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Alexr Monteit

THE SERMONS OF M. IOHN CALVIN VPON THE FIFTH BOOKE OF *Moſes called Deuteronomie:*

Faithfully gathered word for word as he preached
them in open Pulpet;

Together with a preface of the Miniſters of the Church of
Geneua, and an admoniſhment made by the Deacons there.
Alſo there are annexed two profitable Tables, the one containing
the chiefe matters; the other the places of Scripture herein alledged.

Tranſlated out of French by ARTHVR GOLDING.

PERIIT ET INVENTA EST

AT LONDON,
Printed by Henry Middleton
for THOMAS WOODCOCKE.
Anno Domini 1583.

TO THE RIGHT HONOVRABLE Syr Thomas Bromley Knight, Lord Chauncelour of *England, one of her Maieſties moſt honourable priuie* Counſell, his ſingular good Lord, health, proſperitie, and increaſe of Honour.

BEing deſirous to teſtifie my duetifull minde towardes your good Lordſhip, I thought there could be no better meane in all reſpects, than the dedication of this preſent worke; which containeth a large expoſition of the whole Lawe of God, and of the practiſe thereof in the Commonweale of Iſrael: whereof the onely reading with due conſideration, may iuſtly commend it many wayes, euen to ſuch as are of greateſt learning, wiſedome, authoritie and vertue. For if we haue an eye to the author of the groundworke thereof; it is God and not man. If to the Lawemaker; it is the Lawe of the Iudge of the whole world, the lampe of light, the wellſpring of wiſdome, the touchſtone of truth, the rule of right, the ground of goodneſſe, the bond of bleſſedneſſe, the loadſtarre to life, the opener of our vnderſtanding, and the gouernour of our wits: the faithfull following whereof is the way to welfare, the procurer of peace, the path of true pleaſure, the entrie of immortalitie, and the harbourer of happineſſe. Or, if we haue an eye to the maner of the deliuering thereof; it is moſt woonderful, accompanied with many great myracles, ſignes, and tokens, and honoured with the glorie and maieſtie of Gods owne preſence. If to the intent of the Lawegiuer; it is the repayring and reforming of man according to the' Image of his maker, in true holineſſe and righteouſneſſe. If to the end of the Lawe, it is to driue vs vnto Chriſt, that by him wee might be ſaued. If to the obedience which it requireth; it is altogether ſpirituall, holie & euerlaſting. All which things are not onelie great, but the greateſt that can be, and fuller of maieſtie and glorie than can be expreſſed or conceiued by man. Againe, if we haue an eye to the partie by whoſe ſeruice and miniſtery this law was publiſhed; hee was a man peculiarlie choſen of God, indued with moſt excellent giftes, ful of the holy Ghoſt, ſuch a prophet as neuer had his like, (Chriſt onlie excepted) a figure of Chriſt, familiar with God, a perfect paterne of a good gouernour, and a verie father of his Commonweale. Or if we haue an eye to the parties to whom it was deliuered; they were a people whom God had purpoſely choſen, redeemed, and deliuered from moſt miſerable thraldome, to the intent to be their King, and to dwell among them, and that they ſhould be vnto him a holie people and a royall Prieſthoode for euer: which things are ſurelie moſt excellent and ſingular prerogatiues. And as for the Preacher of theſe Sermons, by whom the ſayde things are laide foorth, and expounded to the better vnderſtanding of the Reader: it is well knowen, that for the manifold talents and excellent gifts which God had beſtowed vpon him, and for his diligent and moſt painfull imploying of the ſame to the beating downe of Idolatrie and ſuperſtition, to the winning of folke vnto God, and to the edifying of Chriſts flock: he was in his lifetime, and yet ſtill is, a man of great reputation and renowme. As for mine owne trauell in tranſlating this worke, I humbly ſubmit the iudgement and cenſure thereof to your Lordſhips fauourable acceptation, the obtainement whereof ſhall greatlie increaſe my gladneſſe in that I haue done any thing whereby the Church of GOD is or may bee any whit edified. Written the xxj. of December, 1582.

Ephes.4.24.

Your good Lordſhips moſt humble
alvvaies at Commaundement,

ARTHVR GOLDING.

To the Chriſtian Reader, Grace and *Peace from GOD, &c.*

IT is no ſmall fauour that wee daily receiue from the hands of our God, partly by the publike miniſterie of his word, and partlie by the priuate reading of ſuch good workes as by the meanes of manie his faithfull ſeruants he hath publiſhed and ſpread abroad in this laſt age of the world. But as the beholding of this doth make manie Godly mindes to reioyce in that they ſee Gods great goodnes ſtriuing continuallie to ouercome the malice and frowardneſſe of mans minde: So on the otherſide it pincheth them at the heart when they perceiue not only what ſlender entertainment Gods graces haue amongſt vs, but euen what manifeſt contempt is offered vnto them, while men notwithſtanding the woonderful ſunſhine of Gods holie trueth, remaine in as great darkeneſſe almoſt, in reſpect of iudgement, and be as diſſolute and careleſſe in their conuerſation as euer they were, in the time of the moſt groſſe and palpable blindnes. Would to God that the miſerable experience of our dayes were not too plaine a proofe of this point: And yet this is not ſpoken either as in diſlike of our ſtate with ſome diſcontented people, or to the diſcrediting and defacing of Gods religion which we profeſſe, with the practiſing Papiſts (who with one blow at the Goſpel, would if they could, craftilie cut the throate both of Religion and policie,) but in all holie loue and affection, to make this careleſſe generation more ſtudious to labour to abound both in ſound knowledge of the trueth, and in all holie obedience to the ſame. In which reſpect, not onelie are theſe few lines written at this preſent, but this notable worke of Maſter Caluins Sermons vpon Deuteronomie publiſhed, & that in our owne natiue Language: wherein what paine and coſt hath beene beſtowed, that they might come foorth as beneficiall to the Chriſtian Reader as might be, though I my ſelfe may ſpeake much in trueth as an argument of ſome weight, to induce the godly brethren to the buying and reading thereof; yet letting that point paſſe as a matter not much to be ſtoode vpon, I minde onely to preſſe thoſe things, and that alſo in very fewe words, which ſhalbe moſt material. And that is: that as al ſtates and conditions of men may out of the ſame fetch many profitable points for their inſtruction both in faith and obedience towards God and man: ſo particularly if a man would ouerthrow Atheiſts, or confute Papiſts, and other Heretikes, or wound the wicked, or encourage the fainthearted, or comfort the afflicted conſcience caſt downe with the ſight of ſinne, or performe any other ſeruice towards God, himſelfe, or other men, he ſhall haue matter, and that in great ſtore plentifully miniſtred vnto him for the performance of theſe and all other dueties whatſoeuer. Wherefore I would aduiſe thee (good Reader) to get it ſpeedilie, to reade it diligentlie, to remember it faithfullie, and to expreſſe it fruitfullie in thy conuerſation, to the glorie of God, the profite of his people, and the ſaluation of thine owne ſoule through Chriſt. In whom I reſt alwaies

Thine vnfayned, T. W. the Lord
his vnvvoorthie Seruaunt.

To all the faithfull which hold the holie faith of the true Catholike Church, and generallie to all Christian Readers: Greeting in Ieſus Chriſt our Lord and GOD. Amen.

IT is not without cauſe, that the *pſalme ſpeaking of the great benefits which GOD had beſtowed vpon the Iewes, among whom was his Church at that time, doth cheefly magnifie the grace which he had vttered towards them in deliuering vnto them the ſure rule of his ſeruice, the true maner of good life, & the right way of ſaluation, aſwell by the writings of Moſes and other his ſeruants, as alſo by the liuely voyce of them agreeing with their writings. For without that all the abundance and proſperitie which they could haue had, had beene but as records againſt them to haue increaſed ſtil the meaſure of their condemnation. Therefore hauing ſpoken of Gods defending of the gates of the holy citie Ieruſalem, of his bleſſing vpon the inhabiters thereof, of the peace and quietneſſe that was in all coaſts about it, and of his carefulneſſe in furniſhing it with all things neceſſarie for the maintenance of the whole people: finally he ſetteth downe the principal point whereon the ſweetneſſe and aſſurance of all the reſt hung, ſaying: He hath giuen forth his word vnto Iacob, & his ſtatutes and iudgements vnto Iſraell. And this benefite was at that time peculiar to the citie of Ieruſalem, and to the people that came of Abraham, according as it is ſaid expreſly in the ſame text, that God had not delt ſo with any other nation, nor giuen them knowledge of his iudgements. But we know that Ieſus Chriſt hath by his comming made the ſame grace to extend to al nations of the earth, and that looke whatſoeuer he had promiſed by his Prophets in the holy ſcriptures, he hath performed it by his holy Apoſtles, who haue preached the Goſpell faithfully, as their writings do autentikely, fully, and ſufficiently witneſſe. This aduertiſement therefore belongeth as now to all churches of our lord Ieſus Chriſt, in what countries ſoeuer they be, ſo as they ought to acknowledge Gods mercie in that he teacheth them familiarly and in ſuch language as they may vnderſtand, by the reading and preaching of his worde. For ſo little ought the long interceaſſing of ſo great a benefite (inforced through the tyrannie of Antichriſt) to make vs to holde ſcorne of it, now that God renueth the courſe thereof againe: that contrariwiſe wee ſhould thinke it the more ſweete and amiable, prayſing God for reſtoring vs the thing through his great mercie, which Satans vnderlings had wickedly bereft vs of: acknowledging that God had beene too ſore prouoked by the ſinnes of the worlde, when he puniſhed it in ſuch ſort: and ſeruing him with ſuch obedience according to his worde, as we may not prouoke him hereafter, to vſe the like vengeance againſt vs or our children after vs. And no doubt but this leſſon is told vs throughout the whole Scripture, from the beginning to the end of it, and ſpecially in the bookes of the New Teſtament, wherin the perfection of all learning is throughly compriſed, wel written, and faithfully inrolled. Neuertheleſſe, foraſmuchas the books of Moſes the ſeruant of god are as the fountain from whence all aftercómers, that is to wit both the Prophets and the Apoſtles, haue drawne water: you will not beleeue how greatly it is to the benefit and behoofe of the Church, to confer them with the other books of holy writ. And for the ſame cauſe hath God by his prouidence preſerued them ſo woonderfully, from ſo many dangers through ſo long a race of ſo many hundred yeares. For there, beſides other things, we ſee the antiquity of our faith, and that the ſubſtance of true religion hath alwaies been one, yea and that the very forme of it hath euer tended to the perfection that is fully and infallibly ſhewed vs in the holy writings of the New Teſtament. And in very deede whereas S. Peter ſaith generally of all the Prophets, that the faithfull do well to take

* psal. 147.

psal. 147. 20.

¶. iij.

heede to their wordes, that they may go foreward in Chriſtianitie: it is full certaine that therin he comprehendeth Moſes as the foremoſt of them al. And in aſmuch as he wrote of Ieſus Chriſt, as Chriſt himſelf auoucheth in expreſſe words in ẏ fifth Chapter of S. Iohn: it may well be concluded (according alſo as ſaith the Apoſtle to the Hebrues) that his ſpeaking and writing was to beare record of the things that were to be ſpoken afterward, namely by the ſon of God & his Apoſtles, as we reade them written in the new Teſtament. Now among the books of Moſes, al ſuch as can skil of thē wil eaſily grant, that as *Deuteronomie* is the laſt, ſo it teacheth whereto the other books tend, ſhewing the meane how to fare the better by them, yea and conteining as it were the ſumme of thē. Therfore it is very likely, that that was the cauſe which moued our welbeloued brother or rather good father Maſter Iohn Caluin, that moſt faithfull miniſter of the Goſpell of Ieſus Chriſt, to preach and expound the ſame in the Church, bicauſe that by his ſetting forth therof, he ſhould after a ſort cōprehend the other next three alſo, ſo farre forth as the vnderſtanding of them ſhould be needfull for the people. His ſermons therfore were faithfully gathered in order, like as his ſermons were which he preached vpon other books of ẏ ſcripture, wherof many haue beene printed here already. And in the meane time til all the reſt of his ſermons may by Gods helpe be brought to light, it hath ſeemed good that theſe ſame ſhould be put forth firſt in the meane while: the impreſſion wherof ſhould not neede any commendation or preface, but that the long continuance of cuſtome requireth it. For as many as haue heard true report of the perſon and skil of that good man Maſter Iohn Caluin, wil be ſufficiently drawne to the reading of his ſermons, by finding his name here ſet vnto them: aſſuring themſelues that they ſhal not finde any thing in them, but ſuch as agree with Gods ſpirite, that is to ſay profitable, good, and holy things. As touching the principall and notableſt points that are to be found here, there might very well be made a rehearſall of them, to giue the readers ſome taſt of the whole booke of the ſaid ſermōs, at their firſt entry. But foraſmuch as it is better that euery man ſhould hie him to the reading of them, and to heare the preacher himſelf ſpeake as it were in his owne perſon, we purpoſe not to enter into ſuch diſcourſe, which might peraduenture be ſomewhat with the longeſt. Onely we will touch one point, wherof ſome word hath beene caſt forth already heretofore: that is to wit, that this booke of Moſes beeing well read and vnderſtoode, doth ſhew ſufficiently who they be that holde the true religion, and reſolueth a queſtion wherof men ſeeme partly to doubt yet at this day, and partly to determine ouer boldly after their owne fancie, againſt the expreſſe word of God. We ſpeake not here of Turks, Iewes, Saraſins, and ſuch other, which are commonly called Miſcreants, or Infidels as they be in deede: but we ſpeake of the nations which haue long time borne the renowne of Chriſtianitie, bicauſe that through Gods gracious goodnes ſome ſigne of holy baptiſme hath continued amongſt them, and Ieſus Chriſt is profeſſed there in name. We ſee then that there is great variance nowadaies. The one ſaith, that Chriſtianitie requireth, that in ſeruing God, men ſhould, or at leaſtwiſe may haue images, & ſet them vp in churches for Chriſtian people: the other ſide vpholdeth on the contrary part, that it is a vilanous defiling of religion, and an vtter forſaking of the true Chriſtianitie, and a taking in of a baſtard religion in ſteede of it. If men can finde in their hearts to heare Moſes ſpeake in this booke (as they needes muſt, or elſe be conuicted of renouncing God the Father and his ſonne our Lord Ieſus Chriſt who is very God and euerlaſting life, and of reſiſting the holie Ghoſt:) he ſheweth the thing which he forgetteth not in his other bookes alſo, namelie that God could neuer away to be ſerued after that faſhion, but euermore expreſſelie forbade images in caſe of Religion, and threatened his owne people with horrible puniſhments, if they held not themſelues contented with that ſingle order, to reſt thereupon without attempting any further. Were there no more but the onely text of the ſecond commandement, it were ynough and ſufficient. For (as Moſes wrote in the twentith of Exodus, and hath rehearſed againe at large in the fifth of this preſent booke,) God ſaith, *Thou ſhalt* *not make to thy ſelfe any grauen image*. And to the intent that no man ſhould vſe any wrangling by ſtanding vpon the particular, he addeth, *nor the likeneſſe of any thing that is in heauen aboue, or in earth beneath, or in the waters vnder the earth.* Moreouer, to ſhew that he will not haue men to yeelde them any part of his ſeruice, how little ſoeuer it be: he addeth, *Thou ſhalt not bowe downe to them, nor worſhip them.* Laſt of all he addeth a horrible and dreadefull threate, *that he will take vengeance* vpon the tranſgreſſors and their children, *to the thirde and fourth generation.* This commaundement then is ſet downe in ſo expreſſe termes, that the matter is as manifeſt as may be. And therefore the luſty laddes that haue helde the people in error, perceyuing the great gaine which they and their bellies reaped, by this meane or occaſion of mingling Images with religion, haue ouerleapt this ſecond commaundement, and diuided the laſt commaundement into two, that the full number of tenne might be found there ſtill. But beſides this, Moſes deliuereth ſo often expoſitions of it euen in this ſelfeſame booke, and ſetteth forth ſo liuely and preciſe diſcourſes therof: that if any man will not giue place thereunto in theſe dayes, this prouerbe may well be verified of him, that none is ſo deafe as he that will not heare: and that he is ouerpreached vnto, which hath no care to doe well. For as touching the arguments which ſome haue alledged for that purpoſe in theſe latter yeres, although they haue beene oftentimes chafed and rechafed, yet are they ſo ſtarke and ſtiffe for colde, that they haue no force nor might to giue any holineſſe to Images in the Temples of the Chriſtians, as hath beene well ſhewed to the forementioned gaineſayers in due time and place, and ſhall ſtill hereafter whenſoeuer they liſt to giue eare. And as for vs, we haue on the one ſide, to continue in praying vnto God, that he vouchſafe to touch the heartes of the people and of their leaders and gouernours, effectually by his holy ſpirite, ſo as they may well vnderſtande this point, which would be a good meane to appeaſe Gods wrath, and to open a great gappe to the reformation that might inſue from better to better. And on the other ſide it ſtandeth vs on hand to ſtrengthen our ſelues in the infallible certaintie of the holy Chriſtian religion and true Apoſtolike faith, which we holde with the other holy Churches that are reformed. And as concerning this point, no doubt but it is an inuincible fortreſſe vnto vs, that we are able to ſhewe forth this thing from age to age: namely, firſt of all that the true Apoſtolike and Primatiue Church had no Images at all in their holy meetings, whether it were in Temples or elſewhere, ne willed the people to kneele downe to them, or to ſet them vp before them. That likewiſe aforetimes when the Church was gouerned by the Iewes, both after their returne from Babylon, and euen in the captiuitie it ſelfe, the good and faithfull ſort did warily keepe themſelues from it: that if yee mount vp yet higher, the true Prophetes were commended for crying out againſt Images and the manner of worſhipping of Images, and the holy Kinges were well liked of God for pulling downe, razing out, and rooting vp the occaſions of ſuch ſuperſtitions among their people: that the good Iudges and gouernours had doone likewiſe before the kings: and that euen Moſes himſelfe (who was auncienter than any others that haue left any bookes of long time) ſpake of them after the ſame manner, and dealt accordingly thereto, bicauſe he had both the adminiſtration of the doctrine and the gouernement of the common weale together, which was not ordinarie afterwarde in others. Yee ſee then, yee ſee howe the true Catholike Church is on their ſide which follow the Goſpell, whatſoeuer men liſt to ſay to the contrarie. And nowe that we be deliuered from outwarde Idolatrie, it ſtandeth vs on hande to looke neerely to our ſelues, that our life bee agreeable to the pureneſſe of Gods ſeruice, ſo as wee ſhunne Couetouſneſſe (which alſo is named Idolatrie) ambition, exceſſe and vanitie of the worlde, taking good heede (as much as is poſſible for vs to doe) that no man bee withdrawne from the Goſpell and the loue thereof through our vndiſcreete dealing: to the ende it may appeare that whereas the diſobedient doe ſeeke excuſes and take occaſion of ſtumbling, they doe it without any cauſe giuen on our behalfe. Furthermore the ſtrange blindneſſe or ratherwilfull ſtubbornneſſe which is to be ſeene nowadaies in a number of them that cal themſelues Chriſtians,ought to make vs ſo much the earneſter in praying,to the end aforeſaid, that is to wit, that our good God may vouchſafe to worke ſo effectually in the hearts of all men, as well great as ſmall,Kings, Princes, and other gouernors,as their ſubiects:as the wretched world may not alwais continue at the A.B.C of Chriſtianitie,without learning any further.We terme the ſecond commandement an A.B.C, bicauſe it is and euer hath been one of the firſt and ſureſt groundes of the true religion, and is (as ye would ſay) a neceſſary appurtenance to the firſt commandement. For whoſoeuer mingleth the worſhipping of Images with the ſeruing of God,doth as much as in him lyeth, to ſet forth other gods than the true God. And it is a maruelous thing, that the world becommeth neuer the wiſer for all the great number of puniſhments which God hath powred out,and ſtil powreth out to warne vs to come to repentance. For within theſe fiftie yeres, ſince which time God of his grace hath ſet vp the preaching of the goſpell in diuers places: beſides his ſufficient ſmiting of the people of the earth with his roddes in former yeres, he hath alſo made them feele his ſcourges diuers wayes, in puniſhing their contempt of his holy doctrine. Yet notwithſtanding we hope that God (conditionally that we continue in prayer) wil one day ſhew by more aboundant effect, that he hath heard the prayers of his ſillie faithfull ones, euen in this behalfe,and draw the reſt of his churches out of the miſerable deſolation, which hath laſted now too long by reaſon of our ſinnes. And hereof we haue good hanſel in the furtherance that he hath giuen already to the goſpell,notwithſtanding that Satan hath ſpit out his ſpite againſt it on all ſides. For albeeit that the holy doctrine doe ſounde in the eares of the poore people in diuers places,the ſacraments of Baptiſme and of the Lords ſupper be miniſtred purely, the praiſes of God do ring ſhirlely to mens vnderſtanding in the pſalms and ſongs, and the father is woorſhipped in the name of Ieſus Chriſt our hope and the onely aduocate of wretched ſinners: yet are there a number which hope , or at leaſtwiſe wiſh, that as the ſunne hath been eclipſed this yere,ſo there might be an euerlaſting eclips of the preaching of the goſpell : but by the helpe of God and of our great dayſunne Ieſus Chriſt, they ſhalbe deceaued. And in the meane time while Gods kingdome may inlarge it ſelfe ſtil further out here below,we pray al ſuch as are deſirous to haue the vnderſtanding and vſe of the doctrine of this godlie booke of Moſes, to take the paine to reade theſe preſent Sermons of the faithfull ſeruaunt of God Maſter Iohn Caluin:of whom like as the ſpeeche and pen ſerued the Church as long as he liued, (whatſoeuer ſome Balaams bable to the contrarie:)ſo we beleeue ẏ his writings wil by Gods help edifie al men continuallie hereafter.Moreouer it were a needles thing to warne men,and to pray them to take heede that they make not the Printer to loſe the fruite of his labour, and his coſt which he was faine to be at in the printing of this preſent worke, were it not for the greedie and vnſatiable couetouſneſſe that reigneth nowadaies in men of that trade, by reaſon whereof diuerſe times they ouerrun one another without any honeſtie or conſcience . Surelie we had forborne to giue this warning, and had leuer to haue let the Printers alone to deale with their owne peculiar caſes,as they liſted among themſelues , if it were not for one reaſon which inforceth vs to fall purpoſelie into that matter : which is, that in ſome places they not onelie print againe in ſuch haſt the bookes of that excellent teacher Maſter Iohn Caluin that were erſt printed here , as it is pitifull to ſee the workemanſhip of the imprinting ſo ill corrected : but alſo moreouer, ſome haue gone ſo farre, as to print in Maſter Caluins name the vnperfect copies which they haue gotten by peecemeale or ſtealth where they could come by them . We knowe not what they meane by it : but ſurelie they doe wrong both to the author , and to the Church of God. Yea and they open a gappe which may be dangerous in time to come,whenſoeuer any man will foyſt in bookes ſtained with wicked doctrine , to make them paſſe foorth vnder the name of a faithful ſeruant of God,as euery man knoweth hath

beene

bin done to diuerſe ancient doctors of the Church: Inſomuch that euen S.Paul warneth the Theſſalonians to beware of letters & Epiſtles that were made to run abrode in the Churches [vnder his name], as though he had been the very author of them. Truely, ſo long as it ſhall pleaſe our good God to preſerue vs & the Church wherein he of his grace hath made vs ſhepeherds: it is our duetie to find fault with ſuch as wil needs father any other bookes vpon Caluin than his owne, or by their falſe additions corrupt thoſe which he hath made truelie. But yet is it much better to preuent ẏ danger aforehand, & to eſchew the occaſions thereof as neere as may be. Wherefore, in Gods name we beſeech all ſuch as haue any written copies, ſpecially of the ſaid authors ſermons, not yet printed: to forbeare the putting of them forth, vntil they haue firſt bin duely conferred with the originals, which are here in yͤ keeping of one of the Deacons. And as touching them that are minded to print againe any worke of yͤ ſaid author that is printed alreadie, we pray them to haue regard to the common profit & edifying of the Church, rather than to the furtherance of their owne peculiar gaine. And herewithal we commend you all to the grace of God. The Lorde Ieſus be with you, who is of yͤ ſeed of Dauid according to the fleſh, the verie ſon of the holy virgin Marie, the very Chriſt, & God bleſſed for euermore as S.Paul hath expreſlie written, and ſo haue we alwayes beleeued & do beleeue all of vs. Amen. Deare brethren, we commend our ſelues to your prayers. From Geneua this moneth of Ianuarie, 1567.

Your humble brethren, the Miniſters of Gods word.

The Deacons and diſpoſers of the goods that are giuen in almes to the poore ſtrangers that are come hither into the citie of Geneua for Gods words ſake: to all faithfull and true Chriſtians, helth and peace from our Lord Ieſus.

FOraſmuch as our good & faithfull ſhepherds the miniſters of this church, peraduenture fearing to be ouerlong or tedious to their readers, do in the end of their preface made to theſe ſermons, but (as it were glauncinglie) touch one point, which notwithſtanding is of great importance for the poore ſtraungers that are come into this towne: to our ſeeming it would be thought neither amiſſe nor ſtrange, if we for our dueties ſake, declared the thing ſomewhat more at large, which they ſpake in one word, cõcerning the printing of the ſermons of our late good father M.Iohn Caluin. Nowe then, for the better vnderſtanding of the whole, you muſt conſider that from the yere of our Lord 1549 forth on, the late M.Dennis *Ragueneawe* being fled hither, gaue himſelfe to the gathering of the Sermons word for word, which M.Iohn Caluin did ordinarilie make: and that with ſuch ſwiftnes and cunning, through the vſe of certain notes & ſhapes, as few words eſcaped him euen from the beginning. Which thing when they ſaw which had the charge of the poore ſtrangers at that time: although they had not any great ſum of money wherwith to releeue the preſent needs: yet failed they not to take ſuch order, that yͤ ſaid writer was intertained after a ſort with ſome part of the ſame money, to the intent he might haue wherewith to maintaine himſelfe and his ſmall familie, while he gaue himſelfe wholly to the gathering of theſe ſermons, & to the ingroſing of them faire againe afterward, becauſe he ſhoulde ſpare no time to any other buſineſſe than that. He vndertooke the charge, with condition that he ſhould copie out all the Sermons faire, into bookes of a certain ſcantling or ſyſe whereby they ſhould be made, which he ſhould deliuer to one of the Deacons to be faithfully kept, as a peculiar benefite belonging to the poore ſtraungers, at whoſe charges the ſaide writer was intertained. And foraſmuch as afterward the number of the faithfull increaſed dailie in the realme of France, and many that could not heare the liuely voice of this good ſeruant of God in the pulpit; were deſirous at leaſtwiſe to ſee the things in writing, which he preached openly, and praied to be made partakers of them: in that onelie reſpect and none other, the writer had leaue giuen him to deliuer copies of whatſoeuer ſermons were demaunded of him, to the end that ſuch as receiued them at his hand, might profite themſelues by the doctrine of them, howbeit vppon condition that the ſame ſhould not afterward in any wiſe preiudice or hinder the poore, for whom the originall copies were carefully preſerued (as hath beene ſaid), that they might be printed to the common benefite of them all, whenſoeuer it ſhould pleaſe God to giue them abilitie, as was done afterward. By reaſon hereof ſome which had gotten out copies that came to whole books, taking oportunity of the liberty which our Lord of his infinite goodneſſe and mercie gaue to the realme of Fraunce, ſticked not to cauſe ſome of them to be printed, not onely to the great hinderance of the poore, who by ẏ meanes were bereft of the thing that belonged vnto them: but alſo to the diſaduantage of all the faithfull, inaſmuch as thoſe copies were neuer ouerlooked & conferred with the originals, which are kept diligently here: which is ſuch a deede as we know not how to name in one word, and therefore do willingly leaue the iudgement therof to ſuch as ſee whereto it tendeth, and what ſequele may inſue of it. For if euerie man may haue libertie to print at his pleaſure, al the ſermons which he can pretend to haue bin ſo gathered, whereas notwithſtanding they haue not bin conferred with the originall copies which we haue here: who ſhall let them to falſifie the moſt part of the true ſermons by adding or diminiſhing, and by mangling or nipping of them after their owne fancie? It is well knowen that the abuſing of the names of Gods good and faithfull ſeruants, is no new thing. If ſuch libertie be giuen, & men deale as they haue begun, in this caſe: what wil come of it, but that ẏ doctrine of ſaluation ſhall ſtand as it were at the courteſie of ſuch as will make their owne deuices flie through the whole world, vnder pretence of ſetting the name of this good man to the titles of them? For ſufficient proofe whereof, and to the end it ſhould not be thought that we do wrongfully & without cauſe giue inkling of the things aforeſaid: we will briefly touch what hath bin doone herein a fewe yeares ſince; namely that there haue bin certaine men, who without any forecaſt, haue bin ſo bolde as to cauſe certain ſermons vpon the Prophet Danyel to be printed, without vouchſafing to ſee the originall copie, or to be aduertiſed thereof from hence. And to couer their whole doings the better, they alledge that their ſo doing was for the glorie of God. Yea marie: but that ſhould haue beene done without the hinderance of other men. And it is a wonder to ſee how ſuch folke dare boaſt themſelues to be of the reformed religion. For to thinke that Papiſts are the doers thereof, there is no likelihood at all, conſidering the hatred that they beare to that good man. Therefore it is not to be doubted, but that they be of that ſort which crowd themſelues into the number of the faithfull, and of the reformed Churches, and will needs ſeeme to be great Chriſtians. But let all men iudge whether it be a dealing meete for them that feare God, ſo to filch away ẏ things that belong to the poore members of our Lord Ieſus Chriſt. And this thing bringeth vs to the rememberance of another deede, whereof we be conſtrained to make our moane likewiſe to the whole world, to the end that ſuch as wittingly withhold the goods of our poore folke, may aduiſe themſelues better than they haue done hitherto, and make amends as they ought to do. The matter concerneth them that print or daylie cauſe to be printed, or which haue heretofore printed the Pſalmes made into meeter by M. Beza. There is none of them all but he knoweth right wel, that he cannot with good conſcience, ne ought alſo to print them, without paying to our poore folke the thing that was promiſed and agreed vpon before they were euer once put in print, as all of them can wellynough tell. Yet notwithſtanding the moſt part, and in maner all that haue had to do with that matter, would neuer yet pay aught of that which they ought to haue doone, for any thing that could be tolde them of it. But let them vaunt themſelues to be good and faithfull Chriſtians as much as they liſt: they ſhall not eaſilie make men beleeue that they haue ſo much conſcience as the Papiſts had in that behalfe. For how ignorant ſo euer the Papiſtes were, yet would they neither take away nor withholde the things which they knew to belong to the poore. And therefore it is a great ſhame, that they which profeſſe the Goſpell, which reſort to the Chriſtian congregations, which receiue the holie ſupper of our Lord Ieſus, and (to be ſhort) which will needs be muſtered in the aray of the faithfull, do no better bethinke themſelues of the diſcharging of their dueties. Surely we maruell how they dare preaſe to the open Sermons, where they be ſo often conten condemned,at leaſtwiſe in generalitie. But it is ſeene by experience, that they be no whit mooued with them, but doe fall aſleepe, inſomuch that they thinke not that the great number of threatnings which are vttered againſt all ſuch as behaue not themſelues truſtilie towards their neighbours,and againſt ſuch as withhold other mens goods,ſpecially the goods that are appointed to the poore,do concerne themſelues. Yet notwithſtanding,howſoeuer any of them both doe take the matter, they ſhall one day be faine to feele to their coſt, that whatſoeuer is doone to the poore members of the ſonne of God,he taketh it to be done to his owne ſelfe,ſo great ſtore doth hee ſet by them. Wherefore it were nowe high time that all ſuch folke ſhoulde looke more neerely to themſelues and to their duetie, and not ſuffer themſelues to be ſo caried away by their vnruly fancies and affections,which hinder them to make any conſcience in withholding the poore folkes goods, and in turning them to their owne priuate vſe.As touching ſome other ſort of Printers, which ſticke not to print againe immediatlie the copies that others haue printed at their great charges afore, and by that meanes doe bring to paſſe, that many good men dare not aduenture to print (among other things), a great number of the ſame authors ſermons which are here,and belong to our poore folks: the warning that is giuen thereof in the preface of the ſaid miniſters, (notwithſtanding that it be verie ſhort) ought well to reſtraine them,and to make it ſeeme to the world, that there is at leaſtwiſe as much modeſtie & honeſtie in them,as there appeareth to be in the wretched Papiſts that deale with the Art of printing.For they would be aſhamed to haue it caſt in their teeth,that they had incroched one vpon another. Thus much haue we thought good to adde in this behalfe,aſſuring our ſelues that none of the faithfull and of ſuch as feare God will thinke amiſſe of this warning,which we haue bin driuen to make in diſcharge of our duetie,which ought alone to be a ſufficient excuſe for vs if any man ſhould think that the things which we haue vttered are not material.But we hope that al men of good diſcretion & ſound vnderſtanding,will iudge that we neither could nor ſhould haue let ſlip ſo good an occaſion as this, to warne ſuch as print or cauſe things to be printed,to do their dueties towards the poore. At Geneua the 12.of Februarie, 1567.

The ſame Deacons.

IT falleth out well to the purpoſe,that when the former warning was ended,there remained a voide roome to put in this addition, which ſhall ſerue for a confirmation of the things that were ſpoken concerning the former maner of dealing, vſed in the printing of the ſermons vpon Danyel. For immediatly vpon the getting of a copie printed at Rochell by Bartilmew Berton,in the yeare of our Lord 1565, he that nameth himſelfe the firſt author of the putting of them abroade, gaue forth that they had bin kept as it were in priſon by the ſpace of twelue years or thereabouts, & that the Author of them had ſuppreſſed them and held them faſt locked vp, with ſuch other like ſayings deuiſed of his owne braine. But therein he ſheweth ſufficientlie by what meanes he came by thoſe copies, which were neuer kept backe from any that were deſirous to haue them,ſo it were but to reade them ,albeit that they were kept from ſuch as would copie them out to defraud our poore folke of the benefite that was lawfully gotten for them. And whereas he reporteth that the copie which he cauſed to be imprinted, fell into the hands of a friend of his: he ſhoulde at leaſtwiſe haue inquired how that came to paſſe, and by what title his friend made it his owne, ſo as he durſt cauſe it to be printed.But it is apparant how great his fault was againſt our poore folk: and what pretence ſo euer he make,no man can doubt what zeale or affection draue him to do that thing. By the way, God grant that the Readers be not diſappointed of the profit which they ſhould reape of thoſe ſermons,& that they be put forth according as they were gathered,wherof we neither can nor wil iudge, vntill we haue read them throughly,& conferred them with the originall copies which we haue heere,which thing we will by Gods helpe doe ere it be long, that we may faithfully warne the readers thereof,againſt the next imprinting of them againe.

THE SERMONS of Maſter Iohn Caluin vpon the fifth booke of Moſes called *Deuteronomie.*

On Wedneſday the xx. of March. 1555.

The firſt Sermon vpon the firſt Chapter.

HEre followe the wordes which Moſes ſpake to all Iſraell beyond Iordan, in the wilderneſſe, in the plaine againſt the red ſea, betweene Pharan and Tophell, and Laban, and Hazerot, and Dizahab.

2 There are eleuen iourneyes from Horeb by the way of Mount Seir, to Cades barne.

3 And it came to paſſe, that in the fortith yeere, the firſt day of the eleuenth moneth, Moſes ſpake to the children of Iſraell, according to all that euer the Lorde had commanded him to ſay vnto them.

When God cauſed his lawe to be publiſht in mount Horeb, after his cõueying of the people out of the thraldome of Egypt, there by he ſhewed to what ende and purpoſe he had had pitie of his people in deliuering them: that is to wit, to be glorifyed thereby, as the marke whereunto we alſo muſt referre all the gracious giftes which he beſtoweth vpon vs. Zacharie the father of S. Iohn Baptiſt, ſpeaking of the great and ſoucreigne deliuerance that was made in the perſon of our Lord Ieſus Chriſt, ſaith, that Gods Luke.1.74. diſcharging of vs from the hand and tyranny of our enemies, was to the end that we ſhould ſerue him in holineſſe and righteouſneſſe all our life long. And this is a doctrine very common throughout the whole holy ſcripture. And for the ſame cauſe alſo is it ſayd by the prophet Eſai.43.21. Eſay, that God hath created a people to ſet foorth his prayſe. Seeing then that the Lawe was giuen to the people, to make them perceiue why they had bin deliuered from the bondage of Egypt: it was good reaſon that they ſhould yeelde themſelues to the obeying of God, which had ſhewed himſelfe their redeemer in ſuch wiſe. Neuertheleſſe the people were vntowarde, and could not finde in their hartes to yeelde themſelues plyable, in hearkening to the things that were tolde them in the name of their God. Yet ought they of right to haue done it, ſeeing they had receiued ſo great & ſo ineſtimable a benefit. For God had vttered the mightie ſtrength of his arme in deliuering the people. Therefore ought they to haue conſidered thus: Behold, our God hath magnified himſelfe towardes vs after a wonderfull faſhion, we haue had as it were a viſible preſence of his maieſtie, if the heauens had opened and God had ſhewed himſelfe to our eyes, we ſhould not haue had a greater and more vndoubted aſſurance of his neereneſſe vnto vs, to warrant vs that he was our leader. Seeing then that God is ſo come downe vnto vs, and that it hath pleaſed him to impart his goodneſſe in ſuch wiſe vnto vs: is it not reaſon that we ſhould be wholy his? And ſeeing he hath reached out his hand to redeem vs, ought we not to be his heritage, inaſmuch as he hath gotten vs by his owne mightie power? Had the people had one drop of wiſedome, they ſhould haue yeelded themſelues with all humilitie, to receiue the doctrine that was preached to them by Moſes. Yea and what authoritie deſerued the Law, which was ſo confirmed with ſuch ſtore of miracles? For when God had choſen Moſes to be his prophet: he not onely commaunded him to ſpeake, but alſo tooke him vp into the mountaine, and ſeparated him from the companie of men, to the ende that when he ſhould come to ſet forth his Law, the people ſhould accept him as an Angell, and not as a mortal creature. He was there fortie daies without eating or drinking, to ſhewe that he was exempted from the common ſort of men, and that God had taken him vp as it were into his heauenly glorie. And when he came downe againe, his face ſhone as bright as it had beene another ſunne. Where as men attribute hornes vnto him, it is ſaide that he had ſunne beames rounde about him, that is to ſay, he had ſuch a brightneſſe as he was faine to weare a veyle before his face. And whereto ſerued that, but to ratifie and confirme the lawe which God had giuen and committed vnto him, and to make it knowen that it was not a doctrine deuiſed by a mortall man? Beſides this, there was thundering and lightning and trumpets ſounding [in the aire,] ſo as it ſeemed that all the worlde ſhoulde haue gone to wracke: and there was not any place either high or lowe, which did not ſhake & tremble when God went about to vtter his voice.

Seeing then that the lawe was ſo well ſealed and with ſuch maieſtie: muſt it not needs be that the people were worſe than blockes, when they hearkened not to their God ſpeaking with ſuch force? Yet for all that, the lawe was deſpiſed, & euen while God was preparing of his ſeruaunt Moſes to ſet it forth, behold, the people coulde not abide to tarie the bringing of Gods wil vnto them, but made them a Calfe of golde, and fell flatly to ſetting vp of new ſuperſtitions, euen in ſpite of God, of whoſe power and fauour they had ſo often had experience. Againe, when the law was once giuen, the people trembled & quaked for a while, inſomuch that they were inforced to ſay, if God ſpeake any more vnto vs we be vtterly vndone: there is no way wͭ vs but death: and therwithal they ſtood aloofe from yͤ mountaine, according alſo as they were commanded. It ſhoulde ſeeme then that there was ſome reuerence. But the iſſue ſhewed that all was but hypocriſie, and it appeared well that they were not rightly touched in their hearts, nor had taken liuely root to profit in the doctrine. We ſee then in effect, that when God did firſt of al publiſh his law, it had verie ſkant & ſlender hearing, & the people were not yet diſpoſed to ſubmit thẽſelues to it as they ſhould haue done. By reaſon whereof God was faine to return to it againe, notwithſtanding that the people deſerued not that God ſhoulde cauſe Moſes to ſerue ſtill in that office. For was it not reaſon that they which had ſo deſpiſed the liuing God, ſhould thenceforth haue ben left deſtitute of all truth? that yͤ diuel might haue taken poſſeſſion of them? that hee might haue made them ſtarke blinde? that they might haue ſtarued for want of liuely foode? and that they ſhould haue ben poyſoned with all the deceites and errors of Satan? Of a truth, yͤ people were well worthy of ſuch reward. But God had not an eye to the deſerts of that wretched people. For he ſurmounted their ſinnes with his infinite goodnes, & proceeded in teaching of thẽ ſtill, euen when they had ſhewed thẽſelues moſt ſtubborne & rebellious, and had matched their vnthankfulnes with ſuch wilfulnes, as there ſeemed to bee no way to come neere them to doe them good: & yet did God euẽ then vſe his mercie, and vouchſafed to aſſay whether the people would ſuffer themſelues to be brought backe againe or no. And that is the cauſe why Moſes did not onely ſet forth the Law in Horeb, but alſo vſed vehement exhortations therwithall, becauſe he ſaw the lightnes and vnconſtancy of the people, indeuoring and ſtreining himſelfe by all meanes to bring them backe againe vnto God.

Yet notwithſtanding, God vouchſafed ſtill, that in the end there ſhould be an abridgement of the law, & that the ſame ſhould be confirmed as it is conteined in this booke. And that is the cauſe why it is intituled *Deuteronomie*, which is as much to ſay as *the Law repeated*. Not that God bringeth in any newe thing here: but for that he blameth the people for their foreſaid lewdnes, ſhewing that his doctrine had ben ill obſerued, like as when children do not profit wel at ſchole, but play the groſſe Aſſes, when they haue ſpent a whole yeare and are neuer the further forewarde, they muſt bee faine to returne againe to their Apcie. And why? For notwithſtanding that they haue heard their ſchoolemaiſter, yet they be as ignorant as they were before, inſomuch that inſteede of learning any thing, a man ſhall ſee them continue ſtill alwayes at one ſtaye. So then, our Lorde vpbraideth the people of Iſrael with their brutiſh dulneſſe, in repeating his lawe vnto them the ſecond time. As if hee ſhould ſay, Ye be verie ill ſcholers: for I haue trained you ſufficiently in my Lawe. The doctrine comprehended in the ten commandements conteineth the full perfection of all wiſedome. Yet hath not all this beene ynough for you, becauſe yee haue no eares at all, or elſe they be too long, ſo that of all this while nothing is entered into your harts, or rather yee haue not hearde what I ſaide vnto you. And therefore you muſt bee faine to turne back againe to your firſt leſſon, and to your Apcie: I muſt be faine to open my Lawe againe vnto you, and to chawe your meate vnto you, that you may digeſt it the better. And becauſe yee be ſo dull vpon the ſpurre, I muſt be faine to prick you forward, and to vſe greater force to waken you, that the hardnes of heart which I ſee in you may be amended.

Thus we ſee in effect, what the groundworke of this Booke is: that is to wit, that God hauing erſt alreadie giuen his law to the people of Iſrael, and warranted it as much as was requiſite: vouchſafed becauſe of their hardhartedneſſe & ſturborneſſe, to giue a larger declaration therof, than Moſes had put in writing as yet. And hee hath not only opened the meaning of the Law, but alſo exhorted the people to keepe it better than they had done before, vpbraiding them with their lewdneſſe in that they had beene ſo vnrulie and ſo ill diſpoſed, to receiue the inſtruction of their maker and redeemer at the firſt time. Nowe, all the thinges that wee ſee in this people, belong vnto vs. And would GOD wee reſembled not the Iewes in any thing, I meane as in theſe pointes. But if euer there were too much hardeneſſe of hearte in them, howe much more is it to bee founde in vs nowadayes? For our Lorde hath ſpoken more than once vnto vs. If the law were well warranted in the hand of Moſes: hath the goſpel bin leſſe confirmed vnto vs in theſe daies? If the earth were ſhaken then, if the trumpets ſounded, if the lightenings flewe abroade, if thunderclappes were heard: the Goſpel alſo ſhaketh both heauen and earth as now, as it is ſaide by the Prophet Aggeus, and alleaged by the Apoſtle in the Epiſtle to the Hebrues. Alſo we heare what S.Paul ſpeaketh of it in the third Chapter of the ſecond Epiſtle to the Corinthians. The meſſage of life and ſaluation (ſaith he) which is conteined in the Goſpel, muſt needes bee glorified as much or more than the doctrine of the Lawe, which was dead of it ſelfe and coulde not giue men life.

Agge.2.7.
Heb.12.26.
2.Cor.3.7.

Seeing then that God hath vttered ſo great maieſtie in the Goſpel, and his preaching of it vnto vs hath not bin for once and away, but wee haue our eares beaten with it euery day: let vs ſee if we be good ſcholers, and whether we beare in minde the things that haue beene tolde vs, ſo as God is honoured at our hands. Are we linked vnto him? Alas, it is nothing ſo. For continue God neuer ſo much in ſetting forth his doctrine vnto vs, wherin we do as it were ſee his heart laid open vnto vs: yet are we locked vp on our part, and we giue him no entrance, but rather wee be gadding and ful of vanitie, and we be ſo farre off from being touched with the doctrine, and from receiuing it to holde our ſelues wholly to it, & to ſet our minds vpon it, and to be ſetled in right obedience to it: that rather the cleane contrarie is to be ſeene. And ſo we ſee that the Iewes are as a loking glaſſe wherein we may behold our owne rudeneſſe, frowardneſſe, vnthankfulneſſe, & wilful ſtubbornneſſe againſt God.

Yea and we be more blame worthie than the Iewes for giuing ſo ſlender eare to our God. For as I haue tolde you already, the people of olde time ought to haue thought themſelues bounde vnto God, and to haue yeelded and giuen ouer themſelues wholy to his ſeruice, bicauſe he had deliuered them from yͤ thraldome of Egypt. And what is it that God hath rid vs from now at this time? Is it but from the tyranny of a mortal man, or of ſome earthly people? No, but we know that he hath ranſomed vs from the cheins of ſin and of the diuel, he hath pulled vs out of the gulfe of death, he hath drawne vs out of the dungeon of hel, and he hath not onely promiſed vs the land of Chanaan for an inheritance, but alſo opened the heauens vnto vs in the perſon of our Lord Ieſus Chriſt, who hath taken poſſeſſion thereof for vs, to the end we might be ſure that our abiding place & euerlaſting reſt is made ready for vs there. Seeing then that God hath bound vs in ſuch wiſe vnto him, is not our vnthankefulnes double, yea or rather an hundredfolde more ſhamefull, than the vnthankfulneſſe of the people of olde time?

Furthermore, whereas God hath vouchſafed to hold on in the office of inſtructing, to teache yͤ people which was ſo rude & rebellious: let vs aſſure our ſelues that he doeth the like towards vs nowadaies. Yea & it is requiſite for vs yͭ he ſhould ſo doe (as I haue ſaide already): or elſe what would become of it? But ſith we ſee that God is ſo gracious as not to bee weary of teaching vs; though it boote vs not at the firſt day, nor at the firſt yeare: let vs aſſure our ſelues yͭ his dealing wͭ vs after that ſorte from day to day, is no more than needeth. And it is a point well worth the marking. For men haue itching eares, and be deſirous to heare alwaies new things: & if the doctrine of God be preached and ſet forth to them euery day, it becōmeth irkſome to them & they wax weary of it. For to their ſeeming it is inough to ſpeake of it once or twiſe, and they conſider not how they forget the things which they ought to haue borne away. So then, to the end we wax not weary of the doctrine that is preached vnto vs: let vs marke that it is needful for vs that God ſhould put vs ſtill in minde of the things that he hath taught vs already: for our wits are ſhort towardes him. And therefore let vs bethinke our ſelues well, & whenſoeuer it is told vs that there is but one God in whom we be, & that he is not only our maker, but alſo our father, & hath adopted vs to be his children, and moreouer tied vs to him by a much ſtreiter band, in that he hath redeemed vs with the bloud of his owne ſonne: whenſoeuer we be put in minde of theſe things: although we haue heard of them before, yet let vs not ſay, tuſh, theſe thinges haue beene preached to vs long ago: but let euery of vs enter into himſelfe, & examine himſelfe, & ſee whether yͤ things yͭ we haue heard heretofore, be wel printed in our harts. Let vs then enter into accompt after yͤ ſort. And why? For if we remembred wel, yͭ we be ſet in this world to the end to glorifie our god: would we not be more mindful to diſcharge our dutie towards him? If we conſidered the fatherly kindeneſſe that hee vſeth in calling vs his children, and which he hath ſhewed towards vs once alredy in adopting of vs in the perſon of his own ſonne: & if we mark how dearly we coſt our Lord Ieſus Chriſt whē he did ſet vs free frō endleſſe death: ſhould we not be deſirous to giue our ſelues wholy to our God? Should we not be moued to yeelde him another maner of reuerence than we do? Now therfore, whenſoeuer we be vnruly, ſo as yͤ world carieth vs away, & we be intāgled in earthly luſts & affections: let vs aſſure our ſelues it is becauſe we haue not giuen good eare to our God, when he ſpake to vs, nor taken heede to it when he warned vs of our duties. And therfore it is good for vs to be put in minde of it, and to haue God come backe againe to vs & to ſay vnto vs, yee wretched folke, what meane yee? When I haue once taught you: the doctrine that is conteined in my word ought to ſoke throughly into you, and yet notwithſtanding you be ſtill like little babes. This is it (ſay I) which we haue to doe, to the end we may finde ſauour in Gods worde, and be nouriſhed therewith as with our ordinarie foode. We muſt aſſure our ſelues, that the appointing of this order that we ſhould be preached vnto all the time of our life, and that wee ſhoulde haue our eares beaten continually with the things, which we ought to vnderſtande in one or two monethes, is not in vaine.

Furthermore, if we doe not ſo, if we ſubdue not our ſelues to the hearing of our God, & ſuffer our ſelues to be taught by him all the time of our life: let vs be afraide leaſt he execute the vengeance vppon vs, which he threatned once to the people of Iſraell by his Prophet Eſay, ſay-

Eſa.29,11. ing that his lawe ſhould be to them as a booke ſhut vp and ſealed, ſo as if it were offered to men of ſkill, they ſhould ſay, the letters are not to be ſeene, there is a ſeale vpon then, I cannot tell what is within it: And if it were offered to ignorant and vnlearned men: they ſhoulde anſwere, we be not booke learned, we neuer went to ſchoole, we cannot reade. Loe how God puniſheth all ſuch as walke on in their brutiſhneſſe, and wil neuer ſubmit themſelues vnto him. True it is, that God beareth with vs for a time, and that (as I ſaid afore) although we be worthy to be cut off from his houſe, & to be bereft of his truth, ſo as he ſhould giue vs vp into Sathans handes, to bee blinded with lies and to bee poyſoned by him: yet notwithſtanding, our God hauing pitie vppon vs, aſſayeth ſtill to winne vs to himſelfe. But if we continue ſtill in refuſing the good doctrine, and become neuer the better for it at the yeares ende, than we were at the firſt day: at length this threat muſt needes light vpon vs, namely that we ſhall take the holy ſcripture into our hands, and haue it preached vnto vs, and yet wee ſhall vnderſtande neuer a whitte of it, though we be neuer ſo witty: and that when as the vnlearned ſhall ſay, I wote not what it meaneth, it ſhall alſo bee as a letter folded vp and faſt ſealed, euen to them that are ſkilfulleſt and ſharpeſt witted. Wherefore let vs ſtande in feare of ſuch threatnings: and leaſt our light bee turned into darkeneſſe, let vs take holde of the opportunitie which God offereth vs nowadaies, that wee may fare the better by his continuall ſpeaking to vs after that ſort.

True it is that the thinges which are conteined here were ſpoken to the people of Iſrael, and might haue profited them in their time: but yet doe they alſo belong vnto vs at this day, and they be as a common treaſure whereof God will haue vs to bee partakers. For as wee ſhall ſee hereafter, the Lawe was not onely giuen as a rule whereby to liue well: but alſo grounded vpon the couenaunt which God had made with Abraham and his ofſpring. And by vertue of that couenant, wee are become heires of the

Gal.3.29. heauenly kingdome, as ſheweth Saint Paul. To ſeeke our ſaluation, wee muſt reſort to the promiſe that was made to our father Abraham: and to bee of the houſeholde of Gods Church and members of our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt, we muſt be of Abrahams ſpirituall linage. Hereby then wee ſee, that this doctrine not onely ſerued till the comming of the ſonne of God: but alſo ſerueth ſtill to our behoofe, and ſhall doe ſo ſtill to the worlds ende. For it is a building that is founded vpon the euerlaſting couenant, from whence as from the true fountaine thereof, our ſaluation ſpringeth as I ſaid afore.

Wherefore let vs marke, that whenſoeuer God ſhall henceforth ſpeake to the Iewes, the ſame is ſpoken alſo vnto vs: and wee muſt receiue it in ſuch wiſe, as wee muſt vnderſtande that God hath ſhed forth his grace through the whole worlde by the comming of his onely ſonne, and builded vp the heauenly Ieruſalem, to the ende that we ſhoulde all be linked together in one holy brotherhood, to cal vpō him as our father all with one mouth. Sith it is ſo then, let vs vnderſtand that it is good reaſon that wee ſhoulde giue ouer our ſelues vnto him, and that he ſhould hold vs in awe, and enioy vs, & that like as he hath vouchſafed to giue himſelfe vnto vs, ſo we on our ſide ſhoulde bee wholly his, to yeelde him the duetie which children owe to their father: and that when we be negligent and ſlowe therein, we ſhould at leaſt wiſe be moued with the exhortations that are conteined in this booke: and that ſeeing God calleth vpon vs ſo earneſtly, we ſhold not ſtop our eares againſt him but euerie man awake, and one of vs rebuke another: Yea and that if we were wiſe, we ſhould not tarie till God quickened vs vp ſo ſharpely, but rather preuent him, howbeit that we ought to be moued to bee aſhamed of our lewdneſſe and to returne againe vnto God, at leaſtwiſe when hee falleth to correcting of vs by thundering out his threatnings againſt vs, and by vpbrayding of vs with our ſinnes. Thus yee ſee what wee haue to marke in generall vpon this booke.

Nowe let vs come to the text that I haue rehearſed afore. *Theſe are the wordes which Moſes ſpake vnto the people in the wilderneſſe, in the plaine* (or champion grounds) *beyong Iordan, euen from Horeb* vnto the places here before rehearſed. Herein we haue to note, that God intended to rebuke the people for their not keeping of the lawe, which had not onely bin preached to them by mouth, but alſo ſet downe in writing: as if a man ſhould make an inſtrument or conueyance of ſome bargaine betweene two parties. And God himſelfe vouchſafed to ingraue his Lawe (at leaſtwiſe the ten commaundements) in two tables, to the intent they might be remembred the better. For albeit that the doctrin was cleere ynough of itſelf, & god had prouided to preſerue it from forgetting: yet did not the people receiue it. Therefore as nowe he caſteth them in the teeth, as if it ſhould be ſaide vnto vs, Behold, the Goſpell of our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt hauing bin preached with ſuch power and maieſtie, is alſo left in writing. Wee haue had the Goſpel preached vnto vs nowe a long time, euen the ſame Goſpel which is ſet downe vnto vs in Bookes. Therefore are we too vnexcuſable, if we cannot tell what God ſaith to vs there. If a man ſhoulde ſpeake after that maner, it were a blaming of vs for our beaſtlineſſe. Againe, if it ſhoulde be ſaide that where as wee were baptiſed in the name of the ſonne of God, when we were babes, yet wee knowe him not: that being come to mans eſtate, we bee ſo brutiſh that after ſo often hearing of Gods truth, yet we be ſtill but nouices in it: and that we can ſcarſly tell what it is, or at leaſtwiſe haue neuer taken any taſt of it at al: ſuch maner of opening of the goſpel vnto vs, how it hath bin offered vs of long time & after diuers faſhions, were as a framing of an inditement againſt vs. So now likewiſe Moſes, to witneſſe openly to the people that they had ſhewed themſelues too vnthankefull towardes God, ſaieth expreſſely: Theſe are the wordes that I vttered and preached vnto you from time to time, not for a day or two, but euer ſince the publiſhing of the Lawe in the mountaine of Horeb. And becauſe you ſhewed your ſelues ſo ill diſpoſed, I haue not ceaſſed to put you ſtill in remembraunce of the things that you had heard before. Now let vs learne hereby, to bee the better quickened vp, and ſith wee ſee it hath bin Gods will, that euen from the beginning of the worlde, his trueth ſhould haue ſome certaine record among men, and that he hath not ceaſſed to ſet it forth ſtill, and to raiſe it vp againe when men haue gone about to burie it by their ſpitefulneſſe: let vs acknowledge his wonderfull goodnes in ſo doing, and be moued to receiue the things that ſhall be ſpoken vnto vs. Marke that for one poynt.

But to the end wee may bee the better diſpoſed: we muſt alſo weigh this ſaying which Moſes addeth, *Euen according to all that God had commaunded him.* Nowe by this preface he ſheweth, that he brought not any thing of his owne, ne meant to ſubdue the people to his owne dotages, nor to any thing that he could haue deuiſed of his owne reaſon and wiſedome as in reſpect of men, but that he did ſimply obey God, as a faithfull & truſtie meſſenger, without ſwaruing aſide either to the right hand or to the left. Deut.34.10. Nowe if Moſes who had ſo excellent a record as wee ſee, inſomuch that God neuer raiſed vp any Prophet equall or like vnto him: If Moſes ẏ prince of all Prophets next vnto Ieſus Chriſt, and the chiefe of all vnder the olde Lawe, doe neuertheleſſe proteſt that he putteth not forth any thing of his owne head: I pray you what ſhall others do? May they compare themſelues with him? No: but put the caſe that they be as highly aduanced and placed as he: yet notwithſtanding, the furtheſt that they ought to goe, is but to ſet forth the things that God hath commaunded them. And therefore let vs learne, that here all mens traditions are ſhut out of doores. And hereby it appeareth, that the Pope hath marred and corrupted the whole order of the Church, by his taking vpō him to be a Lawmaker, to deuiſe lawes & to lay them vpon mens necks at his owne pleaſure, to forge & contriue newe articles of faith, and to inforce men to receiue his inuentions as the holy ſcriptures. Was not this a turning of all things vpſide downe? Yes: for God neuer ment that men ſhould haue ſuch libertie and ſway in the Church, as to ſet forth any of their owne inuentions there, but he himſelfe onely will be heard there. Marke that for one point.

But there is yet more in it: for it is not onely ſaide that Moſes ſpake according to the charge that was giuen him: but *according to all that euer the Lord had commaunded him.* He ſheweth then, ẏ he did not as it were make a medlie, or ſeeke by any meanes to bring in what he himſelfe thought good, or to ſeparate himſelf from Gods worde: but that he followed Gods will from point to point to the vttermoſt. Ye ſee then that there was a great ſingleneſſe of heart in Moſes, inſomuch as he not only gaue forth the things that he had receiued at Gods hand: but alſo continued throughout in the ſame ſinglenes of keeping himſelfe within his boundes, ſo as he raunged not abroade to ſay, this is good, or that is good, thus or thus doe I thinke of this matter. No: but in all points he ruled himſelfe according to the charge of his commiſſion, vttering his meſſage according as he had heard God ſpeake it. Marke that for the ſecond point.

Nowe herewithall wee be warned to receiue the doctrine here conteined, not as comming from a mortall man. In ſpeaking vnto vs, Moſes proteſteth that he himſelfe is not our ſchoolemaiſter though he rehearſeth our leſſon vnto vs; but that muſt alwayes be God and his holy ſpirit, that muſt be euen our Lord Ieſus Chriſt, in whoſe hand the Lawe was giuen, as S. Paul Gal.3.19. ſpeaketh of him. For he was the gouernour of ẏ Church at all times. Ye ſee then that the thing which we haue to conſider here, is that we muſt reuerently and carefully receiue the things that were giuẽ vs by the hand of Moſes. Not that wee may think that any thing came of himſelfe: but that God ſent him and ordeined him to be his inſtrument, ſo that when we receiue any thing that was ſpoken by Moſes, wee may warrant our ſelues that God guideth and gouerneth vs by his owne pure trueth, and that our faith reſteth not vpon men nor vpon any mortall creature, but that the liuing God is the author, and will alſo be the warranter thereof.

Now after he hath ſpoken ſo, he ſaith, *That his rehearſing of all theſe things was in the fortith yeere, the eleuenth moneth, and the firſt day of the moneth.* As if it had bene ſaide, when the people drewe nigh to the land of promiſe and were readie to enter into it: then did he repeate the Lawe of God, and make an abridgement of it, and rehearſe all the exhortations and warnings which he had made to them before. Not that Moſes had helde his peace and kept ſilence euer ſince [the giuing of the Lawe in] Horeb: for as I haue tolde you alreadie, he ceaſſed not to call vpon the people continually, bicauſe he ſawe them ſo wilfull and ſtubborne, and ſo ſtiffenecked and hard to be bowed. But in the end, foraſmuch as he drewe neere to his long home, and had as good as finiſhed his race and ſhould anon after depart out of this world, (as wee ſhall ſee that he did in the end of this booke:) he made a rehearſall of all the doctrine that he had preached by the ſpace of fortie yeeres, of purpoſe to ratifie & confirme it in ſuch wiſe to the people, as their ſucceſſours might bee edified by it after his deceaſe, and the profit thereof redound vnto vs at this day, and wee be taught all the leſſons conteyned therein. Neuertheleſſe, we ſee moreouer, that the people ought ere that time to haue bin throughly ſubdued, and to haue ſubmitted themſelues better vnto God than they did. For fortie yeeres are a good reaſonable time to diſpoſe a man to goodneſſe if euer he will be good.

When we ſee a man hath bin let chawe vpon the bridle by the ſpace of fortie yeeres, and yet will giue eare to no counſell nor reaſon: it is then high time or neuer for him to bethinke himſelf, and to fall to better diſpoſition and ripeneſſe of diſcretion than he hath done afore, if he be told of his fault. God therefore perceiuing his people to be ſo wilde, gaue them time and reſpit to become tame, & led them about by yͤ ſpace of fortie yeeres, which thing he did to thẽ for their ſtubbornneſſe ſake, as we ſhall ſee hereafter. But yͤ thing that we haue to marke at this preſent, is no more but that the cauſe why Moſes ſpake now vnto the people, was for that he drew neere his ende, and God was at the point to take him out of the worlde, and alſo for that the people ſhould be as it were renewed at that time. For it had bin ſaide to them that had refuſed to enter into the land [of Chanaan,] Your carkeſſes ſhall rotte here in the wildnerneſſe, you be not worthy to poſſeſſe the inheritance which your God promiſed to his ſeruaunt Abraham. Ye ſee then that when the people were after a ſort renewed at the ende of fortie yeeres, then did Moſes ſet foorth the Lawe againe, and ſpeake to them according to Gods commaundement. Nowe muſt we alſo apply this to our inſtruction. That is to ſay, when ſoeuer we haue bin ſo farre ouerſeene, as not to profit in Gods ſchoole, ſo as we continue Aſſes ſtill, or at leaſtwiſe haue but pickled vpon the doctrine, without ſuffering it to worke any true liuelineſſe in vs: if God ſubdue vs and prepare vs better by continuance of time to hearkẽ vnto him: let vs aduiſe our ſelues to make our profit therof, & let vs not be vnamendable. For what ſhal wee win by it in the end if we continue ſtill vnruly, and be ſo ſtubborne that God cannot ouermaiſter vs? Shall it not turne to our confuſion? Therefore as well publikely as priuately, let vs bethinke vs to profite our ſelues by this warning, & if wee haue ill receiued the doctrine that hath bin long preached vnto vs heretofore: let vs conſider that inaſmuch as God doth not yet giue vs ouer, but vſeth ſuch mercy towardes vs: his deſire is to drawe vs ſtill vnto him, and therefore let vs prepare our ſelues, that we become not ſtubborne againſt him, but rather let vs learne to bee meeke, and let vs giue way to the doctrine, that it may enter into our mindes and heartes. Thus ye ſee how we ought to behaue our ſelues.

Furthermore when God viſiteth vs and ſendeth vs any corrections, to humble vs and to abate our ouergreat vnthankfulnes and frowardnes: let vs turne ouer a newe leafe and returne againe vnto him. And when wee haue done ſo generally for the whole body of the Church: let euery of vs do the like priuately on his owne behalfe. If any man haue runne aſtray, and neuer knowen God aright, nor neuer ſubmitted himſelfe fully to the wholeſome doctrine: if God viſit him by ſicknes, pouertie, or otherwiſe howſoeuer it bee: let him bethinke himſelfe and ſay, Alas, the Goſpell hath bene preached vnto me, but howe haue I receiued it of all this while? I knew not my God, and although I profeſſed my ſelfe to bee one of his nombers, yet did it not touche me at the heart. Howe ſhall I nowe doe therefore? Sith it is Gods will to haue me to bee his ſcholler, it is good reaſon that I yeelde my ſelfe wholly to him, and that I reuerence him as I ought to doe my ſouereigne maiſter and teacher. Thus ye ſee that the thing whereof wee be warned in this text, is that when we ſee how our Lorde indeuoureth by all meanes to bring vs backe, and is minded to beate downe the rebelliousneſſe that is in vs, by rebuking our vices: & that he gathereth vs home to him when he ſees vs go aſtry, to the intent to reforme vs: we muſt not kicke againſt the ſpurre as I ſaide, but rather meekely and mildely ſeeke to bee gouerned by him, & to profit more and more in his word.

Now let vs caſt our ſelues downe in the preſence of our good God, with acknowledgement of the innumerable faultes which we ceaſſe not to commit dayly againſt his Maieſtie: praying him to vouchſafe to wipe them out through his free goodnes, and therewithall to bring vs home againe to him, and to worke ſo in vs by his holy ſpirit, as our conſciences may be mortified from day to day, vntill we be ridde quite and cleane of all the corruptions of our fleſh, to be clothed againe with his righteouſnes. And ſo let vs all ſay, Almightie God heauenly father, &c.

On Munday the xxv. of March. 1555.

Th ſecond Sermon vpon the firſt Chapter.

3 And it came to paſſe, that in the fortieth yeere, the firſt day of the eleuenth moneth, Moſes ſpake to the children of Iſrael, according to all the things that the Lord had commanded him to ſay vnto them:

4 After he had ouercome Sehon King of the Amorrhyts which dwelt in Heſebon, and Og King of Baſan which dwelt at Aſtaroth in Edrai.

5 And ſo Moſes began to declare the Lawe beyond Iordan in the lande of Moab, ſaying:

6 The Lord our God ſpake to vs in Mount Horeb, ſaying: you haue taryed long ynough at this mountaine.

7 Turne ye and depart, that ye may goe to the hill of the Amorrhytes, and to all the Countries there aboutes, in the plaine about the hill, and in the lowe places towards the South, and vpon the ſhore of the red ſea, in the land of Chanaan, and in Libanus vnto the Riuer, euen the great riuer of Euphrates.

8 Looke about ye, I haue ſet the land before you, enter into it and poſſeſſe the land which the Lord God hath ſworne to your fathers Abraham, Iſaac, and Iacob, to giue it to them and to their ſeede after them.

I Haue tolde you alreadie, that the doctrine which is conteined here, is not the beginning of a matter, as though it had bin new to the people, and that God had not taught it them before: but a confirmation of the things that Moſes had ſpoken in Horeb, bicauſe the people had not profited ſo well by them as they ought to haue done. And it hath bin declared further, that God had ſpent the ſpace of fortie yeeres or thereaboutes in ſubduing yͤ people, which had bin ouerſtubborne euen at the very firſt, & could in no wiſe abide to take his yoke. For this cauſe is the time ſet out here, to the ende that wee might vnderſtand, yͭ the people ought to haue framed themſelues to ſome obedience, after ſo hard & ſo long a chaſtiſement as thy had endured. Beſides this, there is one other circumſtance: which is, that yͤ people had alreadie had ſome victorie againſt Og king of Baſan and his neighbours, wherein they had had experience of Gods fauour. And I told you yͭ thoſe things were worthy to be marked, bicauſe they bee the two meanes whereby God draweth men vnto him, to win them withal and to inioy them. On the one ſide he chaſtiſeth them, to yͤ ende they may learne to obey him as being vnder his hand & authoritie: and on the otherſide he vſeth gentleneſſe, to make men in loue with him, and to conſider that nothing is better for them, than to ſticke to him at whoſe hand they looke for all welfare. And both of theſe are expreſſed here by Moſes: namely that yͤ people had lingered in the deſert fortie yeeres long, feeling Gods horrible puniſhmēt for their ſhrinking away frō him: & yet neuertheles, had ouercome Sehon & Og & ſuch like kings, howbeit not by their own power, but by Gods helpe.

Wherefore let vs learne to profite our ſelues, as well by Gods ſcourges when wee bee beaten with them for offending him, as alſo by his benefites whereby he witneſſeth that he is readie to receiue men to his mercie, and to haue pitie vpon them when they returne vnto him. And let ſuch knowledge make vs teachable. Whenſoeuer it pleaſeth God to preache his worde vnto vs, let vs haue our heartes open to receiue it: let vs be plyable to followe that which he commaundeth: & to be ſhort, let vs yeeld our ſelues wholly to his goodneſſe.

Now it is ſaid here, that *Moſes expounded the Lawe*, howbeit that in yͤ Hebrew there is a word which ſignifieth, *that he vouchſafed, or liſted to declare the Lawe*. And that ſerueth to ſhew ſtill that he performed his commiſſion with a free courage or willing minde. For it may bee that he whom God commandeth to teache his people, ſhall diſcharge himſelfe thereof, howbeit but as it were by force: & ſuch neceſſitie, if a man haue an eye vnto it, doth alwayes import a conſtraint, ſo that all that euer we can doe ſhall be nothing worth. And here the miniſters of Gods worde are exhorted, not onely to preach the word that is committed vnto them: but alſo to do it with a free and cheerefull courage, according alſo as S. Paul auoweth it to be requiſite, and proteſteth 1.Cor.9.17. that he himſelfe did ſo. And therefore let the example as well of Moſes as of S. Paul, ſerue for our inſtruction.

Moreouer, let vs marke alſo, that vnder this ſaying, *of the Lawe*, is comprehended the rehearſall of the things that Moſes intended to make, of the things that were come to paſſe. True it is that the word *Law* betokeneth teaching and inſtruction: and therefore a man might aske at the firſt bluſh, what inſtruction there is in the report of ſtories. It is not without cauſe, yͭ Moſes hath ſayde ſo. For when God putteth vs in remembrance of our ſinnes, and of the benefites yͭ he hath beſtowed vpon vs, and of the chaſtiſements which wee haue receiued at his hand: it ought to teache vs to our profit. Gods ſetting of ſuch things afore vs, is not to make vs paſtime: but to the end, that on the one ſide we ſhould be the better diſpoſed to ſerue him, and to continue in his feare: and on the other ſide be trained and allured to reſort vnto him, and to ſeeke all our welfare and all that euer belongeth to our ſaluation, at his hand. We ſee then howe it is not without cauſe, that Moſes giueth the name of *Lawe* or *Doctrine*, to the rehearſall of things that were come to paſſe, forſomuch as by yͤ meanes the people ought to haue bin led vnto God, & to haue bin the better edified. And therefore let vs marke, that when we reade the holy ſtories, it is not onely to know what hath bin done, to yͤ end we may be able to talke of it: but to the end we ſhould behold there the grace of God towardes yͤ faithful in deliuering them. Alſo we muſt conſider after what maner he hath exerciſed his children in patience, and made them to wade through many afflictions, that their faith might bee tryed: and conſequently how he neuer forſaketh them at the point of neede and neceſſitie. Againe we muſt conſider the iuſtice that he hath executed in puniſhing ſuch as haue done amiſſe and tranſgreſſed his will. If we haue ſuch regarde and diſcretion with vs, the Stories will bee as an inſtruction to vs. For wee ſhall bee better aſſured by them, than if GOD did but ſimply tell vs what he requireth at our handes and what our duetie is. That then is the thing which we haue to beare in minde: & it will be a good preparatiue for vs to the thinges that are to enſue. For otherwiſe it would be thought an vnprofitable thing, to knowe that Moſes choſe men to gouerne the people, & that on the other ſide the people followed not Gods commaundement in purſuing their enemies, and ſuch other like thinges. What haue wee to doe with thoſe things, will ſome men ſay? But foraſmuch as we be admoniſhed, that all theſe things concerne our inſtruction: we muſt put them to ſuch vſe as nothing may be vnoccupyed: aſſuring our ſelues that God procured our benefite & welfare, when he did ſet foorth to vs as it were in a painted table, the things that belong vnto vs at this day, and may be applyed to our inſtruction.

Whereas it is ſayde, *That it is ynough that the people had taryed a certaine time at Mount Horeb*: therein we ſee that Gods deliuering of the children out of the bondage of Egypt, was not to lay the brydle in their necke that they might go where they liſted: but to be their gouernour for euer. And that is a thing that ought to ſtand vs in good ſtead. For wee haue a preſident, that when God receiueth vs for his people, it is not only for a day or twaine, but of purpoſe to haue a continuall care of vs to the end, ſo as he will not leaue vs in the midde way, but proceede in guiding of vs ſtill, vntill wee bee come to our right marke. And this is a verie profitable doctrine: for what a thing were it, if God ſhoulde once giue vs his lawe, and ſet vs in a good trade: and afterwarde let vs alone without looking to vs? Wee ſee our owne frayltie, inſomuch that wee could not ſteppe one ſteppe but wee ſhould bee readie to ſtumble or to ſtart out of the way, and the incomberaunces are ſo manie and ſo great, as it would bee vnpoſſible for vs to ouercome them, if God aſſiſted vs not. And therefore let vs learne, that when God hath once adopted vs, and choſen vs to bee of his flocke: it is not to the end we ſhoulde but onely take a taſte of his grace for a day: but to the end that he will continue in doing vs good: and his taking of vs into his gouernment, is of purpoſe neuer to giue vs ouer, ſo as wee ſhall alwayes be vnder his protection, and he will neuer ceaſſe to increaſe the good turnes that wee haue felt and receiued of him, vntill we bee come to the full perfection. Foraſmuch then as wee ſee that he neuer leaueth his worke vnperfected, but goeth through with it, as it is ſayde in the Pſalme: Pſal.138.8. it ought well to cauſe vs to magnifie his goodneſſe, and to incourage vs to giue ouer our ſelues wholly vnto him. And the ſame belongeth to the ſpirituall health of our ſoules, according to this ſaying of S. Paul in the firſt Chapter to the Philippians, that he which hath begun the good Phil.1.6. worke will goe through with it, euen vnto the day of our Lord Ieſus Chriſt. Wherefore let vs marke, that whereas God declareth here by the mouth of Moſes, that the people had taryed long ynough about mount Horeb, and that he would haue them to goe foreward: thereby he doth vs to vnderſtand, that ſeeing he hath deliuered vs from the dungeon of death, and from the bondage of the diuell and of ſinne: we ſhall haue him to be our guide for euer, ſo we hearken to his voyce, and doubt not but he thinketh vpon vs and will continually leade vs ſtill.

Moreouer he ſayeth, *Let the people turne and draw towards the hill of the Amorrhytes, & from thẽce inuade and poſſeſſe the land of Chanaan, whether it be the playne Countries, or the downes, or the deſertes, or the ſeacoaſtes*: for *the land* (ſaieth he) *is before you*: that is to ſay at your commaundement, I haue deliuered it into your handes, nothing ſhall keepe yee from the poſſeſſion of it, if it bee not long of your ſelues. Why ſo? For *I haue ſworne* (ſayeth he) *to your fathers Abraham, Iſaac, and Iacob: I haue promiſed to giue it for an inheritaunce to them and to their ſeede after their deceaſſe.* Here firſt of all wee muſt marke the order that is ſet downe: for God ſheweth the cauſe why he gaue that people the land [of Chanaan:] namely for his promiſe ſake. And thereby he betokeneth, that the lande belonged not to them as by way of conqueſt through their owne power, nor yet for any deſert of theirs, but onely of free gift. God then aſſigneth this title to the children of Iſrael, and telleth them that they ſhall bee as much bound to his meere goodneſſe when they bee brought into the land of Chanaan, [as they were before.] And in deede the othe that Moſes ſpeakes of here, was made foure hundred and thirtie yeeres afore, euen in the perſon of Abraham, before any of them was borne. Seeing then that GOD had promiſed them the land, euen before they had done eyther good or euill, and before they were borne: it may bee concluded therevpon, that their poſſeſſing of it was not for any worthineſſe of theirs, as though God had beene beholden to them for ſome ſeruice: but bicauſe he had made them heires of it, through his owne free goodneſſe. Nowe if this bee verified of the earthly heritage which the children of Iſrael had: what is to bee ſaide of the kingdome of heauen? Are wee able to compaſſe it? Can wee deſerue at Gods hand to bee partakers thereof? No: but contrariwiſe, it is of his meere goodneſſe that we be brought in thither, and ſhall haue fruition of it at the laſt day: for ſurely all that is ſpoken of the land of Chanaan, muſt ſerue vs for a figure and ſhadowe.

Therefore when as God telleth the people that they gat it not by their owne power, and ſendeth them backe to the promiſe that he had made long ago: it is to ſhewe vs that whereas he is our father, whereas we bee mainteined by him in this world, and whereas wee looke for a better and more excellent life than this: we muſt not dreame vpon any deſert or power of our owne, but attribute all wholly to his meere free goodneſſe, in that he vttereth the infinite treaſures of his grace and loue towards vs. Thus much haue we to remember in the firſt place.

Furthermore whereas here is mention made of an othe: let vs note that God vouchſafed to ſtoope ſo lowe to the infirmitie of the people, as to put them out of all doubt, by ſwearing by his owne name: and ſo doeth he nowe likewiſe towardes vs. For he is not contented to ſpeake onely, and to tel vs what he will haue vs to do: but he alſo confirmeth his promiſes with a ſolemne othe. And why? Foraſmuch as wee be inclined to vnbeliefe, and would euer be wauering if we were not well vnderpropped: therefore doeth he ſweare to the ende to ſtabliſhe vs the better.

Seing then that God ſweareth to vpholde our weakeneſſe: let vs conſider, firſt that we be too vntoward, if wee cannot beleeue his ſingle worde: and ſecondly that his goodneſſe is ineſtimable, in that it pleaſeth him to beare with vs, and to ſweare for the confirming of our beliefe. And herewithall we haue to note alſo, that we muſt not ſeeke Gods will in the aire, but content our ſelues with his word; and that ſeeing it hath pleaſed him to ſhewe himſelfe vnto vs, and to giue vs warrant of his will, we muſt holde vs to it, and reſte wholy vppon it.

Now then, will wee bee ſure that God will neuer faile vs, neither in this lyfe, nor after we bee gone hence? Will wee haue an infallible hope of the heauenly lyfe? Let vs haue our eye vppon the promiſes: let vs not wander here and there as a nomber doe, which are caryed away with fonde curioſitie: but let it ſuffice vs that God hath certified and taught vs, that he wil not onely be a father to vs to guyde vs in this worlde, but alſo that hee will neuer leaue vs, ſo as wee ſhall alwayes be gouerned by him, and that when hee hath tryed our faith, wee ſhall haue full fruition of the thinges that are promiſed vs: and when wee bee once ridde of this mortall body, wee ſhall bee rayſed vp againe, and inioye an immortalitie which is hidde from vs as now. Let vs content our ſelues (ſay I) with this word of Gods mouth for all other things, & let vs not ſcan after our owne fooliſh fancies how the matter ſhall goe: but haue God once ſpoken the worde, let vs holde vs to it. And that is it which Moſes meant here, in ſaying, God ſware to your fathers.

Moreouer wee muſt note, that the doctrine which is ſet forth in the name of God, ſerueth not for one age onely, but for all euer, and keepeth his force and ſtrength continually. Abraham, Iſaak, and Iacob were dead and rotten in the earth when theſe thinges were ſpoken: but yet the promiſe that God had made to them was aliue ſtill. Although then that men bee mortall and tranſitorie: yet is Gods worde euerlaſting. And if it bee the ſeede of the vncorruptible lyfe, needes muſt it be endleſſe and exempted from all corruption.

Therefore let vs marke, that Gods ſpeaking in olde time, was not to the ende that his doctrine ſhould be buryed after an age or twaine: but that it ſhoulde be ſet before vs to the ende of the worlde, and we receiue it with all reuerence. Lykewiſe at this day, although the Prophets and Apoſtles be dead: yet doth GOD worke ſtill by them, & the word that is brought among vs in theſe dayes, not onely hath his liuely force, but alſo quickeneth vs, and maketh vs to receiue the food of our ſoules by it. Our ſaluation muſt needes goe forewarde, and wee muſt needes be ſtabliſhed in it, in ſuch wiſe, as wee may ouercomme the worlde and attaine to the kingdome of heauen. Thus yee ſee what we haue to beare in minde, when as mention is made here, of the promiſe that God ſware to the auncient fathers that were dead long time afore.

And it is ſayd expreſſely, *that Abraham, Iſaak, and Iacob were their fathers*: to the ende that they might knowe themſelues to bee the ſucceſſors of the bleſſing that had bin promiſed. And therefore he addeth, *that God had ſworne to giue that land to Abraham, Iſaak, and Iacob, and to their offſpring.* As though Moſes ſhould ſay, that Gods promiſe is not diſanulled, but muſt now preſently take effect, and be accompliſhed in their perſons. Hath God ſaid ſo, ſaith he? Then muſt you conſider, that he ſpake it not onely to your fathers which heard the promiſe, but alſo to [you which are] their offſpring. For it is expreſſely Gen.18.19 ſayd, that Abraham ſhould teach his children the wayes, rightes, iudgementes, and ſtatutes of the Lord. Then was it for the children of Iſrael, to haue receiued the promiſe that had bin made in olde time to their fathers, as if God had ſpoken it within freſh remembrance. And in deede wee ought to wey well this circumſtance. For it is not to thoſe only which were at the beginning of the Goſpell, that God ſayth, I receiue you for my people: but his wil is that yͤ ſame doctrine ſhould be preached ſtil, to the worlds end. Let vs note then, that we alſo are comprehended with them that heard the word of god at the beginning. And foraſmuch as his grace reacheth out vnto all men, and is common to all ages: it becommeth vs to giue eare to it, ſeeing it is appointed and offered vnto vs [as well as to them.] And why? For it is not to S. Peter and to S. Paul onely, that God hath ſayd, I am your Sauiour: but he hath ordeyned them to be meſſengers of his goodnes, that we might be taught by their mouth, and we doubt not but God will doe the lyke to vs as he did to them. Thus ye ſee what we haue to conſider, when as it is ſayd that God promiſed the land of Chanaan for an inheritance to the whole linage of Abraham, and vnto them that ſhould deſcend of his race.

And in very deede it behoued the people alwayes to come back to this ſaying: I am thy God Gen.17.7. and the God of thine ofſpring after thee. And againe vnto this, I am the Lord which ſheweth Deut.7.9. mercie to a thouſand generations: as we ſhall ſee hereafter. Now, this was not ſaid for that one tyme onely, it muſt be accompliſhed nowadayes alſo. Thẽ let vs conſider yͭ God hauing once plited yͤ warrant of our ſaluation, will haue it goe foreward dayly, ſo as we ſhould knowe yͭ he calleth vs to the poſſeſſing of his kingdome, & that in vs he calleth them yͭ are to come after vs: Inſomuch that yͤ children which come of Chriſtians, are already choſen of God to be his flock & of his houſhold, & God hath takẽ thẽ to himſelfe already, euen before they come out of their mothers wombe. Is not yͤ knowledg of ſuch doctrine an excellent ſtrengthening to vs, when we ſee that God hath giuen our ſaluation a ground to build vppon, before we were borne or created? yes.

But here it might be demanded how the land was promiſed to the fathers which neuer had poſſeſſion of it? For wee knowe that Abraham, Iſaak, and Iacob acknowledged themſelues to be but ſoiourners there, and that they had not the Lordſhip of the land, but that they were as Gen.47.9. poore wanderers, and were toſſed too and fro, inſomuch that euen their water was taken from them, ſo as they had not water to drinke, and not onely were kept from comming to the pits that had bin digged already, but alſo were put from water when they had digged pits by Gen.21.25. and 26.15. their owne labor and trauell. Where is then the promiſe of God which he made to Abrahã, concerning the giuing of the land vnto him? Hereby we be put in minde of that which the Apoſtle Heb.11.13. ſayeth in the Epiſtle to the Hebrewes: that is to wit, that the auncient fathers had not an eye to the viſible land: but onely tooke it as a repreſentation of the euerlaſting dwelling place wherevnto God calleth them: Inſomuch that although Abraham had not anie poſſeſſiõ in the land of Chanaan, yet was he Lord & maiſter of it neuertheleſſe, howbeit that he held himſelfe contented wͭ the only ſight yͭ God gaue him thereof, to the end he might haue his heart lifted vp into heauen, and wayt to haue his euerlaſting abode there. Thus to be ſhorte, the Lordſhip which Abraham had of the viſible land, was ſpiritual. For although in mans opinion he had no whit at all of it, but was like to haue bin driuẽ out of it euery day: yet poſſeſſed he the thing that God had promiſed him.

But now if we make compariſon between Abraham and vs, haue we not greater cauſe to lift vp our hartes to the kingdome of heauen than he had, ſeeing we not onely haue a mirror or image of it ſet before vs by God, but alſo that Ieſus Chriſt hath in his owne perſon opened vs ſuch a way thither, as our faith, may well atteine to the glorie of God? Therefore ought we to be the better confirmed in the promiſe that God hath made vnto vs, of aduauncing vs into his kingdome to enter into it as his lawfull heires thereof.

And although wee doe but as it were creepe on al foure here belowe vpon the earth, and our body is to vs as a corruptible and tranſitorie lodging, and we be weyed downe with theſe bace thinges: yet muſt our true dwelling place needes be aboue, and wee our ſelues muſt needes be citizens of heauen and fellowes with the Angels aforehand, and poſſeſſe the thing aforehand by faith and hope, which wee haue not as yet in very deede, as the holie fathers haue done afore vs, who notwithſtanding had not thinges opened ſo plainely & manifeſtly vnto them, as wee haue nowe, nor nothing neere.

Thus ſee you the maner how Abraham, Iſaak, and Iacob were not diſapointed of yͤ land which God promiſed to giue thẽ, although they neuer had the full fruition thereof themſelues, but waited patiently til the cõuenient time were come, for God to put their ſucceſſors in poſſeſſion of it after their deceaſſe. Sith it is ſo, let vs walke on vpon earth in ſufferance of many conflicts, looking only vpon the things that are promiſed vs, not doubting but that we be ſure of the benefite of them already, although we holde them not in our handes, ne behold them with our eyes. For why? God cannot fayle in his promiſes.

But now let vs come to the ioyning together of yͤ thinges yͭ Moſes ſetteth downe: for he ſaith, *Drawe towards the land and poſſeſſe it, for it is at your commandemẽt, according as God ſware to your fathers.* Here Moſes matcheth Gods promiſes, with yͤ exhortations which he himſelfe maketh: for the true faſhion of building when men are to be brought vnto God, that they may honor him & ſerue him & ſeek his kingdom, is to begin at his free promiſes, & to vewe that he preuenteth vs through his own mere goodnes, yͭ he paſſeth not whether we be good or no, & yͭ although we haue not deſerued ought at his hand, yet doth hee of his meere free goodneſſe come vnto vs, & bynde himſelfe to vs without any cauſe why. Thus ye ſee at what end we muſt begin. Againe, men muſt be exhorted & warned not to deſpiſe ſuch a benefite, but to receiue it, & therewithall to inforce and indeuer themſelues to anſwere God when he calleth them. This is the order which wee muſt obſerue in this text of Moſes.

Drawe hence (ſayth he) *and march foreward.* As if he ſhould ſay, Go to, your God hath called you longer time than you be aware of. For in deede, the promiſe of ſaluation was giuen vs before we were created; yea euen before the creation of the world did God chooſe vs, as S. Paul Ephe.1.4. auoucheth: and againe he hath fetched vs backe 1.Pet.2.25. to him, when wee were as cattell gone aſtray. Loe how Gods meere free goodneſſe ſheweth it ſelfe. We cannot alledge here any ſtrength or any worthyneſſe of our owne: We cannot ſay, oh, God hath payed vs our wages for our comming vnto him: There is no ſuch thing at all. But at ſuch time as we were forlorne and damned, our God opened vs the gate of ſaluation: when we were in Satans bondes, he did ſet vs free: when we were become his vtter enemies & were baniſhed out of his kingdom, he made vs heirs therof. Therfore lyke as he hath freely preuented vs, and ſheweth vs ſtil that it is of his owne meere grace, that we can attayne to ſaluation: ſo we on our ſide muſt not be negligent and ſlothfull: but ſeeing he hath ſpoken vnto vs, we muſt alſo anſwere vnto him: ſeeing that he ſayth, *Go, march on,* let vs be going our way out of hand.

When there is any talke of doing good or of ſeruing God, the Papiſts imagine by and by that men earne the kingdome of heauen by their owne deſertes or merites: but the holy ſcripture holdeth the cleane contrary order, as wee ſee here. For why? It is not ſayde that men bynde God to them by their meritorious deedes: but after that the inheritance is ſet before them, and that of free gift: and after it is ſhewed them, that nothing beareth ſway in that behalfe but onely Gods goodneſſe: then is it ſayd vnto them, *March foreward*. And ſo wee learne to doe good, and to giue our ſelues to the ſeruing of God, & to become holy through his righteouſneſſe: not of purpoſe to make him beholden vnto vs, but to followe his holy calling, leaſt wee ſhould reiect his grace, howbeit that we cannot ſtirre one finger without Gods working in vs by his holie ſpirit. For wheras it is ſayd, *Get ye hence and march foreward*: it is not for that the people was able ſo to doe: but when God hath once incouraged vs, he printeth his doctrine in our heartes, and to the intent the ſame ſhould not be vnauaileable, he quickeneth vs vp: and to be ſhort, he worketh ſo mightily in vs, that after he hath once giuen vs willingneſſe, hee giueth vs alſo performance **Phil.2,13.** therewithall, according as S. Paul auoucheth in the ſecond to the Philippians. Yet for all this, wee muſt beare well in minde the thing that I haue touched alreadye: which is, that Gods offering of his grace vnto vs, is not to the end we ſhould as it were fall aſleepe and make none account of it: but to the ende wee ſhoulde be **Tit.2.11.** quickened vp to doe good, according to this ſaying, that his goodneſſe and loue which hee beareth towards men, is vttered to the intent to purchaſe him a holy people fit for good workes, and [to the end] that we ſhould walke in all purenes, wayting for the diſcouerie of the lyfe which he hath promiſed vs. And if this had place vnder the ſhadowes of the lawe: much more muſt we doe it now in theſe dayes. So then, let vs marke well, that Gods ſetting of the infinite riches of his goodneſſe and mercie afore vs and his opening of the gate of heauen vnto vs, is to the ende we ſhould mount vp vnto him, and rid our ſelues of all earthly affections, ſeeking nothing but to lift vp our heartes on high, and to paſſe out of this worlde, and to be diſcharged of all bondes and fetters that hinder vs and hold vs back, indeuouring with all our might to come vnto him, as they that know how this preſent lyfe is but as a race, and that men muſt not loyter and linger here, but rather go ſtill foreward according to gods calling of vs, who ſayth, Come, Come, drawe neerer to me. And if wee goe to him, we ſhall no more be in daunger of wandering here and there, but we ſhall keepe on our way to the mark that God hath ſet before vs, and we wil neuer reſt till wee be come thither.

Now herewithall, to the intent to incourage the people, Moſes telleth them that they ſhal not trauel in vaine. *Go* (ſayth he) *and poſſeſſe the land*: and that is one poynt more well worth the noting. For if we ſhould beſtowe our labor, & not knowe that we ſhal fare euer the better by ſeruing God: we would become lazie, and our hartes would fayle vs euery minute of an houre. But when we be ſure that we runne not in vaine, and that God will reach vs his hand, ſo as wee neede not to feare but our matters ſhall come to paſſe, though Satan ſtreyne himſelfe to hinder vs: when we ſtand vpon ſuch a ſure ground that our Lord will put vs in poſſeſſion of the thinges that he offereth vs: it giueth vs an inuincible courage and conſtancie to outſtand all temptations.

And therefore let vs wey wel theſe wordes where he ſayeth, *Get yee hence and poſſeſſe the land.* God ſayeth not ſingly to his faithfull ones, goe your wayes, ſee what ye can doe, trye your ſtrength, and in the meane while leaueth them at all aduentures: no, but he ſayeth to them, *Go to poſſeſſe*. As if he ſhould ſay, doe but onely apply your ſelues to ſerue me; and let me alone with the doing of it, for I will worke after ſuch a ſort, as he that endeuoreth to followe me ſhall not loſe his labor, he ſhal not take paine in vain. I will make all his doings to proſper. That then is the thing that wee haue to marke vppon this ſtreyne. And therefore what excuſe is there for vs, if we followe not our Lord whither ſoeuer he call vs, conſidering that this voyce, *Goe and poſſeſſe*, ought to ſound in our eares? And if it were ſpoken for ẏ land of Chanaan, much more ſhall it be auowed and verified ſtill at this day. Wherefore whenſoeuer we be ſlowe to obey God, loath to part from this world, or aſtoniſhed with diſtreſſes: let vs enter into ſuch thoughts as theſe: Alas, is it poſſible for me to come vnto God? how may I ouercome ſo manie and ſo great diſtreſſes? It farre ſurmounteth all my power and ſtrength. When we be ſo incombred and brought in perplexitie and doubt, let vs bethinke our ſelues thus: well, ſeeing it hath pleaſed God to ſhewe himſelfe to me, it is good reaſon that I ſhould be contented with the aſſurance that he hath giuen me, and with the experience of his goodneſſe which hee hath made me to feele. And ſo muſt we paſſe on foreward ſtill, notwithſtanding all the temptations of diſtruſt that may come in our heads.

And for a further confirmation of our ſelues, let vs alſo take to vs this ſaying of his, *I haue ſet the land before you*: for it expreſſeth yet better how they ſhould poſſeſſe it. If men haue an eye but to their owne power, and conſider but their owne abilities: they may well diſtruſt and vtterly deſpaire. But when wee knowe how it is Gods office to giue vs the ſtrength which we want of our ſelues, and to performe our ſaluation whereof he himſelfe is the founder: that is the thing wherein lyeth our truſt. And therefore without preſuming any thing of our ſelues, let vs runne on with a cherefull courage: but yet let vs conſider neuertheleſſe therewithall, how it is God that vttereth his power for the working of our ſaluation, and that he is the author thereof, and reſerueth the leading of vs to himſelfe, in ſuch ſorte, as the poſſeſſion thereof is already in his hand. Now if we intend to fare the better by his doctrine, firſt let vs put out of our mindes all vaine imaginations of our owne ſtrength, of our owne freewill, and of all that euer men haue ſurmiſed. For thoſe are the thinges wherewith the diuell hath made men drunken, and beguileth them ſtill, by bearing them in hand that they can doe much of themſelues. And we ſee how the Papiſtes are puffed vp with that diueliſh pryde yet ſtil at this day. There is deſcanting among them of their owne Freewill, there is deſcanting of their owne forewardneſſe: and yet as able folke as they be, they doe no ſooner ſet foorth one ſtep, but they be ready to break their necks. And well worthie: for God muſt needes laugh their ouerweening to skorne, yea or rather puniſh it, becauſe it is a robbing of God. But whereas it is ſayd, *that it is God which hath ſet the land at their commaundement:* let vs vnderſtand that there is no ſtrength in vs, and that we muſt rid our ſelues of all ſelfetruſt. And when we be ſo beaten downe, then let vs take heart againe, aſſuring our ſelues that God will goe through with his worke, and that he hath not forgot his cunning, and that he will neuer giue ouer till he haue brought the things to paſſe which he hath promiſed vs. Againe, if it were ſo that the land of Chanaan was to be ſet before the people of Iſrael, & that the ſame was to be done by yͤ hand of God: I pray you muſt not wee be fayne to haue the kingdome of heauen ſet before vs? [yes ſurely.] For that people had but mortall men to ouercome, that they might enter into the poſſeſſion of a ſtrange countrie. But we muſt ouercome Satan the prince of the world, wee muſt ouercome an hundred thouſand enemies that fight againſt vs, yea and all that euer wee haue of our owne muſt be done away. Wee muſt flye vp on high: and what a diſtance is there from hence to heauen? Then ſeeing it is ſo, let vs reſort to our God, let vs put our ſelues wholy into his hand, let vs reſt vppon his onely grace, and let vs cal vppon him with lowlyneſſe and reuerence. And therewithall let vs walke on in ſuch ſort, as we ſuffer him to guide and gouerne vs, aſſuring our ſelues that hee will neuer fayle vs. For if we proceede after that faſhion, wee ſhal finde that the truſt which we haue to attaine to ſaluation, will not puffe vs vp with all ſelfeweening, but make vs to yeeld God his due honor in the name of our Lord Ieſus Chriſt.

Nowe let vs kneele downe in the preſence of our good God, with acknowledgement of our faultes, praying him to make vs feele them more & more, and that therewithal we acknowledging our infirmities, and perceyuing our ſelues to be poore and naked of all goodneſſe, may runne wholy vnto him, ſo as we ſeeing that there is no cauſe why we ſhould glorie in our ſelues, may ſeeke our whole glorie in his onely goodneſſe and mercye. And that foraſmuch as wee haue not nowe an onely Moſes to leade vs into the land of Chanaan, but Ieſus Chriſt which is come downe vnto vs to drawe vs vp into heauen after him: we may follow ſuch a guyde, yeelding our ſelues wholy vnto him, and in no wiſe dragging backe from him, ſaying he will haue vs to come vnto God his father. That it may pleaſe him to graunt this grace not onely to vs, but alſo to all people and nations of the earth. &c.

On Wedneſday the xxvii. of March. 1555.

The third Sermon vppon the firſt Chapter.

9 And at the ſame time I ſpake to you, ſaying, I cannot beare you my ſelfe alone:

10 The Lord your God hath multiplyed you: and behold, you are this day in nomber as the ſtarres of the skye.

11 The Lord the God of your fathers make you to increaſe a thowſand times as many as you be, and bleſſe you as he hath ſayd vnto you.

12 How ſhall I alone beare your comberance, charge, and ſtrife?

13 Bring me from among you, men of wiſedome and vnderſtanding, and tryed men, according to your trybes, and I will make them your heades.

14 Then anſwered you me and ſayd: It is good to doe as thou haſt ſayd.

15 Then tooke I the heades of your tribes, men of wiſedome and skil, and made them gouerners ouer you, rulers ouer thowſandes, ouer hundreds, ouer fifties, ouer tennes, and officers among your tribes.

AMong the benefites that God beſtowed vppon the people of Iſrael after his deliuering of them from the thraldome of Egypt, one is that he did alwayes lay hold on them to gouerne them. For without that, what would become of men? If all thinges be well conſidered, there is leſſe gouernment in them, than in brute beaſtes. So thē, it was needeful that God ſhould take order for the gouerning of them. And now Moſes putteth the people in remembrance how God had bin their guide at all times, and had not onely bin contented to rid them out of the horrible thraldome wherein they had bin held, but alſo had eſtabliſhed ſuch a gouernment and ſtate among them, as there was no let but in themſelues, that they might not liue in quiet, and alſo walke in all kind of vprightnes. It is all one therefore as if Moſes ſhould ſay, See how greatly ye be beholden to your God: For he hath euery way prouided well for you: he hath continually pitied you, and by all meanes procured your welfare. And in very deede, the remembrance of Gods benefites, ought to prouoke vs continually to ſerue him the better: and when we ſee that he hath not fayled vs in any thing, is it not reaſon that we ſhoulde be the more diſpoſed to yeelde our ſelues wholy to his obeiſance? For he ſheweth how deere we be vnto him, what loue he beareth towardes vs, and what a care he hath of our weldoing, when he procureth it after ſuch maner.

And by the way, wee haue to note here for a ſpeciall poynt, that when God ſetteth a good order among vs, and appointeth men to haue the guiding of vs: it is a ſingular preſident of his goodneſſe and loue towardes vs. True it is that the thing which is reherſed here by Moſes, proceeded of the counſel of Iethro his father in law, as he himſelfe ſheweth in the eyghteenth of **Exod.18.17** Exodus. And although Iethro was an heathen man: yet did God ſerue his owne turne by him in this behalfe. And ſo we ſee, that God applyeth all thinges and all perſons to our benefite. Who would haue looked that a man which had none acquaintance with the people of Iſrael, ſauing that Moſes had maryed a wife out of his houſe, ſhould haue come and giuen ſuch counſell? But ſo doth God apply all his creatures to the benefite of his people, as I ſayd afore.

Beſides this, we haue to note the lowlyneſſe of Moſes, in that he held not ſcorne of the counſell that was giuen him by one that was not ſo excellent as he himſelfe, nothing neere. Moſes might haue replyed and ſayd, what fellowe is this? For I am choſen of God to gouerne his Church, and to be the chiefe of it. I haue publiſhed his lawe in his name, I haue repreſented his maieſtie, yea and he hath giuen mee ſuch a viſible ſigne thereof in my face, as though I were an Angell come downe from heauen, rather than any earthly man. I haue bin ſeparated from the companie of mortall men by the ſpace of fortie dayes, as though God had glorifyed me already: and ſhall a common perſon preſume now to teach me? Moſes then might haue caſt foorth ſuch wordes: but he ſubmitted himſelfe to reaſon. Why ſo? for he knew that God dealeth his gratious giftes as it pleaſeth him, inſomuch that the little ones may diuers times further the greateſt and excellenteſt. And therein God intẽdeth to try the ſoberneſſe and mildneſſe of thoſe whome hee hath aduaunced to degree of ſouereintie. For when they forget not themſelues, but are alwayes pliable, and if a man bring them any better aduice than they themſelues wiſt of, they receiue it willingly, and yeld vnto it: it is a true tryal of their obedientneſſe [vnto God.] Seing then yͤ Moſes, who was chiefe among all the auncient prophets, could finde in his heart to yeeld to the counſell of his father in lawe Iethro, who neuer knew what true Religion ment, but had only a little taſte of it in a ſhadow: what ſhal we do which are not come to yͤ like glorie that Moſes had? Wherefore let vs vnderſtãd, that although God haue beſtowed his ſpirit moſt plentifully vppon vs: it is not to the end that we ſhould hold skorne of the aduice and counſell of ſuch as are meaner than our ſelues. For yͤ meane and very knot wherewith God will haue vs knit and ioyned togither: is that the greate ones ſhould ſtoope to the leaſt, and all agree in one. Moreouer, as hath beene declared already, although Iethro was the inſtrumẽt to put Moſes in mind of it: yet ought it to be imputed vnto God, who had a care to prouide for the benefite and ſafetie of his people, yͭ he might not faile them in any thing. And to this intent is it that Moſes ſpeaketh thereof. Now let vs come to the words that are ſet downe here.

Firſt he ſayth, *that he himſelfe is not able to beare them any more alone, becauſe they were greatly increaſed: for you be* (ſayth he) *mo than the ſtarres of the sky:* and we knowe that they were moe than ſeuen hundred thowſand perſons. Seeing it is ſo then, I am no more able (ſaith he) to beare your charges, your incumbraunces, and your ſtrifes: and therefore you muſt bee faine to chooſe ſome men to bee in office with me, men of wiſedome and vnderſtanding, and well tryed. Firſt of all, whereas Moſes proteſteth that he was no longer able to beare the charge of the people: therein he ſheweth vs, that ſuch as are aduaunced to any degree of honor or dignitie, muſt not be as Idols without doing any thing at all, but [are ſet in that ſtate] with condition to take paynes, yea and to doe ſeruice for the welfare of the commons, in aſmuch as God hath layed that burthen vpon their ſhoulders, for the vpholding of the common weale. And it is a poynt of doctrine well woorthie to be obſerued. For we ſee how all men are giuen to ambitiõ, ſo as euery man ſeekes to be eſteemed and honored, & all indeuour to growe great. And why? Becauſe wee conſider not, that Gods aduauncing of vs is to the intent we ſhoulde repreſent his perſon in this worlde. And ſurely that cannot be without incumberance. The more honorable therefore that any charge or office is, the more paynful and cumberſome is it. But for aſmuch as men imagine an idle honor: that fancie of theirs caryeth them into ſo fond or rather furious ouerluſtineſſe, that they paſſe for no more but to haue their owne ſwindge, and to mount vp on high, yea euen (diuerſe times) to breake their owne neckes.

And on the other ſide it behoueth vs to marke well, how Moſes ſayeth that he is not able to beare ſo great a charge: for it doth vs to wit, that he bewrayeth his owne infirmitie, or at leaſtwiſe ſheweth it to be ſuch, as he muſt be faine to beare a lower ſayle. Thus then the ſecond conſideration which we ought to haue to correct all ambition and fooliſh loftineſſe in vs with all, is that we muſt examine well our owne abilitie, and then ſhal we finde that it were more for our behoofe to creepe belowe vppon the ground, than to couet to growe great to ouerrule our neyghbors. Theſe (ſay I) are the two reſpectes that may abate our pryde and fond deſire of ſuperioritie. The one is, that we aſſure our ſelues that the hygher a man is exalted, the more alſo is he bound both to God and to them ouer whom he is ſet, inaſmuch as there is no preheminence without burthen, yea or rather without bōdage as I ſayd afore. Marke that for one poynt. But we muſt alſo beare in minde, that wee haue no abilitie at all of our ſelues, and therefore much leſſe is any man to be found ſufficient to beare ſo great a burthen. There cannot ſo ſmall a charge be committed vnto vs, but the ſame is able to make our ſhoulders ſhrinke, yea and euen to bow too. For our infirmitie is ſo great, that whoſoeuer ſifteth himſelfe throughly without hypocriſie and ſoothing, ſhall ſee that he is able to doe as good as nothing at all. Therefore if we think wel vppon ſuch weakneſſe, it wilbe as a bridle to reſtraine vs from clymbing ſo high. For what followeth but vtter confuſion, when men will needes be honored, and yet in the meane while not diſcharge their duetie, but rather make themſelues as Idols, and moreouer, not haue any regard at all of their owne abilitie?

Furthermore wee muſt marke alſo for a thyrd point, that although Moſes ſawe the burthen to be ouerheauie for him: yet he did not quite and cleane renounce his calling, to giue ouer the office that God had committed vnto him: but ſought to be helped and ſuccored, ſaying, *Let men be choſen &c.* And this is well worthie to be noted: for there might haue bin two faultie extremities. The one is that which wee haue condemned already: that is to wit, that men haue not an eye to their owne ſlenderneſſe, but beare them ſelues in hand that it is a matter of no importance to be in authoritie. And that is it, that maketh him ſo raſhe and bolde to gripe more than they be able to weelde, by reaſon wherof they ſee themſelues confounded in the ende, but it is too late firſt. For this fooliſh ouerweening maketh men to forget them ſelues, and to take too much vppon them for want of conſidering their owne vnabilitie: and of ſuch fonde enterpryſes can come nothing but euill, becauſe God puniſheth them for them.

Nowe there is alſo an other euill extremitie, which is, that when men ſee themſelues to be very fraile, they become faintharted and thereupon, if God call them to anie office of charge, they plucke backe their neckes becauſe they ſee the burthen cumberſome for them, and woulde faine ſhake off the yoke, and ſhun the vocation that God calleth them vnto. That is a vice whereof we muſt beware. But there is a meane betweene both, which is, when we ſee that the cumberſomneſſe thereof paſſeth our power: then to take as much thereof as we be able to beare, meaſuring our ſelues by our owne ſpan, and moreouer to pray vnto God to make vs meete to go through with the thinges that ſhall be commaunded vs. Thoſe are the thinges that are ſhewed vs here by the example of Moſes. For he did not fling away the gouernement of the people; becauſe that in ſo doing he ſhould haue bin a rebell againſt God. We ſee how God delt with Ionas, for he ouertooke him though he fled away. Therefore we muſt not refuſe to obey God vnder pretence of our owne feebleneſſe, though the charges or offices which he allotteth vnto vs be ſo troubleſome, that we muſt be faine to grone vnder them. Whatſoeuer come of it, let vs hold this rule: namely to ſubmit our ſelues to Gods calling, and to followe him whither ſoeuer he will haue vs. And aboue all thinges let vs pray vnto him to ſupply our wantes: and in the meane time let vs not take too much vpon vs, but let vs meaſure our charge by our abilitie.

Were this wel followed, wee ſhould not ſee ſo many outragious diſorders euerywhere as there be. For what hath cauſed ſo barbarous tyranny in the Church, as is to be ſeene in the Popedome? Behold, the Pope hath vſurped an vniuerſall ſupremacie ouer the whole world. For there muſt needes be one head ſayth he. Verily as who ſhould ſay that Ieſus Chriſt were diſcharged, who is ordeined to be the head both of men and Angels. No: but the Pope will needes thruſt the ſonne of God out of his place. But if he wiſt what it is to reigne ouer the whole world: would he not be loath to take vpon him ſo vnpoſſible a charge? yes: but it coſt him nothing to call himſelfe the vniuerſal head, and to ſpread out his winges euery way. Therefore that diueliſh pride of his was the cauſe of the breaking & renting aſſunder of the order which God had ſet, according as S. Paul ſpeaketh of it in the fourth to the Epheſians, where he ſayth that our Lord Ieſus Chriſt is gone vp into heauen to fill all thinges, and yet in the meane while hath not forſaken his Church. For he hath ordeyned Shepheardes (ſayth he) & men meete to teach. And he addeth that that is according to the meaſure of euery member, that we might al grow together, and Ieſus Chriſt reigne ouer vs in cheefe place.

Eph.1.22. Col.2.10.

Ephe.4.10.

Thus doth Saint Paul diſtribute the offices in ſuch wiſe, as euery man muſt haue his portion of them, becauſe there is not any one man yͭ is able to doe all. But this order which ought to be vnuiolable, is rent aſſunder by the diueliſh pryde of the Pope.

And afterward his taile, & the vermin of his clergie haue followed the ſame: for there is none of them all that mindeth his charge. When they angle for their benefices, doe they conſider that Gods calling of them is with condition, that they ſhall yeeld an account of the ſoules that are committed to them? There is no talke among them but what a benefice is worth: and anon after, pomp and credite muſt be matched therewithall: and ſo they giue themſelues to all lycentiouſneſſe. A man ſhall ſee, not onely Byſhops, but alſo Archbiſhops and Primates, which paſſe for nothing but for hunting, or drinking, or playing, or chambering: thoſe are their ordinarie trades. And why? for it neuer came in their thoughtes, that the honour which they haue vſurped, ſhoulde bee matched with any bond of duetie. And this hath happened, not onely in the Churchmen, but alſo in all eſtates.

If Princes nowadaies did mind yͤ charge which they haue taken in hand: thinke you yͭ the whole world ſhould be ſo turmoyled wͭ warres, & yͭ euery of ry of thẽ would be catching and ſnatching to inlarge his territories? No: for there is not any one which hath but a countrie of one leage to rule, which findeth not himſelfe throughly incumbered, if he haue a regarde of his office and dutie, as well towardes God as towards his ſubiectes. And yet notwithſtanding he that hath a countrie of two hundred leages vnder him, woulde faine ſubdewe the whole world to him. And why is that? Becauſe he thinketh not vpon the burthen that Moſes ſpeakes of here. As who ſhould ſay, there were not a rule giuen to all ſuch as are in any preheminence or authoritie, which is vttered & declared of God by yͤ mouth of Moſes as of his herault: namely yͭ they be not Idols to ſit ouer their people in pompe only: but yͭ they muſt beare the burthen of the people, which cannot be without an honorable kinde of bondage as is ſayd afore.

Alſo this extendeth euen vnto priuate perſons. There is not that man which ſeeketh not to get ſtill more and more: and when he hath three times as much reuenewe as hee needeth for his houſholde, yet is he ſtil laying of baytes, to ioyne peece to peece. For no man bethinketh himſelf, How diſcharge I my ſelfe of that which God hath giuen me already? I haue goods vnder my hands, I haue an houſhold, I ought to occupy my ſelfe in trayning my wife, my children, and my ſeruantes in the feare of God: I ought to haue mine eyes alwayes open, to ſee that nothing be done in my houſe whereby God may be offended. As touching my goods, I ought to vſe them in ſuch wiſe, as they may be imployed according to Gods will. If I haue aboundance, I ought to relieue ſuch as haue want and neede. Howbeit, no man looketh to this geere, but ſuch as haue goods are as gulfes to ſwallowe vp all that euer they can finger: there is no other talke with them, but how they may bring all thinges vnder their pawes, ſo as no man may be ſuccoured at his neede. For all is one with them, ſo they may make their hand. As for Gods honor, they paſſe not ſo much for it, but that they had liuer to be ſotted in the world, and to reigne in it at their pleaſure. And in the meane while they be ſtill ſet vpon gathering, and they conſider not that in ſo doing they doe but plunge themſelues continually into greater curſedneſſe.

Wherefore let vs marke well the doctrine that is giuen vs here by the example of Moſes: which is, that firſt of all euery of vs muſt conſider, that when God vouchſafeth to put any goods into our handes, or to aduaunce vs to any degree: hee bindeth vs with the ſtraiter bond, and we haue the harder account to make: to the ende we may learne thereby to holde our ſelues within the boundes of our owne ſlender abilitie, whẽ it pleaſeth God to haue it ſo. Moreouer let vs alſo haue a continuall eye to our owne infirmitie, ſo as we may acknowledge that our abilitie is very ſmall: and if it pleaſe not God to aduaunce vs, let vs not beare enuy towardes them that are in that daunger, and haue that heauy burthen vppon their ſhoulders. If they feele it not: it is ſo much the woorſe for them. And for our owne part (as I ſayd afore) let vs be contented that our Lord let vs alone ſitting as it were vpon the ground, and let vs not couet to climbe higher. Alſo therewithal let vs haue compaſſion vppon ſuch as beare the hard burthen, & let vs pray God to giue them ſtrength and might at their neede: for we ſee that if God let them alone, they muſt needs be vtterly vndone. And thirdly, if it pleaſe God to put vs in any office, let vs be ready to obey him, at leaſtwiſe according to our abilitie. Howbeit, let vs not take too much vppon vs, leaſt this olde ſayd ſaw be verified vppon vs, that he which grypeth too much can hardly holde it. But let vs aduiſedly offer our ſelues vnto God, that he may gouerne vs by his holy ſpirit, ſo as euery of vs may doe his duetie, and euery of vs imploy himſelfe according to his meaſure and abilitie, referring all our doings to the common weale, to the ende that God may be ſerued thereby, and our labor may redound to the benefite of the people committed to our charge. Thus ye ſee in effect what wee haue to marke.

Now muſt wee alſo marke this ſaying of Moſes, *Chooſe ye men of wiſedome and of good skill, men well tryed, that they may be ſet ouer you according to your tribes, euen ouer Thouſandes, ouer Hundreds, and ouer Fifties,* as wee ſhall ſee afterward. Hereby it is ſhewed vs, that when men are to be choſen to beare office in the common weale, they muſt be choſen with diſcretion, and not taken at al aduenture whoſoeuer can thruſt in himſelfe firſt: neither muſt they be preferred at any mans pleaſure for fauor or for ſome fond brauery: but in ſuch wiſe as God may ouerrule the choyce, and ſuch men be picked out as are knowen to be meete to occupy the roomes that they be called vnto. And ſpecially wee muſt obſerue that which is rehearſed in the eighteenth chapter of Exodus heretofore alledged: for there Iethro ſayth that we muſt take ſuch men as are ſtout, fearing God, louers of the trueth, and haters of couetouſneſſe. Who is he yͭ ſpeaketh this? A poore heathen man, as I haue ſayd already: & yet God gouerneth his tongue in ſuch wiſe, as we cannot haue a better teacher than him, when we be about to chooſe men to gouerne a people. Firſt of all he requireth men that are ſtout, ſuch as are not womaniſh, but haue wherewith to go through with ſuch a charge, and haue both good zeale, courage, and noblemindedneſſe. Howbeit, foraſmuch as without the feare of God all yͤ vertues in man doe turne to euill: behold, Iethro who neuer heard anie one worde of holy ſcripture, doth notwithſtanding perceiue ful wel yͭ it is vnpoſſible for a man to diſcharge his duetie in gouerning a people, vnleſſe he feare God. If a heathen man could ſpeake after that manner: what a ſhame is it for vs nowadayes, that wee ſhould haue leſſe diſcretion than he? And yet a man may ſee with his eyes how the worlde goeth. Haue men this conſideration wͭ them when they goe about to chooſe officers of Iuſtice, that they will needes haue the feare of God to be the firſt thing in yͤ partie? True it is that men wil pro-

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feſſe ſo,& euen nature compelleth vs to ſay,yͭ we had neede of men that are wiſe,and ſtout, verily as graunting couertly that there is neither wiſdome nor courage,without yͤ feare of God beare ſway. Againe, to expreſſe the fruites of the feare of God yet the better, Iethro addeth, that there muſt be vprightneſſe and trueth. As if he ſhould ſay, that a man ſhall neuer be meete to gouern, vnleſſe he haue ſoundneſſe in him,ſo as hee be not hollowharted, but walke on with a good cōſcience. And becauſe that brybes doe blinde the eyes of the wiſe, and make good men to ſwarue from vprightneſſe: he ſayth that if we will haue men fit to beare authoritie,they muſt hate couetouſneſſe and deſpiſe the goods of this worlde,ſo as they can finde in their hearts to forbeare thē. Seing then that ſuch a leſſon is told vs by a heathen man: I pray you what a ſhame ſhall it be, that we which profeſſe our ſelues to be brought vp in the lawe of God and in his Goſpell, & haue our eares ſo much beaten with it, ſhould ſtill be nouices in the doctrine, or atleaſtwiſe put it ſo ill in practiſe among vs? And yet for all that, if we vſe it not to our profite,it is written to be kept to our great confuſiō,& to make vs vnexcuſable.

So then, let vs wey wel this ſaying where Moſes exhorteth the people *to chooſe men of vnderſtanding and wiſedome,and tryed men*. For if a man be put in office but vpon hope, without good knowledge and experience had of him: is it not a defiling of the ſeate of God and of Iuſtice? In deede God reſerueth to himſelfe the ſouereintie ouer all men,as he is alſo worthe to haue:and yet notwithſtanding he wilbe ſerued by mortal men as by his miniſters & officers:and therefore the ſeate of Iuſtice is (as ye would ſay) conſecrated or hallowed vnto him, as ſhall be ſhewed in the next leſſon. Now, there is taking of men at aduenture, and they know not what they ought to doe, nor how to behaue themſelues. Well, ſuch a one muſt needs make a tryal what he can do,& when he is once ſet in his ſeate,he wil haue an eye to himſelfe.yea?Shal he yͭ would not take a Cowheard or a Shepheard into his houſe vpon bare hope,without knowledge or vnderſtanding of him what he is: ſhall he (I ſay)go ſet a man in Gods ſeate, of whom he hath no knowledge,and of whom he hath no experience to iudge what he is? Now then,let vs be well aduized, & foraſmuch as God graunteth vs the grace or rather priuiledge of chooſing officers to gouerne vs, which is not common to all people:in any wiſe let vs not abuſe that gift of God,or els we ſhal be amazed to ſee our ſelues bereft thereof. And ſoothly yͤ very cauſe why ſo many tyrannies are crept into the world, is that all nations haue forgone their freedome,ſo as there is no more election, by reaſon whereof Princes do ſell the offices of Iuſtice,& thinges are ſo out of order as is horrible to ſee. And whereof commeth that, but that when the people had the election in their hands,they abuſed it,& ſo were worthy that God ſhould bereaue them of the honor yͭ he had done them? For is it not as good as a wilful prouoking of Gods wrath,and ſpyting of him, when folke hauing free electiō, whereas they ſhould chooſe men to ſerue God and to be as his officers,doe in ſtead thereof keepe rowtings in Tauerns or Alehowſes, and euen as it were in skorne & mockerie of God, chooſe ſuch as are moſt vnthriftes & furtheſt out of order? See ye not how it is a peruerting of all order? To be ſhort,it ſhould ſeeme that men intended to thruſt God out of his ſeat, when they ſet his enemies in it after that ſort,& ſuch as deſpiſe him,& ſuch as ſeeke nothing elſe but to treade his name & Maieſtie vnder their feete. When men deale ſo, is it any wonder that God ſendeth ſuch diſorder into the world as wee ſee there is? Now then, it ſtandeth vs ſo much yͤ more on hand to marke wel this doctrine, where it is ſaide that when God giueth a people libertie to chooſe officers,they muſt not abuſe it, but muſt vſe diſcretion in chooſing of them. Yea and foraſmuch as we may often times be deceiued,it behooueth vs to reſort vnto God, yͭ he may giue vs diſcretion & gouerne vs with his holy ſpirite, as though he had poynted them out with his finger whom we ought to chooſe. And yͭ is the cauſe why I ſaid yͭ elections ſhal neuer be wel ordered, except God ouerrule them by his holy ſpirit.

Laſt of al Moſes ſaith, *I wil ſet thē ouer you to rule you.* He ſheweth yͭ God had giuen him authoritie, & yet a man may ſee yͭ he imparted it vnto yͤ people,& ſhewed by his doings,as we haue ſeene afore, yͭ he chalenged not to himſelfe an inordinate power,but acknowledged yͭ God had bound him to the common weale. So then,Moſes hath authoritie & knowes well enough that Gods wil was to preferre him aboue the reſt of yͤ people,& yet doth not he abuſe his right for al that,but referreth all vnto the people. As if he ſhould ſay, I will but onely ſhewe the way how to guide, and in ſo doing I will take the payne to my ſelfe,as for the honor,I giue it ouer vnto you. And the ſame mind ought to be in all good magiſtrates and gouerners of people, yͭ they may be able to maintaine the authoritie that is requiſite: for euen to that end alſo hath God ſet them vp. But howſoeuer the world goe, let them not ſeeke their owne profite,but let them indeuour to make thēſelues fit miniſters as nere as is poſſible,alwayes maintaining yͤ chiefe charge yͭ is committed vnto thē.

But now let vs come to that which Moſes interlaceth concerning the multitude of yͤ people. *Your God* (ſaith he)*hath increaſed you, in ſuch wiſe that you be now as the ſtarres of the ſkye, and I beſeech him to increaſe you a thouſand times moe*: or els, he will increaſe you a thouſand times more, according as he hath promiſed you. Here Moſes,in alledging the hardneſſe that he had to decide all caſes, doth alſo ſhewe the people Gods bleſſing and grace. And thereby a man may ſee,that his chiefe trauell was to make the people conceiue the benefites yͭ they had receiued at Gods hand: and that is a leſſon which we cannot be put in minde of too often. For on the one ſide wee ſee what vnthankefulneſſe is in vs, how we ſhut our eyes at the benefites that God beſtoweth vppon vs, Not yͭ we lyke not to haue them: but for yͭ we conſider not from whence they come, that we might glorify the giuer of them. And on the other ſide wee abuſe the giftes that wee haue receiued, becauſe wee bethinke not our ſelues how it is God that hath put them into our handes. Nay, which worſe is, wee ſee how men do ſo vaunt themſelues of them, that Gods glorie is darkened thereby, as though they were not beholden to God at all. And not onely that, but it ſhould ſeeme alſo that they arme themſelues againſt him to bid him battell, for ſhewing of himſelfe ſo bountifull towardes them: and as ſhall bee ſhewed in the two and thirtieth Chapter, Deut.32,15. they play the ouerpampered Iades, which fall to kicking againſt their maiſters. See (I ſay) how God is vnacknowledged of vs in his benefites. And afterward when wee haue forgotten him, wee growe after a ſort heatheniſh, and all his giftes are defiled by vs. Sith wee ſee this, let vs conſider that this doctrine cannot bee too often ſet afore vs: namely, that when God chooſeth vs to doe him ſeruice, he bindeth vs to him the more exceedingly. And therefore his opening of his benefites vnto vs, and his ſetting of them before our eyes, is to the ende wee ſhould knowe that he is readie to continue them ſtill towardes vs, if wee let him not through our vnthankfulneſſe. Therefore if we be often told of the free goodneſſe of our God, and it be ſhewed vs how richly he hath powred out his benefites vpon vs: although it ſeeme to be a very common matter, and that we haue heard ynough of it before: yet let vs aſſure our ſelues, it cannot bee ſpoken too much. Wee ſee howe Moſes, who is the true patterne of all Prophets and true miniſters of Gods worde, behaued himſelfe in that caſe. And foraſmuch as he ſtoode ſo much vpon that point: let ſuch as haue the charge of teaching in the Chriſtian Church, bee ſure that they can neuer be too lauiſh in that behalfe: & let all people alſo vnderſtand, that the often putting of them in remembrance of Gods benefits, is not a needeleſſe and vnprofitable doctrine. Marke that for one point.

Furthermore Moſeſes intent is that the people ſhould perceiue and haue it manifeſtly prooued, that the great increaſe of them came not of the common order of nature, as we ſee that ẏ world doeth multiply: but that it was a very myracle of God. And for the ſame cauſe doeth he alſo ſet downe the ſimilitude that was behighted to their father Abraham. For God had ſhewed him the ſtarres of the ſkie in a viſion, and ſayde vnto him: thy ſeede ſhall be as the ſtarres of the ſkie. Like as the number of the ſtarres is infinite, ſo ſhall thy ſeede be after thee. Now then to the intent to magnifie Gods grace, and to print it the better in the peoples heartes: Moſes ſayeth thus vnto them: you know what was promiſed to your father Abraham, how that his offſpring ſhould bee in number as the ſtarres of the ſkie. Now therefore, ſee what a multitude is of you. For in very deede it is a wonder, conſidering howe ſmall a number went downe into Egypt. When they went thither they were but one houſhold, and little aboue threeſcore perſons. But when they came out, they were not any longer ſixtie, but welneere ſeuen hundred thouſand, and it was within leſſe than three hundred yeeres, that this nomber was ſo increaſed. For the foure hundred and thirtie yeeres are to bee reckened from the promiſe made vnto the people. And wee ſee that Abraham was long time without child. In the end he had Iſaac, who by all likelyhood ſhould haue bene made away. There was ſome likelyhood that Iacob ſhould be increaſed: he had twelue ſonnes: but what was that in reſpect of ſuch a multitude? So then, Moſes ment purpoſely to declare vnto the people, ẏ their multiplying came of ẏ grace of God, yea euen after an extraordinarie maner, and not after the courſe of nature. And yet notwithſtanding, (which ſhall ſerue for an end) Moſes prayeth vnto God to increaſe the people ſtill, or rather aſſureth the people that he will increaſe them more and more. Although this multitude was a great trouble to Moſes: yet doeth he not grudge at it, but receiueth it as a bleſſing of God ioyfully, and glorifieth him for accompliſhing ſo his promiſe. And therewithall he hath a care to prouide for them by good meanes, ſeeking nothing but that God might be ſerued and honoured, and that the fauour which he had begun to ſhewe to his people, might continue till it were come to full perfection.

Now let vs kneele downe in the preſence of our good God with acknowledgement of our faultes, praying him to vouchſafe to make vs ſo to feele them, as we may come to him with true repentance to craue forgiueneſſe of them, and he releaſe them in ſuch wiſe, as wee may ſeeke nothing but to giue ouer our ſelues wholly vnto him, forſaking all the luſtes of our fleſh, and all the vntoward deſires which plucke vs backe to the worlde, and turne vs away from the obeying of righteouſneſſe. And ſo let vs all ſay, Almightie God heauenly father, &c.

On Thurſday the xj. of Aprill. 1555.

The fourth Sermon vppon the firſt Chapter.

16 And I charged then your Iudges, ſaying, Heare your brethren, and iudge vprightly betweene a man and his brother, and betweene the ſtraunger that is with him.

17 You ſhall haue no reſpect of perſon in iudgement, but heare the ſmall as well as the great. Ye ſhall feare no mans countenance: for the iudgement is the

Lordes. And the caſe that is too harde for you, bring it before mee and I will heare it.

18 And at the ſame time I commanded you all the things which you ought to doe.

WE haue ſeene already what warning Moſes gaue for the chooſing of men meete to gouerne the people. For (as hath bin declared) if they had taken iudges at all aduenture, it had bin a defiling of Gods ſeate. Therefore in that caſe, it behooued them to vſe good diſcretion. But here Moſes addeth a point which wee ought to marke well. For although he had procured, that ſuch as were choſen were men that feared God, and were indued with ſingular giftes: yet ceaſſeth he not to put them in minde of their duety, and to warne them of the thinges that they had to doe. Wherein wee ſee, that euen the wiſeſt haue neede to be taught, and the vprighteſt and iuſteſt haue neede to bee warned. And therefore if God haue ſet vs in the good way, and beſtowed giftes of his holy ſpirit vpon vs: let vs not thinke that therefore wee haue no neede to bee taught. For wee muſt bee guided euen vnto the ende, and wee knowe that our perfection is not in this world, nor ſo long as wee beare our fleſh about vs, and are conuerſant here beneath. Againe, whom ſoeuer God hath honoured by ſetting them in ſtate & degree of preheminence: let them vnderſtand that they haue neede to be told of their duetie, and to bee quickened vp to diſcharge themſelues accordingly.

But let vs come now to that which is conteyned here. The firſt charge that Moſes giueth to them that are ordeyned to bee Iudges and Gouernours, is *to heare mens cauſes.* Wherein he doeth vs to vnderſtand, that they ought to bee attentiue and diligent to vnderſtande euery mans right. For if a iudge vouchſafe not to heare, howe ſhall he execute his office? Wee knowe that although men doe the beſt they can to iudge aright, yet their frailetie is ſuch as they may miſſe: and if they be negligent too, then muſt all needes goe to confuſion. Therefore it is not without cauſe, that Moſes warneth the Iudges to vnderſtande well mens caſes. And he ſayeth expreſſely, *betweene the Iewes and betweene the ſtraungers.* As if he ſhould ſay, euery man muſt bee ſuffered to ſhewe his reaſon. Notwithſtanding that the examination and ſifting out of things may now and then procure fauour or hatred: yet the iudge that will doe his duetie well, muſt forget all thinges that may turne him from the right way. And foraſmuch as the ſtraunger hath no vpholder nor ſtay to leane vnto: the iudge muſt ſupply his want. And although he can looke for no reward, no nor for any great thankes at his hand to whom he may doe right: yet let him not forbeare to diſcharge his duetie, for he doeth acceptable ſeruice to God: albeit that there come no rewarde on mens behalfe, God is able ynough to recompence him.

Nowe then, ſuch as are Iuſticers haue their leſſon here in writing: that is to wit, that they muſt maintayne right and equitie towardes all men that are committed to their charge. For (as hath bin declared afore) the office of iuſtice is an honourable ſeruice. They that are ſet in authoritie are not aduaunced to that high eſtate to the intent they ſhould trample their ſubiectes vnder their feete, or make none account of them: but contrariwiſe they bee bounde vnto them, and it is a kinde of ſeruice. For God hath not made principalities for a fewe mens pleaſures, to ẏ end that all mankind ſhould be their vnderlings: but for the common welfare and benefit of all men. Then if gouernours vnderſtand not that they be bound by Gods will and by the order of nature, to them of whom they haue the charge: they muſt be faine to yeeld an account vnto God for their abuſing of his gift and of the honour that he beſtowed vppon them. Thus much concerning the firſt point that we haue to marke here.

And herewithall let vs marke alſo, that if they bee ſo greatly bounde vnto men: much more ſtraitly are they bound vnto God. If a man be grieued in a matter of fiue ſhillings or leſſe, and the iuſtice cauſe him not to haue right: we ſee what is ſayd here. But now, if the name of God bee blaſphemed, if his honour bee defaced, if wicked and deteſtable thinges bee done, and they that ſitte in the ſeate of iuſtice and beare the ſworde in their hande withſtand it not, but are careleſſe what iniurie bee done vnto God: are they to bee excuſed? No: for if they ſuffer but a poore man to bee troden done, ſo as he haue but one penny loſſe: they ſhall bee blamed for it before God. But yet much more precious is the Maieſtie of God, and the thing that concerneth his honour and ſeruice. Sith it is ſo, that Magiſtrates bee bounde to miniſter right to euery man, in thinges that are ſmall and in maner of no valew: let vs marke well that they ought in any wiſe to procure the maintenaunce of Gods honor, more carefully without al compariſon, ſpecially when the caſe concerneth the kingdome of our Lord Ieſus Chriſt, wherevnto all the whole world is not to bee compared, in as much as Gods glorie ſhineth forth there. And that is the ſecond point which we haue to marke vpon this ſtreine.

Againe, whereas it is ſayde, that the Magiſtrates muſt accept no mans perſon: it betokeneth that they muſt not bee mooued with any mans riches, or pouertie, or byrth, or friendſhip, or any thing elſe. For in the holy ſcripture, this worde *Perſon* is taken for any qualitie in man, which may purchace him grace and fauour, or diſgrace and diſfauour. When wee ſpeake of a perſon in our common ſpeache, wee meane a man or a woman: but the Scripture meaneth a more ſpeciall thing: namely that there ſhould no regard be had what maner a one the man is, whether he bee our neighbour, our friend, a riche man able to doe vs good, a man of credit and authoritie able to reuenge himſelf of vs, or a poore man, a man of no allyance or kinred, or I wote not what elſe. All theſe accidentes which ſerue but to induce vs to liking or miſliking of the partie, and to make vs ſwarue from the right way, are comprehended in the Scripture vnder the worde Perſon: as if wee ſhould vſe the word *Vizor*. And in very deede, all theſe accidentes which bleare our eyes and beguile vs to make vs ſtart out of the right way, are but as vizors. If a man come before vs without any qualitie: very well, we would heare him ſimply, and wee woulde not bee corrupted to iudge amiſſe. But if there happen any ſtoppe, by and by wee bee ouerraught, and our reaſon is ſo troubled, that wee iudge not any more as wee ought to doe. That therefore is a vizor, which yeeldeth foorth ſuch a qualitie to bee ſeene in the partie, as maketh vs eyther to fauour him too much, or elſe to miſlike him out of meaſure, ſo as wee keepe not an vpright and euen hand betweene the great and the ſmall. And truely Moſes declareth the ſame very well in this text, in that he ſayeth, *Thou ſhalt heare the ſmall as well as the great*: for it ſerueth to expound the word *Perſon*, and there needeth none other gloſe from elſewhere. And it is a phraſe of ſpeache which wee ſhall ſee in other textes hereafter. Therefore it behoueth vs to acquaint our ſelues with the termes and phraſes of the holy Ghoſt, that the thinges which are contained here may not ſeeme ſtraunge vnto vs.

Howbeit by the way, that wee may fare the better by the things that are declared here, let vs marke that the chiefe reaſon and ground of this doctrine, is bicauſe there is no accepting of perſons before GOD. For the ſame cauſe ought Iudges to haue a ſtay of themſelues, and to keepe them cleare from all conſiderations that may thruſt them aſide, or make them Rom.13.1. Deut.10.17 to ſwarue one way or other: namely (ſay I) for that they repreſent the Maieſtie of God, in as much as he hath made them his officers. Now then, there is no accepting of perſons before God, that is to ſay, when he iudgeth he hath no reſpect to the thinges that men regarde, and wherewith they bee drawen too and fro, ſo as they iudge not vprightly any more, bicauſe their exceſſiue affections doe ouermaiſter them. And this ſaying, that there is no reſpect of perſons with GOD, extendeth very farre. For when as Saint Peter ſpeaketh of it, firſt in the tenth of Act.10.34. & 1.Pe.1.17 the Actes, and afterward in his Epiſtle, he ſheweth that God choſe whom he liſted out of the whole world, in ſo much as he paſſed not whether they were Iewes or Gentiles. Whoſoeuer doeth good (ſaieth he) ſhall haue the fauour of God, and as for Circumciſion or vncircumciſion, they ſhall none of them both bee made account of. True it is that God muſt bee faine to looke mercifully vpon vs, before we can do any good. For of our owne nature wee bee vtterly froward, and there can nothing come from vs but all maner of naughtineſſe: inſomuch that God ſhould hate and abhorre the whole world, and caſt vs away euerychone, if hee ſhould tarie till any of vs gaue himſelfe to well doing: for our nature driueth vs alwayes vnto euill. But God chooſeth his, without any abilitie of deſeruing aforehand on their behalfe: and yet notwithſtanding, after he hath marked them to bee of the number of his flocke, he auoweth them & loueth them as his children and houſhold folke, yea euen without regarding of what nation or ſtate they be, whether they be riche or poore, or in credit, or indued with any good qualitie and handſomneſſe, or any other thing. God then doeth as it were ſhut his eyes againſt all the reſpectes which are had in ſo great eſtimation. For he hath an eye to nothing but to ſoundneſſe of heart, he doteth not vpon theſe vizors that are ſeene to the eye, according to this ſaying in an 1.Sam.16.7. other place, namely that the outward ſhowes deceiue not him, but that he looketh vpon that which is within. Thus much concerning the firſt point.

But wee muſt apply this texte to the ſame vſe that Moſes putteth it: which is, that after the example of God, wee muſt haue this vnpartialitie in vs, ſo as wee will not bee drawen one way nor other by the thinges that appeare in men. And this is a very profitable or rather needefull doctrine. True it is that this is ſpoken expreſſely to Iudges and gouernours, in as much as God hath taken them neere to himſelfe by ſetting them in his owne ſeate, and by willing them to execute his office in this worlde: and therefore ought they alſo to haue the greater care to followe vprightneſſe, that they ſuffer not themſelues to bee peruerted by the thinges that are to bee ſeene in men. But yet for all that, euery man for his owne part ought to take warning to follow Gods example, and to frame himſelfe thereafter, according alſo as Saint Paul Coloſ.4.1. ſendeth vs thither, when he ſpeaketh of bondmen and of men of bace degree that are eaſie to bee oppreſſed, bicauſe men take leaue to doe euill when they ſee that a ſillie ſoule cannot reuenge himſelfe, and that if he haue any wrong done vnto him he muſt bee faine to put it vp patiently: by reaſon wherof they preſume ẏ more boldly to ſay, O, as for him, when I haue done the worſt to him that I can, he hath no meanes to hurt mee. Thus are wee the bolder when we ſee that men are bace & haue no maintenance. But in this caſe Saint Paul ſaieth that wee muſt lifte vp our eyes to heauen, and that foraſmuch as there is no reſpect of perſons before God, wee muſt not thinke wee ſhall eſcape vnpuniſhed when we abuſe the priuiledge & authoritie that he giueth vs. He then ẏ deſpiſeth his neighbour ought to thinke thus: yet notwͭſtanding, we haue a cōmon iudge in heauen, & although I be now rich & honorable to the worldward, although I be in authoritie & eſtimation, yet when I come thither, all this geare muſt ceaſſe: and although my coūterpartie be now deſpiſed, & haue no mā to ſtād by him, yet hath he a defender in heauē.

Lo here (ſay I) what ought to beate downe all pride in vs, to the end that none of vs aduance himſelfe, nor take more vpon him than is lawfull, ne thinke he hath leaue to doe euill, vnder colour that our counterparties are of no credite and authoritie. Let vs not tarie till ordinarie Iuſtice doe redreſſe our extorſions, or till thoſe whom God hath ſet in his place to iudge without reſpect of perſons, doe puniſh vs for committing of ſome outrage: but let euery of vs remember this leſſon here, namely that inaſmuch as God regardeth not any outward ſhowes at al, it behoueth euery of vs alſo to frame himſelfe to the like vprightneſſe and indifferencie.

And foraſmuch as men do always put vs in feare, ſo as there ſpring from thence the ſoreſt and worſt temptations that can be to hinder the perfourmance of our duetie: Moſes warneth Iudges expreſly, not to be afrayde of men. Why? *For the iudgement is Gods,* ſayeth he. Loe here a text well worthy to bee marked. I haue tolde you alreadie, that which experience ſheweth too much: that is to wit, that they which otherwiſe are of good nature, doe neuertheleſſe ouerſhoote themſelues through fearefulneſſe. Ye ſhall ſee a man in the place of Iuſtice, who being not euill of himſelfe, would that all ſhould goe well, it grieueth him when he ſeeth any fault, and he could finde in his heart that euery man ſhould brydle himſelfe, or elſe that there ſhould be ſome good correction when any men haue done amiſſe: but in the meane whyle, foraſmuch as he ſeeth that there will be ſome grudging and miſliking of the matter, [he thinketh thus with himſelfe:] What? Shall I prouoke euery man to anger againſt mee? That man hath kinſfolke and friends, and ſuch a one is able to be euen with me if I trouble him. Againe foraſmuch as naughtineſſe reigneth euerywhere, and wicked folke haue their full ſcope, and are moſt in number: I ſhall bring all the world in my top, & if I minde to diſcharge my duetie, I muſt not ſet my ſelfe againſt two or three onely, but I ſee that all are corrupt, and there is no man but he reſiſteth weldoing. They therefore which otherwiſe feare God and woulde miniſter right and iuſtice when they ſit in iudgement, are letted through fearefulneſſe. If they ſtand in awe of men, they ſhall ſurely bee ſhaken downe. And why? Bicauſe they bee not grounded vpon the foundation that Moſes layeth here, namely *that the iudgement is Gods.* They knowe not (ſay I) that they offer great diſhonour and reproche vnto God, when they preferre men before him. For he that ſwarueth from his duetie for feare, eſteemeth mē more than God. Why ſo? A Iudge ought to conſider, that God hath ſet him in the place where he is, with another maner of countenance than other ſimple creatures. For he that ſitteth in the ſeate of Iuſtice, ſitteth in the roome of God, and is as his Lieuetenant. A Iudge therefore ought to conſider that: and if he doe not, he forgetteth God, whom he was bound to ſerue. It is all one as if a man being feeed by his maiſter to doe him ſeruice, knoweth not whether there bee a maiſter in the houſe or no, but falles to ſinging and playing, and eateth & drinketh at his houres, and ſleepeth when he liſteth, without hauing any care or regarde of his maiſter. Doeth not the ſeruaunt that forgetteth his maiſter after that faſhion, deſerue to haue men to ſpitte in his face? Nowe then, if Iudges conſider not of whome they holde their eſtate and dignitie: their vnthankefulneſſe or rather blockiſhneſſe is too too ſhamefull & beaſtly. Againe, if Iudges knowing themſelues to bee ſet vp of God, doe neuertheleſſe ſhrinke from their duetie for feare of men, and bee ſtopped and held backe from doing the things which they knowe they ought to do, bicauſe men are againſt them: what yeelde they vnto God? what eſtimation haue they of his power? And yet for al that, God hath taught them their leſſon, and promiſed them to ſtande by them, and to bee their defence. Seeing it is ſo, ought they not to make a bucklar of his inuincible power, and to fight luſtily though al the world ſhould ſtep vp againſt them? Is not God mightie ynough to ayde them and ſuccour them, if they truſted thereunto, ſo as they woulde reſt vpon it, and plucke vp a liuely courage and conſtancie to goe on in the right way? Yes: but elſe, if they bee moued by ſuch temptations to ſwarue from their duetie: let them aſſure themſelues that God wil leaue them deſtitute of his power. Thus then wee ſee, that this ſtreine (as I ſaide afore) importeth a very profitable doctrine.

But yet wee muſt note alſo, that this perteyneth not only to them that are in authoritie: but alſo to all men in generall. For there is as it were a compariſon made betweene God and mortall men. And why? For nothing beguileth vs more, than that wee make too great reckening of men, and in ſo doing eyther diminiſhe God, or aboliſh his highneſſe. As oft as men come in our minds, God is no body in compariſon: inſomuch as if wee put him in ballaunce, hee ſeemeth lighter than a feather: whereas men doe alwayes keepe their full weight with vs. Surely if wee were about to compare other men with our ſelues, wee coulde ſet them light ynough: for euery of vs woulde make much of himſelfe. Or if wee were to conſider one man with another: looke whom wee lyked off, he ſhould giue greateſt gloſſe to diſgrace the thinges that were to bee miſlyked in the contrarie partie: inſomuch that wee ſay, tuſhe what is he? he is no body. For why? Wee woulde make farre greater eſtimation of the other. Thus ye ſee howe wee could ſkill to diſgrace men. But come we once to GOD, he muſt bee as good as caſt downe, and men muſt bee ſet vp in his place. Lo howe ſpytefull and frowarde wee bee. So much the more therefore doeth it ſtande vs on hand to mark this ſaying, where it is declared ẏ if God come in place, it is not for vs to make any reckening of men. For it is a great trayterouſneſſe that men or creatures ſhoulde bee in ſuch eſtimation, that Gods right ſhould bee defaced, or any thing bee plucked from him. And yet for all that, we ſee it is too common a thing, & it hindereth vs that we cannot ſerue GOD as we ought to doe. True it is that euery man is turned away by his owne luſtes, inſomuch that although wee haue none other to withſtande vs, yet haue wee inwarde incumberances of our owne, and our nature is ſo ſinfull, as wee cannot in any wiſe applie our ſelues to doe good. But yet is there this inconuenience more in it, that aſſoone as another man comes in place, by and by wee bee at our wittes ende. I would faine doe my duetie (ſay we), but what? Then muſt I purchaſe me ſuch a mãs diſpleaſure. Wee ſee nowe adayes that a man cannot pleaſure men, except hee doe as the worlde doeth, and followe the byaſſe of other men. And againe, beholde heere my neighbour, hee will alwayes bee at deadly foode with mee, if I faſhion not my ſelfe to his manner of dealing: beholde, ſuch a man is my friende, I muſt needes beare him out. Hence come all priuie packings and other lewde trickes, namely that euery man deſpiſeth God, to pleaſe his neighbor or his friend. For whẽ vices reigne, as whoredome, drunkenneſſe, and other diſorders, ſo as euery man is infected by ỹ example of his neighbor, & one catcheth diſeaſes of another: what is the cauſe of al this? It is for that we aduaunce men too much, and conſider not that it were meete for vs to abaſe both great and ſmall, and to frame our ſelues earneſtly to the will of God.

Now therfore let vs bethinke vs ſo much the better of this doctrine that is ſet down here, not only for Iudges but alſo for all men in common: [That is to witte,] that foraſmuch as the iudgement is Gods, we muſt not in any wiſe be ſhaken any more by mẽ, but giue God his preheminẽce, & thruſt downe all conſideration of men, ſo as if men vex vs wee ſet our ſelues againſt them, and be not ſo lewd as to rob God of that which belõgeth vnto him, to furniſh creatures therewithal. Thus yee ſee what we haue to remember heere.

Moreouer alſo, whereas it is ſaide that the *Iudgement is Gods:* that ſpeech importeth another good leſſon. True it is that Moſes ſpeaketh heere of the roome that Iudges and Magiſtrates holde: as if hee ſhoulde ſay, they haue it not in feeſimple or as a Lordſhip of inheritance, but as an office: and God in ſetting them in that degree of honour, reſigned not his owne maieſtie to ſay, Sirs, you ſhall reigne with abſolute power, and I will henceforth bee no bodie. God therefore, when hee did thus ſet men in office, did not for all that diminiſh his owne eſtate. For hee holdeth ſtill the ſouereine dominion ouer all men, and they ought to bee but as inſtruments of his power, and conſequently to ſerue him, and to referre all thinges vnto him. If this doctrine were well knowen, Kinges and Princes woulde not lorde it ſo lycentiouſly nowadayes as they doe, and men ſhoulde haue ſeene another manner of modeſtie in them at all times than is now ſeene. For they that are aduaunced vnto honour, doe beare themſelues on hande that the worlde was made for them, and for their faire eyes (as they ſay): and there vpon they reiect all informations, lawes & ſtatutes, and ſhake off the yoke from their necks, as though they helde all things at their own ſwindge, and God is no body at al with them. But yet in this text Moſes telleth them, that be they neuer ſo great kings & princes, their ſuperioritie ought not to diminiſh the authoritie of God, that his glory ſhould not continue alwayes vnappaired. Why ſo? For what elſe are the princes of the world than Gods officers, to the end ỹ by their meanes he might be obeyed, and al men do him homage, ſo as the higheſt ſhould begin & giue example to the loweſt? Seeing then that the iudgement is Gods: they that peruert the order of gouernment when they be called to do their duetie, ſhalbe double blamed. And therfore ſhal Kings and Princes and al ſuch as are in roome of Iuſtice, haue a verie harde account to make. For if they do amiſſe, they be not bound alonely vnto men, neither haue they offẽded creatures onely: but they haue violated the maieſtie of God, and defiled his ſeate. Why ſo? Becauſe iudgement belongeth vnto him, and he reſerueth it to himſelfe.

But like as it is ſaid of the execution of Iuſtice: ſo let vs note that it belongeth alſo to the ſpiritual gouernement which god hath ordeined in his Church: yea and this doctrine ought to bee kept more ſtraitly in that reſpect, than in the earthly gouernment. Why? When God ordeineth kings, Princes and Magiſtrates: there withall he giueth them authoritie to make Lawes. True it is, that they ought to learne them in his ſchoole, according as it is ſaid that lawes and ordinances which are made in commõ weales, do take their Prou.8.15. force of Gods wiſedome. But yet for al that, ciuil or politike lawes are made by men. Yet notwithſtanding God hath not reſigned any thing, ỹ he ſhould not hold ſtil the ſoueraine dominion ouer men, I meane euen in reſpect of outward policy. And as touching the ſpiritual gouernment of the Church, we know that God wilbe heard, and that he wil haue his word obeyed aboue all things, ſo as men may not take vpon them to make laws & ſtatutes, but muſt hold themſelues contẽted with that which he commandeth them. For the rule that is conteined in his word is the very perfection it ſelf. Therfore when we go vp into the pulpit, it is not to vtter our owne dreames and dotages. why ſo? For God reſerueth the maſterſhip and chiefe ſuperioritie ſtill to himſelfe, ſo as hee will haue mẽ to receiue his word, to reſt wholly therupon without any ſwaruing at all from it. Seeing that God hath once ſet it downe ſo: it behoueth vs to reſt vpon it. Had this bin well obſerued in the world, there ſhould not be ſo great troubles & variances at this day as there are. Whence come the variances that are betwixt vs & the papiſts, but of ỹ men haue not reſerued vnto god ỹ thing that belongeth vnto him, but haue framed articles of faith, lawes, and ordinances at their owne pleaſure, & in the ende are come to this horrible confuſion of mingling the inuentions of mens braines with the purenes of the holy ſcripture, ſo as they haue marred all things? And whereof elſe commeth it, that euen at this day, the papiſtes fight ſtill for the maintenance of that tyrannie, that a man might not knowe God from his Apoſtles as they themſelues ſay, by which common prouerbe of theirs they condemne themſelues and cut their owne throtes? Wherefore let vs marke well this leſſon wherein it is ſaide *that the iudgement is Gods*, that is to ſay, that the ſuperioritie which men haue, in what degree ſo euer it bee, is not to diminiſh Gods preheminence, but rather to maintaine it. What then are the ſtates of honour and all the dignities of the worlde? They are all meanes to bring to paſſe that God may reigne ouer vs, and to make all men to ſtoope to him, and to knowe him and obey him in all caſes. So then, what ought kings, Emperours, and Magiſtrates to doe? They ought to ſee that God be exalted and magnified as he is worthie, and that all their ſubiectes doe him homage, and they themſelues muſt ſhewe them the way. Againe, what ought ſchoolemaſters and fathers to doe, and all ſuch as haue anie houſeholde [or ſeruauntes]? Euerie of them ought to conſider on his owne behalfe howe greatly God hath inhonored him? He that hath children ought to conſider, thou holdeſt Gods place in this roome of a father, but yet hath not GOD ſtripped himſelfe to clothe thee with his honour. What then? He is the father ſtill, both of mee and of my children, therefore muſt I indeuer that he may be obeyed. The maſter muſt thinke thus: Is the maſterſhippe mine? No: but it is Gods, who hath graunted mee that prerogatiue vndeſerued on my parte. It hath pleaſed him to put this houſeholde vnder my gouernement, but yet for all that, it is he that muſt rule me, yea both me and all that are vnder my ſubiection. After this manner ought wee to put this doctrine in vre.

And when wee haue paſſed through all the ſtates of the worlde, wee muſt alſo come to the ſpirituall gouernement of the Church. Therefore let ſuch as are ordeined to preach Gods worde, vnderſtande that God hath not appointed them to ſet foorth their owne dotages, and to ſpeake what they liſt: but to thinke vppon Gods ſuperiorite, ſpecially ſeeing that our Lord Ieſus Chriſt is nowe declared to bee the heade Ephe.1.22. of his Church, according to the euerlaſting maſterſhip which God gaue him ouer vs, in ſaying, Mat.17.5.& Luke.9.35. Heare ye him. Seeing it is ſo, let ſuch as haue the charge of teaching in the Church and are ſhepherdes and miniſters, vnderſtande that they muſt not ſeeke to aduance themſelues, nor to be heard, nor to bring the people in a maſe with their owne inuentions: but [they muſt indeuer] that God may alwayes haue the ouerhand, and be obeyed, and his worde bee receiued purely and ſimplie without any mingling or adding to it.

And like as they that are in that vocation and office, ought to haue mildneſſe, and lowlineſſe, that they vſurpe not the authoritie which God hath reſerued to himſelfe, yea and giuen to his onely ſonne: ſo all Chriſtians ought to thinke thus with themſelues. Wherefore come wee to Sermons? Wherefore is there order in the Church? It is to the ende that GOD ſhoulde gouerne vs, and that wee ſhoulde haue our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt to bee as our ſoueraine teacher, and that wee ſhoulde be his flocke to bee led by him. Nowe this cannot bee done, vnleſſe we hearken to his voyce, and diſcerne it from the voyces of ſtraungers, ſo as wee be not caried too and fro like wauering Reedes with euerie winde, but ſtande faſt ſetled vppon the pureneſſe of the holy Scripture, and that our faith be ſo grounded therevppon, as the diuell may neuer ſhake it downe. Loe (ſay I) howe we ought to applie this doctrine to our vſe, namely that the iudgement and authoritie is Gods. For if wee doe ſo, wee may well ſee many contrarieties in this world, men may aſſayle vs with many troubles, they may well ſet themſelues againſt vs, and they may well ſpeake againſt vs: but yet ſhal we ſtil keepe on our pace. And why? for GOD is not variable. Although the diuell keepe neuer ſo great a ſtirre here beneath, yet is Gods purpoſe alwayes vnchaungeable. And ſo is ment by this that is ſaide of the truth, that Pſal.117.2. it dureth for euer. It is not ſuch a trueth as is hidden or ſhutte vp in heauen: but it is ſaide expreſly that it is the ſame truth which God vttereth to vs by his worde, as he witneſſeth dayly. Sith it is ſo, let vs looke vp to GOD, and yeelde him the gouernement that is due vnto him, that hee may reigne ouer vs: and then ſhal our faith bee vnuariable, though the diuell trouble and turmoyle all thinges vpſidedowne, and ſtirre vp neuer ſo much ſtrife and contention. Thus you ſee howe we muſt put the doctrine in vre that is conteined heere.

Nowe furthermore Moſes ſaith expreſlie, *that if there were any harde caſe, it ſhould be brought vnto him*. And afterwarde hee addeth for a concluſion, *that hee had commaunded them all the things which they ought to doe*. As touching the harde caſes, Moſeſes reſeruing of them to himſelfe, was neither for deſire of praiſe nor for pride, but becauſe they belonged to his vocation: hee knewe that God had ordeined him to the ſame purpoſe. And therefore let vs not bee afraide to keepe ſtill that which God hath giuen vs, if wee execute the charge that hee hath committed vnto vs. For why? like as a man muſt not eſteeme of himſelfe, ſo muſt hee not ſurmiſe, oh, this is hatefull, it may be ill taken, it is ſubiect to ſlaunder: but wee muſt followe that which God commaundeth vs. And therefore let vs not take any thing vppon vs of our owne heade, that is to ſay, let vs not bee raſhe to ſay, this belongeth to mee, for ambition tickleth vs continually, and euerie of vs would haue I wote not what a priuiledge: wherefore let vs beware of ſuch folly. Yet notwithſtanding like as there ſhoulde no ſuch boldneſſe reigne in vs, as to vſurpe or take any thing vppon vs: ſo on the contrarie part, when GOD will haue any office or charge laide vppon vs, it becommeth vs to take it. True it is that men may chaunce to ſpeake euill of vs for it, but wee muſt ouerpaſſe that, and keepe on our pace ſtill. That is the thing which Moſes hath ſhewed vs heere by his owne example.

And in his owne perſon, hee hath ſet vs as it were a looking glaſſe before our eyes, to ſhewe vs that we muſt followe the order that God hath ſet, and not ſwarue from it at all. If wee doe not ſo, it is an vntolerable vnthankefulneſſe. We knowe what infirmitie is in our ſelues: not onely in ſome one point but in all things are wee ſo fraile as is pitie to ſee. But our Lorde hath well prouided for all our needes, and giuen vs remedies for them. As for example, hee hath giuen vs meate and drinke to maintaine this tranſitorie life of ours, hee hath ordeined Magiſtracie to gouerne vs, hee hath ordeyned the miniſterie of his worde to rule our ſoules, and hee hath giuen ſingular giftes of grace to ſeuerall perſons, ſo as they bee able to giue vs counſell, and to comfort and incourage their neighbours, and to helpe them at their neede. What is to be done then? Whenſoeuer wee bee cumbered or in any perplexitie, let vs looke that wee vſe the meanes of remedie that GOD giueth vs, yea and to vſe them alwayes in his feare. For wee may bee abuſed, as wee haue ſeene. What is to bee done then? We muſt not turne aſide nor ſtoppe for ſuch as haue neither right nor reaſon in them, but euerie of vs muſt further himſelfe by ſuch meanes as God giueth him, euen as though hee were going to God himſelfe. And that will make vs to vſe the order of Lawe lawefully, which thing men doe not nowe. And it is a point well worthie to bee marked, to wit, howe men may repulſe iniuries, and howe they ought to behaue themſelues, when any of vs findeth himſelfe intangled or in perplexitie, let vs pray to God to direct vs. If wee did ſo, ſurely wee would not goe to lawe but with trembling, and wee woulde ſay in our ſelues, I goe now to preſent my ſelf as it were before my God. But howe goe men to it noweadayes? Rather to ſeeke a cloke for all naughtineſſe: ſo as there is neither craft, nor ſpite, nor any other wickedneſſe which is not to bee founde there. And why? For without hauing any regarde of God, there is nothing thought vppon but howe to beguile men, or howe to winde them in by ſome wicked practiſe. So much the more neede therfore haue wee to marke well what is ſaide here, that is to wit, that according as God hath ordeined ſtates and degrees among men: ſo muſt men diſpoſe things and direct them by the order that God hath ſet and eſtabliſhed.

And for a concluſion let vs alſo wey well this which Moſes addeth in the ende: namely, *that hee had taught the Iewes all thinges which they had to doe.* When hee ſaith ſo, it is all one as if hee ſhoulde proteſt, that they coulde not but know, that they ſinned not through ignorance, neither coulde ſay, I tooke it to haue beene otherwiſe, I knewe not what was to bee done. You knowe (ſaieth Moſes) there is no let but in your ſelues, for I for my parte haue beene faithfull to Godwarde, ſince the time that hee did put mee in truſt to inſtruct you, I haue taught you as hee commaunded mee: nowe therefore you cannot haue any excuſe to hide you withall. And if Moſes had ſuch a care to teach the people in reſpecte of the earthly gouernment: no doubte but hee was yet more diligent in teaching them the doctrine of ſaluation. That is the firſt poynt whiche wee haue to note. Doth Moſes tell vs, that hee did not conceale nor hyde any thing from the Iewes, in the thinges that concerned their worldlie dueties, for the mainteyning of ſome order and humaine honeſtie among them? Then is it much more likely that hee firſt preached to them the grace of God, and afterwarde ſhewed them the rule of good conuerſation and therewithall tolde them of the couenant of ſaluation, which GOD had made with his people. It is certaine that nothing was concealed in that behalfe, but that he vſed an exquiſite diligence, ſo as hee lefte not the Iewes in doubt without due warrant how to behaue themſelues to Godward.

Nowe then, if Moſes diſchardged his ductie after that ſort, wee muſt conclude that the Lawe was a ſufficient doctrine to inſtructe the people, and that hee vſed not anie ſhiftes to carie them heere and there. Afterwarde came the Prophetes, which added yet a greater lighte. Laſt of all, the Goſpell was preached through the whole worlde. Nowe then, can wee ſay that our Lorde hath not taught vs ſufficiently, and that all the Prophetes, and the Apoſtles, yea and Ieſus Chriſt himſelfe haue giuen vs but halfe an inſtruction? Can wee ſay ſo? No, that were too vilanous a blaſphemie. Nowe therefore, let vs haue our eares open to hearken to our GOD, and he will be a good ſchoolemaſter to vs, and let vs bee contented with the doctrine that is conteyned in the holy Scripture. For there wee haue ſo perfect wiſedome, as no fault can bee found with it. Conſider well therefore what we haue to marke vppon this ſtreine, to the ende that euerie of vs may indeuer to profite dayly more and more. And if there bee any ignorance in vs, let vs aſſure our ſelues it is through our owne fault, in that we bee as blinde wretches, vntill God haue inlightened vs through his grace. Therefore it behoueth vs to pray him to open our eyes by his holy ſpirite. And on the other ſide, let vs not ſtop our eares againſt the thinges that God ſpeaketh, nor pretende ignorance to excuſe our naughtineſſe. But ſeeing that God telleth vs, that he hath ſhewed vs all thinges by his worde which wee ought to doe: let vs holde vs to it without coueting any nouelties, and without fond curioſitie, for wee ſhall neuer ſcape from him; and therefore let vs not be gadding to receiue euerie newe toy that is offered vnto vs. And ſo let vs ponder well the thinges that wee haue to marke vppon this text, to the ende that for aſmuch as GOD hath nowe giuen vs a confirmation of his Lawe and of his Prophiſies, and directed vs to the right marke: wee may take the Goſpel [alwayes] for our guide, in wayting till he haue gathered vs together into his kingdome.

Nowe let vs kneele downe in the preſence of our good God with acknowledgement of our faults, praying him to make vs feele them better, to the ende we may returne to him with true repentance, and being aſhamed of our ſelues flee for refuge to his mercy: and that foraſmuch as we knowe hee hath ſet it forth moſt largely and abundantly in our Lord Ieſus Chriſt, wee may reſort to him the more boldely, ſeeking continually for the great treaſures which he hath prepared for vs in his kingdome. And [beſeeching him] to guide vs ſo hencefoorth with his holie ſpirite, as we may liue in his feare, framing our ſelues vnto his righteouſneſſe, and ſeruing him according to his holie will, ſo that although wee might be hindered by the ſtumblingblockes and cumberances which wee ſee in the worlde, yet wee may not ceaſe to followe our good GOD, whither ſoeuer hee calleth vs, notwithſtanding that the worlde bee blinded with neuer ſo outragious confuſion and diſorder. That it may pleaſe him to graunt this grace, not onely to vs &c.

On Fryday the xij. of Aprill. 1555.

The fift Sermon vpon the firſt Chapter.

19 Then departed we from Horeb, and went through the wilderneſſe which is great and terrible, as you haue ſeene, along the way of the hil of the Amorrhytes, as the Lord our God had commaunded vs, and we came to Cades barne.

20 And I ſaid vnto you, come ye to the Hil of the Amorrhytes which the Lord our God doth giue vs.

21 Behold, the Lord thy God ſetteth the Land before thee: Goe vp and poſſeſſe it as the Lord the God of thy fathers hath ſaide vnto thee. Shrinke not, neither be afraide.

IN this text Moſes rehearſeth, after what ſort he had exhorted the people to take poſſeſſion of the Lande that God had promiſed them, and by what meanes he would haue incouraged them to it. And that is to the ende that the people ſhoulde knowe their owne vnthankefulneſſe and naughtineſſe, in reiecting the benefite that was offered vnto them, and in that they obeyed not God, but were giuen too much to their owne ſenſualitie. This then which Moſes doth heere, is as it were an vpbraiding of the Iewes, to ẏ end they might knowe howe it was long of none but themſelues, that they inioyed Gods bleſſing no ſooner: and that they might afterwarde yeelde themſelues more pliable, and not bee ſo wilfull any more in their owne frowardneſſe, but ſimplie ſubmit themſelues to God as ſoone as they ſhoulde heare him ſpeake. That is in effect the intent of Moſes.

Neuertheleſſe hee interlaceth alſo another matter therewithall: which is, that he telleth the people they be ſo much the leſſe to be excuſed, becauſe they had had experience of Gods goodneſſe, in that he had led them with his mightie hande. For, their paſſing through the horrible and dreadfull deſert, was not without the aſſiſtance of a ſingular and vnaccuſtomed power of God: where as they notwithſtanding forgetting the goodneſſe which they had felt, and which they ought to haue borne in minde for euer, did grudge at God, and became wilfull, and woulde not goe forwarde when he was redie to haue led them to the end. And that is the cauſe why Moſes ſaith expreſly, *that they had ſeene*. As if hee ſhould ſay, you wrought euen againſt your naturall ſenſes, when you went not on as your God commaunded you. The reaſon is this. So long as you ſuffered your ſelues to bee gouerned by his hand, and ſo long as you walked in the way that hee appointed you: did you not euen ſee with your eyes, that hee made you to ouercome all hardneſſe? Was not the wildernes wherthrough you paſſed, a verie gulfe? And yet notwithſtanding you ſcaped out of it. And how came that to paſſe, but by the wonderfull working of your God among you? Seeing ẏ you heard his voyce, you were ſure that hee was come among you. Then ſaid I vnto you, now is there no more for vs to doe, but to inioy the lande which our God hath aſſigned to vs for our heritage. Goe, let vs fight, our God hath promiſed it vs, and hee will not diſappoint vs. Wee knowe he hath wrought mightily for vs hitherto, and ſurely he will goe through with his worke. Theſe and ſuch other things did I alledge vnto you: And yet you followed not them as you ought to haue done. Wherefore acknowledge your vnthankefulneſſe in that you refuſed to enter into the inheritance which God had promiſed to your fathers, and which he hath prepared for you.

Nowe by the way, the firſt good leſſon that wee haue to gather here, is that foraſmuch as God hath alreadie vttered his goodnes towards vs in making vs to feele his bleſſing: wee be the more worthy to be blamed, if we reſt not wholly vpon him, or put not our whole truſt in him to walk on boldly & without douting. For although God had neuer ſhewed himſelfe to our experience: yet ought wee to giue credite to his holie worde. And it is good reaſon that we ſhoulde do him the honour to beleeue whatſoeuer he ſaith or ſpeaketh vnto vs: for as much as he is faithfull, and his worde is better tryed than either gold or ſiluer, as it is ſaide in the Pſalme. And Pſal.12.7.

therefore if there were no more but Gods vttering of his worde with his owne mouth: it were ynough to condemne the whole world for their diſobeying thereof. But ſeeing that God hath confirmed his ſayings by deeds, and hath ſhewed vs as it were to our eyeſight, that his making of his promiſes vnto vs is not in vaine, but hee hath made vs to feele the thinges with our hands;ſo as we know in effect what his power is, and that it neuer faileth thoſe which are his: if after all this teaching we fall to checking ſtill, and be ſo ſtiffenecked as we will not bow to ſubmit our ſelues to the thinges that hee ſpeaketh, nor haue any will to obey him: I pray you doth not the greater condemnation lye vppon vs? What is to be done then? Let euery of vs conſider aduiſedly the good turnes that God hath done him, & let him marke them and note them that hee may beare them in minde. Verie well, God hath ſuccored mee at ſuch a pinch, I haue felt his helpe in ſuch a caſe, I haue beene ayded at his hande, and he hath made me to perceiue his mightie power after ſuch and ſuch faſhion. After this manner muſt wee make rehearſall of Gods benefites, and of his helping of vs all the time of our life. And after as hee hath vttered himſelfe vnto vs, ſo muſt we be the more confirmed to truſt to his promiſes, and to reſt wholly vpon them. Herewithal let vs be ſtabliſhed in inuincible conſtancie, to goe which way ſoeuer he leadeth vs, without feare of any diſtreſſe. Why ſo? For my God which hath neuer forſaken me to this day, will not giue me ouer now. As I haue felt [heretofore] that he giueth ſtrength to thoſe that are his: ſo am I ſure that hee will reach me his hande and ſuccour me ſtill. So then there is no more for me to doe, but to commit my ſelfe vnto him. I ſee that this thing & that thing may cumber me, there are a number of temptations which may make me turne heade: but yet foraſmuch as my God hath ſuccored me hitherto at my neede: I doubt not but hee will doe the like vnto the ende. Thus yee ſee that the way for vs to eſchewe the blame of vnthankefulneſſe, is to call Gods benefits oftentimes to our rememberance, thereby to ſtrengthen our ſelues ſtill in truſt that he will neuer faile vs vnto the end. Alſo this wil ſerue to make vs ouercome al temptations: and although the diuel haue neuer ſo many meanes and ſtoppes to turne vs out of the right way, yet ſhall we not ceaſe to goe on ſtill. And why? Becauſe the hope which wee ſhall haue gathered, of Gods former making of vs to feele his goodneſſe, will ſerue to carie vs ouer all tempeſtes in the middes of the ſea: it will be as a boate, or as a ſhippe, or as a bridge to conuey vs ſafely ouer. To bee ſhort, wee ſhall haue wherewith to ſtrengthen vs continually, ſo wee ſhutte not our eyes at the aſſiſtance which God ſheweth vs dayly. Thus you ſee generally what wee haue to gather vppon this ſaying of Moſes. Anon the matters ſhall bee layde out more particularly by ſimilitudes.

Let vs proceede to the things that he addeth: namely, that being come to the hill of the Amorrhytes, he ſaide, *Let vs poſſeſſe the Lande which the Lord our God and the God of our fathers promiſed vs. For it is here before vs*, that is to ſaye, at our commaundement, as hee had ſaide afore, for this is but a repetition of that which wee haue ſeene already. And heere Moſes ſetteth forth the promiſe that God had made vnto the people, to the end to aſſure them of the Land in ſuch wiſe, as they ſhoulde bee out of all doubt that it was their owne. And why? Becauſe it had bene promiſed them of God. Beholde (ſaith he), thy God ment not to lye to thee, nor to beguile thee: and therefore thou maiſt aſſure thy ſelfe, that the thing which hee hath ſpoken ſhalbe performed. Marke that for one point.

Neuertheleſſe, to the ende that the people may the better vnderſtande, that they were not to poſſeſſe the lande for their owne deſerts ſake: hee telleth them expreſly, *It is the God of your fathers* that doth it. For the Lande was promiſed as well to Abraham as to Iſaac and Iacob, before the Iewes which then liued, were borne. Therby then are they put in minde, that they had not deſerued ſuch a benefite at Gods hande, but that it proceeded wholly of his free goodneſſe. And ſo much the more were they to blame, in that they had felt ſuch experience of Gods goodneſſe, and their ſinne alſo was ſo much the heinouſer, in that they acknowledged not the mercie that he had vſed towards them. That then is the effect of Moſeſes meaning heere.

But we haue to note herewithal, that although the promiſe was then growen olde, yet had it not loſt his force: neither ceaſed it to liue ſtill, though Abraham, Iſaac, and Iacob were deade. True it is that the promiſe which had beene made, was not ſpoken to them that were preſently aliue at this time: [they to whome it was ſpoken] that is to wit, Abraham, and the Patriarks, were all deceaſed. But Gods promiſe & his truth die not with men, they haue not the courſe of a tranſitoritie and flightfull life as wee haue. Therefore let vs marke well, that whereas God had promiſed the lande to Abraham, for him, his heires, and ſucceſſors that ſhoulde deſcende of his race: although Abraham was rotten in the earth, and they that followed him together with all the Patriarks were conſumed to powder and duſt: yet the worde that GOD ſpake continued ſtill, and forewent no whit at al of his force. This (I tell you) is a point which wee ought to marke well. For it is nowe long ago ſince the Lawe was giuen: ſo that if we haue an eye to the oldeneſſe thereof, it will ſeeme to vs to bee an outworne and deade thing. About a two thouſand yeares after that, the Goſpel was publiſhed to the worlde: and wee ſee that manie yeares, yea many hundred yeares are paſſed ſince. Then if wee ſhoulde meaſure Gods trueth by time: wee might thinke it to bee a thing as good as buried and quite and cleane forgotten.

Moreouer they that firſt caryed the Goſpell abrode, are deade long agoe: but yet muſt we beare in minde, that Gods trueth is euerlaſting, and that although men be corruptible and paſſe and vaniſh away: yet the doctrine of ſaluation abydeth alwayes vnappayred, ſo as the force thereof abateth not at all. That is it (ſay I) which we haue to beare in minde. For although it was in olde time that GOD ſpake to Moſes and the Prophetes, and although it bee nowe long agoe ſince the Goſpel was delyuered to the Apoſtles: yet muſt we receiue the doctrine therof nowadayes, as being in full force ſtill. And that ſo much the rather, in reſpect of this ſaying Heb. 10,20. of the Apoſtle, that our Lorde Ieſus Chriſte hath made the way freſh by his bloude. They that liued vnder the Lawe and the Prophetes ought not to haue deſpiſed the trueth that had beene manifeſted to their fathers, though it was done long time before: and yet did not God diſcouer it ſo openly to them as hee doth to vs. It is not for nought then that the Apoſtle ſaieth, that the way which Ieſus Chriſt made, is freſhe. And why ſayes hee ſo? His meaning is, that the bloude of our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt cannot drye nor putrifie, but is alwayes freſhe in rememberance before God, to the ende that wee ſhoulde bee aſſured of his trueth, which hee hath ſealed with his death and paſſion. Seeing then that we haue ſuch a pledge, we ought to be ſo much the forwarder to receiue Gods truth, foraſmuch as wee perceiue that the force and vertue thereof dureth for euer.

Nowe muſt wee marke further howe Moſes ſaieth heere, *Thy God hath promiſed thee the lande, It is before thee, poſſeſſe it.* By theſe wordes he betokeneth, that wee muſt reſt wholely vppon that which God ſaith, and not ſtande ſcanning after our owne fancies. For if men content not themſelues with the thinges that God ſpeaketh to them: where ſhall they ſeeke for greater certeintie? Or when they haue ſought it, where ſhall they finde it? But it is an offering of too greate wrong to our GOD, when wee bee not ſatiſfied with his vttering of his will, and with his warranting of the ſame vnto vs. For if therevppon wee bee ſtill wauering and doubtfull: what elſe is ſuch vnbeliefe, but a replying againſt Gods trueth as though hee were not faithful, or as though he went about to abuſe vs by alluring vs with vaine hope? So then let vs marke well, that all our life long wee muſt content our ſelues with Gods worde, and when we haue it wee muſt followe it without ſeeking any further.

For looke howe many doubtes and miſtruſtes wee conceiue, ſo many ouerthwart nippes and priuie vpbraydings doe wee giue vnto GOD, as who ſhoulde ſay there were no certaintie in his ſaying. But wee knowe that nothing is more peculiar to him than his trueth. And ſo (as much as in vs lyeth) wee make it a thing of nothing. Therefore it is a verie profitable warning when hee ſaieth, *The Lorde thy God hath promiſed thee the Lande.* For hee ſpeaketh ſtill in generall, meaning that we muſt all our life long hold this rule of ſticking ſimply to the word of God. A non the things ſhalbe laide foorth particularly, as I ſaide afore.

But let vs marke well, that Moſes hauing alledged Gods promiſe, and hauing ſaide that the Lande was at the peoples commaundement, becauſe GOD ment not to fayle in the perfourmance of the thing that hee had once promiſed: addeth afterwarde, *Enter into it and take poſſeſsion of it.* Wherein hee ſheweth vs that although GOD performe in vs al that hee hath ſaide: yet muſt not wee on our ſide bee idle, nor bee as blockes of wood, but wee muſt offer our ſelues to his ſeruice. For albeit that wee cannot ſtirre one finger to doe wel: yet hath GOD made vs inſtrumentes whereby hee will worke.

Therefore wee muſt goe forwarde when hee commaundeth vs, and wee muſt indeuer to apply all our members and wits to obey him. True it is (as I ſaide) that men are vtterly vnprofitable, yea and that their will goeth cleane backe from that which God commaundeth: but yet for all that, God ceaſeth not to giue vs willingneſſe, and when hee hath giuen vs willingneſſe, hee giueth vs alſo performance, as ſaint Paul auoucheth to the Philippians: Phil. 2,13. and therewithall hee maketh vs to doe it with feare and carefulneſſe. When as Saint Paul ſaith, *Doe ye,* and alſo, *It is God that doeth:* thoſe two thinges ſeeme to bee contraries: but they bee not. For Gods working is in ſuch wiſe, as hee imputeth to himſelfe the thinges that hee doth in vs: and yet for all that, hee will not haue vs to bee ſlothfull and to fall a ſleepe, but that euerye of vs ſhould indeuour himſelfe. Let vs learne then that whenſoeuer God promiſeth vs any thing, it is his office to accompliſhe the whole.

Neuertheleſſe he will haue vs to take paynes and to ſtraine our ſelues, yea euen vs which are vtterly vnprofitable. And hauing giuen vs his power, hee will haue vs indeuour to make the thing auailable which he hath beſtowed vppon vs, and to make it to bee profitable. That then is the thing which we haue to note here.

Howbeit, there withall there is alſo the concluſion which Moſes maketh: namely when as hee ſaith, *Feare not, bee not diſmayed.* And hereby hee doth vs to vnderſtande, that although we bee armed and fenced with Gods promiſes, ſo as wee ought to bee ſufficiently reſolued, that hee will guide vs vnto the ende: yet ſhall wee haue manie occaſions to make vs grudge and repyne, ſo as we might ſwarue aſide from the right way, or vtterly forſake it, if we had not conſtancie to ouercome all the ſtoppes and lettes that the diuell thruſteth in our wayes: for of nature we be fearefull. True it is that in many things we be but too hardie. When any fond thing is to be attempted fooliſhly: in that caſe men neede not to be hartened, for they be but too bold already, to attempt this and that, & to mount aboue the cloudes as thee ſay. But when GOD ſhoulde be followed whitherſoeuer hee calleth vs: our eyes runne heere and there, vp and downe, wee bee at our wittes ende, yea and if a flye doe but whiske before our eyes or a ſtrawe ſtirre at our feete: by and by wee are at a ſtoppe. Nowe ſeeing wee haue this vice in our nature, let vs determine to fight on al ſides againſt this ſõd fearefulneſſe, to the ende wee bee not helde backe from following God whitherſoeuer hee commaundeth vs, but that wee may ouercome all the temptations of Satan, though he bee neuer ſo wylie in forging and framing of innumerable occaſions in that behalfe, to turne vs away from our calling. And therefore let vs marke this warning giuen to the Iewes by Moſes. For it is a warning to vs as well as it was to them, that it is vnpoſſible for vs to come thither as god calleth vs, if wee ouercome not this fearefulneſſe and diſmayedneſſe, that is to ſay, if wee fight not againſt all the incumbrances that ſathan can ſet before our eyes to make vs afraide. Therefore it ſtandeth vs on hande to bee armed with ſtrength from aboue. Thus you ſee howe wee ought to apply this ſtreyne to our inſtruction.

Nowe the thinges will bee the plainer and better vnderſtoode, if we make a ſimilitude betweene the lande that was promiſed to the children of Iſrael, and the kingdome of God whereunto wee bee called. For in good ſooth, the land of Chanaan was but as a figure & earneſtpenny of the kingdome of heauen. Had the auncient fathers ſetled their mindes vppon the lande which they ſawe: they had had a verie poore reſt and weake ſtay, for in verie deede they inioyed it not of all their life, they did but
Heb.11.9. &13.
onely trauell through it as ſtraungers and wayfarers. Wee ſee that Abraham had not one foote of it in poſſeſſion, ſauing that hee purchaſed a little peece to burie his wife in, no hee had not ſo much as water to drinke. Iacob was baniſhed out of it a great parte of his life. Iſaac and all the Patriarks had but their walke in it, they neuer poſſeſſed one foote of the land which God had giuen for an heritage to them and their iſſue. Wee muſt needes conclude then that the auncient fathers did not paſſe through this viſible land, and that their acknowledging of it for their inheritance was after ſuch a ſorte, as they tended alwayes towardes heauen, and that was the marke which they aimed at. Seeing it is ſo, wee muſt make a ſimilitude betweene this lande, and the inheritance wherunto GOD calleth vs, as it hath beene purchaſed for vs by our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt.

Whereas hee ſaith *That God made the people to paſſe through a horrible and dreadfull wilderneſſe:* the ſame belongeth vnto vs alſo, if wee conſider in what ſtate God founde vs, and whence hee hath drawen vs. For are wee not all damned and forlorne by nature? Hath not the diuell a tyrannous dominion ouer vs, from whence no man can deliuer himſelfe by his owne power? Euen ſo, if wee conſider where GOD ſeeketh vs when hee calleth vs to him: [wee ſhall finde, that] the wilderneſſe wherethrough the Iewes paſſed is not ſo dreadefull and terrible, as is the damnation wherein wee were. For wee bee in bondage of ſinne, wee bee vnder the thraldome of death, ſatan reigneth ouer vs, and is king and prince of the whole worlde. Seeing then that GOD riddeth vs out of ſo miſerable ſlauerie, and ſetteth vs at libertie by his holy ſpirite: is it not all one as if hee ſhoulde make vs way through the gulfes of hell? Yes: for wee bee there in verie deede, and wee cannot come at Ieſus Chriſt, except we be brought out of the dungeons of death. Nowe then, if there were no more but this, that God hath ridde vs from the curſe which was brought vppon vs by Adam, and wherein wee are all of vs faſt ſhut and locked vp vntill hee haue pitie vppon vs: the experience of that one point ought to make vs perceiue his goodneſſe. And if there were no more but that: it ought to giue vs courage to followe him, and to giue our ſelues wholly vnto him. For if wee bee ſlouthful, there is no excuſe for vs, becauſe his goodneſſe is ſufficiently warranted vnto vs, and it is long of none but our ſelues that wee bee not fully reſolued and perſwaded that hee will goe through with the thing that hee hath begunne. And that it is ſo, if euerie of vs bethought himſelfe well, wee ſhoulde finde that God by infinite wayes made vs to ouercome the thinges that ſeemed vnpoſſible. But what? To ſet foorth our owne valiant deedes, wee can well ynough alledge this and that, and our memorie is but too good. And though it bee but a thing of nothing that wee haue done, yet wee can ſkill to magnifie it and to make great reportes of it. Loe howe men can bee quicke ynough to remember all that euer they haue done in their life, that may ſet foorth their owne glorie: but in the meane whyle wee doe wickedly forget the benefites of GOD. And yet worketh hee in ſuch wiſe towardes vs, as ought to quicken vs vp to acknowledge his goodneſſe, or elſe on the contrarie parte wee doe but thruſt all vnder foote. Hee ſhall haue deliuered vs from manie after delays, and hee ſhall haue made vs to haue paſſed manie greate lettes, ſo as wee may haue thought that we had beene vtterly ſhut out and fordone, and hee ſhall haue reached vs his hand: and yet for all that, wee neuer thinke of it againe. Nowe then, where as wee ſee men to bee rechleſſe and ſlothfull in following GOD, it is becauſe they forget his benefites which they haue had proofe of, and become like the Iewes. And therefore it behoueth vs all to acknowledge our fault in this behalfe, and to mourne before God, and to ſeeke redreſſe of it.

Thus yee ſee howe wee ought to put this text in vre by ſimilitude: that is to wit, when the promiſes of the Goſpell are ſet forth to bring vs to the kingdome of heauen: let vs conſider whereat God hath begunne in vs, by what meanes he hath brought vs to him, and howe hee hath ſtrengthened vs, to the intent to bring vs out of the damnation, whereof wee are founde worthy by too too apparant conuiction. Nowe therefore if wee thinke there vpon, and conſider thus with our ſelues, beholde, our God hath made vs partakers of his power, wee haue had too apparant experience therof, he hath deliuered vs out of yͤ gulfe of hel, he hath ridde vs out of the bonds of the diuell and of death: let vs not doubt but hee will alwayes continue like himſelfe hereafter, and hold out to the end.

Mat.13.24. and 31.

Furthermore let vs alſo marke well this ſaying in this text: *The God of thy fathers hath promiſed thee the Lande. Beholde therefore, it is at thy commaundement, enter into it and take poſſeſsion of it.* The meaning is that wee ſhoulde yeelde ſo much honour to Gods truth, as to bee fully and throughly reſolued in our ſelues, that inaſmuch as hee hath adopted vs to his children, our inheritance is certaine and infallible in heauen. For to what purpoſe is the Goſpell preached vnto vs, but to make vs knowe that GOD is our father, and that wee being become his children by his free adopting of vs, ſhoulde bee aſſured that the kingdome of heauen belongeth vnto vs? And in verie deede for the ſame cauſe is the Goſpell called the kingdome of heauen, foraſmuch as it openeth the gate vnto vs, to the ende that wee nowadayes ſhoulde not doubte but that GOD auoweth vs to bee his heires. But wee muſt haue a further conſideration of the inheritance that God giueth vs, than of all the benefites that Moſes ſpeakes of. For it ſtoode the Iewes on hande to haue helde themſelues ſtill to the thing that had beene ſpoken to Abraham, Iſaac, & Iacob. But now is the Goſpel another warrant vnto vs. For God is called the father, not onely of Abraham, Iſaac, and Iacob, but alſo of our Lord Ieſus Chriſt, who is our head in ſuch wiſe, that being once vnyted vnto him, we become partakers of his own ſubſtance and life, and [therefore] we muſt not doubt but that the inheritance of the kingdom of heauẽ belongeth vnto vs. Nowe then, like as Moſes ſaid vnto the Iewes, *The God of your fathers*: ſo muſt this voyce ſounde in our eares, The GOD and father of our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt, hath not onely promiſed vs the kingdome of heauen, but alſo giuen vs wherewith to aſſure our ſelues the better of it. For we haue the performance & effect thereof, in that our Lord Ieſus Chriſt ſuffered death, to recouer vs the inheritance, whereof wee were bereft and diſpoſſeſſed in the perſon of our father Adam. Nowe then wee ſee after what ſort we ought to looke vpon this doctrine: that is to wit, that although wee bee vnhappie wretches, although wee deſerue to bee reiected of our GOD, although there bee nothing but curſedneſſe in vs, and although that by nature wee bee plunged in the gulfe of hell: yet notwithſtanding, ſeeing that God hath adopted vs in our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt, and made vs all one with him by faith: wee neede not doubt but we be heires of the kingdom of heauen. And why? For GOD cannot lye, and foraſmuch as hee is vnchaungeable, wee haue ſufficient warrant that wee ſhall not bee diſappointed by putting our truſt in him. Againe, wee haue our Lorde Ieſus Chriſte, who is the mediatour betweene God and men, and hee hath not onely taken ſolemne recogniſances as a publike notarie: but alſo accompliſhed the thinges that were promiſed on the behalfe of GOD his father. He hath ſigned the euidence in ſuch wiſe with his owne bloude, as wee ſee he hath payed that which hee owed not, and that which he was not to bee charged withall. So then let vs haue this ſtedfaſt aſſuredneſſe with vs, that GOD auoweth vs for his children, and conſequently that wee bee heires of eternall life. Howbeit, let vs alwayes take that aſſuredneſſe out of the Goſpell, accordingly as we ſee that Moſes leadeth the Iewes thither.

True it is that wee muſt not forget the heauenly power that was vttered euerie where in the ryſing againe of our Lorde Ieſus Chriſte. But howe might we applie ſuch a benefite to our ſelues, or how could we inioy it, if it were not by faith? Therefore like as our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt hath purchaced vs the kingdome of heauen by his death and paſſion: ſo is it his will that comfort ſhoulde bee giuen vs nowadayes by his Goſpell, where hee witneſſeth vnto vs that all that euer hee did was for our ſakes and for our welfare: ſo that hauing that once, and being aſſured thereof, we may inioy the benefite that was purchaſed for vs.

But yet in the meane while, wee muſt doe ſo much honour to the Goſpell, as to beholde that thing by faith, which is hidden from our eyes. It is ſaide *that the Lande is at thy commandement*. Nowe if wee beleeue our ſenſes, wee cannot perceiue that the kingdome of heauen is ours, or in our hande: it will ſeeme to bee too farre off from vs, and that wee had neede of wings to flie aboue the ſkyes. But what? Wee muſt ſo honour Gods worde (as I ſaide) as wee muſt not doubt but that the thing which is ſpoken there, is poſſible to be done, although wee conceiue not howe by our fleſhly vnderſtanding: faith muſt ſurmount all capacitie of man. And if wee finde any hardneſſe therein, let vs fight againſt our ſelues, and dayly indeuour to recouer vnto God. For the way whereby hee will be glorified at our hands, is (as I ſaide at the beginning) that if there were no more but his bare worde, yet ought the ſame to contẽt and ſuffice vs. But ſeeing he hath vouchſafed to deliuer vs this pledge which he hath giuen vs in the death and paſſion of our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt: we ſhalbe the leſſe excuſable, if wee haue not a full and whole contentation. Seeing then that we haue ſuch an aſſurance of the kingdome of heauen, let vs go and take poſſeſſion of the lande. For (as I ſaid afore) God will not haue vs idle.

True it is, that hee ſheweth vs by the holy ſcripture, that there is not one drop of power in vs that tendeth vnto good, but that wee be wholly giuen to euill. And yet notwithſtanding it is his will alſo that when he hath put his gratious gifts into vs, we ſhoulde make them auaylable, without chalenging any thing at all to our ſelues. For in this caſe it is not for vs to glorie in our ſelues, nor to truſt in our owne legges, according whereunto it is ſaide in the Pſalme to ſuch as are giuen to the worlde, that they muſt not truſt in their owne ſtrength, nor in the ſtrength of their horſes. If this bee ſaide of the thinges that perteine to this flightfull life: what is to bee ſaide of the ſpirituall life which is much more excellent? So then

Pſal.33.16 and 17.

wͭout attributing any thing to our ſelues, let vs indeuour neuertheleſſe ſeeing that God commandeth vs, and let vs goe on to enter into the poſſeſſion of the ſpirituall kingdome whereunto he calleth vs. And that is the cauſe why I ſaid that wee muſt euermore come backe to our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt, and there ſeeke yͤ thing that is wanting in our ſelues. For wee knowe that his ſuffering of his death and paſſion, was to exalt vs aboue the heauens: and although wee doe but creepe vppon the earth, or rather bee ſo loppeheauie that wee ſinke ſtill downeward, to plundge our ſelues in the bottomleſſe gulfes: yet will our Lorde Ieſus lift vs vp, according as he himſelf was exalted, to the ſame end and intent,
Iohn.3.14. as is declared in the third Chapter of the Goſpel of S. Iohn.

Furthermore, to the ende wee may bee diſcharged of all ſelftruſt, let vs looke vppon the notable example that was giuen vs at the death of our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt. For if wee will goe the right way to heauen, wee muſt followe the poore theefe to whom he ſaide, This day ſhalt thou bee with mee in Paradiſe. Howe can wee bee ſure that GOD will bring vs to the kingdome of heauen, ſeeing that wee ſeeke hell, and all our affections, all our thoughtes, all our deſires, all our powers, and all our workes, tend wholly thither, euen to ſeparate vs from God, and to alienate vs from his kingdome, and to driue vs away from life and ſaluation? How may wee (ſay I) be ſure that God will take vs vppe into his heauenly kingdome? We muſt haue recourſe to this word that was ſpoken to the poore theefe: This day ſhalt thou be with me in Paradiſe. Seeing it is ſo that our Lord died, & that he entred into ſuch gulfes of ſorrowe, that he was pinched ſo farre as to abide the tormentes that were due vnto vs, and not only abode yͤ reproch and griefe of bodily death, but alſo felt yͤ Iuſtice of God, and became as a wretched offender to beare all the ſinnes of the world: let vs not doubt but he hath deliuered vs from the paines & anguiſh which wee ſhould haue felt, and will lifte vs vp to himſelfe, and therefore nowe let vs not bee afraide of death. But firſt of all it behoueth vs to followe the poore theefe. What had he in him to bring him to the kingdome of heauen? He was faſtened to a croſſe, he had his armes and legges broken, he ſeemed to bee but a wretched carkaſſe, there was nothing but reproche in him. Thus then you ſee howe he was an owgly myrrour to looke vpon: and yet neuertheleſſe, Ieſus Chriſte promiſeth him to make him his partaker and companion of his heauenly glorie. And what had hee beene all the time of his lyfe? So lewde and wicked both before God and man, that he was worſe than condemned and accurſed. Will we then be the heires of God? Wee muſt follow this theefe who had the preheminence to goe before vs into the heritage of heauen. And how [muſt wee follow him?] We muſt acknowledge yͭ naturally there is nothing in vs but vtter wickedneſſe, and that GOD might iuſtly holde vs accurſed. Alſo wee muſt thinke our ſelues to bee as folke that haue their armes and legges broken, yea and as men vtterly diſmembred, ſo as we haue not one whit of ſtrength in vs, at leaſtwiſe as in reſpect of our ſelues. And yet for all that therewithall we muſt not doubt but that God accepteth vs to him, when wee linke in with our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt by right faith and pure affection, acknowledging him to be our king, and hauing our eyes faſtened vpon the inuiſible kingdome, as I ſaide afore. For if the wretched theefe which ſawe death before his eyes, which was in as great tormentes as was poſſible, and ſawe himſelfe as it were behated of all the world, did put his truſt in Ieſus Chriſte: what ought wee to doe? Againe, in what ſtate was our Lord Ieſus Chriſt at the ſame time? He hung vpon a croſſe full of reproche and ſhame, all men did ſpit at him, all men did ſpite him. And yet, notwithſtanding that reprochfull ſtate, the poore wretch ceaſſed not to behold life in death, and to ſay, Lorde remember me when thou commeſt into thy kingdome. But now wee knowe that Ieſus Chriſt is exalted to the right hand of GOD his father, and hath ſouereigne power ouer all creatures: ſo that if wee yeeld him not his due honour now that he is entered into his glorie, wee ſhall haue no excuſe at all. True it is that he was once hanged vpon a gibbet ful of reproch and ſhame: but yet wee ſee therewithall that the ſame was turned into glorie and triumph, ſo as the victorie which he obteined was more royall than all the triumphes of all the Princes in the worlde. Seeing then that wee doe ſee that Ieſus Chriſt hath ridde away all the ſlaunder of his croſſe by the power of his reſurrection: ought wee not at leaſtwiſe to looke vp to the kingdome where he dwelleth, whereunto he calleth vs, and which he hath purchaſed ſo dearely? Thus you ſee after what maner wee muſt put in vre this text *of the poſſeſſing of the land which he hath promiſed vs and purchaſed for vs.*

Beſides this, when wee heare this ſaying, *that it is at our commaundement*: let vs vnderſtand that it were a diſanulling of the death and paſſion of our Lord Ieſus Chriſt, if wee ſhould not bee fully reſolued of this inheritaunce, according alſo as Saint Paule ſheweth. If thou ſay, Rom.10.7.
who is he that ſhall goe downe into the deepe, it is all one as if thou ſhouldeſt fetche vp Chriſt againe from death. Then if wee imagine with our ſelues, alas wee bee wretched creatures, there is nothing but vtter weakeneſſe in vs, euill doeth ſo ouermaiſter that wee wote not what to do, the diuell tormenteth vs, on the one ſide, and on the other ſide wee bee ſo fraile as is pitifull to ſee, and wee bee in trouble and vnquietneſſe: if wee ſtande herevpon as quite out of heart and diſcouraged: Saint Paule ſayeth it is all one as if we beleeued not that Ieſus Chriſt dyed for vs. For why? The death and Paſſion that he ſuffered are no trifling thing, but a thing of verie great price. Nowe then wee muſt take it to bee of power as it is, ſo that although we ſee our ſelues in the mids of bottomleſſe pits, yea & that very often and commonly, inſomuch that when wee bee out of one gulfe, by and by wee

wee enter into another, and therewithall Satan hath ſuch power againſt vs and wee on the other ſide are ſo feeble, that we can ſcarcely ſtirre one finger: yet let vs not forbeare to aſſure our ſelues, that the inheritaunce belongeth to vs ſtill: for that is the honour which wee muſt yeeld to our Lord Ieſus Chriſt. But therewithall let vs go foreward ſtill. After what maner? Let vs call to minde howe the Apoſtle ſaieth, that like as our Heb.13.12. Lord Ieſus Chriſt went out of the Citie as reiected out of the companie of men: ſo we muſt not diſdaine to become like him, and to beare the ſhame and reproche of his croſſe: for it becommeth the members to be faſhioned like to their body. And therefore let vs determine to goe after him. For thoſe are the true markes whereby he knoweth vs to bee his. And for performance thereof, let vs vnderſtand that wee muſt forſake the world in general, yea and our ſelues too. For the matter ſtandeth not alonely vpon going out of the world. True it is that ſo long as it pleaſeth God to haue vs lodge here, here wee muſt abide: but yet howſoeuer we fare, we muſt euer haue one foote vp, readie to goe hence whenſoeuer it ſhall pleaſe God to take vs to him: ſo that if wee will be heires of the heauenly kingdome, wee muſt be but pilgrims and ſtraungers in this world. Yea and (which more is) wee muſt go out of our ſelues, that is to ſay, we muſt not leane to our owne will and wit, but wee muſt ridde our ſelues of all ſelfweening, and couet nothing but to goe vnto God. And if the world ſhake vs off and make a mocking ſtocke of vs, (as we ſee now adayes how the poore Chriſtians are lightly eſteemed, ſo that they bee taken to bee as the offſcouring of the world, or rather as myre & dung, as ſaieth S. Paul) I ſay, if wee bee ſo reiected of 1.Cor.4.13. the whole world: let vs beare it patiently. For why? Ieſus Chriſt went out of the Citie Ieruſalem, bearing the reproch and curſe of the whole world vpon him: and therefore let vs bee readie to bee faſhioned like vnto him. Alſo therewithal let vs determine to ſeparate our ſelues from all the vncleanneſſe that reigneth euerie where now adayes in the world. And foraſmuch as we can not poſſeſſe the heauenly heritage, vnleſſe wee ouercome this doubting and fearefulneſſe which plucke vs backe: inſomuch that if our mindes runne ſtill vpon our owne feebleneſſe, truely wee ſhall not neede any other thing to ſhake vs downe: whereas on the other ſide if we haue our eye vppon our captaine Ieſus Chriſt, who alonely hath vanquiſhed all feare, yea and euen death, and the diuell, & all his power: then may wee boldly goe on ſtill, to ouercome all lets that may hinder vs or turne vs aſide from following God whitherſoeuer he calleth vs: Let vs ſhut our eyes againſt all that euer may turne vs out of the right way, and let vs not doubt but that God wil alwayes be our guide, and worke in ſuch wiſe, as he will outgoe all our deſires, yea and all the hope that we can conceiue of him.

Nowe therefore let vs kneele downe in the preſence of our good God with acknowledgement of our ſinnes, praying him to make vs ſo to feele them, that being caſt down in our ſelues, wee may reſort wholly vnto him, and acknowledging our ſelues to bee wretched offenders that haue deſerued his wrath and vengeance, (yea euen wout euer being able to recouer out of endleſſe death and curſednes) flee for refuge to the redemption that is purchaſed for vs by the bloudſhed of his onely ſonne. And that ſeeing our Lord Ieſus Chriſt hath payed all our debtes, to diſcharge vs of them, and to beare the condemnation that was due vnto vs, and foraſmuch as he offereth vs daily the fruite and effect of his death and paſſion: we may not doubt but that he will accompliſh the thing that he hath begunne in vs, and by his holy ſpirit make the power of his reſurrection auaileable in vs, to the end that we may leade a new life, and bee ſtabliſhed in him more & more, till we be quite rid of all the corruptions of our fleſh, to bee taken vp into his kingdome. That it may pleaſe him to graunt this grace, not onely, &c.

On Saturday the xiij. of Aprill. 1555.

The ſixth Sermon vpon the firſt Chapter.

22 Then came you all vnto me and ſaid, let vs ſend men before vs to ſearch out the land for vs, and to bring vs word by what way we ſhall go vp into it, and into what Cities we ſhall enter.

23 That ſaying liked me well, and therevpon I tooke twelue men among you, of euery tribe one.

24 And they departed, and went vp into the Mountaines, and came to the riuer of Eſcol, and ſearched out the land.

25 And they tooke of the fruits of the Land in their handes, and brought them to vs, and brought vs word againe and ſaid, The Land which the Lorde our God giueth vs is good.

26 Yet notwithſtanding, you would not goe vp, but were diſobedient to the commaundement of the Lord your God.

27 And you murmured in your tentes and ſaide, bicauſe the Lorde hateth vs, therefore hath he made vs to come out of the Countrie of Egypt, to deliuer vs into the hand of the Amorrhytes,to cauſe vs to be deſtroyed.

28 How ſhall wee goe vp? Our brethren haue made our heartes to quaile, by ſaying: The people are moe in nomber and taller of ſtature than wee. The Cities are great,and walled vp to the skie. And moreouer we haue ſeene there the ſonnes of the Enakims.

Num.13.2. HEre Moſes bringeth to their remembrance the things that are conteined in the xiij. Chapter of the Booke of Nombers,howbeit that there ſeemeth to bee ſome diuerſitie at the firſt bluſh. For there he declareth that ſuch as ſhould haue eſpied out the land, were ſent by the expreſſe commaundement of God: and here he maketh no mention of it,but ſaieth it was done at the requeſt of the people. Now theſe two things may very well agree: that is to wit, that the people ſhould deſire to haue the enteraunce into the land knowen before they went any further: and alſo that God ſhould allow that deſire,yea or rather euen preuent it,accordingly as wee knowe that in all thinges he guided this people with a paſſing fatherly care, as ſhall bee ſhewed in the next Lecture. Therefore there is no inconuenience in it,that God,to ſhewe the people what care he had to guide them,ſhould appoint ſpies to be ſent: and that therewithall the people alſo on their part ſhould require it. So then we ſee ſtill that God bare with the people, when he graunted to ſend men to ſpie out the land. And let vs marke, that it was a condemning of the people, when the thing that ſhould haue bene to their helpe and furtherance, did plucke them backe. And it is not reported alonely of thoſe whome Moſes ſpeakes off, to the intent that wee ſhould blame them: but they bee ſet forth as an example and looking glaſſe, for vs to ſee our ſelues in, and to fare the better by it. If God beare with vs and giue vs meanes conuenient for our infirmitie: let vs apply them to our vſe,let them ſtirre vs vp to obey him, and let vs not in any wiſe be hindred by them. This(ſay I) is the thing that wee haue to marke.

Num.13.31. 32.& 14.6. But the chiefe point is this that Moſes addeth, namely, *That the ſpies brought worde againe that the land was good, and that the people would not beleeue it,but were diſobedient to the mouth of God.* It ſhould ſeeme that Moſes rehearſeth not the ſtorie as it is conteined in the place before alledged. For there it is ſaid,that of the twelue which were ſent, there were but two that hartened the people to enter into the land that was promiſed them, and that the other ten laboured as much as they could, to diſcourage thoſe which were not verie well diſpoſed of themſelues. Seeing it is ſo, why doeth Moſes ſay here, that the ſpies reported it to be a good land, as though they had incouraged the people to doe as God had commaunded them? Wee haue to marke here, that Moſes hath not an eye to the greater nomber nor to the multitude: but to the better ſort of them. Although then that there was no moe but Caleb the ſonne of Iephonee and Ioſua the ſonne of Nun, that made good report, and traueiled to make the people to obey God: yet are they preferred at Gods hand. Thus ye ſee that God eſteemeth more of the ſixth part than of all the reſt. And it is a verie notable point, as whereof wee may gather verie good and profitable doctrine. For anon Moſes will adde, that the greater part of thoſe that were ſent to ſpie out the land, ſaide that the Cities were great and walled vp to the ſkie. But as now he ſpeakes but of the two that diſcharged their duetie.

Wee ſee then, that whenſoeuer the greater multitude of men inclineth vnto euill, we muſt let them alone as though they were nothing worth. They bee not worthie to come in account, and wee muſt rather holde with a handfull of men whom wee ſee to teache vs faithfully and to giue vs good counſell: I ſay wee muſt rather followe one or two ſuch, and let a hundred, yea a thouſand others goe, than caſt our ſelues into confuſion with the greater multitude. And if euer this were needfull: it is needfull now in our time. For on the one ſide wee ſee how all thinges are turned vpſide downe in the worlde: ſuperſtitions are ſo great and vnmeaſurable as is pitie to ſee. If wee ſhould frame our life to the common trade, what a thing were it? For all is infected with robberie, deceite, crueltie, treaſon, blaſphemie, contempt of God, drunkenneſſe, whoredome, pride, and looſeneſſe. Nowe then, whoſoeuer faſhioneth himſelfe to the cuſtome of men,muſt forſake God and withdrawe himſelfe from all goodneſſe: he muſt giue himſelfe to all lewdneſſe, and plundge himſelfe into all wickedneſſe. Lo to what point wee bee come. What is to be done then? Let vs learne to looke vpon ſuch as are able to guide vs aright, though they be but fewe in nomber: and let vs not be caried away by the greater multitude. For it wil not ſerue to ſhield vs before God, it will not ſerue to leſſen or to mitigate our fault. If we ſay, euery mã did ſo: when I ſaw ſuch a nomber of men followe that trade, I put my ſelfe in companie with them: & to my ſeeming ẏ thing that was ſo commonly vſed, could not bee but lawfull: the alledging of ſuch fond excuſes will ſtand vs in no ſtead, for we ſhall win nothing by them, as I ſaide afore. And therefore let vs follow thoſe to whom God hath giuen the grace to ſhew vs ẏ right way. Though there be but three or foure of them, let vs eſteem them no leſſe than if they were an hundred thouſand. For God paſſeth not for the greatneſſe of the multitude, as it is ſaid alreadie.

Againe, on the other ſide, as concerning Religion: are they that ſticke to the pureneſſe of the Goſpell, moe in nomber than the Papiſts, Turkes, and heathen men? No ſurely. Inſomuch that if wee bee compared but with the Iewes which are a curſed offſcouring, whom God hath ſo rooted out as there remaine verie fewe of them: yet notwithſtanding the Chriſtians which are willing to giue themſelues ſimply to the ſeruing of God according to his word, are ſo fewe in nomber, as the other may farre paſſe them. What would become of vs then, if wee ſhoulde followe the greater nomber? And yet wee ſee howe a great ſort of ignoraunt folkes doe take vpon them to ſay, Tuſh, as for them that take vpon them to alter Religion, they bee but a verie ſmall nomber, and are they wiſer than all the world beſide? Thus you ſee how moſt men gaſe vpon themſelues, and caſt a ſtop in their owne way, to barre themſelues from comming to Gods trueth. And what is the cauſe thereof? Euen their blearing of their owne eyes, by gaſing vpon the greater multitude which goeth to deſtruction,

But contrariwiſe, let vs condemne the whole world, as Noe was faine to doe in his time. And that condemning of his was not in vaine: for he and his houſhold were ſaued by it. And although they were not aboue eight perſons in all: yet durſt they ſet themſelues againſt yͤ whole world: and ſo muſt wee doe. Though all the whole world crie out with one voyce, that it is not now needefull to reſt vpon the holy ſcripture, and that the opinions of the great wiſe men of the world ſhall ſtand: let vs giue eare to that which GOD ſayeth. Albeit there were but one man that laboured to bring vs from the errours and ſuperſtitions that haue full ſcope euerywhere: yet let that one man bee more eſteemed at our handes, than a hundred thouſand others. For wee ſee the rule thereof that is giuen vs here.

And although Moſes was the writer of this Booke: yet is it the holy Ghoſtes doing, who vſed him as an inſtrument. Now then, where it is ſaide *That the ſpies reported it to bee a good land:* wee ſee that the two are ſet downe at it were in the roome of all the twelue, and the other tenne are laid vnderfoote. For they were not worthie to bee remembred, and we knowe that God deſtroyed them for their vntruſtineſſe. Then if there bee any deceiuers that ſeduce the common people, ſo as their wicked doctrine is receiued, and men like well of them, and in the meane while there are very fewe that teache vs to ſerue God purely: let vs heare thoſe fewe, & let vs not ſticke to ſay, Theſe are the teachers that inſtruct vs rightly what wee ought to doe. Though the nomber of their aduerſaries be neuer ſo great, let vs not make any account of thē, foraſmuch as we ſee that God deſtroyeth them, & that they be as it were raſed out of his booke: for beholde, this ſtorie written by Moſes is the very regiſter of God. Inſomuch that whereas on the one ſide ten men had conſpired to miſcarie the people, they were all reiected, & God made no reckening nor account of them. And [on the contrarie part] whereas there were but two that incouraged the people faithfully: thoſe were put in nomber for all yͤ reſt, for they were well worthy to be eſteemed as miniſters and ſhepherdes in Gods Church, for their due perfourming of their charge. Therfore if we marke this text, we ſhall be throughly armed and fenced againſt all the ſtumbling blockes yͭ trouble moſt men, who when they ſee a ſort of dogges barking at Gods trueth, are vtterly at their wits ende, and knowe not what to doe nor where to become. Wherefore let vs looke to obſerue the rule that God giueth vs: & then ſhall wee euer keepe on our courſe, & neuer be turned out of the way for the troubles and diuiſions that we ſee in the world.

And hereunto alſo ought that to ſerue which Moſes addeth, *You would not* (ſaith he) *but were diſobedient.* To whom? He ſaith not ſingly *vnto God:* but *vnto the mouth of God.* This maner of ſpeache might ſeeme harſh at the firſt ſight: but yet it importeth good doctrine. Wee know that men are alwayes deſirous to excuſe themſelues whē they withſtand God and incounter his word: and yet for all that they ceaſſe not to proteſt that they meane not to be againſt God. Their intent then is, that men ſhould not thinke them to doe that which they do. But here to cut off occaſion of all ſtartingholes, the holy Ghoſt ſaith expreſly, that we muſt yeeld to Gods mouth. And what is mēt by this mouth of his? It is his vttering of his will vnto vs, when he ſpeaketh to vs by his miniſters, by his Prophets, and by ſuch as he raiſeth vp in his Church to gouerne his people. That then is yͤ thing that wee muſt take heede vnto: for God will not ſhewe himſelfe to vs in viſible maner. True it is that at the ſame time he gaue ſignes & tokens, to the end it might bee knowen that he himſelfe ſpake by Moſes: but yet in the meane while he vſed Moſes as his inſtrument, & therewithall confirmed his lawe which was publiſhed at that time. After him came the Prophets, and them alſo did God vſe as his mouth: but in the Goſpell wee haue his mouth open moſt of all. So then let vs marke well, yͭ they which proteſt that their intent is to ſerue God, & in the meane while make none account of his word, as it is vttered and left in writing: are but hypocrites, yea euen ſhameleſſe hypocrites, bicauſe the deede it ſelfe proueth them liars. For whereas they on the one ſide ſay that their intent is to ſerue God: and God on yͤ other ſide intendeth to trie our obedience by ſetting his word before vs: yͤ ſame is a good triall to diſcerne whether our ſaying that we be his ſeruantes, be ſo in good earneſt or no. For thereby it appeareth, that they hearken not to his word, but rather reiect it, & preferre their owne opinions and fancies before it. And ſo ye ſee a point that ye ought to marke wel.

And hereby it appeareth how much yͤ whole world is to be condemned now adayes. For yͤ Papiſtes can well ynough ſay, yͭ their intent is to be ſubiect vnto God: yea & to what purpoſe elſe do they take ſo great paines, & martyr thēſelues in their fooliſh deuotions? All the Idolatries which they commit, they terme by the name of Gods ſeruice. But yet for all that, behold, wee haue the holy ſcripture wherein God hath vttered his will vnto vs, and he will haue men to be ruled thereby. This is alledged to the Papiſtes, to the end they ſhould not followe their owne lykings, but ſubmit themſelues to the bridle in ſuch ſorte as God hath layde it vppon vs, and beare his yoke quietly. But contrariwiſe, they will needes ſerue God after their owne imaginations, as we ſee by the confuſed mingling that is among thẽ, [which maketh it manifeſt]that they haue no care at all to obſerue Gods commaundements. For their ſaying is, mee thinkes that this is good, thus were we taught by our fathers. Wherby we ſee that they doe flatly reſiſt Gods mouth. They will not ſtick afterward to ſay, O wee worſhip God. Yea marie, but God will haue men to harken to his mouth, and we knowe what maner a one that is: namely euen the ſame wherewith he hath ſpoken by Moſes and the prophets, and finally by the Apoſtles by whom he hath taught vs familiarly all that euer hee would haue vs to doe. So then let vs nowe take good heede to this doctrine, for wee cannot diſobey Gods mouth, that is to ſay his word, but it is a maniſeſt deſpiſing of him: for they be things that differ not, neither can they be ſeparated aſunder.

Furthermore not onely the Papiſtes doe prouoke God by reſiſting his word: but alſo we ſee that euen they which poſſeſſe the Goſpell, will beleue nothing but that which lyketh thẽſelues. For what reuerẽce hath the holy ſcripture nowadayes among a nomber of men? In deede the word *Goſpell* coſteth them nothing: but in the meane while, if a man tell them that God ſayth not any thing which is not there: euery man takes vpon him to bee an interpreter: or els hee ſayth, mee thinkes this is harde, and as for that, I cannot diſgeſt it. And ſo, after as euery man miſlyketh of the holy ſcripture, ſo taketh he leaue to reiect one thing or other, whereas notwithſtanding, wee ſhould in all pointes haue our mouthes ſhut when God ſpeaketh, and our eares open to receiue whatſoeuer he ſayth vnto vs. Foraſmuch then as we ſee that the doctrine of the Goſpell is ſo deſpiſed throughout the worlde, and euery of vs ſhooteth foorth his owne bolt, and wee will needes haue ſuch ſhiftes and deuiſes as lyke our ſelues, ſo as if any thing ſeeme euill vnto vs, wee reiecte it: it may eaſily be gathered by the ſight thereof, what horrible condemnation is prepared for all ſuch as diſobay the mouth of God. And therfore let vs learn to temper our ſelues with ſuch modeſtie, and ſobernes, that as ſoone as we haue any record of Gods trueth, wee may yeelde vnto it without gaineſaying. Let that ſerue for one poynt.

And moreouer let vs extend this doctrine yet to a further vſe: which is, not to be inquiſitiue of Gods trueth, furtherfoorth than it is vttered in the holy ſcriptures. For God will not haue vs to fall (as yee woulde ſay) to pulling out of his bowels, as they doe which will needes bee ſearching out of meaſure, and more than they haue leaue to doe. We ſhall ſee a nomber of fantaſticall fellowes & giddibraind perſons, which caſt forth fond & tryfling queſtions, and turmoyle heauen & earth, & are neuer contented, but are alwayes buſie & full of vnquietneſſe. Now, this is a curſed & deadly diſeaſe. And therfore let vs learne to hearken vnto God when he ſpeaketh to vs, & not to couet to know any more than he hath taught vs, & ſetteth daily before vs in the holy ſcripture. Let all our wiſedome be to receiue yͤ which is vttered vnto vs by yͤ mouth of god. It followeth how Moſes vpbraided yͤ people, *that they murmured in their tentes, ſaying: Beholde, becauſe the Lord hateth vs, therefore hath he brought vs out of the land of Egypt, and brought vs hither as to a burial place. For our brethren haue made our hartes to quaile, telling vs that they ſawe Giants in the land, and that the townes are walled vp to the cloudes. And to what purpoſe then ſhall wee goe?* Here wee ſee that when men begin once to doe amiſſe, the miſchief waxeth ſtil worſe and worſe, vntill it become to the full meaſure. It was an euill beginning aforehand, when the people reſiſted God, and would not followe to enter into the land at the commaundement of Moſes.

But is this all? No, behold here is yet a much more curſed blaſphemie, in that the people ſpyteth GOD, repyning at his bringing of them out of Egypt, and charging him with hatred towardes them. And whereof came this? No doubt but hee maketh it playne: namely for that men ſeeke couert in dooing euill, and make no conſcience to accuſe God and to blaſpheme his holy name, to the ende to haue ſome colour wherewith to hide their owne wickedneſſe. Thus you ſee how men deale, when they cannot finde in their hartes to yeeld vnto God. They will needes ſtill iuſtifie themſelues in their diſobedience, ſpecially when God preaceth vppon them and holdeth them at a bay, yea and layeth in ſuch euidence againſt them, as they be conuicted: for then doe they ſeeke ſtartingholes to iuſtifie themſelues euen in deſpite of God, accuſing him and laying all the fault vppon him. Truely this is a curſed kinde of dealing, but yet we ſee it is common, inſomuch that men doe make euen an arte of it. How many are there to be found, that wil not blame God to cleare themſelues? If a man blame them for it, and charge them with their faultes: they will not graunt that their intent was ſo: but yet the deede bewrayeth that it is ſo. If a man bee rebuked for his vices, with whom hath he to doe? In deede it may be yͭ it is but a mortall man which findeth fault with him & ſayth, thou haſt done this or that: but yet muſt he vnderſtand that the iudgement is Gods. When ſoeuer any man telleth vs that we haue done amiſſe: wee muſt not looke at him that ſpeaketh, for Gods word is the iudge. Therefore muſt euery man cyte himſelfe, and as oft as he is warned of any offẽce, he muſt offer himſelf to Gods iudgemẽt ſeat, & conſider yͭ yͭ is the place where he muſt appeare to make his account. Now let vs ſe how euery of vs is inclined or diſpoſed to cõfeſſe his faults. Nay, cõtrariwiſe we ſecke al yͤ ſhifts we can, to ſhroud our ſelues, & we haue our lurkingholes, inſomuch yͭ euen whẽ we be too manifeſtly cõuicted of our ſins, yet we ceaſe not to wrangle ſtill. But our Lord will not ſuffer vs to ſcape him ſo by our fond excuſes. He followeth ſtill vpon vs, and then begin wee to gnaſh our teeth at him. We ſee that theſe would excuſe themſelues. But when they fall to replying, with how ſo? ſee we not that the euill is already apparant? Therfore when men perceiue themſelues to be ſo preaced at by Gods word, they become as wilde beaſtes, they ſpit out and caſt vp their poyſon, they ſpite God apparantly, & rayle at his word. And would God ẏ examples thereof were not ſo common as we ſee they be.

Wherefore let vs marke, that this text ought to ſerue vs as a looking glaſſe, wherein to behold the frowardneſſe that reigneth throughout the world. And when we haue done amiſſe, let vs learne to abſteine from wilfulneſſe. For elſe in the ende we ſhall fall into the bottomleſſe pit of blaſpheming God, & if we continue in that ſtubbornes & vnwillingnes to acknowledge our own vices, in the end we ſhal fal to reſiſting God furiouſly, as it befell to theſe wretches of whome Moſes ſpeaketh here. For when men wil needes maintaine themſelues after that ſorte in their wicked quarels againſt God, they fall not onely into diſobedience, but alſo into ſturdineſſe, yea euen into moſt ſhameful & beaſtly ſturdineſſe, as we ſee here. It was too groſſe a fault already, when the people had ſaid, how ſhall we goe, or what can we do, ſeeing the townes are ſo ſtrong and the people ſo giantlyke? It was too much already to reſiſt God after that faſhion. But behold, here is yet a more exceſſiue vnthankefulneſſe. For in ſtead of bethinking themſelues of Gods grace, in deliuering them from the thaldome of Egypt: they fal to rayling at him. What (ſay they?) Would God haue fetched vs out of the land of Egypt, if he had not hated vs? Now alas what hatred was it! When God pitied his poore creatures, they were euen at the laſt caſt: they were intreated lyke wretched ſlaues, yea euen to the drawing of the bloud out of their vaines: they were ſo cruelly handled, as was horrible to ſee: & in the end the tyranny was growen ſo farre, that all their malechildren were murthered, of purpoſe to make cleane riddance of them, and to wipe out the very remembrance of them. Euen at this pinch, did God haue compaſſion vppon the people. Could any greater goodnes haue bin ſhewed? And when as he ſaith Mich.6,3. by his prophet, My people, what harme did I thee in bringing thee out of the land of Egypt? doeth it not appeare thereby that they were too too malitious and frowarde? I planted a vine [ſayth God] and looked for good fruite: & now thou wilt choke thy maiſter with thy ſowerneſſe.

Now then ſeeing that this deliuering of them out of the land of Egypt, was a ſingular warrant of Gods goodneſſe, loue, and mercie towardes them: muſt it not needes be that they were ſtark mad, when they twited God with his bringing of them out of Egypt, charging him that he did it of hatred towardes them? Were it poſſible that men ſhould ouerſhoote themſelues ſo farre, if they were not become ſtarke deuils? No: but as I ſayd afore, this doctrine is written of the Iewes that were in the time of Moſes, to the intent that we ſhould profite in the feare of God by their example, and beare in minde that they which will needes ſtand ſo wilfully in their vices, ſhall in the end fall to flat ſpiting of God, and blaſpheme his name, turne good into euill, deface his mercie as much as they can, mingle heauen and earth together, and make a helliſhe confuſion of all thinges. Wherefore let vs ſtand in awe, and walke on in humilitie and warineſſe, glorifying God. Againe, when we haue committed God any fault, let vs be afrayd, yea and euen mourne for it, and not pretend any matter or quarell againſt God, but rather flee to his onely mercie for refuge, being vtterly aſhamed and caſt downe in our ſelues. And ſo ye ſee what we haue to marke vppon this text, where it is ſayd that the Iewes murmured in their tẽts, ſaying that Gods bringing of them out of the land of Egypt, was becauſe he hated them.

Now furthermore it behoueth vs to marke, that the cauſe of their rayling, was for that they knewe not Gods power, notwithſtanding that it was apparant to them. For although they had felt it enough, & more than enough to haue cõfirmed thẽwithal: yet neuertheles, as ſoon as they heard ſpeaking of the talneſſe of their enemies, of their walled cities, & of their ſtrong holdes: by and by their hearts failed them and they were vtterly diſmaid. And why? Surely God had giuen them proofe of his mightie power, to the intent they ſhould haue truſted to him as I haue ſayd heretofore. But what for that? They ſhut their eyes at all thoſe thinges, and therewithal fell to grudging aſſoone as they heard of any diſtreſſe. And euen ſo doe we. For when God calleth vs, or commaundeth vs to goe: we will ſee aforehand whether there be any lettes or no. How ſhall I goe, ſay wee? for there is this let and that let: and as for me, I haue no ſtrength at all. And in the meane ſeaſon we conſider not that God is ſtrong enough for vs, and that it is his power which maketh vs to walke on, and to ouercome all that euer the deuill trumpeth in our way. Now then, wee can neuer yeeld God his due honor, to truſt in him, to put our ſelues into his hand, and to hope that he will helpe vs and giue vs the vpper hand of all thinges that may turne vs out of the right way: except we haue an eye to the benefits we haue receiued before. And ſo we ſee that Moſes rehearſeth not here a ſingle ſtorie, ẏ we might the better know what God hath willed vs to doe: but rather that he ſetteth before our eyes what we be, together with the vices that are but too common among among vs, to the end we ſhould learne to put our truſt in Gods ſtrength. What is to be done then? We ſee our owne frailetie, howbeit not ſo much as were requiſite: but yet, that which we ſe ought to make vs hang downe our heads. Neuertheleſſe, when we knowe once ẏ there is no power in vs to follow Gods will: let vs ſtep to the remedie, let vs not be out of hart for it, neither let vs doe as they doe which thinke themſelues quit becauſe they haue not wherwith to ſtead ẏ turne, ſaying, oh ſyr, I am of fleſh and bloud, I am a man. And what is that to ſay, but that thou art in ſin, and vncleane? but manie men ſay ſo, to the intent to waſhe their handes of it. They may well ſay, as for me, I haue not ſo great ſtrength: true it is that I ought to doe it, but I am not able. Yea marie, but is there not a God yͤ can do it for vs? yes: and therefore when we once knowe our owne weakneſſe, let vs learne to ſeeke the remedie, foraſmuch as god hath promiſed vs yͤ ſpirit of ſtrẽgth, that being grounded thereupon, wee may not doubt but that wee ſhall ouercome all our enemies, and all the aſſaultes that can be made vpon vs. Furthermore let vs alſo conſider yͤ power of our enemies, and the greatneſſe of temptations. For wee haue not to doe with fleſhe and bloud, they that fight againſt vs are not mortall and tranſitorie men, but they be all the powers of the ayre, and the prince of the worlde practiſeth all yͤ he can to diſcomfit vs. Now therefore, when we once knowe the force of Satan, and the meanes that he hath to breake vs, and to vndoo vs: let vs not faile to take courage, and to bee of inuincible conſtancie. And why? for we know yͤ our God hath promiſed vs the vpper hand of al that euer Satã ſhal practiſe againſt vs. And therfore it is he yͤ we muſt truſt vnto. Thus we ſee generally how we ought to put this doctrine in vre.

Now haue we to goe through with the reſt of the ſimilitude which I glaunced at here before: which is, that we muſt conſider, that ſeeing God doth call vs nowadayes, not to the poſſeſſing of the lande of Chanaan, nor to be lodged here in this world for a fewe dayes, but to come to the heauenly lyfe, and to the immortall inheritance: it becommeth vs to take courage, and to acquaint our ſelues with this doctrine. And ſeeing that God hath told vs, that his reaching of
Pſal. 138. 8. & Phil. 1.6.
his hand once vnto vs is not in vaine, and that he will goe through with his worke: wee on our part muſt determine fully to goe through with our courſe, and not to ſhrinke in the middes of the way. Thus ye ſee, firſt of all that we be more to blame than the Iewes of olde time, if wee hearken not to Gods mouth, conſidering that his intent is not, only to giue vs an earthly dwelling place to lodge in, but to call vs right foorth to the kingdome of heauen, and to the immortall glorie,
Rom. 8.23.
whereof wee bee made partakers aforehand by hope. And beſides this, wee ſee after what ſorte our Lord hath called vs. For he hath not giuen vs ſuch Spyes as were giuen to the people of olde time, he hath not giuen vs a dooſen perſons to report vnto vs what maner a land it is: but hee hath ſent vs his onely ſonne,
Apoc. 1.5.
who is a faithfull witneſſe of the inuiſible heritage, yea and he hath giuẽ vs good hanſel thereof in his ryſing againe.
Rom. 8. 11. & 1. Cor. 15. 20.
Wee haue the twelue Apoſtles which were choſen according to yͤ nomber of the tribes of Iſraell, & they were as good as twelue trũpetters to make gods voyce heard throughout the whole world. And beſides them, there hath bin a great cloude of witneſſes, as the
Heb. 12.1.
Apoſtle termeth them in the twelfth to the Hebrewes, whereby he meaneth that if we were not ouer dull, & worſe than vnthankeful & churliſh: it might well ſuffice vs to haue ſuch an infinite multitude of witneſſes [to auow & warrant] our faith. Now then let vs learne, that if we fight vnder Ieſus Chriſt,
Rom. 4. 39.
who hath told vs that ſin is ouercome by his death and paſſion, & the bondes of death are broken to the intent to ſet vs free:
Col. 3, 2.
it becommeth vs now to looke vp to heauen, & to march on boldly through yͤ world, foraſmuch as he being riſen againe, ſheweth vs that the poſſeſſion of righteouſneſſe and lyfe is aſſured vnto vs, becauſe the power of his ſpirit is vttered therein.
Rom. 1.4.
Seeing we haue ſuch a confirmation to warrant vs the kingdome of heauen that is promiſed vnto vs: ſhould we be cowardly? what excuſe wil there be if we play the daſtards and nice cockneyes? But to the end we may obey our God and not prouoke his mouth: let vs fal to ſtrengthening of our ſelues in him. For what cauſed this wretched people to turne away ſo from his calling? Euen their conſidering of their enemies force according to their owne nature, and their forgetting of God and his power in the meane while. Let vs learne then to make ſuch account of the ſtrength of our God, as that wee may by the power of his ſpirite gette the vpper hand in all incounters that hee bringeth vs vnto: for hee will not haue vs to be idle in this preſent lyfe. Hee coulde well enough ſet vs in quiet at the firſt inſtant, ſo as wee ſhoulde not be troubled any maner a way, nor the worlde make warre againſt vs, nor we be tempted at all by our owne fleſhe, and that Satan ſhould bee far of from vs: God I ſay could well maintaine vs in eaſe at the firſt inſtant: but he intendeth to trye our patience: for he will haue vs to be men of warre. Wherefore let vs on our ſide fight, yea, let vs fight luſtily: and if our enemies bee too ſtrong for vs, (as wee finde that they be in deed) let vs flee for refuge to the helpe that our Lorde hath promiſed vs, and wee ſhall ouercome all lets if wee fight in the ſtrength of God. But yet let vs marke that wee muſt fight vnto death, and not dye once onely: but haue death preſent dayly.

For what elſe is a Chriſten mans lyfe, than an indeuoring to renounce the worlde and all his owne affections? And therefore looke how many good thoughtes wee haue, ſo manie are the deathes of our owne froward nature: ſo as it is not poſſible for vs to ſerue God one day, but we muſt dy a hundred, yea and a thouſand times: I ſaye wee muſt dye by beating downe the ſinfulneſſe of our owne nature: for wee bee full of vices. So then let vs marke well, that God is ſo farre of from making account of Liuerhearted ſeruants, that delight in eaſe, commoditie and pleaſure: that hee will not onely haue vs to fight, but alſo to be readye to dye, and to put the doctrine in vre which I come now to touch: that is to ſay, to bee chaunged and renued euerye minute of an houre.

Moreouer let vs note alſo, yͤ lyke as our Lord Ieſus Chriſt was buryed after hee had bin crucified and ſuffered yͤ reproch of his death: ſo muſt we be buryed too. For it is not enough for vs to dye one day and no more, as ſome doe, (which haue good braydes, ſo as ye would thinke them ready to forſake themſelues vtterly, and there appeareth great willingnes in them to renounce the world: but ſuddenly they will needes fall to reſting there, and they can no skill of entering into the graue:) But we muſt holde out in it, ſo as when wee haue once learned to dye with Chriſt, and to crucifie our olde man as S. Paul termeth it to the Romans: we muſt alſo be ready to goe Rom.6.6. into the graue, that is to ſay, all that euer is in Rom.4.6. vs as in reſpect of the world and of our owne fleſhe, muſt be vtterly aboliſhed, and wee our ſelues become nothing. To be ſhorte, wee muſt deſire nothing but to haue our lyfe hidden with Col.3.3. Chriſt, (as ſayth Saint Paul to the Coloſſians) yea and to haue it hidden til his comming againe. But in any wiſe let vs beware that wee be not vnthankefull: for we ſhall neuer take courage, but by conſidering the ineſtimable worthyneſſe of yͤ good things whereunto God hath called vs. And therefore when we heare that the people conſidered not Gods bringing of them out of the land of Egypt: let not vs followe that trace, for it were the next way to put vs out of hart. So then, we ſhall neuer make anie account at all of Gods benefites which wee haue receiued alreadie, and which he ſhall haue made vs to feele: except we haue our eye alwayes faſt ſet vppon the promiſed land, that is to wit, vppon the euerlaſting lyfe. And therefore on the one part wee muſt oftentimes bethinke vs of Gods benefites, and call to minde his goodneſſe and mercie towardes vs which we haue felt. But that is not all that we haue to doe: when wee haue once conſidered how God hath ſhewed himſelfe to be our redeemer, how he hath taken vs out of the horrible blindneſſe wherein we were, how he hath inlightened vs with the brightneſſe of his Goſpel, and how he hath done vs ſo many good turnes euen in reſpect of our bodies, as we ought well to vnderſtand that he hath ſhewed himſelfe a father and ſauiour towardes vs: but ſpecially when we haue throughly weyed or rather worſhipped the goodnes which he hath ſhewed vs in all the ſpiritual benefites yͤ we haue receiued at his hand: (for they be the excellenteſt, & we alſo ought to eſteeme them more than al the bodily things that we could haue had at his hand:) whē we haue once conſidered all theſe thinges: then muſt we alſo bethinke our ſelues whereunto it is that God calleth vs, that is to wit, to the kingdome of heauen. Therefore we muſt alwayes haue our countenance as it were ſet faſt vppon the heauenly lyfe, and looke thitherward, ſo as all our wittes, all our deſires, and all our indeuors tend thither. For if we haue not an eye to the kingdome of heauen: wee muſt needes ſhrinke at euery incounter euery minute of an houre. Thus then ye ſee what wee haue to doe in that caſe. And moreouer to the intent our hartes quaile not as Moſes ſayth here: let vs indeuer to ſtrengthen our ſelues with the power of the holy ghoſt, and conſider that (as it is ſayd Eſa.35.3.& by the prophet Eſay, and alledged by the Apoſtle Heb.12.12. in the Epiſtle to the Hebrewes,) the Goſpel hath this propertie and nature with it, that when wee feele our knees weake and trembling, when our armes are feeble and after a ſort brooſed and broken, and when we be hemmed in on all ſides with impediments that hinder vs from following our vocation: it maketh vs to reſorte to Gods word, which ought to ſtrengthen vs and to make our armes and legges ſound and luſtie againe, and ſpecially to ſtrengthen vs in our hearts and mindes.

Now let vs kneele downe in the preſence of our good God with acknowledgement of our faultes, praying him to make vs feele them better than we haue done, ſo as we may repent vs rightly of them, and being aſhamed in our ſelues reſorte vnto him, aſſuring our ſelues that (as he hath promiſed to receiue all wretched ſinners that come vnto him vpon truſt of his grace by meanes of the death and paſſion of our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt) wee ſhall be accepted of him and and his wrath pacified towardes vs, though wee haue prouoked him neuer ſo much. And let vs pray him, not onely that wee may obteyne forgiueneſſe of our ſinnes paſt: but alſo to guide vs henceforth by his holy ſpirite, and to drawe vs from all the vanities of the worlde, ſo as he faſhion vs according to his owne righteouſneſſe, and make vs feele the fruite of the victorie and triumph that is prepared for vs in heauen. That it may pleaſe him to graunt this grace, not only to vs but alſo to people & nations of yͤ earth. &c.

On Wedneſday the xvij. of April. 1555.

The ſeuenth Sermon vpon the firſt Chapter.

29 And I ſayd vnto you, dread not, neither be afraide of them.

30 The Lord your God which goeth before you will fight for you, lyke as hee did with you in Egypt before your eyes.

31 And in the wilderneſſe where thou haſt ſeene how the Lord thy God bare thee (euen as a man beareth his ſonne) in all the way which ye haue gone, vntill ye be come vnto this place.

32 And yet for all this, you haue not beleeued the Lord your God,

33 Who to prouide you a place to pitch your tentes in, went before you in the way, in fyre by night to giue you light in the way that you ſhould goe, and in a cloude by day.

If hardineſſe were well taken, it were an excellent vertue worthie of great prayſe, and exceedingly requiſite in al a mans life. For if wee be fearefull, and haue not a ſtout courage to doe well: it will be an eaſie matter to cary vs to all naughtineſſe. But yet for all that, the worlde knoweth not how to bee hardie. And that is the cauſe why men are ſo much giuen to raſhneſſe, & ſo bold & ouerbold to aduēture vpon fooliſh matches without aduiſemēt. But if we aduēture vpon things on our own head & fancie, & put not our truſt in God: it is a building without a foundation. Neuertheleſſe, it is not for vs to looke for Gods helpe, furtherfoorth than he hath bound himſelfe to it by his promiſes. The way then that we ought to be hardy, is that when we haue once ſought out Gods will, wee obey it ſimply without attempting any thing at our owne pleaſure. Be wee once at that poynt, wee muſt examine our owne ſtrength and abilitie, and finding nothing but weakeneſſe there, wee muſt vtterly diſtruſt our ſelues and reſort vnto God. And foraſmuch as he of his owne free goodneſſe vouchſafeth to aſſure vs that hee will not leaue vs at our neede: we muſt thereupon conclude, ẏ we cannot miſcary being vnder his protection.

Now then wee ſee that the true hardineſſe which God alloweth of, is when men truſt not to themſelues, ne leane to their owne wit and reaſon, but yeelde themſelues wholy to him that ought to gouerne them, and depend vpon his grace for all thinges which they want, and thereupon goe foreward ſtoutly, without ſhrinking or ſwaruing one way or other. And this leſſon is ſhewed vs in the text that I rehearſed euen now out of Moſes. For there hee exhorteth the people to hardineſſe, and ſheweth them why. *The Lorde your God* (ſayth he) *will fight for you.* As if hee ſhould ſay, If you eſteeme your ſelues the more for your great multitude, or thinke to ouercome your enemies by your own power: it is but fooliſh preſumption, and God wil puniſh you for being ſo puffed vp with pride. And if ye ſhould attempt any thing without Gods leaue and without hauing his worde for it: that alſo were an ouerweening which ſhould not ſcape vnpuniſhed.

But foraſmuch as God is on your ſide, and you haue his promiſe that he will not faile you, and you be not come hither but by his leading of you with his owne hand: *Be not afraid.* Thus ſendeth he them to Gods will, to the ende they ſhould not doe any thing which is not lawfull. Againe, he will haue them to leane altogether to Gods promiſes, and becauſe they could not haue in themſelues the thinges that were requiſite: he will haue them to hope that God will aſſiſt them. Now, this was ſpoken to the Iewes whom Moſes gouerned at that time: but yet is it a doctrine whoſe vſe is euerlaſting in Gods Church, as is ſayde afore. We haue not the Chananites for our enemies againſt whome to fight: but yet doe wee knowe ẏ this preſent life of ours ſhall not be idle, but that God will haue vs kept occupyed lyke men of warre that are waged to battell. And who be our enemies? Satan with all the ſhiftes that he hath, and all the vnbeleeuers through whom we muſt paſſe. For here wee be mingled with ſuch as ſeeke nothing els but the deſtruction of Gods children, wee haue infinite temptations, and to be ſhort wee neede neuer to go out of our ſelues to finde incounters enow: for all our luſtes, and all that ſpringeth of our fleſhe, is deadly ēnmitie againſt GOD, as ſayth S. Paul to the Romans. Rom.8.7. Seeing then that God hath ordeyned that wee ſhould mainteine battell all our lyfe long, and wee haue a greate ſorte of enemies, yea and thoſe very mightie and ſtrong, which neuer ceaſe troubling of vs: it behoueth vs to get vs hardines: for if we ſhrink, anon we be ouercome. Therefore it ſtandeth vs on hand to be armed with inuincible conſtancie, or elſe if euery of vs followe his owne ſwindge, God wil let vs alone. So then, are we deſirous that God ſhould guide vs, & hold vs vnder his protection, & withſtand our enemies to giue vs victorie againſt them? Let vs walke in obedience, and learne to leade our lyfe according to his will. For whoſoeuer roueth abroad at randon, forſaketh Gods helpe. Againe, let no man beguile himſelf vpon truſt of men, foraſmuch as they are commonly diſapointed of their enterpriſes. And it is good reaſon that God ſhould laugh them to skorne, when they fling forth ſo at al aduenture, and keepe neither way nor path. But lyke as moſt men are ſo ouerluſtie, that they can away with nothing worſe, than to beare the yoke that God layeth vppon vs: ſo euery man would haue libertie to doe what he liſteth, and it is ſeene that all men make warre againſt God and his worde, ſo as their iollitie cannot be daunted, but they be worſe than wilde beaſtes. And therefore doe moſt men abuſe themſelues with their owne deuices: for they regard not what God permitteth them to doe. When a man will aduaunce himſelfe for vaineglorie, he regardeth not what is lawfull, but pilleth, polleth, and filcheth by hooke or by crooke. He hath an eye to the ordinarie cuſtome of the world, but as for to frame himſelfe after Gods lawe, he hath no minde at all: He neuer thinketh thus with himſelfe, beholde, my God giueth me no leaue to doe this thing, and therefore I muſt forbeare it. He hath no ſuch thought with him.

Wel may men coakes themſelues for a time, and beare themſelues on hand that all the world fauoreth them: but in the end, God will make all their enterpriſes to vaniſh away, ſo as they ſhallbe all confounded. And why? Becauſe they ranne gadding about, and kept not the right way. Now then, if we will be guided by Gods hand, and ſuccored by him at our neede: let vs learne to rule our lyfe aright, and to ſubmit it wholy vnto him. If wee be not at that poynt, let vs not looke for any helpe at his hand: but rather to haue him againſt vs as we bee worthie. Thus much concerning the firſt point.

But yet for all this, the matter lyeth not altogether in being deſirous to ſerue God, & to abſteine frō the fooliſh attempts ẏ cary men away.

For there may be ſome that are pliable enough, & which would faine doe the thinges that God commaundeth: but therewithall they be puffed vp with a fond ſelfeweening, bearing themſelues in hand that they be able to compaſſe the things that they haue to doe, and truſting to their owne reaſon. But our Lord cannot abide to be robbed of the honor that belongeth vnto him. For what haue wee whereof it is lawfull for vs to boaſt? When we haue gathered all our powers vnto vs, wee ſhall finde them to be nothing but a vaine and fond ſhew. And therefore wee muſt bee faine to put to the ſecond poynt which I haue touched. Which is, that here we be warned to ſubmit our ſelues to the obedience of God, ſo as we ſeeke the thinges that he giueth vs leaue to ſeeke, & aske counſell at his mouth what things he lyketh and alloweth: to the intent that knowing our ſelues to bee ouerweake, yea and that there is no wiſedome, ſtrength, nor towardneſſe in vs, but that al our powers fayle vs: wee may pray him to guide vs and to giue vs good direction, and to hold vs vp with ſtrong hand, ſo as wee ground not our ſelues vpon our owne weening or opinion, but altogether vppon the aſſuraunce of his worde. Hath God promiſed to helpe vs? then let vs not doubt but he will doe it. Haue we no promiſe at his hand? then muſt we needes be at our wittes ende, till he comfort vs and ſtrengthen vs by ſhewing vs his wil. Thus yee ſee what wee haue to marke vppon this text of Moſes.

And therefore although it be vnpoſſible for a chriſten man to ſtep one ſtep without falling: yet muſt wee not be out of hart. The reaſon is, becauſe wee haue Gods promiſe, *that he will fight*
Eph.6.12. *for vs.* Our fighting (ſayth Saint Paul) is not againſt fleſhe and bloud; beholde, all the powers of the ayre are againſt vs. For the diuil is named the prince of the world, he is aboue vs, and holdeth vs as it were betweene his pawes and in his throate, ſo as he is lyke enough to ſwallowe vs vp euery minute of an houre lyke a lyon: and we haue neither ſtrength nor ſenſe to withſtād him.

But yet for all that, we muſt conclude, that foraſmuch as we be in the protection of our God, we be ſure of the victorie, if we fight wel. Therefore let this ſaying be well printed in our minde, *that the Lord our God will fight for vs.* When there is any queſtion of doing well, the Papiſtes cling to their own freewill, and it ſeemeth to thē that God layeth the brydle in their necke, ſo as they be able to doe this and that, whereby they ouerthrowe themſelues as they be worthy. But contrariwiſe let vs flee to our God, and hope to haue him doe the thinges that we cannot doe.

Furthermore let vs marke well, that this doctrine could not ſtande, vnleſſe wee were vnable to fight for our ſelues. For were wee of power to reſiſte our enemies, Gods fighting for vs were more than needed. Then doth it follow, that his fighting is becauſe wee haue no power at all, becauſe our armes are as good as broken, and becauſe wee bee lame from the ſole of the foote to the crowne of the head. And in good ſooth, if the Iewes hauing to doe but onelie with mortall and tranſitorie enemies, needed to haue God to fight for them: what had we need of? I pray you, when wee ſee Satan and all the worlde readie to giue aſſault vpon vs, yea and that he hath alreadie gotten the forehand of vs, and in the meane while wee haue neither wall, nor banke to holde them out, but (which is worſe) all our owne luſtes are as dartes wherewith Satan may ſerue his turne to wound vs with all: can wee defend our ſelues, hauing ſo hard a battell to beare out? No: and ſo wee ſee how the poore papiſtes are deceiued, in preſuming vppon their owne freewill, and in bearing themſelues on hand that if they haue neuer ſo little helpe of God, they can well enough get the vpper hand of Satan. On the contrary part, it is not ſayd that God will ſupply ſome little default with his power, and that wee muſt fight firſt to preuent him: it is not ſayde ſo, but that *it is our God that fighteth for vs*. It followeth then that all that euer wee doe, is done by the onely power that hee giueth vs, ſo as it is borrowed of him.

True it is that wee would fayne runne, & that wee make great indeuers to ſerue God: but whereof commeth that, but of this, that knowing our ſelues to be vtterly vnable, wee preſume not vppon any power or abilitie of our owne, but doe feele that we be not yet come to perfection? And ſo, to be ſhort, all our fighting commeth of the meere grace of the holy Ghoſt.

True it is that God worketh not in vs as in logges or blockes: for his will is to exerciſe vs as I haue ſayd already. Therefore when we ſhould doe well, wee muſt haue a good mouing and a liuely affection: and although wee haue bin letted and drawen away, yet muſt wee take courage to inforce our ſelues, that God may worke in vs as in his inſtruments. To be ſhort, the battels of the faithfull are paynfull enough: but yet for al ỷ, we muſt come backe to this point, that it is God which worketh by vs, and that all that euer wee doe proceedeth of him, inſomuch that without him wee could not ſtir one finger, no nor ſo much as thinke one good thought. And ſo yee ſee how this ſaying *that the Lord our God fighteth for vs*, is accompliſhed. When wee be once come to that poynt, although our enemies be neuer ſo terrible, yet let vs not be as men diſmayed, aſſuring our ſelues that God alone is ſtrong enough for vs, and that although all the world ſhould ſet themſelues againſt vs, yet ought wee not to care for them.

Haue wee made that account once, with ful purpoſe to withſtand all Satans aſſaultes: we muſt alſo put the ſame doctrine in vre in all the reſt of our lyfe. And ſo, when wee ſee our ſelues beſet with neuer ſo many wicked perſons, and that they lie in wayte for vs, continually following their lewd practiſes and deuices: what haue wee to doe? Wee muſt walke on playnely and vprightly, and not hold with the hare and hunt with the hound as they ſay.

When wee ſee that the wicked labor all that they can to ouerthrowe vs, let vs not doe as they doe, but let vs looke what God commaundeth vs, & frame our ſelues thereafter. And beſides that, let vs conſider, that we ſhall bee as a pray to them, if God had vs not in his keeping. But ſeeing hee hath promiſed vs that hee will haue a care of vs, (as in deede he is our father) and that he will maintaine vs in our iuſt quarels, and ſet himſelfe againſt all ſuch as labor to oppreſſe the right: foraſmuch as hee of his infinite goodneſſe vouchſafeth to take our caſe in hand: let vs goe on hardily, and although our enemies be neuer ſo wyly, & haue the world at will, and haue a nomber of practiſes ready for vs: let not all this abaſh vs, nor make vs to ſtep out of the right way. For why? ſeeing that God is on our ſide, what a ſhame were it to preferre mortall men before him, as though they were able to get the vpper hand of him? So long then as the creatures are not able to preuaile againſt God, let vs aſſure our ſelues of the victorie, foraſmuch as it cannot but fall on our ſide. Thus you ſee how wee ought to apply this doctrine of Moſes to our vſe.

Furthermore we muſt alſo wey well this ſaying which he addeth, namely that *God had giuen them a hanſel thereof in Egypt*, ſo as they had good warrant to put their truſt in him, *and that throughout the wilderneſſe he had ruled them lyke little babes, and borne them in his armes.* Seeing it is ſo (ſayth hee) that you haue had proofe of the power of your God in deliuering you from the handes of your enemies: and ſeeing you haue alſo perceiued his fatherly care towardes you, and that not for one day onely, but for a long time together: You be too too vnthankefull if you make not this concluſion, that he will no more faile you hereafter. To bee ſhort then, to confirme this people withall, Moſes alledgeth here the experience of Gods fauor which they had had. And although this poynt hath bin treated of heretofore: yet foraſmuch as it is repeated again by Moſes: I muſt needes rehearſe it againe and put you in remembrance thereof: for there is no ſuperfluitie in yͤ ſpeach of the holy Ghoſt. Wherfore let vs marke well, that when God putteth vs in minde of his former helpe and grace, his meaning is that wee ſhould thinke well vppon the great nomber of benefites which we haue receiued at his hand. And the ſame ought to ſerue vs for a warrant, that he wil continue to the end. For he is not lyke mortall men which alter and change their minde: neither is his abilitie abridged: and to be ſhort, he neuer ceaſeth to do men good: whereas on the other ſide, if a man haue done his friend a pleaſure, he will perchaunce be willing to doe as much for him the ſecond time. But if his friend make none ende, he will be wearie of him. For he may ſay he is not able to doe for al men, and that he hath other friends whom he muſt doe for, as wel as for him. Againe, wee know that men are not conſtant. But there is no ſuch thing in God, for the more good that we receiue of him, the readier are his riches for vs, and they neuer diminiſh. And as for him, he doth not thinges by fittes as creatures doe, but he continueth alwayes in one will. There is not ſo much as any ouerſhadowing in him, as ſayth Saint Iames, to ſhewe that he is alwayes lyke himſelfe, and keepeth continually at one ſtay. Thus may wee aſſure our ſelues of Gods grace for the time to come, by our former experience of his ſuccouring of vs at our neede heretofore, in that he hath reached vs his hand. To be ſhort, all the good that God doeth vs, ought to ſerue vs to confirme our faith.

Iames.1.17.

But nowe let vs ſee what our vnthankefulneſſe is. For hath there paſſed any day ſince our comming into the worlde, wherein God hath not aſſiſted vs a thouſand wayes? yea and did we not finde him a father, before we knew him, yea and euen before wee came out of our mothers wombe? How ſhould the childe be nouriſhed in the mothers womb whē he is there as in a graue, vnleſſe God vttered a wōderful goodneſſe therin? Be we once entered into the world? behold, wee be hemmed in round about with miſeries. Could we paſſe ouer one minute of an houre, if God ſhewed not himſelfe to haue a continuall care of vs? Now then ſeeing that our God hath vttered himſelfe vnto vs ſo manie wayes: is there any excuſe for vs if wee be ſtill in doubt and diſtruſt of him, ſo as wee cannot leane vnto him? Againe let euery man looke vpon himſelfe [how God hath dealt with him particularly.] For beſides the common courſe of this worldly lyfe, and the thinges that are ordinarie to all men, euery man ought to conſider thus: Go to, I haue bin in ſuch a daunger and in ſuch a neceſſitie, and god hath helped me. How hath he wrought with me vnto this day? Hath it bin long of my ſelfe that I haue not bin vndone and deſtroyed a hundred thowſand times? was it through mine own power, that I haue bin preſerued? No. Then muſt it needes be that I had his helpe to ſaue me, during the time that I was as good as ſenſeleſſe. And afterward he ſhewed me the lyke fauour againe, when I had not yet any diſcretion to acknowledge it and to honor him for it. Now if I haue receiued ſo many benefites of him: ought I not to hope that he will continue to doe ſo to me ſtill hereafter? Let euery man then bethinke him of the benefites that he hath receiued at Gods hand, as well for his ſoule as for his body: and then ſhall wee be ſufficiently conuicted, that he hath powred out the riches of his goodneſſe vppon vs, and that in ſuch ſorte, as we may well truſt in him, that he will neuer forſake vs nor put vs out of minde. After this maner muſt wee put this text in vre, where Moſes ſpeaketh to the Iewes and ſayth thus: conſider what you haue found at the hand of your God vnto this houre. How hath hee dealt with you? how mightily hath he ouermaiſtred the lād of Egypt, and deliuered you from the bondage wherein you were? And beſides this, Moſes noteth here a double circumſtance, whereby the people were conuicted of gods mighty working in their behalfe. For (ſayth he) *He hath fought for you in Egypt, yea euen before your eyes.* As if he ſhould haue ſayd, that the miracles which God had wrought, were not darkſome nor done in hudther mudther, but ſo openly, and apparantly, as the people could not ſay, we knowe not how the caſe ſtandeth. God then ſhewed himſelfe after a viſible manner in that behalfe, ſo as yee cannot but knowe that he reached out his arme. That is the firſt of the two circumſtances.

The other is this where hee addeth, *that from the time of the peoples deliueraunce, God had maintained them, yea and that with ſuch kindeneſſe and gentleneſſe, as a father that had borne his childe in his armes could not haue done more for him.* Now theſe two poyntes belong to vs. For they bee the too meanes whereby God procureth and furthereth our ſaluation, vntill he haue brought it to full perfection. On the one ſide hee fighteth for vs: for wee ſhall neuer bee without enemies as hath bin declared already. If wee be not acquainted with God, the deuill will reigne peaceably ouer vs, and wee ſhall delight to bee vnder his tyranny, as they that are naturally giuen thereunto. But if God call vs to him: then ſhall wee feele the deuill vtterly againſt vs, and wee ſhall ſee the world inflamed with deadly hatred towardes vs. To be ſhorte, there will be ſuch a ſorte of enemies to bidde vs battell, as wee ſhall not knowe on which ſide to turne vs. Lo in what plight Gods children are. Now then, his power muſt bee fayne to maintaine vs, and to fight the battell: and if he haue done it for the Iewes, hee muſt be faine to doe it now for vs too.

Thus yee ſee that the firſt meanes whereby God ſheweth himſelfe to be our Sauiour: is that hee armeth vs againſt our enemies, or rather that hee himſelfe is our ſhielde, our ſtrong holde (as he nameth himſelfe oftentimes in the ſcriptures,) our bulwarke, our captaine, and to be ſhort, all that euer wee bee. Mark that for one poynt. Pſal.91,2.

Now herewithal, when God hath ſo ſtrengthened vs, and giuen vs the vpper hand of all aſſaultes that could be put vnto vs: he muſt bee faine to vpholde vs ſtill within. For elſe ſhoulde not we bee able to goe one ſtep, and wee ſhould want all that euer belongeth to our ſaluation. And euen as a young childe ſhould dye, if it were not ſuccoured: euen ſo is it with vs. If a little childe be let alone, hee will caſt himſelfe into the fire or into the water, hee coulde not take one bit of bread to feede himſelfe withall, hee muſt be borne in armes, hee muſt bee ſwadled, he coulde not dreſſe himſelfe, he would ſtarue for cold ſooner than come to the fire, and to be ſhort, wee ſee that a young babe before hee come to ſome age, is the miſerableſt creature that can bee deuiſed: and euen ſo is it with vs in reſpect of our God. Let vs ſet as much ſtore by our ſelues as we liſt, as wee ſee that men doe, glorying maruelouſly in their owne opinion: and yet is there more infirmitie in vs than in little infantes. He muſt be faine to rule vs, he muſt be faine to feede vs, he muſt be faine to cary vs, he muſt be faine to clothe vs, he muſt bee faine to doe all for vs. For if wee haue any witte at all, it is of his gift: if we haue any ſtrength, it commeth of him: if wee haue any abilitie or helpes, it is he that giueth them. True it is, that wee could not inioye the leaſt benefite in the worlde, but by fayth, I meane to our profite: but yet for all that, it is hee to whome wee be beholden for all. Now therefore, when wee once perceiue that God hath giuen vs ſtrength and ſtoutneſſe to outſtand the temptations that Satan hath ſtirred vp againſt vs: that wee haue not bin woũded to death by his venemous darts and arrowes: that we haue not wallowed in the mucke of this worlde: that wee haue not bin caught in the ſnares of the wicked: that their practiſes and wiles haue not preuailed againſt vs: and that God hath ſuccoured vs at all aſſayes: I ſay when wee haue perceiued that: let vs alſo conſider that God hath borne vs, that he hath fed and nouriſhed vs, that hee hath clothed vs, and ỹ he hath as it were put our meat into our mouthes. The thing then whereupon wee muſt ſette our mindes, that wee may well bethinke vs of Gods benefites: is that the ſame muſt ſerue vs for a warrant and confirmation of our fayth, both in lyfe and in death.

But yet the ſimilitude that Moſes vſeth where hee ſayth, *as a father beareth his childe*: deſerueth to be well weyed. Truely if there were no more but this, that God compareth himſelfe with a fleſhly father: it were a ſingular record of infinite and incredible loue. What a one is GOD if he be taken in his maieſtie? Are wee worthie to come to him ſo familiarly? Now then ſeeing hee taketh vppon him the perſon of a man, and a creature, and lykeneth himſelfe to them that beare their children: therein we ſee how he humbleth himſelfe, of good wil to accept vs in like caſe as if we were his owne children. And what a token of loue is that? Now as for vs, wee be nothing woorth: needes then muſt wee acknowledge an ineſtimable goodneſſe in our God, when he putteth off his maieſtie, to make himſelfe lyke a man.

Neuertheleſſe hee contenteth not himſelfe with this ſimilitude onely, as wee ſhall ſee hereafter in the ſong. For there he lykeneth himſelf to an Eagle, which ſtretcheth out his winges to cary his young ones, and to trayne them to ſore in the ayre. Seeing that God putteth himſelfe as it were vnder the ſhape of a byrde, to ſhewe vs the paſſing fatherly care that he hath of vs: I pray you, ought not wee to bee rauiſhed with wonderment, when God ſtoopeth ſo vnto vs, to make vs perceiue the loue that hee beareth vs, and the fauour that hee meaneth towardes vs? [yes ſurely.] For what a maieſtie importeth this worde GOD? And what are the birdes and vnreaſonable creatures? [Nothing.] Deut.32.11.

And yet notwithſtanding, beholde, God loueth vs ſo greatly, that to expreſſe the loue which he beareth vs, and to witneſſe his goodneſſe towardes vs, hee lykeneth himſelfe to a byrd, and vs to his little ones. Sith wee ſee this, let vs learne to magnify the goodneſſe and infinite grace of our God better than wee haue done heretofore, and let euery of vs awake and inforce himſelfe to conſider them throughly. For wherefore is it that our God transfigureth himſelfe in ſuch ſorte, but to reproue our vnthãkfulneſſe, becauſe we be ſo ouer groſſe and dulheaded, as we let the benefites ſlip which he beſtoweth vpon vs, and digeſt them not to conceiue the goodneſſe of them, and to take heede of them? That is the cauſe why he ſetteth them before vs after that faſhion. And we ſee alſo how our Lord Ieſus ſpeaketh of him- Mat.23.37. ſelfe, in bewayling the deſtruction of the Citie of Ieruſalem. Howe oft (ſaieth he) would I haue gathered thy little ones vnder my winges, and thou wouldeſt not? There our Lord Ieſus ſpeaketh not as man: but ſheweth yͤ inaſmuch as he is the euerlaſting God, he played the part of a henne towardes the Iewes, and had his winges ſtretched out to haue brooded them: and that they on their ſide played the wylde beaſtes that woulde not bee tamed. When wee ſhall once haue knowen the fauour of our God towardes vs: let vs beware that it be not ſo defaced as we may iuſtly bee accuſed of vnwillingneſſe to ſuffer our God to gouerne vs peaceably. What is to bee done then? Seeing that our GOD ſheweth himſelfe ſo louing and kinde hearted, that he proteſteth himſelfe to bee as a father towardes his little babes, in bearing with our feebleneſſe and infirmities: and ſeeing that he ſaieth by his Eſa.49.15. Prophet Eſay, that although all the mothers in the world ſhould forget their children, yet would not he forget vs: and ſeeing he ſtoopeth ſo lowe as to liken himſelfe to an Eagle and to a Henne, to ſhewe that he taketh vs for his chickins and birdes: let vs looke that wee yeelde vnto him, & lay our ſelues as it were in his lappe, praying him to beare vs and to releeue our infirmities, that we may be comforted at his hand, as he is readie to doe, if wee flee to his mercie for ſuccour. Thus ye ſee what wee haue to doe for the well putting of this doctrine in vre.

But Moſes addeth yet one point more for the better confirming that God had as it were borne his people in his armes, ſaying *That a nighttimes he appeared to them as in a pillar of fyre, and a daytimes hee appeared to them as in a Cloud.* Wee knowe that Gods ſhewing of theſe two viſible tokens, was to the end that yͤ people ſhould bee aſſured of his preſence: and thoſe tokens were requiſite for the leading of the people. For elſe in the night they ſhould haue bene flighted with the wilderneſſe which was verie dreadfull, as I haue declared alreadie. God therefore did giue them light by night, whereby he ſhewed that he was continually with them. And bicauſe they were in a hotte and drye Countrie, he did ſpred a cloud ouer them in the day, which ſhadowed them from yͤ burning of the Sunne. Wee ſee then that theſe two tokẽs of Gods preſence, ſerued fitly for the eaſing of the Iewes, and that in all theſe dooings they felt his fatherly goodneſſe. Againe, the moe of ſuch figures they had, the more were they conuicted that GOD had gouerned them, and that he had a continuall care of their welfare. And therefore doth Moſes make expreſſe mention both of the fire and of the cloud, ſaying that neyther night nor day GOD had euer forſaken them: ſo as they could not but knowe that he was with them, and that his grace accompanyed them, as he ſawe meete and expedient for them.

But by the way wee muſt note, that although wee in theſe dayes haue no ſuch figures as the Iewes had vnder Moſes: yet notwithſtanding GOD giueth vs the thing that is of equall value, according alſo as Saint Paule ſheweth, 1.Cor.10.2. ſaying that the cloud and the fire were a kinde of Baptiſme to the auncient fathers. And the chiefe thing that GOD meant to ſhewe vnto them thereby, was that although as in reſpect of their bodyes they were guided with fire by night, and had a cloud ſpred ouer their heades by daye: yet Gods meaning was not to haue them ſtay vpon theſe temporall benefites, but to leade them further. Then were they baptized in the cloud. And what haue wee now adayes? Doeth not Baptiſme warrant vs Gods preſence more certeinly & with a greater vertue, than did that auncient figure? Yes ſurely, if all thinges bee well conſidered. For wee muſt not ſtay our eyes vpon the water: but foraſmuch as yͤ bloud of our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt was ſhed, which is a ſpirituall waſhing vnto vs: therein God ſheweth himſelfe more familiarly vnto vs now adayes, than he did to ſuch as liued vnder Moſes. True it is that wee haue not the like myracles: but in the meane while, howe excellent was the Maieſtie that appeared in the perſon of our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt? How excellent were the myracles that he wrought? To bee ſhort, howe highly ought wee to eſteeme the death and paſſion that he ſuffered? Againe, haue wee not a paſ- Rom.1.4. ſing excellent recorde of his Godhead in his riſing againe from death? Seeing then that wee haue the whole fulneſſe of Gods Maieſtie in the perſon of our Lord Ieſus Chriſt, and that not in ſhadowe onely, but in very ſubſtance as Saint Paule declareth to the Coloſſians: I pray Col.2.9. you were it not too ſhamefull a thankeleſneſſe in vs, if wee ſhoulde not bee throughly reſolued that our God hath vttered himſelfe ſufficiently vnto vs, to cauſe vs to reſt wholly vpon him, and to truſt in his power? Thus yee ſee wherein we reſemble the Iewes as touching the cloud whereof Moſes ſpeaketh here, and as touching the pillar of fire.

Furthermore, if wee conſider well howe our Lorde guideth vs: wee ſhall finde that the Cloud and the pillar of fire ſerued not the Iewes more, than the gouernment that is ſtabliſhed in the Church at this day, ſerueth vs. Whereas that people had the pillar of fire by night, and the Cloud by daye: wee muſt vnderſtand that in ſo dooing GOD meant not to bleſſe them for that one time onely. For what had the Iewes bene the better for it, if it had not made them to knowe that God was their gouernour all their life long? Now then wee cannot goe one pace, vnleſſe wee bee led by our God and aſſured of his goodneſſe. For our life is like the iourney that the people of Iſrael made thorough the wilderneſſe. God therfore ſuffereth vs not to wander in vncerteintie, knowing not whether wee were beſt to goe or to ſtand ſtill. For wee haue ſuch a declaration of his will, as wee can neuer ſtraye, except it bee wilfully.

Whoſoeuer ſeeketh Gods good pleaſure,ſhal be taught by him. And therefore now adayes wee haue no need of the viſible pillar of fire,nor of ÿ cloud that was ſpred ouer the childrẽ of Iſrael, forſomuch as our Lord ſheweth himſelfe to bee at hand with vs by another meane , and ſtretcheth out his hand continually ouer vs, and the way is wide and open ynough for vs. Now then we haue good cauſe to be contented.

And ſo let vs vnderſtand,that Moſes did not onely ſpeake to the Iewes after all ſortes: but alſo that he hath written theſe thinges for vs, that wee alſo might be confirmed now adayes in the doctrine which we haue of God, and not be diſobedient vnto him. And ſeeing wee haue neede to be ſuccoured at his hand , againſt Satan and all our aduerſaries : let vs learne to diſtruſt our owne ſtrength which is none at all,and acknowledging our owne wretchedneſſe let vs reſort to him for aide and helpe at our neede. And when we haue once gotten hardineſſe to marche vnder his banner : let vs aſſure our ſelues that he will neuer ſuffer vs to miſcarie, though we be aſſailed with neuer ſo many temptations. Wee ſee what threatening there is now adayes, yea euen on all ſides : wee ſee how our welfare(as to outward ſeeming)is as a pray to our enemies,which ſeeke nothing elſe but to ſwallowe vs vp : and therewithall wee ſee alſo how weake and feeble we be to withſtand them : and yet for all that, let vs not doubt but our Lord fighteth for vs,conditionally that wee walke on ſimply vnder the ſhadowe of his winges,and play not the looſe colts, ne attempt any thing which he alloweth not. And ſo doing,let vs not doubt but he will deliuer vs,and ſtretch out his hand vpon our enemies to vanquiſhe them and deſtroy them , ſo as wee ſhall knowe that he hath a continuall care of vs, and that his only deſire is to guide and gouerne vs , and to continue and increaſe his graces in vs , and to haue vs alwayes in his keeping and protection.

Nowe let vs kneele downe in the preſence of our good God with acknowledgement of our faultes, praying him to make vs ſo to feele them, that being aſhamed of our ſelues,wee may craue pardon of him, and being deſirous to be gouerned by his direction , ſeeke nothing but to ſubmit our ſelues to his yoke more and more, till he haue ridde vs quite and cleane of all our fleſhly corruptions and imperfections , and that we bee come to the full meaſure of his righteouſneſſe, whereunto it behoueth vs now to tend. And ſo let vs al ſay,Almightie God heauenly father,&c.

On Munday the xxij. of Aprill. 1555.

The eight Sermon vpon the firſt Chapter.

34 Then the Lord heard the voyce of your wordes, and was angrie, & ſware, ſaying:

35 None of the men of this wicked generation , ſhall ſee the good land that I haue ſworne to giue to their fathers,

36 Sauing Caleb the ſonne of Iephone,who ſhall ſee it : and I will giue him the ground wherevpon he hath troden,and vnto his children, bicauſe he hath followed the Lord throughly.

37 Alſo the Lord was angrie with me for your ſakes , ſaying, Thou alſo ſhalt not goe in thither :

38 But Ioſua the ſonne of Nun,which ſtandeth with thee, ſhall goe in thither. Strengthen thou him : for he ſhall put Iſrael in poſſeſſion thereof.

39 Your little children which ye ſaid ſhould be a pray,and your ſonnes which at this day knowe neither good nor euill,ſhall go in thither , and I will giue them the land,and they ſhall poſſeſſe it.

40 But as for you , turne ye backe againe , and get ye into the wilderneſſe by the way of the red ſea.

AFter that Moſes hath rehearſed the peoples ſinne : now he putteth them in remembraunce of the puniſhment that followed vpon it, that they might be better aduiſed thenceforth , & not prouoke God to wrath after that faſhion. For whenſoeuer God puniſheth men for any offences,the ſame ought to ſerue them for a warning, and other men for an example , to beware that they doe no more ſo. True it is that they which had murmured after that ſort againſt God, were alreadie dead : but yet was it expedient ÿ their children ſhould haue it printed in their mindes, that God had not left ſuch vnbeliefe and diſobedience vnpuniſhed . And ſo wee ſee the intent of Moſes. Wherefore let vs note, that if God haue ſhewed vs that he cannot away with ſome offence : his intent is that we ſhould thinke vpon it , and that the chaſtiſementes which he layeth vpon vs ſhould turne to our profite, and that they ſhould ſerue vs for the time to come, ſo as wee ſhould not looke to haue him to ſtretch out his hand againſt vs: for it is good for vs to bee taught at other mens coſt as the prouerb ſaieth. But wee muſt marke, that Moſes rehearſeth here briefely, the things that are declared more largely in the fourteenth Chapter of the Booke of Nombers, where God is ſo wroth with Num.14.11 the people, that he would haue deſtroyed them vtterly. He ſaieth there to Moſes, paſſe not thou for it: I can giue thee a greater and excellenter people than this: but as for theſe wicked folke, they muſt needes bee rooted out, I cannot ſuffer them any more. Hereupon Moſes maketh interceſſion for them and ſaieth: Not ſo Lord: for if it ſhould be heard in Egypt, that it were ſo come to paſſe, thy name ſhould be blaſphemed, & the wicked would make a ſcoffing at it, ſaying: bicauſe God could not performe his promiſe, therfore hath he ſlaine this people, and ſo hath he beguiled them and betrayed them. Lord, wilt thou ſuffer thy name to be ſlaundred after that ſort? Thereupon God telleth him that he will not execute his vengeance vpon any other than ſuch as had murmured, & yet notwithſtanding that he would therewithall reſerue a ſeede, on whom to perfourme the thing that he had promiſed to his ſeruant Abraham.

By the way, yͤ threate that is conteined here, importeth not that God was not determined in his owne purpoſe what he would doe: for if wee ſhould thinke that he altered his mind vpon the aduertiſement that Moſes gaue him: it could by no meanes agree [with his nature.] Should a mortall man haue more diſcretion and forecaſt than the liuing God? No: and on the otherſide wee knowe that God doeth in no wiſe chaunge his purpoſe. Neuertheleſſe, diuers times he vttereth ſomewhat rough threatnings, to driue vs to humble our ſelues before him, and to make vs feele what wee haue deſerued. God then in telling Moſes that he would vtterly roote out that people, ſo as there ſhould not one of them bee left aliue, meant not that he was determined ſo to doe: but ſheweth that the people was worthy to haue bene quite and cleane deſtroyed. And in deede there was iuſt cauſe why, to the intent that euery of them ſhould be ſmitten downe and ſubdued on his owne behalfe, and that Moſes ſhould pray after that maner. And yet for all that, God found the meanes to make good his promiſe, notwithſtanding the wilfull frowardnes that was in the people. And this is a point well worthie to be marked among others: that when God hath choſen any people, although his grace bee deſpiſed, ſo as all they whom he had called become vnworthie of ſuch a benefite, and baniſh themſelues out of his houſe by reiecting yͤ promiſe that was offered them: yet will God finde the meanes to chaſtiſe them in ſuch wiſe, as his Church ſhall not vtterly periſh, yea and he will euen ouercome mens frowardneſſe with his goodneſſe. I ſay it is well worthie to bee marked. For wee ſee that on the one ſide, the hypocrites, vnder colour that God hath manifeſted himſelfe vnto them, and promiſed to bee their Sauiour: doe ſurmiſe that they haue him bound, and thereupon take leaue to doe euill: and if a man ſhewe them their ſinnes, they hardē themſelues againſt it, there is nothing but pride in them, & they arme themſelues with Gods name, to fight againſt his Prophets. And this haue they done in all ages. When the Iewes were rebuked for their wicked life, & for their turning away from God: they were inflamed with ſuch rage againſt the Prophets, as to ſay, How nowe? To whom Ierem.7.4. ſpeake ye? Are not wee the Church? Are not wee Gods inheritance? Hath he not ſet his couenant among vs? Haue not wee the ſigne of Circumciſion? Haue not wee the temple where he is worſhipped? Wee ſee then that the Iewes did falſely abuſe Gods name, to aduaunce themſelues againſt him and his word. And this is reported of the Iewes: but yet wee may ſee the like in our ſelues. For all they to whom God hath done ſo much honour as to giue them his word and to manifeſt himſelfe vnto them, doe imagin that they haue him as it were in their ſleeue: & yet for all that, in ſtead of profiting themſelues by Gods ſo gentle alluring of them vnto him, they ſet themſelues againſt all good doctrine, they cannot finde in their heartes to beare any yoke, they will needes bee as wilde beaſtes, and yet in the meane while they will needes haue God to auow them to be of his flocke. But here wee ſee, that although God had as then ſet vp his ſeat among the Iewes, and made a couenant with them to bee their Sauiour vnto the ende: yet when he ſawe they were not meete to haue him, but that they drew cleane backe, and ceaſſed not to ſpite him: he found the meanes to puniſhe them, yea and that in ſuch ſort, as all thoſe things went to nought, and yet he himſelf abode ſoothfaſt, notwithſtanding their deſtruction. And therfore let vs not deceiue our ſelues. When God hath once taken vs to him to be of his houſhold, and adopted vs to be his children: let vs not ſooth our ſelues in our vices, but conſider how it ſtādeth vs on hand to walke ſo much the more awefully, when God hath ſhewed himſelfe ſo bountifull towardes vs, and that foraſmuch as he hath vttered his goodnes in ſuch wiſe, it is good reaſon that wee on our part being ſo much beholden vnto him, ſhould looke well about vs and indeuour to giue our ſelues wholly to his ſeruice, and be ſo loth to offend him, as we may alſo be afraide to be bereft of the grace that he hath once beſtowed vpon vs. Marke that for one point.

And therewithall let vs marke alſo, that God in puniſhing the hypocrites and all ſuch as abuſe the goodneſſe that he hath done towards them, ceaſſeth not for all that, to continue faithfull ſtil. For if he ſhould deſtroy the whole world and leaue no afterſpring to call vpon him, it might bee ſaid, in deede God hath iuſt cauſe to puniſh men after that maner: but in the meane time where is his promiſe? He hath ſaide that his Pſal.72.17. Church ſhall continue for euer, & that his name ſhall bee called vpon here beneath, as long as there is eyther Sunne or Moone in the ſkie: but nowe is all diſpatched quite and cleane, the remembrance of ſaluation is vtterly buried among men. Although then that God ſhould doe iuſtly in puniſhing ſuch as had done amiſſe: yet ſhould his promiſe bee vaine and voide, if he perfourmed not the thing that he promiſed, and ſo would men blame him of vnfaithfulneſſe. But (as I ſaide) he findeth meanes to puniſh them that deſerue it, and yet notwithſtanding reſerueth and keepeth ſtill a people to himſelfe, and ſuffereth not his trueth to fall to the ground, or to die without effect. And hereof we haue a notable example in this place. For wee ſee that God had made a couenant with Abraham, and had promiſed him to giue the land of Chanaan for an heritage to his offſpring. As ſoone as the time came, the promiſe was performed. Yea verily: but all the poſteritie of Abraham refuſed and reiected the promiſe, whereby they diſanulled it as much as lay in them. Thus you ſee they bee depriued of it through their owne vnthankfulneſſe. But yet to the intent that God be not accuſed of leauing his promiſe vnperformed: it behoued him in puniſhing the fathers to preſerue their race. They that come vp afterward are alſo the offſpring of Abraham, and they poſſeſſe the land that was promiſed: by meanes whereof the couenaunt that God had made abode ſure and faſt ſettled to the end. And for the ſame cauſe it is ſaid that God reſerued the yong children to himſelfe. Now then, as many as had murmured and were aboue the age of twentie yeeres, are caſt off and baniſhed from the good turne that was readie for them: but they that were vnder that age are preſerued ſtill, and God is glorified in them. And albeit that the accompliſhment of his promiſe was delayed by the ſpace of fortie yeeres: yet notwithſtanding he ſhewed himſelfe faithfull in the end. This is the matter which we haue to beare away.

So now likewiſe, when wee ſee the world ſo farre out of order that al is mard, and it ſeemeth that all men will needes ſpite GOD, and ſhut themſelues out of all hope of ſaluation, by driuing away the light of the Goſpell that is giuen them: let vs looke for ſome vengeaunce at hand. For though God bee patient: yet muſt he bee faine in the ende, to ſtretch out his arme to bee reuenged of ſuch malice and contempt. On the one ſide, they to whom the Goſpell is preached, doe growe altogether heatheniſh, and it is ſeene that a nomber waxe worſe and worſe, and wickedneſſe becomes more exceſſiue than it was in the time of the abominations of the Popedome, ſo that (to ſpeake properly) it ſhould ſeeme that men become diuilles after their hearing of the Goſpell. What is it I pray you, that a man ſhall ſee, yea and that commonly? That there is now no more loue of God, no nor countenance of louing him, that Religion is let alone colde and dead, and that there is no more zeale in vs than in a timberlogge. It is apparant then that Gods word is now adayes ſtained and defyled with our iniquities, in ſo much that whereas wee ſhould bee as burning Lampes to giue light to the ſillie ignorant ſoules, wee giue them occaſion of ſtumbling. Againe on the other ſide, we ſee how the faithleſſe doe fight againſt God, ſeeking nothing elſe dayly but to ouerthrow his trueth, and to cauſe it to be quenched out, that it might neuer be ſpoken off more. Seeing then that the whole world is ſo malicious, and that as well the one ſort as the other doe make open warre againſt God, continuing ſtill in their ſtubborneſſe which increaſeth from day to day: muſt not God (after he hath waited for ſome conuerſion and amendment) execute his vengeance vppon vs as wee deſerue? Ye ſee then after what manner it behoueth vs to prepare our ſelues, conſidering that wickedneſſe is ſo great nowe adayes, and ſo farre paſt hope of recouerie. But yet therewithall let vs comfort our ſelues, and looke alſo that in puniſhing the offenders God will not fayle to keepe ſtill ſome ſeed to himſelfe, ſo as he wil alwaies haue ſome little flock to cal vpon him and to worſhip him. Let vs not doubt then but that our Lorde will alwayes maintaine his Churche, to the intent to ſhewe himſelfe ſoothfaſt. Although all thinges ſeeme forlorne and brought to confuſion: yet will God worke after ſuch a faſhion, as wee ſhall ſee in the ende, that he hath had a regard of his promiſe, and that he will ſhew himſelfe faithfull and prooue himſelfe ſo in deede.

But let vs marke well, that the Churche ſhall not alwayes be viſible ſo as wee ſhall perceiue it. It ſhall ſeeme [nowe and then] that all is come to nought: Like as when God made the people to turne backe againe, he ſaid vnto them, *Get ye into the wilderneſſe towardes the red Sea*, as though they ſhould haue returned againe into Egypt. Here is ſuch a great confuſion, as it might well ſeeme that he minded not any more that the land of Chanaan ſhoulde bee giuen for an heritage vnto thoſe to whom it was promiſed. Ye ſee then that for a time it ſeemed that God had falſified his promiſe, and that there was not any more hope that the children of Abraham ſhould haue entered into the place that was promiſed them. Euen ſo ſhall it fall out with vs, as in deede it is come to paſſe. For when God withdraweth his light out of the worlde: it will ſeeme that there is no more any Church at all. If a man looke round about him, he ſhall ſee that all is gone to hauocke. And in good faith, what deſolation was there in the time of Poperie? Yea and euen ſtill at this day, a man myght thinke that all ſhoulde goe to ruine and decaye. But let vs marke, that it is all one as if God ſhoulde cauſe thoſe to goe backe againe which are not woorthie to goe forewarde: and that yet notwithſtanding, he ceaſſeth not to holde on in ſuch wiſe, as his Churche ſhall ſtill bee maintained and preſerued. Howbeit, not that the ſame can bee diſcerned with the eye, or perceiued by man: but wee muſt ſhut our eyes, vntill our Lord doe worke after his owne maner, that is to ſay wonderfully beyond all our expectation, and beyond all that we bee able to conceiue. Thus you ſee howe wee may comfort our ſelues in this, that although wee ſee it is not poſſible but yͤ God muſt not caſt ſome horrible puniſh-

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Ioel.2.30.

ment in theſe dayes vppon mens wickedneſſe: yet neuertheleſſe hee will alwayes reſerue ſome people to himſelfe, ſo as the thing that he ſpeaketh by his Prophet Ioel ſhalbe ſeene continually. Though heauen and earth (ſaith he) do goe together, though the ſunne be darkened, though the moone drop bloude, though the ſtarres loſe their light, and though the earth remoue: yet for all that whoſoeuer calleth vppon the name of the Lorde, ſhalbee ſaued: GOD will preſerue them whom he hath choſen to call vpon him: and albeit that their life bee hidde, yet will not God faile to heare them in the end, and to ſhewe them that hee neuer was vnmindefull of his promiſe, but that he had a regarde of him ſelfe, notwithſtanding that men were not worthy to haue any one drop of goodnes and mercy offered vnto them. This is the matter in effect which we haue to remember in this firſt place.

Pſal.95.7.& Heb.3.7.& 4.7.

But herewithall we muſt marke the othe that God made againſt the Iewes, as it is ſet downe in the Pſalme, and afterwarde applyed vnto vs by the Apoſtle, ſaying: To day, if ye wil heare his voyce, harden not your hearts as your fathers did in the wilderneſſe, vnto whom I ſware in my wrath, that they ſhould not enter into ẏ land ẏ was my reſt. We ſee how it was ẏ wil of the holy Ghoſt, that the Iewes ſhould in al ages be mindful of this diſobedience that had bin committed: and that therevpon they ſhould remember that for the ſame, their fathers were bereft of the benefit that had beene promiſed them, and ſhutte out from Gods reſt. For (as I ſaide afore) this ſerued not for the Iewes only, but the Apoſtle applieth it alſo to our time. God then directeth his ſpeech to vs at this day. Therefore wee muſt haue our eares open to hearken vnto him: wee muſt not driue of from morrowe to morrowe: wee muſt ſeeke no delay: as ſoone as God ſpeaketh wee muſt be readie to learne, and not harden our heartes againſt him. Whereby wee bee put in minde, that there is nothing which hindereth our obedience vnto God, but our own reſiſting of him through a certaine wilful frowardnes. For he for his part applieth himſelfe in ſuch wiſe vnto vs: as hee beareth with our rudeneſſe and infirmitie. So then, all they that are taught by the Goſpell, ſhall obey God without gainſaying, if they poyſon not themſelues through a certaine wilful frowardneſſe to withſtande God, and to driue backe his grace. That is the cauſe why we be expreſly warned, not to harden our heartes. Yea verily: for wee muſt not think that God will ſuffer his grace to bee ſo ſcorned, and dalyed with, and ſet light by. If he were inflamed with anger againſt the Iewes for refuſing to enter into the Land of Chanaan: if we nowadayes doe playe the reſtie iades and fall to kicking, let vs not thinke that ſuch vnthankefulneſſe ſhall ſcape vnpuniſhed. And in good ſooth, if the Iewes were ſo puniſhed at that time, that all the ſorte of them came to nought, wandering in the wilderneſſe by the ſpace of fortie yeeres: God ſhewed yet more harde and rigorous vengeance vppon them afterwarde, in the thraldome of Babylon and other miſeries that happened vnto them: for the thraldome of Babylon laſted threeſcore and ten yeares. And at their returne, although he ſhewed great and wonderfull power: yet were they but a handfull which were ſaued, according to this ſaying of the Prophet Eſay, though thy people were as the ſande of the ſea, yet ſhoulde but a ſmall remnant of them be ſaued. And in another place hee ſaith, we had beene as Sodome and Gomorre, if God had not reſerued a little ſeede, yea euen a verie little one. Wee ſee then that God increaſed his wrath againſt ſuch as amended not at the example of their fathers. And why? Becauſe they were the leſſe to bee excuſed, for they ought to haue taken warning by the puniſhmentes that were prepared for them. Therefore did they double their offence. And what thinke we of the deſolation that hath happened ſince the [firſt] preaching of the Goſpell, [for the refuſall whereof] the wretched world hath wandred ſo aſtray, as all things haue bin corrupted in the Church, ſo that in ſteede of Gods ſeruice there hath beene nothing but abhominations, inſteed of truth there hath beene nothing but diueliſh lyes and errours, and all thinges haue beene put out of order there, and that the ſame confuſion hath laſted nowe ſo long time? [All theſe thinges doe put vs in minde] that Gods voyce ought to ſounde ſhirler noweadayes in the Goſpell, than it did in the Lawe. For as is ſaide by the Prophet Aggeus, God maketh heauen and earth to quake nowadayes, when the Goſpel is preached. And beſides that, wee haue all the thinges that befell to the people of olde time, which ſerue vs as a liuely picture. There muſt wee beholde Gods wrath, to reſtrayne our ſelues from doing euil, as Saint Paul ſheweth vs in ẏ tenth of the firſt to the Corinthians. But if wee make no reckening therof: is it not reaſon that God ſhoulde puniſh vs ſorer than hee did the Iewes?

Eſa.10.22.

Eſa.1.9.

Agge.2.7.

1.Cor.10.11

Let vs learne then to hearken to Gods voyce while it ſoundeth in our eares, and let vs beware that wee harden not our heartes, leaſt God ſweare in his wrath. For it is ſaide expreſly that God ſware. And whie? Becauſe men thinke his threates to be vaine, if hee make them not to perceiue that hee ſpeaketh in good earneſt. And of a trueth we ſee dayly, that when Gods threatnings are vttered vnto vs, a great many of vs do but ſhake our eares at them, and the number of thoſe that are touched with them, is verie ſmal. Therefore the othe that GOD ſweareth is no more than needeth, euen in reſpect of the blockiſhneſſe that is in men, foraſmuch as they bee ſo fooliſh as to make but a mocke of euerie thing that is tolde them. And like as God to helpe the weakeneſſe of our faith, vſeth an othe when hee confirmeth his promiſes: ſo on the contrarie part, hee vſeth to ſweare when hee threatneth to puniſhe vs. And why? To the ende that being afraide and abaſhed at it, wee ſhoulde come to repentance. For if wee bee not made to ſtoope that wee may take holde of Gods iuſtice: our faultes will neuer miſlike vs.

Gods iuſtice then muſt become as a thunder or lightning, and we muſt bee abaſhed before him, that we may no more bee ſo drunken in our ſins as wee were. And therefore whenſoeuer Gods threatnings do not diſmay vs ſufficiently: let vs cal to minde the oth that Moſes ſpeakes of here, and let vs aſſure our ſelues that it is we whom the ſame pointeth at, according to that which I haue alledged alreadie both out of the Pſalme, and out of the record of the Apoſtle.

And therewithall let vs alſo marke well the words that are ſet downe heere by Moſes. *None of this curſed and wicked generation* (ſaith hee) *ſhall ſee the good land that I haue promiſed.* Heere GOD maketh a compariſon betweene lande and the people. This lande then was a ſingular gift, in token whereof hee calleth it his reſt: meaning thereby that he had choſen that lande to bee as a dwelling place and euerlaſting inheritance for the people to reſt in vnder his protection. For there is no certaintie in this worlde, and if wee bee lodged in any place, wee may bee put out of our neſt againe to day or to morrowe. But God tolde them that hee had aſſigned the lande of Chanaan for an euerlaſting poſſeſſiō to the children of Abraham, to mainteine them and keepe them ſafe there, ſo as no man ſhoulde trouble them, nor euer driue them out againe. Yee ſee then that the lande was not a common gift, but a gift that deſerued to bee eſteemed as moſt excellent aboue al others. But behold, the people on the otherſide, are malicious and froward. Therefore it is all one as if our Lorde ſhoulde ſay, I ſee wel ynough howe the worlde goes, I ſhall ſooner make fire and water to agree, than cauſe this people to like of my benefits. For in my benefites there is nothing but meere goodneſſe, and in this people there is nothing but meere naughtineſſe.

Let vs marke well then, that to inioy Gods benefites, wee muſt frame our ſelues to his will and righteouſneſſe: for our naughtineſſe and Gods goodneſſe can neuer match together, inſomuch that if wee will needes followe our owne nature, God muſt needes withdrawe his goodneſſe away from vs. True it is that God looketh not for any worthineſſe at our hands why hee ſhoulde doe vs good: nay rather, hee fighteth dayly againſt our ſinnes, and vſeth mercie where as hee might lawfully vſe rigour againſt vs. But yet for all that, if hee ſee that we continue in our naughtineſſe, hee can no longer continue in doing vs good. Yee ſee then that the doctrine which we haue to gather vppon this conſideration: is that there muſt bee as it were an accorde and melodie betweene God and vs, and that when hee imparteth his benefites vnto vs, we muſt make ſuch eſtimation of them, as wee indeuer to ſerue and honour him for them, and conſider that he calleth vs to him, to plucke vs backe from our ſinnes. If wee doe ſo, the good that he hath done vs ſhalbe confirmed more & more. Otherwiſe, it muſt needes bee that our naughtineſſe ſhall cut off the courſe of his goodneſſe. Why ſo? For (as I haue ſaid alreadie) when God offreth men his benefits, & they refuſe them of a wilfull frowardneſſe: it is as if fire and water ſhould meete together.

But beſides this, wee muſt alſo marke Gods vpbrayding of the people, with their ſaying that their yong children ſhoulde be a pray to their enemies. *They* (ſaith he) *ſhall poſſeſſe the lande*, yea euen to the intent that you may be proued lyers. Heere it behoueth vs to marke well, that when men will needes doubt of Gods trueth, they muſt in the ende be founde lyers, and Gods trueth ſhine forth the brighter to their ſhame. Nowe hereby wee bee warned to receiue ſimplie the promiſes that GOD offereth vs. And although it ſeeme at the firſt bluſh that they ſhold neuer be accompliſhed, & that there be a number of impediments to hinder them: yet muſt we doe him the honour to beleeue that he is faithfull, and to abide patiently for the conuenient time of his performance of the thing that hee hath ſaid. For if we gaineſay his truth, and murmure, and fall to queſtioning and diſputing, with howe can this be? is it poſſible? God ſeemeth to mocke vs: I ſay, if we go that way to worke: Well may hee performe his promiſe for all that: but it ſhalbe to our ſhame, ſo as wee ſhall alwayes bee founde lyers. Wee may well triumph for a time, as we ſee the vnbeleeuers doe, which malapertly deſpiſe God, ſpewing out their blaſphemies againſt him: but yet in the ende God ſhall continue faithfull, and his trewneſſe ſhalbe knowen ſpite of our teeth, and therewithall we ſhalbee put to ſhame. And therefore let vs beware of it, and that wee may beware of it, let vs marke well howe the Iewes are vpbrayded with it here. Yee haue ſaide that your children ſhall bee made a pray: but they ſhall inioy the land, and you ſhalbe ſet beſide it.

Moreouer the example of Caleb the ſonne of Iephone is verie notable, and ſo is alſo the example of Ioſua the ſonne of Nun. Theſe two are reſerued of a great multitude. And why? Becauſe they had gone through ſtoutly. For this recorde is yelded to Caleb, *that hee had perſiſted* [or continued] *in following the Lorde.* Whenas God exempteth here but two men of an infinite multitude: therein wee ſee howe it is a folly to looke what other men doe. For had Caleb and Ioſua done ſo: what had come of it? They had gone to deſtruction with the reſt. But they ſuffered not themſelues to bee caryed away by that horrible tempeſt. When they ſawe ſo ſtraunge a turning backe in the whole people: yet did they confirme themſelues in the power of God, and although the people woulde haue ſtoned them, (as is declared in the booke of numbers, and as ſhalbe touched againe anon): yet did they their duetie. So then, ſeeing that God alloweth the conſtancie of Caleb and Ioſua, for that they did ſhut their eyes when they ſawe the people ſo exceſſiuely ſet vppon miſchiefe, and exhorted them to obey God: let vs note well that although thinges be out of order in the worlde, and we ſee ſtumblingblockes to ouerthrowe vs, and vices rage like a waterfloud: yet is it no ſufficient cauſe to ſuffer our ſelues to bee caryed away, or to make vs followe the

Num.14.10.

common traine, for it ſhall not abate our condemnation before God. We may well ſay, all the worlde doth ſo: for all the worlde ſhall periſh, and thou with it, which ſpeakeſt ſo in contempt of thy God. What a thing is it, that men wil needs aboliſh Gods iuſtice, and giue no more eare vnto him when they giue themſelues to all naughtineſſe, but ſhut him vp in heauen, and ſuffer him to haue no more authoritie heere beneath? Whereto tendeth this? And yet for all that, wee ſee noweadayes that when the ignorant intende to ſhrowde themſelues, the greateſt ſheelde that they haue is to alledge, Howe ſo? I ſee that all the worlde behaue themſelues contrariwiſe. And in the meane ſeaſon what becomes of God? God muſt bee faine to bee thruſt vnder foote, and men muſt runne leaping and frisking at their pleaſure. Yea and euen among our ſelues, if a man tell one or other of their faults: [their anſwere is,] I ſee others are as bad as my ſelfe. Wee beare our ſelues on hande, that our condemning of our neighbours will goe for good payment, and that we ſhal ſcape Gods hand by that meane. Therefore let vs thinke continually vpon the example of Caleb and Ioſua. And foraſmuch as GOD ſheweth that hee made more account of them though they were but two in all, than of all the other howge multitude which were about ſeuen hundred thouſande perſons: foraſmuch (ſay I) as we ſee that God giueth ſuch ſentence of them: let vs learne to ſubmit our ſelues to him, and to regarde nothing but that which he commaundeth. And though the world runne gadding here and there in the meane while, let vs followe the way that God hath ſhewed vs by his pure word.

Moreouer, let vs wey this ſpeech where it is ſaide, *that Caleb held out in following the Lorde.* For it is not ynough for vs to beginne well, but wee muſt alſo ſticke to God through ſtitch, yea euen without any feining or ſtarting, and without fainting or giuing ouer in the mids of our way. And in good ſooth, it is not for nought that this recorde is giuen to Caleb. For (as I haue touched heretofore) the people were in ſuch an vprore, as they would haue ſtoned him and Ioſua too. Inſomuch that if God had not takē them away, and his glorie appeared vppon the tabernacle: they had loſte their liues for it. Yet for all this, they ceaſed not to doe their duetie ſtill, but cryed out againſt the people and rent their clothes. And after that manner ſtroue they againſt thoſe which woulde not inioy Gods bleſſing. Wee ſee then how there was a marueilous power in Caleb and in Ioſua. And therefore we bee warned by their example, not onely to enter into the way, but alſo to goe forwarde and forward ſtil, aſſuring our ſelues that we cannot holde out to the ende in ſeruing God, but by bearing out of many harde brunts and temptations, [and therfore we haue neede] to ſtrengthen our heartes in ſuch wiſe, as nothing may be able to make vs to fleete. Thus yee ſee whereto our Lord and his holy ſpirite exhort vs.

Where as he praiſeth here the conſtancie of Caleb and Ioſua: it is to the end (ſay I) that their example ſhould ſerue to our inſtruction. For although the memoriall of the righteous be bleſſed before God: yet is it declared for our profite. Therefore let vs not haue ſuch a zeale as ſhall waxe colde when it commeth to the following of God: but let vs determine fully with our ſelues to holde out with it, whatſoeuer the diuell practiſe, or howſoeuer the world ſet it ſelfe againſt vs: like as at this day wee ſee many reſiſtances, and many occaſions, that might make vs ſtart away: but yet for all that, we muſt holde on our iourney, not for two or three dayes onely, but all our life long. Let vs goe on therefore: and when there is any mention *of following God:* let vs marke that it is to confirme the matter better which I haue declared alredie: that is to wit, that if we followe men, we ſhall runne aſtray. For why? what els are the wais of the world but ſtraiings, ſo as euery man gaddes in and out, when they once turne their backes vpon God? What is to bee done then? So long as wee looke vppon men, it will bee vnpoſſible for vs to goe right: but wee muſt followe God.

True it is that when God is ſo good vnto vs, as to giue vs men to accompanie vs, yea and to goe before vs and to reach vs their hande: it is a great helpe, and (as Paul telleth vs) wee muſt looke wiſtly vpon them: and when we haue good ſeruantes of God which teache vs and leade vs with good conſcience, we muſt marke that, and faſhion our ſelues like to them: and in ſo doing we ſhall not followe men: for in faſhioning our ſelues like to them that follow God, we haue his way for our way. We grounde not our ſelues one vpon another, to ſay, Thus will I doe, for I ſee moſt men doe it. No: but foraſmuch as God calleth vs to him, it behoueth vs to go, Yea though there were no mo but my ſelfe alone: yet ought I to follow my God. But if furthermore he beare with me ſo farre, as to giue me companie: then muſt I goe to him with ſo much the better corage: and whatſoeuer come of it, I muſt not ſwarue from his pure worde. Thus yee ſee why it is ſaide here, that Caleb the ſonne of Iephone followed the way of the Lord, and therefore was exempted from the common condemnation. Yea and it is ſaide that *he followed conſtantly*, that is to ſay, he continued throughout to the vttermoſt. And ſo wee ſee nowe in effect that all the people were condemned, & that onely two were acquit, becauſe they had giuen glorie vnto God.

1.Cor.4.16. & Heb.13.7.

But the circũſtance that is added, namely, *that God ſpared not Moſes becauſe of the people:* increaſeth yet more the thing that I haue ſaide. In deede this cannot be diſpatched all as nowe: but yet muſt I ad this point aforehande. For if God ſpared not Moſes, (who notwithſtanding had ſuch recorde as wee knowe), but puniſhed him becauſe hee helde not out conſtantly to the vttermoſt in reſiſting the leawdneſſe of the people: I pray you what ſhall become of vs? Is it likelie that wee ſhall goe ſcotfree nowadayes, when euerie man ſuffereth himſelfe to be caried away becauſe hee ſeeth that naughtineſſe hath the vpper hande? Then if wee happen to ouerſhoote our ſelues ſo, thinke wee that God will let vs alone ? No no : For if ſuch puniſhment as we heare of, was extended vpon Moſes : needes muſt wee feele farre ſorer, when we intangle our ſelues in the common vices, and forſake God to followe the worlde . And let vs marke well, that in ſwearing that the people ſhould not enter into the lande: he ſayth, ye ſhal reckeñ the yeres according to the nomber of the dayes wherein ye ſpied out the land. They that were ſent to ſpy out the lande taried forty daies : and ſo behoued it the people to wander vp and downe by the ſpace of fortie yeares . And ſo we ſee that when God hath vſed long patience towardes vs, he maketh vs to pay verie deere for our abuſing of his goodneſſe. Wherefore let vs not meaſure Gods puniſhments after our owne fancie: for they be ſorer than our wittes can conceaue . But whenſoeuer he threatneth vs, let vs tremble at his only ſpeech, and make haſt to follow it. And foraſmuch as his ſpeech is directed to vs nowadaies, let vs not driue off til to morow, but let vs follow, and let euerie man be going on his way . Againe foraſmuch as we be fraile and haue a rough and thornie way to goe , yea and there be many ſtoppes to barre vs , ſo as it will ſeeme that there be great mountaines to make vs turne backe againe : let vs pray our God to giue vs ſtrength to go on ſtil forward . For if he ſtrengthened Caleb and Ioſua : let vs aſſure our ſelues he will do the like to vs. And therewithall if we ſee that the world hinder vs, and that there is ſtore of ſtumbling blockes on all ſides : let vs pray God that he ſuffer vs not to be corrupted with others, but that we may beare him the honor to ſtick vnto him, & to yeld our ſelues wholly to his word, giuing them leaue to periſhe that needes will periſh, and in the meane while ſtaying our ſelues by the promiſe of ſaluation which he hath giuen vs, accordingly alſo as it is his will that wee ſhoulde attaine thereto by any ſuch knowledge.

Num.14.34.

Now let vs kneele down in the preſence of our good God with acknowledgement of our faults, praying him to touch vs better than we haue bin: & that aboue al things we may bethinke vs of the vnthankefulneſſe whereof we be giltie, in that we haue not obeyed his word, nor bin ſo willing to followe the things that he hath declared vnto vs as was requiſite. And therefore let vs beſeech him, not only to forgiue vs our faults paſt, but alſo to ſtrengthen & gouerne vs in ſuch wiſe by his holie ſpirite, as wee may ouercome al the temptations of Satan, and forſake all the luſtes of our owne fleſh, to the end we may obey the voyce of our God, and in ſuch ſort applie all our ſenſes thereunto, as we may paſſe through all the diſtreſſes of this preſent world, vntill he haue gathered vs togither into his euerlaſting kingdom. That it may pleaſe him to graunt this grace, not only to vs, but alſo to all people & nations of the earth, &c.

On Tewſday the xxiij. of April. 1555.

The ninth Sermon vpon the firſt Chapter.

37.38.39.40. Alſo the Lord &c.

41 Then anſwered you and ſaide vnto me : We haue ſinned againſt the Lorde. VVe will goe vp and fight as the Lorde our God hath commaunded vs. And you armed your ſelues euery one with harneſſe of warre, and were readie to goe vp into the hill.

42 And the Lord ſaid vnto me, warne them that they goe not vp, ne fight not, for I am not among you: leaſt you be vanquiſhed of your enimies.

WE began yeſterday to ſee howe hard it is to abſtaine from ſinning when a man is in euil companie, ſpecially if hee haue the charge of gouernment. For ſeeing it was Moſes hap to be ſhaken downe : Howe ſhall they do which are farre weaker than he was ? Wee knowe that God had made him to excell all men, we ſee alſo how he ſerued his turne by him, & what record hee hath giuen of him . And yet for all that, behold here a fal which God miſlyketh of ſo greatly, that he diſappointeth him of entring into the lande for it : and ſuch diſhonour and reproch was done vnto him, that hee might not poſſeſſe the inheritance that had beene promiſed, as well to him as to all the people. Therefore we had neede to call vpon God when we be mingled with ſuch as are able to corrupt vs and to thruſt vs out of the way, ſo as we be hemmed in rounde about with euill examples . But yet they which haue the charge of gouernement, ought to ſtande in greater feare and dreade, and to call vppon God to ſtrengthen them, and to giue them ſuch conſtancie as they may not ſwarue any whit at all.

But before we goe any further, we muſt mark that where as Moſes reporteth that God was angrie with him for the peoples ſakes : hee doth it not to excuſe himſelfe that he had not done amiſſe: for then ſhould he replie againſt God who had giueñ ſentence vpon him . In the twentith Chapter of the booke of Numbers it is ſayde expreſly, thou ſhalt not enter into the lande, becauſe that thou and Aaron haue not glorified the Lord before the people of Iſrael . So then we ſee that God chargeth not Moſes with the ſinne of

Num.20.12.

the poeple, as who ſhoulde ſay that he himſelfe had beene giltleſſe: but his meaning is that hee fell not to euill of his owne accorde and mouing, but was driuen to it as by a ſtorme, when he ſaw ſuch vprore and hurlyburly among the people, that he was at his wits ende and wiſt not what to doe, by meanes whereof he had not a preſent faith to giue glorie vnto God. The intent of Moſes then is not to waſh his hands, as though hee were not blame woorthy at all: but to doe the people to vnderſtande that the verie miſchiefe ſprang of them. Neuertheles it may be thought ſtraunge howe Moſes ſhoulde offende, ſeeing it appeareth not in all the reherſall of the ſtorie. It Numb.20.2 is ſaide that the people grudged againſt God, becauſe they wanted drinke in the wilderneſſe, ſaying: Had it not beene better for vs that God had killed vs in Egypt? Muſt hee needes bring vs into this drie and barren place, that we might die heere for thirſt? It appeareth well that hee hateth vs, and that his intent is to make vs to linger heere in tormentes: and in the meane while wee bee paſt all hope of doing well. After this manner did the people murmure. On the contrarie part Moſes weepeth and reſorteth vnto God, ſaying: Alas Lorde, oughteſt thou to haue ſo ſlẽder a reward for thy deliuering of this people through thine owne goodnes, as to haue thy holy name blaſphemed by them? What coulde Moſes haue done better than this? For he is ſo farre off from conſenting to the wickedneſſe of the people, to bee any companion with them: that hee weepeth to ſee the offence committed againſt God. Pſal.69.12. And Dauid likewiſe ſheweth an excellent and wonderfull weldiſpoſed minde, in ſaying that hee wore ſackloth for their ſakes that blaſphemed God. Moſes did as much. It ſhoulde not ſeeme then that there is any fault in all this. For God commaunded him to take his ſtaffe, and to ſtrike vpon a rocke, and to make water to come out of it before the people. Hee obeyed. Wee ſee not there any replying at al: nay we ſee not that Moſes did ſo much as once doubt. Moreouer when hee ſpeaketh Num.20.10. to the people, hee ſaith: Come on yee rebelles, muſt God bee faine to make water to come out of this rocke, which you ſee nowe ſo harde and drie? Yee ſee hee rebuketh the people ſharpely, and a man woulde thinke hee coulde not glorifie God better. And yet for all this, it is ſaide vnto him, Thou haſt not giuen vnto mee the honour that belonged to mee, and therefore thou ſhalt bee baniſhed out of the lande that belonged by inheritance vnto thee. And did hee ſinne then? As I ſaide afore, if we iudge after our owne fancie, it will ſeeme to vs that Moſes diſcharged himſelfe well in all pointes, ſo as hee offended not, ne had any ſpot or blemiſh in him. But what for that? Heereby wee ſee that it belongeth onely vnto God to iudge, and that wee may bee deceiued at all turnes, in following our owne witte and reaſon. Wherefore let vs keepe this rule which is verie needefull: that is to wit, that wee bee farre vnable to diſcerne good and euill alwayes by eye ſight, for as is ſaid Luke.16.5. in the ſixteenth of Saint Luke, the thing that is highly eſteemed among men, ſhall be abhominable before God. When we haue ſifted a thing neuer ſo well, and ſetled all our wittes to vtter it well: yet ſhall it ſeeme to vs cleane contrarie to that it is indeede. Nowe then, let vs caſt downe our eyes and acknowledge that none but onely God is the competent iudge.

True it is that wee haue the lawe, whereby wee may aſſuredly ſay, this is good and that is euill: and our yeelding vnto that which is ſhewed vs there, is not to make vs iudges: for wee take no authoritie to our ſelues, but onely yelde to yͤ things that God ſetteth forth, And beſides this, wee muſt not onely iudge our neighbours doings by the lawe, but alſo examine our owne liues by it. And when wee finde our ſelues to haue ſwarued from Gods commaundementes, we muſt willingly condemne our ſelues, and allowe no further of our owne doings, than they agree with Gods will. Although they ſeeme good to our ſelues, yet let vs not ſtande vppon that. For our eyes are ſo troubled and weake, that oftentimes one ſinne eſcapeth vs and a hundred followe out after it: and that is becauſe we be not ſharpeſighted ynough, to ſpie out the thinges that God perceiueth, and which are hid from vs. And that is the cauſe why ſaint Paul ſaieth, 1.Cor.4.4. that although he had walked purely in his office: yet was he not iuſtified for all that. For God requireth another manner of perfection than wee can ſee. So then, ſeeing wee haue ſo weake and dimme a ſight, let vs learne to referre our ſelues vnto God: and let euerie of vs put that thing in vre in himſelfe, which is ſhewed vs by Dauid Pſal.19.13. when he ſaith, Who is he that knoweth his falts? Lord forgiue me the euill which I perceiue not. We muſt not onely ask God forgiueneſſe of the ſinnes that ſting vs, and whereof we haue proofe in our ſelues: but we muſt alſo acknowledge that we haue manie ſinnes which wee knowe not of. Marke that for one point.

Furthermore, proceeding ſtill herewith, let vs not be haſtie in iudging, to acquite one and to condemne another: but let vs reſerue vnto God that which is his, for as I haue ſaid afore, if God had not pronounced that ſentence vppon Moſes, euery man would canonize him, and ſay hee did the beſt that coulde be deuiſed. But what for that? Seeing hee is condemned by the heauenly iudge, we muſt bridle our ſelues, and not fall to incountering againſt God. For wee ſhall winne nothing by it. And for the ſame cauſe alſo S. Paul Rom.14.10. intending to exhort vs to modeſtie in the 14. to the Romanes, alledgeth that wee muſt all come before the iudgement ſeate of our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt, where we ſhall not allowe what we thinke good, nor reiect what we miſlike in our own fancie: for that authoritie belongeth to the onely ſon of God. Seeing it is ſo my brethren (ſaith he) wee muſt abſteine from fooliſh ouerweening. Thus much concerning that which is reported of the ſinne of Moſes.

Nowe let vs come againe to the matter that wee were in hande with: Which is, that Moſes meaneth not to excuſe himſelfe: he ſeeketh no ſtartinghole to leſſen his fault: but the thing that he alledgeth is reaſonable, he ſetteth foorth the heynouſneſſe of the peoples offence, ſhewing yͤ their ſedition was ſo forcible, that euen he him ſelfe alſo was ouerthrowen with it. The meaning then of Moſes was as if he ſhould haue ſaid thus: Beholde yee wretches, God hath choſen me to ſupply his place among you, and he hath gouerned me in ſuch wiſe by his holy ſpirit, that I haue had as it were his image printed in me: & yet notwithſtanding I haue done amiſſe, I haue offended. And what is the cauſe of it? I excuſe not my ſelfe: but yet are you giltie before God, of corrupting me, your murmuring hath ouerthrowen me, for by reaſon thereof I haue forgotten my duetie, and not yeelded God ſuch glorie as was due vnto him. Seeing it is ſo: [I may well ſay] it is not long of you, that you bereft mee not of all the grace that I had receiued at Gods hande: for where as he made me your heade to guide you: you haue done ynough to carie mee away to Satan through your naughtineſſe and rebellion.

Nowe then acknowledge the ſinne that you haue committed, for God hath brought me low, and it is his will to ſhewe you in my perſon, that you bee well worthie to periſh euerichone of you. Therefore beſides the thing that I haue touched alreadie, (which is, that we muſt not like yͤ better of our ſelues whē our faults are vnknowen [to our ſelues,] or when we can couer them, for Gods eies are not blindfolded for al yͭ, and the thinges that ſcape men are inrolled before him): wee muſt marke moreouer, that if wee giue anie man an occaſion [of ſtumbling or offending], although hee on his parte is not thereby diſcharged, yet muſt our offence needs be the more grieuous and heauie, according as it is in very deede. Wherefore let euery man ſo behaue himſelfe, as hee giue not his neighbours any occaſion of ſtumbling. For if any man ſinne vnder pretence of mee, if hee be miſſeled by my lewde conuerſation, if he take ill example by my vices: all the whole miſchiefe ſhalbe laide in my necke before God, I ſhalbe diſcharged, wo ſhalbe vnto mee as ſaith our Lord Ieſus Chriſt, and it were better for mee that I were caſt into the middes of the ſea with a milſtone about my necke, than to haue giuen my neighbour any cauſe of miſbehauiour. And therefore let vs liue in ſuch ſorte, as it may not bee caſt in our teeth before GOD, that wee haue beene the cauſe of other mens ruine and deſtruction. For it will coſt vs very deare, if the ſillie ſoules whom God hath created after his owne image, and whom Ieſus Chriſt hath ſo deerely redeemed, be loſt through our fault and wickedneſſe. Thus we ſee in effect what we haue to note vpon this ſentence, where Moſes ſaith, that GOD was angrie with him by meanes of the people.

Matt.18.6.& Mark.9.42. & Luk.17.2.

And furthermore we haue to mark here, that Gods laying of his temporall chaſtiſementes vppon his faithfull ones, is not to driue them to deſpayre, but to humble them for a time: for in the ende all turneth to their benefite, and therefore they muſt not bee out of heart for it. It was a verie harde and bitter puniſhment vnto Moſes, to bee baniſhed out of the lande that had beene promiſed him.

The time is come that the people ſhoulde bee deliuered out of the thraldome of Egypte, to bee conueyed into the Lande of promiſe: Moſes is choſen to bee their guide, ſo as hee ſupplyeth Gods office in deliuering them: and yet notwithſtanding this ſhame is done vnto him, that GOD ſhutteth the gappe againſt him and ſaieth, thou ſhalt not come there. Yee ſee then howe Moſes is (as yee woulde ſay) bronded with a marke of reproch before God. Nowe had hee taken it in deſpyte: it had beene ynough to haue plunged him into ſome blaſphemie. But hee bare this correction patiently, knowing that it ſhoulde bee to his benefite, becauſe it was but temporall. And therefore let vs marke this ſaying of Saint Paul, that Gods puniſhing of vs is to the intent we ſhoulde not periſh with the worlde. Seeing then that GOD procureth our welfare thereby, and his mortifying of vs for a time as in reſpect of the fleſhe: and his condemning of vs in ſuch wiſe as we bee aſhamed afore men, is to the intent that our ſoules ſhould be ſaued at the latter day, and wee liue in his preſence: ſeeing that that is the end & butte that he ſhooteth at: let not vs on our part be ſo headſtrong, as to chafe or fume at his corrections, but rather follow the example of Moſes, who (as wee ſee) did make no wordes againſt God. It might ſeeme hee had ſome occaſion to ſay, howe falles this out, that I am driuen out of the lande of promiſe? What ſhall a man ſay to it? For thou haſt ordeyned mee to be as a redeemer in thy ſteede: and nowe muſt I tarie heere ſtill. It was thy will that I ſhould ſerue in this office, to put the people in poſſeſſion of the promiſed lande: and why ſhall I not be partaker of the benefite that thou haſt purchaſed them by my hande? What though there haue beene ſome little diſtruſt in mee, which continued not the turning of a hande? Is the offence ſo heynous, that I muſt bee ſo grieuouſly puniſhed for that? Moſes then might haue helde ſuch plea with God: but hee holdeth his peace, and yeeldeth to the ſentence of condemnation willingly. Therefore let vs followe that which is ſhewed vs here by example: and (as I ſaid afore) when GOD is ſo gratious to vs, that in ſteede of caſting of vs away (as he might iuſtly doe) he doth no more but chaſtiſe vs as in reſpect of the fleſh, and ſhame vs before men, to the ende to bring vs to repentance, and to humble vs: let vs bee quiet, and let it not caſt vs into ſorrowe, but let vs plucke vp a good heart to follow our vocation. This is the thing wee haue to remember. For if hee ſpared not Moſes, what will he doe to vs? Ought wee to chalenge greater priuiledge than he?

1.Cor.11.32

1.Cor.5.5.

But heerewithall let vs marke, that Moſes ceaſed not to bee an heire ſtill of the heauenly kingdome, though hee were bereft of the outwarde ſigne of it. And thereby wee be warned, that if God make vs not to feele his fauour and loue in this worlde ſo fully as wee woulde wiſh, it muſt not make vs to bee out of patience. For it may happe that we ſhall take our ſelues to bee miſerable, yea and that when wee looke vppon our owne ſtate, we ſhall deeme it had bin much better for vs to haue gone aſtray with the world: Coloſſ.3.3. But what for that? Of al yͤ time we haue a life that lyeth hid in God. Therefore it is no hurt at all to vs, though God cut off the bleſſings of this preſent life from vs. For he knoweth to what end he doeth it: and it is good for vs to be ſo exerciſed. Thus yee ſee that the thing which wee haue to beare in minde, is that God doeth diuers times hide the ſignes of his loue from vs, as in reſpect of the worlde: but hee loueth vs neuer a whit the leſſe, as we ſee how it happened vnto Moſes.

As touching that which is ſaide of Ioſua: it is one notable point more. For beholde, hee is appointed to ſucceede in Moſes roome, yea, and yet was he but his ſeruaunt. And afterward Moſes is commaunded to incourage him. Heere we ſee that God will take the thinges that are not greatly eſteemed among men, yea and exalt them aboue our opinion, as we ſee he hath vſed to doe at all times: and not without cauſe: for thereby he intendeth to pull downe all pride according to this ſaying of Saint Paul, that hee 1.Cor.1.27.29. chooſeth the weake thinges, yea euen to the end that men ſhoulde not glorie in their owne ſtrength: and hee chooſeth the fooliſh thinges, to the ende that men ſhoulde not glorie in their wiſedome: and when he taketh yͤ things that are deſpiſed, it is to the ende that men ſhoulde not truſt in their owne credit, nor bee puffed vp with their owne worthineſſe. And it is verie requiſite that it ſhoulde be ſo: for we ſee howe euery man ſeekes to aduaunce himſelfe, and wee leaue nothing to God as neere as we can. Nay rather if wee doe but yeelde him the tytles that belong vnto him, it is but in way of daliance: and in the meane while we would that all ſhoulde be in our own perſons. Now foraſmuch as men haue this pride rooted in them: God muſt be fain to ſhew them by experience, that all of it is but vanitie: and ſo doth hee, by chooſing the things that are not regarded, and by ſeruing his turne with ſuch as are not eſteemed to be of any great renowne. If we looke howe God chooſeth men ſomtimes, to ſet them in preheminence: wee will ſay, who woulde haue looked for this? And God worketh after that manner, to the intent that thoſe by whom he ſerueth his turne, ſhoulde learne to acknowledge themſelues beholden to him for their dignitie wherein he hath ſet them, and vnderſtande that they obteined it not by their own power and policie, but that it is God which hath placed them in that degree. For if they thinke they haue ought of their owne purchaſing: God will ſhewe them the contrarie. That then is the thing which we haue to marke, when it is heere declared that God preferred Ioſua before Moſes inſomuch that although Moſes had now of long time beene cladde with the grace of the holy Ghoſt: although hee had beene choſen to bee the Redeemer [or Ranſommer] of the people: although God had ſet his marks vppon him; although that in executing his office, it was well ſeene that hee was a newe creature, and there appeared in him a maieſtie ſurmounting the nature of man: and there withall although hee had done ſo many deedes worthy of memorie, as might aſtoniſhe all them that hearde ſpeaking of them: yet notwithſtanding, in the ende God ordeyned his ſeruant in ſteede, to leade the people into the lande of Chanaan, and to put them in poſſeſſion of their promiſed heritage, and Moſes himſelfe is not worthy to come there. So far off is hee from cōming there euen as a common member ſhuffeled in among the reſt of the body: that God driueth him from it: and behold, God reacheth his hand to Ioſua, who had neuer looked for it.

But now beſides that which I haue ſaid, (that is to wit, that we be warned to forbeare all preſumption, and to lay downe all pride): let vs bee wel aſſured, that it belongeth to God to aduance vs & to make vs of eſtimation, through his mere grace: and that when we ſhal haue heaped vp al that euer we can together, all is nothing. Then, beſides that we haue a good warning to humble our ſelues: it is ſhewed vs therewithall, that wee muſt not enuie thoſe by whom God ſerueth his turne. And that is another good leſſon. For wee ſee howe euery of vs repyneth, when God hath aduanced any man, ſpecially beyonde all worldly hope. Where as we ſhould conſider thus, beholde God ſerueth his turne by ſuch a one, euerie man commendeth him, and there appeare manifeſt gifts of grace in him: when we ſee thoſe things, we be ſo malicious, that we grudge & repine at it. But contrariwiſe wee ought to marke, that when we be ſo pricked with ſpite and enuie, it is an aduancing of our ſelues againſt God and not againſt mortall creatures. Therefore let vs learne to honour God whereſoeuer hee ſheweth himſelf, & to be glad when he vouchſafeth to extend his grace to our neighbours: for if we do ſo, all ſhall fall out to our welfare. If another man haue mo gracious gifts thā I: I am rich in his perſon. For whē we confeſſe yͤ communion of ſaints: it is to ſhew, that whatſoeuer God giueth to one mā or to another, the ſame redoundeth to the benefite of all. True it is that we perceiue it not at the firſt puſh: but yet doth ſuch diuerſitie ſerue for the whole bodie of the Church. Rom. 12.4. The members of a bodie haue not all one operation: the eyes execute not the office of the legges, nor the hands the office of the feete: and yet notwithſtanding the body is ſo knit together in one, that whatſoeuer is giuen to any one member, doeth benefite al the reſt. Now then let vs vnderſtand, that when God beſtoweth the gifts of his holie ſpirit more largely vpon ſome one man than vpon others, he ceaſeth not therefore to haue pitie vpon vs: For we alſo muſt be edified therby. Yea ſurely, ſo we be not vnthankfull, and that we take no pritch at it when hee liſteth to holde vs lowe and to exalt our neighbours. To bee ſhort, wee make warre againſt God when we cannot abide that he ſhoulde keepe the order which hee hath determined: yͭ is to wit, to pul down yͤ things that are great to the worldward, and to aduance and exalt the things that are baſe and deſpiſed.

Moreouer we ſee that Moſes is commaunded to ſtrengthen Ioſua. So little ought Moſes to be greeued at the preferring of his ſeruaunt before himſelfe, that hee muſt inſtruct him and harten him. As if hee ſhoulde ſay, I ſee nowe it is Gods will to honour thee by diſhonoring mee. I am worthie of it, and I muſt be faine to beare it, and therewithall alſo to prepare thee to thine office. Although thou take my place: yet will I not ſet my ſelfe againſt thee, but (which more is) I will helpe thee to the vttermoſt of my power. Nowe am I become thy ſeruaunt. Whereas God had erſt aduaunced mee: I muſt nowe giue vp this preheminence, and thou muſt take my roome: and I muſt indeuer as much as I can, that the benefite which Gods will is to beſtow vpon thee, may auayle in thee. So then, if it pleaſe God to take any man to ſerue him, let vs ſtreyne our ſelues to helpe him, and let vs not bee aſhamed to put our ſhoulders vnder him to heaue him vp. Let vs not haue any of theſe wicked reſpects, to ſay, O ho, truely as for mee, if God were ſo gratious to mee as to aduance me as wel as ſuch a one, I woulde beſtirre mee. But foraſmuch as hee holdeth mee downe to the grounde, I will not meddle with other men. Let vs beware of ſuch churliſhneſſe. Nay rather when we ſee that God hath choſen a man: [let vs reaſon thus with our ſelues.] I ſee that God hath choſen ſuch a man, indeede hee is not the ableſt that coulde bee deuiſed, but yet is it Gods will to bee ſerued by him, and wee ſee hee hath a good will: therefore let vs helpe him, let euerie of vs reach him his hande, and let euerie of vs conſider wherin hee may ſuccour him to his furtherance. Yee ſee then that the thing which wee haue to marke heere, is that although our working beare no great outwarde ſhewe, and that the thinges which we doe haue no great gloſſe to commend them to the worlde: yet wee muſt not therefore ceaſe to ſerue God according to our power, and to linke in with thoſe by whom it is Gods will to bee ſerued, and not to imagine any thing that may foreſlowe vs, or make vs ſay, At whoſe whoſe hande ſhall I bee recompenſed? That which I haue done is as good as loſt, men make none account of it. It ſhall well ynough come in account before God. And therefore let it ſuffiſe vs to be allowed at his hand. Theſe are yͤ things that we haue to note vpon this, that Moſes was commaunded to ſtrengthen Ioſua.

Nowe finally it is ſaide, that the people perceiuing their ſinne, anſwered: *Wee haue offended the Lorde, and therefore wee bee nowe readie to goe vp.* And they not onely vſed thoſe wordes: *but alſo euerie man prepared and armed himſelfe, and ſo they went vp to encounter with their enemies.* Heere wee ſee the nature of men. When GOD biddeth them be ſtil, they be too too forward, & they be as hot as fire to doe the thing that is forbidden them. But when they were bidden goe, then their legges were broken. And yet notwithſtanding it is ſaide, that the people acknowledged their ſinne, when they had beene ſo diſobedient againſt GOD. Whereby it appeareth that there is ſuch a corruptneſſe in our nature, that euen in minding to doe good we doe euill, and offende God, & ouerſhoote our ſelues without reaſon or meaſure. Heere is then a faire lookingglaſſe for vs to diſcerne our owne vices by: yea verily, ſo wee conſider in the perſon of yͤ Iewes, that not only they themſelues are condemned, but alſo that God purpoſeth to giue a generall leſſon, whereby all men may fare the better. Nowe I tolde you firſt of all, that when God ſoundeth his trumpet and commaundeth vs to march, we ſtir not a whit: and that although wee haue ſome good liking of the matter, yet we bee ſo colde and ſlowe, as is pitie to ſee. And on the contrarie part, that if hee ſay, Tary ſtill, wee bee luſtie, and moreouer ſo hot and haſtie, that wee deſire nothing but to occupie both our armes & our legs too. When it was ſaide to the people, Go, for your God is among you, bee not afraide ſo long as yee haue ſuch a power to defende you: The people replyed againe on the other ſide, nay marie, howe ſhall wee goe vp? They bee Gyants, they wil deuour vs with their lookes, wee ſhalbe vndone at the firſt chop, it were better yet to returne into Egypt. When the people had replyed ſo, and it was tolde them againe, What meane you thus to diſtruſt your God? He hath giuen vs this lande, wee haue his promiſe of it: and beſides that, you haue had proofe of his helpe alreadie many wayes, and he offereth it you ſtill: howe thinke you of it, you faithleſſe and rebellious people? When the people were thus laide at: did they yet returne to their right wits? Yea, for yee ſee they repented. What for that? It is but a falſe repentance. Goe to (ſay they) ſith it is ſo, we will goe and march againſt our enemies, ſeeing it is Gods pleaſure. Nay, yee ſee heere, that God ment to trie their faith and obedience another way, that is to wit, by their forbearing to doe any thing at all. Becauſe hee ſawe they had not obeyed him at the firſt: nowe he will haue them aſhamed of it, and to tarie his leiſure till hee haue pitie of them. And foraſmuch as hee had ſworne that they ſhoulde not come there: his will was that they ſhoulde (after the example of Moſes) haue ſuffered themſelues to bee bereft of that honour as they were worthie. Wee ſee then that men haue but too greate frowardneſſe when GOD commaundeth them to ſit at reſt: and contrariwiſe that they bee but too colde, when he would haue them to goe forwarde: nay they will rather creepe into cranies, than goe forth when God biddeth them.

Howbeit, for the better vnderſtanding of this matter, let vs marke that this people offended in preacing forwarde without promiſe. For as I haue ſaide afore, we muſt not be hardie any further than God biddeth vs. Therefore when wee haue but a worde of his mouth, we muſt take corage, and put all lettes vnder foote that may turne vs away. For the thing wherein GOD will bee glorified, is that hee commaunde vs nothing in vaine. And ſpeciallie when hee promiſeth vs good ſucceſſe to our matters, and to proſper our doings: then muſt we reſt thervpon, aſſuring our ſelues that hee will giue vs good diſpatch. Neuertheleſſe when God had ſworne, that the people ſhould not come there: then woulde they needes goe vp againſt their enemies, not conſidering that in ſo doing they reſiſted GOD, and aduaunced themſelues againſt him. True it is that if a man had asked them, whether they minded to reſiſt God or no, and to doe cleane contrarie to his will, or whether they minded to haue him to bee their aduerſarie: they woulde haue aunſwered, No: Wee beleeue that God will helpe vs. For why? Hee hath deliuered vs out of Egypt, he hath promiſed our father Abraham to giue this lande in poſſeſſion to his linage, and the time is nowe come. Yea but there is no promiſe [to you,] and therefore it is but fonde preſumption or rather ſtarke madneſſe, when men take a toye in their heades, and aduenture to doe this or that, when in the meane while God hath not promiſed any ſuch thing. So then let vs marke well, that wee muſt not be bolde vppon our owne heade, but hearken till God ſpeake: and when wee haue his promiſe, wee muſt rule our ſelues thereby, and not paſſe the boundes thereof. For elſe it may happen vnto vs, as Moſes reporteth here that it happened to this people: that is to witte that wee ſhall doe all thinges arſiuerſie, and ſo offende God. In ſo much that when wee weene to doe well, wee ſhall dubble our faultes: when GOD commaundeth vs to go, wee ſhall bee as though our legges were broken: and when he commandeth vs to tarie, we ſhall run too ſwift: and ſo, all our whole life ſhall be out of order.

Furthermore let vs beare in minde, that (as I haue ſayde alreadie) if GOD liſt to chaſtice vs as in reſpect of the fleſhe, we muſt not bee too much grieued thereat: for it is for our benefite and welfare. If this people had beene well aduiſed, they woulde haue thought thus: bicauſe wee haue offended God by our diſobedience, hee will not haue vs to enter into the land: but yet for all that he bereaueth vs not of the hope of ſaluation, let vs content our ſelues with that, and wander foorth in this worlde till he take vs hence. So likewiſe let vs learne to wander on, if wee minde to come to the heauenly life. And if God doe nowe and then caſt vs downe, let vs conſider that yͤ caſting downe, will make vs to go much more ſwiftlie towardes the marke of the heauenly kingdome that is ſet before vs, than if wee had runned neuer ſo faſt, and had neuer left galloping all the way. Thus ye ſee what we had to marke more, vppon this ſaying, that the people would needes goe vp to diſcomfit their enemies.

Nowe Moſes addeth, that *They made themſelues readie with their armour and weapons.* Yea forſooth, but it is all one as if ye ſhoulde put an armour vppon a ſcarecrowes backe, and take him a ſworde in his fiſte: ſurely hee were ſubſtantially well armed: but in deede all were to no purpoſe. Euen ſo is it with vs: If wee were furniſhed with all the helpes of man and with al inferiour meanes, and in the meane whyle were not ſtrengthened in our heartes, but were full of fooliſhe ſelfeweening, and as it were drunkenneſſe, by preſuming vppon our owne power: all the brauerie that wee can make, is but winde and ſmoke, bicauſe wee haue not an eye vnto God, but are rebellious againſt him. Wherefore let vs learne to leaue the arming of our ſelues, and to ſeeke ſtrength and courage at Gods hand, and then let vs take armour & weapon as at his appointment. If we go that way to worke, God will proſper the helpes that he hath giuen vs: for he will bleſſe thē, bicauſe we ſought them at his hand. Beſides this, he himſelfe will ſtand by vs though all other meanes faile vs. For diuers times he will perchaunce ſuffer vs to bee made naked, and let yͤ world mock vs, as though we were vndone aforehand: but yet will he prouide wel ynough for all, at leaſtwiſe ſo that afore all things wee be furniſhed with his inward vertue. This is the thing that we had to marke, yet further vpon this text.

And here Moſes ſheweth that God ment not to deſtroy the people, when he commaunded them to turne backe. *Turne ye backe againe* ſaieth he. Here wee ſee Gods wonderfull goodneſſe, & that the threate which he ſpake off yeſterday, was not to the end that God woulde purſue the iniquitie of the people without hauing any pitie vpon them: but to make them feele their owne euill. For notwithſtanding all that, yet doeth he vſe compaſſion and kindneſſe towardes them, in forbidding them to incounter with their enemies. For although that at the firſt ſight a man would ſay that God reiected them, and curſed them: yet notwithſtanding, in ſo dooing he ſheweth them a ſigne of his mercie. For had he ſaid neuer a worde, what a thing had yͤ bin? In deede the people increaſed their offence yet more, by being diſobedient to the warning that he gaue them. But whatſoeuer they did, wee muſt conſider what God intended when he ſaide, *Goe not vp: for I will not bee with you, neither will I helpe you.* Wee ſee that when the people had once bin brought lowe, they perceiued and acknowledged a wonderfull goodneſſe in God, and therewithall became yͤ better diſpoſed to profit themſelues by the correction that was ſent them. Let vs marke well therefore, that when our Lord vttereth any token of his grace and goodneſſe towardes vs: therein he ſheweth more apparantly howe much he loueth vs, than if he made no countenance of any thing, but helde his mouth ſhut, and ſuffered vs to do what we liſted. Why? For alas, we ſhould but throwe our ſelues headlong into deſtruction, if we followed euery man his owne fanſie. Seeing it is ſo then, whenſoeuer God ſetteth himſelfe againſt vs, whenſoeuer he rebuketh vs, and whenſoeuer he ſheweth vs our follie, yea though it be with ſuch roughneſſe as it amaſeth vs: yet is it to our benefite, & therefore let vs learne to beare his yoke.

Moreouer let this bee our rule to diſcerne good and euill by: namely to depend wholly vpon Gods mouth, and not to bee wiſe in our owne conceits, but to ſuffer him to be our guide, and not to fall to gambolding at our owne pleaſure and fanſie, but to followe the way quietly which he ſheweth vs. And then will he giue vs armes and legs,and guide all our ſteppes in ſuch ſort, as he will make vs to goe ſtill forewarde, and cauſe vs to arriue at the good hauen. But on the contrarie part, if wee will needes bee fantaſticall, and doe thinges vppon our owne head and vppon our owne liking, and therevpon fall alſo to fooliſh practiſes:God muſt needes bee againſt vs: And then albeit that all thinges goe well forewarde with vs to our ſeeming, and fall out according to our minde: yet will God turne all vpſide downe, and ouerthrowe vs when we be at the higheſt. Thoſe are the things which wee haue to note. And therefore let vs ſet all our whole mindes to obey God: And for the bringing thereof to paſſe, let vs beſeech him to giue vs the true vnderſtanding of his worde, and to keepe vs from being froward and ſtubborne againſt him, as wee ſee by the example that is ſhewed vs here, which I pray God wee may eſchew.

And now let vs kneele downe in the preſence of our good God with acknowledgement of our faultes, praying him ſo to touche vs with them, as wee may profite more and more in faith and repentaunce, euen vntill he haue vtterly chaunged vs: and not ſuffer vs to ſtand againſt his holy commaundementes,nor to dubble our miſdoings when wee haue offended him: but to reforme vs in ſuch ſort, that being rid of all fleſhly glory,wee may ſeeke nothing but to bee mortified by him, to the end ẏ he may ſo frame vs to his righteouſneſſe, as our whole indeuour may be to rule all our thoughtes wordes and deedes thereby. That it may pleaſe him to graunt this grace,not onely to vs,but alſo,&c.

On Wedneſday the xxiiij. of Aprill. 1555.

The tenth Sermon vpon the firſt Chapter.

42 And the Lord,&c.

43 I tolde you of it: but you woulde not heare mee, but rebelled againſt the commaundement of the Lord,and were preſumptuous,and went vp into the hill.

44 Then the Amorrhyte which dwelt in that hill, came out againſt you and chaſed you,as bees doe,and ſmote you in Seir euen vnto Horma.

45 And when ye were come backe againe, ye wept before the Lorde: but the Lord heard not your voyce,ne inclined his eares vnto you.

46 So you abode a long time at Cades barne, as the dayes doe ſhewe which you haue taryed there.

WE ſawe yeſterday howe it is not lawfull for vs to put foorth our ſelues, except GOD call vs and ſhewe vs the way:and that although the thing which wee take in hande, bee neuer ſo allowable in reſpect of men, yet is it nothing woorth vnleſſe God bee our guide, and that wee bee ſure that wee aduenture vppon nothing but by his will. Therewithall wee ſawe alſo that we haue too tickliſh a nature, inſomuch that when any thing is to be done[that lyketh our ſelues,] wee bee but too forewarde, and wee cannot tarie till GOD ſhewe vs his will. And that on the contrarie part, wee ſee what vnluſtineſſe is in vs when God commaundeth vs any thing: for then wee bee ſo laſie as is pitie to ſee, it ſeemeth that our legges are broken: and to bee ſhort, wee bee ſtarke lame. Nay (which worſe is) when wee weene to doe well, wee marre all by our raſhneſſe. And this is confirmed yet better by that which Moſes addeth.For he rehearſeth what GOD had inioyned him. Thou ſhalt ſay vnto them, *Goe not vp, ne fight not, for I am not with you* (ſayeth the Lorde,) *and therefore ye ſhall bee ouercome.* In this ſentence wee ſee how it belongeth to God to ſay, Goe: and likewiſe to bidde vs tarrie, when he thinketh good. And if wee haue not that voyce to guide vs: we may well ſeeke all manner of furniture,and wee may be well ynough armed to the fight of the world: but yet ſhall there bee nothing but confuſion in our caſe. Then like as wee muſt ſimply obey the thing that GOD commaundeth, and haſt foreward with all ſpeede when wee ſee it is his pleaſure that wee ſhould goe: ſo on the contrarie part, when he will haue vs to ſit ſtill, let his forbidding ſuffice vs, aſſuring our ſelues that he will turne all thinges vpſide downe,if wee thinke to further ẏ matter by thruſting our ſelues foreward. To be ſhort, we muſt yeeld God no leſſe honour & reuerence, in forbearing to do things when he forbiddeth them: than in dooing and executing the things that he liketh.

And he ſheweth expreſſely, that it ſhall not boote vs to do any thing vnleſſe God command it,according as it hath bene declared heretofore how it belongeth to him to fight. True it is that he will haue the faithfull to inforce themſelues, but yet in ſo dooing wee muſt attribute all vnto him. Therefore if he be on our ſide we ſhall bee ſure of the victorie: but if he ſhrinke from vs,we ſhall haue the foyle though all the world helped vs. Then is there but this one onely reſpect that may giue vs courage: which is, that God bee at hand with vs to ſuccour vs, ſo as wee bee ſure of his aſſiſtance, and reſt wholly thereupon. Neuertheleſſe it is not for men to beare themſelues in hand that God will aide them, further then he hath aſſured vs by his promiſe. But it is certeine that God makes no promiſe to any, but to ſuch as walke in obedience. Whoſoeuer then flingeth ouer the fieldes, that is to ſay, whoſoeuer gaddeth here and there, & reſteth not ſimply vpon Gods word, doeth vtterly refuſe the benefite that God had promiſed him, & bereaueth himſelfe thereof wilfully. For the receiuing of Gods word to the end we may know what to do, and be ruled by his mouth: and to truſt in him, ſo as we be grounded vpon his grace, and reſort to him for ſuccour at our neede, are things inſeparable. He therefore that will needes dally vpon his owne head, and truſt to his owne fooliſh imaginations without ſubmitting himſelf to God: may well ſay, I hope God will helpe me: but his hope hath no reſemblance to the hope of ỹ faithfull. So then, ſeeing we perceiue what our owne imaginations are: let vs looke what things God giueth vs leaue to do, and what is lawfull for vs to do by his word. And therewithall, let vs be foreward in doing ỹ which he biddeth vs, waiting for his bleſſing wherby he will make all to proſper. For although we ſee the contrarie to our vnderſtanding: yet ſhall we ouercome all impediments by his helpe.

But howſoeuer the caſe ſtande, let vs beare this leſſon in minde, that GOD, if wee deſire to bee his, doeth binde vs by his infinite goodneſſe to be guided by him: and that as we would bee ſhielded by his mightie power, ſo likewiſe wee muſt quietly ſuffer him to rule vs as his lambes and ſheepe, and not followe euery man his owne fanſie. And if this ought to bee obſerued in the thinges that concerne this preſent life: howe much more ought it to be ſo in going to the kingdome of heauen? I ſay that euen in all our worldly affayres, we ought to doe God ſo much honour, as not to take too much vpon vs, nor to raunge here and there, without hauing firſt aſked counſell at his mouth, (as he ſaieth by Eſa.30.2. his Prophet Eſay,) and vntill he haue ordered al our deuiſes by his holy ſpirite. When we haue any buſineſſe to doe, although it bee not of any great importaunce: yet ought wee to call vpon God with all lowelineſſe, and not to do any thing till our conſcience bee throughly ſettled and reſolued that he alloweth our doings. Now if God looke to be obeyed in ſmall things, & which are as good as nothing: what will he doe when the matter concerneth his ſeruice? and when ỹ caſe concerneth ſo excellent a thing as is the ſaluation of our ſoules? Therefore we ſee herein, howe ſore the wretched world is blinded, ſeeing they giue themſelues to their owne follies & to mens traditions, and thinke not at all vpon the things that God hath ordained: No: that ſhall be the laſt thing ỹ they will doe. And therefore it ſtandeth vs ſo much the more on hand to ſtudie well this leſſon of Moſes, That God will not bee with vs, except we come neere vnto him, and be diligent to hearken what he will ſay vnto vs, & followe it when we haue done, without adding any thing to it, or diminiſhing any thing from it. And thus ye ſee in effect, what we haue to gather vpon this ſtreine.

Now herewithall Moſes threateneth them, *That they ſhall bee ouercome of their enemies, and fall before them.* Whereby we be done to vnderſtand, that if God bee once gone away from vs, wee muſt needes periſh, yea and our enemies muſt needes haue the vpper hand of vs, according as wee ſee in another place, that God leadeth vs [into aduerſitie,] and holdeth vs as it Deut.32.30. were fettered in it. And when our foes haue ſuch power ouer vs, it is becauſe wee bee Gods priſoners. True it is that men aduaunce themſelues ynough in their preſumption, but yet for all that, God daunteth their courage when it commeth to the pinche, and holdeth their hands faſt tyed, ſo as they cannot ſtirre one finger. Let vs marke well therefore, that wee muſt needes fall before our enemies, if wee bee not vphelde by Gods hand. For there lyeth all our ſtrength. Nay moreouer, though no man followe vs, yet muſt wee fall before our owne ſhadowes, and be ouercome without any man purſuing of vs. For Le.26.17.36 Gods wrath of it ſelfe without any other helpe or meane, is able ynough to confound vs. Neuertheleſſe the diuill ceaſſeth not to practiſe to deſtroy vs, and we be aſſailed on all ſides: therfore what woulde become of vs, if God were not our wall and bulwarke? Then if we conſider well the ſtate of our life, there is none other way for vs, but to walke in feare and to be watchfull, that we happen not to play the looſe coltes. As I ſaide euen now, ye ſee that the diuell ceaſſeth not, and he hath innumerable wyles to oppreſſe vs withall: we knowe what force he is of, and he is not without cauſe termed the Prince of the world. He commeth with ſo great crueltie, as paſſeth Ioh.12.31.& 14.30.& 16.11.& Eph.6.12. al the force of our fleſhly enemies. On the other ſide, this worlde is full of Ambuſhes againſt vs. To bee ſhort, when wee haue bethought vs neuer ſo well of the enemies whom wee ſee: there are an infinite multitude of enemies [whom wee ſee not,] which ſeeke nothing but to ouerthwart vs when we ſhould do good. Therefore let vs ſit ſtil in humilitie, to the end ỹ being ſhrowded vnder the ſhadow of God, wee may be vpheld and maintained by him. Let vs looke well to it then, that wee followe not what euery of vs thinketh good in himſelfe: but ſubmit our ſelues to Gods good will, as I haue ſhewed afore.

Nowe it followeth, *That Moſes ſpake vnto the people, & that the people would not followe his aduiſe, but were diſobedient to the mouth of God.* This maner of ſpeach hath bin expounded already heretofore. But here wee ſee yet more clearely, the proofe of ỹ which hath bin ſaid afore: ỹ is to wit, that God is deſpiſed not only when he ſpeaketh from heauen, but alſo when folke make none account of his word ỹ is preached by men. It is ſaid expreſly *That the people were diſobedient to the mouth of God.* And how? It is not ſaid ỹ God appeared in viſible ſhape, or ỹ there was any voyce heard from heauen: but it was Moſes ỹ ſpake: it is a man ỹ ſaith that ỹ people reſiſted the mouth of God. Now then we ſee that God will haue his word receiued wͭ like humilitie when he ſendeth men to declare his commandemẽt, as if he him ſelfe were among them. The doctrine that is ſet forth in yͤ name of God, ought to be of as much authoritie [in the mouth of a man,] as if all the Angels of heauen came downe to vs, or as if God ſhewed his Maieſtie preſently before our eyes: yea & it is the thing wherein he will trie the obedience of our faith. True it is that wee ought to vſe good diſcretion when men ſpeake. For if wee ſhould receiue all that is put to vs: there ſhould be no difference betweene yͤ lyers and falſe prophets yͭ ſeduce our ſoules, & the true miniſters of God. But if we haue ſure warrant that the thing which is brought vs, proceedeth of God: (as if it ſhould be ſhewed vs by the holy ſcripture, yͭ men ſhould not inuent any thing of their own heads, but hold themſelues to the pure ſimplicitie of yͤ Law & the Goſpel:) it is certaine that whoſoeuer maketh any reſiſtance in yͤ caſe, doeth not make warre againſt a creature, but manifeſtly wͭſtand God, who will be heard when he ſpeaketh ſo by men, and ſerueth his turne by them as by his inſtruments. Therefore let vs beare well in minde this order of Moſes ſaying, which is, yͭ he himſelf is the ſpeaker, & yet notwithſtanding, yͭ the people in diſobeying him diſobeyed God. For why? Moſes had not forged any thing of his owne braine, but ſhewed vnto them how it was God yͭ had ſent him. And therfore it is no ſtraunge caſe that God ſhould finde himſelfe grieued, & that his Maieſtie ſhould be offẽded, & take yͤ outrage to be done as to himſelfe, when the meſſage that he had ſent by Moſes was not receiued. In likewiſe is it at this day. Matt.10.14. & 40. And for the ſame cauſe doeth our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt auow, that if men refuſe to heare the Miniſters of the Goſpell, he will take that wrong to bee done to himſelfe. Therefore let not men make a ieſt of it, when GOD cauſeth his worde to bee preached nowe adayes, and ſtirreth vp men to publiſhe it abroade: If any man thinke to eſcape by ſaying, they bee but men with whom wee haue to doe, and therewithall deſpiſe the doctrine: they ſhall knowe in the end, that it came from heauen, and that they ſet themſelues againſt God and not againſt mortall creatures: for he will haue his Maieſtie to bee knowen there. Then if men take him for their ſouereigne Lorde, let them ſtoope vnto him, and doe him homage in his doctrine. For he hath Printed his marke in ſuch wiſe there, that if any man incounter the things that are conteyned in it, it is all one as if hee would put his truth vnder foot, wherein he hath ſhewed himſelfe openly as in his liuely image. Looke that wee beare that poynt well in minde. For if earthly Princes reuenge the deſpite that is done to their cotearmours, and thinke themſelues to bee miſuſed therein: I pray you is it not much more rightfull reaſon that God ſhould doe ſo, when men make no reckening of his worde? [Yes verily.] For this caſe concerneth not ſome painted picture or blaſing of armes: but it is the image of God which appeared to vs in ſubſtance, yea euen with ſuch power as we ought to be transfigured into it, as ſaith S. Paul. 2.Cor.3.18. That is the thing which we haue to marke.

And therefore let ſuch as haue the office of preaching Gods worde looke well to themſelues that they goe ſoberly to worke, & that they may alwayes be able to proteſt, that the things which they teache are put into their mouthes by God. When they bee once ſure that it is ſo: let them labour to make al their hearers to feele Gods power which is after a ſort incloſed in his worde, that it may be receiued as it deſerueth, and euerie man ſubmit himſelfe to it, and God by that meanes bee worſhipped of all men, and ſerued with one accord. And therewithal let them defie al rebels & deſpiſers. Whẽ they ſee yͤ heatheniſh ſort fall to ſcoffing at the doctrine which they beare abroade: let them aſſure themſelues that the things which they haue vttered, ſhall ſuffice to ſend all theſe to the bottome of Hell, which do ſo ſet themſelues againſt them, according to this ſaying of Saint Paul, 2.Cor.10.4. that the Preachers of Gods word are armed with ſuch a ſword, as is able to confound all ſuch as will not obey the doctrine. And herewithall likewiſe let euerie man haue an eye to himſelfe, and when he commeth hither to be taught in the name of God, let him be prepared with ſuch lowelines and modeſtie, as he may perceiue that it is God which ſpeaketh, and be moued to bow downe his necke, to receiue his yoke patiently. And as for thoſe that will needs play the wild beaſtes: let them vnderſtand yͭ here is ſentence giuen vpon them, ſo as they may well plead againſt it, but they ſhall win nothing by their ſhiftes, bicauſe it is ſaid that all ſuch as obeyed not Moſes, were diſobedient to Gods owne mouth.

And nowe Moſes addeth expreſſely, *That the people were preſumptuous*, in that they woulde not bee at reſt. And this importeth very much. For it doeth vs to vnderſtand, that there was neuer yet any vnbeliefe or ſtubbornneſſe in men, but it was matched with loftineſſe, and pride, which puffed them vp in ſuch wiſe, and made them ſo farre out of patience with themſelues, as they fell to checking againſt GOD, and to giue themſelues to all euill. And that is yͤ cauſe why vnbeliefe is ſo behated afore God. Sometimes it will ſeeme to vs to bee ouer great rigour, when GOD puniſheth them ſo ſore which cannot [finde in their hearts to] hearken to his word. For we excuſe them by ignoraunce, foraſmuch as they were not well aſſured that it was God that ſpake: and in the meane time wee looke not to the euill that lurketh in couert, which God perceiueth and iudgeth: yͭ is to wit, that men are inwardly as full of poiſon as toads, and that they bee ſtuffed with pride, which maketh thẽ to moũt vp in ſuch wiſe, as in effect they refuſe to obey God, foraſmuch as they vouchſafe not to yeelde all ſuperioritie to him. That is the cauſe why pride or preſumption, is matched in this place with vnbeliefe. And it is yͤ ſame thing which I haue declared afore, namely that the true hardineſſe muſt bee grounded in God, ſo as men muſt not attempt any thing vpon opinion of their owne power, nor perſwade themſelues that they haue this or that: but onely ſtand vnto that which God promiſeth vs. If it be not ſo with vs: then will our hardineſſe be turned into preſumptuouſneſſe. And in this reſpect ought wee to condemne mens raſhneſſe when they aduaunce themſelues too much: and to commende their inuincible conſtancie, when they ſubmit themſelues out of hand to Gods woorde, ſo that hauing once his promiſe, they reſt vpon it as vppon a rocke deſpiſing all ſtumbling blockes, & keepe on their pace ſtil, notwithſtanding any trouble or ſtorme that can be ſtirred vp againſt them, or anie threatening or menacing of them. It will be ſayd diuers times, that Gods ſeruantes are wilfull: becauſe they will not ſwarue for any thing, nor for al yͤ worldly reaſons that can bee alledged. This and that ſhall be brought in, and wee knowe that nothing is eaſier than to ſtrike ſayle at euery blaſt of winde as they ſay. But wee ſee that ſuch as purpoſe to ſerue God, doe ſhut their eyes againſt al daungers, inſomuch that although all ſhould goe to hauocke, yet will they not ceaſe to doe the thing that is commaunded thẽ. Lo here a willfulneſſe: yea verily, according to the opinion of the fleſh: but yet in very deede it is the true hardineſſe. Why ſo? Becauſe it hath the good foundation. Heauen and earth are of great weight: and yet is all that houge building grounded vppon the onely worde of God. In what good plight then ſhall a particular thing be, when it is founded vppon the ſame? Thus yee ſee what wee haue to gather vpon this text, that the people was preſumptuous in that they yeelded not to God, when hee commaunded them to ſit ſtill.

Now, to the ende wee may know, that when God hath once ſpoken, they be no threatnings to ſcarre babes withall as they ſay: he addeth for a concluſion, *You went vp, and behold, the Ammorrhyte that dwelt on the hill came out before you, and chaſed you as waſpes or Bees doe, inſomuch that they ſmote you in mount Seir euen vnto Horma.* Hereby Moſes ſheweth that the people were taught after the maner of fooles, that is to ſay, by their owne harme. And good reaſon it is that when we will not beleeue Gods ſingle word, we ſhould pay very deere for our experience, and be made to knowe in ſpite of our teeth, that he will be ſtedfaſt in his purpoſe, and bring the thing to paſſe that he hath ſpoken. And hereby wee bee warned not to prouoke Gods wrath, nor to tempt him. So ſoone then as he ſpeaketh, let vs ſtand in awe: for it is a part of fayth as is ſhewed by the example of Noe in the eleuenth chapter
Heb.11,7. to the Hebrewes. It is ſayd there, that Noe beheld the flud at ſuch time as men made great chere in the world. How ſo? for God had told him that the world ſhould periſh, and hee contented himſelfe therewith. And therefore let vs not tary till God arme himſelfe and vtter his power againſt vs: but as ſoone as he hath ſpoken, let vs be afraide, that we may preuent his wrath: and then ſhall we be taught as wee ought to be, to our welfare. But if we bee hardheaded, and thinke that all that euer is ſayde is but a mockerie: wee ſhall finde to our confuſion, that God hath an effectuall worde, and that his hand and his tongue goe together, ſo as all that euer commeth from him ſhall be found to bee certaine and infallible.

Alſo wee haue to marke this ſimilitude that Moſes ſetteth downe here: namely that the *Ammorrhytes came out lyke Bees*. For wee knowe that when Bees are angrye, they ſting men: and they regard not whether men be too ſtrong for them, but they fly vppon them with ſuch choler and furie, as they cannot but be aſtoniſhed. They ſeke to ſting their eyes: ſo as there is not the hardieſt of them, but he is put to his ſhiftes, and is faine to runne away from thoſe little pretie fowles. Moſes then hath vſed this ſimilitude, to ſhewe that the enemies had Lyons hearts, becauſe God had incouraged them. For it belongeth to him onely to ſtrengthen men. When it pleaſeth him to defend vs, though our enemies were as mad as might be, yet ſhould they ſhrinke away, and be diſmayed at a thing of nothing. But elſe, if there were but little children againſt vs, GOD would ſo ſtrẽgthen them, as we ſhould not know where to become, but bee diſcomfited before them. Therefore let vs not haue an eye to the ſtrength of men, nor to their furniture. For our Lord will ſtirre vp folke againſt vs, that coulde doe nothing afore, and in whom there was no lykelyhoode at all: and wee ſhall be ſo combred to withſtand them, that to our ſeeming, all the world is againſt vs: and moreouer wee ſhall be ſo diſmayed, and GOD ſhall ſo bereaue vs of all ſenſe and reaſon, that euen a viſor ſhall be enough to ſcarre vs out of our wittes. Thus yee ſee what wee haue to conſider in this ſimilitude which Moſes hath ſet downe here in the text.

Finally he ſayth *that the people being ſo diſcomfited, fell to weeping, but God heard not their cry, and ſo they taryed in Cades Barne according to the time that they abode there.* Some ſupply it here wͭ theſe wordes, *according to the time that you abode in other places*, and they ſay that they abode there nyneteene yeeres. But that cannot be prooued by the holy ſcripture, & the makers of that gloſe were the Iewes, who haue turned all the holy ſcripture topſiteruie, with their dreames and dotages. The meaning of Moſes is farre otherwiſe. For his intent is to put the people in minde of their long abiding at Cades Barne, becauſe God helde them there as it were at a baye: and to make them cal to remembrance and conſider the better that his pulling down of their pride after that maner, and his cauſing of them to feele that they ought not to raunge abroad at randon when God ſhutteth the gate againſt thẽ by forbidding them, was a iuſt puniſhment frõ heauen. Moſes then intendeth here to ſtabliſh the people the better in yͤ knowledge which they ought to haue had long agoe concerning Gods iuſtice, to the ende that the ſame may humble them, & touche them the better with repentance. That is the playne meaning of the text.

Now wee ſee here firſt of all, that men recoyle a hundred paces backe, when they weene to goe forewarde but one, at leaſtewiſe beyonde the will of God. This people was neere their enemies,they did but put themſelues in a readineſſe,and as ſoone as they were armed, they gaue charge vppon them. They needed not to retyre for the matter, that is to ſay, they needed not to remoue: for wee ſee how they be chaſed, and not onely beaten downe there in the ſame place: but that God alſo dryueth them before the winde, as chaffe or duſt is driuen. Ye ſee then here is a fayre lookingglaſſe to ſhewe vs that when men preſume to make themſelues redoubted, they doe no ſooner ſet one foote foreward, but God plucketh them an hundred leagues backe, and that to their great confuſion. What is to be done then? Obedience muſt alwayes be as a creſſet vnto vs to ſhew vs the way, ſo as we may firſt and formoſt knowe what God hath appointed, and thereupon take courage to goe, when we be ſure that he guideth our footeſteppes. For thereupon wee may boldely conclude, that the ende thereof ſhall bee good, and that there ſhall followe nothing of it but proſperitie. But contrariwiſe, if wee will needes be leaping out, when God will haue vs ſit ſtill at home: it will coſte vs very deare. Thus yee ſee what wee haue to remember vppon this text of Moſes, where hee ſayth expreſſely that the people were chaſed euen vnto Horma, and that they came vnto Cades.

As touching the weeping that is ſpoken of here, it ſhould ſeeme that there was ſome repentance in them before, and that now the ſame was doubled: and yet notwithſtanding it is ſaid that it was but loſt time, and that the peoples weeping booted them not at all. This at the firſt bluſhe might ſeeme contrary to other texts
2.Chr.6.24. of the holy ſcripture. For it is ſayd that as ſoone
& Eſa.65.23 as ſinners acknowledge their faultes and doe but ſigh for them, God receiueth them to mercie, yea and euen preuenteth them. It is ſayd that hee taryeth not till wee cry, but that he preuenteth our crying: or at leaſtwiſe that whenſoeuer wee pray, he is ready to heare vs. But here it ſeemeth that the people repented, and yet that God letteth them alone, ſo as they languiſhe ſtill without faring any whitte the better for their repentance. As touching the thing that wee haue ſeene, it was ſet downe to ſhewe vs that the people had a falſe repentance, as men cōmonly haue, ſoothing thēſelues through hipocryſie, and bearing themſelues on hand that they bee well ſorie for their ſinnes, when there is ſtill ſome backe nooke behinde, ſo as they conſider not the miſchiefe ſo deepely as it were meete to be ſearched. True it is, that God will not ſuffer vs to be plunged in [ſorrowe for] our ſinnes, ſo wee bethinke vs of them earneſtly: but all our ſeeking is to couer them, and to forget them quite by our good will. Now then, wee haue ſo much the more neede to pray God to worke ſo in vs, as wee may not bee
Iere.13.23. double hearted to flatter our ſelues. And for the
& Rom.2.5. ſame cauſe the holy ſcripture telleth vs, that he which knoweth not how hard it is to come to repentance, deceiueth himſelfe.

The Papiſtes imagine, that they can helpe themſelues and further themſelues to repentance by their owne freewill. Loe what their ouerweening is. But let vs vnderſtand that it is a ſingular woorking of the holy ghoſt, when it pleaſeth him to leade vs to repentance. For what elſe is it than a renewing of the man? Is it in any mans power to create himſelfe? No: but God faſhioneth vs newe againe, and therefore that prayſe is to be giuen vnto him. Againe, our wittes are vtterly dulled or rather ſtarke blinde. God muſt bee faine to inlighten them. And is that in our power? Whereas there is nothing but corruption in our hartes: whereas there is nothing but ſecrete rebelliousneſſe and malice: God muſt be faine to rid and clenſe away euery whit of it.

And therefore let vs marke well that there was no repentance in this people, although they were touched before. It might well bee a ſigne that God had compaſſion of them: but true repentance requireth not onely an acknowledgement of our faultes, but alſo that wee ſhoulde be ſorye for them, and that vppon the feeling of our owne euill, wee ſhould goe vnto GOD, referring our ſelues wholy vnto him, and ſeeking nothing but to bee gouerned thenceforth by him, foraſmuch as we haue nothing but frowardneſſe in our ſelues. But the people were not yet come to this poynt: and ſo wee ſee they were not ripe to repentance. And as touching their weeping, true it is that they had ſome feeling and vnderſtanding: but that was not enough yet.

Furthermore let vs marke well, that Gods refuſing to heare the cry of the childrē of Iſrael, was not to ſhake them off vtterly. And there is not a text better worthie to be noted than this. For it importeth great inſtruction for all our whole lyfe. I ſay then that God harkened not to the peoples weeping, and yet notwithſtanding that he did not vtterly ſhake them off, nor was altogether deafe to their requeſt. And how may that be? For ſometimes God heareth vs not to outward appearance, and yet howſoeuer the caſe ſtande our prayers are not vnauaileable, but doe vs good.

As for example: When a man hath played the vnthrift, GOD plucketh him backe, (there are examples enowe to be ſeene thereof commonly:) and when another hath bin giuen to gluttonie and exceſſe: another hath bin a whoremonger or a drunkard, and another hath bin a blaſphemer: very wel, God ſeeing men become ſuch beaſtes, ſubdueth them by force, hee ſendeth them afflictions which laſte not for a day or a moneth only, but linger vpon them a long time: whereupon the one ſorte take the bridle in their teeth, and chawe vppon it with fretting and chafing againſt God, continue ſtill ſturdy and ſtubborne in their ſinnes: the other ſorte graunt that they haue offended, and are ſorie for it before God, beſeching him to vouchſafe to moderate his rigor, & to aſſwage yͤ paines which they indure. And yet in the meane while, their miſerie abateth not, but they continew at the ſame ſtay that they were at before. It ſhould ſeeme then yͤ their prayers are loſt, & that God gaue deafe eare vnto them. Now although ſuch folke pray hartily: yet let vs marke that Gods hearing of them is not to outward appearance. And why? Becauſe he knoweth that it is good for them to be ſo vnder his rod ſtill. Euen ſo was it with this people: it was to their benefite for them to be put in minde of their lewde dealings euery minute of an houre. But yet for all that, he fayleth not to haue compaſſion of them: for he giueth them patience, and afterwarde maketh their afflictions to doe them good: inſomuch that although they were irkſome to them, yet did they ſtand them in ſtead of medicines. Ye ſee then that God doth ſometimes heare vs, and yet notwithſtanding it appeareth not ſo to any mans thinking, yea and euen wee our ſelues may ſuppoſe that wee haue loſt our time. True it is that God will ſurely reiect the yellings of the wicked when they cry out vnto him, and that he will laugh at their weepings: and it is not to bee marueiled at. And yet in ſo doing he fayleth Ex.22.27.& 2.Chr.7.14. not to accompliſhe his promiſe, which is, that he will heare all them that cry vnto him. And why? For this promiſe belongeth to none but ſuch as cry vnto God rightly, and come not to him with windlaſſes and feining, according to Pſal.145.18 this expreſſe ſaying of the pſalme, that God is neere to all ſuch as call vpon him, yea, as call vpon him in trueth. Then if wee will be heard at Gods hand, wee muſt firſt and formoſt haue our affections clenſed. And therefore his reiecting of the hipocrites when they cry vnto him, is no counterworking againſt his promiſe: For they bee vncleane. In deede they houle, and they will not ſtick to ſay, alas my God, they will make lamentation enough: but foraſmuch as they ſeeke not God of a deſire to come vnto him, but in ſtead of comming to him, would recoyle backe from him if it were poſſible: their crying out, my God, is as though they were vppon the racke. Now then, this howling of theirs is brutiſh, and hath no affinitie with faith to doe them good withall. But the thing that I tolde you of euen now, hath another maner of thing in it: that is to wit, that [diuers times] God will not heare vs to deliuer vs from the bodily puniſhmentes that he ſendeth vs: and yet in the meane while he ceaſeth not to be mercifull and well minded towardes vs. And therefore let vs beare in minde, that when our Lord ſendeth vs anie diſeaſes, ſo as one is ſtriken with pouertie, another is ſmitten after another faſhion, and euery man hath his griefe: if we pray vnto him, and the miſerie is as though it were tyed to our ſhoulders, and he maketh no countenaunce to heare vs: it is not to be ſayd therefore that God letteth vs alone therin, to driue vs to deſpaire. But if wee beare the aduerſitie patiently which hee ſendeth, let vs looke to be deliuered of it in the ende: and in the meane while let it ſuffice vs to be comforted by his holy ſpirit, and let vs hope 1.Cor.10.13 that he will not ſuffer vs to be tempted aboue that which we be able to beare. Thus ye ſee how God heard not the peoples cry, and yet that they which haue ſought him with a true and rightmeaning heart, haue not loſt their labor. God ſhewed not by outward deed, that he heard them, and yet in the meane while he made their bodily puniſhment to ſerue to the welfare of their ſoules: inſomuch that albeit they lingered there by the ſpace of fortie yeeres: yet were they not diſinherited of ẏ kingdom of heauen. Wheras they were diſappointed of the land that was promiſed them: therein they felt Gods wrath: but yet did they ouercome that temptation through fayth: I meane them that came againe into the right way, and grew not hard hearted as the moſt part did, which did nothing elſe but chafe vpon the bit, as we haue ſeene afore. And herein wee ſee, that if we haue true repentance of our ſinnes, we ſhall finde that God is not vnmindefull of our requeſtes, though he heare vs not ſo ſoone as wee would: and that yet notwithſtanding our repentance muſt keepe vs ſtill vnder, ſo as although that (to our ſeeming) the gate vnto Gods goodneſſe is ſhut againſt vs, and he will not admit vs in: yet neuertheleſſe, our prayers ſhall not be in vaine. For God will ſhewe in the end, that he was not deaf to our requeſts, but that he heard them to giue vs ſuch aſſwagement of our afflictions, as he knew to be meete and expedient for our welfare.

And finally let vs marke wel that if God haue puniſhed vs, yea & that the affliction hath indured a long time: ẏ remēbraunce thereof muſt bee well printed in our mindes, that we become not lyke thoſe which forget Gods chaſtiſementes ẘin a day or twaine. And ẏ is ẏ cauſe why Moſes ſayth to ẏ people, *According to the dayes which you haue taryed there.* As if he ſhould ſay, yee ought to beare it well in remembraunce. For it ſeemed to you that ye ſhould neuer haue come ſoone enough into the lande of bleſſing: but God made you to retyre from it, & it ought to haue bin yet longer time ere ye had come there. Thinke vppon it, & conſider how it was Gods hand ẏ held yee there as it were ſhut vp in cloſe priſon. Now then, although God haue deliuered you from it: yet muſt you beare it in mind ſtil, according as we ſee how king Ezechias ſpeaketh thereof in his Eſai.38.15. ſong, ſaying ẏ he will bethinke him of the yeeres paſt with heauineſſe and griefe of heart, and call to minde ẏ chaſtiſementes that he had receiued at Gods hand, thereby to holde himſelfe in awe, ẏ hee fall not backe againe into the ſame faultes for which he had bin puniſhed. Thus ye ſe how wee ought to thinke vppon the corrections that God ſhall haue ſent vs, that we may profite our ſelues by them. And therefore let vs not reſemble this people that are ſpoken of here: but whēſoeuer we be chaſtiſed at Gods hand, let our ſorrowing be in ſuch ſorte, as we may haue wherewith to comfort our ſelues in his grace. And therwithall let vs holde our ſelues thenceforth in his obedience, neuer to prouoke him as wee had done before.

Now let vs kneele downe in the preſence of our good God with acknowledgement of our faultes, praying him to vouchſafe to touch vs with them more and more, in ſuch wiſe as wee may not only aske him forgiueneſſe for our trāſgreſſing of his commaundementes ſo many wayes: but alſo deſire to be reformed by his holy ſpirit, that by his power wee may fight againſt al our owne luſts, and againſt al the temptations of the world, and quietly goe through with our calling, vntill ſuch time as being deliuered from all fighting, wee be receiued into the heauenly reſt that is promiſed vs. And ſo let vs al ſay, Almightie God heauenly father, &c.

On Thurſday the xxv. of Aprill. 1555.

The eleuenth Sermon which is the firſt vpon the ſecond Chapter.

THen turned wee and drewe to the wilderneſſe by the way of the red Sea, as the Lorde had ſayd to mee: and wee compaſſed about mount Seir many a day.

2 And the Lorde ſpake vnto me, ſaying:

3 Yee haue gone long enough about this mountaine: turne yee towardes the North.

4 And warne thou the people, ſaying: yee ſhall ſhortly paſſe through the borders of your brethren the children of Eſau which dwell in Seir, and they ſhall be afrayd of you: but take yee good heede to your ſelues,

5 That yee prouoke them not: for I will not giue you ſo much as one foote of their land.

6 Yee ſhall buy vittels of them for mony, and eate: and lykewiſe yee ſhall buy water of them for mony, and drinke.

7 For the Lorde thy God hath bleſſed thee in all the workes of thy handes. He knewe that thou ſhouldeſt iourney through this great wilderneſſe. The Lord thy God hath bin with thee now theſe fortie yeeres, and thou haſt wanted nothing.

HEre wee ſee more fully the proofe of the matter that I treated of yeſterday: ẏ God in chaſtiſing men, doth teache them to obeye him, & by that meanes holdeth them in awe by force, becauſe they would not ſubmitte themſelues to him willingly: And ſecondly that he tryeth their obedience, by reyning them backe, whereas wee of our owne nature are deſirous to preace foreward, and to purchaſe our ſelues eſtimation. Moſes then ſayth, *that the people turned backe after they had bin ſo beaten by their enemies*: For before they could not bee tamed by no meanes. God had commaunded them what they ſhould doe: but wee ſawe they rebelled for all that. When he ſayd, be ye ſtill: they were in a heate and would needes be running vpon their enemies: And when he ſayde, goe not: they would needes runne faſter than before. But were they once taught to their coſte, and had God once performed his threatning, by making them to be ouerthrowen by their enemies: then were they plyable enough: But it was all too late, as we commonly ſay in the prouerb, a foole is neuer wiſe till he be well beaten. Now hereby we be taught how greatly it is for our behoofe to bee ſo dealt with. For except God bring vs home to him by correction: it would be vnpoſſible for vs to bee ſuch as we ought to be, ſo as we would harken to his voyce and followe him whitherſoeuer hee commaundeth vs. Therefore wee muſt be faine to be prepared with ſtripes of the rod.

Furthermore, let vs learne well the thing that hath bin declared heretofore, according alſo as Moſes ſheweth it to the eye: that is to wit, that God will ſuffer vs to languiſh: and that although he bee mercifull to vs, and haue forgiuen the ſinnes that we haue committed: yet muſt wee be faine to ſuffer for a time. We ſhall ſigh vnto him, and yet will he let vs alone in our miſerable ſtate and plight: but in the ende, all ſhall fall out to our benefite. For had God ſet open the gap to the children of Iſraell, and giuen them enterance into the promiſed land: within a day or two they woulde haue forgotten that horrible cryme of theirs in murmuring againſt him, yea (& as much as in thẽ lay) euen in forſaking their heritage: they would neuer haue thought vppon their vnthankefulneſſe and diſobedience. Therefore it behooued them to bee chaſtiſed a long ſeaſon, ſo as they might neuer forget the offence that they had committed. Now then, whenſoeuer wee haue prouoked God to anger by our diſobedience: let vs not thinke it ſtrange though he doe not at the firſt daſhe deliuer vs from the aduerſitie that he ſendeth vs for a chaſtiſement. For our ſinne would not bee printed ſo throughly in our remembraunce at the firſt day as is requiſite. God therefore muſt be faine to worke after ſuch ſorte, and to make vs to languiſh, as I haue touched before. And in good faith, what elſe is all this preſent lyfe but ſuch an exerciſe? Wherefore hath God made vs ſubiect to ſo many miſeries? wee be no ſooner ſcaped out of one miſchiefe, but anon there commeth another in the necke of it, ſo as there is neuer any ende. And all is to teach vs this leſſon, which wee cannot remember if wee be not inforced to it. Beſides that, we would forget it by and by, if our Lord did not (as yee would ſay) incorporate it into vs, ſo as wee may bee prepared and led of nature to ſay, ſee how our God exerciſeth vs with many miſeries, and hee doth it becauſe wee be wretched ſinners. And yet for all this, can wee frame our ſelues to his lure, and not rather drawe cleane contrarie to his will? Therefore is he faine to teach vs, that ſpyte of our teeth wee be in his hand, and he hath all ſouereine dominion and Lordſhip ouer vs.

Againe to come to particularities, whenſoeuer God ſendeth a man any affliction, let him bethinke himſelfe, that beſides the common miſeries of this flightful lyfe, god intendeth to giue him a particular inſtruction. And let vs not ſay, why doth not this man or that man deſerue to be chaſtiſed as well as I: according to the common maner, which is that euery man woulde be priuiledged aboue others? nay let euery of vs yeelde to receiue the rod patiently at Gods hād, aſſuring our ſelues that hee chaſtiſeth vs meaſurably, & as he knoweth to be for our profit. Thus much concerning yͤ retyring yͭ is treated of here.

Furthermore if our Lord plucke vs backe, and wheras things were in good forewardneſſe, and there was good lykelyhoode that all ſhould haue floriſhed and bin in great proſperitie: if we ſee a ſuddeine confuſion, and that the ſame continueth afterward, and things goe on from worſe to worſe: let vs vnderſtand that it is for our ſins ſakes, & becauſe wee haue peruerted the courſe of Gods goodneſſe. For he [for his part] neuer fayleth to goe foreward with the good that hee hath begunne to doe for vs: but wee cannot abide that hee ſhould continue it, wee hinder him as much as in vs lyeth. And therefore is he faine to handle vs as we deſerue.

Beſides this, let vs aſſure our ſelues that when we obey God, then hath he made his corrections auaileable in vs. True it is that a great nomber doe harden when God goeth about to ſubdue them: yee ſhall ſee them growe wilfull and full of venim againſt him. But God worketh after ſuch a ſorte in his choſen, that when hee ſmiteth them with his hand, he doth alſo touch thē inwardly with his holy ſpirit, ſo as their harts become ſoft that they may obey, by reaſon wherof the corrections doe them good. Although then that the miſeries which we indure are hard and contrary to our nature: yet muſt wee thinke them good, becauſe God maketh them to ſerue for our welfare after that faſhion.

Now Moſes ſayth expreſſely, *that after the people had fet a windlaſſe and trayled about the mountaine Seir, they came to the north ſide, euen as God had commaunded him.* Wherein wee ſee the thing more clearely which I haue touched: that is to ſay, that there is a pliableneſſe in the people which was not in them before: they bee now become tractable. And although they wandered a long time, ſo as they might haue bin out of patience euery day, and haue taken occaſion to murmure, and to haue made ſedition: yet notwithſtanding they went ſtill foreward. And why? for the corrections which they had receiued, had wrought a chaunge in them. Wee ſee then that Gods reforming of men by puniſhing them for their ſinnes, is as a fornace to melt 1.Pet.1.7. them and caſt them newe againe in. And therefore if God haue let vs alone here at our eaſe, and wee fall to kicking againſt him: let vs aſſure our ſelues it is more for our behoofe to bee corrected by ſome chaſtiſement. And therewithall let vs beware that we profite our ſelues by it, and that wee become not worſe than they were which are ſet forth to vs as an example of diſobedience and ſtubbornneſſe. Harden not your hartes as your fathers did, ſayth the Lord. And yet notwithſtanding wee ſee that this people Pſal.95.8.& Heb.4.7. (how ſtubborne and froward ſoeuer they were) miſſed not to goe about the mountaine a long tyme, after God had ſo chaſtiſed them: that is to ſay, they were driuen to knowe that it was in vaine for them to reſiſt the hand of God. Howbeit we ſee yet ſome obedience, in that it is ſaid, *that they waited to haue a new commaundement,* ſo as they durſt not remoue one ſtep, [till they had it.] It might ſeeme that God mocked them to goe round about after that faſhion. They might haue ſayd, what ſhall become of this in the end? If God will haue vs to tary, why lets he vs not alone? Or if he will haue vs to goe, why ſheweth hee vs not the way, to ſay, goe forewarde? He holdes vs here lyke little children, ſo as wee doe nothing but fetch a circuit without departing out of one place, and when wee haue tyred our legges neuer ſo much, wee are neuer the further onwarde on our way, The people might haue deſcanted after that faſhion. But what? They tary till God ſay to them, *Turne yee that way.* Wee ſee then yet ſtill howe this chaſtiſement had done them good in that behalfe. And heereupon let vs marke what true repentaunce bringeth with it. Where as wee were deafe when God ſpake to vs, and gaue no eare to his voyce: wee muſt holde our ſelues in awe vnder him, and looke what hee ſayth, that muſt wee doe, and no more. That is the chiefe fruite of repentance. And if it appeared vnto vs in this people which was ſo ſtubborne and vntamable: what excuſe will there be for vs, if wee will not receiue the thinges that are ſpoken to vs in the name of God: but rather will be ſtill replying, and haue not the witte and diſcretion to ſuffer our ſelues to be guided by him who onely can leade vs aright? So much the more then ought wee to reſtraine our ſelues from attempting any thing, vnleſſe God commaund it.

Moreouer it is ſayd *that the people ſhall paſſe through the countrye of Edome, without prouoking of the inhabitantes*. Firſt of all it is ſayd, *They bee your brethren, the children of Eſau*. Wee knowe that Eſau was the brother of Iacob, who was the Patriarke, and (as yee would ſay) the welſpring from whence this people deſcended. And for aſmuch as Eſau came of the line of Abraham: a part of the land of promiſe had belonged vnto him, but that hee was cut off from the inheriting thereof, howbeit not by the pleaſure of man, but by the heauenly ordinaunce vttered by God yea euen while their mother Rebecca was with childe of them, inaſmuch as hee ſayd that the elder ſhould ſerue the younger. But yet for all this, Eſau ceaſed not to bee Iacobs brother ſtill. And their children ought to haue continued the ſame brotherhoode & kinred betwixt them afterwarde. Marke that for one poynt.

Gen.25, 23.
& Mal.1.2.
& Rom.9,13

Another poynt is, *That God gaue mount Seir in poſſeſſion to Eſau*: it was his lot. When he had excluded him out of the land of Chanaan, hee gaue him the other countrye for himſelfe and his ſucceſſors. Foraſmuch then as it was aſſigned him of God: it was not for men to attempt to depriue or bereaue him thereof. Now as touching this brotherhood, God will haue it to moue vs, and to be as a certein bond to knit vs together, ſo as nature may perſwade vs to bee kindehearted one to another, and reſtreyne vs from doing wrong or harme to any man. True it is that there is not fleſhly kinred betweene all men, to make them ſo neere of bloud as they might call one another couſins, and name themſelues be any linage whereof either other were deſcended: but yet is there a certain cõmon kinred in generall, which is, that all men ought to think how they be faſhioned after Gods image, and that there is one nature common among them al. Euen the heathen men knew that very wel. So then whereas we haue ſome diſcretion to maintaine peace and concorde, and to yeelde euery man his right without taking away of any mans goods, & without committing of any extortion or outrage: and wee peruert the order of nature, and are worſe than the wilde beaſtes which make countenance one to another when they be al of one kind. For the woolues are not at ſuch variance among themſelues as men are. And therefore let vs learne, that although there be not any neere kinred among vs, yet notwithſtanding in aſmuch as we be men, there ought to be ſome cõmon bond betweene vs, and a certain brotherly loue. But there is yet another conſideration among Chriſtians: for God hath adopted them to bee of his houſholde: and that ought to auaile more than all the kinred on the earth. For ſeeing that God hath tolde vs that he intendeth to take vs to himſelfe, becauſe that being of his Church wee bee as it were his owne children, and call vpon him as with one mouth, ſaying our father: if wee neuertheleſſe agree as cattes and dogges among our ſelues: may it in any wiſe be borne withal, ſpecially conſidering that wee cannot clayme him for our father, vnleſſe we be gouerned by his holy ſpirit? [No ſurely:] For either his ſpirit muſt cry in our hartes: or elſe we ſhall haue our mouthes ſhut. Againe on the other ſide, by what title can wee clayme ſo great a benefite and honor as to be the children of God: if we be not members of Ieſus Chriſt? But wee be not of his body, but vppon condition aforeſayd. Whoſoeuer then hurteth his neighbor, whoſoeuer is voyde of louingkindeneſſe and pitie, whoſoeuer layeth to catching and ſnatching on all ſides: the ſame (as much as in him is) rendeth Ieſus Chriſt in peeces. And therfore let vs marke well, that when God alledgeth kinred: we be warned to conſider in what degree God hath put vs, and what vnion hee hath ſet among vs, & euery of vs to diſcharge himſelfe faithfully thereof, to yͤ intent yͭ whereas God hath ſet vs together to maintaine vs in good agreement and loue: wee make not a confuſed diſorder. Let that ſerue for one poynt.

Rom.8.14.
15.16.

But if wee conſider the common trade of the worlde, how it ſhould ſeeme that men haue conſpyred to doe cleane contrary to Gods commaundement: it is ſo farre of from neighbors to thinke that Gods placing of them neere together, is to the end that euery man ſhoulde ſerue his neighbors turne, and all imploy themſelues to the common profite, without hurting or greeuing one another: that euen brothers thinke it lawfull to ſhift euery one for himſelfe, and there is none other lyfe with them, but to drawe ſtill to themſelues without any pitie or compaſſion. How then ſhal the neighbors be brethren, which haue but ſome acquaintance a farre of: ſeeing yͭ they which were borne all in one belly, and are all one mans children, beare no more friendſhip one to another than wilde beaſtes, but rather much leſſe? Truely it ſhould ſeeme that ſome will needes be brethren, euen in ſpite of God. For if it be to doe ſome miſchiefe, or to playe ſome diueliſh pranke to the ouerthrowe of all goodneſſe: then they can ſkill to alledge, wee haue this, and wee haue that, wee be countrymen, wee be neighbors children borne all in one towne. Loe how the wicked can finde themſelues to be couſins and brothers. And what to doe? To riſe vp againſt God, to put all thinges out of order, to make quarels and frayes, to maintaine themſelues in all looſeneſſe, and to procure all manner of ſtumblingblockes, that Gods name may be blaſphemed and all honeſtie peruerted. Theſe are the brotherhoods and couſiningſhips of the worlde, as is to bee ſeene too much. But when it commeth to the poynt that euery man ſhould helpe his neighbor, and abſteine from doing him harme or anoyance: men be ſo farre of from abſteining, or from thinking that God vnited them together, or that God hath created thẽ after his own image, or agayne, that they be bound yet wͭ a ſtraiter bond, inaſmuch as he hath adopted them by his Goſpel to be members of his ſonne Ieſus Chriſt, and heires of the kingdome of heauen: men (I ſay) are ſo farre off from thinking any ſuch thing, that they peruert the whole order of nature, with worſe than beaſtly furie. But yet is this text ſufficient to condemne men if they walk not in all mildeneſſe, and be not more kindhearted one to another than they be.

Mal.1.2.

Now let vs come to that which is added here in the ſecond place: which is, *That God had giuen Mount Seir in poſſeſſion to Eſau.* True it is that when he compareth Eſau and Iacob together, he ſayth by his prophet, Is not Eſau Iacobs brother? And yet haue I placed him in a hillie countrie, in a ſtonie and barrein countrey: and I haue giuen you a fruitefull and fatte lande. Hereby the people of Iſraell are put in minde, that God had beſtowed many mo benefites vppon them, than vppon thoſe that went afore thẽ. For Eſau was the elder ſonne, and yet did God diſherit him of the land that he had promiſed to his graundfather Abraham, and to his father Iſaak. And why did God ſo? wee ſee none other reaſon, but for that hee liſted to vtter his free goodneſſe towardes Iacob and his linage. The people of Iſraell coulde not ſay, wee were the more noble and excellent: for the byrthright belonged to Eſau. They could not ſay, wee were better. No: for we ſee they were a people ſet altogether vppon malice and vnthankefulneſſe. Now then, their inheriting of the promiſed land befel them not for any worthines of their owne, but through Gods meere mercy. And beſides this, God had alſo prouided for Iſmael who was halfe a baſtard. For the matching of Abraham with Agar was not a lawfull mariage. And although it was no aduowtrie: yet was not that mariage altogether allowed of God. But yet did God prouide for Iſmael, in aſmuch as hee ſayd, I haue heard him. If the caſe ſtoode ſo with Iſmael, much more reaſon was it that Eſau ſhoulde haue ſome place, and that God ſhould extend his bleſſing euen to thoſe that were of his linage. And for that cauſe did hee giue him mount Seir. Now therefore, in this conſideration the people of Iſrael ought not to trouble him, but to let him alone with the portion that was aſſigned him from heauen.

Deut.32.8.

Here wee haue a good leſſon to gather, which belongeth to vs all. Although mention be made here preciſely of the linage of Eſau, which were called Edomites and Idumæans: yet notwithſtanding, as we ſhall ſee hereafter in the ſong, God declareth that according as he made the partitions and ſtretched out his meeteline, ſo were the realmes and countries deuided. Let vs not thinke that the world is ruled by fortune, and that thinges are ſo intangled, but that God guideth all by his prouidence and power. Hee then hath ſtretched out his meeteline to appoint euery people their countrey to dwel in. But yet for all that, wee ſee how men haue tranſpoſed thoſe boundes. They will not ſticke to confeſſe that boundes are a very holy thing. And truely [the tranſgreſſing in that behalfe] ſhall be more puniſhable, than if a man had offended in any other deede. Lykewiſe mony becauſe it is ẏ thing whereby men intercõmon among themſelues, is a priuiledge and (as yee would ſay) a ſacred thing. In lyke caſe is it with the bounds [meeres, and buttels] of fieldes: for without them, all woulde goe to hauocke, ſo as men would eate vp one another. Wee will well graunt this as in reſpect of a field or a medowe: but wee ſee that the pride, Ambition, and vnſatiable couetouſneſſe of men haue ſo caryed away their mindes, as they haue not bin aſhamed ſince to tranſpoſe the boundes that God had ſet. For as touchng ſuch as haue enterpriſed warres againſt their neighbors, to increaſe themſelues: haue they not all broken the order which ought to haue bin inuiolable? yes: So then wee ſee how men are made to ſpyte God through their ambition and couetouſneſſe. And yet this miſchiefe continueth ſtill at this day, and is inflamed more than euer it was.

But yet for all that, this rule ſhall holde for euer: that is to wit, that looke what landes, what kingdome, what Lordſhip, what principalitie, what ſtate, or what free citie ſoeuer there bee: wee may aſſure our ſelues, that the diſtributing of them after that ſorte, is done by God: and that whoſoeuer wageth battell againſt them, doth as much as in him lyeth to breake the boundes which God hath ſet. I meane here ſuch warres as are taken in hand through ambition, or couetouſneſſe, or pride. Otherwiſe, wee ſee here, that the children of Iſraell ought to make warre: for God auoweth their doing, becauſe he had ordeyned thẽ to be owners of the land, and will haue the former inhabiters driuen out as they deſerued.

But are warres made nowadayes by the authoritie of God? Haue men an eye to the thing that is lawfull? Yea, or doe they tary till they haue commandement from God? Nay, they go to it in deſpite of him, the diuill driues them forewarde. True it is that if a man reaſon of Realmes and Principalities as they bee nowadayes: it may be alledged, how hath this realme bin inuaded, and how hath that country bin conquered? Yea, but yet for all that, it is not for men to remoue boundes. Although they haue bin confounded: yet is it not for vs to enterpriſe any thing. For our Lorde hath not giuen vs commiſſion ſo to doe: hee hath reſerued that to himſelfe.

But let vs marke lykewiſe, that when men haue once altered the order that God hath ſet, hee muſt needes ouerthrowe them. And that is the cauſe why there happen ſo many changes, and it is maruell that there are not ſeene yet a hundred times mo. Surely if God had not a ſpeciall regard to the preſeruation of mankinde: no doubt but wee ſhould ſee alterations of kingdomes euery day, ſo that within two or three dayes, hee that is now a king ſhould bee but as one that were dreſt in a players apparell, to play an enterlude vppon a ſtage. But yet for all that wee muſt marke well, that the alterations of kingdomes which happen, doe ſerue to puniſhe the chaunges that were made afore, when men remoued their boundes at the beginning, and would needes peruert the order that God had ſet. Neuertheleſſe, howſoeuer the caſe ſtands, let vs beare this leſſon in minde, that God hath limited realmes and countries: and that wheras it is his wil that there ſhould be principalities ſtabliſhed euery where, foraſmuch as the ſame commeth of his prouidence : it behooueth vs to holde our ſelues contented and not to alter any thing, vnleſſe we haue good warrant that he openeth vs the gate and armeth vs. As for example, if violence be offered vnto vs, then is it certein that if God giue victorie to him that was wrongfully aſſayled, ſo as he ouercome his enemie and put him to flight: that is a chaunge that commeth of God. But as for to aſſaile [vnprouoked:] that (as I ſayd afore) is not to fight againſt creatures, but againſt the liuing God.

And let vs wey well the wordes that are ſet downe here: *Thou ſhalt not prouoke them* (ſayth he) *and they ſhall be afraide of thee.* And hee addeth afterwarde, *Thou ſhalt buy the bread that thou muſt eate, yea and euen the water that thou ſhalt drinke,* ſo as thou muſt alwayes haue thy purſe open to pay and content them. Here wee ſee that when God intendeth to maintaine a people in their poſſeſſion, he prouoketh them not to make thē misbehaue themſelues, for euen therefore did he caſt that feare vppon the Edomites, to the end that the children of Iſraell ſhoulde not haue any occaſion of warre. Wee ſhall ſee hereafter how God hardened the hart of Sehon, and inflamed Deut.2.24. 32. the other inhabitants of the countrie, ſo as they armed themſelues againſt the people of Iſraell, becauſe he was minded to driue them out. And ſo did he ſhewe the children of Iſraell by effect, that they had iuſt cauſe of warre. But whereas he held the Edomites in awe, and inclined their hearts in ſuch wiſe as they gaue paſſage to the children of Iſraell, and bought and ſoulde quietly with them: therein wee ſee (as I touched before) that when our Lorde purpoſeth to maintayne a people in their poſſeſſion, hee will giue thē ſuch a minde as they ſhall not prouoke their neighbors, nor open them any gap by ſtryking vp the drumme, or by ſounding the trumpette firſt themſelues. To be ſhorte, the warre ſhall not ſpring on their owne ſide. Therefore wee muſt conclude, that when a people doe put forth themſelues, or when a prince will needes attempt fooliſh enterpriſes, and be medling here and there: wee may perceiue it is Gods doing, of purpoſe to ouerthrow him and to bereue him of the countrye that he had giuen him. So much the more then ought wee to pray God to maintaine vs and to make vs milde and peaſeable, that we may not followe thoſe whome we ſee to haue their heads full of vnquietneſſe, ſo as they muſt needs be medling with one thing or other. Let vs abſteine from ſuch thinges, that our Lord may mainteine vs in peace: for that is the true meane, as I ſaide afore.

Herewithall alſo wee be taught, how men ſhould behaue themſelues in their warres (prouided alwayes that the warre be rightfull and holy, and ſuch as God alloweth of:) that is to witte, in ſuch ſort as no man be vexed, and that there be no pillage, no ſaccage, nor no extortion committed. For it is ſayd, *yee ſhall buy the bread that ye eate, yea and ye ſhall pay ready mony for the water that yee drinke.* If God commaund the people of Iſraell to buy water to drinke: howe much rather ſhould they that make warre, pay for wine and victuals, & ſuch other things as coſt ready mony, to thoſe that are not their enemies? For the thing that is ſayd here, is ſpoken of the Edomites. But how is this obſerued nowadayes, I pray? In deede there are Edictes and proclamations inow made: but the world ſees how they be kept.

Yea and who bee moſt troubled with the warres, but ſuch as beare the burthen of it? And that is euē the countrie. When a king or a prince is about to make war, it ſeemeth to be for the cōmon weal: & ſo are men made to beleeue. But in the meane while, when the poore ſubiectes haue payed a ſorte of tallages, taxes, and impoſtes for the maintenance thereof: yet muſt they be ſtill bitten to the bone, ſo as the enemies ſhall not be more vexed, thā they vnder whoſe name and title the warre is made. They can well enough make markets for men to ſel their wares in, and beare them in hand they ſhall haue ready mony. But what? the thing that is woorth three ſhillings, ſhall bee eſteemed at one. And moſt commonly they take vp vittels and pay for them as they liſt. And ſo wee in effect, that all the warres which are made nowadayes, are but robberies: and that the crueltie and vnnaturalneſſe is ſo exceſſiue, as tendeth to vtter confuſion: ſo as it ſhould ſeeme that men are bent to baniſhe all equitie, and that warre cannot bee made without the forgetting of all vprightneſſe, that there may be no more lawe, but that men may become wood beaſtes. Loe to what poynt the world is come.

But yet for all that, lyke as this doctrine cannot be wiped out of the holy ſcripture, ſo can it nor alſo be blotted out of gods booke of records, that he ſhould not iudge the worlde according as he hath pronounced thereof already: that is to wit, that the men of warre which will needes inrich themſelues with other mens goodes, are condēned at his hand, whatſoeuer they alledge for thēſelues, notwithſtanding that they haue taken it vp of cuſtome to ſpoyle and rob, becauſe they haue not ſufficient wages, or whatſoeuer color elſe they can pretend. They may well appeale to kings and princes for to bee their warrant: for they ſhall leade the daunce, and be driuen to anſwere as capteines of theeues: and all their ſouldiers ſhall followe after them, as parteners of their wickedneſſe. Now foraſmuch as wee ſee ſuch diſorders in the worlde, wee be warned thereby to pray vnto God, that hee ſuffer vs not to be wrapped in the ſame. And when we aske him our dayly bread, let vs haue conſideration to thinke thus: Ah good Lord, graunt vs the grace that euery of vs may liue of his own labor, and be in peace: and that when the drum is ſtriken vp, wee may not play the madde bedlems, nor giue our ſelues to ſpoyling & robbing, but holde our ſelues in quiet, ſo as we may take paynes and yelde the thankes for thy ſuſteyning of vs, & ſuffer euery man to inioy his owne, without offering of violence to any man.

Beſides this, if they that make warre bee expreſſely commaunded to pay for their bread and water: I pray you what ought wee to doe in peace? For many miſorders may ſeeme halfe excuſable when there is open warre, and it may ſo fall out, that they which would faine bee gentle, ſometimes cannot, but are inforced to doe thinges which they be loath to doe, yea euen to their enemies. And yet for all that, it is apparant, that if a man take any thing without paying for it, ſo as the owner or partie bee grieued, GOD condemneth it vtterly, and giueth ſentence here againſt it, yea euen though thinges bee neuer ſo farre out of order, whereby ſome colour might bee giuen to iuſtifie their dooinges. Nowe then I praye you what will he doe in peace, when wee haue no cauſe to grieue one another, but that they which can ſkill of huſbandrie may finde themſelues thereby, the ſhoppes are open for marchauntes and handicraftes men, and there is common policie [for men to be ordered by?] Seeing that God induceth vs [by ſuch meanes] to withholde our ſelues from all outrage and extorſion: if we then goe about to robbe other men of their goods, if euerie man ſeeke to ſpoile his neighbour to inriche himſelfe with his goods, if we be ſo ſpiteful as to eate vp one another without any cauſe: muſt we not bee condemned dubble? Yes certainly. Now then, ſeeing that men of warre are commaunded to paſſe without making ſpoile, & without offering any trouble or extorſion: let vs learne that we are much more commaunded to walke vprightly & iuſtly, without doing any outrage or any pilling and polling, ſeeing that God giueth vs greater meanes to auoide it. Thus ye ſee the effect of that which wee haue to beare in remembrance.

And nowe for a concluſion here is made a rehearſall what GOD had done for this people. *The Lorde thy God* (ſaieth Moſes) *hath led thee in the wilderneſſe:* he hath fedde thee with Manna: thou hadſt not any natural water to drinke, but God gaue it thee out of the drie rock: thou neededſt not any money to buy thee clothes withall, or to paye for thy charges as thou wenteſt: and is it not reaſon now that this goodneſſe and iuſt dealing ſhould cauſe thee to deale reaſonably with thoſe by whom thou paſſeſt? For the people might haue replied, Yes marrie, but wee haue not wherewith, wee haue bene a long time in the wilderneſſe, there were no mines of golde or ſiluer there, we earned not a penny there, neither haue wee had any trade of marchaundiſe whereby to get any thing. But Moſes anſwereth hereunto, Conſider howe the Lorde thy God hath gouerned thee. As if he ſhould ſay, ye haue none excuſe at all: for ye haue wherewith to pay and content euery man. And why? For in the wilderneſſe ye ſpent not any whit of the ſpoile that ye brought with you out of Egypt: ye were not driuen to buie bread, vittelles, apparell, or any other thing. So then, nowe that you are at the point to poſſeſſe the land that God hath promiſed you, ye ſhoulde bee too vnthankefull towardes God, and too churliſh towardes men, if ye ſhould refuſe to content thoſe by whom ye paſſe. And of a trueth, although yee had not wherewith, yet ſhould it not bee lawfull for you to rob them. For our Lord chaungeth not the order that he hath ſet, for any pouertie that is in men. But if a man that hath no neede, doe rob or fleece his neighbour of his goods: therein appeareth ſo much the lewder and outrageouſer naughtineſſe. And therefore let vs marke well that Gods alledging of this reaſon to the people, was to the end they ſhould bee the better perſwaded and diſpoſed to do the thing that was commaunded them.

And herein wee ſee firſt of all howe God beareth with vs: for as a father flattereth his child, and vſeth great gentleneſſe towardes him, & although he might cõmand him at one word, ſaying, doe this or that, without alledging any reaſon at all: yet he dealeth ſo gently with him, as to ſay, my childe, marke, this is the reaſon why I would haue thee to doe ſuch a thing, inſomuch that he falleth euen to flattering of him: euen after yͤ ſame maner doth God of his infinite goodnes beare with vs. So much yͤ more then are wee to blame on our part, if wee ſuffer not our ſelues to be ouerruled by him, ſeeing he ſheweth himſelfe ſo gentle and amiable towardes vs.

And for the ſecond point let vs marke, that although no neceſſitie can excuſe our ſinnes: yet notwithſtanding theſe are the more to bee condemned, which offend vnconſtrained by any extremitie. As howe? If a poore man deale vnconſcionably when he hath not wherewith to liue, ne knoweth where to become: yet ſhall he bee condemned: (and if a theefe be puniſhable before men, much more reaſon is it yͭ he ſhould be ſo before God:) And what ſhal the man bee to whom God hath giuen wherewith to maintaine himſelfe, if he fall to pilling & polling, and be neuer ſatiſfied, but is catching and ſnatching on all ſides, and hath no regard of Gods bleſſing, but is alwaies theeuing, filching, & deceiuing? Such a mã is the more to be abhorred, & wee muſt conclude yͭ a horrible vẽgeance is prepared for ſuch as haue offended ſo wilfully. Nowe then let vs marke, yͭ when God giueth vs wherwͭ to ſuſtaine & maintaine our ſelues, his wil is to lead vs therby to be the louinger to our neighbours, & to do no man any harme or wrong. And ſo ye ſee that Gods bleſſinges ought to be inſtructions to vs, to make vs liue vprightly, without attempting any thing againſt our dutie, or without troubling of any bodie. This is it that we haue to remember in the ſecond place. The reſt cannot bee diſpatched as now, and therefore it ſhalbe reſerued till to morrowe.

Now let vs kneele downe in yͤ preſence of our good God with acknowledgement of our faults, praying him to make vs ſo to feele them, as wee may returne to him with true repentance. And againe forasmuch as he vouchſafeth to maintein vs nowe in peace, let vs praye him to continue the ſame fauour towardes vs, and not ſuffer vs to bee aſſayled, leaſt wee doe wrong or harme to any bodie, and ſo open a gap to ſuch as ſeeke to ſwallowe vs vp, by prouoking them againſt vs: but rather that our mildneſſe may make them to ſit ſtill though they were willing to bee dooing with vs. And therewithall, our good God graunt vs alſo the grace to fight in ſuch wiſe againſt our ſpirituall enemies, as wee may get the vpper hand of them by his power. Let vs then bee giuen wholly that way, and therwithal let vs ſeeke to ſerue men to the vttermoſt of our power, ſeeking peace & friendſhip with all men, till our good God haue rid vs from all battels of this world, to take vs into ẏ endleſſe reſt which he hath promiſed vs. That it may pleaſe him to graunt this grace, not onely to vs, but alſo, &c.

On Fryday the xxvj. of Aprill. 1555.

The twelfth Sermon, which is the ſecond vpon the ſecond Chapter.

8 Then paſſed we by our brethren the children of Eſau, that dwell in Seir, by the way of the wilderneſſe of Elath, and of Aſion-gaber: then turned we, and went in the way of the wilderneſſe of Moab.

9 Then ſaide the Lord vnto me, trouble not Moab, neither prouoke him to battell: for I will not giue thee any peece of his land to poſſeſſe, bicauſe I haue giuen Ar in poſſeſſion to the children of Lot.

10 The Emians dwelt there before, which were a great people and many in nomber, and tall as the Enakims.

11 And likewiſe they were counted Giantes as the Enakims, and the Moabites called them Emins.

12 Likewiſe in Seir dwelt the Horians aforetimes. But the children of Eſau draue them out, and deſtroyed them before them, and dwelt there in their ſtead, like as Iſrael hath done in the land of their poſſeſſion, which the Lord hath giuen them.

13 Then ſaid I, now then, get ye vp, and goe ye ouer the riuer Zared. And wee went ouer the riuer of Zared.

14 And the time wherein wee trauailed from Cades barne vntill wee paſſed the riuer of Zared, laſted eight and thirtie yeeres, euen vntill the whole generation of the men of warre was conſumed from among the hoſte, as the Lorde God had ſworne vnto them.

15 For the hand of the Lord was againſt them, to deſtroy them from among the hoſte, vntill he had conſumed them.

16 And it came to paſſe, that when all the men of warre were conſumed from among the people,

17 Then the Lord ſpake vnto Moſes, ſaying:

18 This day ſhalt thou paſſe the borders of Moab by Ar,

19 And come to the children of Ammon, whom thou ſhalt not beſiege, nor prouoke them: for I will not giue thee any poſſeſſion in the land of the children of Ammon, bicauſe I haue giuen it in poſſeſſion to the children of Loth.

20 This land alſo was counted a land of Giantes: for Giantes dwelt in it aforetimes: and the Ammonites called them Zomzomins:

21 A great people and many in nomber, and tall as the Enakims. But the Lord deſtroyed them before them. And ſo they poſſeſſed it and dwelt there in their ſtead:

22 Like as he had done for the children of Eſau that dwell in Seir, when he deſtroyed the Horims before them: by reaſon whereof they poſſeſſed their land, and dwelt there in their ſtead euen vnto this day.

23 Alſo the Caphthorims that came out of Caphthor, deſtroyed the Euims that dwelt in Hazerin euen vnto Gaza, and dwelled there in their ſtead.

Like as yeſterday wee ſawe that the children of Iſrael were commaunded to paſſe by the Countrie of Edom without doing any wrong to the inhabitantes, bicauſe there was kinred betwixt them, inaſmuch as they deſcended of Eſau Iacobs brother: ſo nowe they be willed to paſſe by the borders of Moab and Ammon, without dooing them any hurt or harme, bicauſe that they alſo were of kinne to them. For the Moabites & Ammonites came of Loth: and God would haue the children of Iſrael to acknowledge it ſtill. And herein wee haue to note, that here againe God tried the obedientneſſe of his people. For the children of Iſrael had languiſhed nowe a great while alreadie: and although they had bene fed by Gods free goodneſſe, inaſmuch as Manna was giuen them dayly from heauen: yet notwithſtanding if wee looke vpon their trauell, the time thereof might ſeeme verie long to them, & they might haue bene exceedingly wearie of it. Nowe againe God commaundeth them to paſſe on their way, paying for their meate and drinke, and not to take any bootie nor to ſeeke any profite or aduantage, but to goe by intreatance notwithſtanding that they could haue vſed force. This might haue bred a newe hartburning among them. Howbeit foraſmuch as they had beene wel tamed with afflictions: they yeelded themſelues the more plyable as was declared yeſterday. And therein wee ſee what the fruite of chaſtiſement is. When God hath once pulled downe our pride, and taught vs to beare his yoke: wee can ſtoope to obey him, and wee will make no great a doe of it. But vntill that time, our necke is ſo ſtiffe as wee can no ſkill to yeelde to any right or reaſon. Ye ſee then that one point which we haue to marke, is that God tried here the obedience of his people, by forbidding them to make warre vppon the Ammonites or Moabites. And here Moſes alledgeth the ſelfe ſame reaſõ again, which I expounded yeſterday intreating of Mount Seir and of the Countrey of Edom. *You ſhall not prouoke the Moabites*, ſaith he. And why? *For God will not giue you their land to poſſeſſe.* As if he ſhould ſay, it is not lawfull for you to attempt any thing, which God doeth not auow, and giue you leaue to doe. Nowe it is certaine that he will not ſuffer you to proſper, if you aſſaile the Moabites, and therefore forbeare them.

And ſo let vs marke well, that ſuch as make warres wrongfully and frowardly, conſider not that their ambition and couetouſneſſe ſhall bee curſed of God in the ende, and that all their preparation muſt come to ruine & confuſion. True it is that ſuch as take warres in hand vpon a brauerie, ſhall diuers times haue great victories and winne many Countries: howbeit that is not bicauſe God beareth them any fauour, but bicauſe he meaneth to puniſh men, ſometime the one and ſometime the other, ſo as euery one of them ſhall haue his turne. And in good ſooth wee ſee that the warres which are made now adayes, are like the game of the Barriers, wherein he that winneth to day looſeth to morrow. And this is not done by haphazard, but our Lord giueth Satan the bridle, who prouoketh and inforceth the wicked to kill one another, and to knocke one another vpon the heades. For God vſeth them as Smithes; as he ſaith by his Prophet Zacharie. Zach.1.20. But yet herein wee haue a good leſſon, which is, that when a Prince moueth warre, he muſt conſider wel againſt whom he doeth it, and whether God do giue him entrance or no, or elſe the end of it muſt needes be curſed of God.

And hereunto Moſes addeth the cauſe why the people of Iſrael might not take any thing frõ the Moabites. *For it is the Lorde* (ſaieth he) *that hath giuen them the land to poſſeſſe.* Deut.2.8. Yeſterday it was declared, that God did caſt out his lynes ouer all the world, and that the partitions were made by him: inſomuch that Principalities, Kingdomes, & Common weales haue not any thing of themſelues, but for that he will haue the world to bee ſo gouerned. Therefore when any man goes about to chaunge the borders that God hath ſet: he doeth as much as he can to violate the order of nature, and the end thereof muſt needes bee curſed. Were this marked throughly, wee ſhould not ſee ſo many garboyles as are in the worlde. For men thinke not that they ought to yeelde any account vnto God. And in very deede they thinke not that God medleth with the gouerning of men. When they haue gotten any victorie, they make bonfires for ioy, & they thanke God with ſolemne proceſſion: but it is not for that they thinke ſo, or for that they be fully perſwaded of it: it is but for vaineglorie that they do it. For if they meant to ſhewe that God was on their ſide: they ſhould lay downe their pride in fathering all things vpon their owne power, or vpon their good fortune. Yet notwithſtanding it would bee thought a very ſtraunge thing nowe adayes, if a man ſhoulde ſay to them that take warres in hand, Be well aduiſed: for if your cauſe be not iuſt, lawfull, and allowed of God, ſo as you haue ſure and infallible witneſſe that you were inforced to make warre, and that God hath reached out his hand vnto you and ſhewed you the way: all your furniture muſt needes turne to your owne ouerthrowing. If a man ſhould ſay ſo to them, they would thinke he did them great wrong: but yet were it for their behoofe to marke that leſſon well.

Further let vs marke, that this muſt ſerue vs for a comfort. For if wee bee ſure that God hath called vs into the place where wee bee, and that wee liue there in his ſeruice: we haue here a promiſe, that if any man come to aſſaile vs, howe great force ſo euer our enemies bee of, although they come as a tempeſt that were like to deſtroy and marre all: yet notwithſtanding wee ſhall be maintained by the hand of God. Nowe then if our Lord take vs ſo into his protection, and telleth vs that wee dwell in any countrey at his appointment: ye ſee we may wel aſſure our ſelues, and defie all our enemies. Contrariwiſe, if God liſt to forſake vs: wee bee vndone, there ſhall neede no great force to ouerthrowe vs. Therefore let vs learne to ſubmit our ſelues cõtinually to to the tuition of our God, and to pray him to bee our defence. And when wee ſee great forces prepared againſt vs, let vs flee to his promiſe, and waite to bee ſuccoured of him at our neede. Thus ye ſee that the applying of this doctrine to our vſe, conſiſteth not in thinking that only princes are taught thereby what they ſhould doe: for the meane people alſo are to be comforted therby, foraſmuch as they may ſee thereby that God defendeth them as his flocke.

Alſo let vs call to minde what was rehearſed here, concerning kinred. In deede it was treated of at length yeſterday: howbeit foraſmuch as Moſes ſpeaketh of it againe, in making mention of the children of Moab and of their brethren the Ammonites: and ſeeing that God ſetteth before his peoples eyes the kinred which they had with theſe nations: Let vs marke ẏ wee muſt liue peaceably and brotherly one with another, bicauſe God hath knit vs together. In deede wee ſhal not all be kinſfolke in reſpect of the fleſh: but yet is there ſuch a[generall] vnion among mankinde, as wee ought not at any time to bee ſuch ſtraungers one to another, ẏ there ſhould not be ſome communicating together: & ſpecially foraſmuch as we be all created after one likenes, & we ſee as it were our own fleſh & bones in other folkes perſons, in reſpect whereof it behoueth vs Eſa.58.7. to practiſe this ſaying of the Prophet Eſay, that we muſt not hate our own fleſh. But beſides this, there is an image of God which ſhineth in all men: and is it not reaſon that wee ſhould doe it ſo much honour, as to reuerence it whereſoeuer it ſheweth it ſelfe? Againe ſeeing God hath called vs to the knowing of him, and will haue vs to call vpon him as our father, and hath vouchſafed that wee ſhoulde bee marked with Baptiſme, and be graffed into the bodie of our Lord Ieſus Chriſt, and that he openeth vs his kingdome, to take vs in thither as into our common inheritaunce: muſt it not needes be that wee be worſe than beaſtes, if yet for all this, wee will not bee kinde hearted one to another, to bee as brethren, and to abſtaine from all anoyance and extorſion? And herewithall let vs marke alſo, that the neerer God bringeth men together, and maketh any neighbourhood between them: the more readie ought they to be to doe ſeruice one to another: and that if they doe it not, it is as a defying of God and nature.

But nowe let vs ſee what kinred there was betweene the children of Iſrael, and the Moabites and Ammonites. Truly the original of theſe two peoples was of inceſt, ſo as they could not boaſt of their Pedegree. And in deede the verye names of them were euerlaſting marks of their ſhame. For what is Moab to ſay? *Of my father.* What? that the daughter had conceiued childe by her owne father? Yea: and that (ye ſee) was a beaſtly and curſed deede. And againe, what is meant by Ammon? [It is as much to ſay, as] *Of myne owne people*, that is to ſaye, of mine owne bloud: for he alſo was borne of the other daughter, who had made her father drunken as her ſiſter had done, and ſo conceiued by him likewiſe: and all this was againſt nature. Ye ſee then that theſe nations are no better worthie than to bee counted Harlottes birdes borne in a brothelhouſe: but that they were yet in more horrible plight, becauſe their begetting was againſt all order and humane honeſtie. And yet notwithſtanding, God will haue the children of Iſrael to acknowledge their kinred wͭ them, not for any honor or worthineſſe ſake, but onely bicauſe of Lot. For although he were ſo beaſtly drũken, as to be bereft of diſcretiõ: yet did God cõtinue his goodnes towardes him, and therefore vouchſafed he to fauour his linage & the childrẽ that came of his race. And therein we ſee ẏ God had not an eye to the excellencie of thoſe nations to whom he ſhewed himſelfe ſo beneficiall, but ẏ he did all of his owne free mercie. Likewiſe alſo as touching the children of Iſrael, if God had looked for nobleneſſe to moue him to ſhew himſelfe ſo gratious towards them, and to deale ſo friendly with them: what would haue come of it? For ẏ chiefe ſtocke among them was ẏ tribe of Iuda. And whence came Phares and his brother Ge.38.15.29 Zare? Euen of inceſt too. For Iuda thinking to haue medled with a harlot as common as a Colmanhedge, had to do with his owne daughter in lawe, & played the beaſt as dogs and buls doe. Ye ſee then it was ſo great a villanie, ẏ euen the Heathen men would haue bene aſhamed of it. They that neuer knewe of God nor of Religion, could not haue done worſe. To bee ſhort, it was ynough to haue made al his offſpring to haue bin quite rooted out. And yet nowithſtãding we ſee that Dauid came of the ſame race, and that it was Gods will to ſtabliſh the ſeate of a kingdome in his tribe, yea & that not of an earthly & tranſitorie kingdome onely, but of ſuch a one as ſhould bee a figure of the euerlaſting kingdome that bringeth vs to heauen, inſomuch that euen our Lord Ieſus Chriſt came of the ſame ſtocke. And ſo wee ſee (as I ſaid afore) that God ſought not any worthines in this behalfe, as who ſhould ſay that this people was of more dignitie and nobleneſſe than all the reſt of the worlde, and therefore he would make much of them. No no: but he powred out the infinite treaſures of his goodneſſe vppon them. Yea and the baſeneſſe of the children of Iſrael, cauſed Gods ineſtimable goodneſſe to bee perceiued the better, and gaue the greater gloſſe vnto it. Then let vs conſider, that whereas here is mention made of the Moabites and Ammonites: GOD alledgeth them not as in waye of exalting the thing that is in man, or to put in ballaunce, their deſertes, their qualities, or any renowne of theirs which they haue gotten by their owne trauell. He meaneth no ſuch thing. But foraſmuch as it pleaſed him to loue Lot, and to continue his mercie towardes him & his linage, notwithſtanding the foule and outragious fault that he had committed: Therefore is it his will that ẏ Moabites and Ammonites ſhall ſtill inioy the landes that he had giuen them.

And let vs note further, that although God beſtowed his bleſſinges ſo largely vppon thoſe two Nations: yet they were neuer the better for it, but became ſo much ẏ more vnexcuſable in the ende. For ſurely their vnthankefulneſſe ſhewed it ſelfe in that they knewe not that God ſpared them. Let vs marke well then, that Gods preſeruing of vs in this worlde, and his defending of vs with his hande, and his making of vs to ſcape our enemies handes, and his ſuſteining of vs through his fauour, is not all [that wee ought to deſire]. For the hauing of all this will boote vs nothing at all, if wee want the principall: which is, that God bee mercifull to vs, that wee call vppon him, that wee referre our ſelues wholly vnto him, and that we knowe him to bee our father, not to maintaine vs heere for a two or three dayes onely: (for this life is but a little ſhadowe that glideth away out of hand): but to bee our euerlaſting Sauiour, and that wee walke in ſuch wiſe vnder his awe, as wee not only look to be guided by him for a little while: but alſo that hee ſhould gather vs to him in the ende, ſo as when hee hath made vs to paſſe through this worlde, at the laſt wee ſhall haue a much better inheritance which is prepared for vs in heauen. When wee once knowe this, wee haue all. And that will make vs to inioy theſe earthly bleſſings to our welfare. Otherwiſe they ſhall bee turned into a curſe: Inſomuch that they to whome GOD hath done moſt good, ſhalbe founde moſt blameworthie before him. And why? Becauſe they haue abuſed them. For wee doe wickedly corrupt all Gods benefites, when wee bee not ledde and prouoked by them to honour him for them, and to put our ſelues wholly into his handes, to flee to him for refuge. Let vs then put this doctrine in vre: and while wee paſſe through this worlde, let vs not deuour the benefites that God ſendeth vs, to become brute beaſtes here, pooring with our muzzels vppon the grounde: but rather let vs lift vp our heades to heauenwarde, and conſider that God calleth vs to him, and that it is to no purpoſe to haue had ſome earthly proſperitie, except wee goe further, that is to witte vnto our GOD, to bee knitte vnto him for euer. Thus yee ſee what we haue to beare in minde.

Yea and let vs marke alſo that the two nations which are ſpoken of heere, ſhewed themſelues too too vnkinde, in yeelding farre other rewarde to the children of Iſrael than was to be looked for. Wee ſee that the children of Iſrael paſſed by them [quietly,] paying readie monie for all thinges, yea euen for the water that they dranke. The Moabites therefore and the Ammonytes not onely had no cauſe to complaine, ſeeing they were not greeued nor troubled by the children of Iſrael, nor receiued any harme or loſſe by them: but alſo ought to haue conſidered thus, Beholde, Gods will is to ſtabliſhe the brotherhood that is betwixt them and vs, and that ought wee to print well in our mindes. In ſo much that although they had had neither ſtories nor Chronicles: yet ought that to haue beene a thing of renowne among them, and the report of it ought to haue beene common from father to ſonne, to the ende they might haue applied and indeuoured themſelues to maintaine one another. Though there had beene none other alyance nor promiſe: yet ought that to haue ſuffiſed to maintaine peace and agreement betwixt them. But contrariwiſe they became Scorpions to ſting the children of Iſrael: and when they coulde not make warre againſt them themſelues, they linked Ezec.25.12. in with their enemies, and procured them manie quarrels. Abd.11. And whenſoeuer any aduerſitie befell them, they playde the barking curres and made hew and crie after them, as wee ſee is ſpoken of them by the Prophetes and the Pſalmes: For it is ſaide, Lorde remember the Pſal.137.7. children of Edom, which were the neereſt of kinne vnto them: for they came of Eſau and were circumciſed as well as the children of Iſrael, they bore the badge of Gods couenaunt, as houſeholde folkes of his Church: and yet for all that, in the day of Ieruſalem they cryed out, vppon them vppon them, roote them out ſo as one ſtone may not abide vpō another. Thus ſee ye ſo greate a crueltie, that euen the enemies woulde haue beene more courteous, than theſe which had cauſe to haue beene ſo, and ought to haue beene as brothers. As much is to ſee ſaide of Moab. For when the poore Iewes were put to any afterdeele and fledde vnto Moab, in hope to haue ſome refuge there: they were betrayed by theſe to whome they had conueied themſelues. And therefore doth God complaine of ſuch crueltie ſaying: Moab, thou wart Eſa.26.4. the couert of my people, but when they came to thee, thou draueſt them away, yea and dealteſt more cruelly with them than their enemies. That was the recompence which thoſe nations yeelded whom God had ſo greatly borne withall, and to whom hee had ſhewed ſo great kindneſſe: but yet ought not that vnkindneſſe of theirs, to make the children of Iſrael to ſhewe themſelues vncurteous towardes them. For their ſparing of them after that ſort, increaſed their condemnation the more, I meane them that had ſo ill acknowledged the benefite. And therfore GOD failed not to puniſh ſuch trecherie.

Nowe then wee bee taught, firſt not to paſſe whether men acknowledge ẏ good that we haue done them or no. For albeit that wee may ſeeme to loſe the thing that wee ſhall haue done: yet let it ſuffiſe vs that GOD alloweth our obedience, in that hee ſaieth, bee kindeharted towardes all men. And when wee ſhall haue indeuoured to doe good to all men, without hurting of any man: if men acknowledge it not, but doe the contrarie vnto vs: verie well, let vs not paſſe for it, but let vs beare their vnthankefulneſſe patiently. For why? Wee haue ſerued GOD, who will not forget what wee haue done. Therefore if the worlde bee ſet vppon ſuch frowardneſſe, as wee may bee occaſioned to feele ſome griefe and impatiencie: yet muſt wee ſtill keepe on our courſe, which God hath commaunded vs. Marke that for one point.

And it is a verie needful leſſon in theſe dayes. For if we ſhould fal to reckning of our cards, before we would ſhew any kindnes one to another:

what a thing were that? When ſhould a man begin to doe good? [neuer:] for we ſee how al the world is ſo corrupted, as is pitifull to thinke. It ſeemeth that wee caſt our good turnes into the throtes of woolues or madde dogges, and that it is nothing elſe but a prouoking of their malice more and more, which ſeeke to abuſe our ſimplicitie. But yet for all that, it behoueth vs to haue an eye to that which God commandeth.

Nowe whereas men on their ſide are ſo malicious and froward: let vs marke, that as God took vengeance of the Moabites, Edomites and Ammonites, for miſuſing the children of Iſrael after that ſort: ſo will he doe the like nowadayes. I tolde you euen now that the Prophets doe oftentimes make mention of the ſlender recompence, that theſe nations yeelded to the children of Iſrael: but did God let them alone from heauen? No. For although the children of Iſrael cōplained not: yet did God take their caſe in hand, and ſet himſelfe as counterpartie againſt thoſe nations. He taryed not till the crie of the afflicted did come vp vnto him, and vaniſh away in the aire: but he ſendeth them his Prophets, and telleth them that foraſmuch as he had taken the people of Iſrael into his protection, he wilbe reuenged of the outrage that is done vnto them. For although that they on their ſide did ſuffer it iuſtly, for ſhrinking from their ſubiection to God: yet notwithſtanding, the Edomites, Moabites & Ammonites ought to haue pitied their brethrē. And therfore did God ſet himſelfe againſt them and ſaide, You alſo muſt flee when your turne comes about, and no man ſhall receiue you: yee ſhalbee ſcattered throughout the worlde, and Abd.17. Ioſ.6.26. not finde any place to reſt in. Againe, when hee ſpeaketh of the Edomites: wee ſee hee curſeth them, and in the meane ſeaſon comforteth his owne people. There ſhalbe a horrible ſpoile (ſaith he) through the whole countrie of Iewrie: but yet will I bring home my people againe in time. But as for Edom, curſed ſhall hee bee that buildeth it againe, or that goeth about to builde it and ſet it vp againe. Hee ſhall lay the foundation of it in his firſt borne, that is to ſay, all the preparation that ſhall bee made to ſet vp this people againe, ſhall fall downe in the ende, and they that helpe him ſhall periſh: for there ſhalbe no helpe, but it ſhall fall out againſt him. Nowe then, ſith wee ſee this, let it ſuffiſe vs that wee haue indeuoured to doe our duetie. For our God will take the caſe in hande for vs, and bee on our ſide. If men bee malicious towardes vs, and render euill for good: GOD will make himſelfe the counterpartie againſt them, and although wee ſit ſtill and make no countenance to reuenge our ſelues: yet will GOD put to his hande. Thus yee ſee what wee haue to beare in rememberannce concerning theſe nations.

But there is yet this point to bee noted where it is ſaide, *That there had beene Gyants in all the Countries of the nations afore mentioned, and that God had driuen them out*. For Moſes intended to doe vs to wit, that the ſucceſſours of Ammon, Moab, and Eſau, had beene brought into thoſe countries by the hande of God. As if he ſhould ſay, there was no force in themſelues to conquer the countries that they poſſeſſed: for they were too farre ouer matched. And therefore as touching their bringing of their matters to paſſe: it muſt be concluded that it was god which wrought that chaunge. Mark that for one point.

And hee addeth, that it was to be conſidered that the children of Iſrael had gotten the poſſeſſion of their land after the like maner. He ſpeaketh here as of a matter alreadie come to paſſe. As if hee ſhoulde ſay, Goe to, looke about yee my friendes; ſee how God bringeth you into the lande that he promiſed to your fathers for an inheritance. When yee be come thither, and that hee hath ſetled you there: thinke yee that hee woulde maintaine you there, if he had not compaſſion vppon you, according as you ſhall haue good neede thereof? For yee ſhalbe hated of all the worlde: and therefore your God muſt bee faine to maintaine you. Nowe if you be deſirous to bee preſerued by him, attempt not any thing againſt his hande, and you ſhall perceiue that hee will ſet himſelfe againſt all ſuch as ſhall goe about to hurt you. Therefore muſt you bee gentle towardes them that are in the ſame caſe that you are. Nowe wee ſee what Moſes meaning is. Wherfore let vs learn to come home to our ſelues when wee conſider not Gods benefites towardes other men, as in deede oftentimes wee haue our eyes blindfolded. If a man tell vs that wee ought to conſider the good that God hath done to our neighbour: wee paſſe not for it. But when wee enter into our ſelues, then are wee conuicted, and wee learne what it is to forſake others. That is the common leſſon which is giuen vs heere. As howe? for it would bee darke ſtill, if it were not ſet out plainlyer by example. If it bee ſaide vnto vs generally, God hath giuen euerie man that which his pleaſure is that hee ſhall haue and poſſeſſe: thereuppon ſuch as pille and polle their neighbours, & vſe violence and extortion, notwithſtanding that they make their quarel againſt creatures, do in deed match themſelues againſt God, who wil haue order kept in the world. Whē any man tels vs heereof, wee are not perſwaded of it that it ſhoulde bee ſo. For wee haue euer ſome fonde toye or other to bleare our owne eyes with all. What, ſay wee? Is ſuch a man rich by the will of God? And howe knowe wee that? Nay rather, I ſee hee is inriched by euill meanes. We make no bones in conſtruing the thing the cleane contrarie way. And why? Becauſe wee conſider not Gods grace in our neighbours. But if a man ſay vnto vs: See what God hath done for thee: thou muſt doe him homage for it: if thou acknowledge it hee will make thee to inioye it, yea and thy inioying of it ſhall bee for euer.

Againe, looke that thou ſuccour thy neighbours according to the abilitie that hee hath giuen thee: and if thou goe that way to worke, all ſhall turne to thy benefite. Now then we ſee to what purpoſe Moſes hath alledged this admonition: and after what manner wee ought to practiſe it.

And beſides this,let vs marke in general, that the chaunges which happen, come not but by Gods hand and prouidence. When wee ſee a mightie people, when wee ſee ſtrong and well manned Cities, when wee ſee all other meanes that may ſerue to the maintenance of a Countrie, and yet the ſame is conquered by enemies: it muſt needes bee thought that God wrought therein. And therefore let vs learne to behold Gods iudgementes in al the alterations,that are ſeene in the worlde. And although all things bee on a broyle: yet let vs vnderſtande that God holdeth the ſterne aboue. True it is that men will make vprores, and runne into diſorder, and when they keepe a greate ſtirre,to their ſeeming God is ſhut out of doores. But when they haue practiſed what they can, yet ſhall it not ſtoppe God from turning all things to ſuch ende as hee hath purpoſed in his minde. And therefore as I ſaide afore, let vs not imagine that fortune beareth any ſway in the worlde: but let vs aſſure our ſelues that God hath reſerued the ſouereintie to himſelfe, to bring euen all the turmoyles that men rayſe vp, to ſuch ende as hee hath ordeined, of purpoſe to puniſh the ſinnes of ſuch as offende him, to pull downe the pride of ſuch as are too loftie, and to cut off his bleſſings when he ſeeth them miſuſed. That is the thing which we haue to note.

And euen theſe manner of ſpeeches, *That God draue out the Gyantes before the face of the Edomites and before the face of the Moabytes*, doe yet better confirme the things that are ſaide alreadie, according as wee haue ſeene heeretofore, Exo.23.27. Deut.2.4. that it is hee which putteth men in feare. For if it pleaſe him, although men haue no courage at all, but bee fearefull and henharted: yet will hee make them ſtrong and ſtout,ſo as they ſhalbee as vnmoueable as rockes when other come to incounter againſt them. And on the otherſide although they bee Gyantes and carie the countenaunces of Lyons: yet can God weaken them in one moment, ſo as they ſhall runne away from their owne ſhadowes, though no bodie elſe purſue them. Foraſmuch then as Moſes vſeth ſuch manner of ſpeeches: let vs aſſure our ſelues that men haue not their heartes in their owne handes, to ſtrengthen them at their neede. And therefore let vs take warning thereby, to truſt that GOD will diſcomfit our enemies without the power of man: and that if they riſe vp againſt vs with neuer ſo violent rage: yet ſhall they bee beaten downe, and not bee able to doe any thing againſt vs. And why? For GOD which when hee liſteth doeth put to flight not only men of ſmal courage, but alſo euen Gyants which are ſo howge that they aſtoniſh men euen with their looke: can well ynough skil how to put them backe with al their boldneſſe.

And therefore let vs learne to call vppon GOD, that hee may vouchſafe to giue vs courage at neede, and that wee may bee ſtrengthened by him: for elſe what will become of vs? Wee ſhall bee as weake as water, though no man preace much vpon vs. And this muſt teach vs to walke the more warely, conſidering the weakeneſſe or rather brittleneſſe that is in vs: to the intent wee bee not ſo fooliſh, as to ground our ſelues vppon our owne ſtrength and courage, but pray vnto GOD to holde vs with his mightie hande, and to giue vs inuincible conſtancie. Nowe if wee bee ſo vnable to incounter with mortall men: howe much more vnable are wee to incounter our ghoſtly enemies? Are wee able to withſtand Satan and all his aſſaults? Alas, wee come farre ſhort. And therefore let vs followe the counſell that is giuen vs heere: let vs pray GOD to driue away Satan, and to cut a ſunder all the cordes which holde vs heere faſt tyed, and therewithall to giue vs ſuch power to reſiſt him, as wee may haue victorie euen vnto the ende. Thus yee ſee what wee haue to remember vppon this text of Moſes.

Furthermore where as hee ſaith, *that God led his people about by the ſpace of eight and thirtie yeeres, vntill ſuch time as all thoſe that were able to beare armour at the time that the people murmured, were conſumed:* it ſerueth ſtill to bring to rememberance the thing that hath beene ſpoken: namely that God executed the vengeance which he had threatened to his people. And (as wee ſee) it is a verie profitable leſſon, to teach vs to tremble at Gods threatenings, as well as to bee mooued at his promiſes. Such is our nature, that when GOD promiſeth vs any thing, wee fall to ſcanning and diſputing of it, ſo as wee cannot reſt vppon it, to ſay it ſhall bee ſo: wee cannot conclude that it is Gods will. True it is that we will confeſſe it with our mouth: but as for to bee fully reſolued of it, wee will none of that, vnleſſe his trueth bee well ſealed and warranted in our heartes by his holie ſpirite. And yet euen then too, we be ſo inclyned to diſtruſt, that we draw ſtill backe from the thing that God promiſeth vs: ſo brutiſh and dulheaded are we.

And this appeareth yet more when he threatneth vs, So much the more then ought wee to thinke vppon his iudgementes, and to conſider that if hee bee prouoked, the threatenings that hee hath vttered with his mouth ſhall not fall to the grounde, but haue their effect and performance.

Thus ye ſee to what purpoſe Moſes rehearſeth again, that all they which were aboue twentie yeere olde at the time that the people murmured, were conſumed, and that not by caſualtie, *but according to the Lordes owne ſaying*. And this was to aſſure the people yet more, to the ende they might perceiue that Gods threatening of them was in good earneſt.

And herewith all let vs alſo call to rememberance, that God cannot abide that men ſhoulde deſpiſe and refuſe the benefite that hee offereth, and let occaſion ſlippe: for if hee open the gate, and men will not enter, hee cannot beare with that negligence of theirs matched with diſobedience. For what was the cauſe that God was ſo prouoked to anger, that hee ſware that

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Num.14.31. all the carkeiſes of the people ſhoulde rotte in the wilderneſſe, and that hee vſed ſo ſharpe wordes vnto them? It was for that they had refuſed to enter into the lande that hee had promiſed them. Wee ſee then, that vnthankefulneſſe prouoketh Gods vengeance againſt vs to the vttermoſt, ſpecially when wee refuſe the benefite that hee offereth vs, and that ſuch refuſall proceedeth of wilfulneſſe and malice, which happeneth in manner continually. For what maketh vs ſo loath to receiue the good turnes that GOD woulde doe vs; but our owne vnbeleefe, foraſmuch as wee thinke not that he will keepe touch with vs, but rather fall to reaſoning what will become of it? And therefore let vs marke well that men ſhall neuer bereaue themſelues of Gods benefits, but through their owne diſtruſt. Wherefore it ſtandeth vs ſo much the more on hande to indeuour to beleeue al the promiſes of our God, and to receiue his ſayings purely and ſimply, and to yeeld vnto them without any gaineſaying. Lo wherupon it behoueth vs to reſt.

Nowe as concerning the time, true it is that God coulde haue deſtroyed them all at the firſt day which prouoked him ſo to anger: he coulde haue ſent an Angell to haue made cleane riddaunce of them, and yet haue preſerued the young folke by myracle, ſo as they ſhoulde haue come into the lande the firſt day: but hee ledde them vp and downe by the ſpace of fortie yeares. And why did hee ſo? To the ende that others ſhoulde take example by them. For God ſeeth, that wee profite better by his corrections and iudgements in proceſſe of time, than if hee ſhoulde puniſh vs out of hande and away. Indeede, in our owne imagination wee had leuer that God ſhoulde thunder downe at the firſt daſh, and wee thinke wee ſhoulde perceiue his power much better, if hee wiped them quite out of the world which haue offended him, and that wee might ſee the wicked conſumed at once. And what woulde become of it, if hee ſhoulde out of hande deſtroy and take away all thoſe out of the worlde, which are not worthie to liue in it? If it were ſo, wee woulde within a day or twaine forget the thinges that he had ſhewed vs before our eyes. Wee may well weene the contrarie, but God knoweth that it is ſo. For hee leaueth the wicked heere in this worlde, where they haue their delightes, ſportes, and triumphes at their pleaſure: and that is to trie our patience. Neuertheleſſe ſometimes God ſetteth them languiſh as well as other folkes, ſo as a man may ſee them dragge their legges after them, and they bee as it were vppon the racke, and God ſetteth them before vs as lookingglaſſes, ſo as we may well perceiue, that it is more for our profite to ſee his iuſtice ſo prolonged, by making the wicked to languiſh after that manner: than if hee ſhoulde ſende them their puniſhmentes out of hande. This (ſaye I) ſtickes faſter in our remembrance. Yee ſee then howe wee be better taught by the delay of Gods iuſtice, than if it were executed at once and out of hande. And that was the cauſe why it behoued God to bee fortie yeeres ſpace in conſuming the people, to ſhewe them that they were not worthie to enter into the promiſed lande. For thereby the younger ſort were occaſioned to thinke, why did not God giue vs the fruition of the lande at the firſt day? It is becauſe our fathers murmured againſt him. And ſo are wee depriued of the inheriting thereof from our childhoode, and that not for a day or two, but it was Gods will that we ſhoulde wander in this wilderneſſe a long time, to the end that the ſinne of our fathers might be the better printed in our minds, to beware that wee followed them not in that behalfe. Yee ſee then that by this meanes the yonger folke were taught to liue in the feare of God, and to be better aduiſed than their fathers were. And therefore whenſoeuer God executeth not his iuſtice vppon the wicked, to make cleane riddance out of hande, but conſumeth them by little and little: let vs learne to hold our wittes alwayes tied vp and as it were in ſuſpenſe. And in the meane time let vs take the inſtruction that God giueth vs thereby, & learne to beare them wel in mind, and neuer to forget them: for his intent is to put vs in minde of them vntil we haue throughly digeſted them. After this manner muſt wee practiſe this doctrine, concerning the time that is ſet downe heere by Moſes, wherein God led his people vp and downe by the ſpace of eight and thirtie yeares, wherevnto two yeares moe were added afterwarde, to make vp the full number of fortie.

Nowe let vs kneele downe in the preſence of our good God with acknowledgement of our ſinnes, praying him to vouchſafe to bring vs more and more to ſuch repentance, that wee mourning for them before him, may acknowledge that there is nothing but curſedneſſe and deſtruction in vs, wherein wee ſhould dwell ſtil, if he pitied vs not, and that in the meane while we may not be ſo frowarde and malicious, as to turne heade againſt him, though hee handle vs roughlier than wee would bee, but that acknowledging it to bee rightfull that hee ſhould touch vs with his hande, wee may bee ſo reformed, as our whole ſeeking may bee to mortifie all our affections and luſtes, and to pleaſe him and to obey his righteouſneſſe: and that therewithall he ſtrengthen vs in ſuch wiſe, as wee may fight ſtoutly vnder his antſigne, & by that meanes be mainteined vnder his protection, vntill we haue finiſhed our race in this worlde, and bee taken vp into his euerlaſting reſt, after wee haue outſtoode the battelles that wee haue to indure here. That it may pleaſe him to grant this grace not onely &c.

On Wedneſday the j. of May. 1555.

The xiij. Sermon, which is the third vpon the ſecond Chapter.

24 Afterward the Lorde ſaid, Vp, get ye hence, and go ouer the riuer of Arnon. Behold, I haue deliuered Sehon King of Heſebon the Amorrhyte and his land into thy hand. Begin to take poſſeſſion, and prouoke him to battell.

25 This day will I begin to ſend the feare and dreade of thee vppon all people that are vnder the whole heauen: ſo that when they heare the fame of thee, they ſhall tremble and bee in anguiſh for thy preſence.

26 Then ſent I meſſengers from the wilderneſſe of the eaſt, to Sehon King of Heſebon, with wordes of peace, ſaying:

27 Let mee paſſe through thy land, keeping on the high way, without turning to the right hand or to the left.

28 Thou ſhalt ſell me meate for monie, to eate, and thou ſhalt alſo giue mee water for monie, to drinke: let me but onely paſſe through on foote,

29 (As the children of Eſau haue done which dwel in Seir, and the Moabytes which dwell in Ar) vntill I be come ouer Iordan, and bee entered into the lande which the Lord our God giueth vs.

Heere Moſes confirmeth yet better the thing that I treated of before: that is to wit, that men muſt not giue themſelues to foliſh enterpriſes, as euerie mans fancie leades him: but wee muſt haue an eye what is lawfull. And thereof there is none other triall, than to hearken what God cōmaundeth and promiſeth vs. For his will muſt be our ſure rule. Whoſoeuer thruſteth himſelfe forth to doe what he liketh beſt, although he be able to iuſtifie his doings before men, and can ſet neuer ſo many faire colours vppon them: yet ſhall he alwayes be condemned before God. Therefore let vs beare in minde, that to liue as it becommeth vs, we muſt haue this ſoberneſſe and modeſty with vs, that we aduenture not any further than his worde will beare vs out. True it is that the talke heere is onely of warres: but wee muſt applie the doctrine thereof to our generall vſe. For like as God choſe his people of Iſraell to make them as a lookingglaſſe for his Church: ſo muſt wee applie all the thinges to our ſelues which are written of them. For the perfection of the things that are conteined here, belongeth to vs as ſheweth ſaint Paul. Nowe were this wel obſerued wee ſhoulde not haue ſuch diſorder in our life, as wee ſee. For euerie man hath his liking by himſelfe, and according to his liking, ſo flingeth he forth to attempt thinges, and we neuer ſtande to inquire what God commaundeth, but our owne affections carrie vs away, and inflame vs in ſuch wiſe, that euerie one runnes after the thing that he lighteth vppon: and ſo wee doe but gadde vp and downe all our life long.

1.Cor.10.11. & Heb.6.1.

But heere it is tolde vs, that men muſt not reach out their handes to aduenture vppon any thing at all, further foorth than GOD hath giuen them leaue. When hee ſaith, goe: our going is not at all aduenture, but it is matched with a promiſe, *Beholde* (ſaith hee) *the Lord hath deliuered Sehon king of Heſebon into thy handes.* As if hee ſhoulde ſay, men muſt not haue an eye to any thing that may drawe their deſire to it afore hande, as wee ſee that our nature doeth driue vs thereunto: for ſcarſly can wee tell howe to open our eyes, but ſome lewde liking will tickle vs. And what is the cauſe thereof? It is for that wee bee not fully perſwaded of this principle, that wee muſt let all thinges alone which are not graunted vs of God. If wee followed this doctrine, ſuch as are poore would be contented with their ſlenderneſſe, and craue no more of God but to bee ſuſteyned: and the rich ſort would not be ſo blinded with vnſatiable couetouſneſſe, as to increaſe themſelues ſtill by adding peece to peece. And therefore it ſtandeth vs ſo much the more on hande to beare this doctrine in minde, ſith we ſee howe ſore our life is diſordered, and we cannot rule our luſtes according to Gods will, which onely can and ought to maſter them.

Againe on the other ſide, wee ſee howe wee picke out enemies: whereas it belongeth to GOD to appoint vs them. In good faith what is the cauſe that men heaue one at another, that they ſeeke to eate vp one another, and that there is ſo much ſtrife, trubble, and quareling? It is for that as ſoone as any man is greeued, by and by hee will needes bee reuenged: and wee cannot abide that any man ſhoulde touch vs in our goods or our perſons, but incontinently wee will be at open warre with him. As for patience, there is none at all in vs. But our Lorde will haue vs to ouercome euill with good, that in ſo doing wee may be as his ſheepe. But no man will bee brought to ſo much reaſon. Men then arme themſelues where God commaundeth them to bee quiet and peaceable: and they will needes haue them enemies, whom God would haue them to labour to winne by loue and gentleneſſe.

Contrariwiſe, if there bee a iuſt quarell that ought to bee mainteyned, euery man ſhrinkes away. The name of God is blaſphemed, and wicked deedes are committed: there ought ſuch as haue courage and manhood, to ſhewe that they feare not the hatred or anger of men. For GOD will haue vs to vndertake warre in his nāme: and euery man doeth ſhunne it. And therein wee ſee howe frowarde and vntowarde wee bee. Againe, it is ſaide that our warring Ephe.6.12. muſt bee, not againſt mortall men, but rather againſt Sathan and all his wyles. Loe howe GOD ſoundeth the trumpet and ſtriketh vp the drumme, and telleth vs that wee muſt enter into battell againſt our ghoſtly enemies. But that will not ſinke in our ſtomackes: wee be wedded to our owne luſtes: if any man anger vs, if any man doe vs wrong, wee muſt bee reuenged: and wee conſider not that in ſo doing Satan winneth greatly at our handes.

Nowe then (as I ſaide afore) wee ſee that this doctrine was written for our vſe and inſtruction, ſo as wee muſt alwayes beare in minde the likeneſſe that is betweene vs and the people of olde time.

Wherefore, firſt of all let no man couet to poſſeſſe any thing which hee hath not receiued at Gods hande, according to our dayly aſking of him our ordinarie breade. Then let vs not goe about to inrich our ſelues by vnlawfull meanes, crafte, and violence, neither let vs practiſe one thing or other by ſuttletie: but let euerie man followe his trade ſimplie, and meddle with nothing but that which GOD giueth vs leaue to doe, and let vs learne to rule our liues according to his worde, wayting for ſuch beſſing as it ſhall pleaſe him to giue vs. And let ſuch as haue goods, be always readie to forgo them, whenſoeuer it ſhall pleaſe him: and let ſuch as haue not the worlde at will, beare their pouertie patiently. That is the thing which wee haue to marke in the firſt place.

Secondly, when the caſe ſtandeth vppon aduenturing, let our hardineſſe bee, that wee dare bee bolde to doe whatſoeuer GOD commaundeth vs, ſpecially when wee haue his promiſe, as is ſaide afore. That is the thing (as I haue declared alreadie heretofore) which putteth difference betweene the true wiſedome of the faithfull, and the raſhneſſe of ſuch as playe the looſe coltes and runne galloping aſtray. For the faithfull doe waite for warrant from GOD, and that the ende of the thing which they take in hande ſhall bee good: and when they once haue his promiſe, then goe they forwarde without attempting any thing to the contrarie. But the vnfaithfull take a toy in their heade, and when they haue laide their platte, they conclude to doe whatſoeuer ſeemes beſt to themſelues, without inquiring of Gods will, and thereupon they ſticke at nothing. In ſo doing there is nothing but preſumptuouſneſſe to ouerthrowe themſelues. But the true foundation is to haue God promiſe, and to reſt vpon the ſame, doing the things that hee commaundeth vs. And if wee haue that regarde with vs: then ſhall wee take the contrarie way to that which I haue ſpoken of. For where as nowe wee be fearefull in the good quarrels that God alloweth, and wherein wee ought to hazarde our ſelues: wee ſhall haue an inuincible conſtancie, and euerie of vs ſhall haue an eye to his duetie, to ſay, beholde, my God commaundeth mee to doe it: in deede I ſhall haue many aſſaultes and manie incomberances, and I may perchaunce bee greatly hindered by men: but it is ynough to mee that God is my warrant: ſeeing he hath appointed mee to doe it, it is not for mee to ſticke at it.

Beſides this, we haue alſo a promiſe: God neuer ſaith to vs, *Doe this*, but he telleth vs alſo that hee will be with vs. Nowe then ſeeing we know that hee is able to mainteine vs euen in ſpite of all the wicked and of all them that are in a chafe againſt vs: what neede wee be afraide to do wel? And if wee bee afraide, doe wee not wrong vnto God as though hee were not of power to defende vs? So then wee ſee nowe howe bolde and hardie wee ought to bee in mainteining of good quarels, foraſmuch as wee bee ſure that GOD will not faile vs, ſpecially when wee bee to incounter againſt Satan, and againſt all the things that hee practiſeth, as well againſt our ſelues, as againſt the whole Church. Therefore if wee play the daſtardes and ſhrinke away when wee ſhoulde enter into ſuch incounters, as wee ſee moſt men doe, who ſeeke ſtartingholes, and cannot finde in their heartes to beare any burthen for the honour of God: is it not too ſhamefull trecherie? yes: for wee cannot ſtep out of the way, but our vnbeleefe bewrayes it ſelfe. What cauſeth vs to bee ſo colde in performing our dueties? It is for that wee beleeue not God. For were wee throughly perſwaded that hee will keepe touch with vs, and that wee ſhall not bee diſappointed in wayting for the thing that hee hath promiſed: it woulde make vs to forget all feare, and all the goodlie ſhiftes that wee deuiſe to turne the catte in the panne. And therefore let vs learne to glorifie our GOD in yeelding to him the title of ſoothfaſtneſſe: and then ſhall wee bee hardie ynough, not to followe our owne fancies, but to obey his commaundementes. Wee ſhall haue a holy preſumptuouſneſſe, if wee holde vs to this line and rule of truſting in God, and of hoping that hee will performe whatſoeuer he hath ſaide or vttered with his mouth. Thus yee ſee howe this leſſon is to be put in practiſe.

Furthermore let vs marke heerewithall, how God addeth heere, *that hee will ſtrike ſuch a feare and terrour into theſe peoples hearts, as they ſhall be diſmayed when they doe but heare of the fame of the Iewes.* Heere wee ſee that God holdeth mens heartes in his hande, to weaken them or ſtrengthen them at his pleaſure.

True it is that men imagine themſelues to haue this vertue of manlineſſe in themſelues. And the verie cauſe why they deſpiſe God, is that euerie of them makes his account to compaſſe his matters by his owne power. But ſo farre off are the common people from hauing any ſtoutneſſe or manhood in them, without that God giue it them: Prou.21.1. that God holdeth euen the heartes of kinges and princes in his hande, and although they ſeeme to themſelues to haue much more ſtrength and courage than others: yet doeth God make them to ſlip away like water, when hee thinkes good. So then let vs marke well, that it is not in any mens power to bee valiant, vnleſſe GOD ſtrengthen him. And therefore wee may applie this doctrine to double vſe. The one is that although a man ſee himſelfe to be weak, he muſt not be out of heart for it: for there is a remedie readie for it, if we liſt to ſeeke it. I ſay we muſt gather ſtrength of mind by ſeeking it in God, yea euen whenſoeuer we be hindered to do our duetie for want of courage. As for example: God perchaunce calleth vs to glorifie his name, hee ſholeth vs out from this worlde, accordingly as it is his will that euery man ſhoulde renounce himſelfe, and that wee ſhoulde forſake our owne luſtes. Nowe wee ſee howe poſſible it is to obey, yea and wee knowe howe farre all our abilite ſtretcheth. Againe, we ſee alſo a great number of hazards, and the diuell will face vs with this inconuenience and that daunger, where at we ſhalbe as good as diſmayed, ſo as we ſhall not dare to ſtirre one finger to obey God and to execute his commaundement. And what is the reaſon? It is for that we be too faintharted. Now it is not for vs to ſticke ſtill in this myre: but wee muſt ſeeke for ſtrength where we can finde it. Let vs conſider (ſay I) that God is able ynough to amende the faintneſſe of heart that holdeth vs backe, yea & which maketh vs to ſhrinke back from his word, and to turne heade from it. Yee ſee then how wee ought to take warning to flee vnto GOD and to ſeeke ſuccour there, forſomuch as hee hath mens heartes in his hande, and doth both faſhion and bowe them as hee thinketh good. Likewiſe again, whẽ we feele a good diſpoſition in our ſelues, ſo as wee would faine giue the onſet (as they ſay), and wee haue no feare at all to holde vs backe: yet muſt wee not ſtande vppon Phil.2.12. that, for wee heare howe ſaint Paul warneth vs to worke out our ſaluation with feare and trembling, that is to ſay, to followe and drawe that way which God ſheweth vs. And after what maner? Fearefully, and as it were with trembling. Why ſo? For it is God (ſaith he) which giueth vs both the will and the performaunce, and all through his owne freebeſtowed goodneſſe.

Seeing it is ſo then, albeit that wee haue the ſpirite of courage and ſtouteneſſe: yet let vs not ceaſe to reſort vnto GOD, and to humble our ſelues continually, and to pray him that hee forſake vs not, but rather continue the grace that hee hath put into vs, and confirme the ſame vntill wee haue finiſhed our courſe. And thus yee ſee that wee bee warned to ſeeke continually for newe ſtrength, notwithſtanding that we feele that our Lorde hath ſtrengthened vs alreadie.

Nowe the ſeconde vſe is, that when wee ſee our enemies fearefull and diſmayed, wee muſt conſider howe it is GOD that hath diſcouraged them, and not impute any whit to our owne proweſſe, or to aught elſe that in vs: but yeelde the whole prayſe thereof to him that ought to haue it. And on the contrarie parte, when wee perceiue our enemies to bee like fiendes, ſo as there is none other likelyhood but that wee ſhalbe ſwallowed vp: when we ſee a deſperate boldeneſſe in them ſo as they goe forwarde ſtill whatſoeuer come of it: [finally] when wee ſee them, all on flaming fire after that ſort: yet let vs not bee diſmayed thereat. Pſal.58.8.& 90.5. For why? God will make them to ſoke away like water when it commeth to the pinch.

Nowe then, as for this diuelish geeriſhneſſe which the wicked haue to ouerthrowe Gods children withall, and to cumber and trouble them euerie where: let it not put vs out of hearte, though they purſue vs neuer ſo deadely. For why? GOD will prouide for vs in ſuch wiſe, as hee will make thoſe afraide of our ſhadowes, which ſeeme as nowe to haue their throates open to ſwallow vs vp, and to bee as gulfes of hell. God will worke after ſuch a faſhion in that behalfe, as they ſhall not bee worthie to be compared with little babes.

Let vs marke then, that ſeeing it is tolde vs that God holdeth mens hearts in his hande: wee muſt alwayes rather looke to him, than reſt vppon any thing heere belowe, whenſoeuer wee ſee any ſtoppes that may put vs in feare. And in ſo doing wee ſhall neuer bee confounded.

Moſes addeth moreouer, *That hee ſent to Sehon with wordes of peace, ſaying: Let vs paſſe through thy countrie, wee will pay for our breade and water, wee will doe thee no harme, wee will paſſe as thy friendes, as wee haue done to our brethren the Edomytes.* It ſhoulde ſeeme heere at the firſt ſight, that Moſes did againſt that which was commaunded him. For theſe are two diuers things, [namely yͤ God ſaith] goe giue battell to Sehon king of the Amorrhytes: and that Moſes in ſteede of giuing him battell, and in ſteede of incountering him in the fielde, ſendeth an Ambaſſade vnto him, and prayeth him to giue him leaue but onely to paſſe through his Countrie, promiſing to doe no harme, and to paye for all thinges that hee tooke. It might ſeeme then that heere is ſome contrarietie: and if it were ſo, then was Moſes diſobedient vnto God.

Let vs marke, that where as God commaunded him to offer battell to Sehon king of the Amorrhytes: his meaning was, that the warre ſhoulde in all reſpectes bee lawfull, and that Sehon ſhoulde well perceiue, that hee was iuſtly aſſayled by the people of Iſrael. This therefore is no impediment, but rather a meane whereby God ordeyned his people to haue lawfull warre with Sehon and all his ſubiectes. Where as God had ſaide, *I will giue you the lande in poſſeſſion:* it was requiſite that the malice of Sehon ſhoulde bee diſcouered and bewrayed, that it might appeare to the worlde, that the people of Iſrael had iuſt tytle to diſcomfite him. For where as GOD promiſed the lande of Chanaan to his people: this was no parte of that Countrie: hee gaue them this as an income or ouerplus, and extended his liberalitie further than the promiſe made to Abraham did conteine. And therefore Sehon was not as yet declared to bee an enemie to the people of Iſraell. And if they ſhoulde haue defied him as an enemie at the firſt daſh, without giuing him knowledge of the warre: it had beene a diſorderly kinde of dealing. Theſe thinges then, agree verie well: that is to wit, that Sehon was condemned aforehande by God: and that the children of Iſrael hauing chaſed out all the inhabitaunts of his countrie, ſhoulde poſſeſſe the ſame themſelues: and alſo that theſe thinges ſhoulde not bee done, vntill the wilful ſtubborneneſſe of Sehon were diſcloſed that hee might diſpoſſeſſe himſelfe, and bee the cauſe of the warre, ſo as the fault might iuſtly bee imputed to himſelfe. Wherefore let vs marke well, that Moſes hath not ſwarued heerein from Gods commandement, to play the wiſe man after the manner of the worlde, which is to haue ſome politike deuiſe by themſelues, ſo as they muſte needes inuent ſome toy or other of their owne heade, as though they were better aduiſed than GOD. And ſurelie that is the common faſhion of all. But ſuch forecaſt is curſed, when we thinke to amende the things that God commaundeth vs, by our owne policies and inuentions. Moſes went not that way to worke, he followed ſimplie Gods will.

But by the way it may ſeeme verie ſtraunge, that GOD doeth ſende a meſſage of peace vnto Sehon, and yet notwithſtanding had determined aforehande that it ſhoulde not auayle him. In this caſe all worldly pride muſt ſtoope, and conſider Gods manner of dealing towardes vs with ſuch humilitie, that where our wittes cannot reach vnto it, wee may honour his incomprehenſible ſecretes. And certes it is a text worthie of rememberance when it is ſaide, that GOD (or Moſes by Gods authoritie) ſendeth vnto Sehon to deſire him to ſuffer the people to paſſe, gently intreating him and ſhewing him the thing that was for his welfare: and yet notwithſtanding that GOD had fully determined aforehande, that Sehon ſhoulde make none account of it, but that hee ſhoulde bee diſcomfited and deſtroyed. This may ſeeme ſtraunge geere to our imagination. When men will needes ſcanne of Gods workes and prouidence according to their owne reaſon: they ſhall finde thinges to grudge at, euerie turning of a hande. And that is the cauſe why venemous tongues ruſh out nowe adayes, and are not aſhamed to blaſpheme God. When there is any talke of Gods ſecrete ordinaunce, and of his diſpoſing of thinges in this worlde, after a manner vnknowen to vs, ſo as we ſhall not comprehende it vntill wee bee ridde of this fleſh of ours: they ſtorme at it, and repyne againſt GOD. And why? Becauſe the ſame ſurmounteth their capacitie. But if Gods iuſtice be too high for vs: ought it to bee abaſed therefore? If his ordinaunce bee aboue our vnderſtanding: ſhoulde it therefore bee hidden from himſelfe, and ſhoulde it haue no authoritie ouer vs? Yes: And this text is ynough to ſtoppe the mouthes of all ſuch raſcols. For one of the common obiections that ſuch beaſtes doe make, is this: Howe ſo? If men had not freewill to take or refuſe the thing that GOD ſayeth to them, and that the thing it ſelfe were not vndetermined: it were in vaine to preach, or to make exhortations, or to profer the choyce of good and euill: for the matter were diſpatched aforehande.

Thus doeth it ſeeme in deede to theſe ſeelie fooles, which attribute more to their owne braine, than to Gods doctrine, and which by reaſon of their ſlender exerciſe in the holy ſcripture, are the more preſumptuous to iudge at all aduenture of the thinges that they knowe not. But let vs looke vppon that which Moſes rehearſeth here. The meſſage that hee ſent to Sehon king of the Amorrhytes, came of GOD, and muſt not bee taken as the meſſage of a mortall man, as I haue declared before. But yet is Sehon diſpoſed to receiue the meſſage? Or is there any caſuall vncertaintie in this behalfe, ſo as a man might thinke it might as well not happen as happen? [Nay.] Moſes was well aſſured that Sehon woulde not obey it: and I enter not yet ſo farre as to diſcuſſe whereof that proceeded. It ſhall bee declared in the nexte Lecture, that God had hardened Sehons hart, and that it was his will that it ſhould be ſo. Lykewiſe alſo it is ſayd in the pſalme, that God turned away the hartes of ſuch as otherwiſe had bin the peoples friends, and that hee hardened them in ſuch ſort, as they could not abide to ſpare them. But I will not enter yet ſo farre. I treate as now but vppon this poynt, that GOD ſendeth meſſages to men in his owne name and authoritie: which notwithſtanding ſhall not preuaile to reclaime them. And why? Becauſe that thoſe to whom hee ſpeaketh, are ſet vppon euill aforehande: and there is none other thing to bee looked for, but that they ſhall bee the more inflamed and waxe woorſe, at the hearing of Gods commaundement. And therefore (as I haue ſaide alreadie) although it bee not ſeemely to our humaine reaſon: yet muſt wee humble our ſelues and honour Gods ſecretes. When wee finde thinges contrarie to our naturall reaſon, is it meete that wee ſhoulde giue libertie to our owne witte, to ſay, Oho, I take it to bee otherwiſe, and therefore it muſt needes be ſo? Noe: Let GOD rather haue the maiſterie, and let vs become fooles that wee may bee wiſe in him. For at that ende muſte wee beginne if wee will profite well in GODS ſchoole. Pſal.105.25

Wee muſte followe that which Saint Paul telleth vs, which is, that wee muſt bee fooles in our ſelues, that is to ſay, wee muſt not couet the curſed wiſedome where with men are puffed vp, when they thinke themſelues 1.Cor.3.18.

to bee ſharpe witted and wiſe ynough to iudge of [diuine] matters. Let vs beware of ſuch imaginations, and ridding our ſelues quite and cleane of all ſelfeweening, let vs profite our ſelues by Gods ſhewing of the thinges vnto vs which he liketh, and which are good in his ſight. Let vs then learne to frame our ſelues wholly to his good will, for if wee be counted to be fooles and witleſſe before men: it ſhalbe but of ſuch as iudge after their owne mother wit.

Furthermore let vs marke, that when wee haue ſearched things throughly, wee ſhall finde that Gods ſending of his worde dayly vnto ſuch as receiue it not, and are alreadie condemned afore him: is not without cauſe. Then is it vncertaine to vs, that when Gods worde is preached, it is to the ende to blinde the reprobates and ſuch as are vncorrigible: and yet for all that, that it is Gods will to make them vnexcuſable. For commonly God reſerueth that knowledge to himſelfe, and when we bee ſent of him and doe preache in his name: wee cannot tell whether our labour ſhall doe good or no. Hee then which is appointed to preache Gods word, knoweth not (when he hath done as hee was commanded) whether his preaching ſhall turne to the ſaluation or damnation of his hearers. But yet for all that let vs labour ſtill, and pray GOD to vouchſafe to giue effect to his word, that it may ſo profite, as the wretched worlde may bee plucked backe from the deſtruction whereunto it goeth. That is the marke which wee muſt ſhoote at, and the thing which wee haue to doe. Neuertheleſſe ſometime GOD will ſhewe vs before our faces, that his worde ſerueth to condemne the hearers, and to bereaue them of all excuſe. Wee ſee it was once
Eſa.6.9. ſaide vnto Eſay, Goe to this people. And what to doe? It was in deede to carie them the word of ſaluation. But yet therewithal it is ſaide vnto him, Goe to harden this peoples heartes, goe to ſtoppe their eares, goe to ſhut their eyes, and to thicken their heartes, to make them vtterly paſt recouerie: for I will not haue them conuert. Seeing then that the Prophet is ſent with ſuch commiſſion, as he knoweth well that thoſe to whom he ſpeaketh, ſhall but waxe the worſe for it: in what caſe is he? But what for that? Yet muſt he execute his commiſſion with all obedience. It is not for men to enter into counſell, and to take aduice in this behalfe according to their abilitie: no, but they muſt ſubmit themſelues to GOD as I ſaide afore. Looke what was ſaide to the Prophet, doeth ſhewe it ſelfe dayly in effect. It might put vs oftentimes out of patience, to ſee that the more that Gods worde is preached, the more doeth the worlde ruſh foorth into all licentiouſneſſe. For they that conſpire among vs againſt GOD and his Goſpell: are in compariſon farre worſe than the Papiſtes. The Papiſtes haue ſome deuotion with them: and although they bee growen bruttiſh, yet neuertheleſſe their chiefe intent is to ſerue GOD. But as for the other ſort, they bee ſtarke Diuels: and although they knowe and ſee it ſufficiently prooued, that they warre againſt God and not againſt mortall creatures: yet doeth their furie carrie them away to proceede ſtill. Wee ſee it. Wee ſee that whereas in the time of blindneſſe there was ſome ciuill order, and men were more bridled: nowe it ſeemeth that all thinges are ſet at libertie. This were able to make Gods ſeruauntes quite out of patience. But what for that? We muſt take courage as Saint Paule comforteth vs. Hee ſaieth that whether Gods worde bring life or death to men, 2.Cor.2.15.16. yet is it alwayes a good and ſweete ſauour before GOD. True it is that Gods worde of it ſelfe (as ſhall bee declared more fully hereafter) is alwayes the ſauour of life. For what is it that God aimeth at, if wee conſider his worde in it owne nature? The calling of men backe to the ende they might be ſaued. And yet for all that, wee ſee by experience that it is an odour and ſauour of Death, inſomuch as the wicked are ſtrangled and choked with it, as ſoone as they doe but take the ſent or ſmell of it. They neede not to taſte of it nor to eate of it: if they doe but take the ſent of it a great way of, it is poyſon to them, ſo that the diuell carries them away, and they fall to fretting and chafing againſt GOD: and all to their owne deſtruction. And do we ſee that Gods word turneth into occaſion of death, to a great nomber of men? Yet muſt wee bee of good cheere, ſaieth S. Paul. And why? Bicauſe it is a good and ſweete ſauour vnto God, when men are made vnexcuſable.

But nowe let vs come to declare how Gods worde tendeth vnto life, and howe it hath that propertie: notwithſtanding that men through their owne wickedneſſe, doe turne it to their deadly condemnation. This is ſufficiently expreſſed in that it is ſaide, *That Moſes ſent a meſſage of peace to Sehon King of the Amorrhytes*. His deſire then is to abſtaine from all anoyance, if Sehon coulde abide it. Nowe let vs ſee to what ende the Goſpell is preached, and after what manner. What elſe is contained in it, but that God intendeth to bee reconciled to the world, as ſaieth Saint Paule in the fifth of the ſeconde to the Corinthians? 2.Cor.5.20. In as much then as GOD ſendeth vs tidinges of peace, ſo as his deſire is to ſhewe himſelfe a father to all ſuch as yeelde themſelues teachable vnto him, and our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt is offered vs as the meane to bring vs againe into the loue and fauour of our God: it is ſurely a meſſage of peace. And in deede the Goſpell is ſo intituled, and not without cauſe. Epheſ.6.15. True it is that the lawe alſo was a meſſage of peace, as in reſpect of the promiſes: If wee looke vppon the lawe ſtrictly, Rom.4.15. as Saint Paul ſpeakes diuers times of it: it will be a very meſſage of wrath. But if wee looke vpon the promiſes that were made to the fathers of olde time: [wee ſhall finde that] euen from the beginning of the world, Gods will was that ſinners ſhould knowe his mercie, and come vnto him. And for that cauſe is it ſaide that Ieſus Chriſt bringeth peace, both to them that are a farre off, and to them that are neere hande, as ſayeth Saint Paule to the Epheſians: and he will haue it to bee preached through the whole worlde, Eph.2.17.

that Gods onely deſire is to holde vs in his loue. Thus ye ſee howe wee may finde ſaluation in the Goſpell. Nowe then wee ſee, that Gods worde conſidered in it ſelfe, is a commiſſion of peace, furthering vs to be ioyned and made one with him, ſo as wee may call vpon him and reſt in his goodneſſe. And the meane to haue this worde to redounde to our ſaluation, is this, if wee can receiue it as wee ought to doe, according
Rom.1.16. as Saint Paul treateth thereof in the firſt to the Romanes. And therefore the Miniſters therof muſt haue this conſideration with them: Beholde, GOD ſendeth mee: and what putteth he in my mouth? Peace, to offer it vnto all men, and to the ende that euen the wickedſt ſhould bee partakers of the ſame meſſage and vnderſtand that GOD ſeeketh them. But yet for all that, wee knowe that this meſſage cannot profite all men. What muſt it doe then? It muſt make men vnexcuſable. For what can bee ſaide to it, if God handle men out of hand as they deſerue? Wee bee all damned by nature, we bring ſuch an inheritaunce of curſedneſſe from our mothers wombe, as God might ſinke vs at the firſt day, and wee coulde lay nothing at all for our ſelues. And foraſmuch as there are a great nomber of people, which ſeeme to periſhe but through ſimplicitie: therefore it is Gods will to conuict the whole worlde, to the end to take away all ſcapes. Wee ſee that when the Goſpell is preached, thoſe whome a man woulde haue thought to haue bene well diſpoſed, doe burſt foorth, and their malice is diſcouered and laide open, which was hidden before. The worlde ſeeth howe fewe are willing to ſtoope to take the yoke vppon their neckes: Nay, which worſe is, the world ſees that they become enemies to it, ſo as they can not bee ouercome by any warnings: or elſe they become ſo wilde headed, as a man can not tell on which ſide to catch holde of them. Seeing then that when GOD hath ſent men the meſſage of peace after that ſort, they on their ſide deſire warre and ſeeke it, and can not finde in their heartes to yeelde and ſubmit them ſelues vnto God, but will needes bee enemies vnto him: wee ſee that the preaching of the Goſpell to ſuch as are vtterly paſt recouerie, is not vnauailable. And why? For elſe their malice had bene vnknowen, and Gods Iuſtice ſhoulde not bee ſo apparant, nor haue ſo great brightneſſe, as when the wicked abide ſtill vnconuerted and coulde not bee ſubdued for ought that could be done.

Nowe hereupon what haue wee to doe? This doctrine belongeth not onely to ſuch as are miniſters of Gods worde, to make them to goe through with their calling, ſo as they may ſhut their eyes when God is to bee obeyed, and proceede ſtill in preaching his worde though it bee miſuſed, and turned cleane contrarie to Gods intent: but alſo wee bee all warned generally, in what wiſe wee ought to receiue the meſſage that God ſendeth vs: namely that for as much as he ſheweth himſelfe ſo gratious towardes vs, that in ſtead of being our enemie, as he might moſt rightfully and iuſtly bee, he is contented to bee at one with vs, and taryeth not till wee ſeeke peace at his hande, but ſeeketh attonement with vs, notwithſtanding that he perceiue vs to bee mad to make warre againſt him: wee ſhould not bee ſo wretched and malicious as to dragge backe from him, and to forſake that paſſing loue and fatherly kindneſſe of his. Marke that for one point.

Yet notwithſtanding, when we ſee that God hath drawen vs to him, and that wee can finde in our heartes to let him vſe his mercie and goodneſſe towardes vs: then muſt wee knowe that the cauſe why his worde hath had ſuch entraunce into our hartes, and why wee haue bin ſubdued to his obedience: was for that he hath refourmed vs by his holy ſpirite. Let vs knowe that. And on the contrarie parte, when wee ſee the rebelliouſneſſe of the worlde, and howe men doe rancle againſt the Goſpell, and are puffed vp with pride to aduaunce themſelues againſt God: let vs conſider that they bee looking glaſſes which God ſetteth before vs for our inſtruction, and that we alſo ſhould be in the ſame taking, if God had not pitied our frowardneſſe to correct it. Neuertheleſſe, let vs vnderſtand, that God dalyeth not with vs in ſending vs his worde nowe adayes. And why? For it holdeth men ſo much the more conuicted, inaſmuch as they become worſe than wilde beaſtes, in that they woulde not by any meanes bee tamed for all his calling of them to him ſo familiarly, by meanes whereof their ſhame is ſo much the more diſcouered, ſo as the worlde knoweth what was hidden within them, which coulde not haue bene perceiued otherwiſe. Seeing then that we ſee this: let vs learn to ſay euer, that Gods worde is good and holy, and that it ſhoulde bee the very foode of life, if men turned it not to venim and poiſon through their owne naughtineſſe their owne naughtineſſe: by reaſon whereof their fault is ſuch, as the blame thereof can in no wiſe be fathered vpon God.

Now let vs kneele downe in the preſence of our good God with acknowledgement of our faults, praying him to make vs feele them better, yea euen ſo farre as to bring vs to true repentance, that being ſubdued by his corrections, wee may learne to be ſorie for our ſinnes, and for the imperfections ẏ are in vs, vntill he haue throughly clenſed vs of them, and deliuered vs quite from all the temptations of the fleſh and the world. And ſo let vs all ſay, Almightie God heauenly father, &c.

On Munday the vj. of May. 1555.

The xiiij. Sermon,which is the fourth vpon the ſecond Chapter.

26.27.28.29. Then ſent I meſſengers,&c.

30 But Sehon King of Heſebon would not let vs paſſe, for the Lorde thy God had hardened his ſpirit,and made his heart ſtubborne, to the ende to deliuer him into thy hand,as it appeareth at this day.

31 And the Lorde ſaide vnto mee, beholde,I haue begunne to giue Sehon and his land before thee; goe to, take poſſeſſion,that thou mayeſt poſſeſſe his land.

32 And Sehon came out againſt vs, he and all his people to fight in Iaſa:

33 And the Lorde our God deliuered him before vs, and wee ſmote him, and his ſonnes,and all his people.

34 And at the ſame time wee tooke all his Cities,and deſtroyed the men, women,and children in them,and we left him nothing remaining,

35 Sauing the Cattell which we tooke to our ſelues, and the ſpoyle of the Cities,which we tooke.

36 From Aroer which is vppon the banke of the Riuer Arnon, and the Citie which is vppon the Riuer,and vnto Galaad,there was not any Citie that could defend it ſelfe from vs. For the Lord our God had giuen them all into our hands.

37 Onely thou ſhalt not come neere the land of the children of Ammon,nor vnto any place of the Riuer Iabok,nor vnto the Cities on the hill,nor vnto any of all thoſe places which the Lord our God forbad vs.

WEe haue ſeene heretofore howe God being determined to hardẽ Sehon,letted not for all that to cauſe him to be ſummoned, to the end he ſhold haue let the children of Iſrael paſſe without dooing them harme, and without ſhewing himſelfe to be their enemie. And therewithall it hath bene ſhewed, that GOD will ſende meſſage of peace vnto men: & yet notwithſtanding knoweth that the ſame ſhall ſtand them in no ſtead, but to make them vnexcuſable. After the ſame maner, the Goſpell is preached to a great nomber, who notwithſtanding doe but become the worſe for it,and God knoweth right well that no profite ſhall come thereof, but that they ſhall bee rebellious ſtill. Why then doeth hee call them to him? To bereaue them of all excuſe, and to lay open their malice and vngodlineſſe. For ſo long as men abide vndiſcouered, GOD ſeemeth after a ſorte to doe them wrong. But when he ſendeth them his worde, then bewray they themſelues what they bee, and their vnbeliefe is manifeſtly prooued. And ſo let vs vnderſtand that our Lorde knoweth well what the end of the preaching of his word ſhall be: ẏ is to
2.Cor.2.16. wit,that it ſhall become the ſauour of death to a great ſort: but yet will he not ceaſſe to appoint his worde to bee preached ſtill: and that doeth he for good and iuſt cauſe, namely to the ende that men ſhould bee the more condemned. But yet for all this, it is the preachers duetie to of-
Luke.10.5. fer peace vnto all men, according alſo as our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt ſaith to his Diſciples, whereſoeuer yee come, offer peace: and if they that heare you bee vnwoorthie thereof, your peace ſhall returne to you againe. As if he ſhould ſay, There ſhall be no loſſe at al, you ſhall trie what is in men, and the friendlye greeting which you ſhall beare vnto them, ſhall be as a touchſtone, to the ende they may not be able to ſay, that God hath not viſited them nor had no care of them: and ſo ſhall they be proued to haue reiected his grace.

And herewithall wee bee warned, to ſeeke peace with all men as much as in vs lyeth, accordingly as it is ſaide in the Pſalme that wee muſt euen followe after it: ſo as it is not ynough Pſal.34.15.
for vs to bee friendly, and to indeuour to 1.Pet.3.11.
liue without anoying of any bodie, and without vexing or troubling any of our neighbours: but wee muſt labour yet further to ſeeke peace. If wee ſee there bee any vnrulye folke, wee muſt pacifye them as much as is poſſible. If wee ſee that Satan procureth vs ſtrife and contention, wee muſt labour to remedie them as much as wee can: accordingly as our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt requireth of the faithfull, not onely that they ſhoulde bee peaceable themſelues, but alſo that they ſhoulde indeuour to ſet peace euerywhere. That then is one thing which wee ought to doe. And therewithall wee Rom.12.18.
muſt bethinke our ſelues how S. Paul ſaieth,that wee muſt ſeeke peace, as much as in vs is. And by that ſaying he comforteth vs. If it ſo happen that wee can not make men our friendes, but ẏ although they haue no cauſe to complaine of vs,nor can ſay that wee haue done them any harme or wrong, yet they ceaſſe not to be malicious & bitter towards vs: we haue wherewith to comfort our ſelues, in ẏ we haue done the beſt we can to ſeeke peace. And therefore although

wee bee faine to liue among ſuch as ſeeke all the meanes they can to trouble and vexe vs: yet muſt not wee followe their malice to be like vnto them, but wee muſt alwayes doe our duetie Pro.25.22. &Ro.12.20 to maintaine peace and friendſhip. And if men will not bee wonne by vs: then ſhall our mildeneſſe and gentleneſſe turne to burning coales againſt them, wherewith they ſhall bee conſumed. Beſides this, the Lorde will maintaine our innocencie, and when he ſeeth that wee haue not aſſailed thoſe at whoſe handes we demaund not any thing, but rather haue laboured to ouercome euill with dooing good: let vs not doubt but he will aſſiſt vs with his ſuccour.

There is this further, that Moſes termeth it *The word of peace*, when men abſtaine from all euill dooing, and offer all right and reaſon: which wee ought to marke well: for many will ſay that they deſire nothing but peace: howbeit, that is but to their owne profite, and to their neighbors loſſe: and that is no meane [of peace in deede.] Deſire wee then to bee at peace? Deſire wee to haue agreement with them that dwell with vs? Let vs on our ſide deale vprightly: let vs abſtaine from all wrong dooing: let vs greeue no man, let vs drawe no mans goods to our ſelues, let vs yeeld euerie man that which is his due. Lo what peace is. And herein wee ſee that all the faire proteſtations which they make that are giuen to rauine and extorſion: are but lyes. For the holy Ghoſt hath tolde vs here, that there is no word of peace, but where vprightneſſe and iuſt dealing is obſerued, ſo as no man is vexed in any wiſe. And like as wee muſt indeuour to bee reaſonable towardes our neighbours, to maintaine friendſhip with them: ſo if they offer vs reaſon, wee muſt looke that we refuſe it not. For if wee bee vnmeaſurably hard to bee contented: the thing muſt needes be performed in vs which Pſal.109,17. is written in the Pſalme: that is to wit, he refuſed bleſſedneſſe, and it is farre off from him: therefore ſhall curſedneſſe couer him as a cloake, and it ſhall ſticke faſt to his fleſh and to his ſkinne. Would wee then that God ſhould bleſſe vs, and cauſe men alſo to beare vs fauour and friendſhip? Let vs on our behalfe ſeeke bleſſedneſſe to the vttermoſt of our power: and when wordes of peace are offered vs, let vs not goe ſeeke occaſions of controuerſie, to ſtirre vp ſtrife and debate. Thus ye ſee what wee haue to marke vpon that text.

Nowe let vs come to that which Moſes addeth. He ſaieth *That Sehon King of Heſebon woulde not giue the children of Iſrael leaue to paſſe.* And why? *For the Lord* (ſaieth he) *had hardened his ſpirit, and made his heart ſtubborne.* I haue told you alreadie, that although God foreſee that the meſſage of peace ſhall not preuaile: yet he ceaſſeth not to ſend it. But here Moſes expreſſeth yet a further matter: that God hardeneth mens hartes. And in the ende he addeth moreouer, that he doeth it of purpoſe to ouerthrowe them and deſtroy them, which is much more. Nowe this is verie ſtraunge geere at the firſt ſight. And that is the cauſe why men haue gone about to alter theſe textes: but in ſo doing they haue marred them, for it is all one when they would ſet ſuch a gloſe as this vpon it, that Gods hardening of Sehons heart, was no more but his promiſing that hee ſhould become hard hearted, and that he letted not the hardneſſe and ſtubbornneſſe of his hart, that is to ſay, he did let Sehon alone when he ſhewed himſelfe ſtubborn. Theſe are too feeble ſhiftes. For when as the ſcripture ſaith expreſſely that G O D hardened: it fathereth the verie worke it ſelfe vpon him. Againe, wee ſee how it ſaieth, Thou Lord haſt done it: and that in mo places than onely in this. Thinke wee that the holy Ghoſt wanted wordes wherewith to vtter his meaning, when he ſaide, I will harden Pharaos heart, and beholde, God hath hardened Exod.7.3. him? And againe when he ſaieth in the Pſalme that the Lord turned & conuerted their heartes Pſal.105.25 vnto ſtubbornneſſe, when they roſe vp ſo againſt Iſrael? If men ſhould flee alwayes to this gloſe, God ſaieth that he will harden, that is to ſay, he will not hinder or impeache the hardening: to what purpoſe were that? Wee ſee it is a fond kinde of dealing, and the word *Turne* ſheweth it well. Behold, God turneth the heart. Whereas mens heartes were plyable and diſpoſed to courteſie, God turneth them and maketh them to be inflamed with hatred, ſo as they be the firſt that begin the warre. And what meaneth that? So then vnleſſe wee meane to dally and mocke with the holy ſcripture, we muſt not ſeeke ſuch ſhifts, but rather conſider after what ſort it is that God hardeneth mens heartes: and yet notwithſtanding is not guiltie of the hardneſſe that is in mē, nor can or ought to bee charged with the euill. Wee muſt come to that point. For let vs marke, that although God harden mens heartes, yet men faile not alſo to harden themſelues. And theſe two things may agree very well: that is to wit that a man ſhoulde harden himſelfe in his owne naughtineſſe, and yet not without Gods working in ſuch wiſe as the euill proceedeth not of him, ne ought to bee imputed to him, as I ſaid afore. And to proue that men themſelues ought to beare the blame and condemnation of their hard heartedneſſe, there needeth no long diſcourſe to bee made: for euery man carieth his owne inditement readie framed in himſelfe. As howe? Euen the wickedſt ſort doe giue euidence againſt themſelues: and although all the world would excuſe them, and that both great & ſmall did acquit them: yet haue they a hartbiting within them, which maketh them to perceiue, that whenſoeuer they offend or ſinne, they doe it willingly of their owne accorde, of a certaine lewdneſſe, and with their owne wil. There is not that man which knoweth not this. Euen the greateſt deſpiſers of God that are (ſay I,) euen they that are become as brutiſh as is poſſible to bee, haue the ſaid brondingyron ſearing within them, ſo as they knowe that their ſinnes come of nothing elſe than their owne ſelfemouing, and of their owne curſed and wicked affection. Seeing then that men doe feele themſelues guiltie: there needeth no more diſputing vppon that point.

But now let vs come to the ſecond point: that is to wit, how it is that God hardeneth men, without being partaker of their ſinnes. Let vs marke, that ſometimes the cauſes ſhall be apparant. And whenſoeuer God puniſheth men, wee muſt needes confeſſe that hee doeth it iuſtly: marke that for one poynt. Now one of the meanes which he hath to puniſhe men with all, is that hee blindeth them, that hee hardeneth their hartes, that hee ſendeth them the ſpirit of giddineſſe, that hee deliuereth them vp to Satan. Theſe then are ſignes of Gods wrath and vengeance.

And therefore if there were any cauſe going before: wee muſt glorify him. And why? for hee doeth the office of a iudge: and for ſo doing there is no cauſe to carp and ſnap at him. It is Eſa.19.14. ſayd that God will ſend the ſpirit of drowſineſſe Rom.1.28. vppon men. And why? Becauſe they haue miſuſed his goodneſſe, and the inſtruction that he gaue them. When wee ſee that this cauſe went afore: that is to wit, that men did wilfully ſhut their eyes, that they would not heare, and that they would not receiue any inſtruction, but rather labored to aboliſh Gods truth vtterly: is it not reaſon that they ſhould bee giuen vp to the ſpirit of giddineſſe? Nay moreouer, they will needes be wittie to mocke God: and we ſee a nomber of theſe ſkoffers, which are alwayes frumping, and to their ſeeming, God is but a babe. By reaſon hereof hee ſhaketh them vtterly of, in ſuch wiſe as they become brute beaſtes. Now then, when that cauſe goeth afore: wee ſee that God executeth his Iuſtice and puniſheth men in ſuch ſort, as wee can not but glorifie him. Marke that for one poynt.

True it is that ſometime there ſhall be ſpeci- Rom.1.19. all cauſes: but the ſaying of Saint Paul in the firſt chapter to the Romans extendeth yet further. For there wee ſee that God hath iuſt reaſon to blinde all the world, and that if hee ſhould doe ſo he ſhould doe but the office of a iudge. For why? although the heathen had no doctrine preached vnto them: yet doe the heauens and the earth ſpeake ſufficiently vnto them, inaſmuch as God doth ſhewe himſelfe there. But who are they that honor and ſerue God, for all their inioying of the benefites which he beſtoweth vpon them in this world? All are vnthankefull, all are malicious, wee cobble vp Gods riches here, and in the meane while regard not how much we be beholden to him, at leaſtwiſe to doe him homage for them. And therefore it is reaſon that he ſhould giue vp men into a leude Rom.1.24. 26.28. minde, (as ſayth Sainte Paule) and that hee ſhould deliuer them into wicked luſtes, ſo as they ſhould forget themſelues, and ouerſhoote themſelues, and giue ouer themſelues to all vngratiouſneſſe, and to all maner of ſhamefull and horrible dealings. And why? For they honoured not their creator that made them, & had ſhewed himſelfe ſo bountifull and mercifull to them. And therefore whenſoeuer God hardeneth men, wee muſt thinke he hath iuſt reaſon to doe ſo, becauſe our leawdneſſe and vnthankfulneſſe are to be found euery where.

But yet neuertheleſſe, if there appeare no apparant cauſe, and that when we haue ſought neuer ſo much why God hardeneth men, wee finde no cauſe at all: yet let vs not therefore ceaſe to glorifie him, though wee ſee not the reaſon of his doings. As for example, a man might aſke why Sehon was hardened rather than the Moabites, Edomites, and Ammonites? Ye ſee here foure nations betweene whom there was no oddes, I meane as in reſpect of naughtineſſe. For if wee thinke that the Ammonites and Edomites, were better than the Amorrhits: it is but folly and a deceiuing of our ſelues. Then were they all as infidelles, and coulde haue found in their hartes that Gods people had bin vtterly ſunk. But God boweth the heartes of the Ammonites and ſuch others, to the end that they ſhould not enter into warre. Hee meekeneth and ſuppleth them, as if a wilde beaſte were tamed: and in the meane while he hardeneth Sehons hart, pricking him and inflaming him foreward, to the ende he ſhould come to giue battell. Whence commeth ſuch diuerſitie? Wee cannot alleadge any reaſon, our wit is too rawe and weake thereto. And againe, God concealeth his purpoſe from vs in that behalfe. What ſhall wee doe then? although wee be at our wits end in this caſe: let vs learne to doe God ſo much honor, as to acknowledge that hee is iuſt and vpright in all his doinges. And although the thing be ſtraunge to our vnderſtanding, and it ſeeme to vs that wee might ſpeake againſt it: yet notwithſtanding let vs forbeare to reply, and let vs humble our ſelues vnder the maieſtie of our God. For truely the thing wherein he wil try mens humilitie, is that wee ſhould glorifie him in al his works, yea euen though they agree not nę match not with our natural reaſō. There Rom.1.5.16 26. is not a truer obedience of faith than that. And if they which babble ſo much nowadayes againſt Gods prouidence, had learned but this one principle of honoring GOD by confeſſing that hee is righteous, and meaſured not his Iuſtice or righteouſneſſe by their owne brayne: there would be no more difficultie. But what? There are a ſorte of proud beggers, which ſet themſelues againſt GOD, and ſwelle at him lyke Toades. Inſomuch that if they haue once taken a toy in their head, although GOD haue ſpoken the flat contrary: they paſſe not for that, neither will they ſurceaſe their rage for it. But as for our part, to the intent wee may be Gods true diſciples, let vs bridle our wittes and hold them as priſoners and captiues vnder the doctrine of the holy ſcripture: which is, that God holdeth mens hartes in his hand, and turneth them to gentleneſſe when hee liſteth, as we ſee he did in Egypt. Behold, the Egyptians Exod.11.3. &12.36. were ful of ſpite and crueltie, ſo as they ment nothing elſe but to haue vtterly deſtroyed the people of Iſrael. But yet in one minute of an houre, and euen in the turning of a hand, God wrought in ſuch wiſe that they were chaunged. They yeelded vp all their veſſell of golde and ſiluer at the cōmaundemēt of yͤ people. To be ſhort they did more for the children of Iſrael, than the fathers would haue done for their owne children. And whereof came this? Euen of Gods changing of their hartes when hee thought good. Alſo on the contrary part, God holdeth mens hartes in his hand, to harden them as he liſteth. And if this ſeeme ſtraunge vnto vs: let vs acknowledge the weakeneſſe of our vnderſtanding, and let vs alwayes firſt and formoſt confeſſe God to bee righteous, and therewithall reuerence his high and deepe ſecretes, ſith wee cannot atteine vnto them. Thus yee ſee what we haue to remember in the firſt place.

Alſo wee haue to note the ende for which this was done. *God* (ſayth Moſes) *was determined to deſtroy Sehon*: GOD had already aſſigned him his iudgement: that was the cauſe why hee hardened him. It is not in this text onely, that the holy Ghoſt ſpeaketh ſo. But when God ſendeth his Prophet Eſay, and telleth him that the people ſhalbe hardened and blinded, yea euen the more after their hearing of all the matters and warninges that ſhould be giuen them: he addeth I will haue this people blinded, to the ende they conuert not and I ſhould heale them. As if he ſhould ſay, this people is not worthie to bee pitied at my hand, or to haue any mercy ſhewed them: and therefore they muſt dwell ſtill in their deſtruction. And that they may doe ſo, I will harden their hartes, ſtop their eares, and blinde their eyes, ſo as they ſhall be paſt all amendement. Let vs vnderſtand, that in ſo doing God hath alwayes iuſt reaſon: but yet is it not to be ſaid, that therefore it is lawfull for vs alwayes to know it. If the reaſon be apparant to vs: it is well, and let vs wey it throughly, acknowledging (as I tolde you before) that God executeth his iuſt vengeance vppon the ſinners that haue offended him too much, and abuſed his patience and goodneſſe, But howſoeuer the caſe ſtand, if wee ſee no reaſon at all, let his onely will and ordinance ſuffice vs, and let it content vs that he knoweth why hee dealeth ſo, though it be not his will to reueile it vnto vs, at leaſt- 1.Cor.3.9. wiſe till the day wherein the thinges that are now hidden from vs, ſhal be diſcouered vnto vs. For (as ſayth Saint Paul) as now wee ſee but in part and darkely. And if wee knewe that: namely that wee be here as in a darke priſon, ſo long as we be cloſed in with our mortall fleſhe: and againe that wee be earthly and muſt be faine to bee renewed ere wee can comprehend Gods ſecretes perfectly: it were enough to allaye the cackeling of ſuch as nowadayes blaſpheme the doctrine of election, ſo as they ſhould humble themſelues before God, to imbrace with all reuerence whatſoeuer is conteined in the holy ſcripture. But doe what we can, yet muſt wee paſſe that way. And therefore when wee heare that Gods will was to deſtroy Sehon, and ẏ therefore he hardened him: let vs aſſure our ſelues, that when it pleaſeth God to drawe men to ſaluation, he turneth their hartes to make thē repent them of their ſinnes, that they may bee ſory for them and ſeeke to obey him. After that maner doth God alter the hartes of ſuch as were malicious and froward, and reformeth them to his obedience, yea euen when he intendeth to ſaue them. Lykewiſe on the contrary part, when he hath vtterly appoynted them to deſtruction: he hardeneth them, ſo as there is no meane for them to admit any amendment, or to come neere it, but they repine againſt him and his doctrine, whereof they make as it were a deadly poyſon. Lo after what ſorte God worketh. True it is that mans naturall reaſon can neuer well brooke his doctrine: but wee muſt ſubmit our ſelues with ſuch humiltie in this behalfe, as wee 1.Sam.2.25. gaineſay not the thinges which the holy ſcripture teacheth. Againe, whereas it is ſayd, that the children of Hely hauing bin warned, receiued not correction at their fathers hand: it followeth immediately, becauſe the Lord was purpoſed to ſlea them. By the ſetting downe hereof, wee ſee that God gaue them not the grace to conuert, becauſe he left them in the deſtruction, wherein they were by nature: And that he ſo purpoſed, it was through his rightfull iuſtice. Here is no talke of I wote not what permiſſion or ſufferance, ſo as God ſhould play the blinkard, or ſhut his eyes as theſe fantaſticall fellowes imagine, which haue as much experience in the holy ſcripture as dogges: but it is ſayd, that Gods will was to haue it ſo. Wherefore let vs learne, that when God hardeneth men, it is a ſigne that hee hath deliuered them to Satan, as paſt recouery. True it is that on the one part God ſerueth his turne by Satan and by wicked men, to deceiue the vnbeleeuers, ac- 1.Kin,22.26 cording as wee ſee that when it was ſayd, who will be my meſſenger to deceiue Achab? the diuill offereth himſelfe, and God ſendeth him. Go (ſayth God) and ouerrule thou all his falſe prophets, and let them bee all there to blinde this wretch that hath bin ſo rebellious againſt me. We ſee how God ſerueth his turne by Satan, & that all falſe prophets are ſent by him. But yet ſhould not this preuaile: for if men were well diſpoſed, Satan ſhould win nothing by his illuſions, and al his wiles ſhould be withſtood: But 2.Theſſ.2.11 it is ſayd that God giueth effectuall or workefull error: it is euen Saint Paules owne maner of ſpeach.

Now whereas he termeth it effectuall error, it is as much to ſay as men ſhall be ſo ſotted, that they ſhall not be able to diſcerne any more, nor to perceiue the deceites, but ſhall become ſo brutiſh, as they ſhall fling and caſt themſelues headlong into deſtruction, and not iudge of any thing. It is God that blindeth them ſo, ſayth Saint Paul. And why? Becauſe he is minded to ouerthrowe them. Now I haue tolde you already, that ſometimes the cauſe ſhall not be apparant as it is in that place of Saint Paul, who auoucheth it concerning ſuch as hauing heard the Goſpell, receiued it not, ne became the better for it, but reiected it, as wee ſee theſe wretches doe nowadayes, which trample the doctrine of ſaluation vnder their feete, through their vngodlyneſſe. And Saint Paul ſayth it is good reaſon that God ſhould ſo blinde them, as darkeneſſe might reigne ouer them, foraſmuch as they liſted not to receiue the light. But ſometimes the cauſe ſhall be incomprehenſible: wee ſhall not perceiue why God worketh ſo; [wee ſhall not diſcerne] why hee will haue one to peariſh rather than another. [In that caſe] let vs content our ſelues with his only goodnes, and confeſſe that he is righteous howſoeuer the worlde goe. Beſides this, let vs learne to call vpon God, that it may pleaſe him to turne our hartes to good, ſo as when hee ſendeth vs the meſſage of peace, and offereth vs his fatherly goodneſſe, wee may not onely heare it as the voyce of a man: but alſo be touched with it by him in our hartes. And in ſo dooing, let vs not doubt of his mercie, for hee witneſſeth thereby that he hath pitie vppon vs, and prepareth vs, and chaungeth our hartes, to bowe them to his obedience. Thus yee ſee what wee haue to remember as in reſpect of this ſentence.

1.Pet.1,2.

Now Moſes ſayth, *that Sehon came foorth to battell, & was ouercome, both he and all his people, becauſe God had deliuered him to the children of Iſrael.* Here Moſes ſheweth that the victorie which the people had of Sehon and the Amorrhytes, was of Gods meere grace. And it was meete alſo that the people ſhould bee put in mind thereof, that they might perciue how God had gouerned thẽ. And this rehearſall is made, to keepe the people in awe, and to make them vnderſtand, that if they did not ſerue and honor him all their lyfe long, and teach their children to doe the lyke: it were too wicked an vnthankefulneſſe. And here wee haue two poyntes to marke. The one is generall, that wee muſt learne to yeelde God the honor of all the victories that hee giueth vs againſt our enemies. I meane not onely of Princes when they haue made warres, or woonne a battell in the field: but [euen of our ſelues alſo] when wee haue bin aſſayled by ſome peculiar perſon, and be eſcaped from his handes. When a man hath done vs any wrong, or put vs to ſome trouble, and wee bee deliuered from it: Let vs aſſure our ſelues it is God that hath giuen vs that vpper hand, to the end we ſhould alwayes haue our mouthes open to yeelde him thankes for it: and that we ſhould not onely doe it with the mouth: but alſo and ſpecially ſhewe forth by our whole lyfe, how much wee bee bound vnto him. Yee ſee then that the thing which wee haue to marke, is that whenſoeuer and how oft ſoeuer we ſcape from the malice of our enemies, God hath reached out his hand to ſuccour vs, and by that meanes hath bound vs to him, to the intent wee ſhoulde haue the more courage to ſerue him and honor him.

The ſecond poynt is, that looke what Moſes ſpake to the people of Iſrael, the ſame doth hee ſay at this day vnto vs. For wee haue neede to be put in minde of Gods grace and benefites, that wee may bee the more moued to magnify his name and to giue our ſelues wholy vnto him, ſo as wee may neuer forget his benefites, to runne into any diſorder. For wee ſee howe men doe eaſily ſotte themſelues, ſpecially when GOD dealeth fauourably with them. Becauſe our God dealeth gently with vs: wee thinke we may conſpire to forſake him and forget him. And truely this prouerb which is common among men, namely that wee cannot away with our owne eaſe, is put too much in practiſe. And therefore it is for our welfare to be put in minde of Gods benefites, and to haue the remembraunce of them refreſhed. And why? To the intent wee may be helde in awe of him, and ſerue him, & take courage to keepe our ſelues altogether vnder his ſubiectiõ, aſſuring our ſelues that that is our ſoueraigne bliſſe, and that foraſmuch as hee neuer forſaketh his faithful ones, and thoſe that leane vnto him, wee ſuffer him to be our protector, and play not the looſe colts, ſo as wee ſhould be forſaken of him at our neede. Yee ſee then that this declaration is directed to vs nowadayes.

As touching that it is ſayd, *That GOD had deliuered Sehon before them:* it ſerueth to ſhewe the better, that inaſmuch as they had an eaſie victorie, GOD gaue the greater brightneſſe to his grace, as wee haue ſeene alreadye heretofore. I note this briefly, to the intent that this ſtreine may bee layd to the other, which wee haue ſeene and expounded alreadie.

Had the people of Iſraell had much a doe to ouercome their enemies: they might haue imputed it to their owne force. O wee haue fought well, [might they haue ſayd.] O there was great prowes in vs: for our enemies were very valiant.

But when as their enemies were driuen lyke chaffe with the winde, when they that we earſt both ſtrong and ſtout were diſmayed, ſo as they had no more hart than women, but ſcattered away at the firſt ſhocke, and became ſo cowardly, as they might ſmite vppon them at their pleaſure, ſo as the people were euen weary of ſleaing them that were lyke enough to haue eaten them vp: What is to be ſayd of it, but that God deliuered the enemies of his people, that is to ſay, that hee brought them thither as it were of purpoſe to take vengeance on them? Yee ſee then that the thing which is imported by this maner of Moſeſes ſpeach, is the amplifying of Gods grace, to the ende that it might bee the better knowen of the children of Iſrael.

And whereas it is ſayd, *that all were put to the ſworde, euen little children and all:* It might at the firſt bluſhe ſeeme a poynt of great crueltie, that the children of Iſrael ſpared not euen the little babes. And what an outrage was that? For what though the king and the men had bin ſo froward as to deny them paſſage? Ought the women therefore to haue borne the ſmart of it, and their little babes too? We ſee and are warned hereby, that wee muſt not deeme of Gods iudgements after our owne fancie. For if wee will needes runne a head when God telleth vs that hee hath diſpoſed a matter, and that wee will needes ſhoote foorth our bolte at euery turne: wee take vppon vs the office of GOD. For it is his right to iudge of vs, and not ours to iudge of him. And what will come of it, but that wee ſhall be confounded in our raſhneſſe and malapertneſſe? What a trayterouſneſſe is it, that mortall creatures ſhoulde clime ſo high, as to giue iudgement vpon their maker? Therefore when there is any ſpeaking of Gods iudgementes, let vs learne to reſtreine our wittes from ſuch raſhneſſe as to ſay what we thinke good: and let vs conſider that all that euer commeth from God, is good and rightfull, though it ſeeme contrariwiſe to vs. And in very deede, ſith wee ſee not a whit into the bottomleſſe deepes of Gods iudgementes: let vs aſſure our ſelues that wee doe but bewray the informitie that is in vs, and that in the meane ſeaſon God hath wherewith to maintaine his iuſtice, although he ſhewe it not to vs. And were the Gen,5.16. thing wel weied ỹ is written in Geneſis: we ſhould know that it was not without cauſe ỹ our Lord commanded the children of the Amorrhytes to be rooted out of the world. For euen in the time of Abraham, the Chananites were come to the full meaſure of all iniquitie, as it ſeemed: and we ſee examples enow thereof, in that they troubled Abraham ſo much. And yet for al that, God ſayd that their iniquitie was not yet full ripe. Albeit that men had condemned them: yet is God patient, and taryeth, and beareth with them, yea euen foure hundred yeeres after. Yee ſee then that God did beare with the wickedneſſe of that people foure hundred yeeres: and ſhall wee ſay now at the foure hundred yeeres ende, how happeneth it that God dealeth ſo roughly with them? Wee would faine be pleading againſt God. If he vſe patience, wee ſay he is too ſlowe: and if he vſe extreme vengeance, wee blame him of crueltie. But contrarywiſe, if God execute not his iudgementes out of hand: let vs aſſure our ſelues ỹ therein he ſheweth his goodneſſe. And on the other ſide if he extend ſuch rigor as maketh vs abaſhed and afraide: let vs aſſure our ſelues that he doth it iuſtly and vpon good cauſe, although the ſame cauſe be not euer apparant vnto vs. So then, firſt of al, wheras here is mentiō made of ſuch a ſlaughter of the Amorrhites as extended euen to the infantes: let vs aſſure our ſelues that ſeeing GOD telleth vs that hee hadde commaunded the people of Iſraell to doe it: wee muſt imbrace it without gainſaying, & it is not for vs to checke againſt it, vnleſſe we will be condemned for our diueliſh pride, in preſuming to pleade againſt our iudge, yea euen againſt our ſoueraine iudge. Finally wee muſt not iuſtifie men when they aduenture any thing vpon their owne heades and for their owne pleaſure: but wee muſt put a difference betweene the things that concerne God, and the thinges that concerne men. For in the end of the chapter, Moſes ſaith expreſſely, *According as the Lord our God had commanded.* Thē if any thing come in our way, let vs inquire whether it concerne God or no. If wee perceiue that it concerne God: then muſt wee ſubmit our ſelues thereto, ſaying, Lord thou art righteous, let thine onely will ſuffice vs, without looking to haue any other reaſon: let it not be lawfull for vs to goe beyond that rule, foraſmuch as it is the rule of all right. Now then if we haue the diſcretion and skill, to diſcerne betweene God and men: then ſhall we not fayle to honor and glorify God, and to yeeld him the prayſe of Iuſtice and vprightneſſe: [and ſo ſhall wee lykewiſe] if wee indeuour to trye mens doings by Gods word as we be taught it. For good reaſon it is that the ſame ſhould ouerrule vs, yea and that all our deedes and thoughtes ſhoulde be ſo meaſured, compaſſed, and directed thereby, as wee may conſider thus with our ſelues: Hath God forbidden it? then is it a wicked thing, and therefore I muſt forbeare it: but doth God allow it or permit it? then let vs confeſſe that it is well done, without inquiring any further. Thus yee ſee what wee haue to remember for the concluſion of this text.

Now let vs kneele downe in the preſence of our good God with acknowledgement of our ſinnes, praying him to make vs feele them better, and to teach vs to condemne our ſelues vtterly, (as in very deede there is nothing in vs but curſedneſſe, and none but onely God deſerueth to haue al praiſe of righteouſnes & vprightnes yeelded vnto him) and ỹ euery of vs may not only confeſſe it with our mouths, but alſo ſigh for our ſinnes through true repentance, ſo as wee may returne againe vnto him, praying him to chaunge our wicked hartes in ſuch wiſe, that whereas now they be plunged in al naughtines, and ſtonehard: hee will vouchſafe to bring them to his obedience, and to write and ingroſe his lawes and commaundementes in them, ſo as we may ſeeke nothing but to pleaſe him, and to frame our ſelues wholy to his good will. That it may pleaſe him to graunt this grace, not onely to vs, but alſo to all people, &c.

On Tewſday the vij. of May. 1555.

The fifteenth Sermon which is the firſt vpon the third Chapter.

THen turned wee and went vp by the way of Baſan. And Og the king of Baſan came out againſt vs, he and all his people, to fight in Edray.

2 And the Lord ſayd vnto me, feare him not, for I haue deliuered him into thy hand, with all his people and land, and thou ſhalt doe to him as thou diddeſt to Sehon king of the Amorrhites, that dwelt in Heſebon.

3 So the Lord our God deliuered Og King of Baſan with all his people into our handes, and we ſmote him, ſo as nothing remained of him.

4 The ſame ſeaſon we tooke all his Cities, and there was not anie Citie which we tooke not: that is to wit, threeſcore Cities, all the Countrie of Argob, which is of the kingdome of Og in Baſan.

5 All his Cities were fenced with high walles, Gates, and Barres, beſides the vnwalled townes which were manie in number.

6 And wee deſtroyed them as wee had done to Sehon Bing of Heſebon, in rooting out all his Cities, men, women, and children.

7 But all the cattle and the ſpoile of the Cities, wee made a pray for our ſelues.

8 So at that time we tooke the land out of the hand of the two kinges of the Amorrhytes, which were beyond Iordan, from the riuer Arnon vnto Mount Hermon:

9 (Which Hermon the Sidonians call Sarion, and the Amorrhytes name it Sanir:)

10 [Euen] al the cities of the plaine, and all Galaad, and all Baſan, vnto Selcha and Edray: which are cities of the kingdome of Og in the countrie of Baſan.

11 For onely Og king of Baſan remained of the remnant of the Giants, behold, his bed which is a bed of yron, is it not at Rabbath among the children of Ammon? The length thereof is nine cubites, and the bredth foure cubites after the cubites of a man.

If we ſhould take yͤ thinges that I haue read, but as a ſimple reporte of a ſtorie: there would be no profite at all in the reading. But if we be able to apply it to ſuch vſe, as God meant by his holy ſpirit: it is a very profitable leſſon for vs. It is declared here, that the people of Iſraell ſmote Og king of Baſan, as they had done Sehon king of the Amorrhytes. That (as ye ſee) is the ſtory. But wee muſt conſider to what purpoſe G O D meant to haue it regiſtred in his lawe, and publiſhed by Moſes, and brought againe to the peoples remembraunce. It was to the ende that the people ſhould knowe, that they had bin guyded by the hand of God, and that when they were deliuered out of the land of Egypt, they wiſt not where to haue become, vnleſſe G O D had continued his fauour towardes them, to put them in poſſeſſiõ of the land which he had promiſed them for their inheritance. But now wee muſt marke alſo, that the people were not yet entered into the land of Chanaan: there was yet great hardneſſe in the matter. And if they had not truſted in God, they might haue bin ſo ſcared, as would haue cauſed them to turne head, and to murmur againſt God, and to forſake the land that had bin promiſed them. Therfore it was for them to be confirmed. And Moſes hath reſpect thereunto, in that he ſetteth before their eyes, the power where through they withſtoode their enemies: which was Gods aſſiſting of them, and his ouer throwing of their enemies. And now that I haue noted that it was Gods wil to haue this ſtory publiſhed and confirmed, to the end aforeſayd: it behoueth vs lykewiſe to come to our ſelues, and to apply it alſo to our owne vſe. For all was written for our learning. 1.Cor.10,11.

Then let vs marke, that whereas Moſes hath ſayd here, *that Og king of Baſan was ouerthrowen:* the people ſhould haue thought thus: Behold, God hath deliuered vs from a ſecond and a third death. For it had bin to no purpoſe to haue ſcaped out of Egypt, to haue bin ſet free from the bondage of Pharao, and to haue paſſed through the red Sea: all this had bin nothing, if our God had not ſtrengthened vs, ſeeing wee haue bin aſſayled by ſo mightie and ſtrong enemies, whome we had not bin able to reſiſt. And in good ſooth, wee ought to call to minde what hath bin declared before, that is to wit, that the people ran away as ſoone as their enemies came againſt them. And why was that? For it was not for them to looke for any ſuccour at Gods hand, becauſe they ran fourth at aduẽture with ſuch fooliſh raſhneſſe. God had ſayd vnto them, yee ſhall not goe to battell: and yet would they needes hazarde the incounter.

Therefore it was meete that they ſhould bee made to knowe their follie to their coſt. Yet notwithſtanding, the people of Iſrael knewe wel enough by experience, that they were not of ſufficient power to withſtand their enemies. But now, for aſmuch as nothing was able to ſtand before them: therby it appeared that their obteining of the victorie was not by their owne ſtrength, neither coulde they boaſt thereof: but it was God that had wrought in that behalfe. And it behoueth vs alwayes to make the ſame compariſon, if wee wil well perceiue Gods grace and fauor towardes vs. For what is the cauſe that wee take our ſelues to be ſtrong and ſtoute, and yeede not God his due prayſe? It is for that wee bee bleared: when hee hath reached vs his hand, and when hee hath ſuccoured vs at ſome pinch, wee conſider not from whence that commeth. What remedie then? Let vs bethinke our ſelues thus: Go to, haue I not found my ſelfe ſore coinbred in very ſmall thinges? Haue not I bin daunted and ſtriken out of hart? And what was the cauſe thereof, but that God made mee to feele mine owne frailtie? Surely I ſhoulde bee neuer a whit valeanter now, than I was then: were it not that God gaue me his helpe. So then it is ſome where elſe than of my ſelfe, that I haue my ſtrength: and therefore it is not for mee to aduaunce my ſelfe through ouerweening: for God hath giuen mee a ſure knowledge of my feebleneſſe. Now then, I muſt thinke continually how to humble my ſelfe: and when he hath vpheld me by his ſtrong hand, I muſt acknowledge that that benefite came of him, and that hee will be glorified for the ſame. Yee ſee then that the intent why Moſes ſpake ſo to the people of Iſrael, was that they ſhould acknowledge that their ouercomming of their enemies, was not by the power and ſtrength of man, but by Gods fighting for them.

Neuertheleſſe, this ought to haue moued them, not onely to honor God, but alſo to truſt in him, as I haue touched before. For it was not enough for the people of Iſrael to haue conquered the land of Baſan: for they had not yet paſſed the riuer of Iordan where their inheritance lay. Therfore it ſtood them on hãd to be armed with newe truſt, and to proceede with full purpoſe to incounter their enemies againe. And whence might they haue ſuch hardineſſe? If they had taken it in themſelues, it had bin but a rage that God woulde haue condemned: but they muſt haue imboldened themſelues with truſt that God would not faile them. And how might they be ſure of that? By their owne experience which they had had therof. Why was it that God ouerthrewe as well Sehon, as Og king of Baſan? Becauſe he was the leader of his people, and had taken them into his charge and protection. And that was not to leade them onely to the banke of Iordan: but to performe the promiſe that he had made to Abraham. And therefore the people might conclude, that the victories which they had obtained already, were but an enterance to a further paſſage, whereby they might fully perſwade and aſſure themſelues, that God would continue with them euen vnto the ende. Euen ſo muſt we doe. If we perceiue any change in our ſelues, wee muſt acknowledge it to be the hand of God.

For ſometimes, yea oftentimes the faithfull ſhall finde themſelues aſtoniſhed and abaſhed vppon the ſudden, yea euen though there bee no great cauſe why. But thereby God warneth them of their infirmitie, to the ende they ſhould walke in awe and feare of him, calling vpon him, and vtterly diſtruſting their owne ſtrength. Agayne, when they ſee themſelues ſtrengthened they knowe that that commeth not of themſelues, neither are they ſo fooliſh as to be proud of it: but they magnify Gods goodneſſe and grace towardes them, and take courage vppon the ſame.

True it is [ſay they] that wee be wretched and ſilie creatures: but yet hath our God helped vs, to the end that wee ſhould truſt in him. Therefore let vs on forewarde as he commandeth, and let vs not doubt but hee will be the ſame man to morrowe that he is to day. The remembrance of his promiſe laſteth longer with him than for a day: and ſeeing he hath auowed himſelfe to be our father, it is not to ſhake vs off as the baſtes doe that forget their young ones, or as the fowles doe which forſake their byrdes whom they bred: but our God is a father to vs both in lyfe and death. Now then, let vs alwayes flee vnder the ſhadowe of his protection, and aſſure our ſelues that his power ſhall neuer bee diminiſhed towardes vs.

But wee haue alſo to marke how Moſes ſaith, *That Og king of Baſan came flinging foorth to giue battell.* wherein hee ſheweth that the people [of Iſraels] warre was iuſt and lawfull. For although they had expreſſe commaundement from God, to arme themſelues and to put Og king of Baſan to the ſword, not at their owne pleaſure, but vppon the authoritie of him that hath all power: yet was it Gods wil to miniſter a iuſt cauſe thereof vnto them, that they might be the more aſſured in their conſcience. And thereby wee bee warned (as I haue ſayd heretofore) not to attempt any thing againſt right and reaſon. If we will haue GOD to bleſſe our doinges, and to make them proſper, and bring them to good ende: let vs beware that wee ſtirre not ſo much as one finger vnaduiſedly, or contrarily to that which is ſhewed vs by Gods worde. For what is it that can make vs rightly hardye in all things? The hauing of a good warrant in our owne conſciences, that wee haue walked according to Gods commaundement, and gone no further than equitie and right will beare. If wee be ſure of that: then may wee looke for helpe from aboue, and wee ſhall not bee diſapointed. But if wee neglect the difference betweene good and bad, and runne to thinges vppon a head: it is good reaſon that God ſhoulde beguile vs, and that wee ſhould be confounded in our doinges. Thus yee ſee what wee haue to marke here, when Og king of Baſan came foorth as an enemie to prouoke the children of Iſraell, in ſuch wiſe as their warre became iuſt. For no doubt but this enemy was offered him of Gods hand, as wee ſawe that Sehon was yeſterday, whome God hardened becauſe hee was minded to ouerthrowe him. After the ſame maner happened it to Og the king of Baſan.

Now then, let vs learne to beware that wee prouoke not one man nor other, by giuing them cauſe to vexe and moleſt vs: but if wee haue any enemies, let them beginne the warre, and let vs on our ſide keepe the peace. Let that be a point for vs to beare away. For if wee begin the fray, by doing them wrong or violence: can wee looke for helpe at Gods hand? Can wee hope that he will fauor vs, when we be ſo out of order? No: and therefore let vs not goe about to purchaſe vs enemies: (the diuil wil raiſe vs vp but too many of thẽ: and God alſo on his ſide may chance to exerciſe vs, and worke in ſuch wiſe as wee ſhall haue enemies enowe, that will ſeeke all the Rom.12.18. meanes they can to perſecute vs:) but let vs for our part ſeeke to haue peace, to the vttermoſt of our power.

And beſides this, let vs alwayes hope that GOD will aſſiſt vs, if the quarell that wee maintaine bee good and rightfull, and ſuch as hee alloweth. Theſe are the thinges which wee haue to remember in that it is ſaid that Og aduaunced himſelfe, and came forth to aſſaile the people of Iſraell, without demaunding any thing at their hand, euen to ſtop them of the paſſage that God had giuen them.

Furthermore let vs beare in mind that which Ephe.6.12. hath bin ſayd afore, namely, that the chiefe warre which wee haue, is againſt our ſpirituall enemies. Therefore whenſoeuer Satan aſſaileth vs, and practiſeth all the miſchiefe that hee can againſt vs: let vs vnderſtand that GOD is minded to exerciſe vs: but yet ſhall wee haue wherewith to beare out the brunt, foraſmuch as wee ſhall be ſtrengthened by the power of the holy Ghoſt. And for the bringing thereof to paſſe, let vs marke howe it is added here, that God ſayth vnto Moſes, *Be not afraide: for I haue deliuered Og king of Baſan into thy hand: therefore ſhalt thou doe to him as thou diddeſt vnto Sehon the king of the Amorrhytes.* Yee ſee then that here is a promiſe giuen, to the ende that the people ſhould reſt vppon it, and not doubt any more of the victorie, inaſmuch as God telleth them that hee will fight for them. And it behoueth vs to marke well this text, becauſe that if wee be deſtitute of Gods promiſes: though wee proteſt neuer ſo much that wee truſt in him: it is but a vaine and fond imagination. And it is not in men to promiſe themſelues any thing. For by what right or title may wee holde God bounde vnto vs, ſo as wee may ſay, God ſhall help vs, we ſhall not faile to be ſuccoured at his hand? It would be to fõd an ouerſtatelynes, if men ſhould forge hopes of their owne head after that ſort. Nay wee muſt waite quietly that God ſhewe vs his wil, and when we once haue the word of his mouth, then may wee ſtand vppon it. Let vs marke then that there is an inſeparable bond, betweene Gods promiſes and the truſt that wee Rom.10.17. haue in him. The world doth in deede vſe the wordes *Faith*, and *Truſt*: Howbeit vnrightly. For men knowe the cõtrarie to that which they proteſt, becauſe euery man conceiueth what hee liſteth in his fancie, and conſidereth not what is the will of God. Therefore it behoueth vs to come backe to the order that Moſes ſheweth vs here: which is, that wee attempt not any thing before God haue firſt ſpoken it. For elſe, our meaning is but to transfigure him after our own pleaſure, and looke as euerie man inuenteth follies in his owne heade: ſo woulde hee by and by haue God at his commaundement, to make him performe the things that hee himſelfe hath conceiued. And what a dealing were that? What maieſtie more woulde there bee in our God? Againe wee ſee our luſtes are ſo outrageous, as is horrible: and yet ſhoulde God bee faine to daunce attendance at all houres, to doe the thinges that our imagination hath dreamed or doted vpon? Therefore let vs haue the modeſtie to looke vnto that which God promiſeth. And when wee once haue that promiſe, we muſt no more reply againſt it, but bee contented with his ſpeaking of the worde, and goe on boldly. *Be not afraid* (ſayth the Lord) *I will deliuer him into thy hand.* And when our Lorde had ſayd, *I will deliuer him into thy hand*: he added for a concluſion, *therefore be not afrayd.* But how muſt wee apply this doctrine to our inſtruction?

Firſt and formoſt let vs looke that God promiſe. If wee were combred with any perplexitie or anguiſhe, and knewe not whether God would leaue vs in the mire or no: wee might well bee afraide: and if wee would not be afraide, wee ſhould be too blockiſh. But when God ſayth vnto vs, my children, it is true that you be weake, you can doe nothing of your ſelues, and you haue too ſtrong an enemie, by meanes whereof yee coulde by no meanes withſtand him if yee were not helped and vpheld by me: but I tell you, your temptations ſhall not bee greater than you ſhall be able to beare, I knowe what your power is, I will giue you ſtrength and 1.Co.10.13 courage at your need, I wil mitigate ỹ tẽptations ỹ might ouerthrow you, and although the world and the deuill be ſtarke mad againſt you, yet wil I bridle them, ſo that although you be roughly aſſayled, yet ſhall you ouercome them: truſt thereunto. Hath God ſpoken as this man telleth vs? let vs neuer doubt of it. Not that wee can be vtterly exempted from all feare, ſo long as we liue in this world: Inſomuch that although wee haue Gods promiſes, whereby we be aſſured that hee will neuer leaue vs, but that wee ſhall euer feele his helpe at our neede: yet muſt wee not thinke that wee ſhall be vtterly voyde of care and doubt, or that wee ſhould not beware of the daungers that inuiron vs round about. No, but yet muſt not this feare ſo ouerawght vs, as wee ſhould not take hart to call vppon God, and to reſt vppon him, and to goe on ſtill foreward. Therefore when as it is ſayd, *I will helpe thee, be not afraide:* our Lord will haue vs to fight in ſuch wiſe againſt all feare, as it may not ſo ouermaſter vs, as to make vs giue ouer, and turne head, and ſtart away, ſo as we ſhould be vtterly diſmayd: but rather ỹ in ſtãding in aw, we ſhould alſo hope & take courage to go forewarde, foraſmuch as we haue God on our ſide. Thus yee ſee what is to bee remembred here.

And let vs chiefly apply this doctrine to our ſpirituall battels which wee haue againſt Satan. For if the children of Iſraell could not vanquiſhe their enemies which were but men: how ſhall wee ouercome the prince of the worlde, and the infinite nomber of diuils, which are as ramping Lyons readye to ſwallowe vs vppe out of hand?

John 14.30 & 1.Pet.5,8

What is our force to beate backe ſuch enemies? Againe on the other ſide, we neede neuer to ſeeke out of our ſelues wherewith to be ouercome. For euery of vs doth nothing elſe but labor to ouerthrowe our ſelues. All the affections and all the thoughtes that wee haue, are enemies to God and to our own ſaluation. Therfore although wee had no enemies to aſſaile vs without vs: yet are wee ouerthrowen already by our ſelues within. Yea verely, but when as our Lord telleth vs that his ſtrength ſhall dwell in vs: that is the thing whereat wee muſt take courage. And it ſhall be no preſumption to proceede after that ſorte, as the Papiſtes [beare men in hand: which] ſay it is a follie for men to aſſure themſelues, and that wee muſt alwayes hang in doubt. By meanes whereof they ſet vp their owne freewil, and al the other dotages inuented by themſelues, which are no better thā illuſions of Satan wherewith he hath bewitched them. And hereuppon they ſay yet ſtill, O, God will helpe vs. Yea but they haue not his promiſes: or at leaſtwiſe they regard them not. And in good faith they be forepoſſeſſed with this diueliſhe imagination, that they are able to doe much, and that they haue ſuch ſtrength in thē, as they may well bee Gods fellowes. And yet for all that, their hoping is but off and on at aladuenture. But in the meane while they accuſe vs of preſumption, when we reſt all onely vpon Gods promiſes, aſſuring our ſelues that we can doe nothing at all, and that there is not one whit of ſtrength in vs. Whereas wee wayte for the thinges which our good God hath promiſed vs of his owne free goodneſſe, euen without preſuming any whit at all of our ſelues, but onely hoping for the performance of that which hee hath ſpoken, accordingly as he hath vouchſafed to binde himſelfe by his promiſes: muſt it not needes be that the diuill hath put out the Papiſtes eyes quite and cleane, when they terme ſuch beliefe preſumptuouſneſſe, whereas it is grounded vpon nothing but Gods promiſes? [yes verily.] But as I ſayd afore, let vs goe on boldely, and not doubt but that God can deliuer our enemies into our handes. Although it ſeeme that they ſhould catch vs in their pawes, and vtterly deſtroy vs: yet hath God deliuered them into our handes before the battell: and with ſuch certeintie doth it become vs to fight alwayes againſt Satan. Truely if wee looke vppon the ſtate of the faithfull: it may well ſeeme that they be left as a pray, and that there is no way for them to ſtand againſt their enemies. But what for that? God hath already determined what he will doe. As for the execution thereof, it doth not appeare at the firſt: but when as the faithfull haue this promiſe giuen vnto them, *I will deliuer thine enemies into thy hand*: they muſt haue an eye to the thing that is yet hidden. And for the ſame purpoſe doth Saint Paul ſay, GOD wil ſhortly put Satan vnder your feete. And for the ſame purpoſe alſo doth he ſay in another place: that Satan hath his power and dominion in the aire. It ſhould ſeeme by this, that Satan is ouer our heads, and that he ſhould ouerwhelme vs. But beholde here on the other ſide, how God auoweth that hee hath put him vnder our feete; and that for all the skirmiſhes which he can make againſt vs, and for all the alarums that he can giue vs, yet ſhall he not get the vpper hand of vs, no nor once prick vs in the heele, but we ſhal tread vpon his head. Loe howe God hath aſſured vs of victorie. What is to bee done then? Let vs looke at Satan and all our ghoſtly enemies, as already vanquiſhed, and aſſure our ſelues aforehand that God will make vs to triumph in the middeſt of our battels, ſo as wee may glory in our God as though our enemies were already diſpatched, and wee rid quite and cleane of them. And why? For the inſight of our faith muſt reſt vppon his promiſe where it is ſayd, *I haue deliuered thine enemies into thy hand.*

Rom.8.7. & Col.1.21.
Rom.16.20.
Ephe.2.2.
Gen.3.15.

Moreouer, whereas Moſes reporteth, that *the people did to Og king of Baſan, as they had done to Sehon king of the Amorrhytes*: it is to ſhewe that the people were not cruel in putting the young infantes to the ſworde, and in leauing neither man nor woman aliue: though a man might imagine them to haue bin cruell at the firſt ſight. And why? Becauſe it was done by Gods commaundement. Now then, let vs come backe againe to that which hath bin touched alreadie: that is to wit, that when we paſſe not the bounds which God hath ſet vs, ne doe any thing vppon our owne heades, but onely obey his will: then although all the world accuſe and condemne vs, yet ſhall wee be quitte in heauen. And that ought to ſuffice vs. Why ſo? For God can well skil to maintain his authoritie againſt the pryde of all men: Though all the world were ſo fonde as to goe to lawe with God, and to finde faulte with his ſayings and doings: Let vs let them all alone. For as I ſayd, it ought to ſuffiſe vs, that God doth iuſtify vs, and if he acquit vs, we may laugh all the fooliſhe verdites of the worlde to skorne. But herewithall let vs beare away this leſſon, that is to wit, that God doe auowe all our doinges. And how ſhall wee be ſure that he will auowe them? [verely] if wee haue not followed our owne fleſhly reaſon, nor taken leaue to doe thinges vppon our owne head: but haue waited for Gods commaundement. Now then, if God haue giuen vs his warrant, and wee haue walked in his obedience: then are wee ſure that all ſhall goe well with vs, though the world finde neuer ſo much fault with vs.

Pſal.51.6.
Rom.8.31.

But wee on our ſide alſo muſt take warning that wee riſe not againſt God, as wee ſee theſe fantaſtical fellowes doe, who will needes bee ſcanning whether a thing be good or no, without inquiring whether it be of God or no: and ſo ſhould God be faine to reſigne his maieſtie. For hee cannot be GOD, if he bee not righteous. And if men might put his righteouſneſſe to triall of inqueſt, ſo as it might bee lawfull for them to giue their verdit vpon it: then if they condemned any of Gods workes, his glorie were like to goe to wrecke, and he ſhoulde bee quite bereft of it. Wee ſee then what a treacherie it is, when men will take ſuch libertie to diſcourſe of good and euill at their owne pleaſure, without aſking counſell at Gods mouth. And on the contrarie part, although thinges ſeeme ſtraunge to our naturall vnderſtanding: yet muſt we ſo diſpoſe our ſelues, that if our Lorde doe once ſay, this is good, it is my pleaſure ſo to haue it: as ſoone as we haue that determinatiō from Gods mouth: we on our part muſt hold our peace, not onely to forbeare all replying or grudging againſt him: but alſo to ſubmit all our owne reaſon thereunto, and to glorifie him with a good will, in this wiſe. True it is Lord, that if I ſhoulde iudge after mine owne fanſie, I might ſpeake frowardly and vntowardly: but I muſt haue mine eye vppon thee: and foraſmuch as I knowe thy will to be ſo, I muſt ſubmit my ſelfe to it, and acknowledge it to bee good and rightfull, yeelding thee this praiſe therewithall, that thou canſt not doe amiſſe. Surely this preſent example ought well to ſuffice vs. For who is he which would not at the firſt ſight condemne the children of Iſrael, for killing the little babes after that ſort? Did they any thing without Gods appointment? No: for Moſes ſaieth the contrarie. Therefore in condemning them, a man ſhould ſet himſelfe againſt God: And ſo fareth it commonly with vs. Wherefore if wee iudge of our neighbours, let vs not doe it vpon our owne braine, but let vs giue that authoritie vnto God, without replying againſt his worde, ſo as if he allow of any thing, wee receiue it immediately: for wee muſt haue this modeſtie of ruling our ſelues in all caſes according to his good will. And therewithall, if God now and then doe thinges which ſeeme ouer rigorous, yea and euen doe touch our ſelues very neere: let vs ſtoope to them. As for example, if wee be afflicted out of meaſure to our own ſeeming: yet muſt we not murmur nor fret at it, For in good ſooth what ſhall wee gaine by it? It will turne to our dubble confuſion. Nay, let vs pray God to frame vs to ſuch obedience, as wee may patiently receiue yͤ afflictions that he ſendeth vs, in ſuch wiſe as the thinges which ſeeme ſtraunge to our owne appetites, affections, and thoughtes, may bee deemed of vs to bee good, iuſt, and rightfull, bicauſe he willeth them. That is the point which wee muſt come vnto. To bee ſhort, let vs learne, not to bee wiſe in our owne conceite, nor to giue head to our affections: for thoſe two things are requiſite, if we intēd to glorifie God in all his doings.

Nowe here is alſo that which Moſes addeth, concerning the Cities and the greatneſſe of them, and concerning the Countrie, and the great ſtrength of Og King of Baſan. *Wee tooke* (ſaieth he) *threeſcore Cities, which were very well fortified*, and furniſhed in ſuch wiſe, as there was no likelyhood that they ſhould haue bene eaſily taken. Moſes addeth theſe circumſtaunces, of purpoſe to magnifie Gods grace the more, that the people might perceiue yͤ their ſtrength came not flying in the aire, but that it was GOD that gaue it them. And that is a point well worthie to bee noted. For if it bee to vaunt of our owne proweſſe, we can ſkill well ynough to gather the thinges that may ſerue for the purpoſe. O (ſay wee,) I had ſuch a thing and ſuch a thing: I haue compaſſed my matters trimly: ſuch a crink was practiſed againſt mee a great way off, and I remedied it with ſuch a ſhift. See my cunning, ſee my policie: there were ſuch matches and ſuch againſt me, but I ſhifted well ynough with them all, ſo as I diſpatched them euerychone, and mine enemies wonne nothing at my hand. To bee ſhort, wee can ſkill to alledge all things that may giue a faire gloſſe and ſhowe to our owne vertues. But if it bee to glorifie God, for the reliefe that wee haue had at his hand: wee runne ouer it as it were vpon hotte coales (as they ſay) wee remember not the diſtreſſe that wee were in, the daunger that wee bee ſcaped out of ſeemeth to bee a thing of nothing. See what our lewdneſſe is. So much the more therefore doeth it ſtand vs on hand, to mark what is told vs here, that is to wit, that in all the benefites which wee haue receiued of God, we muſt conſider in what taking wee had bene, if wee had gone without them: and wee ſhall haue matter good ſtore wherewith to doe that, if we be not wilfully blind as wee are wont to bee. For was not the leaſt daunger that euer we fell into, ynough to abaſh vs? But when a thing toucheth vs any thing neere: ye ſhall ſee vs as ſore diſmaied as may be. In deede if wee bee once out of it, it is nothing with vs: but that is for want of minding it. Yet notwithſtanding if wee ſee but a mote or a flie whiſking by our eyes: by and by wee bee dazeled. But yet for all this, out of howe great things doeth God deliuer vs? He will ſuffer vs to goe downe as it were into our graue, and to be there as it were in a gulfe of death, ſo as which way ſoeuer we looke, we ſhal finde no way to ſcape out at, ſo deepely ſhall wee bee ſunk therein. And to what ende? Euen to the ende that God may make vs perceiue his power the better, when it pleaſeth him to ſuccour vs. So then, wee haue matter ynough and ynough to giue gloſſe vnto Gods grace, if wee bee not minded to ſhut our eyes maliciouſly of ſet purpoſe, or to thruſt the things vnder foote, which are too too manifeſt and apparant. Therefore let vs put this doctrine in vre which is ſhewed vs here by Moſes: that is to wit, that God will giue vs incredible victories, as he doeth alreadie, and that when wee haue them, wee muſt bethinke vs thus: Goe to, came this of our owne policie? came this of our owne ſtrength? No: it is God that hath done it. For when wee haue well examined all that is in vs: wee ſhall finde our ſelues to come ſhorte in all pointes, and that euen from the one ende to the other, our Lorde muſt bee faine to doe all in man.

And looke what Moſes reporteth here concerning the bodily enemies of the children of Iſrael, as in reſpect of the power of this world: that muſt wee apply to the power of Satan, and to all the ſhiftes that he hath againſt vs. If wee haue that diſcretion with vs, then ſhall we haue wherefore to magnifie Gods grace towardes vs, if wee conſider well whence wee bee deliuered, that is to wit, out of the pit of hell. For which of vs was able to breake the barres and bondes of Satan? which of vs was able to aboliſh the ſoueraigntie of death? It ſtoode vs on hand that God ſhould worke there. Nowe it is ſo, that we were Ro.3.9.& 5.12. all ſhut vp in the bondage of ſinne, and conſequently that death reigned ouer vs. Satan had poſſeſſion of vs, ſo as none of vs could ſcape frō him. Wee could ſtirre neither arme nor legge, but it was to thruſt our ſelues ſtill further, and to ſinke our ſelues ſtill deeper. Seeing it is ſo: let vs Eph.2.3. vnderſtand, that when God brought vs out of the curſe, wherein all of vs are by nature: it muſt needes be that his meere grace wrought in that behalfe. And that is moe times than once, as Moſes ſpeaketh here of the threeſcore Cities. Wherefore let vs vnderſtande, that as ſoone as we be come to the end of one battell, ſtrait ways wee muſt enter into another: God helpeth vs to day: and if he hold not on dayly, yea if he make vs not to feele his ayde euerye minute of an houre: what will become of vs? If wee had had a thouſād victories, yet were one aſſault ynough to ouerthrowe vs. Therefore let vs learne to magnifie Gods grace towardes vs.

And herewithall let vs marke alſo, that Moſes ſpeaking here of the ſtrength of Og King of Baſan, ſaieth: *Behold, he had a bed like a Giant*: and againe he ſaith *that he came of the race of the Rephaims.* Which ſerueth to ſhewe more and more, that the people were as a ſheepe in a Wolues mouth. And if it were ſo with them at that time: what is it nowe with vs? For wee haue enemies which are much ſtronger and ſtouter in compariſon of vs, than had the Iſraeltes when they were to enter into the land of Chanaan. It ſhould ſeeme that they might eate vs vp at one bit (as they ſay.) Wee ſee what treaſons and conſpiracies they make: wee ſee that the more gratious and fauourable God ſheweth himſelfe to vs, the more doe wee ſeeme to take pleaſure in grieuing him, and in reiecting of his grace. And therefore let vs looke to it, that wee minde well this doctrine, if wee will haue God to giue vs victorie againſt Satan and all his aſſaultes. And beſides this, when wee haue concluded that God will ſtrengthen vs againſt all temptations: let vs not doubt but that he hath a care of vs alſo for this tranſitorie life. And if men goe about to roote 1.Tim.4.8. vs out, let vs put our ſelues to his protection, and let vs looke to bee preſerued and defended by him: and no doubt but that if hee reached out his mightie arme in olde time, to ſuccour the people of Iſrael: his power is not abated, nor his goodneſſe diminiſhed, to doe the like for vs at this day. Thus ye ſee howe wee ſhall bee ſafe both in life and death, and as well in body as in ſoule, if our Lorde bee readie to ſuccour vs. But without that, wee muſt needes bee worſe than forlorne. Wherefore let vs looke that wee profite our ſelues by this doctrine, by putting away all pride and fooliſh preſumption, ſo as wee reſt wholy vppon God, and learne to exerciſe our ſelues in his promiſes earely and late, and to renew the rememberance of them, to the end that by that meane wee may bee armed againſt all temptations. Let not the diuell finde vs vnprouided when he commeth to aſſaile vs: but let vs haue wherewith to reſiſt him. And that we may ſo, let vs take to vs Gods worde, for when we bee Eph.6.11.17 & 1.Pet.5.9. armed with that, wee bee well ynough fenced to beate back Satan, and al ẏ euer he can practiſe againſt vs. And therefore it behoueth vs to be ſo much the more watchfull, that we may giue eare to this doctrine.

Nowe let vs kneele downe in the preſence of our good God with acknowledgement of our faultes, praying him to make vs ſo to feele them, as wee may bee vtterly caſt downe by them, at leaſtwiſe to miſlike of them and to forſake them, ſo as our whole ſeeking maye bee to frame our ſelues altogether to the righteouſneſſe of our God, and to proceede more & more in his feare and obedience, vntil he haue ioyned vs fully and perfectly to himſelfe, beſeeching him to beare with vs in the meane while, and that foraſmuch as it is his will that wee ſhould bee in continuall warre in this worlde, he vouchſafe to ſtrengthen vs with his power, vntill he haue taken vs vp into his heauenly reſt, to make vs enioye the glorious immortalitie that hee hath promiſed vs. That it may pleaſe him to graunt this grace, not onely to vs, but alſo to all people, &c.

On Wedneſday the viij. of May. 1555.

The xvj. Sermon which is the ſecond vpon the third Chapter.

12 The ſame time wee tooke poſſeſſion of the land, From Aroer which is vpon the Riuer Arnon. And I gaue one halfe of mount Galaad with the Cities thereof to the Rubenites and Gadites.

13 And the reſt of Galaad and all Baſan, which was of the kingdome of Og, I gaue to the halfe tribe of Manaſſes: that is to wit, all the Countrie of Argob, and all Baſan, which is called the land of the Giantes.

14 Iair the ſonne of Manaſſes tooke all the Countrie of Argob, vnto the bor-

ders of Geſſuri,and Machati: and called them after his owne name, that is to wit, Baſan Hauoth Iair,vnto this day.

15 And vnto Machir I gaue Galaad.

16 And vnto the Rubenites and Gadites I gaue from Galaad vnto the riuer Arnon,the middes of the riuer and the end,and vnto the riuer Iabocke, which is the border of the children of Ammon.

17 And the plaine, and the Iordan, and the borders thereof from Kenereth to the ſea of the wilderneſſe,that is to wit, the ſalt Sea vnder Aſdodphaſga towardes the Eaſt.

18 And the ſame time I commaunded you, ſaying: the Lorde your God hath giuen you this land to poſſeſſe. All you that are ſtrong men, goe armed before your brethren the children of Iſrael:

19 But your wiues,your children,and your cattell, (I know ye haue much cattell) ſhall tarie in your Cities which I haue giuen you,

20 Vntill the Lord haue giuen reſt to your brethren as well as to you,and that they likewiſe poſſeſſe the land which the Lorde your God giueth them beyonde Iordan. Then ſhall yee returne euerye man to his poſſeſſion which I haue giuen you.

21 And the ſame time I commaunded Ioſua, ſaying: Thine eyes haue ſeene all that the Lord your God hath done to theſe two Kings. So will the Lord doe to all the kingdomes through which thou ſhalt paſſe.

22 Feare them not: for the Lord is your God: it is he that fighteth for you.

HEre Moſes continueth ſtill his matter, to ſhewe the people of Iſrael the great good that God had done them, beyond their hope. For as I haue declared heretofore, the kingdomes of Baſan and Heſebon were as an ouerplus,beſides that which had bene promiſed to the fathers of olde time. God then ſhewed himſelfe more liberall than he had promiſed to bee, in that behalfe. Therefore it became the people to haue ſignified Gods grace, according as Moſeſes intent alſo was. Furthermore, to the intent the people ſhould not thinke that they had gotten and conquered that Countrie by their owne power and ſtrength: it is tolde them howe it was of neceſſitie that God guided them, conſidering that their enemies were much ſtronger than they, in reſpect whereof here is mention made of their ſtature, and the land is named yͤ land of Giants,to put the people in remembrãce and to make them conſider,yͤ they could not haue compaſſed thoſe things, vnleſſe God had gouerned them. And ſo the whole matter is to be referred to this ende,that the people ſhould knowe Gods goodneſſe in deliuering them from the thraldome of Egypt, not onely in that he had giuen them the land which he had promiſed them for their inheritance, but alſo had added more than they looked for: that is to wit, yͤ two kingdomes that were beyond Iordan.

And nowe herewithall Moſes ſaieth, *That hee gaue that Countrey to the Children of Ruben, and to the children of Gad*, that is to ſay, to their Tribes, *and to the halfe Tribe of Manaſſes*. Not that Moſes offered them that Countrie in partition: but they did ſue for it, as is written more plainely in the two and thirtie Chapter of Numeri. In ſo much as it is ſaide there, that Moſes was angrie when he ſawe them ſo haſtie to bee aforehand, for it was reaſõ that the whole land ſhould firſt haue bene conquered,ere any partition had bin made. But therewithall it is ſaide, that the two Tribes of Gad and Ruben, excuſed themſelues for yͤ they had much Cattel,& it was a Countrie fit for graſing: & their deſiring to be ſetled, was not to ſeparate thẽſelues frõ their brethrẽ, or to be in better taking thã they. For they proteſted that they would goe with the reſt of the people,to fight with them againſt all their enemies,and that they would neuer reſt in the land that was aſſigned them,vntil all the reſidue were ſetled as well as they. Vpon the making of this promiſe, Moſes agreed vnto them. For before, he ſaid vnto them,behold,ye increaſe the heape for your ſinne.For heretofore when ye ſpied out the land, ye would not enter into it at ſuch time as the way was opened for you. And nowe ye bring new lets: it ſhould ſeeme ye ſeeke nothing but to reſiſt God,and to ſhut his grace out of the doore. Moſes then ſpake ſharpely after this ſort againſt the children of Ruben and Gad, vntill they had ſhewed that their meaning was not to forſake their brethren, but to holde themſelues ſtill in the vnitie of the bodie, and in the meane while to leaue their Cattell at a ſtay, to the ende they might not bee too much combered with their wiues and children. And euen in this wee haue to marke the goodneſſe of God. For had not he beene the defender of them that were to dwell in that Countrie,what had come of it? Behold,a ſort of women and yong children are left behinde with their Cattell. Nowe we know that al the neighbours thereaboutes were deſirous to deſtroy the people of Iſrael, and a generall hatred or rather burning fire was kindled euery where againſt them. Therefore if the women and children had not bene preſerued vnder the hand of God, and vnder his protection: had they not periſhed a hundred times? And yet being ſo forſaken, they were not troubled by any man. Nowe then the people ought by all meanes to haue acknowledged Gods grace herein, to ſtrēgthen themſelues thereby againſt the time to come, and therewithal to vnderſtand that there was nothing of their owne to boaſt themſelues of, but that it was good reaſon that God ſhould be praiſed, and they acknowledge that all that good came of God. Thus ye ſee what the intent of Moſes was in this text.

And wee alſo in theſe dayes may well apply this leſſon to our inſtructiō. For ſeeing that God did ſo preſerue the women and little children, which were deſtitute of defence and ſuccour, & inuironed with enemies that were their nexte neighbours, and which were able to haue ſwallowed them vp at one chop, as I haue tolde you before: let vs aſſure our ſelues that our ſafetie conſiſteth not in the multitude of worldly defences. Though we haue neither wall nor bank, nor any thing elſe to defend vs: yet if God haue the leading of vs, and take the charge of our ſafetie, wee haue ynough, ſo as wee may defie all our enemies. Contrariwiſe, if wee bee deſtitute of Gods tuition: we may well prouide all the defences in the world: and yet wee ſhall bee neuer the neerer, all of it muſt needes tumble downe vpon our owne heades. Therefore let vs learne to call vpon our God, and to put our ſelues into his handes. And foraſmuch as he ſaieth that he will receiue the poore that are in aduerſitie: ſo as he promiſeth to ſupport thoſe that are deſtitute of all helpe and ſuccour of the world: let vs goe to him, aſſuring our ſelues that wee ſhall not haue the gate ſhut againſt vs. Be we once come thither: wee may boldly truſt that he will maintaine vs. And although wee be hemmed in with enemies on all ſides, and it may well ſeeme that we cannot eſcape their handes: yet will God be our defence, though there bee nothing but vtter weakeneſſe in vs. Thus ye ſee what wee haue to remember vpon this example.

Yet notwithſtanding it is not to be doubted, but that herewithall Moſes doeth couertly vpbraide the children of Ruben & Gad, with their ouer great haſt. And although he accept their proteſtation, and thereupon doe graunt their requeſt: yet were they not to bee commended in that they ſought to haue their poſſeſſiō ſo ſoone in that Countrie. In deede their pretence was honeſt: but yet ſhould they haue helde themſelues ſtill vnder Gods prouidence, and not haue attempted any thing. So then, as wee haue ſeene here before, if wee will haue God to bleſſe vs, we muſt hold our ſelues ſimply to his word, without attempting any thing at all, ſo as wee ſteppe not one pace foreward to doe any thing that he liketh not, ne ſwarue to the right hand or to the left. But the Rubenites would needes bee ſhifting aforehand, and ſought to ſettle themſelues before it was meete for them. They aſked not whither it were lawfull for them or no: they came not to Moſes with ſubmiſſion, ſaying, let it bee conſidered by generall aduiſe whether it be good or no: but they would needes determine the caſe themſelues at the firſt daſh. Wee haue great ſtore of Cattell ſay they: this Countrie is fit for vs: therfore it is meete that it ſhould be giuen vs in partition. Herein they are not in any wiſe to bee excuſed. True it is that they were made owners of that fat and fruitfull ſoyle: but yet did not God bleſſe them in al points. It had bin better for thē, ſpecially for the halfe tribe of Manaſſes, to haue bene ioyned with their brethren, than to haue had a poſſeſſiō ſo by themſelues. For by ẏ meane they were cut off from the tribe of Iuda: & they were bereft of ẏ preheminēce of being matched ẇ their brethren ẏ children of Ioſeph. And therfore if they had taried with the reſt, and waited Gods leiſure as they ought to haue done: it is certaine that they had bene bleſſed much more abundantly than they were, & conſequently the others to. Wee ſee how the Prophets ſpeake of thē: The fat Buls of Baſan (ſay they) haue their eys ſtopped ẇ greace. Psa.22.13.& Amos.4.1. Bicauſe they liued at their eaſe in a fruitful & abundant Country, there was nothing but pryde and ſtubbornneſſe in them. Let vs learne therefore to forbeare the ſeeking of our owne commodities, and not be ſelfwilled in ſeaſing vppon one thing or other: but let vs tarie for the bleſſing of God. Wee ſee howe it fell out with Lot: for he had the like reſpect in chooſing to dwell in Sodom. Gen.13.10. That plaine was as an earthly Paradiſe: there was nothing but pleaſure, there was nothing but fruitefulneſſe in it. Lot gate him thither: but our Lorde made him to pay verie deare for his ſhotte. Although he was one of his choſen, although GOD pitied him euen to the ende, and although hee made his children to feele his grace notwithſtanding that they were begotten of inceſt: yet was hee chaſtiſed as he deſerued, for his tendering of his owne eaſe and commoditie too much. Hereby wee bee taught to brydle our deſires, and not to be ouer greedie vppon any fleſhly commoditie when wee ſee we may haue it at aduauntage. If God giue it vs, let vs accept it: but let vs beware that our affections be not too inordinate, as they cōmonly be. Thus much concerning the wordes wherewith Moſes vpbraided the children of Gad & Ruben and the halfe tribe of Manaſſes.

Now herewithall we haue to note this ſaying of his, *That he gaue them the Countrie in partition.* for it ſhould ſeeme that he taketh vpō him here to doe that which belonged to God. What was Moſes? Was the land his to giue? By what title could he bee named Lord of it? He is in that reſpect but as a member of ẏ body. True it is that God honoured him ſo much, as to make him the head of his people: But in the meane while how is the Land named? *Gods reſt*, Psal.95.11. that is to ſay, the land that God had aſſigned his people to reſt in. It is not ſayde to bee the reſt of Moſes, but the reſt of GOD. Seeing then that this land was in the hande of GOD: ſhoulde Moſes boaſt himſelfe of the giuing thereof? Wee muſt not thinke this ſtraunge: for when Gods

ſeruants

ſeruaunts ſpeake ſo, they chalendge not aught to themſelues, but ſhewe in what truſt they be put, and what charge is committed vnto them, by meanes whereof they ſeparate not themſelues from God. If a man be ſent from a prince with authoritie to doe the thinges that hee hath in commiſſion: hee taketh vppon him the name of the Prince as in way of borrowing, and ſaieth, I ordeine this, I appoint this, I commaunde this, I will haue this executed. And he that ſpeaketh after that manner, meaneth not to derogate his maſters authoritie. Euen ſo doe Gods ſeruauntes: for they knowe that hee hath ordeined them as his inſtrumentes, and imployeth them in his ſeruice, ſo as they doe nothing of themſelues, their maſter is hee that ouer ruleth them. That is the cauſe why Moſes ſaieth, that hee hath giuen them their portion: yea verily, not taking himſelfe as another mortal man, but as one whom God had ſet in his own place, and which did all thinges in the name of God. And ſo yee ſee what wee haue to beare in minde.

It is a verie profitable doctrine for vs: for it extendeth further than ſo. And for proofe therof, if wee had not the ſame rule: what woulde become of the gouernement of the Church?

Eph.5.26.

Wherefore are wee baptiſed, but to bee waſhed from all our ſpottes, that wee may bee pure and cleane before God, that wee may be members of Ieſus Chriſt, ẏ we may be clothed ẇ his righteouſnes, &(to be ſhort) that we may be renewed by the holy ghoſt?

1.Cor.12.13
Gal.3.27.
Rom.6.4.
Col.2.12. & 3.1.

Nowe, lyeth it in ẏ mortall man that baptiſeth vs, to giue vs al theſe things? No, if we conſider him but as a man in his owne peculiar perſon. But ſith it is Gods will that the miniſters of his word ſhould baptiſe in his name: baptiſme muſt needs haue that vertue notwithſtanding that it be deliuered vs by the hande of a man. And againe, as touching the Lords ſupper, we ſee howe our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt doeth ſhew himſelfe there to be the foode of our ſoules.

Matt.26.26
& Iohn 6.51

Nowe is there any creature that can make vs partakers of ſo great a benefite? No ſurely. But it is certeine that the ſupper is not a vaine thing: therefore when we come to receiue it, wee muſt conſider that the [miniſter though he be a] man is not ſeparated from Ieſus Chriſt. And in the preaching of Gods worde wee ſee the like.

Luke.1.16.
21.79.

It is ſaide that the miniſters are ſent to inlighten the blinde, to deliuer priſoners, to forgiue ſinnes, and to turne mens heartes. Howe ſo? for thoſe are thinges that belong all onely vnto God. And in verie deede if a man ſhoulde goe about to bereaue him of the leaſt part of thoſe thinges, it were an vtter defacing of his maieſtie. For nothing is more peculiar to him than the forgiuing of ſinnes. Likewiſe doeth he reſerue to himſelfe the turning of mens heartes.

Mar.27.
Luke.5.21.
1.Ki.18.37.
Ier.31.18.

Yet notwithſtanding hee communicateth all thoſe titles to ſuch as he hath ordeined to beare abrode his worde: telling them that he ſeparateth not himſelf from them, but rather that hee vſeth them as his handes and inſtruments. And in this caſe men muſt not muſe vpon the thing that they ſee, but they muſt lift vp their eyes aloft by faith. We ſee then what rule wee ought to drawe out of this text, where Moſes ſaith that hee gaue the lande in poſſeſſion. Namely that he treateth not of his owne perſon to vaunt himſelfe: but onely ſheweth, that hee had put the tribes of Gad and Ruben, and the halfe tribe of Manaſſes, in poſſeſſion of thoſe two kingdomes by Gods authoritie, according to the commiſſion that he had giuen him.

Howbeit to the ende that the profitableneſſe of this doctrine may bee the better knowen: let vs marke in one worde, that it expreſſeth vnto vs the power that is in Gods worde: namely that it is not a fleeting ſounde, but that it hath ſpeedy execution, accordingly as we ſee that when the Prophets threaten the citie Ieruſalem, they ſay they haue beſieged it and beaten it down alreadie.

Ier.4.5.15.
and 32.2.

And howe is that? By dreames and viſions. This ſhould ſeeme to be a plaine mockerie. Yea, but in the ende it appeared, that it was not a rolling of their tongues onely, but that they ſhould not haue had a greater meane or power to raſe the Citie of Ieruſalem, though they had had a great hoſte of men. For by what meanes did the enemies bring it to paſſe? By vertue of the Propheſies. So on the contrarie parte, when they ſpeake of making the people to proſper: their manner of ſpeeche is, that all impedimentes are remooued, and their enemies ouercome.

Eſa.37.33.

And howe is that? Becauſe Gods worde is vaine. So then, let vs vnderſtande that it is greatlie to our profite, to bee tolde that when Gods miniſters ſpeake, they caſt not foorth a fading ſounde, but ſuch a one as is matched with effecte: and therefore let vs bee edified thereby to our ſaluation. Sith wee knowe that the remiſſion of ſinnes is not preached vnto vs in vaine: it ought to aſſure vs. Come wee to a Sermon? Is Gods grace offered vs? Is it tolde vs that Ieſus Chriſt hath made amendes for vs, to ridde vs out of the curſedneſſe wherein wee were? When wee bee certified of theſe thinges, it is all one as if they were put into our handes. Why ſo? For when GOD ſendeth meſſengers to tell vs his will: hee matcheth ſuch force therewithall, as that the effect is ioyned to the worde.

Likewiſe when hee threatneth vs, let vs aſſure our ſelues that vengeance is in a readineſſe, as ſaith Sainct Paul.

1.Cor.10.6.

Let vs not thinke it a ſport and daliance when wee bee tolde of Gods curſe and wrath againſt the deſpiſers of the Goſpell, and againſt the diſobeyers of the ſame. Heereby wee ſee with what reuerence wee ought to reſort to Sermons. Alſo wee ſee in what taking all theſe heatheniſh ſort are, which come to Sermons as it were in ſcorne of God, with ſuch brutiſhneſſe as euen little children are aſhamed of them, inſomuch that there is neither feare of God nor honeſtie in them. Let vs be well aduiſed to ſhunne ſuch mens companies, and to abhorre them: aſſuring our ſelues that if wee learne not to miſlike of them, wee ſhall be intangled with them by becomming like them. Theſe (ſaye I) are the thinges which wee haue to remember, in that Moſes went not to exalt himſelfe to deface Gods glorie: but ſhewed that God wrought by him and by his meanes.

Furthermore, whereas hee ſaieth that the children of Manaſſes, that is to ſay the halfe tribe, together with the whole tribes of Ruben and Gad bounde themſelues by the promiſe Num.32.27 that is rehearſed in the booke of Numeri, *to goe before the Lorde* that is to ſay in his preſence: it is well woorth the marking: for it ſerueth to expreſſe the better, with what loyaltie they went to it. For if wee ſet not our eye vppon God: there will alwayes bee ſome feynedneſſe in our promiſes, and in all our dealings, ſo as wee ſhall neuer goe to worke ſoundly and ſubſtantially. Wee knowe that naturally men are double harted, and that they paint and diſguiſe their doings, inſomuch that if it were poſſible for them, they woulde keepe no touch in any thing that they promiſe, longer than it were for their owne profite, or at leaſtwiſe vnleſſe they were driuen to it for verie ſhame. To bee ſhort, there wil bee no faithfulneſſe in vs, except GOD ouerlooke vs, and wee looke vp to him in all our doings. And that is the cauſe why the men that were aſſigned their poſſeſſion, did ſweare to their brethren, euen in Gods preſence, that GOD might bee a witneſſe to puniſh their leaudneſſe, if there were any guile, feyning, or treacherie at al in their caſe.

Hereby wee bee warned, that whenſoeuer wee make any bargaine or couenant: wee muſte not onely haue ame to the partie with whome wee haue to doe: but wee muſt alſo as it were ſet GOD among vs, and keepe our faith and promiſe to him that wee haue bounde our ſelues, as though GOD watched vs at euerie ſteppe, and that wee coulde not ſo ſoone worke deceite towardes any man, but that by and by GOD woulde ſteppe before vs to withſtande it. That is the thing which wee haue to doe: but there are verie fewe of vs that thinke vppon it. For although the name of God bee called vppon, and ſolemne othes taken, and promiſes made autentically ynough, yea and that there bee order of Lawe to make vs feele his maieſtie: yet doe moſt men ſhut their eyes, and in all the promiſes and othes that are made, [commonly] there is nothing ſought but to deceiue one another. He that is ſuttleleſt and fulleſt of ſhiftes, is the handſommeſt man: and ſuch kinde of dealing is eſteemed as a vertue. And why? For euerie man runnes gadding after his owne luſtes and likings, yea & that in ſuch wiſe, that they bee as blindfoldings to keepe vs from ſeeing God. Though wee thinke not vppon it nowe: yet will not God forget any of our deceites, ſpytes, trecheries, and falſhoodes which wee commit againſt men. For hee hath tolde vs, that when an othe is taken Exo.20.7.& Leuit.19.12 & Deut.23.21.& Ioſ.9.19.& Matt.5.33. betweene man and man: his glorie is defaced and himſelfe openly mocked, if the promiſe be broken. Therefore let vs bee wel aſſured that he wil not put vp ſuch wrong, & that although wee bee neuer ſo blinde, yet will not hee play the blinkarde on his ſide, but will note and marke euery whit of it to bring it to account. And ſo yee ſee what wee haue to marke heere for one point.

By way wee ſee, that none but ſuch as make lawful couenãts can make thẽ as in Gods ſight. For as many as doe lewdly linke themſelues together to helpe one another in naughtineſſe, (as to confounde all right, to make wicked ſhiftes, to worke outrages, to oppreſſe men, or to maintaine themſelues in their vnthriftineſſe): as manie (I ſay) as conſpyre after that faſhion, are all faine to ſeeke lurkingholes: they are loth to ſhewe themſelues to God or to come in his preſence: nay they muſt rather ſhrinke away from him, but they cannot. Yet notwithſtanding, the wicked ſort doe fall aſleepe, when they make thoſe ſhamefull and deteſtable confederacies of theirs: they bee faine to holde themſelues there as it were in the darke, and to ſhunne Gods preſence as much as they can. So much the more then doth it ſtande vs on hande to remember this text, that in all our promiſes and in all our doings, wee may deale as in Gods ſight, aſſuring our ſelues, that hee is euer at hande to take notice of our couenaunts, and to beare witneſſe of them, yea and to gouerne and direct all thinges aright, if wee proceede vprightly and ſoundely. And ſo yee ſee what wee haue to marke.

Nowe heere is yet moreouer a certaine vprightneſſe to bee kept, whereof Moſes ſpeaketh when he commaundeth the Rubenytes and Gadytes to goe conquer the reſt of the lande with their brethren, notwithſtanding that they had their portion alreadie beyonde Iordan. Hereby wee be warned, firſt that if God haue vnyted vs in one bodie or corporation: one part of vs muſt not withdrawe our ſelues from the charges [of the common weale,] as if wee woulde ſay, let vs exempt our ſelues, and let the reſt ſhifte for themſelues: but it behoueth euerie man to imploy himſelfe to the benefite of the whole ſtate, and that hee which coulde ſhift for himſelfe alone, ſhoulde not forbeare to take part with his brethren, and to put vnder his ſhoulder (as they ſay) to beare a peece of the burthen. This might bee declared more fully: but a glaunce will ſerue our turne well ynough, and the cheefeſt matter is, that wee muſt put it well in practiſe. Then let vs marke well, that if GOD haue knitte vs into one bodie, wee muſt all doe Rom.12.5. the office of members, as we ſee howe the foote ſerueth the hande, the hande the eye, and euery other part imployeth it ſelfe according to his ſeuerall propertie and power, ſo as all redoundeth to the benefite of the whole.

Likewiſe muſte wee obſerue the ſame rightfull and reaſonable order of dealing, when GOD hath ſet vs in one common weale. It was well knowen of the wretched Paynims, that there coulde bee no good ciuill order in the worlde, if euerie man were giuen to his owne profite. If the hande ſhoulde ſeparate it 1.Cor.12.12 ſelfe and refuſe to ſerue the reſt of the bodie, and the reſt of the members alſo: Yee ſee there woulde bee a good ſort of pieces: but in the meane while they ſhould all die and of neceſſity periſh. In like caſe is it with men when they will needes draw backe from the communion of life, which they ought to obſerue, and no man think vpon the common profite, but take it to be ſufficient that hee can profite himſelfe: for in the ende all muſt needes goe to hauocke. But this is chiefely to bee obſerued in the ſpirituall 1.Co.12.27 gouernement of the Church, as Saint Paul Rom.12.5. ſheweth it vs. For in the Church there is not onely a reſemblance of mans bodie, but the ſonne of God is our heade in verie deede. It is of him that wee bee, and of him haue wee grace and power, in ſuch portion and meaſure as it pleaſeth him to beſtowe vppon vs. Seeing it is ſo: let Eph.4.7.16. vs learne to maintaine peace and brotherlineſſe among vs. And that wee may ſo doe: let euerie of vs yeelde himſelfe to his neighbours, and let vs not be ſo wedded to our own peculiar aduantage, that we ſhoulde not take paine to pleaſure all thoſe with whome wee bee vnited. Neither let vs alledge, what haue I to doe with the bearing of ſuch a burthen as ſhoulde bee too heauie for mee, and which I cannot well away with? Let vs beware that wee holde not backe after that ſort, to maintaine our ſelues in ydleneſſe. For according to the abilitie that God giueth vs, ſo doth hee binde vs to ſerue our neighbours therewith. And why? For wee be al members of one bodie: there needeth none other reaſon to moue vs than that. So then, to be ſhort wee cannot be of our Lord Ieſus Chriſts flocke, vnleſſe wee conſider what he hath giuen vs, that wee may make the ſame profitable, and put it to 1.Cor.14.12 & Eph.4.12 the common edifying of the Church, as ſaith Saint Paul.

As touching worldly conuerſation, let vs liue in ſuch wiſe with men, that as wee receiue good by them, ſo wee alſo on our ſide may looke to do good to them: ſo as there may be a mutuall anſwerableneſſe on both ſides. Nowe it is certaine that none of vs can forbeare his neighbours. Let a man bee of as good abilitie as he can wiſh, and yet neuertheleſſe he muſt ſtande in neede of other mens ſeruice in many thinges. Nowe, when hee knoweth that hee hath ſuch neede and neceſſity of other mens helpe: ſhould he drawe backe from his neighbours, or bee ſo nyce that hee will beare no burthen, but be loth to take any paine for the common weale? [It is no reaſon.] For if they that ſerue him ſhould bee at the ſame point, and bee as peeuiſh and proud as hee: muſt it not needes bee that all ſhoulde goe to wrecke? Yes: and therefore let vs learne, that in aſmuch as euen in the Church wee haue this bonde of ſeruing our neighbours: it behooueth likewiſe in reſpect of this preſent life and of all worldly affaires, to conſider with our ſelues ẏ inaſmuch as God maketh others to do vs good, and to profite vs diuers wayes, ſo as wee be ſuccored by them: we alſo ought to render the like againe on our ſide.

Now as concerning the people of Iſraels caſe, there was a ſpeciall conſideration in their conquering of the land of Chanaan. Why ſo? For it was not promiſed ſeuerally to the tribe of Iuda, or to the tribe of Beniamin, or to any of the other tribes alone: but generally to the whole ofſpring of Abraham. Therefore it behoued this lande to bee conquered by them in common, and that afterwarde lottes ſhoulde bee caſt for it, as was done in the ende by Ioſua. But nowe that God commaundeth vs to follow one common trace, wee muſt applie this example to our ſelues, and conſider that the ſame rule which is ſet downe heere, is giuen to vs alſo. As howe? Doeth God commaunde, that we ſhould but euerie man ſeuerally for himſelfe reſiſt Sathan, and proceede more and more in the Goſpell? Is it not a common leſſon? [Yes.] Seeing then that God calleth vs ſo one with another, and will haue all to agree in one accorde, like good melodie: it is not for vs to ſeparate our ſelues any more a ſunder. Wherfore let vs conſider, that to aduaunce the kingdome of our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt and the ſaluation of all his: to builde vp his Church, and to make his Goſpell to proſper and floriſh: euerie man muſt not onely worke alone by himſelfe: but wee muſt alſo agree all in one, and drawe all by one lyne, and euery of vs ſtreine himſelfe to ſerue ſuch as haue neede of his helpe. And ſo wee ſee, that all ſuch as will needes builde ſo alone by themſelues, doe but worke confuſion. Of which ſort there are that thinke themſelues very able men, and that they coulde worke wonders to their owne ſeeming, inſomuch that they deſpiſe their neighbours, and woulde euen beare downe all other men before them to ſhew themſelues valiant fellowes, and that they doe a hundred fold more than all the reſt. And what commeth of ſuch pride, but ouerthrowe and confuſion? Let vs marke well therefore, that wee ſhall neuer ſerue God by furthering of the gladtidings of our ſaluation: vnleſſe we haue the ſaid concord, that we be readie and wel diſpoſed to helpe euerie man his neighbour, and that there bee one common eaſing one of another. Thus yee ſee what we haue to remember further vppon this ſtreine.

Now in concluſion it is ſaide heere, *that Moſes incorageth Ioſua to be of good cheere, and to go through with the thing which he himſelfe might not do*, that is to wit, to conuey the people ouer Iordan, and to conquer all the lande of Chanaan. But firſt of all hee ſetteth before him the victories that the people had had againſt Og king of Baſan, and Sehon king of Heſebon. *Thou haſt ſeene* (ſaith he) *how the Lord hath dealt with theſe two kings.* He ſaith not, As you haue done to theſe two kings, [but as the Lorde hath done]. For as hath bin declared, here is no flattering of men, nor no tickling of their eares: for they bee but too forwarde alreadie in taking more vpon them than belongeth to them. Seeing then that men are ſo naturally giuen to ſelfeweening let vs vnderſtand that it is expedient for them to be meekened, and to bee bereft of all their pride and loftineſſe, to the intent they may knowe that they haue nothing of their owne. But this cannot bee done, without making them to vnderſtande, that whatſoeuer they haue, they are beholden to Gods meere grace for it. That is the cauſe why Moſes ſaith expreſly, *Thou haſt ſeene with thine eyes, what God hath done vnto theſe two kinges.* As if he ſhould ſay, If yee knowe not the power that God hath ſhewed you: of whom is it long? The matter is not darkſome of it ſelfe, it is altogether viſible and apparant. Therefore it muſt needes bee that your owne vnthankefulneſſe hindereth you, and that your malice blindeth you. Seeing then that God hath made you to perceiue his goodneſſe, euen as it were by eyeſight: bee you mindfull of it continually.

But let vs marke, that Moſes in incouraging Ioſua, doth not onely exhort the whole people to giue thankes vnto God, and to praiſe him for the benefites that they had receiued of him alredie: but alſo harten them for the time to come, to the ende they ſhould not doubt but that God woulde goe through with the thing hee had begonne. And the manner of his ſpeech ſheweth it ſufficiently. *Thou haſt ſeene* (ſaith he) *howe thy God hath ſuccored & helped thee againſt thoſe two kinges. As much ſhalt thou doe to all the kingdomes through which thou ſhalt paſſe.* As if he ſhould ſay, Yee haue ſeene trials enowe alreadie of Gods goodneſſe: and therefore ye cannot diſtruſt him, but you muſt be too too vnthankfull. For he hath ſhewed you what his power is, it is not for a pang and away, hee hath ſhewed you that he is faithfull in all his promiſes. Nowe yee knowe what he hath promiſed to your fathers: therfore looke you for the performance of the things towardes you, which your fathers hoped for, and bee yee conſtant in it. Think not that your God is weary of doing you good, or that in proceſſe & length of time hee waxeth vnable to bring the things to paſſe which he hath begun: no: but reach out your truſt to the vttermoſt, & aſſure your ſelues that hee wil likewiſe continue his goodneſſe and power towards you. Thus ſee wee what Moſes meant.

Howbeit foraſmuch as the incomberances were greate: hee ſaith expreſly to the people, *Be ye not afraid:* and vnto Ioſua, *Feare not.* Wherin hee ſheweth that wee muſt not meaſure Gods grace by our owne vnderſtanding. For when thinges ſhall ſeeme to vs vnpoſſible: God will finde meanes to ouercome all thinges that are againſt him to the worldward, ſo as they ſhal not hinder him to bring al his matters to perfection, and to execute his determination.

But to the intent to gather the ſumme of the doctrine that is contained in this texte: let vs marke howe it is not without cauſe, that Moſes directeth his ſpeech to Ioſua. For albeit that the doctrine belong to the whole bodie of the people, yet was it meete that Ioſua ſhoulde bee incouraged, as heade and Capteine of the people: For it may happe that a people ſhall be well diſpoſed: and yet marre all for want of good guiding, accordingly as wee ſee howe al things goe to hauocke and to wracke, when the heades and gouernours are not ſuch as they ought to be, yea euen although there appeare good diſpoſition in the people: inſomuch that when things goe amiſſe, a man ſhall heare ſighings and gronings, and euerie bodie ſeekes to goe the right way, ſo that if it lay in priuate mens powers to remedie diſorders and vices, they woulde ſurely doe what they coulde. Two or three vnthriftes are ynough to trouble a whole common weale when they once ſet vppon it and the diuel driues them forward, if the gouernours ſet not ſtay in the matter. And therefore it is not for naught that Moſes directeth his ſpeech preciſely to Ioſua. For (as I ſaide) it importeth ſo much the more, ẏ ſuch as are in publike authoritie ſhould bee well diſpoſed, that they may the better guide the whole bodie. But for aſmuch as it ſhalbee ſpoken of yet more at large hereafter: I doe but touch the thing briefely, to haue a ſhort concluſion of this text.

Furthermore whereas it is ſaide, *That God which ſmote Sehon king of the Amorrhytes and Og king of Baſan, will doe the like to all the kingdomes of the lande that he promiſed to Abraham:* let vs marke (as I ſaide afore), that when God hath made vs to feele his gracious goodneſſe: he will ſtill giue vs courage for the time comming, to the ende wee may not doubt but hee will holde on continually: And that as we haue founde the force of his power by experience heeretofore: ſo we may aſſure our ſelues of it to the ende: not doubting but that if wee doe as hee commaundeth vs, he will bring all our enterpriſes to good and happie iſſue, ſo long as they bee according to his will. For without that, wee ſhoulde become too vnthankefull and churliſh, burying his goodneſſe towardes vs, and ſhutting our eyes, that wee might not ſee it. And if wee ſee ſuch chaunges as may abaſh vs: let vs returne to that which I haue ſaide: that is to wit, that we muſt not meaſure Gods power by the worldly meanes that trouble vs, neither muſt we ſtande ſcanning after this ſort, and ſaye, howe can that come to paſſe, how may that be poſſible? Let vs not put forth any ſuch allegations: for wee muſt yeelde this praiſe vnto God, that although thinges be vnpoſſible to vs, although wee haue neuer ſo great daungers to paſſe, although thinges bee farre out of order as wee wote not where to become: yet will God prouide for them. Then let vs reſort vnto God in that behalfe, acknowledging ſuch power in him, that although all our wits faile vs, yet wee put the matter into his hande, aſſuring our ſelues that hee can bring it to paſſe. That is the thing which we haue to marke here. And without that, what woulde become of our ſaluation? True it is that God hath ſhewed himſelfe heretofore to bee our guide and king, and therein wee haue the more cauſe to magnifie his grace. Neuertheleſſe, when wee come to the point that we ſhoulde hope for Gods helpe, and that his ſuccour ſhall not faile vs at our neede: wee muſt ſhut our eyes at all ſtoppes, and refer all thinges into his hande, waiting for the accompliſhment of his promiſes. Seeing he hath bound himſelfe to vs of his owne free goodneſſe: let vs put him in truſt with the euentes of the thinges that ſeeme vnpoſſible vnto vs. And if we doe ſo, then may wee certainely thinke our ſelues ſafe againſt all the aſſaultes of Sathan and all his champions. And though they practiſe all that euer they can to ouerthrow vs: yet ſhal we not be as men diſcomfited and forlorn, but God will worke in ſuch ſort for vs, as wee ſhall not neede to feare but that he will bring our ſaluation to perfectneſſe: and albeit that to our ſeeming it bee vnpoſſible to bee done, and that we cannot finde any way out by reaſon of the hinderances that let vs: yet will he alwayes make vs to ouercome them. Thus yee ſee how we ought to put this leſſon in vre.

Nowe let vs kneele downe in the preſence of our good God with acknowledgement of our faultes, praying him to doe them away, and to correct them immediatly that we may obteine forgiueneſſe of them: and that for aſmuch as wee cannot yeelde our ſelues ſo wholly to him, as hee might guide and gouerne vs according to his holy will: it may pleaſe him to ridde vs of all our wicked affections, and of all the luſtes of our fleſh, that wee may frame our ſelues vnto his righteouſneſſe, and in the meane while be borne withall in our infirmities, vntill he haue taken vs hence to himſelfe. And ſo let vs all ſay, Almightie God heauenly father, &c.

On Thurſday the ix. of May. 1555.

The xvij. Sermon, which is the third vpon the third Chapter.

23 And at the ſame time I prayed vnto the Lord, ſaying:

24 O Lord God, thou haſt begun to ſhew thy ſeruant thy greatneſſe and thy mightie hand. For what God is there in heauen or earth, that can doe according to thy workes, and according to thy mightineſſe?

25 I beſeech thee let me goe and ſee the good lande that is beyond Iordan, and this goodly mountaine, and Libanus.

Deut.1,37.

I Tolde you heretofore that Moſes made mention how God had bereft him of the benefite and honour of entering into the land of promiſe, for the ſinne of the people. Nowe he rehearſeth the ſame matter againe, howbeit to another ende. For it was conuenient that the people ſhould be done to vnderſtande, that they ſhoulde not alwayes haue ſuch a leader. To the intent therefore that the exhortations which Moſes maketh, might be the better receiued, and the people take the better heede to them: hee telleth them that he muſt leaue them, and that he ſhall not haue leaue to paſſe ouer Iordan. That is his meaning, whereof I ſhal ſpeake more fully hereafter. In the meane ſeaſon, let vs ſee what he ſaith here. Firſt of all he reherſeth that *he beſought god, that he might enter into the promiſed lande.* But hee had alredie had the ſentence of condemnation, that hee might not goe. It ſhoulde ſeeme then that he reſiſteth God as much as in him lyeth, and that hee cannot finde in his heart to admit his ſaying. And in deede wee cannot vtterly excuſe him that hee did not amiſſe. For we cannot bee tickled with ſo ſmall a deſire contrarie to Gods will: but wee bee by and by blameworthie. But when wee be ſo bolde as to come vnto God, to make a requeſt cleane contrarie to his will: then is the offence double. And why? For the foundation of all our prayers is faith. But there can bee no faith without Gods promiſe. Who ſo then commeth to caſt out his pangs, & deſireth of God the thing that hee knoweth ſhall miſlike him: doth he not paſſe his bounds? Doth he not goe cleane contrarie to that which the rule of praying will beare? Yes. Now, this was ſeene in Moſes, and therefore it followeth that hee did amiſſe. And indeede the aunſwere ſheweth it. For like as God was angrie with him before, becauſe he had not glorified him in the ſtrife that the people moued for want of drinke: ſo is hee angrie with him nowe againe. Though we had none other witneſſe, euen this ought to ſuffice vs, that God doeth expreſly ſhutte the gate againſt him for the time to come, that he ſhoulde no more returne vnto him. Heereby wee bee done to vnderſtande, that wee muſt bee earneſt in repreſſing our deſires, and in bridling them. For hardly is there any man to bee founde, that euer yeelded himſelfe ſo pliable to obey God, as Moſes was, Let vs ſeeke on all ſides, [and yet ſhall we not finde one.] It is certaine that Mo-was an excellent mirrour of meekeneſſe, and ſuch a one as had his minde vtterly brought downe, ſo as he ſought not to followe any thing which was not commaunded him from aboue. And yet for all that, it appeareth that he coulde not ſo reſtraine and ouermaſter himſelf, but that there was ſome exceſſe in his affections. If this befell to Moſes who had beene accuſtomed to obey God in all pointes: howe ſhall we do which haue profited ſo euill in that behalfe? So then, we ſee heere a deede which ſheweth vs what the cheefe exerciſe and ſtudie of Gods children is: namely to ſubdue their affections, that it may not befall them to deſire any thing, but ſuch as they knowe doeth pleaſe GOD. For that is the onely rule whereby to diſcerne good from bad. Marke that for one point.

Matt.21.22
Mar.11.24.
Iames.1,6.
Num.20,12.

Moreouer wee muſte not ſtaie vppon the outwarde apparance. If wee haue a deſire to a thing, although the ſame ſeeme good and iuſt, yet muſt wee not thinke that it is therefore lawfull. For if wee looke vppon Moſes deſire, euerie of vs will ſay it was holy. Yea and wee maruell howe it was ſo refuſed, conſidering that hee ſpake not ſo much for himſelfe, as for the common profite of all the people. For his deſire tended to none other ende, but that the people might haue beene the better ſtabliſhed and confirmed in Gods grace. Hee ſawe the vocation wherevnto hee had beene ordeined, to bee moſt excellent: hee had executed it alreadie by the ſpace of fortie yeeres: hee ſawe the hardeſt was yet behinde: hee was acquainted with the peoples vices: hee knewe the power of mind that was giuen vnto himſelfe: hee was ſure hee had purchaſed greate credite nowe long agoe: Loe heere the cauſes why hee wiſhed to haue entred into the land. For being a man of ſixeſcore yeeres olde, hee was not wedded to this preſent life. And beſides all this, wee knowe that inaſmuch as hee had beene taken vp heeretofore into the mountaine, and had taſted there of Gods glorie: he was not intangled with tranſitorie delightes, nor with any worldly thing. Yee ſee then that Moſes had no reſpect to himſelfe, but woulde faine haue accompliſhed his office, in ſetting the people in poſſeſſion of the heritage that had beene promiſed them, and by that meane haue ſtabliſhed the ſeruice of God in the holy lande. Who woulde not ſay that this was a good deſire, conſidering howe it tended to the glorifying of GOD, and to the procuring of the welfare of the whole people? Loe heere the two principall endes where vnto the whole life of man ſhoulde tende. And yet notwithſtanding, Moſes did amiſſe. Why ſo? for hee reſiſted God. It ought to haue ſuffiſed him, when hee had once hearde that GOD woulde not bee ſerued by him in that caſe. Albeit then that the deſire that hee purpoſeth bee excellent in it ſelfe, and ame at a good and rightfull ende: yet doeth it not faile to bee worthie of blame. The reaſon is, becauſe hee ſubmitted not himſelfe to God.

Nowe then, wee ſee the thing that I ſaide afore: that is to wit, that wee may nowe and then haue faire colours to deſire this or that: but in ſo doing wee may goe too farre, yea and indeede wee ſhall not obtaine our requeſtes. Why ſo? For obedience muſt goe before: and without that wee cannot builde, but to our ruine and confuſion. And it is a thing verie requiſite. For men cannot bridle themſelues from being wiſe in their owne conceites: inſomuch that if wee take a thing to bee good: wee cannot bee perſwaded to the contrarie, GOD cannot winne ſo much at our handes as to gette the maſterie of vs. So much the more then behoueth it vs to take paine to holde our ſelues wholly in awe, to the end we build not any thing which God alloweth not, but that wee alwayes haue that marke before our eyes, and reſt wholly vppon it.

Nowe if it bee ſo that the deſires which of their owne nature are good, holie, and commendable, doe neuertheleſſe become ſinfull and blameworthie, when they aduaunce themſelues againſt God: what are they when wee couet euill thinges, and giue heade to [illegible] fleſhly luſtes? Wee ſee that the thing which GOD hath forbidden vs is euill, and yet notwithſtanding wee take leaue to deſire it: is this to bee excuſed? Nowe then, to the intent wee may take profite by this doctrine, let vs marke that although our deſires to ſee to, are as good as can bee: yet muſt wee abſteine from them vnleſſe God doe like of them. For at that ende muſte wee beginne. And furthermore, that if wee ought to correct our deſires, though there bee no likelihoode of euill in them: we ought much more to bee well aduiſed that wee caſt not forth our bubbles when wee bee tempted to euill, and when wee be caried away to fleſhly luſtes. All that geere muſt bee killed ſtarke deade, ſeeing it is not lawfull for vs euen to wiſh the thing that is good, except wee haue leaue of God. But we muſt then ſpecially obſerue this leſſon, when wee goe about to pray: for as I haue ſaide alredie, the foundation of all our prayers is faith: and what importeth that? Euen that we ſhould heare God ſpeake. If wee pray at all aduenture, doubting whether wee ſhall obtaine the thing Iames.1.6.7 that wee require or no: it is but hypocriſie and it ſhall not boote vs at all, ſaith the holy ſcripture. It ſtandeth vs then in hande, to bee well aſſured when wee come before God, ſo as we beleeue certainly that our praying is not in vaine, and that wee ſhall not bee diſappointed of the thing that wee require. And that is the point wherein the prayers of the Chriſtians doe diſferre from the prayers of the infidelles. For the infidelles and vnbeleeuers may well flee vnto God, and craue this and that at his hande: but what for that? they bee euer wauering, and wote not whether they ſhall obteine or no. For they depende not vppon the promiſes. But as for vs, wee muſt aſſure our ſelues of the loue of our God, & that he is much redier to graunt than wee bee to require, yea and that hee is ſo pitifull and hath ſuch a reſpect of our Eſa.65.24 miſeries and neceſſities to relieue them, that he euen preuenteth vs. Wee muſt bee throughly perſwaded of this when wee pray. But how ſhall we knowe it? Wee muſt not beare our ſelues on hande that wee holde God bounde vnto vs, and that wee ſhall make him to graunt all our deſires: for what a malapertneſſe were that? And what an honouring of God were it, if euerie man ſhoulde ſay, I trowe God will do whatſoeuer I liſt to commaunde him? But we muſt reſt vppon his promiſes. Yee ſee then that faith is requiſite in our prayers: that is to wit, that no man thruſt forth himſelfe vpon his owne heade, but that hauing the promiſe whereby God allureth vs vnto him, wee goe vnto him boldely, not doubting but that hee will keepe touch with vs. Seeing it is ſo: wee muſt note nowe that al our praiers are faultie, if they bee not ruled by the wil of God. For when wee preſume to aske of him whatſoeuer comes in our heade, there is no promiſe for vs to truſt vnto in going to it ſo without aduiſe. And therefore for aſmuch as we paſſe our bounds, wee be neuer a whit furthered by it. Thus ye ſee that in praying we muſt alwayes cōſider what god permitteth vs, & what his will is ẏ we ſhoulde aske of him: and that wee muſt euer haue this modeſtie and ſoberneſſe with vs to aske counſaile of him, as though his ſpirit ſpake in vs, and indyted vnto vs the verie forme of our prayer. Matt,6.9. And for that cauſe hath our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt made as it were a ſumme of all the requeſtes which wee ought to make vnto God. For although wee bee not tyed to thoſe words, to ſay hollowed bee the name of God, his kingdome come, his will bee done, &c. yet muſt we referre all our deſires, wiſhes and requeſtes to thoſe ſixe articles, which are conteyned in the praier that our Lord Ieſus Chriſt hath giuen vnto vs. And although the Fathers of olde time had not the ſame rule; yet were they alwayes gouerned by Gods ſpirite, to keepe them from wandering from the thinges that are taught vs at this day, ſo as all their prayers were conformable to the rule that our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt hath giuen vs. Nowe then we ſee, that all ſuch as take leaue to pray what they liſt, doe not direct themſelues to God as they ought to doe, and therefore are they likewiſe diſappointed of their deſires. And for the ſame cauſe is it, that I haue tolde you, that in all our prayers wee muſt be well aduiſed, that the thinges bee lawfull according to Gods worde. But nowe there are ſome thinges which God hath promiſed without exception, and thoſe wee may demaunde without condition. Whenſoeuer wee haue offended him, (which thing wee neuer ceaſe to doe) wee muſt reſort to the remedie, praying God to forgiue vs our ſinnes and to ſhewe vs mercie. God hath aſſured vs that hee is redie to doe it. And ſeeing he hath promiſed it, our comming to him to ſeeke fauour muſt not bee as though we wiſt not what woulde be the ende of our requeſt: but wee muſt bee fully reſolued that hee will ſhewe vs fauour indeede. Yet notwithſtanding, if therewithall wee deſire him to releaſe his chaſtiſementes: that is nowe another thing. For hee may well pardon our faultes, but yet in the meane while hee wil not ceaſe to ſubdue vs, vntill he perceiue that our vices are corrected. I meane not as the Papiſts doe, namely that God pardoneth the fault, and reteineth the puniſhment ſtill, as they haue ſurmiſed, ſaying that when God forgiueth men their ſinnes, hee ceaſeth not in the meane while to execute his rigor vpon them as a iudge. It is nothing ſo. But God chaſtiſeth vs for our ſinnes after hee hath forgiuen them, howbeit, not in way of puniſhment, but to make vs looke better to our ſelues & to be warer hereafter, ſo as we become not ſo vnconſtant, as to returne to the ſelfe ſame fault againe. Then if God perceiuing vs to haue neede to be tamed, doe liſt to chaſtiſe vs: if wee require of him ſimply & without condition, that he ſhould by and by withdraw his hand: that requeſt were out of ſquare. For why? He perchãce ſendeth vs ſome ſicknes or ſome other croſſe, & hee knoweth that it is not ynough for vs to bee ſicke a two or three dayes: and therefore the diſeaſe muſt continue and increaſe, vntill wee bee throughly clenſed of it. Therfore when we make any requeſts vnto God, he muſt haue the moderating of them. Why? For we know not his will: I knowe not what is meete for mee, neither hath God giuen me any promiſe of it: nowe muſt I in this caſe ſtay my ſelfe, and referre my ſelfe to God in praying to him, I muſt patiently waite for ſuch iſſue as he ſhall thinke good, and I muſt yeelde my ſelfe as a priſoner wholly to his will, vtterly forſaking all mine owne affections. Now then we ſee that where wee be not ſure of Gods will: wee muſt not warrant our ſelues any thing vppon our owne heades, but wee muſt goe to it with condition, that God ſhall doe to vs as hee liſteth. And therewithall wee muſt pray him to make vs thinke wel of al his doings, and to deale ſo with vs as wee may agree there vnto: howbeit, not as inforſed, but of our owne accorde. Thus yee ſee what we haue to remember vppon this example of Moſes. Sith it is ſo: let vs beware that we pray not for any thing, which we knowe doth diſpleaſe God and is condemned of him. As howe? If we ſhould deſire him that we might liue euer in this worlde: we knowe we be created to another ende, yea and we cannot be his children, but we muſt be as pilgrims in this world, as ſaith the Apoſtle. He,11.13,16 Seeing it is ſo: he that ſhoulde deſire to liue alwayes here, ſhould renounce the kingdome of heauen, ſeparate himſelf from god, and barre himſelfe from all acceſſe vnto him. So then yee ſee heere a thing that were cleane contrarie to the manner of praying aright: as much is to be ſaide of all our ſinfull luſtes. Wee knowe what God hath forbidden vs: if we deale to the contrarie, is it not as if wee ſhoulde play the chafed bulles or wilde beaſtes? And ſuppoſe wee that ſuch manner of praying prouoketh not Gods vengeance againſt vs? Is it not a heynous treaſon to him, ſeeing wee cannot deuiſe to abuſe his name more falſly? Therefore wee muſt alwayes looke wel about vs. Seeing the caſe ſtandeth vppon the finding out of the will of our God: wee muſt (I ſay) be well aduiſed what he promiſeth vs, & then ſhall we haue our requeſts graunted vs.

Yet notwithſtanding wee haue to marke, *that when Moſes deſired God that hee might goe ouer Iordan*: hee did it not wilfully of purpoſe to diſobey God. For hee had humbly receiued the condemnation that wee ſawe, whereby GOD had baniſhed him from entering into the lande of promiſe: but as nowe he forgetteth himſelfe, and this eſcapeth from him. When as wee ſee this, let vs marke that wee had neede to bee ſo much the more diligent in examining our owne wiſhes, to witte whether they bee conformable to Gods wil, and ſquared throughout by the rule of his worde or no. For wee may well proteſte that our intent is to bee ſubiect to God, and wee may well ſay it without diſſimulation: but yet in the meane time wee ſhall not ceaſe to bee intangled in wandering imaginations, and our wittes ſhall vaniſh away. If Moſes being a man wholly bent to obey GOD, were ſo farre ouerſeene, as to confounde himſelfe in his owne requeſt: what ſhall wee doe? For wee haue a great ſort of thicke and darke cloudes, which dimme our ſight that wee cannot ſee cleare. And therefore let vs ſharpen our wittes, that we may conſider what is lawfull for vs to demaunde with godlineſſe, and what liketh God according as hee ſhall haue declared it vnto vs. Thus yee ſee what wee haue to beare in minde. And if wee chaunce at any time to ouerſhoote our ſelues through heate, and to require the thing which wee cannot tell whether wee ſhoulde obtaine or no: let vs by and by correct it with this addition, My God, thy will bee done. As for example, A man hath his childe or his wife ſicke, or he is in ſome other perplexitie: Alas my God (ſaith hee), and hee caſteth forth ſome vehement affection, ah my God, wilt not thou pittie mee? muſt I bee thus afflicted with extremitie? Well, when hee hath made this requeſt, he muſt acknowledge that there is a fault in it. And let vs not excuſe our ſelues by ſaying, As for me, I neuer meant to withſtand God or his will: but when wee once knowe the fault, let vs goe and adde this correction, Alas my God, indeede ſuch is my deſire, that thou knoweſt to what end it is: but yet for all that, it becommeth me to yeelde thee thy principall ſeruice which thou preferreſt before all others: that is to wit, obedience, ſo as I humble my ſelf wholly in this caſe vnder thy hande. Euen ſo Lorde, diſpoſe thou of mee and of all mine at thine owne pleaſure. Ye ſee then that in examining our requeſts, when we doubt whether God like of them or no: we muſt enter into this conſideration, that God ought to ouerrule vs, that we may yeeld him his deſerued honour, and all our affections bee ſo bridled, as he may haue the maſterie of vs. That is the true manner of praying, if we intend to be hearde.

But by the way we muſt alſo marke the thing that is ſet downe heere. Moſes to the intent to obtaine his requeſt, ſaith, *Lorde thou haſt begun to ſhewe thy ſeruant the highneſſe of thy mightie hande.* When Moſes ſpeaketh after that faſhion, it is a kinde of proteſting that his putting of himſelfe forth to pray, is not for any ſeruice that he hath done to God: hee alledgeth not any ſuch thing. No: but he proteſteth that God had ſhewed him fauour alreadie, and therefore he deſireth him to continue it ſtill. And it is a point that wee ought to marke wel, namely that when we come vnto God, the beſt reaſon that wee can alledge vnto him, to winne our requeſts at his hande, is to ſay, alas Lorde, wee be exceedingly bound vnto thee alredie. If a mortall man haue done vs a good turne, wee may well bee aſhamed to be alwayes hanging vpon him: but it is not ſo towards God: For he neuer ceaſeth to do vs good: neither can hee bee dreined drie in doing good, as creatures ſhould. And yet notwithſtanding, if wee ſhould return three or foure times to a man that hath done vs good or pleaſured vs, we might ſay: Sir, the goodneſſe that you haue ſhewed mee heretofore, for the which I think myſelfe greatly boūd vnto you, maketh me bold to repaire vnto you againe, euen to increaſe my dette to you the more. If wee might ſay ſo to mortall men: much more ought wee to ſay it vnto God, for vnto him wee can alledge no deſerts, nor any thing elſe of our owne. Therefore wee muſte followe that which is ſhewed vs heere, ſaying: Lorde, ſeeing thou haſt begunne to do vs good, goe through with it. For God bindeth himſelfe to vs in doing vs good: not that he is tyed to it of neceſſitie, we muſt not ſtep to him with ſuch luſtineſſe as though hee owed vs any thing: but after as we haue felt the experience of his goodneſſe and grace towardes vs, wee may bee ſo much the more familiar with him. And that is the thing whereon wee muſt caſt our eye: and it is alſo the thing wherein GOD is rightly glorified by vs. When I come vnto him and ſay, Ah Lorde, true it is that nothing I am, nor nothing I can: I haue nothing in mee but vtter naughtineſſe: neuertheleſſe, foraſmuch as I haue found thee bountiful to me heeretofore, & thou haſt ſhewed thy ſelfe good to me ſo many ways: therefore doe I reſort vnto thee ſtill. Beholde, by my ſo doing, GOD (ſay I) is glorified, both for the time preſent and for the time to come. And it is not onely Moſes that hath vſed this manner of praying: Wee ſee it was common among all the auncient fathers. Howe often ſee wee it vſed in the Pſalmes: and wee ſee Pſal. 30.7. alſo that Iacob did the like. Gen. 32. 10. Lorde (ſaith hee) I am ſtuffed full of thy benefites: when I conſider the good that thou haſt done mee, I cannot but acknowledge that thou haſt vſed wonderfull mercie towardes mee: and yet for all that, I am faine nowe to repayre to thee ſtill. Wherefore let vs learne, that if Moſes being a man of GOD, yea and ſuch a one as had ſo excellent recorde of the holy Ghoſt, alledged not any deſertes of his, ne vaunted of any worthineſſe of his owne parte, in his praying vnto GOD: much more ought wee to confeſſe that wee bee not worthie to open our lippes vnto him: and to ſtoope and to diſcharge our ſelues of all ſelfeſtimation when wee come vnto him, ſo as wee preſume not vppon any thing that is in our ſelues. Marke that for one point.

But though wee bee vnworthie to pray: wee haue well wherewith to imbolden vs, by reaſon of the greate number of benefites that wee haue receiued at Gods hande. For his reaching out of his hande vnto vs, is not to doe vs good for one day, but to continue, and to giue vs acceſſe to reſort to him againe to morrowe. In ſo much that when GOD hath once beene gracious to vs, thereby hee ſheweth that hee woulde haue vs to come ſtill to him, ſeeing hee hath ſhewed vs the way and opened vs the gate.

So then, let vs learne to call to minde the great number of benefites, whereby GOD hath vttered his loue towards vs, to ſtrengthen our ſelues withall, that wee may take heart to warrant our ſelues by true faith, that hee will heere vs at our neede. And ſurely, as for them that minde not Gods benefites: they bee at their wittes ende when they come to the pinche. And the ſame is the verie cauſe why we be ſo colde in praying, and why we goe to it ſo vnluſtily, not knowing whether wee ſhall obtaine aught or no, or whether our prayers ſhall bee in vaine and vnprofitable or no. Why ſo? For wee bethinke vs not of the promiſes that GOD hath made vs, and (as yee would ſay) of the hanſels which he hath giuen vs. Matt.7.7. He hath aſſured vs oftentimes that wee ſhall neuer come vnto him amiſſe: and we thinke not vppon it at all. Our owne vnthankfulneſſe therfore, is the let that wee haue not a true and right truſt in him, and that wee cannot repaire vnto him to ſay, Lorde, I doubt not but thou art mercifull to mee, and admitteſt mee alwaies vnto thee, but not for any worthineſſe of mine. Neuertheleſſe I beſeeche thee remember the benefites that I haue receiued at thy hand: for it is vpon that truſt that I come vnto thee: hoping that as thou haſt ſhewed thy ſelfe gracious and bountifull to mee heretofore, ſo thou wilt continue ſtill vnto the ende. Thus ye ſee what wee haue to remember in that Moſes ſaieth, *Lord thou haſt begun to ſhewe thy ſeruaunt the highneſſe of thy mightie arme.*

Now Moſes ſpeaketh here expreſſely of Gods highneſſe and greatneſſe, and of the mightie power of his hand. As if he ſhould ſay, that God had made him to feele an extraordinarie working, and that the grace whereby hee was induced to pray vnto GOD, was a ſpeciall one aboue that which euerie man feeleth. For God had vttered an vnaccuſtomed maner of power, ſo as they were no common thinges which he ſhewed vnto Moſes. That then was yͤ cauſe why he deſired to bee brought into the lande of promiſe. As if he had ſaide, My God, thou knoweſt that thou haſt choſen mee, not as ſome other perſon among vs, but as an elect veſſel: & therefore foraſmuch as thou haſt vſed mee in thy ſeruice, nowe vouchſafe to bring me into the land. And herein wee ſee, that Moſes deſired this, not ſo much for his owne ſake, as for the whole peoples ſakes, that all of them might haue fared the better by it. For it was a thing that might haue troubled yͤ weaklings, to ſee the leader of yͤ people die. Ye ſee they were a people that were ouerbold, at leaſtwiſe in raſhneſſe: but yet when they ſhould obey God, they were ſeene to be cowardly ynough: and when Moſes died, it was ynough to haue made them vtterly vnweeldie, inſomuch as it might haue cauſed great offence among them. What meaneth this [might they haue ſaide?] The Lorde was determined to put vs in poſſeſſion of the lande: and why doeth he nowe bereaue vs of him whom he had ordeined to bee our guide? Moſes hath bene his lieuetenant vnto this houre, and nowe he goeth away to die. It ſhould ſeeme then that God had altered his minde, and intended not to goe through with the thing he had begun. Moſes had an eye to all this. And therefore, if we looke no further, we ſee ſo much yͤ more, that his deſire was good and holy: but his fault was, that being condemned of God, whereas he ought to haue held him to it and not to haue gone any further to reply againſt it: he did it not.

Moreouer he addeth therewithall, *What God is hee in heauen or earth, that hath done according to thy workes, and according to thy mightie power?* This manner of ſpeache to ſay, *What God is he in heauen or earth*, ſeemeth perchaunce to be fond. For is there any other GOD, than hee that had publiſhed his lawe by the hand of Moſes? If hee alonely bee God; then is this compariſon ſuperfluous, yea and euen fonde; and to no purpoſe. But wee haue to note that in ſpeaking ſo, Moſes meant not that there is a multitude of Gods, ſo as euerie of them wrought according to his owne abilitie and power, and that the GOD of Iſrael ſurmounted all the reſt, and was mightier than they all: Moſes had no ſuch diueliſh ſuperſtitiō in his head. For he knew well ynough yͭ there is but onely one God, euen he that had reuealed himſelfe to their father Abraham, the verie ſame which had ſhewed by his deedes, that he is yͤ euerlaſting & vnchangeable God: but he ſpake ſo as in reſpect of men. Although men do generally confeſſe that all good commeth of God: yet ceaſſe they not to forge idols after their owne fanſie: inſomuch yͭ in ſted of reſorting to the true God that made heauen & earth, which reuealed himſelfe to the fathers: they wander away after their own imaginations Rom.1.21. (as ſaith S. Paul,) and fal to deuiſing of they wote not what. As ſoone as we conceiue any whit of the diuine Maieſtie: by and by wee bee gadding after idols, and turne away from the liuing God. And thereupon came it that euerie nation had his God. If man had aſked them, what intende ye to doe, yee wretched ſoules? [they woulde haue anſwered,] wee intende to ſerue God. But yet for all that, they worſhipped idoles. And why? For they turned away from the ſimple eſſence of God; and worſhipped the things which they had ſet vp in their owne dotages and fooliſh conceites. According whervnto, when any of thē had any welfare or proſperitie, they would ſay, God be praiſed, God hath done vs this good turne: but in the meane while they fathered all vpon their idols. If a mā had ſaid to the Egyptians in the time of Moſes, now ſirs ye haue had a fruitefull yeere, yee haue gotten in good ſtore of Corne and Wine, and whence comes all this? [They woulde haue anſwered,] it is GOD that hath helped vs. And yet notwithſtanding they worſhiped an Oxe, they worſhipped bruite beaſtes, yea and euen Serpentes and the herbes of the earth. It was as brutiſh a kinde of dealing as might be. Although this people was ſharpe witted and ſuttle aboue all others: yet were they become ſo brutiſh, that they gaue ouer themſelues to all the abominations of the worlde. To bee ſhorte, when they had either peace, or health, or abundaunce of wealth: they woulde ſay *God*, *God*: the worde *God* ran trotting euery where: But in the meane while euerie man had a God by himſelfe. Such a one was Baal Peor (of whom wee ſhall ſpeake hereafter) which was the GOD of the Ammonites. Thus did Idolatrie reigne euery where, and euerie man had his Patrons and gods by himſelfe. In conſideration whereof Moſes ſaith, Of a trueth Lorde, men abuſe thy benefites, Deut.10.17. & Pſal.50.1 & Eſa.45.21

and when thou doeſt them good,(as in deede all proceedeth from thy hand:) they do vtterly forget it, or marre it, or beelie it. For they beare themſelues on hande that they receiue thoſe things of their Gods,that is to ſay of their idols, which are but leaſinges and dotages. And ſo are men vtterly ouerſeene. But Lord,howſoeuer the world fareth,thou haſt vttered ſuch a power towardes vs, as all the Heathen muſt needes haue their mouthes ſtopped, ſo as they cannot ſaye, Theſe are Gods that haue wrought as great miracles as the God of Iſrael. If thy deliuering of thy people bee compared with all the benefites which thou haſt beſtowed vpon men: it will appeare that thou art the ſoueraigne God, & that thou haſt ſhewed forth thy mightie arme in ſuch wiſe,as all other Gods muſt needs be caſt down. Thus ye ſee what Moſeſes meaning was. And the Scripture ſpeaketh often after that maner, as though it graunted men their errour. As if we ſhould ſay,put the caſe,or admit: not that it is ſo in deede, but to come by degrees, to the thing that is to be proued. As for example: if we haue to doe with ſome Papiſt: to the intent wee may teache him according to his raweneſſe, wee will ſay: Go to, in praying vnto God, let the one ſide haue Ieſus Chriſt for their aduocate, and let the other ſide haue the Virgin Marie with the reſt of their Heeſaints and Sheeſaints: and let vs ſee which is the better. For when a man comes vnto God,and ſetteth Ieſus Chriſt before him: he is aſſured by the holy ſcripture, that it is Chriſts office to bee the meane betweene God and him, and to make interceſſion for him. And ſo, hee that prayeth in the name of Ieſus Chriſt, is thoroughly ſure that he goeth not to worke at all aduenture. But as for him that takes the Virgin Marie or any other patrone, he ſhall bee beguiled when he thinkes himſelfe moſt ſure to be heard: for why,he hath no warrant. Now then, which is beſt? Wee ſpeake after that maner to the Papiſtes, not that wee meane it is lawfull to haue patrones: for then ſhould we abuſe Gods name. It is ſaid,that in praying wee muſt bring nothing of our owne head, but faith muſt be our foreleader,and it is as the key to open vs yͤ gate. Neuertheleſſe wee vſe ſuch maner of ſpeache to the vnbeleeuing and ignorant ſort,to draw them by little and little. So then, Moſes maketh not compariſon of the God of Iſrael, as though hee had conceiued in his imagination that there was a ſwarme of Gods, and that euerie of them wrought according to his abilitie: No: he knew well ynough that there is but onely one God: but foraſmuch as he ſawe men ouerſhoote themſelues in that behalfe: he ſaieth that although all other Nations imagine themſelues to receiue benefites at the handes of their Gods: yet notwithſtanding,the God of Iſrael had vttered himſelfe with ſuch power, as he onely ought to bee worſhipped, and men might well vnderſtande that none reigneth but onely he, and that the gouernment of heauen and earth belongeth to none but onely to him, and all men might ſee by the myracles which he had wrought, that all creatures are in his hande. That then was the meaning of Moſes.

Pſal.115.4.8 & Eſa.45.16 & Deut.4.7.34.& 32.37 & Ier.14 22

Let vs marke further, that when the fathers of olde time, did by reaſon hereof deſpiſe idols and all thoſe that worſhipped them: God did ſhewe himſelfe to them alſo, after a mightie faſhion. Their ſaying is, where are the Gods that can doe like the God of Iſrael, which hath vttered ſuch a mightie power? And in deede wee ſee no viſible ſubſtaunce of God: but his will is to haue vs knowe him by his ſhewing of himſelfe in his workes: that is the way that he will haue vs to conceiue him. Seeing then that God hath vttered his mightie power: it is our duetie to magnifie him and to worſhip him in ſuch ſorte, as wee defie all the idols that men haue forged to themſelues,and laugh all the things to ſcorne that haue bene brought in by the world. For why,there is nothing but vanitie and leaſing in them. But foraſmuch as wee be not of ſufficient capacitie to iudge of Gods workes, though they be preſent afore vs,ne can come right vnto him, except he guide vs thither by his worde: let vs learne to hold our ſelues to this doctrine. Therfore whenſoeuer God maketh vs to perceiue his mightie power: let vs bethinke vs of our owne rudeneſſe and infirmitie,and by and by take his worde to vs,to exerciſe vs therein. And let vs not play the Paynims and wretched Infidels, who are harping vpon yͤ word *God* with their mouth, and in the meane runne trotting vp and downe knowing not what God is in deede. Let vs then followe the infallible trueth. And ſeeing that God hath reuealed himſelfe vnto vs, yea euen in ſuch ſort as wee can not be deceiued nor beguiled: let vs learne to ſtay thereupon,and to holde vs to it throughout. Let vs not bee ſo fond headed,as not to profite our ſelues by the benefites that God beſtoweth dayly vpon vs, and by the which he will be glorified: let all ſuperſtition and Idolatrie bee beaten downe,and let Gods trueth haue full ſcope: let all inuentions of men ceaſſe, and let the world know which is the liuing God. Thus ye ſee after what manner wee muſt proceede: that is to wit,when wee once know God, wee muſt worſhip him, wee muſt goe to the perfection,which is onely he, and whatſoeuer is ſet vp on the contrarie ſide againſt him, it muſt bee brought to naught. For it is not poſſible for vs to worſhip God as wee ſhould doe: except wee put all things vnder foote, which men haue forged and imagined in their owne braine. Wherefore let vs learne to exalt him in ſuch wiſe,as nothing may impeach or darken his preheminence. And foraſmuch as wee knowe not of our ſelues howe wee ſhould glorifie God to yeeld him his deſerued honour: let vs take his worde for our guide, and fetch light at his trueth which is in the holy ſcripture,to the ende wee may knowe that there is none but onely God to whom we ought to reſort, and that it is onely he to whom wee muſt yeeld all praiſe and thankſgiuing.

Nowe let vs kneele downe in the preſence of our good God with acknowledgement of our faultes, praying him to make vs feele them better than wee haue done heretofore,that we may returne vnto him with true repentance:and that foraſmuch as our nature is ſo corrupted, we may fight without ceaſſing againſt our owne deſires, and holde them in ſuch awe, as wee may ſeeke nothing at his hand but that which wee knowe that he alloweth and liketh off: not doubting but that in the meane while he will ſhewe himſelfe bountifull towardes vs in prouiding of all things for vs which are meete for vs and neceſſarie to our ſaluation, ſo as we may learne to ſubmit our ſelues to him, glorifying him, and giuing him thankes for all his benefites, in ſuch wiſe as his bounteouſneſſe be not buried, but euery of vs acknowledge more and more howe much he is bound vnto him, and yeelde him praiſe for the ſame. That it may pleaſe him to graunt this grace, not onely to vs, but alſo, &c.

On Fryday the x. day of May. 1555.

The xviij. Sermon which is the fourth vpon the third Chapter.

26 And the Lord God was angrie with mee for your ſakes, and heard mee not, but ſaid vnto mee, be contented, ſpeake no more to mee of this matter.

27 Get thee vp to the top of Phaſga, and lift vp thine eyes towardes the Weſt, the North, the South and the Eaſt: and beholde with thine eyes: for thou ſhalt not go ouer this Iordan.

28 But charge Ioſua, and ſtrengthen him, and imbolden him: for hee ſhall goe ouer before the people, & put them in poſſeſſion of the land which thou ſhalt ſee.

29 And ſo we abode in the valley againſt Beth-phogor.

I Told you yeſterday, how it was not any fleſhly luſt that moued Moſes to deſire to goe into the promiſed land, but a holy zeale, to the ende that ẏ people might haue bene the better confirmed in the grace of God. And that it is ſo, a man may gather by this ſpeache, where he deſireth expreſſely to ſee the good Mountaine and the Libanus. For it is verie certaine, that Ieruſalem & the Countrie about it, were neither the beſt, nor the faireſt, nor the fruitfulleſt of all Iurie. There were other ſoyles, which were both richer and pleaſanter alſo. And yet doeth Moſes preferre Libanus and the good Mountaine before all the reſt. And no doubt but he meaneth the Mountaine Morea. Wee ſee then that he reſted wholly vpon the thinges that were ſpirituall, bicauſe God had reuealed vnto him that the Temple ſhould bee bulded there, & that it was the place which God had choſen to bee worſhipped and called vpon there. That was the cauſe why he ſet all his minde vpon it. And therefore let vs marke, that Moſes deſired not to enter into that land, to fill his belly there, or to liue in delight and pleaſure there: but onely to ſtirre vp himſelfe the more to knowe Gods grace, which he had taſted alreadie in ſpirit, and likewiſe to help the people by his example. Yet for all this, he is refuſed, howbeit not in ſuch wiſe as if God had vtterly reiected him: but as in reſpect that hee intended to chaſtiſe him by depriuing him of a temporall benefite. And thereby we be yet more confirmed in the thing that was treated of yeſterday: that is to wit, that albeit our affections be not alwaies wicked, yet they ſhall not alwaies be graunted vs, when God intendeth to humble vs. For ſometimes we may haue offended him: and he muſt be faine to cut vs off from his benefites. True it is that our ſaluation abydeth alwaies certaine: but as for our preſent ſtate, it appaireth ſo farre as wee can ſee, inſomuch that whereas God made vs to feele his fauour moſt abundantly and in verie large meaſure: we haue but a ſmall peece of it. If this befell to Moſes, let not vs thinke it ſtraunge if God deale after the ſame maner with vs.

Nowe whereas Moſes ſaieth *That he was not heard:* it is to be referred to this ſpeciall ſute of his. For God doeth neuer quite ſhake off his faithfull ones when they call vpon him, at leaſtwiſe generally: for he is alwayes mercifull to them, and their praying to him is not in vaine. Matt.7.7.9. But yet for all that, he graunteth them not euery particular thing that they aske of him. It may ſo happe that a faithfull man, ſhall make ſome requeſt in his prayer vnto God, (yea, for as was ſaid yeſterday, there is not a harder thing than to bridle our ſelues in ſuch ſort, as wee paſſe not our boundes:) there may ſome ſuch requeſt (I ſay) ſlip from a faithfull man, as ſhall bee good in it ſelfe, and yet notwithſtanding, God ſhall not vouchſafe to graunt it. Then is he not heard in that behalfe: but yet ſhall not his prayer bee vaine and vnprofitable. For though he obteine not in that point: yet ceaſſeth he not to bee in Gods fauour, neither doeth God faile to regarde his neceſſities. So then let vs note, that all the prayer of Moſes was not reiected at Gods hand, as though he had obtained nothing at al of him: but onely as touching that point, wherein it behoued him to haue deniall at Gods hand. That is the thing which he meant here.

But it is ſaid expreſſely, *That the Lord was angrie with him for the peoples ſake,* Deut.1.37. as we haue ſeene alreadie heretofore. Wherein he meaneth not

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altogether to iuſtifie himſelfe: but he doeth it to the end that the people ſhould finde their owne fault, and humble themſelues vnto God. If Moſes had meant to vphold that he was not in any fault, nor blame worthie: he had couertly accuſed God. For is it written, that he that ſinneth ſhall beare his owne puniſhment. Then muſt it needes bee, that Moſes was not cleare: or elſe that God did him wrong in puniſhing him for the peoples ſake. But I haue declared heretofore, that he glorified not God as hee ought to haue done. In deede this appeareth not by the ſtorie: for it ſhould ſeeme there, that he did his duetie as well as could be wiſhed: but only God is the competent iudge thereof. Although Moſes could not be condemned by his wordes, nor by any outward ſigne: it is ynough that God findeth fault with him, and auoweth that he yeelded him not his due honour. Ye ſee then that Moſes was faultie: and that Gods baniſhing of him out of the lande of promiſe, was for his offences ſake, ſo as he coulde not ſay that he had not deſerued ſuch puniſhment.

Why then doeth he lay the blame vppon the people? As I ſaide afore, it is not to cleare himſelfe, but to make the people to knowe their own euill dealing: yea and alſo to conſider, that ſeeing Moſes being ſo excellent a man, and a man choſen of God, did ſuffer ſuch reproch and diſhonour: they themſelues ought to be the more caſt downe. Thereby then the people is warned to thinke the better vppon their owne faulte. And in verie deede this offence of theirs was verie grieuous and exceeding great. For we knowe that Moſes had an earneſt zeale to ſerue God, and that it was his whole ſeeking. Neuertheleſſe the murmuring that roſe among the people for want of water, was as a tempeſt to carie Moſes away. Beholde, Moſes is as a rocke, he is wholly ſetled in Gods ſeruice: and therefore it muſt needes be that the peoples riſing in vprore was with horrible violence, euen as if a rocke were ſhaken with ſome tempeſt. And ſo wee ſee that the people were vtterly deſtitute of all patience and as good as ſtarke mad, and that it could not be but that the diuell poſſeſſed them, ſeeing that the fire of it did euen ſindge Moſes. Alſo this puniſhment of his ſheweth how great the peoples offence was. What had Moſes done? For his owne part he deſireth nothing but to liue & die in glorifying God. And yet notwithſtanding, God ſetteth a marke of infamie vpon him for all ages to ſee, in reſtraining him out of the promiſed land. Sith it is ſo: what puniſhment doe the people deſerue, which were the cauſe of the miſchiefe and the chiefe authors thereof?

Nowe to apply this doctrine to our vſe, let vs take good heede that we driue not others to doe amiſſe, leaſt the whole blame light vppon our owne neckes. Not that our thruſting of any man out of the way can quit him: for God will neuertheleſſe correct him for it: but howſoeuer the world goe, we ſhall be guiltie of al the ſinnes that wee haue occaſioned. This ought well to bridle vs, to the ende that no cauſe of ſtumbling proceede from vs. And beſides this, let vs conſider that if God haue giuen vs gouernours that labour to diſcharge their dueties: if we vexe them in ſuch ſorte as they ſwarue or ſtart aſide from the right way: wee ſhall yeeld account of it before God, and at the laſt his curſe will light vpon our heades. Hereby all folkes are warned to liue ſimply & peaceably in obedience to their ſuperiors, ſpecially when they ſee them diſpoſed to ſerue God: to the ende that they may take courage, and continue & increaſe in goodneſſe. And if we fall to raiſing of trouble and diſorder: ſurely if they that haue committed but halfe a faulte be corrected, wee ſhall bee dubble puniſhed, and anſwere for all the inconuenience, as of a trueth wee deſerue well to bee charged with it before God. Thus ye ſee what wee haue to marke vpon that ſpeach, where Moſes telleth the people againe, how it was for their ſakes that yͤ Lord was angrie with him.

2.Cor.12.9.

Nowe let vs returne to the matter which wee beganne withall: that is to wit, that although GOD chaſtiſed Moſes by bereauing him of a temporall benefite: yet was that no impeachment to his ſaluation. And ſo meaneth he by theſe woordes, *Bee contented, and ſpeake no more to mee of this matter.* In ſaying *bee contented:* he doeth him to vnderſtande that he hath wherewith to content him, foraſmuch as God is ſtill mercifull to him, & acknowledgeth him for one of his, and taketh him ſtill as of his houſholde, & caſteth him not out of his kingdome. Seeing that all theſe thinges abide vnto him ſtill: hee ſheweth him that he ought to reſt without greeuing of himſelfe ouermuch. And it is a very notable and profitable point; namely, that we ought not to be too ſorrowful and grieued out of meaſure, ſo long as GOD bereaue vs not of the ſubſtaunce of our ſaluation. Wee heare what anſwere Saint Paule had, when he was afflicted, yea and euen buffeted by Satan, and God had caſt him downe in ſuch ſorte, that he was as one at the point to bee troden vnder foote. Now he beſought God to be deliuered from ſuch temptations: but anſwere is made him at Gods hand, Let my grace ſuffice thee. GOD telleth him hee will aſſiſt him, but as for the comberance, he muſt beare it ſtill. Therefore let vs learne to put a difference betweene the thinges that are of the ſubſtaunce of our ſaluation, and the appurtenances which are in deede the tokens of Gods loue and goodneſſe, but yet may bee forborne of vs whẽſoeuer God thinketh good, whether it be to chaſtiſe vs, or to trie our patience, or to any other purpoſe, that he deale ſo with vs. As for example: the things yͭ are of the ſubſtance of our ſaluation are theſe: that God forgiue vs our ſinnes, that he keepe vs vnder his protection, yͭ he dwell in vs by his holy ſpirit, yͭ the light which he hath giuen vs by his Goſpel be not quẽched, & that we may take him for our father, to cal vpon him and to flee to him for refuge. So then, the ſubſtaunce of our ſaluation, is yͭ the ſeede of faith abide continually in vs, that God guide & gouerne vs by his holy ſpirit, and that he make vs feele his goodneſſe, ſo as wee reſt thervpon. But yet for all this, many temptations may befal vs,yea euen ſuch as may pluck vs back from calling vpon God. Not that they can ſhut vs quite out from him: but yet they may ſo comber vs, as wee ſhal not be able to reſorte to God ſo freely as wee woulde. Againe, wee ſhall be toſſed with many ſorrowes and many hartbytings. On the one ſide wee ſhall haue ſickeneſſe,and on the other ſide pouertie: beſides theſe, men ſhall doe vs wrong, and diuers other inconueniences, and to be ſhorte, wee ſhall in effecte doe nothing but pyne and languiſhe. In deede if God delt ſo mildely with vs, as wee might alwayes haue our mouthes open to prayſe him, ſo as there were nothing but myrth and eaſe in our lyfe: wee ſhould perceiue his loue the more playnely. But yet in the meane while, although wee be afflicted, although wee haue much anguiſhe and griefe: yet doth the ſubſtance of our ſaluation continue ſtill. What is to be done in this caſe? Let it content vs that GOD is our father. Although he handle vs not as wee woulde wiſhe, but rather cleane contrariwiſe: ſo as in ſteade of ſweeteneſſe, wee finde bitterneſſe, and hee graunteth not our requeſtes at the firſt choppe, but hideth himſelfe from vs in our afflictions, as if hee had forſaken vs, and giueth vs not meate and drinke at our pleaſure: [finally] when all thinges faile vs: yet let it ſuffice vs that wee haue ſtil the warrant of our adoptiō,& that God ceaſeth not to take vs and auow vs for his children. Theſe (ſay I) are the thinges wherewith we muſt content our ſelues, in ſuch wiſe as all thinges elſe muſt bee borne patiently by vs. And that is it which wee haue to marke vppon theſe wordes where GOD ſayth to Moſes, *bee contented.*

But the vnbeleeuers haue not this prerogatiue: God ſhaketh them off quite, if they cry he giueth deafe eare to them, neither ſaith hee to them for their comfort, bee contented: but hee letteth them chawe vppon the bridle, ſo as they bee in horrible vnquietneſſe and vexation, and haue not wherewith to aſſwage their ſorrowe. For they beleeue not that God beareth them a fatherly good will, nor that hee receiueth them into his fauour. So, now wee ſee more clearely the thing that I touched briefly before: that is to wit, that Gods refuſing of the faithfull, is not an vtter reiecting of their prayers, as though their calling vppon him had not booted them at all: but hee graunteth them generally that which is good for their ſaluation. And as for in the reſt, he cutteth them out their morſels, ſo as hee graunteth them not whatſoeuer they wiſhe, neither were it for their welfare that hee ſhoulde ſo doe.

Therefore muſt wee beare this leſſon ſo in minde, as wee may bee able to put it in vre: that is to wit, that if wee obteine not all that euer wee faine would at Gods hand: but that when we reſort vnto him, he ſuffreth vs to linger ſtil in our miſeries & eaſeth vs not of our troubles at the firſt, ſo as we dragge our winges after vs as they ſay: we muſt bethinke vs of this, that wee muſt be contented. And why? for it is good reaſon that wee ſhould yeelde to the good pleaſure of our God, ſeeing hee reſerueth this ineſtimable benefite and priuiledge to vs, that wee be ſtill muſtered in the aray of his children.

And beſides this, let vs aſſure our ſelues that God furthereth our ſoules health, in refuſing to graunt vs the thinges that he knoweth to be vnmeete for vs. Wee ſee that diuers times hee granted yͤ diſobedient their deſires: but that was Num.11.18. not to their benefite. It had bin much better for them to haue gone without them, and that God had ſayd them flat nay of them. Contrariwiſe, when hee denyeth our requeſtes, and maketh vs to perceiue that it is not reaſon that our luſtes ſhoulde raunge vnbridled, and wee haue all that our fancie runnes vppon: his making of vs to perceiue all this, is our benefite. As for example, if a childe haue a fickle head, (as commonly all children lacke diſcretion) and deſire his father ſome fond or euill thing: if his father let him haue his ſwindge lyke a gooſe: hee putteth the halter about his neck, by cockering of him too much. But if hee ſhewe him a grim looke, and make him perceiue that he is a lightheaded boy, without wit or diſcretion: his child will be the better for it afterward, and this correction whereby his fooliſhe appetite is repreſſed, wil do him good. Euen ſo doth God towards vs: for hee knoweth it is much better for vs to haue our luſtes ſubdewed, than to giue them too much libertie. And that is yͤ cauſe why he did ſo preciſely deny Moſes requeſt.

Wee knowe that if euer man obteined fauor in Gods ſight, it was Moſes inſpecially aboue all other. For God did him the honor to ſhewe Exod.33.11. himſelfe familiarly vnto him face to face, as a friend doth to his companion: for ſo doth the ſcripture it ſelfe report: and yet yee ſee his requeſt was refuſed: [for it was ſayd vnto him,] *Speake no more to mee of this matter.* Hee doth [as it were] threaten him. Now if Moſes were thus dealt with: let vs vnderſtand that wee ought not to take it too much to hart, if God deale roughly with vs nowadayes, and make no haſte to ſuccour vs, but rather that to our ſeeming the miſerie increaſeth dubble, after wee haue prayed vnto him. Let vs not thinke the matter ſtrāge: for it ſhall turne to our benefite. To be ſhort, let vs learne to beare all temporall corrections patiently which God ſendeth vnto vs. Although our condition waxe woorſe and woorſe to the worldward, although wee haue a heauy burthen to beare, although wee haue many harde and grieuous thinges to indure: yet notwithſtanding wee muſt come to this poynt, that foraſmuch as they bee but temporall chaſtiſements, wee may well holde our ſelues quiet, for our ſaluatiō abideth ſtil vnappayred. And although wee obteine not ſome thing which wee aske: yet muſt wee not thinke our ſelues vtterly barred from it, vntil our Lord ſhewe vs by ſome euident ſigne. As how? When a man is in trouble, he repayreth vnto God, and craueth mercie, and yet he findeth no reliefe, but in ſted of eaſement he findeth himſelf tormēted dubble. All yͤ he gaineth by his calling vpon God, is that his miſerie is increaſed. But yet for all this hee muſt not be diſcouraged, but continue ſtill in praying vnto God. And therewithall wee muſt conſider thus: God knoweth to what end hee doth it. And his delaying to grant vs our requeſt, is to ſhewe vs that although hee ſuffer vs to languiſh in our aduerſities: yet doth he not forget vs nor diſdayne to be our father ſtill, but onely teacheth vs to obey him and to bee ſubiect to him. After that manner then muſt wee behaue our ſelues in praying. When it ſhall ſeeme that wee haue loſt our time in calling vpon God: yet muſt wee ſtill come backe to this comforte, ſaying: No, God ſheweth mee that it is not meete for mee to aſke whatſoeuer I thinke good, but that I muſt come and put my ſelfe into his hands with all humbleneſſe, to receiue what hee thinks good, and to holde all my deſires in obedience vnto him. Seeing that hee ſheweth mee this, it behoueth me to frame my ſelfe thereunto, and to take that to bee beſt for mee which hee ſhall vouchſafe to ſend mee. Thus ye ſee what wee haue to remember in the text where God telleth Moſes that hee wil not haue him to ſpeake any more of his going into the lande of Chanaan.

But yet for all that, he ſhewed him the land a farre off. And no doubt but that the ſight of Moſes reached beyond the ordinarie ſight of nature, and beyond all that hee coulde conceiue within kenning. True it is that in the end of this booke it is ſaid, that euen in his old age, although hee was then ſixeſcore yeeres olde, yet his ſenſes were not appaired, but continued ſtil in their full ſtrength. Neuertheleſſe, when as it is ſayd, that he extended his ſight ſo far, as that he could view al the countryes of the lande of Chanaan: [it is euident] that God gaue him ſight aboue the power of nature. And all this tended to this ende, that Moſes might bee aſſured, that Gods deliuering of the people was not to the ende to leaue them in the midway, or to leaue his promiſe vnperformed which hee had made to his ſeruaunt Abraham. And his aſſuring of Moſes thereof, was not onely for Moſes owne ſake, but alſo for all the peoples ſake, to incourage the weaker ſorte, that they might take hart to enter the more boldely into the poſſeſſion of their inheritance after his deceaſe, not doubting but that God would ſtill reache them his mighty hand. That was the cauſe why this great ſight was giuen to Moſes. And wee muſt not maruell that God ſhewed him the land of Chanaan after that ſort: ſeeing he had alreadie reueiled mount Sion & Morea vnto him in ſpirite. Moſes then was confirmed by all meanes, not for himſelfe onely, but chiefely for the edifying of the people. Here by the way wee bee taught, to receiue ſuch taſte of his grace as hee giueth vs, though wee haue but ſome little feeling of it, and inioy it not yet to the full. Moſes ſtanding vppon the toppe of the mountaine, ſaw the land a far off: it behoueth him to ſtay there, and to thãke God for that ſight. Lykewiſe ſometime God will make vs to feele his grace very ſlenderly, at leaſtwiſe in reſpecte of our deſire: for we would fayne haue our fill of it, wee would haue him to giue it vs more plainely: but that would not bee good for vs. Why? Sometimes wee might not call vppon him: but all thinges ought to be ſubmitted to his will. Yet notwithſtanding, wee may chaunce to ſee ſome little ſparke of Gods grace a farre of, or elſe perhaps hee will make vs to feele it: but that ſhall bee ſo ſlenderly, as it ſhal ſeeme that his intent was but to prouoke our appetite, and to whette our wit, and not to content vs.

Deut.34.7.

But yet muſt wee bee contented to receiue whatſoeuer hee giueth vs. Although our fleſhe woulde cary vs further: yet muſt wee reſtraine our ſelues as priſoners, and in ſo doing followe the example of Moſes. For if Moſes had bin lyke to ſuch as are impatient and fall to ſtryuing againſt God: hee would haue held ſkorne to go vp into the mountaine. It is to much purpoſe (would hee haue ſayde) for mee to goe breake my ſhinnes in climbing vp this hil, to goe ſee the mooneſhine in the water. I can forbeare ſuch a ſight. After that faſhion would they deale, which are not yet come to ſuch meekeneſſe, as to bee as lambes and ſheepe. But Moſes ſhewed well, that notwithſtanding that he was the ſhepheard of the people, yet was hee alſo a very ſheepe in deede, ſo as GOD might guide and gouerne him as hee liſted. When hee ſayd to him, get thee vp into the hill: hee knewe hee ſhould haue no more but a ſight of the land, and that the ſame ſight ſhould be a renewing of his griefe, ſo as hee ſhould ſigh at it and might ſay, Alas I am baniſhed from the poſſeſſion of this good land, which I ſee before my face: my deſire is but to make a ſteppe ouer this Iordan, and I am forbidden it. He knewe this. Yet notwithſtanding foraſmuch as God had commaunded him, hee receiued his grace, yea and hee receiued it with ſuch affection, as hee replyed not to the contrary. Not that hee coulde not haue founde in his hart to haue had it otherwiſe: but for that hee did thruſt his owne will vnder foote, to the ende that GOD might haue the whole maiſterie of him. Therefore let vs learne to bee meeke. When our Lord is ſo minded to bring vs vnder awe, and graunteth not the thinges that wee coulde lyke of: let not vs on our ſide refuſe or diſdeine the ſmall taſte of his grace which hee giueth vs, waiting till hee giue vs a larger diſcouerie and fruition thereof. For in this worlde wee muſt bee exerciſed after that maner: and we muſt apply al our indeuer therevnto. Inſomuch that if GOD giue vs not ſuch knowledge of his grace as wee may holde it (as yee would ſay) in our handes: or as wee may haue our fill of it: or as wee may triumph in it: yet muſt wee call vppon him ſtill. And if he giue it vs droppe by droppe, and therewithall wee haue ſtore of griefe and ſorrowes, [ſo as we might ſay,] what will become of this? why doth not GOD admitte me more familarly vnto him? Why doth hee not inriche mee with his goods? why doth hee not beſtowe his benefites vppon mee in greater meaſure? when wee bee in ſuch caſe, wee muſt come to this poynt, [that wee may ſay,] hee dealeth no worſe with mee than he delt with Moſes. So then let vs patiently accept this maner of Gods dealing, which he vſeth to humble vs: and in the meane ſeaſon let vs not forbeare to hope further. For if wee perceiue not out of hand whither wee tend: let it ſuffice vs that God ſheweth vs a farre off, the good which hee hath prepared for vs. And if wee haue not the fruition of it in this world: let vs be contented that he hath layd it vp for vs in heauen, and that it can not faile vs there: as in very deede the land of Chanaan was vnto Moſes as a ſigne and ſacrament of the kingdome of heauen: and yet hee did but ſee it a farre off. Neuertheleſſe, howſoeuer the caſe ſtoode with him, hee had ſtill a warrant that God woulde not bereaue him of his inheritaunce in heauen. That was the poynt that hee reſted on: and ſo muſt wee doe too.

Hee addeth *that he muſt inſtruct, ſtrengthen, and incourage Ioſua, for it is hee that muſt leade the people of Iſraell*. Hereby the obedientneſſe of Moſes is yet better warranted vnto vs. For how many are there to bee ſeene, which woulde bee loth to imploy themſelues in dooing the thinges that God commaundeth them, vnleſſe GOD gaue them the honor as well as the charge? But Moſes reſigneth the honor and dignitie that hee had receiued: God putteth him out of office. Hee ſhould haue bin the leader of the people, to bring them into the land of Chanaan, and ye ſee hee is depoſed from his office with diſhonor and ſhame. Now had hee bin as one of theſe worldlings which know not what it is to giue ouer themſelues playnely vnto God: or had hee bin as a nomber are, who being caryed away with ambition and vainglory, wil alwayes needs be had in eſtimation: hee woulde neuer haue yeelded to doe any thing to Ioſua. But behold, God telleth him here, thou muſt reſigne thy ſtate to Ioſua, and thou muſt inſtruct him, to the end hee may bee ſet in thy place: and knowe thou that hee is worthie to bee my lieuetenaunt, to leade my people into the poſſeſſion of their inheritaunce. Sith wee ſee that Moſes was ready hereuppon to giue ouer his authoritie, ſo as God ſhould bereaue him thereof, and yet hee himſelfe not onely bare no grudge to Ioſua his ſeruaunt when hee ſawe him exalted in his roome: but alſo inſtructed him, and ſought to ſurrender his owne gratious giftes vnto him, as if hee ſhould haue plucked al the good out of his owne hart, to haue ſayd vnto Ioſua, take here that which belongeth vnto thee, to the intent that all may redound to the welfare of the people, and I hencefoorth become as a poore naked man: ſith wee ſee (ſay I) that Moſes was at that poynt: haue wee not an euident proofe that hee regarded not himſelfe? and that hee ſought not any thing elſe but that God might be gloryfied? and that when hee had finiſhed his courſe, the people might ſtill haue a faithful man to guide and gouerne them? Specially ſeeing that euen in his lyfetime, when hee ſawe Gods grace floriſhe and increaſe in a meane perſon which was ſet in preheminence ouer him, he not onely enuied him not, but alſo was willing to helpe & further him, that hee might be able to execute his charge when hee were ſucceeded in his place? This verily is written in commendation of Moſes: but it ſerueth alſo for our inſtruction, to the ende wee may learne to ſubmit our ſelues to our God: that whenſoeuer he liſteth to exalt others in our place, wee may be glad of it, wiſhing that the ſame may redound to the benefite of ẏ people, and indeuoring to helpe thoſe whome God hath choſen and elected, ſo as hee may alwayes reigne & gouerne, and that whenſoeuer it pleaſeth him to exalt men, it may ſuffice vs that hee be gloryfied in them, and none of vs be ſelfewilled in that behalfe, but all in generall ſeeke the maintenaunce of the whole body of the Church in her ſtate, and the benefite, welfare and proſperitie of the ſame. Thus yee ſee what wee haue to remember vppon this text.

Furthermore let vs mark alſo, that whereas Moſes is commaunded to ſtrẽgthen Ioſua: therein God ſheweth vs the effectuall woorking and force of his worde. The incouraging of a man, ſpecially to ſo excellent a worke, is no ſmall matter. And by what meane is that done? By good teaching, and by holy exhortations. Thus are there two thinges to be noted in effect. The one is ẏ ſuch as are ſet in authoritie haue neede to be inſtructed and ſtrẽgthened, that they may be able to doe their duetie. The ſecond is, that Gods word hath this vſe and propertie to frame thoſe which els ſhould be vnmeete, and to ſtrẽgthen them when they be weake: and to be ſhort, to make them fit in all poyntes to execute their office, and whatſoeuer is appoynted them by God.

Therefore let them that are called to any charge or authoritie looke wel to themſelues. For they be not abler men than Ioſua was, who had done a notable act already now forty yeeres agoe, in outſtanding the rebellion of the whole peeple, notwitſtanding ẏ they would haue ſtoned him, and that he ſawe ſo great, and (as ye would ſay) ſo infinite a multitude againſt him, which was not of an hundred men, neither of raſcalles, or of no eſtimation, but there were moe than ſixe hundred thowſand men that did ſet themſelues againſt him: and yet for all ẏ he bare out the brunt, with inuincible conſtancie, and maintained Gods quarell. Ioſua had done this deede fortie yeeres afore: and yet notwithſtanding he is faine to be incouraged ſtil, he is faine to receiue newe inſtruction, hee is faine to be confirmed yet better and better. Now thẽ, what ſhall thoſe do which are as ſillie beaſtes, & can doe nothing? If a man examine them thorowly, although there bee ſome good ſeede of vertue in them, alas, they come farre ſhorte of the perfection that was in Ioſua. Then if they cannot finde in their hartes to be taught, and to be ſtrengthened that they may the better ſerue God: are they not worthie to be put to reproch, ſo as they may not diſcerne what vprightneſſe and Iuſtice meane, but commit ſo groſſe crymes as euen little children may laugh them to ſkorne, and all the worlde bee aſhamed of them? Thus much concerning the firſt poynt.

Deut.17.1.

Wherfore let them yͤ are called to any charge, whether it be to yͤ miniſtring of Gods word, or to the executing of Iuſtice as touching earthly gouernment, or to be maiſters or fathers: let them all (euery one in his owne vocation) vnderſtand, that they haue neede to bee inſtructed, or elſe that they cannot furniſhe out the place to performe their duetie. Let that ſerue for one poynt. Now were this well obſerued: wee ſhould not ſee ſo many skorneful perſons as there are. For vnder color that a man is aduaunced to ſome authoritie, he may no more be ſpoken to: for hee cannot bee but wiſe ynough, ſeeing he is in authoritie. But it is cleane contrary, as we ſee here, and as God hath alſo well ſhewed, in that hee hath giuen Kings a ſpeciall commaundement to haue the bookes of his lawe about them, as wee ſhall ſee in due place hereafter.

And now muſt we alſo note the ſecond point, which hath bin touched already: that is to wit, that if we purpoſe to be wel taught, if we purpoſe to bee confirmed, if wee purpoſe to be wholy diſpoſed to doe the things that our dutie requireth: we muſt repaire to Gods ſchoole. For hee hath giuen the power and efficacie to his worde, not onely to teach vs to knowe what is good, and to giue vs wiſedome and skill: but alſo to make vs ſtrong to goe through with our affaires as wee ought to doe, ſo as we be able to withſtand all euill, and to ouercome all the ſtoppes and lettes which the diuill ſhall thruſt in our way. To bee ſhort, to the end wee may bee able to compaſſe all thinges well, and to goe through with the thinges that God commaundeth vs: let vs bee ready to harken vnto God, and be willing to receiue inſtruction by his worde. And it is certain, that if wee haue that, it will neuer faile vs, for it is a good ſcholemaiſter. But (as I ſaid) it is good reaſon that men ſhould continue in their beaſtlyneſſe, and that GOD ſhould diſcouer their ſhame, when they will not ſubmit themſelues to him, but are ſo ſtately that they thinke it a needeleſſe thing to be taught, becauſe they be no young children any more. Alas, that is euen the very cauſe why god withdraweth his bleſſing from them. But contrarywiſe, let vs doe as Ioſua did. If God bee ſo gracious vnto vs as to teach vs: let vs bee ready to receiue inſtruction, and then ſhall we be inuincible. Albeit that Satan doe practiſe all that euer he can againſt vs: and albeit that the wicked bee as barres to ſtop vs, ſo as by all lykelyhoode wee can not ſet foreward one ſtep, no nor ſtirre one finger: yet ſhall wee bee ſtrengthened by the power of God, ſo wee followe the order that is ſhewed vs here.

Now for a concluſion, it is ſayd of Moſes and the people, *that they abode in the valley ouer againſt the Temple of Pheor*. For *Bethpheor* is as much to ſay, as the houſe of yͤ Idole Pheor: and the word *Houſe* is put for a *Temple*. This is not ſet downe for nought: for it was Gods will to ad this as the vpſhot of condemnation vnto Moſes, that hee was fain to haue the Temple of an Idol continually before his eyes, He was choſen to leade the people of Iſraell into the land of Chanaan. And it is certaine that hee himſelfe murmured not againſt God, ne letted the people from comming there: but yet for all that, when it came to the poynt that hee ſhould haue made the water to come out of the rocke, he went not to it cherefully, but was (as yee would ſay) ouergreeued in his minde, ſo as he gaue not glory vnto God, By meanes wherof whereas Gods ſeruice ſhould haue bin ſet vp in the lande, and whereas there ſhould haue bin ſuch a melodie in calling vppon his name, as al ſuperſtitions ſhould haue bin rooted out, and as all the thinges that had bin ſhewed him in the mountaine ſhould haue bin put in practiſe, that Gods maieſtie might haue bin ſeene ſhining in the middeſt of the people: in ſtead of hauing ſo goodly and (as ye would ſay) angelicall order: he is faine to tary hard by a temple of Idols, he is faine to ſee himſelfe as it were defiled with it, he is driuen to beholde the abhominations that were dayly committed by the heathen as it were in deſpite of God, he is driuen to ſee the true religion ouerthrowen: and this could not bee but a great hartbreaking to him, and worke a terrible vexation in his minde. Now vppon this example wee haue to gather, how it is not for naught that our Lorde cauſeth vs to ſee thinges that ought to offend vs and to caſt vs into great heauineſſe. And why? For we be not worthie to ſee his ſeruice throughly in good order, and to ſee his religion purely and ſoundely obſerued, ſo as he might bee worſhipped with one common conſent throughout all the world. We bee not worthie to inioy ſuch a benefite. For the full perfection of all felicitie that wee can haue in this world, is that GOD be ſerued and honored, and that in ſuch wiſe, as all ſuperſtitions, al abuſes, and all other things that may corrupt his ſeruice, bee layde downe. But for examples ſake, wee ſee at this day how God mingleth many of his faithful ones among the Papiſtes, where they be faine to behold abhominations dayly with their eyes, and are held in ſo ſtrait bondage, as they dare not open their mouthes to ſpeake againſt them. They ſee Gods temples turned into no better than brothelhouſes, and fraughted with ſo fowle and filthie baggage, that it were much better that Temples or Churches were neuer ſpoken of, than to haue ſuch as are in the popedom. But yet this are yͤ poore faithful ones driuen to behold. And why? For they be not worthie to ſee ſuch reformation as they deſire, God intendeth to humble them, and hee knoweth to what ende. And leaſt wee ſhould perke vp aboue other men to ſay, heere is no corruption: alas, what are we? Though there be not open Idolatrie among vs, is there not a horrible cōtempt of God by ſwearing, and a rebelling againſt his worde? Is there not ſuch a beaſtlyneſſe to bee ſeene in a great nomber, as it were much better for them to become Turkes and Heathen men, than to pretend the name of Chriſtianitie which they abuſe ſo ſhamefully? Are they not ſeene to bee manifeſt deſpiſers of God, and to bewray themſelues in ſuch ſorte, as euen little children may diſcerne eerne it? Now then ſith wee ſee ſuch corruptions among vs: let vs vnderſtand that they bee the rewards of our ſins. And therfore let vs bewaile our caſe, aſſuring our ſelues that Gods ſuffering of ſuch minglemangle among vs, is to make vs perceiue that wee deſerue well to be ſo intangled. Yea, which woorſe is, wee ſee this come to paſſe, euen where the Goſpel was purely preached. Is not the helliſh corruption of the *Interim* returned againe? Doth not the worlde ſee how idolatrie is ſet vp againe by it? And think wee that this is happened without Gods iuſt puniſhment? Now therefore let vs looke well to it, that lyke as it was Gods wil to humble his ſeruant Moſes and al the people, by facing them with the temple of a curſed idoll: ſo lykewiſe nowadayes, ſith wee ſee ſo great corruptions, ſith wee ſee religion diſguyſed, ſith wee ſee on the one ſide idolatrie, and on the other ſide loſeneſſe and occaſion of ſtumbling: let vs vnderſtand that all this commeth through Gods iuſt vengeance, by reaſon of our ſinnes. Wherefore let vs humble our ſelues and mourne, vntill it pleaſe God to ſet al thinges againe in ſuch order and plight, as wee may all call vppon him with one common accord, foraſmuch as the ſame is the ende whereunto hee hath ſet vs together, and for the which hee hath redeemed vs ſo deerely with the bloud of his ſonne.

Now let vs kneele downe in the preſence of our good God with acknowledgement of our ſinnes, praying him to mortify them more and more, that wee may learne to be ſo ſubdued, as our whole ſeeking may be to obey him, and to glorify him in all thinges that hee liſteth to doe, and that in the meane while we may not be wedded to our owne affections and fleſhly luſtes, but that although wee haue neuer ſo many incomberances in this world, & neuer ſo many meanes to turne vs from the right way: yet notwithſtanding wee may goe through with the courſe of his calling, vntill hee haue deliuered vs from all Satans trappes, and from all thinges that hee ſetteth afore vs to make vs turne head, and to hinder vs from going forewarde to our ſaluation, euen till wee bee come thither. That it may pleaſe him to graunt this grace, not onely to vs but alſo &c.

On Wedneſday the xv. of May. 1555.

The nineteenth Sermon which is the firſt vpon the fourth Chapter.

NOw then O Iſrael, hearken to the ordinaunces and Lawes which I teache you to doe, that yee may liue and goe in and poſſeſſe the lande, which the Lord God of your fathers giueth you.

2 Ye ſhall not adde anie thing to the word which I command you, neither ſhall yee take anie thing from it, to intent yee may keepe the commaundementes of the Lord your God which I commaund you.

THe concluſion ẏ Moſes maketh here, is wel worthie to be marked: for it maketh for the matter which hath bin expounded heretofore: that is too wit, that wee haue neede to bee prepared to the obeying of our God, becauſe wee bee diſobedient of our own nature, and our affections drawe contrarie to his will, inſomuch that whereas hee will haue vs to walke vprightly, there is nothing but vtter lewdeneſſe in vs. Againe, if wee happen to haue any good diſpoſition & deſire to walke after Gods commaundementes: wee ſtart away incontinently in the turning of a hand, and there is no conſtancie in vs towardes any good. On the other part, wee haue a ſorte of fooliſhe dotages, which cary vs away, ſo as wee will needes bee euer diſputing with God, yea and be wiſer than hee. Therefore haue wee neede to be ſubdued and humbled by al meanes, or elſe God ſhall neuer be able to welde vs. For this cauſe it is ſayd, that the people heard not the lawe publiſhed vnto them one day onely, but that they were often times put in minde of it. And that foraſmuch as they were ſtubborne, GOD had ſubdued them by many chaſtiſementes, as by leading them about in the wilderneſſe the ſpace of fortie yeeres, to inure them to obedience: and by trying them diuers wayes, to teach them that it was no reſiſting of ſuch a maiſter.

After that Moſes hath treated of all thoſe thinges: hee ſayth, *Harken now O Iſraell, what I tell thee in the name of God*. As if hee ſhould ſay, it is time now or neuer for you to begin to walke in obedience, that yee bee no more lyke wilde folke as yee haue bin, that yee giue not head to your wicked luſtes, that yee bee not ſo fierce as to ſhake off Gods yoke, and that ye ſtick not to your owne fond inuentions which make you to runne aſtray: but that yee beare well in minde what yee haue indured. For if yee cannot yet bowe your neckes to ſubmit your ſelues to your G O D: in the ende hee muſt be faine to breake you, if ye will not bowe. *Now heere yee his voyce*, ſayth hee. And wee muſt apply this to our vſe. That is to ſay, Seeing it is now a great while agoe ſince wee began to heare the worde of God: wee muſt not bee ſtill as young nouices, we muſt not bee lyke the young bullockes or Steeres which cannot yet skill what it is to beare the yoke: but wee muſt bee throughly acquainted with obeying. If they that neuer were taught Gods trueth bee wildeheaded and cannot finde in their heartes to ſtoope at the firſt, but runne gadding heere and there after a number of worldly vanities: it is not to bee wondered at. True it is that that ſhall not ſerue to excuſe them: no ſurely: for ſeeing that God hath created vs to the ende to ſerue and honor him: wee ought to giue our ſelues wholy vnto him, euen from our mothers wombs.

Neuertheleſſe if wee be ſomewhat ſtraunge for want of teaching: it may bee borne withall among men. But if at the end of twentie yeeres, when wee haue had our eares continually beaten with the Goſpell, ſo as G O D hath ſpoken vnto vs earely aud late, and [cryed out vnto vs] to waken vs: wee abide ſtill at our Abſie, and wot not what rule or doctrine meaneth: muſt it not needes bee ſayd that wee bee of too vntowarde a nature? Yes: and that is it which the Apoſtle meaneth in ſaying, yee ought by this time to haue bin great doctors in reſpect of the time that yee haue gone to ſchoole: and beholde yee bee ſtill rawe and vnlearned, ſo as it ſhoulde ſeeme that G O D neuer ſpake to you. According then to the time that God of his grace ſhall haue beſtowed in teaching of vs by his worde: let vs learne to yeelde our ſelues the more teachable, and to ſhewe that he hath not loſt his labor, but that we haue profited well in his ſchoole. And this poynteth at vs ineſpecially. For howe long time hath the Goſpel beene preached among vs? ſo as wee heard nothing elſe euery day, but what Gods will is. Nowe then, it is good reaſon that wee on our ſide ſhould not bee ſo ſtraunge, but that wee ſhoulde conſider, that wee ought not to bee ſtill newe to beginne, in the things that haue beene tolde vs ſo often alreadie. And againe wee muſt profite alſo as well by chaſtiſementes as by teaching. If G O D haue humbled vs in any wiſe, becauſe hee ſeeth that wee cannot otherwiſe bee ſubdued vnto him, ſo as hee hath tamed one with ſickeneſſe, and another with pouertie, after what faſhion ſoeuer G O D hath made vs to feele his hande: let vs looke well to it that wee profite our ſelues thereby, and that this word *Now* which Moſes vſeth here, be wel printed in our hearte and minde. So that if wee haue bin ouerſeene, if wee haue not at the firſt bin ſo well diſpoſed to liue as it becommeth vs, if wee haue not bin ſo forewarde as wee ought to haue bin in running to our God when hee hath called vs: at leaſtwiſe let vs not continue ſo hardharted and ſtubborne to the vttermoſt.

1.Cor.3.1.

But nowe let vs ſee in effect what Moſes requireth here. *Hearken O Iſrael* (ſayth he) *to the ordinaunces and ſtatutes which I teach thee to doe, that thou mayſt liue and enter into the land which the Lorde thy God giueth thee, and poſſeſſe it*. Here Moſes declareth that our lyfe ſhall alwayes bee full of diſorder and confuſion, vntill wee haue yeelded ſo much authoritie vnto God ouer vs, as to haue the [whole] guyding of vs, and that wee haue made our account to reſt ſimply vppon his worde. To bee ſhorte, wee bee taught heere, to rid our ſelues of all ſelfweening, and that when the caſe concerneth how to liue well, wee muſt not ſtep to it vppon our owne head, and after our owne fancie, to ſay, this ſeemeth good to mee. Whereat muſt wee then begin? At learning, as Moſes declareth. And therefore hee that giueth eare vnto God, to receiue whatſoeuer is tolde him from him, ſhall bee well learned. But on the contrary part, vntill ſuch time as wee haue heard our G O D ſpeake, and that hee haue performed the office of a teacher towardes vs: it is certeine that our life ſhall be quite out of order. Wee may well flatter our ſelues as ignorant wretches doe, who beare themſelues in hand that the worlde goes as well with them as is poſſible, when in the meane while they be no better than bewitched, ſo as there is neither wit nor diſcretion in them. Ye ſee then that the thing which wee haue to marke vppon this text, is that if wee meane not to leade a diſordered lyfe, and ſuch a one as God vtterly miſlyketh: wee muſt hearken vnto him. And heere it appeareth of what valewe good intents (as they terme them) are: whereof I will treate more at length anon. For if it behoue vs to heare God ſpeak, before we lift vp one foote to goe foreward: what will become of vs when euery of vs is wedded to his owne fancie, and when our luſtes are ſo wilde? Doth it not appeare that God refuſeth all ſuch thinges in one worde? Againe, Moſes telleth vs that God on his ſide, will teach vs faithfully, ſoundly, and perfectly: conditionally that we refuſe not to be ruled by him and to obey him. And hee vſeth mo wordes than one. For he could haue ſayd, hearken to the Lawe, or hearken to his commaundementes: but hee ſayth, hearken to his ſtatutes and ordinances. And in other places he ſetteth downe *Statutes, ordinances, commaundementes, and rules*. This is not a ſuperfluous ſpeach, but it ſerueth to expreſſe the better, that it is long of none but our ſelues that wee be not well and faithfully taught. But what for that? Men are ſo luſtie, as they cannot temper themſelues to yͤ ſimplicitie of Gods worde, to ſay that it ſhall ſuffiſe them to be gouerned by God, and to receiue whatſoeuer is ſet before them in his name. Men cannot abide ſuch modeſtie: but are alwayes itching after their owne inuentions, and yet in the meane while doe ſtill arme thēſelues wͭ ſtartingholes: according as we ſee nowadayes yͭ a number doe grant yͤ holy ſcripture to be good, but they ſay alſo yͭ it is expedient to ſupply yͤ wants yͭ are in it: & yͭ is a

Gen.26.[illegible]

curſed blaſphemie, inaſmuch as it accuſeth God of ouerſight, or elſe of enuie, for not ſetting downe all that is requiſite to our ſaluation. But yet ſhall this ſaying holde, ſpyte of all the world, that the lawe of God is a full and perfect doctrine wherein there wanteth not any thing: and that if our lyfe bee ruled thereafter, it is certeine that there ſhall no fault bee able to bee found in it: and that wee cannot walke after that manner, but that if the worlde condemne vs, God will not faile to allowe of vs: and that ought to bee enough for vs.

But herewithall Moſes ſheweth the ende alſo why hee taught the people: not to the end that euery man ſhould knowe what was good, and then make no further account of it: but to the ende that their liues ſhould bee anſwerable thereunto. God then ſetteth vs downe a doctrine of practiſe as they ſay. And therefore it is not enough for a man only to knowe Gods word, but hee muſt alſo be transformed into it by beholding it as Gods image, as Saint Paule ſpeaketh thereof. 2.Cor.3.18 To what ende then doth God ſpeake vnto vs? not to the end we ſhould but nod at it or liſten with our eare to it, to ratify his ſayings by ſpeach or by ſignes: but to yͤ end we ſhold giue proofe by our whole lyfe that hee is our father and maiſter, and that hee hath all preheminence ouer vs: and that whereas wee bee his creatures, we bee his children too. Let vs marke well then, that our comming hither to heare Gods worde, muſt not bee to goe away as wee came: but if our life bee chaunged, and that wee haue learned to frame our ſelues according to that which God hath tolde vs: that is the very right vſe of it. Otherwiſe wee doe but vnhallowe Gods worde, and wee ſhall be found guiltie of high treaſon towards him, for diſappoynting of the operation thereof. But what? So little is this obſerued nowadayes of ſuch as name themſelues Chriſtians: that in ſtead of performing the thinges that are commaunded them, they vouchſafe not to come where they may bee taught one worde, but which woorſe is, doe ſhunne all learning.

There are to be ſeene which can brag well enough that they be faythfull: and yet there nedeth none other tryall to knowe what they bee, than their manifeſt deſpiſing of Gods woorde more than the Turkes or Iewes doe. For theſe haue yet ſome reuerence of religion, but the diuells that are among vs, come to ſermons lyke dogges and Oxen, without any honeſtie or modeſtie.

Otherſome come thither to ſleepe, ſo as it ſhould ſeeme that their meaning is to ſpite God openly and to ſpit in his face: it ſhould ſeem that they be deſirous to ſhew ſome ſigne of their leawdneſſe and beaſtlyneſſe, how deteſtable they be. To be ſhort although they ſpeake it not, yet doe they beare a marke in their foreheades for all men to beholde with their eyes, that they ſeeke to deface Gods glory to the vttermoſt of their power. Another ſorte doe make countenaunce to hearken, and yet make but a flimflammie of it (as they ſay). For what ſhall a man finde in all their life? Nothing but deſperate diſobedience. But yet for all that, Gods worde hath not chaunged his nature. Wherefore if wee looke not about vs to frame our ſelues accordingly thereunto, wee muſt needes come to account, for defyling ſo holy a thing, which GOD hath ordeyned to ſo worthie and noble an vſe.

And herewithall Moſes addeth, that God requireth not any thing at our handes in reſpect of himſelfe, or for any profite that he ſhall haue by it, but for our owne welfare. *To the ende (ſayth hee) that thou mayſt enter into the land that is giuen thee for thine inheritaunce, and poſſeſſe it.* Herein Moſes proteſteth, that God looketh not for any reward at our handes, for hee hath no neede of any thing: but it is for our profite, that hee would haue vs to ſerue him. Hee could well ynough forbeare vs: but yet is hee deſirous to haue vs, and hee woulde that wee ſhoulde ſuffer him to gouerne vs. Seeing then that God in all reſpectes ſheweth ſuch loue and regarde of our welfare: are wee not woorſe than wilde beaſtes if wee bee ſtill hard to yeelde, and cannot finde in our hearts to come to him but againſt our willes? If God ſhould but onely commaund vs after a preciſe faſhion, yet were we bound to do whatſoeuer he biddeth vs: yea and although hee ſhould vſe the greateſt rigour that could bee, yet might not wee refuſe to doe our duetie towardes him. But hee forbeareth that authoritie of his, as though hee yeelded vp ſome part of his right, and vſeth another maner of ſpeach, [as if hee ſhoulde ſay,] you owe mee all thinges, for yee bee mine: and yet for all that, the ſeruice which you doe mee ſhall bee accepted in ſo good woorth, as yee ſhall perceiue that I take yee for my children, yee ſhall feele my gratious goodneſſe and benefites in all ſortes, and to bee ſhorte yee ſhall not looſe your labor. Seeing then that God ſtoopeth thus vnto our rudeneſſe: ought not wee to bee rauiſhed at ſo great goodneſſe? And although we had all the lettes in the world againſt vs, ought it not to ridde them all quite away? Otherwiſe, what an vnthankefulneſſe were it?

Therefore let vs learne, that whenſoeuer God matcheth promiſes with his commaundementes: it is to win vs by gentleneſſe, becauſe hee ſeeth vs ſo ſlowe as is pitifull, and therefore he allureth vs as a father that flattereth his children as ye would ſay. That is the yͤ thing which wee haue to gather here.

Now if wee conſider this leſſon well: wee ſhal not ſay as the Papiſts doe, That ſeeing God promiſeth reward to ſuch as ſhall haue ſerued him, it appeareth thereby yͭ we deſerue, and that God is as wel bound vnto vs, as we to him. But cleane contrariwiſe, Gods promiſing vs, to doe vs good, is not for that our ſeruice can deſerue aught at his hand, nor for that hee is or can be beholden to vs for any thing: but his ſhewing of himſelfe ſo freeharted towardes vs as to forbeare his owne right, proceedeth of his owne free beſtowed goodneſſe, as I haue declared afore. Surely the Papiſtes doe well ſhew themſelues to be puffed vp with diueliſh pride, when they preſume after that ſorte to abuſe Gods fatherly goodneſſe. He could doe no more, except he ſhould make vs cockneyes as I haue ſayd already: and yet notwithſtanding, mortall men which are but carion and dung, fall to aduauncing of themſelues and ſay it is a token that God is bound vnto them. Now then let vs beare in minde, that the promiſes which GOD ſetteth afore vs to prouoke and incourage vs to doe him ſeruice, ſerue not to ſhewe that he oweth vs any thing, or that we can deſerue aught at his hand: but they be a record vnto vs of his free beſtowed goodneſſe, inaſmuch as hee byndeth himſelfe to vs of his owne good will, notwithſtãding ẏ hee can not be any way indetted vnto vs.

Moreouer it behoueth vs to marke that in ſpeaking, Moſes ſetteth ẏ lawe in the firſt place, to the ende to leade the people yet further. For by the lawe wee knowe our duetie and how wee Matt.22.37 ought to liue: that is to wit, that wee ought to loue God with all our heart, with all our minde, with all our affections, and with all our powers: and that wee ought to loue our neighbors as our ſelues. Now when we once know this: we muſt ſee whether wee bee able to doe it or no. But ſo vnable is any man liuing to diſcharge himſelfe thereof: that wee cannot ſo much as ſtirre one finger to begin it. Therefore are wee all guiltie before God. And what is there to be done? We muſt flee for refuge to his grace, and therewithall beſeech him to be mercifull to vs in forgiuing vs our ſinnes: and moreouer to vouchſafe to reforme vs foraſmuch as hee ſeeth that wee be not onely weake but alſo vtterly vnable to doe any good, becauſe there is nothing but corruption in vs: And finally that when he hath made this lawe to bee preached vnto vs, hee vouchſafe alſo to ingraue it in our hartes, and to giue vs ſuch a minde as wee may ſeeke to ſerue him. This is the maner of proceeding which wee haue to beare in minde, in that it is ſayd that the lawe is preached vnto vs, to the ende wee ſhould ſerue our God: as in deede the ende whereto it tendeth is to ſhewe men what they ought to doe.

Nowe herewithall let vs examine all our owne abilities, and wee ſhall finde our ſelues ouerwhelmed, and that wee bee all of vs curſed and damnable, if God added not a remedy to 1.Cor.15.56 Ro.3.19.& 4.15.& 6.14 drawe vs out of the curſe which the lawe bringeth vppon vs. And therefore Saint Paul ſheweth that if men will needes holde themſelues to the lawe, they ſhall bee damned without any further hope of ſaluation. And why? for it is written, hee that doth theſe thinges ſhall liue Leuit.18 5. & Ro. 10.5. in them. Now then (ſayth Saint Paul) let euery man looke into himſelfe, and examine his whole lyfe: is there any man that is able to vaunt that he hath fulfilled Gods lawe? No, wee be all diſobedient. Seeing the caſe ſtandeth ſo, Rom.3.9. Rom.6.2. 3. & 10.4. there is no more life in the Lawe: but wee muſt rather flee to the free forgiueneſſe of ſinnes, and ſpecially beſeech God to giue vs power to doe that which we can not. And ſo whereas the Papiſtes doe make themſelues drunken with their diueliſh imaginations of meritorious works and ſuch other lyke thinges: let vs vnderſtand that after our Lord hath allured vs by gentleneſſe, he addeth a ſecond grace: which is, that albeit we be not able to performe his commaundementes throughly in all reſpectes, yet he beareth with vs as a father beareth with his children, and imputeth not our ſinnes vnto vs, but receiueth our halfe ſeruices as though they were whole and perfect, not for any worthineſſe that he findeth in them, but becauſe he purpoſeth to play the father with vs. Marke that for another poynt.

Beſides theſe, there is a thirde grace which hee vſeth: which is, that hee ingraueth his lawe in our heartes, inſomuch that whereas he ſeeeth our heartes to bee as harde as ſtone or ſtithies, 2.Cor.3.3. hee maketh them as ſoft as fleſhe, and meekeneth them ẏ they may be obedient. And hee not onely prepareth vs after that maner to ſerue him: but alſo giueth vs diſcretion, power, Phil.2.13. and performance. Sith wee ſee this, let vs put all meriting or deſeruing out of minde, and let vs not be ſo preſumptuous as to aduaunce our ſelues any way: but as wee haue iuſt cauſe to abaſe our ſelues, ſo let vs ẇ all humblenes giue the glory vnto god. Thus ye ſee what we haue to do, ẏ we may take profit of ẏ doctrine cõteined here.

And immediately hereunto Moſes addeth, *That men muſt purely and ſimply followe the doctrine that hee commaundeth, without putting any thing to it or taking any thing from it. To the intent* (ſayth hee) *that yee may keepe the commaundements of your God which I inioyne you.* Before wee proceede any further, wee muſt marke the authoritie that Moſes taketh to himſelfe in this text. Hee had ſayd heretofore, *I teach you*: and now hee ſayth, *I inioyne or commaund you*. And why is that? To ſhewe that hee ſpeaketh not in his owne name, but as ſent frõ a greater maſter, in reſpect whereof it is meete that euery man ſhoulde wholy ſubmit himſelfe to him without gaineſaying. And here wee ſee how all true ſhepheardes ought to behaue themſelues, and all ſuch as haue charge to preach Gods worde, or haue the gouernment of the Church: that is to wit, they muſt be ſure that God hath ſent them, ſo as they attempt not any thing of their owne head, but ſpeake as in the name of God, and vtter all their ſayinges as on his behalfe. Being once at that ſtay, then muſt they alſo maintaine Gods maieſtie, and deale in ſuch wiſe as the doctrine may be receiued with all reuerence, and no man ſtep vp to incounter it. To bee ſhorte, there are two thinges requiſite in all good ſhepheardes. The one is, that for their part they muſt not burthen men with any tyrannie, nor inuent lawes to tye their conſciences, thereby to bring them in bondage, nor forge any doctrine vppon their owne head, but faithfully deale foorth the thinges that are committed vnto them. Haue they that? Then let them aduaunce the thing which they know to proceede of GOD, ſo as they ſuffer not the heauenly doctrine to bee ſkorned, but ſhewe men that they ought to reuerence GOD, and to ſubmit themſelues to his word ,and let them withſtand all loftineſſe that vaunteth it ſelfe againſt him. After which maner we ſee how God ſtrengtheneth his Prophets, telling them that they muſt Eze.6,1.2. not paſſe for any mans greatneſſe,nobleneſſe,or aught elſe , but rebuke the Mountaines and ſet themſelues againſt the Hilles : that is to ſay, let them not ſhrinke for men , but let them ſhewe yͤ the word which they bring,and which is committed to them,is as it were Gods roayll mace, at the which all creatures ought to ſtoope and to bow their knees. Ye ſee then that all miniſters of Gods word ought to ſeeke thoſe two things.

But yet for all that,wee ſee the cleane contrarie. For ſuch as raigne with roughnes and Ezech.34.4. churliſhneſſe (as Ezechiel termeth it) paſſe not to keepe this rule of Moſes, which is , to ſerue God purely. For wee ſee that the Pope and all the filthie rable of his Clergie (as they terme themſelues)are euer thundering, and would not haue men in any wiſe to open their lippes againſt any point [of their doctrine,] but that they ſhoulde without any gaineſaying obſerue whatſoeuer they liſt to ordaine. Yea marie,but in the meane while whence haue they their ſtuffe ? whence do they preach it? It is ynough for them that they 1.Pet.5.3. may lorde it, & they beare themſelues on hand that they may hold the poore ſoules vnder their tyrannie, which were redeemed with the bloud of our Lord Ieſus Chriſt. But neither Moſes nor any of yͤ Prophets did euer giue themſelues ſuch libertie:for they ſpake in Gods name , without ſetting foorth any thing of their owne. Let vs then learne to hearken to ſuch as come in the name of God,and diſcharge their ducties vnfeinedly. Againe we ſee that ſuch as ſhould maintaine Gods trueth,doe let all ſlippe, and though they ſee neuer ſo much diſorder : it greeues thē neuer a whit , neither doe they paſſe though all goe to hauocke. And why? Bicauſe they haue no zeale at all to aduaunce the Maieſtie of Gods word. Alſo on the other ſide wee ſee a nomber that vaunt themſelues to bee Chriſtians , which can as much skill of the reuerence that Moſes ſpeakes of here,as if they had bene brought vp in a ſwines ſtie or on a dunghill. Are there not a nomber to be ſeene which will ſay continually, tuſh,you haue nothing to doe to command mee? Yes : and you my friend are a verie brute beaſt in ſo ſaying,for if I haue not to doe to command you,you haue no more Chriſtianitie in you than is in a dogge. For when wee preach Gods word, to what end is it ? That God ſhould bee the ſeruaunt? or the maiſter ? Let that be well conſidered. Speake wee in our owne names? Or ſet wee foorth any thing that is not giuen vs in commiſſion by God ? Now,he will haue vs to repreſent his perſon : and yet we muſt neither command, nor beare any ſway at all for theſe raſcalles and vnthriftes,which aduaunce themſelues with exceeding vnſhamefaſtneſſe to fight againſt God. But what? Ye ſee what the Chriſtianitie of Geneua is , where the Goſpell hath bene preached this twentie yeeres,inſomuch that yͤ verie walles ought to ring of it, and the verie pauing of the ſtreetes ought to beare ſome marke of Gods trueth:and yet theſe wood beaſtes continue ſtill in their groſſe and barbarous rebelliouſneſſe ,ſo as they be worſe than bulles with their hornes, or I wote not what other beaſtes. Yet notwithſtanding it cannot be wyped out of Gods Regiſter , but that whenſoeuer Gods worde is preached,both great and ſmall muſt receiue it , at leaſtwiſe if we acknowledge it to be Gods truth. Yea and we muſt receiue it with ſuch reuerence, Mal.1.6. as to thinke thus with our ſelues : beholde, it is our God that ſpeaketh:and if he be our maiſter, doe not we owe him all reuerence? If he bee our father,doe not we owe him all honour ? What is to bee done then , but onely to ſhewe by our deedes , that our whole ſeeking is to bee ruled quietly by him ? Thus yee ſee what we haue to remember here, in that Moſes ſpeaketh not as in the perſon of a mortall man , but taketh vpon him the authoritie to commaund : howbeit not as chalendging any thing to himſelfe,but as being deſirous to be heard,becauſe he was a faithfull ſetter forth of Gods lawe: ſhewing alſo that he had vengeance readie prepared for all ſuch as would checke againſt him , or reiect the doctrine that he did ſet forth.

He ſaith yet further,*that men muſt neither adde any thing to that which he commaundeth, nor take any thing from it, to the ende they may keepe Gods commaundementes* . Whereas he ſaith that nothing muſt be added nor diminiſhed : it is to ſhewe the thing that I touched euen nowe : that is to wit, that God mindeth to try our obedience , by reſtreining vs from fetching our windlaſſes, and from ſcoterloping ouer the fieldes , to raught at euerie thing that we like off : and to hold vs faſt tied and bound vnto his word. Then is it not ynough for vs to receiue that which God ſendeth vs,and to allowe it as good : but wee muſt acknowledge it to be our whole wiſedome,(as ſhal be added hereafter in this Chapter)ſo as wee be not skilful to mingle any thing with Gods word, but conclude thus with our ſelues : Seeing God hath ſpokē it,it is not lawful for mortal mē to interlace any thing wͭ it,but they muſt be contēted with yͤ which they haue heard of ſuch a maiſter. This is in effect the meaning of Moſes.And this Deut. 5.32. & 12.32. is not ſaid in this place onely : wee ſhall ſee it repeated againe hereafter in the twelfth Chapter,and in other places,and the ſcripture is full of it.And yet we ſee there is not any thing worſe kept,than this preſent exhortation.And what is the cauſe thereof ? That men doe take it for a principle, that they haue alwayes ſome reaſon with them,and that they bee of ſufficient abilitie to gouerne themſelues as they ought to doe. Thus then doth pride take the firſt place ,when men will needes diſcerne betweene good and euill after their owne fanſie. Contrariwiſe Gods will is to be wiſe for vs, & that we as ſillie ſheepe ſhould hearken to our ſhepeheardes voyce , and quite forget the ſufficiencie which the vnbeleeuers imagine themſelues to haue. Let vs thinke, there is nothing in vs but errour and follie,there is nothing but vanitie and leaſing,vntil our God haue taught vs.That is the point that God wold bring vs to.But it is exceeding hard for men to reſtaine them ſelues continually from being puffed vp with this fond ouerweening of ſelfe-wiſedome. And therewithall is mingled curioſitie: Our eares itch to heare this and that, wee make diſcourſes, we haue our imaginations, and a nomber of things do runne in our heads. Why ſhould not this be good, ſay we? Why ſhould not that bee lawfull? Bicauſe then that curioſitie hath taken ſo deepe roote in our mindes: therefore cannot God hold vs to the pure ſimplicitie of his worde. Beſides this, wee haue a ſorte of naughtie affections, which turne vs away from God, and are al of them enemies to make warre againſt God, ſo as wee cannot ſo much as thinke a good thought, but we bee full of vice and corruption. That is the cauſe why wee cannot hold our ſelues in obedience vnto God. And yet notwithſtanding, when wee haue offended him a thouſand wayes, doe wee fall to amending of any whit of it? Yea marie, but after what faſhion? After our owne guiſe. Wee lay on plaiſters that make the ſore worſe, as wee ſee hath befallen in all ages. For the Prophets fought againſt theſe ſame vices without ceaſſing. Although the people of Iſrael had the lawe with ſuch ſtrait reſtraints as ye ſee here: yet were their fingers alwaies itching to intermingle ſome inuentions of their own therewithall. The Prophets cried out, how now? Shall your God neuer ouerrule you as his flocke? He hath purchaſed you by deliuering you from the bondage of Pharao, he hath giuen you his lawe, hee hath helped you a nomber of wayes beſides: and yet ye cannot finde in your hearts to liue as he will haue ye. And wherefore was this people ſo vnruly? Firſt bicauſe of pride, (which, as I told you, hath reigned in men in all ages) for that the Iewes would needes be able to rule themſelues. For they were of opinion, that whatſoeuer ſeemed good to themſelues, yͤ ſame ought to haue bene allowed of God. The verie ground frõ whence they tooke their boldnes, to make al the chãges [of Religion] yͭ happened among thẽ, was their gaſing about them, [& their thinking wͭ themſelues] wee ſee that our neighbours do thus. Hereby ſuperſtition gat ful ſcope, ſo as they ran gadding after the idoles of yͤ heathen. And when they ſawe that they had troden Gods lawe vnder foote: Oh (ſaid they) this muſt be amended. And howe? By dubling yͤ miſchiefe from time to time. Wee ſee the like in the Popedome: and would God wee had the wit to profite our ſelues by ſuch examples and lookingglaſſes. For what is the chief point that troubleth Chriſtendome at this day? Wee demaund that men ſhould heare God ſpeake: and that thereuppon there ſhould no doctrine be receiued that is deuiſed at the pleaſure of men, but that the world ſhoulde ſubmit it ſelfe to God, that the holye ſcripture ſhould be taken as the doctrine of perfection: and that wee ſhould acknowledge it to bee Gods trueth, whereunto it behoueth our whole life to be framed, wͭout adding or diminiſhing. That is our demand. On the cõtrarie part, it is certaine that all Poperie muſt needes fall to the ground, except mens inuentions may haue their full courſe, ſo as Gods word may bee mingled, turmoiled, ſtuffed, yea and euen falſified wͭ mens deuiſes. And yet notwithſtanding the Papiſts are ſo ſhameleſſe ſtill, as to vpbraide vs that we will needes be too wiſe in our owne conceits. Yea marie, but wherein? When it comes to the triall, wee deſire no more but that Gods worde may not in any wiſe be diminiſhed, and that the thinges which wee thinke good of our ſelues ſhould not be admitted, but that wee ſhould forſake whatſoeuer is of man, and thruſt it vtterly vnder foote and aboliſh it, ſo as onely God may bee exalted. Is it our intent to be ouerwiſe, when we confeſſe, firſt of all that there is nothing but fooliſhneſſe in men, and that ſuch as will needes be ſkilfull and wittie [of themſelues] are ſtarke mad, inaſmuch as they can not put themſelues whclly into Gods hand, to bee gouerned by him as he liſteth? And yet notwithſtãding, that is the thing wherein wee differ. And that is it that ingendreth moſt ſtrife in theſe dayes, bicauſe the Papiſtes cannot yeelde to this reaſon, that God ſhould bee obeyed according to his worde, and that men ſhould be contented to bee taught by him in his ſchole. In deede they will not bee ſo bolde as to denie that Gods lawe is holy and rightful: but yet to their ſeeming, God hath ſpoken but by halues, & men had neede of a higher and profounder doctrine, and of ſtraiter lawes. But it is not ſaid here, that men ſhould but onely heare what God ſaith, & afterward do what they liſt themſelues: No, God giueth them no ſuch choiſe. For what a thing were that? He ſhoulde not onely admit vs to bee his fellowes, but alſo giue vs ſuperioritie ouer him. And yͭ were euen a turmoiling of heauen & earth togither, & a helliſh cõfounding of al things. Yet notwithſtãding, ſuch hath it bin, & ſuch is it ſtill among the Papiſts at this day. For notwithſtanding that they graunt Gods Law to be holy and righteous: yet they ceaſſe not to turmoile it with whatſoeuer ſeemes good to themſelues. O (ſay they) this is the commandemẽt of our mother holy Church, this is a doctrine of hirs yͭ muſt be obſerued, this is a good deuotion, this is a law of hirs, this is an ordinãce. To be ſhort there is no ho. And is this an obeying of yͭ which Moſes ſaith here? So then let vs learne to giue attentiue eare to this exhortation, ſeeing it is not for nought yͭ it is ſo often repeated vnto vs. And if yͤ Prophets in old time had ſo hard hold wͭ the people for this vice: let vs aſſure our ſelues yͭ we alſo ſhall euer be vnruly & wildheaded, vntill our Lorde haue tamed vs by long handling, & made vs to ſticke to this grõd, That it is no more lawfull for vs in any wiſe to adde any thing to his law, than it is lawfull for vs to take any thing from it. Now in deede the Papiſts alledge yͭ this was ſpoken to the Iewes: but yͭ as for vs, we be now vnder the law of libertie. But they ſpeake like beaſts. For when the Goſpell is named the Law of libertie: it is not ment yͭ God layeth the bridle in our neckes, and that we may henceforth followe our owne ſwindge: but (as I ſaid afore) it is bicauſe it beareth with vs, & continueth not the extreme rigor of curſing vs, whẽ wee haue not performed Gods commandemẽts in all pointes to the full. In that reſpect is yͤ Goſpell

Rom. 8. 7.

Rom. 5. 18. & 8. 2. & Gal. 5. 1.

pell named the lawe of libertie. Neuertheleſſe foraſmuch as God hath more fully reuealed the things vnto vs, which were hid for a time: & foraſmuch as wee bee taught much more largely now adayes, than the Iewes were: there is much more reaſon why wee ſhoulde holde our ſelues more in awe, and walke reuerently before God. For in compariſon of vs, the Iewes had a verie ſlender teaching: and yet notwithſtanding, they bee forbidden to put any thing to it. And ſhall we then preſume now adayes to adde any thing to that which God hath left vs, when he hath reached out his trueth farre and wide, and that beſides his lawe and Prophets, we haue this further perfection, that he hath ſpoken to vs with open mouth by Ieſus Chriſt? What a preſumptuouſneſſe were that? Beſides that we ſhould offer wrong and diſhonour to the lawe: we ſhould alſo blaſpheme the Goſpell. And therefore let vs vnderſtand, that Gods ſpirit hath not ſpoken it for any one time onely: but that he meant to deliuer it for a rule to continue to the worldes end when he ſaide, *Put not any thing to that which I commaund you, neither take any thing from it.* When he ſaieth, *Put not any thing to it:* It is to ſhewe vs that onely God muſt bee wiſe, and haue authoritie to gouerne vs, ſo as we muſt not ſticke to our owne fooliſh deuotions, which wee had in the time of our ignorance, when wee were wretched blind Papiſtes. Then let vs learne to holde vs to the ſimplicitie of Gods worde, and let our onely wiſdome bee to obey that which he ſaieth, that he may haue all preheminence. And like as God forbiddeth vs to adde any thing to his worde, ſo doeth he forbid vs to take any thing from it: and not without cauſe. For if wee will needes obey God but in part, & in the meane while exempt our ſelues from whatſoeuer wee liſt: it is ſuch a partaking, as ſhall neuer bee admitted. Accordingly as now adayes wee ſhall ſee many, which will bee contented to obey, ſo farre foorth as it pinche them not ouer neere: but if it be a thing that trouble them, they ſeeke to bee rid of it, and fret and chafe againſt it. But it is not for vs to proceede after that maner. For as I ſaide, like as God forbiddeth to adde any thing to his doctrine: ſo forbiddeth he to take any thing therefro. He that ſaide, Thou ſhalt not commit
Iames. 2.11. adulterie (ſaieth S. Iames) hath ſaide alſo, Thou
ſhalt not ſteale. And therefore let vs bee well
Matt.19.6. ware, that we rend not Gods lawe in pieces. For it is not for mā to put the things a ſunder, which God hath put together. And let vs aſſure our ſelues we can not breake Gods law in any point, but we violate Gods Maieſtie which is contained therein. That then is a thing which we haue to remember vpon yͤ text. For otherwiſe we ſhall not be able to keepe Gods commandements, yͤ is to ſay, we ſhal not yeeld God yͤ authoritie which he deſerueth. As for example, when the Papiſtes obſerue Gods lawe: how go they to work? They leaue it behinde them, & in the meane while reſt vpon the commandemẽts of their Mother holy Church. And wherevpō ground they thẽſelues? Behold, there comes mee an idole, euen a ſtinking carion, & he loades them with a law. A Papiſt imagins himſelfe to bee a little Angell, if he keepe yͤ ordinance of a worme yͤ is but dung: and he will ſay it is Gods law. Nowe I pray you, in ſo dooing what preferment yeeldeth he more to God, than to creatures? Is it not apparant, that in that caſe God is as it were rāged in aray, to be but companion with men? Now ſurely ſuch obedience of yͤ Papiſts is diueliſh, bicauſe it ſetteth vp mē in Gods ſted. Therfore let al ſuch dealing be done away, yea and let vs abhorre it vtterly.

Finally let vs marke, yͤ whereas Moſes ſaieth, *That thou mayſt enter into the lande & liue:* it is not meant yͤ God giueth vs any payment or wages, as though he were bound vnto it: but yͤ he muſt euermore haue the ſoueraigntie of vs, & we bee ſubiect to him, forſaking all our wicked affectiōs which may turne vs away frō following his commandements. And although he ſpeake to vs by the mouthes of men: yet let not vs ceaſſe to honour him in the Maieſtie which he vttereth by his woorde, but let vs learne to holde our ſelues wholly thereunto, without ſwaruing one way or other, & let vs giue ouer all our owne wit & reaſon. Againe, let all our luſtes be ſo beatē downe, as wee attempt not in any wiſe to ſtand againſt God, but walke before him in ſuch reuerence & lowlineſſe, as we may giue proofe that wee bee his people in deede, and that we take him for our father and ſoueraigne Prince.

Now let vs kneele downe in yͤ preſence of our good God with acknowledgement of our faults, praying him to make vs feele thē more & more, yea euen in ſuch wiſe as we may come to ſubmit our ſelues to him with true repentance, & proceede therein more and more, vntil ſuch time as being quite rid of all our fleſhly corruptions and clothed againe wͭ his righteouſnes, wee be made partakers of the immortall glory whereunto he calleth vs dayly by his word. And ſo let vs al ſay, Almightie God heauenly Father, &c.

On Munday the xx. of May. 1555.

The xx. Sermon which is the ſecond vpon the fourth Chapter.

3 Your eyes haue ſeene what the Lorde did to Beelphegor, for the Lorde thy God hath rooted out all the men from among you, which walked after Beelphegor.

4 But you which haue cleaued to the Lorde your God, are all aliue at this day.

5 Beholde, I haue taught yee ordinances and lawes as the Lorde my God commaunded mee, that you ſhould doe thereafter in the land which you are entering into to poſſeſſe it.

6 Keepe them [*therefore*] and doe them: for that is your wiſedome and vnderſtanding in the ſight of the Nations, who hearing of all theſe ordinances ſhall ſay, ſurely it is a wiſe and vnderſtanding people, it is a great Nation.

God ſheweth his great goodnes in labouring to drawe vs to him by gentleneſſe: and great alſo is his grace if he draw vs to him by force, when he ſeeth that wee cannot otherwiſe bee ſubdued. And that is the cauſe why he not only ſetteth his promiſes before vs, but alſo addeth threatnings, ſhewing vs his rigour, and making vs alſo to feele it: euen to the ende to win vs by ſome meanes or other. But yet doeth all this redound to our welfare, and God ſheweth howe much he tendereth vs, euẽ in that he is ſo ſharp and rough towardes vs. For if wee coulde ſuffer our ſelues to bee led gently by him, ſurely ſuch is his nature that he would deale that way with vs, according to his owne ſaying that he is a kinde hearted and pitifull God, foreward to ſhew mercie, and of long ſufferaunce. Exo.34.6.& Deut.1.31.& Eſa.49.15.& Matt.7.9. When God intendeth to ſhewe what good will he beareth vs, he alledgeth all the properties of a good Father. Then will he neuer vſe any roughneſſe, vnleſſe he bee inforced, bicauſe he ſeeth vs dul vpon the ſpurre, and is faine to prick vs, or elſe wee would neuer goe on our way. Therefore when we come to reade the holy Scripture, let vs alwaies haue this before our eyes, that our Lordes deſire is to drawe vs to him by gentleneſſe, if wee bee plyable: and therevpon let vs humble our ſelues vnto him, and not looke to haue him deale roughly with vs, but followe him quietly as ſoone as he hath ſhewed vs that he is willing to receiue vs. And if we haue bin ſo farre ouerſeene as to haue giuen deafe eare to all his promiſes, and not to come at his call: at leaſtwiſe it were not meete for vs to bee drowſie ſtill, when he addeth his threatnings to waken vs. Therefore let vs vnderſtand that it is time for vs to yeeld our ſelues to God then or neuer. And that is the cauſe why that in this text, Moſes putteth the people in remembrance, of the puniſhments that God had laide vpon ſuch as worſhipped the idole of Ammõ which was called Beel-phegor. But we haue yet one point more to mark, which is, that God ſpareth vs and puniſheth others, to the intent wee ſhould learne wit at other mens coſt, as they ſay. If God ſhould ſtep to vs at the firſt daſh, and correct vs as ſoone as wee haue done amiſſe, or tell vs that we ſhould looke for vengeance at his hand: yet ought we to take it as a token of his fatherly goodneſſe, as I ſaid afore. But his will is to beare with vs, and he ſetteth the ſaide chaſtiſements before vs, to make vs knowe that his puniſhing of offenders is not without cauſe, & that wee ought to take the ſame for a warning to our ſelues. And ſo doth Moſes vſe it here. For he ſaith not, God will puniſh you if ye offende: but hee ſaieth, *Ye haue ſeene howe they were puniſhed which worſhipped Beel-phegor.* Nowe therefore, preuent Gods wrath, and tarie not till he be angrie with you, & ſet on fire: but cleaue ſimply to his word, and let the corrections that he hath ſhewed you auaile you, & not bee ſhewed you in vaine. Thus ye ſee the third point which wee haue to marke: that is to wit, that our Lorde vttereth not his threatenings vnto all men, but ſheweth vs howe he puniſheth the vnbeleeuers, to the intent that wee ſhoulde not bee of their nomber, leaſt wee ſhould be wrapped in the ſame condemnation with them. And it is the ſame thing that S. Paul Eph.5.5.6. ſheweth. For after he hath tolde the faithfull, that they muſt abſtaine from couetouſnes, theft, whoredome,, drunkenneſſe, and ſuch other like things, yea and euen from all manner of looſeneſſe and wantonneſſe: he addeth, be not deceiued, for Gods wrath commeth vppon the vnbeleeuers for ſuch things. He ſaieth not that Gods wrath ſhall come vpon them: but he tempereth his ſpeach and ſaieth, Conſider that God puniſheth the vnbeleeuers for ſuch cauſes, and therfore ſeparate your ſelues from their nomber and companie. After the ſame maner ſpeaketh he likewiſe in the tenth of the firſt to the Corinthians. 1.Cor.10.6. After he had tolde them how God had puniſhed idolaters, rebels, and ſuch as had coueted vnlawfull things: he addeth that thoſe thinges are written for vs, that we might ſee and behold Gods iudgements as in a liuely picture, & keepe our ſelues from falling into the like puniſhment. Nowe therefore let vs come to that which Moſes rehearſeth here: *Your eyes* (ſaieth he) *haue ſeen what the Lorde did in the caſe of Beel-phegor*. In ſaying ſo, he telleth not the people a tale that ſhall doe them no good: but he doeth them to vnderſtand, that Gods vttering of his vengeaunce againſt ſuch as had worſhipped that idole, was to giue a generall leſſon to all men: and therefore that they ought to thinke themſelues worthie of dubble blame in that behalfe, foraſmuch as they had fared neuer the better by Gods ſcourges, but had ſhut their eyes all the while that he was about to warne them to their benefite and welfare.

Nowe remaineth to apply this geere to our vſe. When God ſendeth any trouble vppon the world: let vs vnderſtand that it is not without cauſe that he is ſo ſore diſpleaſed. For if we conſider the offences and miſdeedes that haue bene committed: wee muſt needes conclude yͤ God ſheweth himſelfe a iudge in puniſhing ſinnes. But doeth that ſerue onely for them that feele the ſtrokes? No: Gods will is to ſhewe his iuſt vengeance generally, that men may learne to ſtoope to him, and to walke in feare of him, and to giue thẽſelues no more to prouoking of him. To be ſhort, all the chaſtiſementes that wee ſee

Eſa.26.9. in the worlde, ought to ſerue for our learning: according to this ſaying of the Prophet Eſay, O Lorde, when thou executeſt thy iudgementes, the dwellers of the earth ſhall learne righteouſneſſe. For when God winketh, and puniſheth not the wicked and vnrighteous: men take leaue to doe euill, it ſeemeth that all thinges ſhoulde ſcape vnpuniſhed, and euerie man beareth with himſelfe, accordingly as all of vs are naturally too much inclined to flatter our ſelues in our ſinnes. But when wee perceiue that GOD calleth mens ſinnes to account, and that all thinges are inrolled before him, he ſheweth him ſelfe a iudge in puniſhing men, whereas they thought they had beene forgotten: then behold, wee be wakened, ſo as euerie of vs beginnes to bethinke himſelfe, or at leaſtwiſe it were good reaſon that he ſhould do ſo. True it is that Gods iudgementes doe ſometimes paſſe before our eyes, and wee make none account of them, by meanes whereof wee can fare neuer the better for them: but vnhappie are wee when we bee ſo blinde. And why? For (as I ſaide) Gods intent is that other men ſhoulde take example, by his chaſtiſing of thoſe that haue offended. Yea and euen the worldly iudges obſerue the ſame order, inſomuch that when they puniſh a theefe, or a murderer, or any other euill dooer, they doe it not alonely to be reuenged of ẏ euil that he hath done as in reſpect of himſelfe: but alſo to ſet him forth as a lookingglaſſe, to the intent that all other folkes ſhoulde ſet a watch ouer themſelues, and abhorre ſuch crimes, and not ſuffer them to haue their full courſe and ſcope. And thinke wee that God goeth yet any further? So then, let vs ſuffer our ſelues to bee amended at other mens coſt, and let vs haue our eyes open to beholde the puniſhments that he ſendeth. And nowe in theſe dayes, muſt it not needes bee that wee be worſe than aſleepe, if wee bee not mooued at the great number of corrections that God ſendeth? Wee ſee howe the whole worlde is in maner paſt recouerie, and (as the Prophet Eſay Eſa.1.6. ſaieth) there is not one whit of ſoundneſſe from the crowne of the head to the ſole of the foote: Gods ſcourges runne abrode euerie where: euerie man complaineth, great and ſmall lament: On the one ſide wee ſee warres, famine, and peſtilence, (and thoſe thinges happen not by caſualtie:) and on the otherſide euerie man bewaileth his owne priuate caſe. And why ſo? Wherfore doe wee not knowe the hande that ſtriketh vs? Wherefore doe wee not conſider that God ſheweth himſelfe a iudge towardes vs, to make vs returne vnto him? For mens ſinnes are not vnknowen, we ſee well that the whole worlde is out of order, and that God muſt bee faine to put to his hand. And yet in the meane ſeaſon wee abide ſtill blockiſh, but wee ſhall be helde the leſſe excuſed for it in the ende. And why? For it may bee tolde vs to our ſhame, that our eyes haue ſeene howe God warned vs: it was long of none but our ſelues that we were not brought to repentance. Seeing that GOD did laye his iudgementes open to our ſight, and wee marked them not: wee muſt needes bee puniſhed the ſorer for ſuch negligence, becauſe we haue played the deafe and blinde folkes, when GOD went about to bring vs gently to him. And ſo the thing that Moſes ſpake to the people of Iſraell, is written to our vſe in theſe dayes. For it is as much as if the holy Ghoſt ſhoulde tell vs, that when God puniſheth men, bee it generally or particularly: we muſt not be purblinde, in that caſe, but bethinke vs well and ſee whether wee our ſelues haue not deſerued the like: and therevppon bee ſorie for our ſinnes, and not tarie till God drawe his ſworde againſt vs, but hye vs apace to him ſeeing hee warneth vs to returne. And for the performing heereof, let vs vnderſtande that the calamities which light vppon the worlde, come not by haphazarde, but from heauen, and are corrections for the offences where into the worlde hath euerſhot it ſelfe.

Nowe Moſes ſpeaketh heere by name of *Beelphegor*, which was the ydoll of the Ammonites, as is ſaide afore. And the worde *Baal* betokeneth *a Principal, a Maſter, or a Patrone:* which thing is well worthie to bee marked. For when wee heere ſpeaking of the ydolles of the heathen, they ſeeme to vs to bee farre other thinges than thoſe that wee ſee nowadayes. But the Scripture ſheweth vs that they bee in manner all one. And why? For the heathen were not ſo groſſe and dulwitted, but that they knewe there was a certaine ſoueraine maieſtie which had created heauen and earth, and helde ſoueraine Dominion ouer all thinges. But therewith all they woulde needes haue vndergods and meane gods whom they termed their Patrones, as they doe nowadayes in the Popedome. Againe there was another ſort of gods, whom they thought to haue the charge of ſeuerall Countries: for euerie countrie had his ydol. And ſo alſo this worde *Baal* was the name as yee woulde ſay of a God that had the gouernance of a whole countrie, and ſerued to get men fauour at the great Gods hand. Nowe it may ſeeme at the firſt bluſh, that this was no defacing of Gods glorie, nor any impeachment to the continuall ſeruing and worſhipping of him: and yet is it ſuch a corruption as he cannot abide. For he will haue all preheminence to himſelfe, and hee will not haue men to giue him or aſſigne him any companion, as we ſhall ſee hereafter where Moſes will ſay, *The Lorde thy God is the onely God.* Deut.4.35. Againe, when men make ſuch mingling, and will needs haue a multitude of gods: we ſee how god ſpeaketh of it in the twentith of Ezechiell. Goe your wayes (ſaith he) I giue yee ouer, ſeeing yee Eze.20.35. haue other Gods than me: go ſerue the diuel altogether, for I will haue nothing to do with you. Let vs mark wel then, that Gods ſeruice can neuer be kept in his pureneſſe, except all ſuperſtition be laide downe, and men holde themſelues ſimply to his worde, without inuenting of any thing, & without intermingling of any thing deuiſed of their owne braine. Thus yee ſee that the true and pure religion, is the exalting of the only one God, ſo as his glorie is not darkened by adding any companion vnto him.

And nowe hee ſayeth expreſly, *You that haue cleaued to your God are all aliue this day.* This ſerueth not ſo much to make the people gladde: as to ſhewe them that ſeeing they bee ſo greatly bounde and beholden to their God, they ought to ſerue him with the greater zeale. Moſes then telleth the people thus: Yee haue ſeene Gods wrath: and what hath preſerued you from it hitherto? For yee might haue beene ouerthrowen and deſtroyed as well as they that worſhipped Beelphegor. Knowe yee therefore that your continuing vnto this day, is through the free fauour of your God. And therefore looke that yee ſerue and honour him as hee deſerueth, ſeeing hee hath mainteined you after ſuch a faſhion, and againſt all hope. Nowe this warning belongeth vnto vs, becauſe we liue not to any other ende than to ſerue our GOD, and woe bee to them which being in this worlde doe rauen vp Gods benefites, and knowe not to what ende, but are heere as brute beaſtes. So then let vs marke well, that as long as we bee in this worlde, God will haue vs to doe him homage for our life, and [to vnderſtande] that we bee bounde to him [for all thinges,] and to make that our marke to ſhoote at, according to this ſentence often ſpoken in the ſcripture, Pſal.5.8.& 118,17. Ionas.2.5. I ſhall liue and goe into the temple of the Lorde. Yea & when Ionas was come out of the Whales bellie, and euen when hee called vppon GOD being there as in a gulfe of hell: hee ſaide not I will liue and make good cheere, but hee ſaieth that hee ſhal yet againe ſee the temple of God. And what to doe? to giue him thankes for prolonging his life after that ſort. Therefore let vs marke, that in al the benefites which we receiue at Gods hande, he bindeth vs ſo much the more ſtreitly vnto him, to the intent that we ſhoulde indeuour to ſerue him, and to giue our ſelues wholly vnto him, and to walke in the obedience of his righteouſnes. This is it in effect which Moſes meant to note.

And hee ſetteth downe afterwarde, *that hee had giuen them ſtatutes and ordinances according as God had commaunded him.* Wherein hee proteſteth that hee had beene a faithfull deliuerer of the doctrine which hee did ſet forth, to the end that the people might not receiue it as the doctrine of a man, but conſider howe it was God that had ſpoken it, and ſo imbrace it with all reuerence. And heereby wee ſee that GOD doeth euermore reſerue to himſelfe, the right of gouerning vs as in reſpect of the ſpirituall gouernement of our ſoules. True it is that God woulde there ſhoulde bee ciuill policie in this worlde, and hee hath put men in commiſſion for the ſame: but in the meane while hee will haue none but onely himſelfe to haue power to lay lawes vppon vs. When the caſe concerneth his owne ſeruice, and religion, and ſpirituall thinges: then muſt onely he himſelfe bee heard, and no man muſt vſurp his office or meddle in it, nor no man ſteppe in to adde one word. For if euer any man in the worlde was worthie to bee hearde: was not Moſes ſo excellent, that hee might well bee formoſt and chiefe? Yes: for wee ſhall ſee heereafter, that there neuer was ſuch a Prophet in the worlde, Deut.34.10. 1.Pet.5.4. neither before him nor after him, euen to the comming of him that is aboue al Prophetes, that is to wit, the ſonne of God. And yet for all his worthineſſe, Moſes holdeth himſelf in the number of thoſe which ought to herken vnto God without ſetting forth any thing of his owne deuice. Seeing it is ſo, whoſoeuer taketh vpon him to make lawes to rule mens ſoules, ſhall goe to confuſion with his diueliſh preſumptuouſneſſe and ouerweening. To bee ſhort, when any doctrine is to bee followed, let vs on our ſide looke that wee bee ſure that it proceedeth from God, & that our faith be groũded on him alone, ſo as wee hang not vppon mortall men, nor vppon any creature. For there woulde bee no ſteedineſſe. Thus yee ſee that the firſt point which wee haue to marke vppon this text, is that Moſes proteſteth that hee commeth not in his owne name, nor ſetteth vp Lawes at his owne pleaſure, but receiued the thinges at Gods hande, which hee taught. And for that cauſe he ſaith, *the Lorde my God commaunded mee.* True it is that the people might haue ſaide ſo as well as Moſes, according alſo as Moſes addeth oftentimes, *The Lorde your God.* But here hee appropriateth the title of God to himſelfe, ſaying, *The Lorde my God.* And whie? It is like as in a Countrie where there is a Prince, euerie man may well ſay, yondſame is the king, yondſame is the Prince: and yet notwithſtanding, they that are of his houſholde or beare any office may adde theſe wordes ouer, the King my maſter, or they may ſaye, the Prince my maſter. And why? For they bee his officers or his houſeholde ſeruauntes. After the ſame manner delt the Prophetes. Eſa.7.13. As for example, Eſay in his ſeuenth chapter ſpeaking to Acaz, ſaieth: Yee houſe of Dauid, is it not ynough for you to [greeue men, but yee muſte alſo] tempt my GOD? Heere yee ſee howe Eſay ſetteth himſelfe alone. And why? for hee is Gods officer, and hath his 1.Ki.17.20.21. commiſſion to bee his Prophet. We ſee as much in Helias. And Saint Paul likewiſe incrocheth vppon the tytle that is common, and ſayeth, Rom.1.8.9. The Goſpel which I haue receiued of my God. Whereby hee ſheweth that hee was ordeyned to bee an Apoſtle. Euen ſo is it in this text, where Moſes declareth that hee was not a Prophet of his owne making, ne came foorth at auenture, but that GOD had called him to that ſtate, and committed that charge vnto him. The reaſon then why wee muſte giue eare to men that teach vs, is becauſe they bee ſent of God, ſo as hee diminiſheth not his owne authoritie, ne diſchargeth vs to goe where wee liſt, but will haue vs alwayes ruled by his word.

Nowe Moſes addeth immediatly, *that he hath ſet foorth the ſtatutes and ordinances, to the ende that the people ſhoulde doe them, when they were come into the lande to poſſeſſe it.* Wherein wee ſee the ſame that hath beene ſhewed heeretofore; that is to wit, that God wil not haue mẽ to dally with

his doctrine, but to imbrace it with all reuerence, and to obey it by framing themſelues thereafter. Wherefore let vs bee well aduiſed, that if wee will bee well taught at Gods hande, wee muſt ſerue him all our life long. For without wee doe ſo, wee ſhall be condemned of falſe abuſing the doctrine, which was giuen vs to kill our vices and to alter our lewde and inordinate luſtes. As often then as we come to heare Gods worde, let vs alwayes haue this before our eyes, that his will is to bring vs home to himſelfe, and not to haue vs wander after our owne wicked luſts and likings, but to bow down our necke vnder his yoke to yeelde him obedience. And heereby wee ſee howe the Goſpell is vnhallowed nowadayes. For wee haue our eares ſufficiently beaten with the thinges that wee ought to doe: but who is hee that doeth but ſo much as lifte vp his finger, to ſtreine himſelfe to ſerue God? The number of them is verie ſmall. But there is great ſtore of them that take greater libertie to doe euil vppon the preaching of the Goſpell, and in their opinion God is much beholden to them, in that they ſuffer his worde to bee preached, themſelues holding ſcorne of it. But needes muſt ſuch vngodlineſſe and diueliſh pride bee horriblie puniſhed. Why ſo? For the worde that GOD ſendeth vs, is the ſeede of life which ought to yeelde fruite in vs: and yet for all that, wee make no reckening of it, but trample it vnder our feete, and wee become ſtarke blockes. And it is not ynough for vs to bee a barren grounde that beareth no fruite: but wee doe alſo bring forth the
Ier.2.21. fruites of bitterneſſe, as God complayneth by his Prophet Ieremie: inſomuch that yee ſhall ſee a great number that doe euen ſpite God and rancle in malice againſt him, ſeeking nothing elſe but to kindle his wrath more and more. Such folke muſt needes looke for dreadful damnation and mercileſſe vengeance.

And truely like as Moſes hath declared here that hee came not in his owne name: ſo alſo, his proteſting that hee had inioyned them the lawes and ordinances as GOD had vttered them vnto him, ſheweth that men cannot deuiſe to ſpite God more openly, than by ſtriuing againſt his worde. Indeede they will alledge that their intent is not ſo, like as wee ſee in theſe dayes that theſe ſcorners of God which make none account of any doctrine, doe doſſe with their hornes like madde bulles againſt all good gouernement and policie, and would faine that there were nothing but vtter deſolation in the Church: and yet notwithſtanding to couer themſelues, they will [not ſticke to] ſay, what, doeth the matter concerne the Goſpell? who is he that woulde not mainteine it? Yea if the diuels of hel maintain it. We ſee ſome ſuch among vs, yea euen which ſhew themſelues much wickeder than the Papiſts. And the diuel alſo muſt neede be faine to ſhew his furie, and the libertie that God hath giuen him againſt ſuch deſpiſers. But all is well if they can couer themſelues alwayes with this faire excuſe, that they mind not to fight againſt the Goſpel, but againſt the preachers. Nowe ſeeing they bee at that point, wee muſt fall to ſcanning of the matter, to wit whether the preachers doe ſet foorth any ſtraunge doctrine, whether they haue put forth any forged dotages, or whether they haue ſet vp any lawes at their owne pleaſure. If it be found that the miniſters preach Gods worde purely: that they are glad and faine to aduaunce the kingdome of our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt: that they procure the ſame to the vttermoſt of their power: and that they ſeeke to haue ſuch order in the Church, as God may alwayes be worſhiped, and good policie bee mainteined among men: with whom haue they to do, which ſtriue here againſt? And we muſt bee faine to come to the proteſtation that Moſes made, ſaying: What are wee Exod.16.7.
Moſes and Aaron? What haue wee ſet foorth, which wee haue not receiued of God? What cauſe haue you to mooue this ſedition and vprore, in ſaying that yee cannot abide that wee ſhoulde reigne ouer you? What is the ſoueraintie, what is the dominion which we woulde haue ouer you? Wee deſire nothing but that God bee obeyed, and that hee haue the authoritie and preheminence that belong vnto him. Loe howe Moſes ſpake of his time. And after the ſame maner ſpeake wee nowadayes to theſe royſters, which ſeeke to bring all to confuſion, vnder ſhadowe and pretence that they intende to mainteine the Goſpell, whereas it appeareth that they make a flatte mockerie of it, and raile againſt it. Yet for all this, they that haue any taſte of Religion, wil defie ſuch plages, and ſeparate themſelues from them, leaſt God wrappe them vp with them in the ſame condemnation: and they will looke to make the knowledge profitable which they haue receiued, yea and with all humbleneſſe receiue the thinges that are taught them by men, ſo they bee ſure that they come from God. Thus yee ſee what wee haue to remember vppon this ſentence.

Nowe afterwarde hee commaundeth them *to keepe theſe thinges and to doe them.* And why? for (ſaith hee) *Beholde your vnderſtanding and your wiſedome in the ſight of all Nations, is that you bee taught of your God.* Whereas he ſaith, *ye ſhall keepe them therefore and doe them:* it is a concluſion well worthie to bee noted. For muſt it not needes be that men are ſtarke madde, when they haue no minde to heare God at ſuch time as hee teacheth them? What are wee that GOD ſhoulde take the paine to doe the office of a teacher towardes vs? Is it not a great ſtooping downe from his highneſſe? But ſeeing that God doth ſo leſſen himſelfe, as to ſtoope to our rudeneſſe to teach vs: ſhoulde wee let his worde fall to the grounde and deſpiſe it? So then let vs vnderſtande, that whenſoeuer wee bee ſpoken to in Gods name, we ought to tremble vnder his maieſtie, yea and to imbrace his worde with all reuerence, truely, hartily, and zealouſly. For it is but a counterfait worſhipping of God, if we be not as Lambes, ſuffring our ſelues to be led by his onely voice: and it is certaine that if we followe not after him as ſoone as hee doeth but make a ſigne, wee be wilde beaſtes, and hee will not knowe vs for any of his. And ſo wee ſee what authoritie the name of God carieth with it: inſomuch that when Gods worde is ſet afore vs, wee muſt all caſt downe our heades, and bowe downe our neckes to receiue the yoke that is laide vpon vs, and ſeeke by al meanes to pleaſe him and to be obedient to him.

Nowe Moſes returneth to that which I touched at the beginning: namely, that God indeuoureth to drawe vs to him by gentleneſſe: and hee ſheweth it heere to the people of Iſrael, in telling them of the excellent prerogatiue that had beene giuen them. For *beholde heere* (ſaieth God) *this is thy wiſedome and thine vnderſtanding in the ſight of all nations.* Wee knowe that naturally it is a griefe to men to be counted beaſts. And why? For they knowe that the thing wherein they differ from beaſtes, is that they haue diſcretion and reaſon in them. God to the intent to make vs excell Oxon, Aſſes, Dogges, and Swyne, hath printed his image in vs. And wherein conſiſteth this image, but in the hauing of diſcretion to deſcerne betweene good and euill? And therefore it is not to bee maruailed at, though men couet to bee ſkilfull, and to haue wiſedome and abilitie to iudge. But yet for all that, there are verie fewe that ſeeke rightly to haue a true iudgement, inſomuch that al doe rather turne away and wander after their owne fancies, and become brutiſh in themſelues. Yet neuertheleſſe, (as I ſaide afore) wee make great account of the hauing of diſcretion and wiſedome to iudge betweene good and euill. But heere Moſes ſheweth, that men are vnable to rule themſelues. In deede wee weene yes: but it is but a weening, yea and an ouerweening. For our life is vtterly out of order, and there is nothing well ruled in it, vntill GOD haue ſhewed vs the way, and that wee haue profited in his ſchoole. That is the thing where vnto Moſes leadeth the people as nowe. All men [ſayeth hee] are deſirous of knowledge, and loath to bee as brute beaſtes. Becauſe they bee ſhaped after the image of God, they woulde faine haue diſcretion, that they might know how to liue.

Nowe it is ſo that GOD giueth you diſcretion and wiſedome, by vouchſafing to ſet his worde before you. So then, bee not ſo vnthankefull towardes him, as to miſuſe ſo ineſtimable a benefite. Suffer GOD to make you profite in ſuch wiſe by his worde as yee may bee ſkilfull and wiſe, and not wander any more. Wee ſee now in effect the meaning of Moſes.

Nowe haue wee to gather vppon this text, what the weakeneſſe of mans minde is. True it is that our father Adam receiued vnderſtanding and power to diſcerne betweene good and euill in his creation: but after hee had ſinned hee was after a ſort blinded. And wee likewiſe are corrupted, ſo as wee diſcerne in a manner nothing at all. Wee take white for blacke, as it appeareth by our corrupting of the whole ſeruice of GOD by our ſuperſtitions. True it is Ro.2.14.15 that God hath left vs ſome diſcretion, ſo as wee knowe it is euill to commit theft, whoredome, murther, &c. but yet notwithſtanding, wee be daſeled in ſuch wiſe, that our inſight is not ſo cleare and ſure as to make vs walke aright. Yee ſee then after what ſort men are marde, and it is the thing that the ſcripture ſheweth vs, inſomuch that the wretched Paynims and ſuch as Ep.4.17.18. knew not God, could not but be plunged in darkneſſe and ſo deſtitute of reaſon, as they coulde not diſcerne any more. That is the firſt point which we haue to marke.

And when as Moſes intytleth Gods worde and his lawe to bee our wiſedome: thereby hee ſheweth that wee haue no wiſedome in our ſelues, ne knowe howe to behaue our ſelues, but are as brute beaſtes, vntill ſuch time as our Lorde haue taught vs. That is another point. And were the ſame well borne in minde, ſurely men woulde not bee ſo bolde to inuent things after their owne liking, but woulde hold themſelues ſoberly and meekely vnder Gods worde. And ſo much the more neede haue wee to mind this texte, becauſe wee knowe there is no other wiſedome in vs, than to ſubmit our ſelues teachable vnto God, and to harken what hee ſaith to vs, to ſticke thereto quietly, refuſing all that euer we can conceiue of our owne head. 1.Cor.3.18.19. According wherevnto Sainct Paul ſaieth, that wee cannot bee wiſe before God, vntill wee be become fooles in our ſelues: that is to witte, vntil we know that there is nothing but vanitie & leaſing in our owne vnderſtanding, and therefore that wee muſt giue ouer all that we thinke good, and not knowe aught but that which God commaundeth. And therewithall, as Moſes ment heere to bereaue men of all ſelfeweening, to the intent they ſhoulde ſtoope and ſubmitte themſelues vnto Gods worde: ſo on the contrarie parte hee ment to ſhew that when men haue Gods Lawe for their rule: they ſhall want nothing, but all ſhall bee well and perfect. That is a ſeconde point which we haue to note. I haue told you alreadie that men muſt vnderſtande, that there is not one droppe of ſounde iudgement in them, but that to become wiſe, they muſt yeeld themſelues wholly vnto God. It is not ynough to knowe this: for wee might partly heere GOD, and afterwarde adde thereto of our owne, as we ſee the Papiſts haue done. They will not ſaye that the Scripture is falſe, (howebit that they themſelues doe falſifie it moſte wickedly: and yet for all that they bee inforced ſpite of their teeth to ſay ſtill, it is the worde of God:) But they woulde faine mingle their owne lawes with it: whereby it is euident that they haue made ſuch confuſion, as a man cannot diſcerne betweene the holy ſcripture, and their fancies. And why [haue they done ſo]? Becauſe that to their ſeeming there is ſome want in Gods worde, and hee hath not taught thinges perfectly ynough: but that is a curſed blaſphemie. For Moſes, to giue due authoritie to Gods worde, ſaieth expreſlie that it is the wiſedome and vnderſtanding of ſuch as heare it, and taſte of the doctrine that is conteyned in it. As if hee ſhoulde ſay, couet not to knowe further than your God ſheweth you. Holde yee there: for thoſe are your boundes and liſtes, and whoſoeuer paſſeth them confoundeth heauen and earth together. So then let vs learne, that when God is ſo gratious as to teach vs, it behoueth vs to yeelde ſimplie to that which he ſaith. And how may that bee done? Verily if wee take thinges whole as hee telleth vs them, and not by halfe as wee ſee theſe braue laddes doe, which would cut off Gods authoritie from him by the waſte. Well, ſay they: Let the Goſpell be preached: but if there bee any thing that wee miſlike, let that be laide away, ſuch doctrine muſt bee let alone. Yea? Shall God then be ſubiect to mens fancies, ſo as they ſhall receiue nothing but what they thinke good themſelues? What a madnes is that? Now when we ſee yͭ theſe raſcals aduaunce themſelues after that ſort: let vs on our ſide learne to giue eare to God in all points, and to make no exception to reſtreine his authoritie, but to receiue obediently whatſoeuer proceedeth from his mouth. Let that ſerue for a principle. And againe, when we once know what is in the holy ſcripture, let vs reiect all the reſt as ſtraunge and baſtarde ſtuffe. For our Lorde hath not taught vs as it were an Apſie, to ſende vs to a greater and excellenter maſter than himſelfe: For what a preſumptuouſneſſe were it [to think,] that God hath ſhewed vs but onely the firſt enterances, and that men muſt leade vs higher? What a compariſon were that? And yet notwithſtanding it is the thing that is done in poperie. For the Pope ſaith, that the lawes which hee hath made, are the reuelations of the holie Ghoſt, whereof our Lorde Ieſus ſpake when hee ſaide to his diſciples [I haue many thinges to ſay vnto you,] but yee cannot beare them all away as nowe. Iohn 16.12. Verily as who ſhoulde ſay, that God had giuen but ſome ſmall enterances in his Lawe and his Goſpell: and that the Pope were inſpired aboue the Prophets and aboue Chriſt himſelfe to bring a much more exquiſite doctrine than theirs. Wee ſee then that the diuell hath paſſed all meaſure in this behalfe. Wherefore let vs learne to knowe nothing but that which we receiue from aboue, and which it pleaſeth God to ſhewe vnto vs. Take that for a principle. Moreouer, if this was verified of the lawe of Moſes: let vs aſſure our ſelues there is much more reaſon that it ſhoulde properly be iuſtified and verified of the goſpel, ſo as they which haue profited therein, may aſſure themſelues that they haue perfect learning, wherein to beholde euen the heauenly giftes, as Saint Paul ſpeaketh of it. 2.Cor.3.18. And therefore let vs humble our ſelues when we ſee our Lorde ſo gratious to vs, as to teach vs familiarly as it were with his owne mouth. This is it in effect, which we haue to remember vpon this ſtreine. In deede it deſerueth well to be laide foorth more at length, and I muſt touch it againe hereafter: neuertheleſſe I will now conclude with a complaint. I ſee walkers yonder, & I knowe for what their comming is, except it be to ſhew not a contempt of God and his word, which is an intollerable lewdeneſſe. They come babling heere to the doore, and that not twiſe or thriſe, but more than a dooſen times. It ſheweth well that they deſpiſe God manifeſtly. Such is the honour of Geneua, that when the Goſpell is a preaching, men come euen to the Church doore to make a flatte mockerie of it, and after the ſame manner alſo is baptiſme honored heere: and it is too common a dealing.

Therefore let vs kneele downe in the preſence of our good God, with acknowledgement of the innumerable faultes which wee haue committed againſt his maieſtie, and for the which wee bee woorthy of eternall death if hee pittie vs not. And therfore let vs pray him to ſhedde out his mercie vppon vs: and that we may the better feele the ſame, let vs beſeech him to vouchſafe to traine vs ſo vnto him henceforth as hee ſubdue all our ſtubburnneſſe and all the wicked luſtes of our fleſh, and reforme vs in ſuch wiſe to his obedience, as wee may fare the better by the chaſtiſements that he ſendeth vs: and therewithall graunt vs the grace to receiue our Lord Ieſus Chriſt for our guide and ſhepheard, and to heare him as our teacher and maſter, like as hee ſpeaketh to vs daylie by his worde. That it may pleaſe him to graunt this grace, not onelie to vs, but alſo to all people and Nations of the earth, &c.

On Tewſday the xxj. of May. 1555.

The xxj. Sermon, which is the third vpon the fourth Chapter.

6 Which you ſhall keepe &c.

7 For what Nation is ſo great, that hath Gods comming ſo nie it, as the Lord our God commeth vnto vs, in all thinges that we call vpon him?

8 And what Nation is ſo great, that hath ſo righteous ordinances and lawes as all this lawe is, which I ſet before you this day?

9 Therefore take heede to thy ſelfe, and keepe thy ſoule diligently, that thou forget not the thinges which thine eyes haue ſeene, nor let them depart from thy heart all the dayes of thy life, but teach them to thy ſonnes, and ſonnes ſonnes.

10 Forget not (ſay I) the day that thou ſtoodeſt before the Lorde thy God in Horeb, when the Lorde ſaide to me, gather me the people together.

IT was declared to vs yeſterday, that foraſmuch as GOD ſeeth that we know not howe to liue: hee taketh paine to teach vs, and doth it in ſuch ſort, that as manie as liſt to obey his doctrine, haue a perfect rule to deale by. And at this day it is long of none but our ſelues, if we be not wiſe and well aduiſed to guide our ſelues. For wee haue a God that will not faile vs, and his worde is a ſure rule for vs. But heere in wee ſee mens leawdneſſe and vnthankefulneſſe, in that they cannot finde in their heartes to ſubmitte themſelues vnto God, but will needes bee wiſe in their owne conceit, and ſtill follow their owne inuentions. Yet notwithſtanding this maxime cannot bee raſed out by men: namely, that wee haue neither wiſedome nor diſcretion, except wee haue profited in Gods ſchole. And therefore we be warned heereby, to holde our ſelues ſimplie to Gods commaundementes. For as ſoone as wee fall to adding of any thing to Gods worde, it is by and by but corruption: and when wee bee out of thoſe boundes, wee can doe nothing but ſtray. Neuertheleſſe, a man might make a queſtion heere, howe Moſes coulde ſay that the people of Iſrael ſhould bee counted ſage and wiſe among all Nations: ſeeing wee knowe that the heathen did glorie in their owne follies and ſuperſtitions, euen in deſpite of the lawe. Rom.1,22. Seeing the Infidels were ſo proude that they reiected the good learning [of the Lawe,] and reſted vppon their owne fonde toyes, it ſhoulde ſeeme that this was not accompliſhed in ſuch wiſe as Moſes ſpeaketh of it heere. But wee muſt wey well the ſpeech that is ſet downe heere: that is to wit, *that the nations which ſhoulde heare the Lawes in ſuch wiſe as God had giuen them, ſhoulde ſay, beholde heere an excellent and noble people:* Nowe as for thoſe that held ſcorne of Gods law, and were caried away with pride and ouerweening, did they euer vnderſtande what Moſes had ſaide vnto the people? No. So then, yee ſee that the queſtion is reſolued in this wiſe: namely that as many of the heathen, as had knowen and taſted well the doctrine that God had deliuered to the people of Iſrael, confeſſed (as truth was) that Gods choſing of a certaine people for himſelfe, was a great and ſingular priuiledge. But verie fewe of them vouchſafed to conſider that: for all of them lay weltring ſtill in their owne dung. And although it was apparantly ſeene that the people of Iſrael had a ſeuerall lawe and Religion by themſelues: yet did all men ſhut their eyes and ſtoppe their eares. And that was the cauſe why they made no reckening of ſo great a benefite.

Now herewithal Moſes ſheweth in two things, how greatly the people ought to haue eſteemed of the grace that was giuen vnto them. For let vs (ſaith he) bee compared with the reſt of the worlde: and it ſhall not bee founde that thoſe which worſhippe Idolles doe finde ſuch power Pſal.50.15. among them as to bee ſuccoured at their neede, or that their Gods whom they call vppon, bee ſo familiar with them. There will no ſuch thing be found. For as ſoone as we pray vnto our God, and reſort vnto him: wee feele him neere vs by and by. Yee ſee then an ineſtimable benefite. Againe, wee haue his lawes and Statutes which hee hath giuen vs, wee haue his righteous ordinances: all others doe but goe aſtraie. True it is that they weene they do wel: but in the meane while they haue no certaintie in their religion: for they haue no trueth concerning God. Therfore let vs conſider the good that hee hath done vs, to the ende wee may inioy it. For all this is treated of by Moſes, to the intent it ſhoulde bee applyed vnto vs, and we learne to ſerue our God with ẏ greater zeale, and to holde our ſelues in awe. For the ſetting of his benefites and gratious giftes afore vs, is one of the wayes whereby God intendeth to winne vs to him. And it is a ſhame for vs if wee ſerue him not, ſeeing hee hath choſen vs and adopted vs to bee his children. Thus much concerning the firſt part, where it is ſaide *that other nations haue no Gods that come ſo nigh them.*

This ſaying (as I haue touched afore,) is meant of Gods helping of his people of Iſrael as ofte as they called vppon him: yea and oftentimes alſo euen before they required it, Eſa.65.24. after which manner wee ſee that hee dealeth with vs alſo. Hee thinketh vppon vs whyle wee bee aſleepe, hee watcheth for vs, and hee maketh vs to feele his ſuccour at our neede. Neuertheleſſe, in telling them that God will ſuccour vs, euen in all thinges that wee require at his hand: his intent is alſo to incourage folk to call vppon God, and to make them to blame themſelues for their owne negligence whenſoeuer they bee deſtitute of helpe and ſuccour at Gods hande: and to doe vs to vnderſtande that Gods forgetting of vs, is for that wee flee not to him for refuge as wee ought to doe, ne ſeeke vnto him, who is alwayes readie to helpe vs at our neede. Thus yee ſee that the intent of Moſes was to exhort the people to prayer and ſupplication, and therewithal to ſhew that God had alwayes ſhewed himſelfe at hande vnto ſuch as had returned to him.

It is not ſo with any of the Gods of the heathen. If this ſaying were well obſerued, the wretched worlde woulde not ouerſhoote it ſelfe ſo farre as it doeth. Wee ſee what windlaſſes men make to ſeeke ſaluation: but there are very few which goe right forth vnto God, and yet doeth hee allure all of vs: the way and the gate is open. Whereof is it long that wee goe not on? It is for that euen of nature wee deſire to bee deceiued. Wee ſee howe all men doe deuiſe patrones and aduocates to themſelues, and it ſeemeth to them that they cannot bee diſappointed, when they haue their owne deuotions after what ſort ſoeuer it bee. Thus doe men wilfully beguile themſelues, and runne gadding vp and downe. But when they haue toyled themſelues neuer ſo much, in the ende they finde themſelues ouer weried, & yet yͤ they haue gained nothing by all that euer they did. Wee ſee then howe it is not without cauſe ſaide, that if wee looke well to our ſelues, none of all the wretched vnbeleeuers which torment themſelues to atteine vnto God, and holde not the right way thither, haue ſuch aduauntage as wee haue. For whenſoeuer we call vpon God ſimplie Pſa.145.18 and according to his worde, wee be neuer diſappointed.

But now let vs come to that which Moſes addeth concerning ſtatutes and laws, which is the principall point of this ſentence. *What people is there* (ſaith he,) *which hath ſo rightfull ſtatutes and ordinances as we haue?* Truely if a man would haue beleeued the heathen, they thought verie well of themſelues in their owne dotages, and they bare themſelues in hand that there was nothing but ſounde perfection in them. But yet for all that, it is a wonder to ſee howe they became ſo dull. They that otherwiſe were of great ſkill and ſharpewitted, were become ſo brutiſh in their ſuperſtitions, as euen little children might iuſtly haue beene aſhamed of them. But the light muſt be faine to ſhine in the darke: or elſe it will neuer bee poſſible to diſcerne a right. And for proofe thereof, what is the cauſe that the heathen are ſo hardened in their owne dotages? It is for that they neuer knewe Gods Lawe, and therefore they neuer compared the trueth with the vntruth. But when Gods lawe commeth in place, then doeth it appeare that all the reſt is but ſmoke: inſomuch that they which took themſelues to be maruelous wittie, are founde to haue beene no better than beſotted in their owne beaſtlineſſe. This is apparant. Wherefore let vs marke well, that to diſcerne that there is nothing but vanitie in all worldly deuiſes, we muſt knowe the Lawes and ordinances of God. But if we reſt vppon mens lawes, ſurely it is not poſſible for vs to iudge rightly. Then muſt wee needes goe firſt to Gods ſchoole, and that will ſhewe vs that when wee haue once profited vnder him, it will be ynough. That is all our perfection. And on the otherſide wee may deſpiſe all that euer is inuented by man, ſeeing there is nothing but fondneſſe and vncertainty in them. And that is the cauſe why Moſes termeth them *rightfull ordinances.* As if he ſhoulde ſay, it is true indeede that other people haue ſtore of ceremonies, ſtore of rules, and ſtore of Lawes: but there is no right at all in them, all is awrie, all is crooked. True it is that they perceiue it not: and what is the cauſe thereof, but for that it is not poſſible for them to diſcerne good from euill, without Gods worde which is the trueth? Howe ſoeuer wee fare, wee cannot do the thing that is iuſt or right, except wee haue firſt learned it at Gods hande. And if wee haue beene ſo farre ouerſeene as to allowe our owne doings, let vs not goe on ſtill, for God will diſallowe euerie whit of it, becauſe wee muſt take all our rightneſſe at his trueth. In this caſe it is not for euerie man to bring his owne weightes and his owne balance: but wee muſt hold our ſelues to that which God hath vttered and doth vtter. True it is that Moſes doeth greatly magnifie the people of Iſraell heere: but yet neuertheleſſe we muſt vnderſtande, that the priuiledge which is ſo greatly magnified heere, did nothing aduantage thoſe which reiected the lawe and profited not themſelues thereby. The Iewes are termed heere a wiſe and ſkilfull people, a noble people, a people that hath nothing but excellency and worthineſſe in them. And why ſo? Becauſe God had choſen them, and vttered his iudgementes and righteouſneſſe vnto them. But Eſa.42.18. yet for all that, on the other ſide they be termed blinde and deafe. And why? Becauſe they did what they coulde to haue quenched the light that God had kindled for them. We knowe that they were taught by the doctrine which conteined their whole wiſedome. And therefore when they deſpiſed it, they coulde not be but dubble blinded inſomuch that the ignorance of the heathen and infidels, was nothing in compariſon of theirs that had ſo reiected Gods grace, when it was put into their handes: And that is a point well worthie to bee weyed. The Iewes do arme themſelues yet ſtill at this day with the ſame texte, when they liſt to commende themſelues. Tuſh, ſay they: it is ſaide that wee bee men of vnderſtanding, a people of great wiſedome, a people of paſſing nobilitie and worthineſſe. This is true, if they had helde faſt the treaſure that God gaue them, and kept it well. But ſeeing they bee fleeted away from the law, or rather yͭ a veyle is caſt before their eyes, becauſe of their 2.Cor.3.14 reiecting of Ieſus Chriſt: yea and ſeeing that e- 16. uen before his comming, they diſobeyed the Prophetes and became hardharted againſt the doctrine of ſaluation that was brought to them: it coulde not bee but that (as I ſaide afore) they muſt needes become more ignoraunt than all the reſt of the worlde. For if the heathen bee as good as deſtitute of reaſon, becauſe they haue not beene in Gods ſchoole: needes muſt they to whome GOD hath ſpoken, and yet are diſ- Eph.4.18. obedient thereunto, needes muſt they (I ſay) bee ſtriken with the ſpirite of diſineſſe, and bee caried away by the diuell, and become as wilde beaſtes, ſo as they ſhall not offende of ſimple ignorance as they doe which neuer hearde any thing, but of wilfull rage more than beaſtly. Euen after that manner is it happened to the Iewes. And it is the verie ſame thing wherewith the Prophete Eſaye vpraideth them in his two and forteeth chapter, ſaying: Hearken ye deafe, ſee yee blinde. And why ſpeaketh hee to Eſa.42.18. the deafe and blinde, to heare and ſee well? Hee 20. addeth the reaſon by and by, ſaying: yee haue ſeene ynough, and yee haue hearde ynough: but yee haue not regarded it.

Alſo God complayneth of his paines taken in teaching of his people, and of loſing his labour therein. For (ſaieth hee) haue not I done workes ynowe among you ? Yes, but what for that? You haue had neither eares nor eyes. And nowe if yee bee compared to the reſt of the worlde, yee paſſe all the heathen and vnbeleeuers in blindneſſe . And why ? For yee haue had teaching ynough and too much . And his vpbraiding and blaming of them, is not for that they had not ſufficient experience whereby to haue beene dewly taught : but for that they did ſhut their eyes , and woulde not profite themſelues by the thinges that GOD ſhewed them.

Seeing that the Iewes are thus blamed by the Prophet, notwithſtanding that Moſes had reported them to bee a people of wiſedome and vnderſtanding : let vs come to our ſelues, and conſider that if this bee happened to the naturall braunches, what ſhall become of the impes [that are graffed into the tree,] as Saint Paul Rom.11.17. ſpeaketh of it in the eleuenth to the Romanes. It is certaine that the Iewes went before vs in preheminence, or at leſtwiſe they had the birth- Exod.4.22. ryght in Gods Church, and haue it yet ſtil. And Ep.2.12.13. which more is, at ſuch time as wee were ſtraungers vnto God, they were his houſeholde folke, Rom.9.4. and in his houſe and Church. Yet notwithſtanding, euen after they had beene inlightened as wee ſee heere, they were condemned of greater blindneſſe than the wretched Painims that neuer had any taſte of the trueth, nor any one ſparke of good knowledge . And why ? for they had made themſelues vnworthy of ſuch a benefite . But God in theſe dayes ſheweth himſelfe more familiarly to vs than he did to the fathers 2.Cor.3.18. in the time of the lawe. For in the Goſpell his face ſhineth foorth in ſuch wiſe, as wee may beholde it to be transfigured into his glorie. Is not our Lorde Ieſus the liuely image of God his father ? And doeth not hee ſhewe himſelfe in ſuch wiſe in his Goſpel, that we may diſcerne him as well as if he dwelt among vs ? Nowe then, if wee haue not our eyes open to receiue this doctrine, nor bee diligent to profite in the ſame : muſte not the vengeance which the Prophet Eſaye ſpeakes of, light vpon our heads ? that is to wit, Eſa.42.20. that wee ſhall be more blinde and brutiſh than the heathen, for as much as wee haue ſeene and woulde not ſee? And in good ſooth wee knowe it without his telling vs thereof . Looke me vppon the Turkes : they haue ſome reuerence to their religion, and ſo haue the Papiſtes alſo. & yet are both of them cut off from the Church of God through their own fault, but yet are they not ſo much to blame as wee. Therefore when men ſlide backe againe after they haue once knowen the Goſpell, yee ſhall ſee them become like dogges, ſo as there is no more honeſtie nor feeling of God in them, but they bee vtterly bewitched , and growe into the ſenſleſneſſe of 1.Tim.4.4. minde which Saint Paul ſpeaketh of, namely that they make no remorſe of conſcience at any thing. And wee neede not to goe farre to ſeeke examples hereof. For euen among vs there are diuers to bee ſeene, who hauing vnhallowed Gods word after that ſort, are become ſtarke madde and fall at defiance with GOD, being poſſeſſed with ſuch diueliſh rage, as there remaineth not any more ſhamefaſtneſſe in them. Therefore when wee ſee this geere, we ought to quake at it and to ſay, Loe howe GOD reuengeth the contempt of his worde. And therefore let vs beare in minde, that when God hath bene ſo gratious to vs as to doe the office of a ſcholemaſter among vs, and to teach vs by his word: it behooueth vs to followe the light thereof. For if it bee put out through our naughtineſſe : it muſt needes bee that wee ſhall become more dull of vnderſtanding , than all the reſt of the worlde whiche neuer wiſt what GOD or true Religion is . Thus yee ſee what wee haue to marke as in reſpecte of this ſentence.

Nowe Moſes addeth immediatly, *Take heede to thy ſelfe and keepe thy ſoule diligently, that thou forget not the thinges which thine eyes haue ſeene, nor let them euer depart from thy heart* : that is to wit, *the day wherein thy God made thee to appeare before his Maieſtie in the valley of Horeb . There hee taught thee his lawe, when hee willed mee to make you all to appeare together before him. Therfore be mindfull of that day, and let it neuer be forgotten* . Nowe when as Moſes ſaith *take heede to thy ſelfe & keepe thy ſoule*: Hee ſheweth that hee cannot ſufficiently expreſſe the care which wee ought to haue to walke in the feare of God, and to make and keepe good watch , for feare of ſtarting from him, leaſt the diuell harrie vs abrode and make vs become as ſtray ſheepe. Nowe if this bee not ſuperfluous, what needeth any more to quicken vs vp withall ? See howe God ſpeaketh heere : hee ſaieth not onely, take heede to your ſelues : but alſo, take heede to your ſelues and take heede to your ſoules. That is to ſay, vppon perill of your liues take heede to your ſelues and watch well, that yee bee not taken vnwares. And this is not ſaid without cauſe : for wee ſee howe frayle wee bee. Although God haue giuen vs ſo ſure a foundation, as wee can neuer be ſhaken downe if wee holde vs to it : yet doe wee nothing but totter, and euerie thing of nothing maketh vs to reele . Seeing then that our nature is ſo vnconſtant, and wee ſwarue ſo eaſily from Gods trueth : let vs aſſure our ſelues that this exhortation is not ſet downe heere without cauſe. Againe, wee ſee alſo howe wyly the diuell is, and howe many meanes hee hath to beguile vs, and wee are eaſily ledde to giue eare to ſuch as ſeduce vs. Alſo there is great policie vſed to deceiue vs : inſomuch that the couſiners doe ſhroude themſelues euen vnder the name of GOD, in their foiſting in of their falſe doctrines and errours : and the diuell diſguiſeth himſelfe by transforming himſelfe into an Angel of light (as S. Paul ſpeaketh of him) : 2.Cor.11.14 1.Pet.5.8. and hee aſſaulteth vs not ſome one way onely, but when hee perceiueth that hee hath miſſed on the one ſide, hee runneth ſtreight to the other, ſo as wee haue no ſooner withſtoode one aſſault, but wee muſt by and by come to another. Seeing then that wee on our ſide are ſo fraile, and the diuell hath ſuch ſhifte of wyles and ſlyghtes to beguyle vs : we may well aſſure our ſelues it is not for nought that Moſes willeth vs here to beware, euen vpon perill of our ſoules. But what for that? Wee ſee neuertheleſſe how ill this doctrine is put in practiſe. For wee bee carefull ynough for the thinges that concerne this earthly life: inſomuch that wee ſtande alwayes vpon our gard for feare of being taken vnwares, and on what ſide ſo euer a man come to aſſaile vs, he can not enter vpon vs, for wee are euer armed: but as concerning Gods worde, wee forget that out of hand. True it is that men will come to ſome Sermon nowe and then for faſhions ſake: but when they come home againe they neuer thinke more of it, it is quite out of their rememberaunce, it goes in at the one eare and out at the other, as ſaieth the prouerb: ſo that [in the ende] they finde themſelues emptie and hungerſtaruen, bicauſe they made none account of the warning that is giuen vs here. So then, let vs learne to bee more watchfull and to keepe better warde: and let vs weigh well this ſaying, *That we muſt take heed to our ſelues.* Why ſo? For if wee doe not keepe good watche and looke well about vs: wee ſhall wonder to ſee how ſoone the Diuell will haue ſnarled vs in his ſnares. Moreouer foraſmuch as it is very harde for vs to doe ſo, and wee ſee that at one time or other wee bee quickly thruſt out of the way: let euerie of vs take good heede to himſelfe, and rowſe vp all our wittes, and gather them about vs, applying them earneſtly to this care & wareneſſe which Moſes ſpeaketh of here.

And he ſaieth purpoſely, *Take good heede that thou forget not the things which thine eyes haue ſeene, and beware that they neuer depart from thy heart.* Whenas he ſaith, *The things which thine eyes haue ſeene:* thereby he meaneth that the people are vtterly without excuſe, if they regarde not the thinges that God had ſhewed them, according Deut.3.21. to his former vſing of the ſame maner of ſpeach. And whereas he ſaieth that our eyes haue ſeene, it ſerueth to expreſſe the things which our Lord hath ſhewed vs tootoo euidently, ſo as wee cannot alledge ignoraunce, nor ſay, this or that was too high or too darke for mee. *Thine eyes haue ſeene it,* ſaieth Moſes. As if he ſhould ſay, No no, ye neede not to bee great Clerkes nor Doctors in this behalfe, ye neede not to bee verie ſuttleheaded: our Lordes manifeſting of himſelfe vnto you hath bene in ſuch ſorte and ſo euidently, that euen the verieſt idiotes and rudeſt ſorte of you haue perceiued the things that he told you. And in good ſooth, although Gods worde conteine wonderfull ſecretes: yet notwithſtanding they bee ſo manifeſt vnto vs, as wee may bee able to conceiue them, at leaſtwiſe if we our ſelues bee not in the fault. For wee ſee howe God lowlieth himſelfe and ſtoopeth to our rudeneſſe, bicauſe he knoweth what wee bee able to beare. Nowe then ſeeing it is ſo: let vs but open our eyes, and when God hath once ſhewed himſelfe to vs, let vs take good heede that wee forget him not: for [if wee doe,] wee ſhall bee vnexcuſable, and our vnthankefulneſſe will bee manifeſt and ſufficiently prooued. Againe he ſheweth that it is not ynough for vs to haue ſome light rememberaunce of it ſwimming in our braine: but it muſt bee well rooted in our heartes: And after that manner ought Gods worde to bee ſowen in vs. It is not ynough for vs to haue ſkill to talke of it, and to bee able to ſay, I knowe this & that: but wee muſt holde faſt the thinges inwardly which wee haue heard outwardly. Nowe then, if Gods woorde bee ſetled in our heartes, and raigne there: then haue wee good rememberaunce of it. But if wee bee not touched with it, nor haue any willingneſſe to keepe it: it is all one as if wee had neuer heard of it. Thus ye ſee what we haue to marke concerning this ſpeach of Moſeſes, where it is ſaide, that the thinges which wee haue once knowen muſt neuer out of our mindes.

But foraſmuch as God had vttered himſelfe diuers wayes to the people: it behoued Moſes to ſhewe his meaning more particularly in this text. And therefore he addeth, *The day wherein thou wart before the Lorde thy God, thou diddeſt appeare before God in the valley of Horeb, at which time hee commaunded mee to ſummon you, and to call you all together.* Albeit then that God had ſhewed himſelfe to the people of Iſrael by diuerſe myracles, by ſundrie kindes of ſightes, and alſo by diuerſe reuelations as in reſpect of his worde: yet doeth Moſes bring backe the people here, chiefly to the lawe, and to the ſolemne day wherein the lawe was publiſhed. And that is according to the matter that wee haue ſeene. In ſo much that if wee haue not that grounde, wee ſhall but builde in the aire, and all that euer can bee ſaide vnto vs will ſlippe from vs. The grounde that I meane is the ſubmitting of our ſelues vnto God, to bee guided by his worde and to bridle our ſelues thereby, ſo as he alone may haue the whole authoritie and maiſterſhip ouer vs, and wee become his true Diſciples in ſticking to his pure doctrine. That then is the cauſe why Moſes doeth make ſpeciall mention here of the ſolemne day wherein the lawe was giuen to the people of Iſrael. For he ſawe well that it woulde not haue booted at all to haue vppened neuer ſo many thinges by parcellmeale, if he had not ſet downe the chiefe groundwoorke, which is that men muſt ſuffer themſelues to bee gouerned by Gods lawe. Likewiſe at this day, when wee ſhall haue diſputed at large of a nomber of pointes, if wee doe not firſt and formoſt winne that men ſhould obey God, and make them to knowe that his woorde is the right trueth whereunto they muſt holde themſelues: to what purpoſe is it? They will bee ſtill wauering and vnconſtant, accordingly as wee ſee howe a great nomber will bee taſting of this and that, and can finde nothing whereon to reſt. And why? For they know not the firſt point of Chriſtianitie, which is, that the holy Scripture is our whole wiſedome, and that wee muſt hearken to God ſpeaking there, and not adde any thing thereunto. Nowe then, vntill ſuch time as wee bee come to that point, Col.1.18. wee ſhall bee euer chaunging, and doe nothing but totter and wauer like Reedes. And for the ſame cauſe doeth the Prophet Malachie ſaye, Be mindeful of the Law that was giuen you by Mal.4.4.

Moſes in Horeb. For it was Gods will that thenceforth there ſhoulde bee an intermiſſion, ſo as a certaine time ſhoulde paſſe wherein the Prophetes ſhoulde ſpeake no more till the comming of our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt. Nowe in the meane while the Prophet Malachie ſaith, Bee mindefull of the Lawe that was giuen. As if hee ſhoulde ſay, yee can not doe amiſſe if ye hearken to your GOD, and ſuffer your ſelues to bee taught by him: but you ſhall haue perfect learning, for it is vttered there. Now therefore wee ſee what the meaning of Moſes is, and howe wee ought to apply the ſame to our owne vſe: that is to wit, that aboue all thinges wee muſt aſſure our ſelues, that our Lorde hath vttered himſelfe vnto vs in ſuch wiſe, as he will be a good and faithfull teacher vnto vs, if wee bee good ſchollers vnto him. And therefore let vs ſettle all our wittes to the obedience of faith, ſo as wee preſume not to adde any thing to that which GOD telleth vs. When wee bee once come to that point, then ſhall wee bee guided foorth from point to point, and from degree to degree to our perfection: but yet muſt we haue the foreſaid groundworke, before wee can build well.

Nowe let vs come to this ſaying of his, *Call to minde the daye wherein yee were before the Lorde.* This ſaying importeth much. For although that GOD did then teſtifie his preſence in the vailey of Horeb, as wee ſhall ſee hereafter: yet notwithſtanding whenſoeuer hee ſpeaketh vnto vs, wee appeare before his iudgement ſeat, though wee haue no viſible myracles. And it is all one as if a Prince being ſet to hold a Court of eſtate, ſhould cauſe his ſtatutes and ordinances to bee proclaimed by the ſounde of a trumpet, to the intent that all men might haue knowledge of them. After the ſame manner doeth GOD deale in this caſe. For when he vouchſafeth to haue his worde preached vnto vs, it is as much as if he ſummoned vs to him, and called vs to his throne, there to appeare euerie man for himſelfe, to yeelde account as before our iudge. And (as I told you) this importeth much. For wee bee greatly deſtitute of wit and reaſon, if this mooue vs not to heare Gods worde with other reuerence than wee haue done. If we conſidered well, that when wee come to a Sermon, or when wee take the Byble in our handes to reade, God citeth and ſummoneth vs, ſo as wee cannot caſt our eye vppon his word, nor receiue ſo much as one worde that is vttered to vs in his name, but that his Maieſtie is preſent there with it, and wee our ſelues are preſent in his ſight. If wee thought well vppon that: I pray you ſhould wee not bee otherwiſe prepared and humbled to yeeld our ſelues teachable? Should wee not bee in another manner of forewardneſſe than wee are ſeene to bee? Therefore if wee come hither with ſuch coldneſſe, as it were but for orders ſake, or when in reading of the Byble, ſome of vs are caryed awaye with fonde curioſitie, ſome thinke them ſelues diſcharged to Godwarde with the hauing of two or three ſentences, and otherſome make but a paſtime of it: doeth not this dealing of ours ſhewe well, that wee neuer taſted of this ſaying? Namely, that if GOD ſpeake vnto vs, wee muſt come before him and feele his Maieſtie, to be as it were beaten downe vnder it, to the ende to ſubmit our ſelues the better to his woorde. That is one principall point.

Beſides this there is alſo an aſſemblie that Moſes ſpeaketh of, howe he was commaunded to gather the people togither. For it hath bene Gods will to keepe that order from the beginning for the better exerciſing of vs in the vnitie of faith. True it is that he could well teache vs euerie one alone by himſelfe: and in deede he vſeth that way too, ſo that whether he inſtruct vs by teaching, or giue vs grace to profite by reading, it may well bee done by our ſelues alone: but yet therewithall there is the common order, which he will haue to continue inuiolable. And why? Foraſmuch as wee haue all one faith, and Eph.4.5. haue neede to bee tyed and knit togither in one: GOD vſeth this meane of teaching vs all as it were by one mouth, and maketh vs to meete togither as it were in one bodie: and that, not onely to the ende that a great multitude may take profite at one mans mouth, but to the ende wee ſhoulde knowe that there is but one rule, one trueth, one God that ſpeaketh, and which cauſeth vs to bee of one accorde and one melodie in that behalfe, in ſo much that when euerie mã holdeth in with his neighbour, it is bicauſe there is a right conformitie. That then is the thing whereunto Moſes had reſpect, in ſaying that God commaunded him to aſſemble the people, as he that was his Leiuetenaunt. Hee gaue the Lawe generally to the intent that the people might by that meanes bee taught to thinke thus with themſelues: beholde, our God will haue vs to bee of one accord in him, and to bee one bodie wholly conformable to his worde, ſo as euerie man ſhift not for himſelfe like bandes that were ſcattered and put to flight in battell, but linck togither in one right and holy vnion. And this is not for one time onely: but it muſt be put in vre vnto the worldes ende. For it is Gods will that his Goſpell ſhould bee publiſhed. And how? Matt.10.27. & Luk.12.3. Not in hudder mudder and in folkes eares: but he will haue men to bee taught openly, and to meete togither, yea and their meeting to bee to the ende that he bee preached, ſo as there may be a good vnitie of faith, & that the mark whereat all of vs doe ſhoote, may bee to bee gathered and knit togither in our head Ieſus Chriſt, who Eph.4.11.16. is the bond whereof S. Paule ſpeaketh, which proceedeth of the common preaching. Wherefore let vs learne that wee can not bee rightly of Gods houſholde, nor of his flocke, vnleſſe wee meete togither, and that our meeting be not only a comming togither in the Church, but alſo a continuall linking togither in vnitie when we be gone thence, and when euery of vs is alone by himſelfe from companie, ſo as wee ſhewe that Gods gathering of vs togither vnto himſelfe is not in vaine, but that there is a right brotherhood among vs, to come all vnto him in yͤ name of our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt. For the diuell ſeekes by all meanes to breake that bond, as wee ſee he hath laboured in all ages to ſtirre vp ſectes to rend aſunder the bodie of the Church, and it is the thing that he ſtriueth to doe in theſe dayes more than euer he did erſt. And if hee cannot obtaine that falſe doctrines may haue their full ſcope to make hauocke of all thinges: yet will he ſowe darnell among vs, ſo as in ſtead of being vnited, wee ſhall bee heauing one at another, or at leaſtwiſe as good as drawen a ſunder, ſo as our bond ſhall not bee ſtraite and well knitte togither. When wee ſee the matter in that taking, let vs vnderſtande that it is a practiſe of the diuels driuing. And why? Gods intent is that we ſhould bee gathered togither before him, yea euen before him. For the wicked wil wel ynough make leagues and confederacies. howbeit, that is but to ſpite GOD: and in verie deede they turne their backes vppon him, and hide themſelues from him, and by all meanes poſſible eſchew to come at him, for they haue no liking at all of him. But wee on our ſide muſt come togither in the preſence of our God. Sith it is ſo, let vs bee afraide to ſhrinke a ſunder, and let not the Diuell ſeparate vs as wee ſee hee laboureth to doe: and he knoweth that hee ſhall haue ouerthrowen the principall point of our ſaluation, if he may winne that at our handes. And therefore let vs abhorre all ſuch ſowers of diſcorde in the Church of God. Wee ſee nowadayes, that in ſtead of aſſembling togither, there are diuerſe which ſeeke nothing but to ſcatter Gods flocke: and wee neede not to goe any further than to this preſent place. We perceiue howe theſe raſcalles doe nowadayes ſerue the diuell as though they tooke wages of him, or were vtterly ſolde to bee his ſeruauntes. A man may ſee whereat they ſhoot. There needeth no geſſing or coniecturing, there needeth no great inquirie of the matter: let a man but looke vppon their doings, and he ſhall finde that their whole ſeeking is to breake al vnion, and to pluck aſunder the things that haue beene knitte togither in the name of God. If GOD did euer worke myraculouſly in any place: he woorketh here as myraculouſly as in any place of ÿ world, and hee ſheweth the power of his woorde as mightily as may bee. Goe whither ye will, and ſuch as are ſcattered from all other places, reſort hither to ſhrowde themſelues as it were vnder Gods winges, and to bee as it were one flocke gathered togither in his name. And what doeth the Diuell on the contrarie parte? There is nothing elſe but banding, that the wicked may ſhed abroade their venim and poiſon. And howe? Euen by vnioyning the thinges that GOD had ioyned. In deede they will not ſay it: but the thing it ſelfe is too apparant, and there needeth no long diſputing or diſcourſing of the matter, if a man doe but open his eyes he ſhall ſee it. And it is a great ſhame that it is ſuffered and winked at: for the matter is too open and maniſeſt. Yet notwithſtanding it is not our Lordes will that the thinges which he hath knitte togither ſhoulde bee ſo vnhappily rent a ſunder, and all bee put out of order after this ſort. Wherefore let vs abhorre ſuch plagues, and beſeeche GOD to rid his Church of them & the world too, by powring out his vengeance vppon them, ſeeing it appeareth that they bee vtterly reprobate, and that there is no meane to reclaime them againe. God ſo thunder downe vppon them, as men may knowe howe highly hee eſteemeth the vnitie of the faith, and his Church be maintained in true brotherhood and concord. And in the meane ſeaſon let vs labour to bring this to paſſe: and if wee bee true members of Ieſus Chriſt, let vs doe the cleane contrarie to that which wee ſee the wicked doe. For ſith that they doe ſtraine themſelues ſo to put all thinges to hauocke: let vs on our ſide walke on in good vnion, and looke that wee come togither in the preſence of our God, and that in ſuch wiſe as his worde doe maintaine vs in good agreement, and cauſe vs ſo to ſerue him, and wee being conuerſant one with another in good brotherly friendſhip, may bee followers of the fatherly goodneſſe of our GOD, whereby he gathereth the thinges togither which were ſcattered aſunder before.

Matt.19.6.

Nowe let vs fall downe in the preſence of our good GOD with acknowledgement of our faults, praying him to make vs ſo to feel them, as wee may repent vs of them aright and ſeeke the remedie of them, which is, that he cleanſe vs from all our affections and luſtes, making vs to renounce all our owne deſires in ſuch wiſe, as we may no more bee giuen to our owne fanſies and likings, but ſeeke altogither to bee ruled by his worde, and to profite therein after ſuch a ſorte more and more, as our whole wiſdome and perfection may be to be ruled altogither by ÿ ſame. That it may pleaſe him to graunt this grace not onely to vs, but alſo to all, &c.

On Wedneſday the xxij. of May. 1555.

The xxij. Sermon, which is the fourth vpon the fourth Chapter.

and I will make them to heare my words, which they ſhall learne, to the end they may feare mee all the dayes which they ſhall liue vppon the earth, and that they may teach their children.

11 Then came yee and ſtoode vnder the hill, which burnt with fire vnto the middes of the skie, and there was darkeneſſe, cloudes, and miſt.

12 And the Lorde your God ſpake vnto you out of the middes of the fire. Yee heard the voyce of his wordes: but you ſawe not any image beſides the voyce.

13 Then declared he his couenant vnto you, which hee commaunded you to doe, that is to wit, the tenne verſes, and hee wrote them vppon two tables of ſtone.

14 The ſame time the Lorde commaunded mee to teache you the ordinaunces and Lawes, to the ende yee ſhould doe them in the Land which you goe into to poſſeſſe it.

I Declared yeſterday after what maner wee muſt come together in the name of God, to appeare before him. For the meeting of the wicked is to make confederacies, and it is apparant that their ſeeking is but only to conſpire againſt God and all goodneſſe: but yet their meeting is by hiding themſelues from Gods preſence, & they would faine turne their backes vppon him, ſo as he ſhoulde not ſee them. Truely they doe but looſe their time: for all things muſt needs come to account before God. And if mortall men eſpie their wicked practiſes, ſo as they perceiue that their banding of themſelues is but to ouerthrowe all order: the ſame muſt needes bee Eccle.12.14. Heb.4.13. knowen to the heauenly judge, from whom nothing is hidden. If their lewdneſſe appeare euen to little children: thinke they that God hath his eyes ſtopped? But it behoueth vs on our ſide to preſent our ſelues before God in all our meetings, to the intent that he may ſit among vs, & wee bee taught as it were by his mouth and gouerned by his hand. Furthermore foraſmuch as wee ſee that the wicked ſeeke altogether to rend a ſunder the vnion of the Church: let vs indeuour ſo much ẏ more to come togither in Gods name. For wee can not prooue our ſelues to bee his children, if wee haue not the marke whereof Moſes ſpeaketh here. And thereby it may bee iudged, that ſuch as paſſe not to haunt the companies of Chriſtians, when they meete together in the name of God to heare his worde and to pray vnto him: are but as dogges, and deſerue not to bee reckened in the common aray of mē, but are to be abhorred as dung and filth, bicauſe they haue cut off themſelues from Gods houſe. Thus yee ſee what wee haue to remember concerning that text.

And nowe Moſes addeth, that if we minde to fare the better by the meetings that are made in the name of God: *Wee muſt hearken to the things that he telleth vs*, and that muſt bee *to the ende that wee may feare him*, that is to ſay, to the ende wee yeeld him al reuerence, and it may appeare that wee take him for our Father and God. For if we thinke to content God with ceremonies, we deceiue our ſelues, as they doe which could finde in their heartes to haue no Religion at all, and therefore reſort hither, ſome but once a moneth, and otherſome as ſeldome as may bee. There are alſo which come hither vpon the Sundayes and Wedneſdayes as it were for faſhions ſake: but in the meane while doeth it appeare that they bee any whit edified in the feare of God? Doeth it appeare that their comming hither to crowd themſelues into the flocke, doth any whit amend them or make them the better? Nay rather they become the more venemous againſt God, & therefore their comming to infect Gods houſe, is to their greater condemnation: for they bee vnworthie to come here, they bee no better than ſwine. Therefore our comming to the Church muſt be to another ende: that is to wit, that wee may profite in the feare of God. Nowe (as I haue touched alreadie) this feare importeth that he ſhoulde ouerrule vs, and that wee ſhould bee ſubiect vnto him. And for the ſame cauſe alſo doeth Moſes match theſe two ſayings together, namely *that wee muſt doe the things that God commaundeth vs*, and alſo, *that wee muſt feare him*. Many men thinke they feare God well, whē they haue ſome fond deuotion towardes him, as wee ſee in Poperie, where euerie man ſayes that his intent is to ſerue God: but after what faſhion? Euen euerie man after his owne fanſie. But ẏ obedience which God requireth at our hands in yeelding our ſelues wholly to his worde, and the reuerence which wee owe him as to our Father and King: are things vnſeparable. Wherefore let vs marke well that if we be minded and deſirous to come together as wee ought to doe: Gods worde muſt haue all authoritie ouer vs, ſo as our receiuing thereof bee not onely to confes it with our mouth, but alſo to frame our liues wholly thereafter. For if wee will needes liue after our owne ſwindge, and euerie of vs doe what ſeemeth good to himſelfe: God holdeth ſcorne of vs and diſclaimeth vs, though wee proteſt to feare him and ſerue him [neuer ſo much.] For it is no reaſon but that he ſhould be heard, ſpecially ſeeing he taketh paine to teach vs. That therfore is the firſt point.

Againe let vs vnderſtand that our keeping of Pſal.16.2. Gods Lawe, and our walking according to his will, doe not aduauntage him at all: for what can he receiue at our hands? But it is to the end that the world may know that we feare him, that is to ſay, that wee take him for our maiſter, & that we would faine be wholly his, and that he ſhould gouerne vs. That is the effect of the matter that Moſes ſheweth here. Howbeit foraſmuch as Churches are oftentimes defiled with hypocrits and wicked folke which crowde in couertly, who notwithſtanding are worthie to bee euen thruſt out of the world: Let vs marke what is ſaide in Pſa.50.5.16 the fiftieth Pſalme, where God declareth that he ſeparateth his [true ſeruantes] from ſuch as falſely abuſe his name: ſo as his voyce thundereth to ſummon thoſe that feare him aright, and haue not couenanted with him vnfeynedly, nor ſerue him onely with Ceremonies, but alſo in very deede: them will he aſſemble together. And on the contrarie part, hee vpbraydeth thoſe that take his name in their mouth, and yet notwithſtanding doe take part with robbers, murderers, theeues, and traytours. Therefore when men will needes match GOD and the diuel together after that faſhion, as it appeareth that moſt men doe: God complaineth of it, and proteſteth that it ſhall not ſcape vnpuniſhed. Now if he ſhewe ſuch a ſeparation aforehand: Let vs Matt,25.33 bee well aſſured, that when the day commeth wherein the Goates ſhalbe put aſunder from the Lambes, the ſhame of ſuch as haue preaced after that ſorte into Gods Church ſhall then bee diſcouered, and they ſhalbe abhorred of all creatures as they deſerue. But in the meane while let vs ſee that wee ſeparate our ſelues from them as neere as we can: and when we ſee ſuch vncleanneſſe, at leaſtwiſe let vs beware that wee miſlike them, and let vs pray God to rid and cleanſe his Church of ſuch infections. Howſoeuer the caſe ſtand, let vs be mindeful of the thing that Moſes ſpeaketh in this text, whenſoeuer we intende to meete together in the name of God.

Afterward hee addeth, *that when wee our ſelues haue walked in the feare of God, euery of vs muſt teach his children to do the lyke.* Wherein we ſee that it is not enough for euery man to diſcharge his duty in liuing orderly himſelfe: but that we muſt (to ẏ vttermoſt of our power,) procure the cōtinuance of Gods honor and ſeruice after our deceaſes. And in good fayth, is it reaſon that Gods name ſhould be buryed with our death? We know how Eſa.40.6. flightfull our lyfe is: but Gods glory muſt indure 1.Pet.1.24. for euer without decaying. Therfore let vs learn Iude.25. our owne duetie: that is, to walke righteouſly all ẏ time of our lyfe, and to indeuer to traine vp our children aright, ſo as religion may floriſh and proſper when wee be dead, and God be alwayes honored in the world, that his name may be called vppon purely. And that is the very cauſe alſo why God commaundeth fathers ſo ſtraightly to teach their children. For he coulde well ſend his creatures into the worlde, though no man had any ſpeciall care of them: but hee chargeth fathers to bring vp their children. And why? To the ende they ſhould knowe that they muſt yeelde an account of them. And for the ſame cauſe alſo doth he communicate his name Mal,2.10. vnto them. For the title of father belongeth to himſelfe alone: but yet hee honoreth men ſo much as to grant them the name of fathers. And Matt.23.9. to what ende? That they ſhould be the earneſter and carefuller in teaching their children their dueties.

So then, let vs doe our indeuour, that there may remaine a good afterſpring after our deceaſe, ſo as Gods Church may floriſhe ſtill, and his name be worſhipped from age to age. And wee ought to labour ſo much the more in that behalfe, becauſe wee ſee how the diuil practiſeth to ouerthrow all that euer is builded in the name of God. So farre of is it that the fruite which ought to come of the Goſpel doth ripen: that men doe labor to plucke it vp, or elſe to marre it and to turne it out of the owne kinde. Sith wee ſee this, ought we not to bee the more prouoked to doe the duetie that is commaunded vs here? Without going any further, what is to be ſeene heere among vs? The Goſpell hath bin preached to vs now a long time: and yet for al that, what maner of ones are they which haue bin borne of all this time, to whome God hath grãted the grace to be ſuckled with Gods word euen from the teate; and to bee brought vp in it lykewiſe, ſo as they being then but little babes, did neuer ſee any of the diueliſh abhominations of poperie, and therefore ought to bee euen throughly ſoked in the doctrine of ſaluation? what maner of ones are they? doth it not appeare that moſt part of them are ſo frowarde, as if they were the brood of Serpents? The world may ſee that they deſpiſe God openly, and commit ſuch wickedneſſe and lewdeneſſe, that there is much more honeſtie and more ſhewe of Religion among the Papiſtes; than there is among theſe. Seeing then that thinges are ſo farre out of order, and the diuill indeuoreth to put all to hauocke, ought we not to be the more inflamed to doe our indeuer, that there may remaine at leaſtwiſe ſome little ſeede after our deceaſe, ſo as the remembraunce of the Goſpell be not vtterly aboliſhed, nor the thing that hath bin ſet vp ſo happily in the name of GOD and by his wonderfull power, be decayed and pulled downe againe by the enemies? Now then, ſeeing that God hath graunted vs the grace and priuiledge to bee called to the hearing of his worde, and to haue it ſet forth in the pure ſimplicitie among vs: let vs vnderſtand that we be the more bound to ſerue and honor him, not onely ſeuerally for our owne partes, but alſo by teaching our children, and by taking paynes to make them alſo to liue vertuouſly, ſo as the doctrine which they ſhall haue heard in their youth bee not loſte nor marde, as wee ſee too much by experience. And generally let vs all haue this regarde, that ſuch as come after vs may agree in the true religion, ſo as there may be no chaunge. But ſo far off is that from being done, that the enemies of the trueth, (I meane the houſholde enemies and not the Papiſtes, for they bee farre woorſe than the Papiſts,) think they ſhall neuer come time enough to ouerthrowe all order and to pull downe all that GOD hath ſet vp here. Sith wee ſee it is ſo, let vs vnderſtand that wee ought to bee as earneſt in building vp to the Lorde as the diuill is in pulling all downe. For let vs not miſtruſt but that Gods power is ſtronger than al the fiendes of hell. Thus yee ſee what wee haue to note vppon this ſtreyne: but the chiefe matter is the putting of it in vre.

And now Moſes addeth, that GOD ſhewed himſelfe to his people with dreadfull tokens, which were able to haue aſtoniſhed them. For *hee ſpake to them* (ſayth he) *from the middes of the fyre. And therewithall there was a great clowde, darkneſſe, and miſte.* By theſe wordes Moſes ſheweth that the lawe was not brought without good warrant: for it was accompanied with wonders that were able to aſtoniſh the whole worlde. And to what purpoſe ſerued that, but to make it certainly knowē that the lawe came from heauen, and that God was the author thereof? According whereunto Exod.19.16. 18. it is ſayd in Exodus, that when God appeared after that ſorte in a thicke cloude, and a flaming fire, making the ayre to rore and the mountaine Sinay to ſhake, and the ſound of trumpets to be heard: all thoſe thinges (ſayth he) were done of purpoſe to make you hearken to your Lorde God, and to knowe that it was hee that ſpake, and that whoſoeuer receiueth not the doctrine that I haue brought you, muſt fight againſt the maieſtie of God. But[if he doe ſo:]he ſhall finde God too ſtrong for him. Thus yee ſee what belongeth to this text. And ſo wee ſee now wherfore Moſes made mention of the cloude, darkeneſſe, and miſt: namely to the ende it ſhould be knowen, that the lawe was not put forth but by the authoritie of the liuing God, and that men might be fully aſſured that it came from heauen.

And let vs mark by the way, that Gods choſing of the ſigne that is mentioned here, was to do vs to vnderſtand, that we muſt not inquire of his maieſtie further than he giueth vs leaue. GOD ſhewed not himſelfe in any viſible ſhape, leaſt it might bee thought that his eſſence or being had ſome ſhape, whereof we will treate to morrowe by Gods leaue: but hee did ſet a cloude, darke- 1.Tim.6.16 neſſe, and miſtineſſe before him. And why? To the ende that wee ſhoulde learne to be humble, and to know that hee dwelleth in vnapprochable light. Wee knowe howe curious and ouerbolde men are, for they woulde faine knowe what Gods being or ſubſtance is, and ſearche out euery whit of him by inchmeale, and that ſo preſumptuouſly as though they would puſhe vp their hornes into heauen. Such is their nature. But God will haue vs to worſhip him in feare and humilitie, as good reaſon is it ſhould be ſo. And he withdraweth himſelfe the further from vs, when wee inquire further of him than hee commaundeth vs. For otherwiſe were it not all one as if we would make him our vnderling? What preheminence ſhould he haue if he were ſo ſhut vp wͭin mans conceit? Therefore to expreſſe ſo great and ſo exceſſiue raſhneſſe, hee did ſet a darke clowd before him. But wee muſt marke, that whē God did ſet darkneſſe before the eyes of the people, it was not to the intent to be vtterly vnknowen, but to hold the people in awe, that they ſhould not preace nie the hill where the fire and flame appeared that are ſpoken of in Exodus as is ſaid afore: and therefore was there a great and thick clowd hard by the people. That then was the meane which God vſed to ſhewe himſelfe to the people. Marke that for one poynt.

The other poynt is that God did vtter himſelfe in ſuch maner, as the people ſought no further than was lawfull for them, but helde themſelues contented with ſuch diſcouerie as was giuen vnto them. And theſe two poyntes are well woorthie to bee marked. For many men when they liſt to excuſe their ignorance, will ſay that wee ought not to be inquiſitiue of Gods ſecretes: No truly, but yet is it not meant that we ſhould bee brute beaſtes. Wherefore hath GOD created vs after his owne image, Eph.4.24. but to the intent that his trueth ſhould ſhine forth in vs? And yet notwithſtanding, it is as a common prouerbe that hath reigned and doth reigne ſtill in the popedome: inſomuch that the foundation whereon they haue grounded their implyed faith, is that they muſt not knowe any thing, but that it is enough to beleeue as the Churche beleeueth. And in the meane while they wote not at what marke they ſhoote, nor what God they worſhip, nor how his name is to be called vppon. But as I touched afore, Gods meaning is not that men ſhould ſo aboliſhe and deſtroy the grace that hee hath put into them, for it were an vtter defacing of his image in diſpite of him: but rather after as hee cōmeth neerer vnto vs & we vnto him, ſo wil he haue his Image yͤ more knowen in vs & his trueth yͤ more ſhine foorth there. Let vs vnderſtand then that Gods intent is not that men ſhould be ignorant of him, but to vtter himſelfe in ſuch wiſe, as we may be able to diſcerne him from the idols that 1.Cor.8.4. 5.6. haue bin forged, ſo as wee may take him for our father, and aſſure our ſelues yͭ we be called to Eph.1. the knowledge of his truth, and yͭ we may boldly Eph.3.12. reſorte vnto him to call vppon him, and to ſeeke ſuccour at his hand. After that maner was it Gods will to manifeſt himſelfe to the people of Iſraell at the ſetting foorth of the lawe: and after yͤ ſame maner continueth he ſtill at this day.

But yet for all that, the clowde is ſtill before his face, to make men knowe their owne rudeneſſe. Againe foraſmuch as wee be ouerfickle and would knowe dubble as much as is lawfull for vs, inſomuch that wee attempt to knowe the things that are vnpoſſible to bee knowen: therefore did God caſt a great and thicke clowde betweene himſelfe and the people. And if wee were throughly perſwaded hereof, it would be as a key to open vs the vnderſtanding of yͤ whole holy ſcripture. For why? Whenſoeuer we came to the reading or hearing of it, we ſhould be ſure that our Lord ieſteth not when hee ſpeaketh after that maner, and when hee proteſteth thus by his prophet Eſay: I haue not ſpoken it in ſe- Eſa.45.19. crete, neither haue I ſayd it in vaine, that men ſhould ſeeke mee. Therefore whoſoeuer heareth mee, and receiueth the trueth that I tell him, ſhall not bee diſappointed in ſeeking mee. Thus ye ſee that wee ſhall profite, if wee beare well in minde that GOD manifeſteth himſelfe vnto vs, ſo farre foorth as is behoofefull for our ſoules health. And beſides this, wee ſhoulde with all ſingleneſſe reuerence the thinges that we comprehend not, wee ſhould euery of vs walke according to the meaſure of his faith, and wee ſhould continually indeuor to come neerer and neerer vnto him and to gather ſtrength. And moreouer if the thinges were too high for vs: very well, wee would (as Saint Paul warneth vs in the third to the Philippians) Phil.3.15. tary till God ſhewed them more playnely, and yet in the meane while not ceaſe to glorifie him. But we ſee the clean contrarie. For vnder pretence that Gods word ſeemeth dark, many ſhrinke from it, and make a defence of it to excuſe their ignorance withall. Otherſome againe doe ruſh foreward with diueliſh preſumptuouſneſſe, to ſeeke out thinges that God hath not reuealed, and through vnſatiable deſirouſneſſe of knowledge, doe picke out newe queſtions euery minute of an houre, and if they may not ſee all thinges at will, they bend their hornes againſt God as wee ſee theſe raſcalls doe, which ſpewe out their blaſphemies when Gods ſecrets ſeeme ſtrange to them after their owne fancie. If they conceiue not Gods eternall election, if they perceiue not how he choſeth the one ſort & refuſeth the other euen according to his will: if they vnderſtand not how hee diſpoſeth of his creatures, and that nothing happeneth but by his good will: by and by they fall to fretting and chafing, yea and they dare euen murmure againſt God and would haue all thinges raſed out of the holy ſcripture, which agree not with their fantaſtical braine. So much the more therfore doeth it ſtand vs on hand to remember well what is tolde vs here: namely that God caſteth a clowde before our eyes. And why? To the end wee ſhould be ſober in inquiring of him, and indeuour to profite according to his teaching of vs: for it belongeth him to knowe what is for our behoofe: and moreouer that wee ſhoulde alwayes walke according to the meaſure of the Rom.12,3. faith which he ſhal haue giuen and imparted vnto vs. Thus much concerning the clowde.

And now ſeeing the Lawe was giuen with record that God is the author thereof: Let vs in theſe dayes learne to rule our ſelues thereafter, and not call the thing any more in queſtion, which wee ought to bee moſt aſſured of. Secondly if wee compare the lawe with the Goſpell, let vs vnderſtand that there is much more reaſon why wee ſhould humble our ſelues, and reuerently receiue all that is conteyned in the Goſpell. For although the lawe was ratifyed with ſo many miracles: yet did it not fayle to ſtryke the people in feare, and to bring them in greate vexation of minde, inſomuch that they ſayd, Exod.20.19 Let not the Lorde ſpeake vnto vs, for then are wee all Ro.7.10,14. dead. And why? For if a man looke no further but to Gods commaundements, there is nothing but curſing. By reaſon whereof men beholding themſelues bound to things vnpoſſible, and perceiuing that God wil be their iudge: muſt needes be caſt downe, yea and driuen to vtter Ephe.2.19. deſpaire. After that manner was the lawe deliuered to the people. But yͤ Goſpell nowadayes is friendly vnto vs. For there God calleth vs to bee of his houſhold, not for any deſert of ours in performing the thinges that he commaundeth, but of purpoſe to beare with vs as with his children, foraſmuch as he hath adopted vs in our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt. Seing then that God allureth vs to him ſo louingly, haue wee not the more cauſe to receiue the doctrine of ſaluation with all reuerence, conſidering that it is the meſſage of lyfe, 2.Cor.3.7.8 whereas the lawe was a recorde of death to terrify the people, I meane the people of the Iewes? And as in reſpect of miracles, wee are ſure yͤ the Goſpel hath bin warranted wͭ moe, than euer yͤ lawe was. And beſides the miracles yͤ haue bin wrought, behold, Ieſus Chriſt in whom dwelleth all glory and maieſtie, is come into the worlde Heb.1.2.3. to beare witneſſe thereof. Seeing then yͤ we haue the Goſpell & the doctrine of Ieſus Chriſt, who Col.2.9. hath yͤ fulneſſe of yͤ Godhead in him: ought not we to be more humbled vnder the obediēce of yͤ Goſpel, than yͤ people of olde time were vnder the ſubiectiō & bondage of the lawe? yes: and therfore is it ſayd, yͤ heauen & earth were both ſhaken, as yͤ prophet Aggeus ſpeaketh of it, ſaying Agge.2.7.& Heb.12.26. that yͤ earth was throughly ſhaken at yͤ publiſhing of the lawe. And the Apoſtle alledgeth yͤ ſame text in the Epiſtle to the Hebrewes, ſaying: but now muſt all be ſhakē, & the power of God muſt vtter it ſelfe farre greater in the Goſpell. So then let vs learne that if the clowde and darkeneſſe which appeared at yͤ time to yͤ Iewes, ought to haue taught them to obey God & to ſubmit themſelues to his lawe: much more ought the ſame to preuaile wͭ vs at this day: ſpecially ſeing wee haue not a darke clowde: for (as ſayth S. Paule) there is not ſo much as any veile before 2.Cor.3.13, 18. vs, but wee haue yͤ image of God ſhining forth, and wee ſee him as it were face to face. Seeing then yͤ God doth nowadayes appeare to vs after another maner than he did to yͤ fathers, ſo as he ſheweth vs his liuely image in our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt, to the intent we ſhould beholde him for our father and Sauiour, and in ſtead of the dark clowde we haue nowadayes the great light of yͤ Goſpel: Let vs aſſure our ſelues that we ought to be yͤ more deſirus to obey him in al things. That is the thing which we haue to remember here.

Herewithall let vs alſo wey this ſaying that is ſet downe here: namely, *that the people ought to haue reſted altogether vppon the voyce that was vttered vnto them*, as the very marke whereby God will be knowen. To morrowe it ſhall be declared more at length, why God would not haue any viſible image: but yet notwithſtanding wee muſt at this preſent, wey well this poynt, that GOD did vtter foorth his voyce. And why? To the intent that thereby the people ſhoulde bee reſtreyned as with a bridle, and conſider with thēſelues that their eyes muſt not be wandering and gaſing about, to ſeeke any ſhape of God, but that their eares muſt be attentiue to heare his voyce, ſo that whenſoeuer God ſpeaketh, men muſt be as it were impriſoned to it, and content themſelues to be taught by him. Therefore when we come before the Lorde, accordingly as it is ſayd that they which meete together in his Church doe appeare before him: let vs note that wee muſt make account of his voyce, [and think thus with our ſelues.] What come we hither to doe? Whereas the Papiſtes gaſe vppon their Church walles, and fiske about after their fooliſh ceremonies and after murlimewes of their own making: inſomuch that although they thinke they pleaſe God, yea and hold him bound vnto them, yet they doe but play the brute beaſtes in yͤ behalfe: Let vs haue Gods word as yͤ certaine mark that he ſitteth in yͤ middeſt of vs, & is [alwayes]

as

at hand with vs. After that maner muſt wee thinke, if wee will not erre: for the true marke for all the faithfull to ſhoote at, when they aſſemble together in the name of GOD, is to haue his voyce as a warrant of the preſence of his maieſtie. And of a trueth, lyke as the eare was the cauſe of the withdrawing of the firſt man from God: ſo muſt it drawe vs to him again at this day. What was it that baniſhed our father Adam out of Gods kingdom? Gen.3.17. What caryed him away from the hope of lyfe, but his eares which receiued the voyce of Satan, and the falſhoode that was put to him? Now then, lyke as wee be ſeparated from God by that damnable voyce, when wee haue yeelded vnto euill: ſo now wee knowe that the onely meane to bee called vnto God and to enter into his houſe, that wee may be of the number of his children: is to heare Gods voyce and therby to be vnited vnto him. Thus muche concerning that worde.

Moſes addeth thereunto, *that at the ſame time God publiſhed his couenaunt which hee had made afore, and commaunded Moſes to bring them the ten articles in two tables, charging him to teach the people his lawes and iudgementes, that they might doe them.* Hereby wee ſee againe that which I haue touched heretofore: that is to wit, that God will not haue his doctrine to be as a dead thing, but to bee of power to reforme vs, ſo that wheras naturally wee be frowarde and giuen to all naughtines, wee muſt be ſubiect to him in ſuch wiſe as his righteouſneſſe may raigne in vs. To that intent was the lawe ſet foorth. True it is that the lawe being writtē in two tables of ſtone, could not be kept vnleſſe God ſubdewed the hardneſſe of mens hartes by his holy ſpirit: and 2.Cor.3.3. therefore it ſerued as a figure to ſhewe that the lawe ought to be written in mens hearts, though Iere.31.33. they be neuer ſo hard. Thoſe ſtones then were as an image of our heartes. For as God auoweth by his prophet) wee haue ſuch a hardneſſe in vs, as hee can neuer bow vs till wee be ſoftened. Neuertheleſſe lyke as hee ingraued his lawe in the ſtones: ſo alſo doeth hee print the ſame in vs when it pleaſeth him to touche vs by his holy ſpirit. And this was done at the ſame time that the lawe was put foorth. And here yee ſee why compariſon is made betweene the Goſpell and the lawe. God tolde the people how it behoued thē to know thēſelues, for ſuch as they were in deed, that is to wit ẏ they were hardned in naughtineſſe, ſtubborne, and ful of all corruption, Rom.8.6.7. Coloſ.1.21. ſo as there was no concord nor agreement betweene the thoughtes and affections of them, and the righteouſneſſe of himſelfe. And for proofe thereof, let vs marke that there are two thinges betokened by that which Moſes reherſeth here. The one is the goodnes that GOD hath ſhewed in ſetting forth his lawe. For it is not enough for men to be taught: that will not boote them vntill ſuch time as he ſubdew them. Wee may haue our eares beaten long enough with the doctrine of the Lawe, but wee ſhall continew ſtill giuen to our owne naughtineſſe: and therefore it ſhall be but labor loſt and miſpent to preach Gods word vnto vs. And why? For it will ſlip out againe, and ſo ſhall wee continewe alwayes lyke our ſelues. That is one thing that is betokened vnto vs.

☞ And therewithall God hath ſhewed, that yet notwithſtanding, the ſetting foorth of his worde in that wiſe by the mouth of a man, is not in vaine, for it ſerued to put the people againe in hope of thinges that were yet hidden, whereof wee haue not onely a full ſight, but alſo the effect and accompliſhment, by the comming of our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt, according as it is ſayd Ier.31.31.& Eze.37.26. by the prophets Ieremie and Ezechiel, that God will make a newe couenant, after another maner than that which he made with the fathers of olde time. For that couenant (ſayth he) was ſoone broken, becauſe they had no holde of themſelues: but I wil ingraue my lawe in your heartes. God then did teſtify this newe couenant by Moſes in mount Sinay, which our Lord Ieſus Chriſt hath performed by his comming into the worlde, and which is offered vnto vs ſtill euery day. And therefore let vs learne that when wee come to be taught, it muſt not be to any other ende than to be renewed by God, ſo as hee put away the hardneſſe that is in vs, and ſoften our heartes after ſuch a ſorte, as wee may ſtoope vnder him to receiue his yoke, and hee holde vs in awe, becauſe wee be ſo fickle that we would ſtart away from him euery day, if hee gaue vs not ſteddie conſtantneſſe to goe through with our vocation. That is a thing which wee ought to marke well. And why? Euen to humble vs, and to make vs knowe that although GOD ſpare our liues yet ſhould they bee turned into death, if hee ſhould let vs alone in our owne plight, and not adde a ſecond grace in reforming vs by his holy ſpirite. And therewithall let vs be of good comfort, foraſmuch as wee ſee that nowadayes wee haue not onely the auncient figures, and the tables of ſtone wherein God wrate his lawe: but alſo that hee worketh effectually by his holy ſpirit, as Saint Paul ſheweth in the thirde to the Coloſſians. Col.3.9.10. Seeing then that God worketh after ſuch a ſorte, as wee perceiue that our heartes are no more ſtony, foraſmuch as wee be willing to ſtoope vnder him, and deſirous to honor him, inſomuch that although there be many lettes and hinderances in vs, (as wee ſee that the fleſhe ſtriueth continually againſt goodneſſe:) yet notwithſtanding our Lord giueth vs the grace to be ſorie for our infirmities and ſinnes, being deſirous to eſchewe them, indeuoring to withſtanding, and inforcing our ſelues with all our heartes to ſerue him: Let vs acknowledge the ſingular grace that hee vouchſafeth vppon vs, and therewithall let vs learne to preace boldely vnto him, and not to ſtand aloofe vnderneath the hill as is ſayd heere. And it is the ſame thing that the Apoſtle ſheweth in the Epiſtle to the Hebrewes when he ſayth, Heb.12.18. 22.23.24. that wee be not come to the mountaine where there was nothing but fire, where nothing was heard but thundering and tempeſt, where lightninges flaſhed, where trumpets ſounded, and where there was nothing but terribleneſſe: wee be not come to that mountaine: we bee not nowadaies called to bondage: but wee bee heere in the preſence of our God, where we haue friendly felowſhip with the Angels: wee be matched and knitte in companie with the holy fathers, and with the ſoules whom God hath already taken out of the world: and we be all called to the end we ſhould with open mouth call vppon God as our father. Then if we bethink our ſelues hereof, let vs goe boldly to our God.

Moreouer let vs alwayes beare in minde how it is tolde vs here, that Gods inioyning of vs to keepe his lawe, is by way of couenanting with vs. And that ought to giue vs the more courage. True it is that if God did ſimply vſe his authoritie, euen in ſhewing vs our duetie towards him, and delt with vs by playne rigor, ſaying, yee muſt obey mee ſpyte of your teeth: yet ought wee to doe it, and it were not meete for vs to gaineſay him. But now when wee ſee that Gods ſubdewing of vs vnto him is in ſuch wiſe, as hee vouchſafeth therewithall to be our ſauiour and father, couenaunting as it were by mutual conſent with vs, and binding himſelfe to vs in requiring vs to come to ſerue him: ought it not to moue vs greatly, if wee were not woorſe than blockiſhe? Ought it not to prouoke vs to giue our ſelues ouer to our GOD, ſeeing that hee vouchſafeth to ioyne with vs? yes: and therefore let vs alwayes marke well this word *Couenaunt*. And that worde ought ſpecially to touch vs to the quicke in theſe dayes, when wee compare the lawe with the Goſpell. For if God in thoſe dayes made a couenaunt with the people of olde time: it is Hebr.8.6. in farre other taking with vs nowadayes, that is to ſay, infinitly better. And for proofe thereof, the pledges of thoſe times were earthly, and ſerued to keepe folke alwayes in feare. True it is that God did alwayes ſet to his mark, ſo as the auncient fathers had an eye to the Lorde Ieſus Heb.11.2. Chriſte, and were not deſtitute of this warrant, that hee of his free goodneſſe was their Sauiour: howbeit that was done but (as yee would ſay) aloofe. But nowadayes God vttereth his couenant vnto vs ſo largely, that wee be ſure of the forgiueneſſe of our ſins: and that although there be many thinges amiſſe in vs, although wee haue a number of incomberaunces by reaſon of our infirmities, although wee limpe and hang our winges, yea and although wee ſtumble and take many a fall: yet ſhall not all this let him to vſe that ineſtimable goodneſſe of his ſtil towards vs, whereof hee ſpeaketh by his prophet: namely Iere.31.9. that hee will not deale roughly with vs, no more than a father doth with his children. Seeing then that wee perceiue that our Lord of his free fauour accepteth our ſeruice though it bee vnperfect and full of faultes: wee ought to bee the more willing to giue our ſelues vnto him euen with all our power. And ſith wee ſee it hath pleaſed him to ſtoope ſo lowe, as to ſhewe himſelfe to be our father and teacher, dealing more familiarly with vs than hee did in old time with the fathers vnder the lawe: let not vs on our ſide be ſlothfull in comming to him, but let vs labor the more earneſtly in his commaundementes, and ſtriue to withdrawe our ſelues ſo from the worlde, as nothing may keepe vs from atteining to the holy vnion, which is conteined in the couenant that God hath made with vs on the behalfe of our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt.

Now let vs kneele downe in the preſence of our good GOD with acknowledgement of our ſinnes, praying him to make vs feele them better, that wee may miſlyke of them in ſuch wiſe as after wee haue condemned our ſelues for thẽ, our whole ſeeking may be to feele the mercie that hee hath promiſed vs, not onely in not imputing our faultes to vs, but alſo in correcting them by the power of his holy ſpirite, that wee may all liue in his obedience. And ſo let vs all ſay, Almightie God heauenly father, &c.

On Thurſday the xxiii. of May. 1555.

The xxiij. Sermon, which is the fifth vpon the fourth Chapter.

15 Therefore ſhall yee take good heede for your ſelues, that yee ſaw no maner of image in the day that the Lorde your God ſpake vnto you in Horeb, from the middes of the fire:

16 That you marre not your ſelues, ne make you anie grauen image, or repreſentation of anie portraiture, bee it the likeneſſe of man or woman,

17 Or the lykeneſſe of any beaſt vppon earth, or the lykeneſſe of any byrd that hath winges, which flyeth vnder the skye:

18 Or the lykeneſſe of any thing that creepeth on the ground, or the lykeneſſe of any fiſhe that is in the water vnder the earth.

19 Alſo that when thou lifteſt vp thine eyes vnto heauen, and beholdeſt the Sunne, and the Moone, and the ſtarres, with all the hoſte of heauen: thou bee

not deceiued and bowe downe before them, and ſerue them, ſeeing the Lorde God hath imparted them to all people that are vnder the whole heauen.

20 But as for you, the Lord hath taken you and drawen you out of the yron fornace of Egypt, to be vnto him a people of inheritance, as you be this day.

WE haue ſeene already heretofore the care that God had of his people, in willing them to take heede to themſelues, and to watch well for their ſoules. For by thoſe words he ſheweth howe deare & chare our ſoulehealth is vnto him. Here we ſee the like againe. *Take heede to thy ſelfe* (ſaith he) *and keepe thy ſoule.* If God did not beare a ſingular good will to men, he would not ſpeake ſo. And therefore wee haue a ſure and infallible warrant that God ſeeketh our ſaluation, to the end that we on our ſide ſhall thinke vppon it alſo. But wee muſt marke therewithall, whereof he treateth here: that is to wit, of the worſhipping of God purely without diſguyſing of his maieſtie. Then is it a token that the ſame belongeth chiefly to our ſaluation, and that wee runne to ruine and deſtruction when we ſwarue aſide from the pure religion, and fall to deuiſing of any thing that beſeemeth not God. If wee doe ſo, the diuell reigneth among vs, and GOD muſt needes forſake vs. Wherefore let vs learne that the holding of religion purely & in ſuch ſorte as God alloweth it, is a thing of no ſmall importance. For this kinde of ſpeach were vnexpedient, if to make images were either lawfull or but a ſmall and light fault: and ſurely God would not ſpeake ſo vehemently as he doth. And therefore whenſoeuer the caſe concerneth the worſhipping of God, let vs marke well that it is one of ÿ principall poyntes of our ſaluation, & that men muſt not preſume in this behalfe to take leaue to doe what they themſelues thinke good, but rather this warning that is ſet downe here muſt induce vs to walke in feare and carefulneſſe. For what a ſhame is it, that our Lord ſhall tell vs wee muſt ſtand vpon our garde: and we in the meane while ſhall runne at rouers, as though wee needed not to paſſe greatly for the matter? And that God ſhould ſo procure our welfare, and we make none account of it? And ſo ye ſee what we haue to marke vppon thoſe termes.

But now let vs come to the chiefe matter of this ſentence. *You ſawe not* (ſaith he) *any image or portraiture, in the day that the Lord ſpake to you in Horeb. Take heede therefore that yee marre not your ſelues, by making you any carued image, or the lykeneſſe of any thing, whether it be of man or woman, bird or beaſt, woorme or fiſh:* Beware of al ſuch thinges. For your God hath ſhewed himſelfe to you in ſuch wiſe as was expediēt, and not in any ſhape. So then let vs beare this leſſon in minde, namely to worſhip him in ſpirit, becauſe hee hath not a body, nor any thing in him that can be repreſented by the things that are ſeen with our eyes. Now this doctrine is cleare enough of it ſelfe, if men would followe it, and that the world would not wilfully reſiſt ſo certeine a thing. But this pride hath bin in all ages and reigneth yet ſtil at this day, that men will needes haue a preſence of God after their owne faſhion and deuice. But ſurely their wittes are fleſhly, by reaſon whereof they conceiue and imagine of God after their owne nature, and thereuppon make images vnto him. Neuertheleſſe it is not for vs to counterfeit God, or to attribute any thing vnto him: but it belongeth to him to vtter himſelfe: and therefore we muſt but onely receiue that which hee ſheweth vs, and hold vs wholly thereunto.

Exod.31.2.
Rom.1.32.

Now let vs marke the grounde that Moſes taketh here: that is to wit: *At ſuch time as God ſpake vnto you in mount Horeb, hee ſhewed not himſelfe in anie viſible ſhape.* In ſpeaking after that maner, Moſes ſheweth that we muſt not be haſtie aforehand to conceiue what wee our ſelues thinke good, but muſt tary till God ſhewe himſelfe. Take that for one poynt. For if men will needes giue way to their owne fleſhlie reaſon in that behalfe, they ſhall ouerthrowe themſelues and breake their neckes with their ouer much haſte. But on the other ſide Moſes ſheweth, that GOD did manifeſt himſelfe in ſuch wiſe to his people, as there is no cauſe why men ſhould any more ſay, how ſhall wee knowe God? How ſhall wee be ſure that hee is neere vs? How ſhall wee worſhip him? How can wee call vppon him? God therefore hath cut off all occaſions of fond curioſities, by ſhewing himſelfe to his people. And the ſame agreeth now fitly vnto vs. For when God publiſhed his lawe in mount Horeb: although he had then choſen the ofſpring of Abraham: yet was it his intent to giue foorth a doctrine that ſhould continue to the worlds end. Then let vs vnderſtand, that God in manifeſting himſelfe by voyce, meant to barre all images, not onely in reſpect of the Iewes, but alſo in reſpect of vs too. And therefore wee ſee that their beaſtlyneſſe is ſo much the greater, which nowadayes mainteine this corruption concerning images in the Popedome: for they alledge that this was ſpoken for the Iewes & not fos vs: Verily as who ſhould ſay that Gods maniſeſting of himſelfe by voyce, and not in ſhape of man or of any other liuing creature, ſerued not for all ages, but onely for the people of olde time.

Againe, what is to bee ſayd of the reaſons that are alledged through the whole holy ſcripture? ſerued they but onely for a time? or rather ought they not to ſtand faſt for euer? Beholde, Eſay vpbraideth the Iewes, that they had diſfigured the maieſtie of God. And why? To whome haue yee likened me, ſayth he? The complaint ÿ God maketh is this: dooth wood or ſtone reſemble me? As for them, they be but dead & corruptible thinges. Doth it not wel appeare then, that diſhonor and wrong is offered to my being, when men goe about after that ſorte to repreſent mee vnder ſuche ſhapes?

Eſa.40.18.
25.59.

Now is God chaunged ſince that tyme? Is hee not the ſame that he was? Then if hee had no lykeneſſe to wood and ſtone in olde tyme: neither is hee lyke them now. And therefore it followeth that this neither ought to be nor can be reſtreined to any one time, but muſt continue, for euer: Furthermore whereas the Papiſtes alledge, that Gods reſtreyning of idolatrie ſo ſtraitly, was becauſe the Iewes were ſo much inclyned to ſuperſtition: I would with all my hart that it were in their power to amend men and to drawe them from their error. But what? The world ſees it is all one ſtill. For if euer the Iewes were fleſhed in their fooliſhe vanities: the world is neuer a whit amended now, but rather become woorſe. As ſoone as men doe thinke vppon God, by and by they wil needes haue ſomewhat that reſembleth their owne kinde, and thereupon they fall to making of images. And when they once haue any thing to gaſe at, they cling to that, and their deuotion is tyed to it, ſo as they neuer goe about to lift vp their heartes to heauen, to worſhip God and to call vppon him. Wee ſee this with our eyes. What a beaſtlyneſſe then is it to ſay, that onely the Iewes were forbidden to worſhippe images, that it is lawfull for vs nowadayes to doe it? Yea, but we ſee how the new teſtament alſo doth ſpeake of it.

Iohn 5. 21. Act. 17. 24. Rom. 1, 21.

For the reaſons as well of Moſes as of the prophetes which wee haue touched already, are alledged by Saint Paul, who ſaith that men went aſtray or rather vaniſhed away in their owne imaginations, and turned al things vpſide down, and falſifyed Gods trueth, whẽſoeuer they made any counterfeit of him, whether it were in the lykeneſſe of man or of beaſt. Doth Saint Paul ſpeake there but onely of the Iewes? Yes: and euen in the Sermon which hee maketh in the ſeuenteenth of the Actes,

Act. 17. 28, 29.

hee ſpeaketh not to any one people alone, but to all the heathen vniuerſally. And to the ſame purpoſe he alledgeth them a ſaying of their owne heathen wryters.

Aratus.

For it is written by a heathen Poet, that wee bee Gods generation. Saint Paul reaſoneth hereuppon, if wee be the generation of God, is it either comely or reaſonable that wee ſhoulde make him any image either of woode or ſtone, golde, or ſiluer? None of theſe thinges can reſemble him. But wee muſt marke that when this poore heathen man ſpake after that faſhion, he meant not that wee reſemble God either in eyes, or in noſe, or in eares, but in ſoule, foraſmuch as wee haue reaſon to diſcerne between good and euill,

Pſal. 8. 4-7.

vnderſtanding to conceiue and comprehend thinges, and are ſo excellent aboue all brute beaſtes, that there is no creature in the world ſo noble as man. That is the thing wherein we reſemble God. But now, with what paynting can mans ſoule be expreſſed? Seeke all the cunning that can be, & what portraiture can be made thereof? And yet for all that, what are our ſoules? They be but as little ſparkes in compariſon of the infinite brightneſſe that is in God. Our ſoules are created, and God is without beginning: He is the ground and welſpring of all thinges. Our ſoules are weake, ſubiect to ignorance, ſubiect to ſin, and ſubiect to many wicked luſtes. But God with his infinite being and maieſtie is the perfection of all vertues. To be ſhort, as oft as we thinke of him, wee ought to be rauiſhed into wondering and aſtoniſhment. So then, is it not apparant that men are worſe than mad, when they wil needs take vpon them to ſhape out Gods being, ſeeing that no ſhape can be made of their owne ſoules, which are nothing in compariſon of him? For ſeeing that S. Paul ſpeaketh ſo to yͤ heathen, I pray you do not the Papiſtes ſhewe that their meaning is to reproue him of ignorance, and of the miſapplying of Gods lawe? Or elſe muſt they not needes be confounded in their blaſphemies? Yes: and therefore let vs marke well, that this doctrine yͭ God will not haue any maner of image made of him, ſerueth not for two or three dayes, but for all euer. And there is euen one reaſon which ought to ſuffice vs, which I alledged euẽ now out of the prophet Eſay.

Eſa. 40. 15.

How now, ſayth God? conſider who I am. If I liſted to gripe yͤ whole world, I need not to ſtretch out my hãd for the matter, For though I kept my hand ſhut, yet could I hold all the world cloſe in it, as a little grayne of duſt. It is true that God hath no handes, for he hath no bodie: but his ſpeaking ſo is by a ſimilitude. As if hee ſhould ſay, doe yee thinke me to be like any creature? No: for all the world is nothing in compariſon of me. It is but as a grayne of duſt in a mans hand: & you your ſelues are here beneth as a ſort of frogges and graſhoppers. Now then, if yee will needes make ſome puppet to repreſent me, is it not as good as a defacing of my glory, & a ſpyting of me to yͤ vttermoſt of your power? Wee ſee that God is a ſpirit as the ſcripture declareth:

Iohn 4. 24.

& ſhall wee then goe about to make him a bodie? It is he that giueth lyfe to all thinges: & ſhall we go take a dead thing to repreſent him thereby, and ſay: There is God? When we haue ſhaped out a ſtone or a peece of wood, and made it a noſe, eares, and all the reſt of mans limbes, yet hath it no feeling at all: and ſhall wee neuertheleſſe ſay, Behold, there is God? What a dealing were that? For the ſame cauſe is it ſayd in the pſalme: Are idols remembraunces of God?

Pſal. 115. 5.

In deed men make them mouths, and they haue feete, handes, noſes, & eares, but yet haue they no power to goe, nor any other abilitie, they be but corruptible & dead things. And is there any remembrance of God in thẽ? Serue they not rather to leade men into error & beaſtlyneſſe, ſo as they ſhould make no more account of God? The very heathen men thẽſelues could skill to ſay it: not that they did practiſe it in deede: but God wreſted ſuch woordes out of their mouthes, to yͤ intent they might all be conuicted. And albeit yͭ neither Moſes nor yͤ prophets ſpake vnto them: yet was it Gods will to condemne thẽ by themſelues. Ye ſee then how it is a ſufficient peremptorie reaſon, that inaſmuch as there is no lykeneſſe betweene God and any of all the ſhapes that can be made to repreſent him withall: hee hath wrong done vnto him, and it is an abacing of his maieſtie and glorie, when men doe make images of him after that ſorte.

And therewithall let vs alſo beholde mens madneſſe. Is it in mans power (as ſayth the Eſa.44.15. prophet Eſay) to take a logge of wood, and with part thereof to goe heate his ouen, or to ſeethe fleſhe in a potte, or to bake his bread, or to warme himſelfe: and to take another parte of it, and to faſhion a noſe and eares vppon it, and to ſay vnto it: Thou art my God, and thereupon to worſhip it? Now when men make Gods, that is to ſay remembraunces or repreſentations of God, at their owne pleaſure, becauſe they liſt to put a difference between two or three peeces of wood [to preferre one before another,] and ſay, behold, this is GOD: is it not too great a beaſtlyneſſe? yes, and the very heathen men themſelues haue affirmed it, as I haue declared. Behold, a Paynim, a blinde wretch that was before the comming of Ieſus Chriſt, ſayth: Since Varro. Aug.lib.4. de ciui.Dei. 9.and 31. the time that images came into the world, there hath bin nothing but errour, and it hath bin the meane to make men brute beaſtes, and to turne them away from the truth. Seeing that euen blinde men knewe this, or rather that God did caſt foorth thoſe words by their mouth: is it not a horrible condemnation to ſuche as terme themſelues Chriſtians, if they take not heede to it? Another heathen man bringeth in an idoll ſpeaking thus: The Carpenter or Car- Horace. 1.Ser.Sat.8 uer (ſayth hee) was in doubt what to make of mee: in the ende hee thought beſt to make me a God, and ſo am I now worſhipped. See how this blinde wretch ſkoffeth at the beaſtlyneſſe that was among men, and yet hee himſelfe ceaſed not to worſhip idols ſtill. But what? God wreſted this acknowledgement from him by force, to the ende that all mankinde ſhoulde bee condemned, and that there ſhoulde bee no more excuſe. But as for vs, wee will vaunt our ſelues to be taught by Gods word: and yet we will not knowe ſo much as the ſillie infidels haue ſpoken. And truely, are not wee warned by them? If wee heare not the Prophets and Apoſtles: at leaſtwiſe yet ought thoſe heathen men to teach vs to our ſhame. Therefore it muſte needes be that wee bee woorſe than bewitched by Satan, if wee conſider not all theſe reaſons, ſpecially ſeeing they be of Gods owne alledging, who will haue men to receiue them euen with all reuerence, as at his maieſties hand, and that for a further confirmation hee addeth the ſayings of the infidels which I haue alledged. And therefore let vs forbeare to take that vppon vs which belongeth not to vs, that is to witte, the choice and libertie of making images of God, for men to worſhip, or to caſt the wood into the fire to make the potte ſeethe, and ſuch other lyke thinges. For it is too much againſt reaſon.

Furthermore, let vs alſo take heede to our ſelues. For aſſone as we begin to intangle our ſelues in our own imaginations: by and by there foloweth a ſea of foliſh thoughts, which make vs to run gadding heere and there, ſo as they carry vs quite & cleane from God. If men knew their owne nature: ſurely they durſt neuer aduenture to make any image. I told you at the firſt, that wee ought to know God, & that the ſame knowledge would be a good bridle to holde vs in ſimplicitie, and to make vs to preuent all ſuperſtitions. And when wee enter into our ſelues, that alſo ought to teach vs well, that it is a turning of all thinges vpſide down, when wee make any Image of God. For what is the cauſe that men are ſo eagre to haue ſome repreſentatiō of God: but for that they cannot mount vp into heauen, for aſmuch as their wits goe groueling downeward, and are alwayes wedded to the earth? And therfore would they haue God to come downe vnto them. Now it is true yͤ God commeth downe vnto vs: howbeit, that is after his owne maner, and not at our appoyntment. And he muſt bee faine to ſtoope vnto vs, becauſe we cannot moūt vp vnto him: but yet he keepeth ſuch a faſhion & meaſure, yͭ therewithall he lifteth vs vp to him. We for our part could finde in our hearts yͭ God were (as ye would ſay) vnder our feete, ſo as wee might treade vppō him: And yͭ is the cauſe why we haue idols. For yͤ beginning of idolatrie ſprāg of this, yͭ men feeling their own infirmitie, would needes haue God in ſuch wiſe as their owne wit was able to brooke. Now their wit ſtyeth not high, but rather rucketh beneath vpon yͤ groūd. And therefore although men had no idols at all: yet is idolatrie in them, & they haue yͤ ſeede of ſuperſtition, inaſmuch as they would haue God to faſhion himſelfe to their lyking. Nowe then ſeeing yͭ this naughtineſſe is rooted in vs already: muſt not yͤ miſchiefe become dubble, whē we meete wͭ an obiect? that is to ſay, when we haue any thing to ſet vs foreward, & whē any new occaſiō is miniſtred? So thē, if there be any idols or images to portray or repreſēt God: it cannot be but yͭ men ſhalbe dubble ſeduced. Seing they be to much inclined thereto of nature: it is a great inforcement whē they be further driuē foreward by yͤ thing yͭ they beholde. Therefore if we wiſt it were ſuch a vice, ſurely we would abhorre idolatrie, knowing yͭ it turneth vs quite away from God. And for the ſame cauſe doth the prophet Ier.10.8. Ieremy ſay, that there is nothing but doctrine of falſhood in Idols: and the prophet Abacuck Abac.2.18. verifying the ſame, & comparing idols with the liuing God, ſayth that they be a ſchoole of lyes.

But yet for all this, the Papiſtes will affirme that images are laymens bookes: and that becauſe all men cannot reade nor are clearkes, there muſt be ſome helpe for the ignorant. Very well: if a repreſentation of God be made, that is a booke, that is as good as the Byble, ſay the Papiſts: and it is their chiefe ankerholde that they flee to in this caſe. True it is that this ſhifte is not of their owne deuiſing: it was deuiſed by a man not wicked of himſelfe, notwithſtanding yͭ he was ſomewhat atteinted with the corruption of papiſtrie. For he was a Pope himſelfe, howbeit not when the Popedome was in ſuch plight as it is nowadayes: but yet when it had already bin greatly corrupted, and the world was ſore degenerated. Nowe then, this good man Gregorie thought it good to haue images, and that they would be as books for the vnlearned: & this haue the papiſts receiued as if it were yͤ oracle of ſome Angel from heauen. But contrariwiſe yͤ Prophet

Ieremie auoweth that all the doctrine of idols is meere falſhood, and likewiſe Abacuck in the ſecond Chapter ſaieth that they teache nothing but lyes. Were it lawfull for a man to coine falſe money on his owne head, bicauſe he can get none of the right ſtamp? No: but yet hath God giuen his word to all men, ſo as he hath vouchſafed not onely to ſpeake to great Clerkes, but alſo to ſtoope to the rudeneſſe of the little ones. And for all this, men ſtoppe their eares, and ſay they can not knowe God but by a Puppet: and vnder that pretence they will needes haue it lawfull for them to beely the thinges that God hath reported of his owne being. Foraſmuch then as wee haue warrant that there is nothing but falſhood in images: let vs ſend home ſuch Bookes to the diuell: for it is certaine that he is the author of them, and that they came all out of his ſhoppe. And herein we ſee how that curſed Counſell which allowed images, was firſt caried away. For theſe were the worſhipfull reaſons that they alledged for the hauing of images. It is not ynough (ſaide they) that men bee taught by the eare: but their eyes alſo muſt haue ſome inſtruction too. And thereunto they wreſted this ſaying of the Pſalme, Wee haue heard and ſeene: that as wee haue heard Gods worde, ſo muſt we alſo haue ſome thing to looke at: and (as I ſaid) they referre this looking, vnto images. But contrariwiſe the Prophetes meaning is, that God (beſides his vttering of himſelfe to his people by his word) had beſtowed ſo many and ſo apparant giftes of grace vppon them, as they might well ſay, Our God hath ſufficiently aſſured vs that he was our Sauiour, not onely by his promiſes, but alſo by the deede it ſelfe whereof we haue had experience. And yet notwithſtanding vnder colour of that text, theſe raſcals will needes beare men in hand, that God muſt be repreſented by puppets.

Pſal.88.9.

But if they will needes that there muſt be viſible images: our Lord hath giuen vs as many of them as he knewe to be for our behoofe. When we haue Baptiſme, is it not a viſible image of the thing that is ſpirituall? that is to wit of the waſhing which we haue by the bloud of our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt, when wee bee renewed by his holy ſpirit? And haue we not a repreſentation of the heauenly myſterie ſet foorth to vs in the Lordes ſupper? Yes: but yet for all that wee muſt not make any image at all of Gods being. And why? for it were not for our profit as I haue declared afore: but it would rather turne vs away to lyes and beſotte vs in all manner of ſuperſtition. God therefore knowing that the hauing of images is an vntoward thing and as a deadly plague: hath not liſted to giue vs any, but rather holdeth vs back to this, that hauing ſuch ſignes as may conuey vs vpward, we ſhould trauell towardes him, howbeit without hauing any repreſentation of his being. Thus ye ſee that the thing which wee haue to remember in effect, is that although the ſcripture did not expreſſely forbid vs to haue any image or bodily repreſentation of God: yet the reaſons are ſuch as wee ought to worſhippe God in ſpirite, and to flye vp aloft into heauen, and not to ſticke faſt here belowe. Why ſo? For in knowing God, we muſt conſider his Maieſtie, how there is no proportion or likeneſſe between him and the creatures. Therefore it is but a miſſhaping of him when we make any bodily image vnto him: he that is the welſpring of life cannot be repreſented by a dead thing. If wee goe this way to worke, then ſhall wee neuer bee marred nor imbaced, but rather wee ſhall ſeeke God in ſuch wiſe, as he hath vouchſafed to vtter himſelfe vnto vs, and we ſhall not bee ſo ſhettleheaded as wee bee. For as ſoone as wee haue taken any toy in our heades, wee bee ſo doted and intangled, that wee thinke the ground beares vs not. If wee knewe this (I ſay,) wee ſhould be ſoberer. But what? The world muſt ſhewe it ſelfe blind as it is, and be ſotted with this drunkennes of Idolatrie, to bee caried away thereby, that it may euer turne away from God. For although men be naturally contented to haue ſome Religion: yet ſeeke they by al meanes not to come at God, I meane in trueth. They will well ynough ſay alwayes, God is to be worſhipped, and our intent is to doe ſo, wee muſt reſort vnto him. But how? Whereas they ſhould ſeeke God in heauen by faith: they will needes goe about the buſh. Verie well ſay they, wee will haue ſome image of God. And that is all one as if they ſhoulde ſay, Behold, here is a God that ſhall not trouble vs: for wee will deale well ynough with him at all times, he ſhall not ſpeake a worde, he ſhall but onely make a mowe. See how the world making countenaunce to ſeeke God, doeth drag backe from him as much as is poſſible, ſhrouding themſelues vnder this pretence, that it is ynough to haue a repreſentation of God, & that his power ſhall neuertheleſſe be infinite ſtill. But nowe we haue to marke, that God is not contented with ſuch reaſons, foraſmuch as he hath tolde vs that it is not lawfull for vs to haue any image of him to repreſent him withall. And ſhall wee reply againſt him when wee haue the woorde of his mouth? What ſhall we win by it? When wee haue pleaded our fill, ſuppoſe wee that wee haue any deuiſes in our braine, that can make God beleeue that he conſidered not all thinges well? No: and therefore (to be ſhort) as many as couet to haue any image of God, bewray themſelues to bee ranke rebels againſt him, they bewray a diueliſh malapertneſſe, in that they preſume to forge and ſet vp Gods after their owne fanſie: yea and they bewray their owne beaſtlineſſe alſo, in that they doe againſt nature. For they would allow God ſuch a repreſentation, as agreeth as fitly to him, as if they ſhoulde liken him to a ſticke, or I wote not what elſe. Men therefore doe in all reſpectes ſufficiently ſhewe themſelues to be vnexecuſable, when they turne ſo away after their images.

Eph.5.26.
Rom.6.4.
1.Cor.12,13

But by the way wee haue to marke further, that all manner of images and repreſentations are not meant here. For our Lord ſaieth expreſly that he ſhewed not himſelf to his people any otherwiſe than by his onely voyce, and therefore that it is a corruption to make images. If this ſhould be drawen to conclude, that it is not lawfull to make any picture at all: it were a miſapplying of Moſeſes teſtimonie, as ſome doe, who being too ſimple in this behalfe, doe ſay it is not lawfull to make any image: that is to ſay, it is not lawfull (to their ſeeming) to paint any ſtorie or to make any portraiture. But when the holy Scripture ſaieth, it is not lawfull to ſhape any reſemblaunce of God, bicauſe he hath no bodie: it extendeth not ſo farre: for it is otherwiſe as concerning men. Now then looke what wee ſee, that may wee repreſent by picture. And therefore let vs ſee that wee apply the textes againſt the Papiſtes as wee ought to doe, that we may bee armed to prooue our caſe iuſt. But yet muſt wee bee fully reſolued of this, that if any man goe about to expreſſe Gods Maieſtie by any ſhape: he doeth him wrong, and it is high treaſon to him, becauſe he is vncomprehenſible in his glorie. Marke that for one point. Now wee ſee that the Papiſts haue gone about to expreſſe God by ſhapes: therefore it followeth that they haue marred all Religion. And whereas Exod.25.18. they alledge that there were Cherubins painted vppon the vaile of the Temple, and that two likewiſe did couer the Arke: it ſerueth to condemne them the more. When the Papiſtes pretend that men may make any manner of image: What, ſay they? Hath not God permitted it? No: but the imagerie that was ſet there, ſerued to put the Iewes in minde that they ought to abſtaine from all counterfeiting of God, inſomuch that it was a meane to confirme them the better, that it was not lawfull for them to repreſent Gods Maieſtie, or to make any reſemblance thereof. For there was a vaile that ſerued to couer the great Sanctuarie, and againe there were two Cherubins that couered the Arke of yͤ couenant. Whereto commeth all this, and what is ment by it, but that when the caſe concerneth our going vnto God, we muſt ſhut our eyes and not preace any neerer him, than he guideth vs by his word? Then let vs hearken to that which he teacheth, and therewithall let vs bee ſober, ſo as our wits bee not tickliſh, nor our eyes open to imagine or conceiue any ſhape. That is yͤ thing which God meant to betoken in his Law. And ſo are we the more confirmed in the doctrine that I ſpake of. But as for the images which the Papiſtes make of their Heeſaints and Sheeſaints as they terme them: there is other reaſon to condemne them. For GOD hath forbidden two things. Firſt the making of any picture of him, bicauſe it is a diſguiſing and falſifying of his glorie, and a turning of his trueth into a lie. That is one point. The other is, that no image may bee worſhipped. But nowe, doe not the Papiſtes worſhip images? If they ſay, it is requiſite ſo to doe, for it is a continuall ſtirring vp of the peoples deuotion: that is too fond a reaſon. For firſt of all, when we come to the Church, it can not be but that we ſhall be caught in ſome errour, if wee haue neuer ſo little occaſion offered vs. For (as I ſaide) although there bee no image at all to drawe our eyes: yet are wee inclined to earthly imaginations euen of our ſelues, and wee nouriſh ſuperſtition in vs of our own nature. Now then if we be furthered and thruſt foreward vnto euill, ſo as wee finde as it were ſpurres to pricke vs foreward: I pray you ſhall wee not bee as good as madde? Therefore the ſetting vp of images in Churches is a defiling of them aforehande, and can ſerue to no purpoſe but to drawe folke from the pure and true knowledge of GOD. Againe, to what end doe the Papiſtes ſet vp images in Churches? Is it to haue knowledge of their Hiſtories? No: but there ſtandes a ſort of puppets with demure countenaunces, as it were to ſummon folke to come to doe them homage: inſomuch that an image is not ſo ſoone ſet vp in a Church, but by and by folke goe and kneele downe to it, and do a kinde of worſhip to it. And can a man deuiſe to teare the Maieſtie of our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt, and to deface his glorie more, than by yͤ thinges that the Papiſtes doe? Beholde, they paint and portray Ieſus Chriſt, who (as wee knowe) is not onely man, but alſo God manifeſted in the fleſh: 1.Tim.3.16 Coloſ.2.9. and what a repreſentation is that? Hee is Gods eternall ſonne, in whom dwelleth the fulneſſe of the Godhead, yea euen ſubſtantially. Seeing it is ſaid, ſubſtantially, ſhould wee haue portraitures and images whereby the onely fleſh may bee repreſented? Is it not a wyping away of that which is chiefeſt in our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt, that is to wit, of his diuine Maieſtie? Yes: and therefore whenſoeuer a Crucifix ſtands mopping & mowing in the Church, it is all one as if the Diuell had defaced the ſonne of God. Ye ſee then that the Papiſtes are deſtitute of all excuſe. Againe wee ſee howe they behaue themſelues: the images are worſhipped among them, as if God were preſent there in his owne perſon. Where ſaye they their Pater noſters, but before ſome puppet? And yet are they not contented with that: for they will needes make idoles of al things, yea euen to the verie Sacramentes: inſomuch that they haue falſified them, to drawe the worlde from the right Religion. Is there a more abhominable idol, than that which they haue inuented vnder pretence of yͤ Supper of Ieſus Chriſt? No: for they ſay, that GOD is there, and there he muſt bee worſhipped. So then, no maruaile though they abuſe their puppets and pictures after that faſhion, ſeeing they haue bene ſo bolde as to peruert the thinges, that God hath appointed to the furtherance of our faith.

And by the waye let vs marke, that the true meane to ſeeke God after ſuch ſorte as he vttereth himſelfe, is, that after we once knowe him, wee doe alſo conſider that hee ſtoopeth to our rudenes, and yet ceaſſe not to ſeeke him by mou̅ting vp higher, and by conceiuing the thinges ſpiritually which the Sacramentes doe ſhewe vs. It is true that by them God commeth downe to vs: howbeit, that is not to hold vs downe here beneath ſtill: but to make vs flie vp aloft vnto him. It is all one as if hee ſhoulde reache vs his hand and ſay, Come to me, and worſhip me ſpiritually. Wherefore let vs learne to ſeeke GOD euermore aboue vs, and not to tie him to our fleſhly and earthly vnderſtanding.

Now finally Moſes ſheweth the vnthankfulneſſe of the worlde in ſeeking new Gods, and in conueying ouer of the Maieſtie of the liuing God to dead creatures. It was a verie common thing in the Eaſt Countries, to worſhip the Sun and the Moone and the Starres, bicauſe that to their ſeeming they were not as the earthly creatures are, nor had any corruption to be ſeene in them, nor were ſubiect to ſuch changes as men, beaſtes, trees and waters are, for we ſee howe all things vnder the ſkie are chaungeable: but ſeemed to bee things immortall and incorruptible. Yea verily, ſo ſeemeth it to men that are become brutiſh, and haue not the wit to goe to the creation, to knowe that God hath giuen the Sunne, Moone & Starres ſuch nature and proprietie as he liſted: but yet for all that, howſoeuer thoſe creatures fare, they bee liueleſſe. But here Moſes rebuketh the wicked fantaſticalneſſe of men in worſhipping the Sunne. They ſawe there a kind of Maieſtie. Oh (ſaid they,) theſe lightes of the ſkie are excellent thinges: ſurely there is ſome Godhead in them: therefore muſt wee needes worſhip them. But in ſo doing (ſaieth Moſes) mē became vnthankefull towardes God. For why? What is the Sunne? Our Seruant: & the Moone is our Handmaide. And for proofe thereof, was Gen.1.15. not the Sunne ordained to giue vs light? Is not he our Candleſticke? Yea and beſides that he is the Candleſticke, he is alſo the Candle it ſelfe, euen to doe vs ſeruice. It is true that God coulde well giue vs light without the meane of ẏ Sunne: but hee meant to ſhewe howe greatly he eſteemeth and loueth vs, in that he hath put ſuch ſeruants vnder vs, and aduaunced vs ſo high as to make the Sunne the Moone and the Starres to doe vs ſeruice. Now then, ſith wee ſee that God hath made his heauenly creatures ſubiect to vs after that faſhion: are wee not too churliſh and vnkinde if wee worſhip him not? Is it not a refuſing of the good turne that God hath done vs, and a ſhutting of our eyes to reiect his gratious fauour, as if they would ſay in deſpite of him, wee will not acknowledge the good that thou haſt done vs? In deede we ſee ẏ the Sunne & Moone doe ſerue vs: but yet will wee not take them for our ſeruants. Muſt it not needes bee that men are become ſtarke diuels, when they bee ſo froward & malicious, as to refuſe the receiuing of ſo great a benefit at Gods hand? That then is the thing that Moſes ſheweth here.

Moreouer he addeth for a concluſion, *that the people of Iſrael excelled all other Nations.* It is true (ſaith he) ẏ God hath vouchſafed to make ẏ Sun & Moone ſeruants to the whole world: but thou excelleſt all other nations of the earth, inaſmuch as he hath choſen thee for his inheritance. And ſeeing it is ſo: ẏ oughteſt at leaſtwiſe to worſhip him as thy God, & to feare him and reuerence him as thy father, & in any wiſe to beware that thou defile not thy ſelfe ẇ the abhominations of idolatrie. For what a thing were it, if a Kinges ſonne ſhould refuſe to be in his fathers palace, & go keepe company ẇ ſome ſwineherd, yea or go wallow abrode ẇ brute beaſts, & fall to wrooting vp of the ground to eate filthy things like ẏ ſwine thēſelues? What a thing were it? But Moſes telleth vs, ẏ thoſe whō God hath choſen to bee his people, do the like, whē they go to caſt thēſelues downe before creatures. Therefore let vs learne to worſhip our God in ſpirit & trueth, and to doe Iohn 4.24. him homage, & to acknowledge the good ẏ hee doth vs, ſpecially for that it hath pleaſed him to adopt vs to bee his children, through freebeſtowed adoption in our Lord Ieſus Chriſt.

Now let vs kneele down in the preſence of our good God with acknowledgement of our faults, praying him ſo to open our eyes, as wee may no more aduēture to deuiſe any thing after our own fleſhly vnderſtāding, but reſort altogither to his holy word whereby he hath reuealed himſelfe to vs, & alſo receiue his Sacraments wherby we be yet better confirmed in his knowledge, ſo as our whole ſeeking may be to follow the purenes that is ſet forth in his doctrine, ẏ no error may lead vs away frō him nor from the pure religion ẏ hath bin taught vs: And in ẏ meane ſeaſon, ẏ as we do him homage in ſpirit, ſo likewiſe wee may ſerue him ẇ all our heart, aſſuring our ſelues ẏ wee can not ſerue nor worſhip him by any Ceremonies or outward things, ẇout yeelding him the honor & praiſe ẏ he requireth. And finally that it may pleaſe him to correct all ẏ idolatrie & ſuperſtitiō in the world, & to rid it in ſuch wiſe frō the earth which he hath appointed to ẏ vſe of men: as his name may be purely called vpon there. For the performāce wherof, it may pleaſe him to raiſe vp true and faithful miniſters of his word, &c.

On Fryday the xxiiij. of May. 1555.

The xxiiij. Sermon which is the ſixth vpon the fourth Chapter.

19.20 Alſo that when thou lifteſt vp, &c.

21 And the Lorde was angrie with mee for your woordes, and ſware that I ſhould not paſſe ouer Iordan, nor goe into the good land which the Lord thy God giueth thee to inherit.

22 For I ſhall die in this land, without paſſing ouer Iordan: but you ſhall paſſe it, and poſſeſſe that good Land.

23 Beware that ye forget not the Couenant of the Lorde your God which he hath made with you: and that ye make ye not any grauen image, nor the likeneſſe of any thing which the Lord your God hath forbidden you.

24 For the Lord thy God is a conſuming fire and a ielous God.

Yesterday I began to ſhewe mens vnthankefulneſſe, in that they cannot finde in their heartes to profit themſelues by the benefits that God putteth into their handes, as this preſent example ſheweth ſufficiently. Beholde, God hath ordained the ſtarres of the skie to doe vs ſeruice. There ought wee to eſpie his infinite goodneſſe towardes vs, howe greatly he loueth and eſteemeth vs, in that he hath made ſo noble creatures our ſeruaunts. But in ſtead of magnifying our God, and of worſhipping him as wee ought to doe, we cleane contrariwiſe fall to deuiſing of ſome errour and idolatrie in our heades. After which manner the Gentiles tooke occaſion to worſhip the Sunne and the Moone, bicauſe they ſawe the great benefites that were receiued by them. Yea, but therewithall they ſhoulde haue mounted vp higher, and haue conſidered yͤ God is the author of them, and that the Sunne and Moone and the Starres are but inſtrumentes of Gods fatherly loue towardes vs, and haue not any power which proceedeth not from him. Furthermore let vs marke that men ſinne not in this behalfe through ſimple ignorance, but through wilfulneſſe, bicauſe they can not finde in their heartes to yeeld themſelues to God with a ſingle minde. For if we intend to ſerue the liuing God, we muſt not goe to it by windlaſſes, but we muſt go right foreward. But when men ſee themſelues ſo pinched: they ſeeke ſtartingholes, and deuiſe new faſhions of ſeruing God on their own head, ſo as they neuer come neere him. And that is the cauſe why the worlde hath euer gone aſtray, and loued better to followe lawes of their owne inuenting, than to cleaue to Gods pure doctrine, and to reſt vpon the ſame, as wee ſee is done ſtill at this day in Poperie. What is yͤ cauſe that the ſuperſtitions which reigne there, doe ſeduce men ſo much, and make them to bee ſo farre ouerſeene? Euen for that it is eaſier for mē to ouerrunne a fewe gay Ceremonies, than to ſerue GOD rightly and with a ſingle meaning heart. Behold, God will not bee outfaced with a ſort of pelting trifles, but commaundeth vs to walke ſoundly before him, ſo as wee forſake our owne imaginations and deſires, and ſeeke to bee gouerned by him & to haue his holy ſpirit reigne in vs. Surely it is a verie hard thing to forſake our owne reaſon, ſo as we ſhould not bee wiſe in our owne conceites, to behaue our ſelues after our owne liking, but yeeld that there is nothing but vanitie and vntrueth in vs, and learne to humble our ſelues. That (ſay I) is a thing contrarie to our nature: for we haue a fond beliefe that we bee wiſe of our ſelues. But God on the contrarie part will haue vs to be bereft of our ſelfewit and ſelfreaſon, and to giue ouer our ſelues to be gouerned by his ſpirit. Alſo our affections do carrie vs away, in ſo much that mē would faine haue the bridle laid looſe in their necke to do all maner of euill, and that God ſhould giue them leaue to doe what they liſt. Nowe our affections are ſinnefull, and God will haue vs both to condemne them and to reſtraine them, ſo as wee Rom.8.6. & 6.18. may bee as priſoners in that behalfe, and with maine force withſtand whatſoeuer carieth vs away to euill. and 1.Pet. 2.11.& 5.9. But ye ſee that men liſt not to ſerue God with that condition. Againe wee bee commaunded to loue our neighbour as our ſelfe. Matt.19.19 Whereas we bee giuen to ſeeke euerie man his owne profite: God pulleth vs from it, and contrariwiſe will haue vs to procure the welfare of our neighbours. And whereas wee bee giuen to ſuttletie, to ſhifting, and to all maner of naughtineſſe: 1.Pet.2.1. & 3.9. he will haue vs to deale plainely, and to lay aſide all deſire of reuenge. Matt. 5. 39. If any man doe vs harme or wrong: the world ſees how hotte wee bee to acquite like for like. But Gods will is that in ſuch caſes we ſhould yeeld him ſuch ſeruice, as to forgiue the wrongs quietly that are done vnto vs. Againe whereas we bee deſirous to runne at rouers in taking our delightes and pleaſures: Gods will is that we ſhould but waifare through this world, ſtill hauing our eye vpon the euerlaſting life: that we ſhould mortifie whatſoeuer is earthly in vs: and that although he giue vs ſome commodities and eaſe, yet our vſing of them ſhoulde bee but as it were in running by them. Moreouer he will haue vs patient in all our aduerſities. If it pleaſe him to keepe vs occupied with neuer ſo many croſſes, he will haue vs to beare them meekely. Theſe thinges are good & holy: but mãs nature ſtriueth altogither againſt them. And what doe men in ſtead hereof? It is a much eaſier matter to haue a ſort of gawdies, & gewgawes. Churches are fraught full of idols, and they be worſhipped with great pompe, ſo as they bee throughly perfumed, beſenced, & painted, and a nomber of ceremonies are done vnto them: there is great ſolemnitie, with goodly chaunting on the one ſide, and with ringlng of peale vpon peale vppon the belles on the other ſide: there is ſcudding frō aultar to aultar: there is faſting on this day, and forbearing of fleſh on that day: there is trotting to ſhrift, and gadding on Pilgrimage: men found Yeeremindes, and cauſe Maſſes to be ſung by note. Thus yͤ world raunging away from GOD, will neuertheleſſe needes ſeeme to be duetiful towardes him. [And all is] bicauſe we be ſo froward, that we couet nothing but to mocke God with our hypocriſie, and that he ſhould hold himſelfe contented with our doings, which are no better than rattlebagges to pleaſe babes withall. So then let vs mark, that in ſtead of worſhipping God, the world is giuen to fondneſſe and ſuperſtition, and yet notwithſtanding that it doeth it not ſo much of meere ignorance, as for that it cannot abide to be obedient as were requiſite, and therefore it goeth to worke by windlaſſes, and ſeeketh by all meanes to ſtray from the right way. To be ſhort, we ſhall finde that men are alwayes guiltie of wilfulneſſe in committing idolatrie, and that it is vaine for them to ſhrowd themſelues vnder pretence of ſimplicitie. For contrariwiſe they bring it with them of nature, and they will needs be deceiued, and ſo they be. And therefore doeth God blind them alſo. For (as ſaieth S. Paul) it is reaſon that Rom.1.25. ſuch as liſt not to ſerue their maker, ſhould bee vnderlinges to the creatures: and that ſuch as cannot finde in their hearts to beare the yoke of God,ſhould indure the tyranny of the diuel,as is come to paſſe,and as we ſee accompliſhed ſtil at this day in the vnhappie Popedome.Now therfore let vs mark wel the thing ẏ I haue ſaid alredie:ẏ is to wit,that mē inſteed of being thankfull to God for the good ẏ he hath done thē,do turn his creatures to their own decay & condēnation, & falſely abuſe them:for they peruert ẏ vſe of thē cleane contrarie to Gods meaning. And this is ſeene to be done, not only in the Sunne and the Stars according to that which Moſes ſaith here: but alſo in all other things whatſoeuer. So much the more therefore behoueth it vs to watch and to ſtand vppon our garde, as it is ſaide heere,to the end that in vſing of gods benefits, we may euer haue our eyes vpon him to doe him homage for them,and neuer be turned away from him.

Moreouer let vs marke the ſaying that Moſes ſetteth down here,namely,*Leaſt thou fal,leaſt thou be prouoked.* Hereby he ſheweth ẏ wee haue in vs the ſeede of falling:that is to ſay,ẏ we haue ſuch a crabbednes in vs, ẏ as ſoone as we haue neuer ſo ſmal an occaſion,by & by we be downe,yea & we do euen ſeeke occaſion when none is giuen , as I ſaid afore. Wheras god hath ordeyned his creatures to do vs his ſeruice,and the ſame ſhould be a help to guide vs vnto him,ſo as we ſhold be the more prouoked to loue him, becauſe he ſheweth himſelf ſo good & louing a father towards vs: we take occaſion therat to ſtumble.His dealing is as though he ſhould ſet vp a ladder for vs:or make a paire of ſtayers for vs to goe vp vpon:& we fal to iuſtling againſt it.Greeces & ſtayers are made to helpe vs:but if a man fal to ruſhing & daſhing againſt thē,he may hap to break his legs & to hurt himſelf,& he ſhal rather be hindered thā helped vp by them.Euen ſo deale we.For gods meaning is to draw vs to him by his creatures, and we fall to ruſhing againſt them wilfully and as it were in deſpite. Now then it ſtādeth vs on hand to mark wel this ſaying, ẏ we may looke the better about vs, to profite our ſelues by the thinges that God giueth vs for our helpe and furtherance to bring vs vnto him. Thus ye ſee what we haue to beare in mind. But now we ſee that Gods goodnes extendeth euen to the vnbeleeuers & infidels , according as it is written, that hee maketh his Sun to ſhine both vppon good and badde. Matt.5.45. Likewiſe in this place Moſes ſaieth , *that God hath imparted the light of the Sunne and the Moone , together with their influences and properties , not onely to ſuch as vſe them well, but alſo to all folke vnder the cope of heauen.* Nowe wee knowe that at that time all Nations were ydolaters, and there was no truth nor knowledge of God among them : and yet notwithſtanding God ceaſed not to do thē good for al that.And it is an excellēt token of his goodnes aboue all ẏ he ſendeth them the light of the Sun,& maketh the ſtars to do them ſeruice. Thē let vs marke wel that although god was neither worſhiped nor knowen of the heathen:yet failed he not to do the office of a father towards them, and alwas to their condemnation.For inaſmuch as they abuſed his benefites in ſuch wiſe,& could not finde in their hearts to looke vp vnto him : it muſt needs be ẏ they were ẏ more vnexcuſable.

But yet herewithal let vs mark wel the condition ẏ Moſes ſetteth downe here,*As for thee*(ſaith he) *thy God hath rid thee from the yron furnace of the thraldome of Egypt,to the intent that thou ſhouldeſt be vnto him a ſure people & an inheritance.* Although ẏ Moſes haue declared that the vſe of the ſun & of the ſtars is common to al folks:yet doth he ſhew that they bee ſpecially appointed to the people whom God hath choſen.As if he ſhould ſay,that the order of nature is common to al ẏ world: we ſee that both great & ſmal are partakers of ẏ benefites that God beſtoweth : the earth bringeth forth corne wine and al other things, to ſuſteine both ẏ faithful & the vnfaithful:the wicked & the deſpiſers of God do eat & drink as wel as we:nay (which more is)we ſe they abuſe gods creatures with al exceſſe,& haue more abundance of them than ẏ faithful:for he that knoweth ẏ God ſuſteineth him,wil vſe his meat & drinke and al other things ſoberly & meaſurably, & he wil conſider ẏ he muſt not vnhallow the things which god hath ordeined to a good & moderate vſe.But what do the wicked?There is nothing with them but crāming,as if they were minded to ſpyte God of ſet purpoſe. But yet for al ẏ, it is Gods will that the propriety of his creatures ſhoulde belong to vs. And after what ſort ? Euen to vſe thē as his true & lawfull heires,and to haue them ſo warranted as we may auow ẏ the things which he giueth vs are our own,& belong vnto vs of right,& that we poſſeſſe thē by iuſt title. And ſoothly there is not a more ſingular benefite than this. For although ẏ wicked do cram themſelues with gods benefits til they burſt,as I ſaid afore:yet haue they always a hartbyting within,ſo as they know not by what right they eat & drink,nor can ſkil to deſire God to ſuſtaine them . Nay verily,we ſee they coulde find in their harts,ẏ al remēberance of god were aboliſhed . For when they make good cheere(as they terme it), they muſt minde nothing but to play the brute beaſts . But contrariwiſe when we cōſider in our eating & drinking,ẏ it is god which feedeth vs:it is a warrant vnto vs ẏ hee is our father,and that he taketh vs for his children. And ſurely(as I ſaid)there is not a treaſure that deſerueth greater eſtimation,thā ẏ growing of corne, and wine in the world , & the increaſe of cloth & other things ẏ ſerue for mans vſe, together with the fruition of al the other creatures whereof god hath giuen vs the ſight & hearing, to inioy them al in ſuch wiſe,as we may ſay,ẏ the world is created for vs, & that our God will not haue vs deſtitute of any thing at all , but hath prouided for all our neede,and ſheweth himſelfe ſo liberall to vs, as we haue indeede iuſt cauſe to magnifie him,& to be rauiſhed with wondermēt at the ſight of ſo great goodnes . This thē is the cauſe why Moſes ſaith here namely,*but as for thee.* After he had generally declared ẏ god cauſeth his mercie to extende euen to the infidels & vnbeleeuers : nowe ſpeaking to the choſen people, O (ſaieth he)you haue a ſtate of preheminence, you haue a much more ſingular priuiledge then ẏ ignorant & blind wretches haue. For why?They wote not by what title they poſſeſſe the good thinges which they haue.But your God wil haue the world to belong by right vnto you: for as all the faithfull are his children, ſo bee they heires of his good thinges likewiſe. Therefore we muſt conclude, that if the vnbeleeuers be to be condemned for abuſing the benefits which God hath beſtowed vppon them: much leſſe excuſe is there for vs that are taught in his lawe and doctrine. Thus yee ſee what we haue to marke.

But withal let vs alſo beare in mind the leſſon ẏ is ſet downe here: that is to ſay, to know and feele this, that when we inioy Gods creatures, we poſſeſſe them as our heritage, & yet that this is not for any worthines of our owne: (for we muſt not here imagine any deſert of ours,) but becauſe our God hath choſen vs, as it is ſaide expreſly here. Moſes ſaith not, Thou thy ſelfe haſt gotten this priuiledge: but he ſaith, *Thy god hath takẽ thee.* He referreth all to that free election of God, at what time that it pleaſeth him to chooſe vs to himſelfe: that he ſheweth himſelfe to be our father, ẏ he adopteth vs to be his children, and will haue vs to be of his houſhold and that we ſhould be as it were his flocke. Therefore let vs marke wel that we haue not any thing which we can ſay is our owne for any deſert of ours, but onely becauſe it hath pleaſed Gods goodneſſe to haue it ſo.

Moreouer Moſes ſetteth downe two thinges here: *Thou waſt taken from the yron furnace, & now thou art become Gods people and his inheritance.* Here he ſheweth what the ſtate of the people was before God choſe them to himſelfe: and alſo to what dignitie they were exalted afterward. Now although we haue not ben fetched out of Egypt: yet doth the thing that Moſes ſpeaketh here belong to vs. For in what caſe are wee, as long as
Rom. 5.12. God letteth vs alone? Are wee not accurſed, if
we continue the children of Adam? And if God ſhake vs off, are wee not vnder the tyrannie of Satan? Doeth not ſinne reigne in vs? Doe wee not ſee here a furnace much worſe than the furnace of Egypt? And he vſeth here a ſimilitude in calling it *an yron furnace,* as a place that was ſo to conſume the people, as there was no remedie for them to get out of it. If a furnace be once inflamed, and that the ſame be made of yron, muſt not a man needs periſh out of hand if he be caſt into it? If a furnace be but of bricke: yet do we ſee howe ſore it burneth. But here is mention made of a furnace of yron. Therefore it is all one as if God ſhoulde ſay, Thou haddeſt no hope to get out of that thraldome, thou waſt as a people vtterly forlorne: and yet haue I deliuered thee from it after a wonderfull manner. And now
Eph.2.5. at this day, coulde wee ſcape out of that bon-
1.Pet.1.18. dage vnto Sathan, vntill ſuch time as God deli-
Ro.5.8.10. uered vs out of the ſame? Muſt not that curſe
haue altogether lien vppon vs ſtill, if we had not remedie from elſe where, that is to wit, from the mercie that God hath ſhewed vs in our Lord Ieſus Chriſt? So then let vs marke, that here we be warned to thinke vppon our beginning, that ſo we might alwayes know from whence God hath deliuered vs, and in what taking we were when it pleaſed him to chooſe vs. [Which thing if we do,] we ſhalbe aſhamed of our owne wretchednes, yea & we ſhalbe euen aſtoniſhed to ſee how we had bene vtterly damned, if our God had not pitied vs. And thus much for one point.

Secondly let vs conſider againe, that our God thought it not ynough to haue deliuered vs from ſuch a bottomleſſe pit, and from ſo horrible confuſion: but hee hath alſo made vs his heires, and 1.Pet.2.9.
likewiſe vouchſafed to take vs for his heritage. What are wee, or what can God receiue at our hands? [Nothing:] and yet doth hee call vs his heritage, to ſhewe howe dearely hee loueth vs. Like as a man loueth a peece of grounde that findeth and maintaineth himſelfe and his houſholde, and ſetteth as it were his heart vpon the ſame: ſo doeth our Lorde ſhewe that he delighteth in vs, yea euen in vs that are but wormes and rottenneſſe, and which haue nothing but al manner of ſinne and corruption in vs. Wee ſee then hereby that Moſes ment to magnifie Gods grace, to ẏ end that being humbled in our ſelues by beholding the miſeries wherout of we be waded, we might againe and againe magnifie Gods goodneſſe, in that hee thought it not ynough to rid vs out of the bondage wherein we were, but alſo hath ſet vs in ſo high degree, as to chooſe vs to be his children. And beſides, by terming vs his owne heritage, he ſheweth that he will haue his hart as it were faſt tied vnto vs. Thus ye ſe what we haue to remember vpon this text or place.

Immediatly herevnto Moſes addeth, *that the Lord was angrie with him, becauſe of the peoples words, and that he had ſworne to him that he ſhould not paſſe ouer Iordan to goe into the lande of promiſe. But as for you* [ſaith he] *you ſhall paſſe ouer, and inioy the poſſeſſion thereof.* Moſes doth ſtil vpbraide the people with Gods bereauing of him of the inheritance that was promiſed to all their tribes, not ſo much for his own fault, as for the common fault of them all in murmuring againſt God: but yet hath Moſes a further meaning. He ſpeaketh this as it were by the way, yea as hauing reſpect to this, that he ſhould ſhortly die: and foraſmuch as he himſelfe might not inioy the lande, hee had a care to inſtruct the people, to the end that they might abide in Gods couenant, and continue ſtedfaſt in it, without ſwaruing aſide, or without any changing of religion to peruert the doctrine that had beene giuen them. The effect then is, that Moſes being at the point of death doth as it were make his laſt will, & hath ſo much the more care of the peoples welfare, for feare leaſt they ſhould ſtart away after his death, as he had ſeene them doe oftentimes in his life. And he interlaceth this particular matter that I ſpake of: namely that their words were the cauſe that he ſhould die before he paſſed ouer Iordan, and before he entered into the lande of promiſe. For as I haue touched heretofore, Moſes ment not to iuſtifie himſelfe: for indeede he was greatly blameworthy before God, & ſurely God neuer vſeth any crueltie towards ſuch as are his. Now, the caſe is ſo, that Moſes is ſhut out of the land with an oth: therfore muſt it needs bee that he had offended. But his doing of this, is to the intent that the people on their ſide ſhould think the better vpon the fault that they had committed. And in good ſooth, ſo ought all faithful teachers to do: that is, they ought to touch ſinners to the quicke, that they may haue remorſe of their ſinnes, that they may crie to God for mercie & aske pardon therof, that they may be ſorie for thẽ, that they may miſlike of themſelues for them, that they may hate them, and vtterly forſake them. For when men are flattered in their vices: firſt they bee hardened in them, and take alwayes greater libertie to do euill: ſecondly they thinke not that euer they ſhal come to account before God: and finally they neuer forſake the world that ſo they may glorifie God, & conſider or feele how much they be bound & beholdẽ to him. By this means thẽ is Gods mercie defaced, & his grace ſlippeth away and is vtterly aboliſhed. Beſides this, there is yet a greater enormitie, namely that men goe on ſtill from euil to worſe, vntil they be falne into vtter confuſion. Now then for this cauſe it is the duetie of ſuch as haue the bearing abrode of Gods word, to exhort their hearers continually to conſider their ſins and to ſearch thẽ throughly. And to what end? Not only to make them barely aſhamed of them: but alſo to make them hũble themſelues before God, & to goe forward continually in repentãce, ẏ ſo they may learne to miſlike of their faults, & to glorifie God when they wholly repaire to him for refuge, by asking him forgiuenes of the offences that they haue committed. But what? There are very few that can away with this order of teaching: for there is not ſo wicked a man, but he would be flattered. And the world ſeeth that as ſoone as a man ſpeaketh, ſome gnaſh their teeth & ſeeke nothing elſe but to bite him: and otherſome though a man do but by the way glaunce at their faults which are too too farre out of al ſquare, feare not to check him, or to ſtand with him face to face in the maintenance therof. But yet for all that, the rule which God hath appointed vs, vs I ſay which haue the charge to beare abrode his word, is that we muſt dayly labor in warning our hearers, to cal themſelues to account, and to examine well their owne faults, that they may be ſorie for them.

When as he ſpeaketh of hearers: we our ſelues are comprehended in ẏ number: for we muſt not condemne others, & exempt our ſelues: but he ẏ ſpeaketh to others, muſt firſt ſtick & look to himſelf & cite himſelf before God. But yet neuertheleſſe we muſt proceede in this order ẏ we muſt al of vs be ſummoned before God, & haue our inditement redy framed & made, and not tarie til God pronounce the ſentence of condemnation vppon vs, but euery of vs play the iudge againſt himſelf, & that, not by ſaying in a word or two, I haue done amiſſe: but by being throughly wounded within, ſo as we be aſhamed of our miſdeeds. After this faſhion muſt wee deale. In the meane ſeaſon if we perceiue ẏ the wicked cannot away with any correction, but conceiue rancor againſt Gods word, as we ſee theſe deſpiſers of al religiõ do, who cannot abide that any mã ſhould rebuke them, let vs not maruell at it, for if they bee pinched, by & by they ſpit out their poiſon like toads as they be: But if we purpoſe to ſhewe our ſelues to be Gods children, let vs learne to ſuffer correction willingly, & to haue our ſins laide afore vs, ẏ we may cõdemn them. For our acknowledging of thẽ, wilbe a mean to haue them buried before god. Thus ye ſe what we haue to note vpõ ẏ text.

1.Cor.11.31 32.

But now let vs come to Moſeſes chiefe intent which I haue touched afore. *I ſhall not go into this good land,* ſaith he. *And therfore I warne ye continue ſtedfaſtly in the couenant of God, ſo as yee neuer forget it, to worſhip ydols in his ſteede,* but ſerue him, ſeeing he hath once choſen you, & vouchſafed to ſhewe himſelfe your god & father. Here we ſee ẏ Moſes was not out of hart, though God chaſtiſed him roughly. And here we ſee how the faithful ought to behaue themſelues. That is to ſay, If God puniſh them, yet muſt they not therefore ceaſe to loue him, and to go forward in their courſe ſtill, yea & to giue ouer themſelues wholly vnto him. As ſoone as the wicked feele but one yirke of the rod with Gods hand, and by and by they kicke againſt him, and if they may ſcape from him, they play the horſe that hauing ſhaken of the bridle caſteth his rider downe, & afterwards becõming as if he were mad, he ſtormeth as though no mã were able to lay hold on him, or to reſtrain him: Euen ſo play the wicked, which can neuer abide ẏ God ſhold chaſtiſe thẽ and tame them, to hold thẽ in obedience to him. If he make thẽ to feele their ſins, they burſt out into impatiẽcie, & thervpon fal by and by to rebellion & furie. But contrariwiſe, when our Lord viſiteth vs with afflictions: we know it is not for vs to ſtray far from him, nor to take occaſion to ſcape his hands: but rather to ſubmit our ſelues quietly to his ſeruice, & to keepe our ſelues from theſe tentations ẏ run oftẽtimes in our heads. If we fal to ſcanning, ſo as we ſay to our ſelues, how now? muſt I for ſeruing of god haue ſo hard & cumberſome a condition? It ſhould ſeeme ẏ he is minded to diſcorage me: Let vs beware of ſuch conceits, & rather follow ẏ example of Moſes. He ſaw himſelf bereft of ẏ inheritance ẏ had bin promiſed to ẏ whole people, he ſaw he had as it were a marke of reproch for euer, as though God had withered him: for wher as God had choſen him to bee the leader of his people, & to ſupplie his roome in bringing to thẽ that welfare that they had loked for ſo long time: now towards his death he muſt bee diſgraded at Gods hand, and be baniſhed from the poſſeſſion that was as a pledge of the kingdome of heauen. True it is that Moſes continued and doth continue ſtill an heire of Gods kingdome: but he had not that earthly pledge of it, that was ſet before the people. He ſaw, that of ſix hundred thouſand perſons, (for the whole multitude was ſo manie) there was not one among them al that was worthier to enter into the land than himſelfe. Therfore he might haue ſtormed thus with himſelfe: Howe nowe? I ſee I haue taken great payne in leading this people, God hath wrought ſo manie miracles by my hand, I haue yet ſtil ſuch zeale to the honor of God and to ẏ welfare of his people as I neuer ceaſe to procure the ſame, & therwall I may well ſay God hath granted me ẏ grace to walke more roundly than al ẏ reſt: and yet notwithſtanding muſt I be barred out of ẏ land, & the reſidue enter into it, which haue not taken ſo much paine as I nothing neere? Moſes might haue bin in a chafe & chawed vpon his bridle ſaying: wel, ſeeing I haue taken ſo much paine, & God ment to ſerue his turne by me heretofore: it is ynough for me, I am contented with that which I haue done, but nowithſtanding I will giue ouer my roome, and ſeeing that he will not ſet me aworke any longer, let him ſerue his turn by ſome other. Moſes might wel haue entred into ſuch fancies. But what? Notwithſtādiug ẏ God liſted to abace him ſo before men, by bereuing him of the benefite that he eſteemed aboue al other, and to preferre the meaneſt and miſerableſt of the people before him who was ſo excellent a Prophet: yet ceaſed he not to diſcharge his duetie, and to goe through with it ſtill. And we ſee with what carefulnes he goeth about it. My friends (ſaith he) although I muſt dye here, and God cutteth me off from you as touching the bodie: yet notwithſtanding I will diſcharge my ſelfe both towards him and you, and ſeeing it hath pleaſed him to make me his miniſter to teach you his doctrine, I will neuer faile to doe my duetie. In deede he might haue twytted the people, as them that had cauſed God to lay ſuch puniſhment vppon him: but yet for all that hee ceaſeth not to ſerue God and to loue the people ſtill, which (as I ſaid) had cauſed him to be diſinherited of the Land that was promiſed to Abraham.

Therfore hath Moſes good right to ſay, *Becauſe of your words God ſware that I ſhould not go ouer Iordan to enter into this good land.* Neither murmuring nor blaſpheming proceeded from Moſes: Nay (which is more) we ſee he crucified himſelf whē he ſaw that god was not honored as he ought to haue beene: whereas on the contrarie part there was a froward & wilfull people, which could not be brought into order by any meanes. It ſeemeth then indeede ẏ Moſes had iuſt cauſe to be angrie with the people, ſeeing that God had puniſhed him ſo grieuouſly for their diſobedience. But yet for all that, a man may ſee hee ſheweth himſelfe ſtill a father towardes them, and taketh them as his children, for hee knewe to what ſtate he was called. True it is that he vſed ſharpneſſe and rigour in due time and place, ſpecially when it behooued him to ſhewe the people their offences. We ſee that Moſes was [in that behalf] as a burning fire: we ſee howe vehemently he rebuketh the deſpyſers of God and the Rebels. But when ẏ was once ouer, he ſhewed himſelfe alwayes to beare an affection of loue, towards ſuch as could abide it. As for example, God had now puniſhed the people by the ſpace of fortie yeres, inſomuch that they which had brought puniſhments vpon the people, and had beene the authors of ſedition, were alreadie dead and their carkeſſes were rotten in the wildernes: & yet now behold, Moſes pitieth the children that were deſcended of them, and ceaſeth not to loue them. So then let vs marke, that if God call vs to the preaching of his word, the vnthankfulneſſe of ſuch as ought to heare it, muſt not ſtay vs from procuring their ſaluation as much as in vs lyeth. Moreouer let vs not forbeare to pronounce Gods iuſtice againſt the wicked. And though there be ſome that are vtterly wilful & paſt hope of recouery, whoſe diſeaſes are vncurable: wel, yet let vs do our duetie towardes them: let vs cite them to Gods iudgement, & let our doctrine ſerue for their condemnation to ſende them to hell. And in the meane while, looke where we can reclaime them that haue done amiſſe: let vs giue good heede therto and beſtow our labor thereon. Behold yet what we haue further to remember out of this place.

And herewithall wee ſee alſo, that when Gods ſeruants perceiue themſelues to bee neere their ende, they muſt be the carefuller to ſtabliſh the doctrin which they taught in their life time. And why? For we ſee how men do eaſily ſlip away, & that euen ſuch as haue ſhewed ſome good ſigne, will anon after ſtart aſide, if they be not helde in with a dubble reine as they ſay. And when a ſeruant of God ſeeth ẏ in his lifetime he was greatly hindered in the maintenance of Gods ſeruice, and had much adoe to repreſſe euil: what ſhould he thinke but that the diuell will take poſſeſſion after his death, if God remedie not the matter? Therfore ſuch as haue felt and found by experience in their lifetime, how painefull a thing it is to maintein the church, ought euē for this cauſe to take ſo much the more paine & trauell when they draw towards their death, to cauſe the ſyncere religion to be mainteined in his pureneſſe, that men being once ſet in a good courſe, may not ſwarue away from it. Beholde the example which Moſes ſheweth vs.

And beſides this let vs mark alſo that he doth not only diſcharge himſelfe here at his death, by vttering ſome ſodaine ſpeach, or by ſhewing ſome ſigne of zeale onely: but that he ſtood vpon this, and did moſt vrge it, to wit, all his life long that the people might bee edified in the feare of God. For yee ſhall ſee a number that are negligent all their lifetime: and yet they thinke that if they do but once exalt God and make a faire proteſtation at their liues end: it is ynough But Moſes delt not ſo. For hee neuer forgate the commiſſion that was giuen him, but continued throughout in preaching to the people. Neuertheleſſe, whatſoeuer he did all his life long: yet when he ſawe his death at hande, hee inforced himſelfe the more, and burned the whotter in earneſtneſſe of zeale, becauſe of the vrgent neceſſitie aforeſaide. Wherefore let thoſe whom God hath ordeined to preach his worde, looke well that they diſcharge their duetie al their life long. And that when they ſhall haue done their indeuer to ſtabliſh the true religion, and brought to paſſe that God is honoured, and that they haue builded Gods Church as much as they coulde, and taught thoſe to walke in the feare of God which were committed to their charge: let them indeuer to ſeale vp al the ſame doctrine, & to cauſe it to continue after their deceaſe. This thē is another thing which we haue to remēber.

Alſo let vs marke further, that ſeeing Moſes was ſo carefull for the people of Iſrael: wee alſo haue neede to bee vpon our watches. Do we ſee that God taketh away a man that hath ſerued faithfully in his time? Then let vs bee ſure that anon after, the diuell will indeuour to marre al, and that he will ſoone make ſome breach to enter vpon vs, if we be not luſtily vpholden & kept.

And there is not a more profitable leſſon than this ſame. For wee knowe not how great a good turne God doth vs, when he giueth vs ſuch men as ſeeke nothing elſe but to hold vs in aw of him, and to bring to paſſe that hee may reigne ouer vs, and we liue vnder his obeyſance. On the contrarie part, when our Lord taketh ſuch out of the worlde as are able to builde his Church: wee bee careleſſe of it, and this careleſneſſe is the cauſe, that the diuell findeth a gappe open amongſt vs, that ſo hee may vtterly make hauocke of vs. So much the more therefore doth it ſtande vs in hand to be watchful in this caſe, & to know that wee bee well fenced when God giueth vs men to guide vs in his feare. Contrariwiſe if he leaue vs deſtitute of ſuch: it is as if a man were without munition in a towne, wheras were no power nor meane of defence. Ye ſee then how it ſtandeth vs in hande to bethinke our ſelues, and to pray god that when it pleaſeth him to take away thoſe that haue taught vs faithfully, that then the doctrine which wee ſhall haue receiued by them, may not die anon after them, but liue ſtil & continue alwayes faſt ſetled in our hearts, and that it may haue full force and ſtrength, and we be fenced by it againſt al Satans temptations, neuer to turne away from it, but euermore to remember what we haue learned & always to ſet our minds vpon it, that it may ſerue vs for a ſhield to warde all Satans blowes withal, and that wee may be ſo armed with it from top to toe (as they ſay) that Gods word may bee a ſworde to vs, our hope a helmet, & our faith a buckler, ſo as the diuel may not bee able to foile vs in any wiſe whatſoeuer: that when the meanes ſhalbe taken away wherwith Gods will was to haue vs edified, yet neuertheleſſe he may ſtil continue with vs, and we likewiſe keepe on our way to him.

1.Pet.5.9.
Eph.6.13.

Nowe let vs kneele downe in the preſence of our good God with acknowledgemēt of our ſins, praying him to make vs perceiue them better than wee haue done heretofore, ſo as we may learne to miſlike more and more of our ſelues for them: And that in acknowledging the great benefits which hee beſtoweth vpon vs, wee may call vpon him as our father, ſeeking nothing elſe but to giue our ſelues wholly vnto him, to be gouerned by his holy ſpirite as his teachable and meeke children: & ſeing that he doth vs this honor to take vs for his heritage, & to giue himſelfe to vs, that we may alſo remember, ſith he taketh delight in vs: to be vnto him ſuch a poſſeſſion, as may ſerue to his glorie, & that hee would neuer cut vs of although we wel deſerue it. That it may pleaſe him to grant this grace, not only to vs but alſo to al people and nations of the earth, &c.

On Wedneſday the xxix. of May. 1555.

The xxv. Sermon, which is the ſeuenth vpon the fourth Chapter.

23 24 Beware that ye &c.

25 When thou ſhalt haue begotten children, and childrens children, and ſhalt haue dwelt long in ẏ land: if then ye ſhal corrupt your ſelues, & make carued Images after the likeneſſe of any thing, and worke wickedneſſe in the ſight of the Lord thy God, to prouoke him to wrath:

26 I call heauen and earth to record againſt you this day, that out of al doubt ye ſhall ſoone periſh out of the land whither ye go ouer Iordan to poſſeſſe it: and yee ſhall not prolong your dayes therein, for ye ſhalbe vtterly deſtroyed.

WE haue ſeene heretofore the exhortation that Moſes made, to the intēt that Gods ſeruice might not bee corrupted. Hee ſhewed that to worſhip GOD purely, there muſt no image at all be made, becauſe it is not in any wiſe agreeable to his nature: but men muſt worſhip him after another faſhion. His ſeruice (ſay I) is ſpiritual: and therefore wee muſt reſt wholly therevppon. For as ſoone as we ſwarue one way or other: it is but preſumption, which God condemneth. That is the thing which Moſes hath treated of hitherto. Now to confirme this doctrine the better: he ſetteth before the peoples eyes, the couenant that God had made with them: for when God manifeſteth himſelfe vnto vs, it is the principall meane whereby to hold vs in the pure religion. Naturally we be blind wretches, and therefore it is verie eaſie for Satan to beguile vs. And although there were none to deceiue vs: yet doth euery one of vs wander away in our owne conceites and imaginations. Therefore there is nothing in vs but darknes: and Gods maieſtie is ſo high and incomprehenſible a thing, as it is no maruell though we be at our wits end, before we can come nigh vnto it. Then if we were not duly taught, ne had a grounded doctrine to ſhew vs ẏ right path: what could we do but go aſtray? But now ſeing ẏ God hath ſhewed himſelf vnto vs, & that ſo familiarly as we may diſcern him from al the ydols that haue bin forged in ẏ worlde, & we are able to ſay ẏ it is he whom we ought to worſhip: there is no more excuſe for vs if we be caried to and fro. And our vnthankfulneſſe is the more ſhamefull, if wee ſhut our eyes againſt the doctrine of ſaluation, and turne our backs vpon God when he hath ſhewed himſelfe to our face, and vouchſafed to bee knowen of vs familiarlie. Now we ſee what Moſes ment. For his meaning

Iohn 4.24.

is to ſet forth the greeuouſneſſe of the peoples ſin, if it ſhould ſo fall out that they ſhoulde turne away from the purenes which they had learned in the lawe. As if he ſhould ſay, True it is that euen from the creation of the worlde moſt men haue not ceaſed to ouerſhoote themſelues into a number of errors and follies: but that came to paſſe becauſe they had not ſo ſpecial a teaching, as you haue, whereby they might haue had certeinetie of faith to reſt themſelues vpon. Therefore the wretched infidels went aſtray: but yet was not their ſin ſo greeuous and outragious. For although they were vnexcuſable: yet had they not any ſuch teaching as you. But as for you, yee haue had Gods couenāt, wherby ye were brought into his houſe: hee hath ſhewed himſelfe as a father towards you, & taught you as his childrē: this is that holy band wherby god hath tyed him ſelfe to you: now then if you ſhould turne backe againe, and become like thoſe wretched beaſtes which neuer knew nor taſted of gods truth, what a thing were it? Might you pretende them for a ſhrowding ſheete and ſay, other men do ſo as wel as we? Yea, but yet had not thoſe other men ſuch teaching as you haue had. Nowe therefore acknowledge the grace that God hath beſtowed vppon you, in ſhouling you out from all nations of the earth, & in cōming ſo nigh vnto you. And in deed ẏ ſame is the very cauſe why ẏ when the heathen are condēned in their ſuperſtitions: it is ſaid on the contrarie part, that ẏ Lord dwelleth in Sion, & his maieſty is knowen there. After
Abac,2,20. that manner doth the Prophet Abacucke ſpeake in his ſecond chapter: and it is a doctrine that is rife ynough euery where. As if it were ſaide, The world runnes at randon, and euery man forgeth and ſetteth vp ſome God priuately to himſelfe: but as for the God which hath ſhewed himſelf to bee the true liuing God: his voyce ſoundeth in mount Sion where the temple was builded. Thē ſith it is ſo: although the whole world bee caried away & go wandering in the darke: yet muſt not we be remoued, foraſmuch as he hath ſet vp his ſeat among vs, and we know him by his voyce & by his word. And here we ſee why it is ſaid in the
Pſal.97.1.3 Pſalmes where Gods kingdome is ſpoken of in
5.& 115.3.4. ſuch wiſe as it was to bee ſtabliſhed in the perſon of our Lord Ieſus Chriſt, as wel in the fourſcore and ſixteenth pſalme as in other pſalmes: The Lord reigneth, Let ẏ far countries reioyce therat, let all ydols be confounded, and let all that is ſet vp by men be throwen downe. For when wee haue the truth, which driueth away al darknes & ignorance, then haue we the verie meane to deſtroy al ſuperſtition. And to the ſame purpoſe al-
Eſa,19.1. ſo is there this like ſaying in Eſay: when the Lord reigneth, then ſhal al the ydols of Egypt fal. And why? For the wretched Infidels weene they doe well, and thinke they do God good ſeruice in following their fond ſuperſtitions. But when God is once ſet afore them: then his maieſtie bereaueth them of all excuſe, and he muſt needs as then be
Eſa,25.9. magnified. And that is ẏ cauſe why it is ſaid in another place, This is the Lord, this is the Lord. The prophet in the perſon of all the faithful, defieth the ydols with their abuſes, becauſe GOD ſhould be knowen, accordingly as al things were accompliſhed at the comming of our Lord Ieſus Chriſt. Now then the thing ẏ we haue to gather vpon this text, is that when we once knowe God by his word, wee muſt be ſo fully reſolued and aſſured thereof, that although the whole wretched world run rouing after their owne abuſes and ſuperſtitions, yet we muſt keepe on our way ſtill: & that ſeing we haue a ſure foundation which cannot be ſhaken, that is to wit gods infallible truth: wee muſt let thoſe blinde wretches breake their necks, ſith we cannot remedie it, and in ẏ meane while we muſt go forward ſtill as the Lord commaundeth vs, ſeing he hath reached vs his hand to draw vs to him. And although this was ſpoken to the Iewes by Moſes: yet it perteineth euē now vnto vs. For wee ſee what fauor God hath ſhewed vs aboue others. All the worlde is full of error and diueliſh imaginations, & wretched men are become brutiſh in their ignorance. But what? Neither hath the doctrine of life bene preached vnto them: neither haue they euer in good earneſt vnderſtood what God is. Indeede they can ſpeake of him, but that is but at randon & without order. But wee haue the ſcripture declared vnto vs, and by that mean God communicateth himſelf to vs, and allureth vs ſo ſweetly vnto him, as he could not doe any more for vs, except hee ſhould take vs into his lap, and yet we ſee he applieth himſelfe to our infirmitie, he chaweth our morſels to vs, he feedeth vs with pappe, & ſpeaketh to vs like a nurſe. Now when we ſee that our God manifeſteth himſelfe ſo familiarly vnto vs, there is no more excuſe for vs, wee may no more mingle our ſelues in the order or rancke of vnbeleeuers. For our ſtate is cleane contrarie. God is Rom,2,12.
hidden from them: and yet ſhall they not faile to periſh in their ignorance as they be worthie. But as for vs, if we be ſo ſtubborne againſt God, that euen of a ſpitefull malice wee will not obey the things that he ſheweth vs, but wil play the wilde beaſtes with him, ſo as hee cannot reclaime vs to himſelfe: and that euen when we knowe him and do vnderſtand that it is hee which ought to be honored, yet wee be ſo vnconſtant and wauering ſtill, as to turne away after our owne dotages: ſhall we not bee doublie condemned? Shall not horrible vengeance hang ouer our heades? Then let vs beare in mind, that in aſmuch as our Lorde hath made a couenant with vs, that is to ſay, hath called vs into his Church to be taught by his worde: that this is the onely meane, wherewith wee may bee armed and fortified againſt all ſuperſtitions. This is one point.

And let vs alſo marke therewithall, that horrible condemnation hangeth ouer our heades, if we wander away, and hold not our ſelues to the ſimplicitie of Gods doctrine, but bee carried away hither and thither by our owne luſts. Theſe are the two pointes which we haue to marke vpon this text. Wherefore let vs learne to make our profite and commoditie of the worde that is preached vnto vs for the ſame purpoſe. That is to wit, albeit that all bee full of corruption and errour, yet let not vs bee ſhaken downe, nor bee wauering as manie men are, to ſaye, yeamarie, but there is ſo much diſagreement [that I wote not what to doe]. Let vs not alleage Eſa.25.9. this: but let vs ſay with the prophet Eſay, Behold, this is our God: behold, this is our God. And by that means let vs defie all that the diuell can ſet before vs to turne vs aſide. Yea let vs not make any reckoning at all of it. And why? Becauſe the light that God giueth vs, is ſtrong ynough to driue away all darkneſſe, and the truth is ſtrong ynough to beate backe all lies. Thus ſee yee I ſay what the power of faith ought to be: When wee haue well printed in rememberance the doctrine that is preached vnto vs, and yet notwithſtanding continue ſtill for all that in blindneſſe, and bee ſtill as reedes ſhaken with euerie winde: Let vs vnderſtande this that we knowe not God, nor yet euer vnderſtood of what great value his couenaunt towardes vs was, nor euer were knitte to him as we ſhoulde be: but that there was hypocriſie inſteede of that proteſtation that we made to followe his worde. But let vs marke herewithall, that our condemnation ſhalbe doubled, if wee runne aſtray after wee haue knowen the truth. For if Gods couenant cannot hold vs in obedience: muſt it not needs bee that wee bee as cloudes? And what an vnthankefulneſſe is that? Indeede many will ſay, I haue not beene ſufficiently confirmed, I vnderſtande it not: but thoſe are fonde ſhiftes. We neede but to open our eyes and our eares ſeing wee haue Gods worde preached, and our Lorde will certeinely make it of power and force, ſo as we ſhal haue ſufficient inſtruction by it, ſeeing he regardeth vs eſpecially, and therefore wee muſt needes be founde blameworthy if we ſwarue one way or other, after that God hath ſhewed vs his truth. And this much then concerning the couenant that Moſes ſpeaketh of here.

Howbeit, to ſet forth the heynouſnes of their crime the more, he addeth *that hee taketh heauen and earth to witneſſe, that if the people turne away from the lawe, and inuent or ſet vp any newe Religion, they ſhall periſh out of hande, and not poſſeſſe the lande any long time, which ſhould be giuen vnto them.* Now this ſerueth to waken ſuch as are puffed vp with vaine preſumption, vnder colour that God is gratious vnto them, and hath giuen them ſome priuiledge aboue others. And it is well worthie to be noted. For although we cannot exceede meaſure in truſting in God: yet doe wee ſee that a greate number doe falſely abuſe Gods name. If they bee once baptiſed and taken into the companie of the faithfull: it ſeemeth to them that God is greatly bounde vnto them. Whereas they ſhoulde conſider that they bee called of his free goodneſſe, and ought to giue ouer themſelues to walke in feare and wareneſſe: beholde, they be puffed vp with pride and vaine ouerweening, and beare themſelues in hande through fond hypocriſie, that they bee ſcaped out of Gods hande, and in the meane while they doe but dalie with him. Ye ſee then what the pride of men is, howe that when God ſheweth himſelfe bountifull towardes vs, and vttereth the great and infinite treaſures of his mercie: they thinke ſtill that hee is greatly beholden to them, and therevppon doe ouerſhoote themſelues, and take leaue to doe amiſſe. According as wee ſee that the greateſt ſtrife which the Prophetes had againſt the Iewes, was for that they bragged of their hauing of Gods Temple, Ierem.7.4. and of his ſacrifices, and of ſuch other thinges. Nowe according hereunto Moſes ſaith in this place, It is true yͭ ye doe now enter into poſſeſſion of the heritage which God promiſed to your fathers: it is true that therein you haue an excellent warrant of his preferring of you before al other nations: Surely it is a great and ineſtimable dignitie, that your God ſhould purchaſe you with his owne hande, and driue out the inhabiters of a countrie to ſet you in their place, yea and that when you bee in that lande, you ſhalbe ſure to be of his houſholde, and that he dwelleth among you, and that his ſo doing is to take you vp into his euerlaſting kingdome: Surely it is a ſingular benefite which your God hath vouchſafed vppon you: but yet for all that, deceiue not your ſelues to deſpiſe and reiect his worde, or to ſhrinke away from him, & to corrupt his ſeruice. For like as now he performeth the promiſe that he made to your fathers: ſo can he alſo driue you out againe, when he hath ſetled you there: and he can well ynough weede you againe out of his heritage, & ſo ſcatter you abrode that you ſhalbe diſperſed euery where. Now then, the more that your God doth preſently increaſe his goodnes towards you: the more dilige̅t be you in ſeruing and louing of him, and hold your ſelues vnder his ſhadow, and beware that ye alter not any thing in the religion that hee hath ordeined for you. Marke that for one point.

And now furthermore, whereas Moſes *calleth heauen and earth to witnes:* it importeth yet a greater vehemencie. True it is, that ſome take this for Angels and men. But yͭ is not the meaning of Moſes, as we ſhal ſee by the like maner of ſpeach hereafter in the 32. Chapter, where he will ſay, Deut.32.1. Hearken O yee heauens what I ſay, and let the earth here the words of my mouth. And ſo ſaith the Prophet Eſay, Eſa.1.2. Hearken ye heauens, and let the earth giue audience vnto mee, for the Lorde hath ſpoken. Beholde I haue nouriſhed children & brought them vp, and they haue deſpiſed me. When God calleth heauen and earth to witnes after that maner, it is to rebuke mens brutiſhnes ſo much the more. For we be created after Gods image, to haue reaſon & vnderſtanding: & where to ſhoulde wee applie ſuch giftes, but to knowe God and to giue our ſelues wholly vnto him? Shall men haue wit ynough to comprehend the whole order of nature, and ſhall they in yͤ meane ſeaſon deſpiſe the Lorde? It is all one as if a man ſhoulde thinke himſelfe well forwarde, when hee hath toyled in traueiling and running all daylong: and hath wandered all the while without keeping any path. And is not the knowledge of our God the finall ende of all our perfection? Yes, and therefore when God inte̅deth to ſhew men that they bee more than blockiſh, and that they bee ſo marred as they bee not worthy to be taken any more for reaſonable creatures: then doth hee direct his ſpeech to heauen and earth.

As if hee ſhoulde ſay, I haue not nowe any more witnes in ẏ world: for I choſe theſe to be knowen of them: but herken you to me yee heauen and earth, hearken yee to me I ſay nowe yee that are vnreaſonable creatures: for I ſhal finde more reaſon in you, than in thoſe to whom I haue giuen witte and knowledge to diſcerne betweene good and euil, and to haue skil not only of this preſent life, but alſo of the immortalitie of heauen. So then, Moſes calleth heauen and earth to witnes here, to doe vs the better to vnderſtand, that if men flatter themſelues and play the brute beaſts when they haue offended God, and think by that meanes to go quitte: they beguile themſelues: for when men ſhall haue conſpired together in naughtines, and that euery man may ſay, I haue done as all others haue done: ſo as there remaineth no more but heauen and earth, although they haue no vnderſtanding in them, yet ſhall they be ſufficient witneſſes. Why ſo? For ſhall they not bee able ynough to bewray our naughtines without ſpeaking, ſeeing they were ordeined for our ſeruice? We haue ſeene alreadie what Moſes ſaide heretofore of the Sunne, Moone and Starres. What is the Sunne? A right noble creature. And yet notwithſtanding, what is he in effect, but our ſeruant? And the Moone that mounteth ſo high, is our handmaid, & God hath appointed al theſe things to our vſe & commoditie. Seeing then that theſe creatures being without vnderſtanding, doe knowe that the end whereto God hath applyed them, is to do vs ſeruice: what a dealing is it, ẏ when we ſhal haue inioyed ſo many benefites, as namely that we ſhal haue receiued the light of the Sunne and the Moone, that the earth ſhal haue fed vs with her owne bowels, and that we ſhall haue bin fraught full of a number of other good thinges: yet notwithſtanding we fal to defiling of the world with our filthineſſe and infection, ſo as Gods glorie is darkened by vs, and wee ouerthrowe his ſeruice, and ſet vp ydols againſt him to deface and diſcredite his maieſtie? Whither go we in ſo doing? Shall not the creatures aske vengeance againſt vs, when wee ſhall haue ſo abuſed them, and defiled and berayed thẽ with our filthines as much as we could? Yes: and ſo we ſee nowe what the meaning of Moſes was.

Nowe remaineth that we applie it further to our ſelues: And firſt and formoſt let vs marke well, that if wee haue beene receiued into the Church, and God for a time haue admitted vs to bee of his people and flocke, and haue beſtowed many benefites vppon vs, ſpecially if we haue had any excellencie or preheminence aboue others: we muſt not be proude of it. For if we abuſe Gods grace, hee can well ynough roote vs out: and if we follow not his calling, hee can as well cut vs off, as hee coulde adopt vs. And in good Rom.11.17. ſooth, if this befell to the Iewes which were the naturall branches (as Saint Paul termeth them) and which came out of this ſtocke of Abraham: if that holy and high exalted linage was neuertheleſſe ſo cut off vppon the ſudden, and diſinherited of the poſſeſſion that God had giuen them: what ſhall become of vs which are graffed in as it were againſt nature? For wee were wilde impes: wee came of the Gentiles, which were enemies to God, & ſeparated from his Church, & Ephe.2.12. had not any acquaintance with him. Seeing then that our Lorde gathereth vs to him, not onely by Baptiſme but alſo by the holy ſupper, and wee haue his worde daily, wherein hee aſſureth vs that hee is our father, that he will bee the keeper of our ſoules, and that he will take vs for his people: let vs learne to looke diligently about vs, that we abuſe not ſo great a benefite. But if wee minde to inioy it for euer: let vs feare our God and walke in his obedience: and that (I tell you) is a thing which wee ought to beare in minde. For if wee thinke to holde God in our ſleeue, and imagine him to bee bounde vnto vs becauſe he hath once choſen vs: hee will eaſilie ſhewe vs that as hee came to vs, ſo will he goe againe from vs, if we will needs be ouerluſtie. Wil wee then haue our Lorde to continue our ſhepherd ſtill? Let vs be pliable to him, ſo as wee liue quietly vnder his ſubiection. To bee ſhort, let vs alwayes beare in minde the threat which our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt vttered: That is to wit, that Matt.21.43. the kingdom of God ſhalbe remooued far from vs, when wee cannot profite thereby, and that it ſhalbe taken away from vs, and giuen to a people that ſhall glorifie their God, when they haue bin taught by his word. Thus ye ſee what we haue to remember vpon this point.

Furthermore let vs marke well, that whereas it is ſaide here, *that heauen and earth ſhall beare witneſſe againſt vs:* it is to put vs to the greater ſhame, in that the Angels neede not to come downe from Paradiſe, nor the Prophets and Apoſtles to riſe from the deade, to giue euidence againſt vs before God: but only the liueles creatures are ſufficient witneſſe for God to vſe to condemne vs withall. It is true that GOD coulde bring other witneſſes alſo, as we ſee, that ſometimes hee calleth foorth the heathen and infidels to make vs the more aſhamed. For (as Ierem.2.11. ſaieth the Prophet Ieremie) goe euerie where, and yet yee ſhall not ſee that the ydolaters bee ſo fickle, as thoſe that haue beene duely inſtructed in the pure worde of God. Looke me vppon the wretched infidels, which bee headſtrong in their follies. Although they haue no certaintie to leane vnto (as alſo they cannot indeede haue any) & (which more is) their minds be ſo intangled in their owne dotages as they cannot winde themſelues out: yet notwithſtanding, ſay what a man can, they ſticke ſtill to the things that they haue learned. And although they keepe one courſe ſtil: yet doe they nothing but goe aſtray, without keeping either right way or path: & yet notwithſtanding they be held ſtil to it wᵗ this perſwaſion, ẏ they muſt not chaunge their God. But yet they neuer knew him for al that. And ſhal we thẽ be caried away at the firſt daſh, which know the liuing God and haue bene taught his truth, and haue had ſo good warrant therof, as it is not for vs to wauer any more? Shall we ſtart away after wee haue beene trained vp in the pure doctrine of the Goſpell? O what meaneth this? Looke mee vppon the Turkes, Paynims, Papiſtes, and Iewes. Notwithſtanding that al theſe

bee

be bewitched at this day in their errours:yet ſhal they riſe vp and bee found ſufficient witneſſes to make vs aſhamed before God,and to diſappoint vs of all ſtartingholes. And why? For they go on ſtill in their ſuperſtitions , whereas wee for our partes fall to reeling at euerie blaſt of winde,and the diuell plucketh vs out of the place wherein wee were planted. Thus ye ſee what we haue to remember vpon this place.

But aboue all thinges let vs marke,that in as much as God hath beſtowed infinite benefites vpon vs,and diſplaied his liberalitie towardes vs after ſo many faſhions: all that he ſhall haue beſtowed vppon vs ſhall ſerue to our condemnation,if wee doe him not homage for the ſame. To bee ſhort,both heauen and earth ſhall be armed againſt vs, and aske vengeaunce vppon vs. And how ſhall we bee able to finde any excuſe, when our Lorde ſhall raiſe ſuch a crie to confounde vs and put vs to ſhame? Therefore let vs nowe looke well to our ſelues, and let vs walke in the way that he hath ſhewed vs.

Now here is expreſſe mention made of *Images and other likeneſſes*: but vnder one kinde, Moſes comprehendeth all. For it is a maner of ſpeache rife ynough in the holy ſcripture, to marke out ſome one kinde of ſuperſtition,thereby to warne vs that wee muſt keepe our ſelues from all ſuperſtitions in generall. And Moſes himſelf doth euer obſerue the ſame maner of ſpeaking,as wee ſhal ſee in the next Chapter, where he vſeth to ſpeake of the heinouſeſt things,to the intent we ſhoulde the more abhorre them and miſlike of them, to keepe our ſelues from them. And yet for all that the holy Ghoſt meant in this place by the mouth of Moſes ſhortly to ſhew that whē God hath once made his couenant with vs, wee muſt hold vs in the ſimplicitie of his word, without mingling any ſuperſtition with it. Now that wee vnderſtand the naturall ſenſe of this text: let vs looke that we make our commoditie therof. For although we haue no images either carued or molten: although wee haue no puppets either ingrauen or painted ; yet faile wee not to be idolaters,if we ſticke not to our God to keepe his worde throughout. For the matter that the Couenant it ſelf importeth is not that we ſhould confeſſe in wordes,that the God which gaue his Lawe by Moſes is alonely to bee worſhipped:but that wee ſhould vnderſtand his will, after what manner he will bee ſerued,that wee ſhould haue his promiſes printed in our heartes , that wee ſhould knowe howe and by what meanes wee ought to worſhip him, and that we ſhould keepe on our way to the inheritaunce whereunto hee calleth vs. That is the thing that Gods couenāt importeth. And without that, in what caſe were wee? If wee ſhould ſay, verie well, there is but one God which hath created heauen and earth, he hath reuealed himſelfe vnto vs, and he hath giuen vs his Lawe: and yet notwithſtanding we knewe not his will, but euerie of vs ſhoulde behaue himſelfe as he liſted: to what purpoſe were this? It were better for vs neuer to haue knowen Gods word, than after the knowing of it to deſpiſe it, and to take leaue to doe what wee liſt.

Deut.5.18.

Therefore let vs beare well in minde, that Moſes meant here to ſhewe the people generally, that ſeeing they had bene taught in the trueth,it behoued them to keepe themſelues from all errours and leaſings. And this is that which I haue ſaid alreadie, that Gods word ought to ſuffice to gard vs in ſuch ſort,as the diuell may not ſeduce vs,doe the worſt he can. Nowe then will wee be exempted from the threate and condemnation that is contained here? Let vs giue ouer our ſelues wholly in all reſpectes to our God, let vs hearken to his worde, and let vs obey his voyce without any exception or gaineſaying, ſo as his ſeruice remaine in ſuch ſort among vs , as hee hath commaunded by his word. But let vs compare the crime that Moſes reproueth here, with other crimes that are leſſe to bee excuſed. For although there was vnthankfulneſſe and rebellion at yͤ time in all ſuch as ſuffered themſelues to be miſled,after they had bene taught by Gods word:yet cōmitted they not ſo curſed ſacriledge againſt God,as yͤ caitifs do in theſe dayes,which to the vttermoſt of their power do blot out al religion, and are ſo full of wickedneſſe, that they could finde in their hearts to confound heauen and earth togither,in working ſpite to the whole Maieſtie of God. Take mee a man that hath bin taught in the Goſpell, and afterwarde through lightneſſe ouerſhooteth himſelfe and turneth away from well dooing,howbeit with a minde to doe well againe: truely ſuch as one is not to bee held guiltleſſe,as I haue ſaide alreadie: but yet is he not worthie of ſo much blame, neither is his fault ſo heinous before GOD, as another that outrageth ſo farre as to ſcoffe and ſcorne at God and all his doctrine, and to play the mad bedlem,of purpoſe to thruſt all Religion vnder foot, ſo as he could finde in his heart that men ſhould liue like beaſtes: and for the bringing thereof to paſſe,ſpeweth out blaſphemies not onely againſt the maner of the ſuperſtitions in Poperie,but alſo euen againſt the word of God. For is not ſuch a one farre more horrible, than the ignoraunt wretch that is ſtill ſnarled in ſome imagination, and thinkes he ſerueth God,though the ſame be but vanitie,as I ſaid afore? But nowe let vs looke to our owne time. God telleth the Iewes here, that he would not beare with them if they happened to ouerſhoote themſelues in any ſuperſtitions, but would bereaue them of the inheritance that he had promiſed them. Wee at this day haue a more excellent benefite than that people had,and therefore ſhall wee be the more to blame, if wee yeeld not homage to our God, which hath eſteemed and honored vs ſo much, as to call vs into his Church. But nowe how doe moſt men behaue themſelues, after they haue bene taught by the Goſpell? In deede wee meddle not with the ſuperſtitions of Papiſtrie, wee paſſe not for ſhrift, nor for Maſſes, nor for ſuch other like traſh: but what for that? Wee coulde finde in our heartes plainely and ſhortly to defie God, and that he ſhoulde haue no further audience among vs than we liſt our ſelues. After this maner doe a great ſort deale euen to this day, who neuertheleſſe will needes bee taken, not to

be of the common ſort of the faithfull, but as the pillars and vpholders of the Church. And yet haue they gone about to ſtoppe Gods mouth when any thing hath miſliked them, or fallen out otherwiſe than they woulde haue it. O this muſt bee taken away. And wy? Beholde, GOD not onely ſpeaketh here of the things that haue beene inuented by men: but alſo holdeth vs in awe, ſo as it is not lawfull for vs to incounter him. He paſſeth not for them. And againe, let vs ſee what their life is. We ſee that they mocke GOD to the ful, and that their deſire is to haue their owne ſwindge in all thinges. And yet notwithſtanding when the diuell raiſeth vp ſuch plagie folke to infect the whole flocke with their poiſon: wee ſee a great nomber, whoſe whole deſire is to mingle themſelues with them. For as ſoone as ſome leawd fellowe, or two or three maintainers of wickedneſſe, (which ſhewe them ſelues to bee readie to vpholde all diſorder and offences) doe but ſteppe vp: it is as good as the diſplaying of a banner, and by & by al vnthriftes runne after it. And would God that the experience of it were not ſo great as it is ſeene to bee. But what? When wee bee tolde of it, we muſt repent yea and we muſt mourne before God, praying him to keepe vs from ſuch deadly plagues as are ſeene intermingled among vs. And ſo let vs marke well howe it is ſaid here, that it can not bee that ſuch as doe ſo peruert themſelues, did euer know what Gods couenant is, or of how excellent value. For if his trueth ought ſo to reſtraine vs that we be not led away by any of the wyles and ſlightes of Satan: how were it poſſible that men ſhould ſo caſt themſelues into deſtruction, if they had knowen God in good earneſt, & bene ſtrengthened in his word? Although then that ſuch folke profeſſe the Goſpel, yea and haue
Hebr.6.4.5. taken ſome ſmack of it, as ſaieth the Apoſtle: yet may we perceiue that it neuer entered into their hearts in good earneſt. They be but hypocrites, which make countenance to ſerue GOD for a time, and afterward doe fleete away, as wee ſee theſe roiſters doe which band themſelues togither. As ſoone as they ſee any aide or ſupport to vphold their wickedneſſe, they fall to practiſing and confederating, and they contriue all the drifts that they can poſſibly, to ouerthrow Gods Church. Therefore let vs vnderſtand, that although the Goſpell be preached among vs: yet are there many deafe folk which heare not what God ſaith to them: not that that ſhall ſeeme to leſſen their fault, for they ſhall not faile to be taken for guiltie as wel as others.

Now here a man might demaund a queſtion,
Deut.31. wherfore Moſes ſaith that they ſhal not liue in ẏ land that is giuen them, but ſhall be ſhortly rooted out of it: for wee ſee that God is patient: and in deede it appeareth ſufficiently. And therfore it ſeemeth at the firſt ſight that the thing which Moſes ſaieth here, ſhoulde not come to paſſe. God ſpared his people a long time. Although they gaue themſelues to idolatrie and ſuperſtition: yet did God vſe long patience towards thẽ, inſomuch that the Prophets laboured to bring them backe againe whẽ they were reuolted. Although they were wilfull and hard hearted, yet did God aſſay to win them to him. Notwithſtanding all this, it is ſaid here that they ſhall ſoone be rooted out. Yea, but this *ſoone or ſhortly* muſt agree with that which is written in many other
places: that is to wit, that although Gods wrath Num.14.18. light ſuddainly vpon offenders, & ouerwhelme them as a ſtorme that commeth vnlooked for: yet doth he not faile to be patient, and to delay his vengance till mens wickednes bee growen ripe, yea and euen till it be ſtarkẽ rotten. Therfore it is to be vnderſtoode that God puniſheth not offenders out of hand, for he ſaieth that he is ſlowe to wrath, and he muſt needs keepe his owne nature. Neuertheleſſe in vſing patience, and in bearing with them that haue doone amiſſe: he ouerthroweth them ſooner then they would. Ye ſee then that this *ſoone, ſhortly, by and by*, or *out of hand*, muſt be referred to mens careleſneſſe, who make their account that all ſhall go well with them, and beare themſelues in hande that they haue made a couenant with death (as ſaith the Prophet Eſay,) and they be as drunken
folkes in that behalfe, ſo as if God winke at them Eſa.28.15. for a time, they thinke they bee ſcaped from his hand. See how the hypocrites abuſe Gods goodneſſe, bearing themſelues in hand ẏ they ſhall neuer come to account for it. For this cauſe doth Moſes ſay here *ſoone* or *ſhortly*. Not ẏ God forgetteth his owne nature (as I ſaid,) or tarieth not a long time for the amendment of offenders: but that when all is done, his vengeaunce is alwaies
in a readineſſe, & there needeth no more but to Pſal.2.12. kindle it, and by and by without any further tariance, yea before one finger cã be ſtirred, there needeth no more but to ſhewe forth his wrath, and we ſhall bee euerie one of vs ouerwhelmed as it is ſaide in another ſong of Moſes, or in the XC. Pſalme. Sith it is ſo, let vs not thinke it
ſtrãuge that Moſes threatneth the people here, Pſal.90.3. that they ſhall ſoone be rooted out.

And to the ſame purpoſe, (that is to ſay, for a further declaration thereof) ſerueth this alſo which he addeth: namely, *When ye ſhall haue begotten children, yea euen a two or three deſcentes: if ſuperſtition doe then raigne among you, thy God can roote thee out.* Hereby Moſes ſheweth, that long poſſeſſion will ſtand vs in no ſtead. For though we beare our ſelues on hand, that it is betweene God and vs, as it is betweene man and man, yet it wil not preuaile. If a man haue bin a long time in authoritie & eſtimation, ſo as he be wel friended or of great kinred and aliance: he beares himſelfe on hand that hee ſhall neuer bee put from it. But we ſee how the world paſſeth away, and ſmall occaſions will ſerue to ouerthrow euen them that are mounted higheſt. And therefore
the Prophetes vpbraide them with their pride, Eſa.28.1.2. which glorie in their owne credit and authoritie, ſaying vnto them: ye beare your ſelues in hand that ye bee ſo faſt ſetled, as ye can neuer be ſhaken downe: and yet if God doe but blowe vppon you, by and by you bee gone in the turning of a hand. Now according hereunto it is ſaide here, that if we thinke to claime any title againſt God by preſcription (as they terme it,) that is to wit,

bicauſe wee haue poſſeſſed his benefites a long time, imagining that we can neuer bee diſſeaſed or diſpoſſeſſed of them, but that they muſt continue ſtill in the ſame ſtate, not onely to vs, but alſo to our children, euen to the third & fourth generation: both they and wee ſhall for all that bee bereft of them, and God will withdrawe his hand which he had erſt ſtretched out to doe vs good. So then let vs mark, that whenſoeuer God ſhall haue bin patient towardes vs, it is not to be ſaide that he hath forgotten our tranſgreſſions: but his bearing with them, is for that it is not yet conuenient time to puniſh them. Therefore let vs not truſt to that: but let vs alwayes beare in minde howe it is ſaid here, that if wee ſerue not God, we ſhal ſoone be cut off. Although it pleaſe him to wink at things, and to tarie a time for vs: yet ſhall his wrath come ſuddeinly vppon vs, though it ſeeme not ſo to vs. And when we ſhall ſay, all is whiſt and ſtill, imagining our ſelues to be ſafe and ſure: then muſt we be ouerwhelmed by his hand. Let vs conſider this, that wee may walke warely and keepe good watch, and not tarie till the fire be kindled.

1.Theſ.5.3.

And for ẏ ſame cauſe is this ſaying ſet downe: *Thy God is a conſuming fire and a ielous God.* When Moſes ſpeaketh after that maner, ſpecially when he calleth him a ielous God: he ſheweth that God cannot abide that men ſhould mocke him and deſpiſe him, but that he will maintaine his owne honour, as good reaſon is that he ſhould: and in ſo doing he ſheweth vs how dreadfull his wrath is. Behold then, here are two points which we muſt mark for a concluſion. Not ẏ we can lay them forth at length as at this time: but that it ſhall ſuffice to haue ſome foretaſte of them. Let vs marke then that the cauſe why God vttereth himſelf vnto vs, is ẏ hauing once knowē his goodnes, & that he hath choſen vs & called vs by his word: we ſhould couet nothing but to be quietly gouerned by him, and acknowledge ẏ it is he to whom al honour & praiſe belongeth, & therevpon apply our whole indeuours to the glorifying of his holy name. That (ſay I) is the end why our Lord hath once called vs to his knowledge, and why he calleth vpon vs daily, and exhorteth vs ſtill to come vnto him. But yet let vs conſider therewithall, that if wee doe not ſerue and glorifie him as he deſerueth, and as wee bee bounde: wee ſhall feele him a conſuming fire: that is to ſay, wee ſhall feele that it is no dalying with ſuch a Maiſter: not that this is ſaide to make Gods Maieſtie terrible vnto vs, ſo as wee ſhoulde bee afrayde to come at him: but rather that wee ſhall not bee a whit diſmaied, if we take him for our Father. But if wee will not behaue our ſelues as children towardes him, but continue vnamendable: he will lay away the perſon of a Father, and ſhewe himſelfe to bee our iudge: and that, not ſuch a iudge as needeth to make long inquirie, & to call the hangman to put his iudgementes in execution: but if he do but caſt forth the fire of his ſpirit, or but his breath, by and by the fyre is kindled as ſayeth the Prophet Eſay, ſo as wee muſt needes bee conſumed by it. So then, if wee will not haue the Maieſtie of our God terrible vnto vs, but rather that wee may goe vnto him: let vs looke that wee glorifie him in all our life, and not giue him cauſe to kindle his wrath againſt vs, nor prouoke him vnto ielouſie. For then doeth he tell vs that he will prouoke vs to ielouſie likewiſe, by caſting vs frō him & by taking another people in our place. Wherfore let vs looke that wee perſiſt in the vocation whereunto he hath called vs, and that wee kindle not his vengeance againſt vs. And ſeeing he hath once vttered his goodneſſe and manifeſted himſelfe vnto vs in our Lord Ieſus Chriſt: let vs not doubt but that he on his ſide will continue to make vs feele the ſame ſtill, if wee on our ſide continue in glorifying him.

Eſa.5.25.

Deut.32.21.
Rom.10.19.

Now let vs kneel down before ẏ maieſtie of our good God with acknowledgement of our faults, praying him to make vs feele them better than we haue done, ſo as wee may bee ſorie for them and depart from them by the power of his holy ſpirit. And ſo let vs all ſay, Almightie God heauenly father, &c.

On Munday the iij. of Iune. 1555.

The xxvj. Sermon which is the eight vpon the fourth Chapter.

27 And the Lorde God ſhall ſcatter you among the Heathen, and ye ſhall remaine fewe in nomber among the Nations whither the Lord will bring you.

28 And there ye ſhall ſerue gods which are the worke of mans hand, wood & ſtone, which neither ſee nor heare, eate nor ſmell.

29 And there thou ſhalt ſeeke the Lorde thy God, and thou ſhalt finde him if thou ſeeke him with all thy heart and with all thy ſoule.

30 And when thou art in tribulation and all theſe thinges are come vpon thee: in the end thou ſhalt returne vnto the Lord thy God and obey his voyce.

31 For the Lord thy God is a merciful God: he will not forſake thee, nor deſtroy thee, nor forget the Couenant of thy fathers which he ſware to them.

WEe haue ſaide heretofore, that Gods vſing of the ſimilitude of fire, is not to diſmay vs in ſuch ſort as we ſhould not come vnto him: but contrariwiſe to make vs come to him with reuerence. For what ſhoulde it boote men to bee ſtriken in ſuch terrour, as ſhoulde make them ſhrinke away from GOD, and loth to haue any thing to do with him? Againe we know that our Ezec.18.23. Lorde hath not any other marke or intent, than to winne vs to him and to drawe vs to ſaluation. Nowe the onely meane thereof, is to goe right foorth vnto him, and to bee ioyned vnto him. Wherfore let vs beare well in minde this leſſon, that Gods intent is not to ſcare vs in ſuch wiſe, as we ſhould ſhun him: and that is the thing which we haue to gather at this time vpon that which is rehearſed here. For the threate that Moſes giueth here, is hard: but yet it ſerueth to bring the people backe to God. *If thou diſobey the voyce of the Lord thy God* (ſaieth he,) *thou ſhalt bee ſcattered.* Flatter not thy ſelfe wͭ his chooſing of thee from among all other Nations to bee his inheritance, nor with his giuing of thee this lande in poſſeſſion: for he can well ynough bereaue thee of all theſe benefites. Yet notwithſtanding, hee addeth that if God ſee repentance in his people, after he hath chaſtiſed them: he will bring them againe & deale fauourably with them, ſo as they ſhall feele him to bee a mercifull God, and ſuch a one as powreth not out his rigor with extremitie vpon offenders, when he ſeeth that they bee not vtterly paſt amendment. What is to be done then? Firſt of all, when wee heare this ſentence which God gaue in olde time vppon his people: let vs learne to beware that wee abuſe not his goodneſſe. Let vs goe to him with all humilitie while he allureth vs by gentleneſſe, as the Apo- He.12.18.22. ſtle declareth in the Epiſtle to the Hebrewes. For there he ſaieth that wee bee not come to Mount Sinay where there was nothing but flaſhes of Lightening, and Thundercraks: and where the people were ſo amazed, as they looked for preſent death. What remaineth then? Behold (ſaith he,) God calleth vs by his Goſpell, to the intent wee ſhould bee fellowes with the Angels, & with the ſpirits of the faithful, and that we ſhould bee verie Citizens of his kingdome. Seeing it is ſo (ſaieth he:) let vs enter into the heauenly Ieruſalem, for our God is a conſuming fire. It ſhould ſeeme at the firſt ſight that there is ſome contrarietie in theſe two ſayings, That wee ſhould come boldly and after an aſſured maner to our God: and alſo that he ſhould bee a conſuming fire. But both theſe agree verie well togither. For firſt the Apoſtle ſheweth that wee ought not to be ſo afraide of the Maieſtie of our God, as that wee ſhould ſhunne him, but rather conſider that there is nothing in him but gentleneſſe. But yet therewithall wee muſt knowe alſo, that wee muſt worſhip him vnfainedly: or elſe wee muſt learne that he can well reuenge himſelfe of ſuch as ſhal haue abuſed his grace, and of ſuch as ſhall haue held ſcorne of it. Therefore let vs receiue Gods goodneſſe when it is offered vs, & that with ſuch reuerence and lowlineſſe, as wee prouoke him not to wrath againſt vs, ne make him to arme himſelfe as he doeth againſt the deſpiſers of his grace.

But nowe let vs come to that which Moſes ſaieth here. *The Lord thy God* (ſaieth he) *will ſcatter thee among the Heathen, and there thou ſhalt bee fewe in nomber, and thou ſhalt ſerue ſtraunge Gods that are made with mans hand.* Here Moſes ſetteth Gods curſes againſt all the benefites that he had promiſed to his people. It was a ſingular benefite that the people were gathered into one bodie, that they had a land alone by themſelues, that they were ſettled quietly there, and that euerie man had a houſe of his owne. But here he ſaieth that they ſhall be driuē out of it. The firſt threat then betokeneth that the people of the Iewes ſhall bee thruſt out of the land that God had giuen them. And let vs mark herewithall, that the bringing of the people into that lande, was not onely to the intent they ſhould liue at their eaſe and in reſt: but to the intent they ſhould alſo be ſanctified vnto God. The Land of Chanaan was as a mirror of the heauenly life, ſo that by dwelling there ẏ people were aſſured that they were the children of God: and therefore this threate that they ſhould be driuen out among the heathen Nations, was not to bee eſteemed lightly. Alſo it is ſaid *that there ſhall bee a ſmall nomber left of them.* But we knowe that among other things, God had promiſed Abraham to multiplie his ſeede as the Starres of the skie, and as the ſande Gen.15.5.& 22.17. of the Sea. It is ſaid here that they ſhall be fewe in nomber: yea, and wee ſee they had bin euen as Sodom and Gomorrhe, ſo as they had periſhed euerichone, if God had not vouchſafed to reſerue ſome little ſeede to himſelfe, as is ſaid in the Prophet Eſay. Eſa.1.9. Laſtly it is ſaid *that they ſhall ſerue ſtraunge goddes which are made with mans hand.* This is the grieuouſeſt puniſhment of all, that the Iewes which had Gods Lawe, ſhould neuertheleſſe bee ſubiect to ſuch tyrannie, as to bee faine to worſhip the idoles of the Heathen, ſo as they ſhould haue no Religion among them but ſuch as ſhould defile them, and that all their toyling of themſelues ſhould bee but to their greater condemnation. Thus wee ſee in effect what this text comprehendeth. Now remaineth that we apply it to our inſtruction.

Firſt therefore let vs learne to vſe well the benefites that God beſtoweth vpon vs, and to ſubmit our ſelues vnto him ſeeing he ſheweth himſelfe ſo friendly and louing towardes vs, aſſuring our ſelues that he can well take away the things that he hath giuen vs. Not that wee muſt bee afraide that God will not continue his goodneſſe ſtill towardes vs, yea and alſo increaſe it if we on our ſide walke aright, and continue in the poſſeſſion of ẏ things that he hath put into our hands: but that ſuch as deſpiſe God, ſhal feele that he is not bound to them, nor vnable to pluck ẏ things out of their fiſtes which he had giuen them. Let vs therefore poſſeſſe Gods benefits in feare and carefulneſſe. This is the thing in effect, which we haue to gather vppon the ſaid ſaying of Moſes. True it is, that wee haue not nowe adayes a land of Chanaan, ſo as Gods Church ſhould be ſeparated into ſome one countrie, where it pleaſeth him to haue his name called vppon : but yet notwithſtanding if wee haue a place where wee may ſerue him vncorruptly, hee graunteth vs a ſpeciall grace, and wee ought to ſet great ſtore by it. And if wee know not that: we ſhall feele that Moſes hath not ſayd in vaine, that we ſhall become lyke other nations. How many nations ſee wee in theſe dayes, that inioye the lyke benefite as GOD hath beſtowed vppon vs? Nay contrariwiſe, they ÿ haue any taſt of the Goſpell, doe languiſhe among the enemies of the faith, and are there as ſheepe in the woolues mouth, wandering vp and down as in a wilderneſſe, while in the meane time our God keepeth vs as in his flocke. Seeing then that wee haue ſuch an aduantage : is it not reaſon that wee ſhoulde ſtreyne our ſelues to ſerue God, and that wee ſhould liue peaſeably vnder his hand, ſeeing hee doth vs the honor to receiue vs, as in deede it is he that gouerneth vs, and the thing is as apparant as any thing may be? Now then if wee will needes bee ouerluſtie, the threate that was vttered in olde time againſt the Iewes will light vppon our heades. And as it is ſayde here that they ſhall bee fewe in number: ſo although GOD haue gathered a greate ſorte of vs together, hee can well enough diminiſhe our number, if wee misbehaue our ſelues: and in the end, ÿ thing that is moſt of all to bee feared will come vpon vs, that is to wit, ÿ we ſhall ſerue ſtraunge Gods. And in deede if we cannot finde in our heartes to beare Gods yoke, but are loth to be ſubiect vnto him: is it not reaſon that wee ſhould be vnder a cleane contrarie gouernment, that is to wit, that we ſhould be bereft of the true and pure religion, and be plunged in idolatrie? Eze.20.11,13 We heare what hee ſayth by his prophet Ezechiel. For hauing blamed ÿ Iewes for their vnthankfulneſſe, he addeth ÿ his deliuering of thé into ÿ handes of tyrants, is rightfull. I haue giué them (ſayth he) a good & holy lawe, yea euen ẘ promis, ÿ if they walked in it, they ſhould finde lyfe and welfare therein: and I cannot tel what I might haue done more for them. What a thing is it, that God doth vs the honor to rule vs, and to take the paine to guide vs all our lyfe long? Againe, ſeeing he addeth a promiſe, that his teaching of vs is for our welfare: if we will not yeeld our ſelues teachable vnto him, but ſhake off his yoke lyke wood beaſtes: is it not reaſon that we ſhould be caſt into moſt vile ſlauerie, ſeeing we cánot abide ſuch a maſter as our God, ſpecially ſith he deſireth not to rule vs otherwiſe than to our welfare? [yes, and therefore] the creatures, yea and euen the diuell himſelfe in the end muſt reigne ouer vs. For that is the thing which Ezechiel meaneth by the Tyrannie of Babylon.

For there (ſayth he) they ſhall haue lawes giuen thé for their own tooth, and ſuch lawes as they can finde in their heartes to keepe: but they ſhall not liue by them. When they haue toyled themſelues to the vttermoſt, and payde impoſtes and tributes to the infidels : yet ſhall they bee faine to ſerue their idols too, ſo as they ſhall defile and beray themſelues with all ſuperſtitions. And what ſhal be their rewarde? Euerlaſting death. That is the payment of all ſuch as cannot finde in their heartes to ſerue God quietly, and to keepe his law and his word. But to the intent wee may not thinke that this ſerued but for that one time: Moſes ſheweth that the lyke ſhould befall to all ſuch as misbehaue themſelues and withdrawe themſelues from the Church. And this vengeance of God hath bin accompliſhed vppon the greater parte of the world, as we ſee already. For whence came the helliſh confuſion of poperie? Euen of gods iuſt puniſhment for the rebelliouſneſſe of the world, becauſe men were hardharted and would not ſtoope. For when God cauſed his Goſpel to be publiſhed: then was the trumpet ſounded, to the end that all men both great and ſmall ſhould haue bin brought vnto him. But we ſee what befel on mens behalf. They would in no wiſe ſtoop: they were very loth to doe that. And not that onely, but alſo ſome defied God openly when hee would haue brought them to his lure: and otherſom made countenáce of obediéce through hipocriſie, but it laſted not: for they were vnconſtant and fled touch anon after. Therefore it behoued him to puniſhe ſuch ſpiteful wickedneſſe, and ſo he did. Becauſe they would not obey the trueth: therefore did lying get the maiſterie of them. 2.Theſ.2.11 God gaue Satan the bridle, ſo as his errors wrought effectually, in beſotting ſuch as had wilfully ſhut their eyes, againſt the doctrine of ſaluation when it was offered them. Now then ſith we ſee that God offereth vs great good nowadayes in gathering vs into his flocke, and in giuing vs his worde whereby we haue life and ſaluation: let vs learne to inioy ſo greate a benefite. For God mocketh vs not when hee telleth vs that he is our father and Sauiour. Hee taketh not the thinges with the one hand which he gaue vs with the other. Onely let vs be contented to continue ſtill in the poſſeſſion of his grace.

But yet beſides this, let vs ſtand in feare of this horrible curſe of ſeruing ſtraunge Gods, and of being bereft of the pure religion, for refuſing to make our commoditie of the honor and priuiledge that God giueth vs in drawing vs to him, and in ſhewing vs that hee is willing to reigne among vs. And Moſes ſpeaketh here expreſly of the vanitie of idols, to the ende that the people may bee the better touched therewith. For the wretched Paynims in worſhipping a peece of woodde or ſtone, could not conceiue what an abhomination it is to worſhip a dead thing. But they that knew the liuing God, euen the GOD that giueth lyfe to all thinges, ought better to perceiue that it is againſt nature, yea and a deteſtable thing, to worſhip a puppet ſo, whether it were made of woodde, or caſt of mettall either golde or ſiluer. For they bee all of them corruptible creatures: and without GOD there is no lyfe, without his power there is no mouing.

Act.17,28. So then Moſes hath ſet downe theſe circumſtances, to ÿ end that the people might knowe that they ſhoulde not be puniſhed lightly, but that in diſobeying God and in refuſing to keepe themſelues holy vnto him: they ſhoulde defile themſelues. And it is good reaſon that when God hath ſhed foorth his grace vppon vs, wee ſhould bee puniſhed the more grieuouſly, if wee cannot profite our ſelues by it. The more then yͤ euery of vs hath made proceedinges in Gods grace: the more earneſt let him be to loue him and ſerue him: vnleſſe we will haue him on the contrary part, to vſe the extreme rigor that is ſpoken of here.

Howbeit herewithall (as I haue touched already) Moſes ſheweth that God will not ſo puniſhe his people as to leaue them in deſpayre: but that hee intendeth a cleane contrary ende, that is to wit, to bring them to repentance. And ſurely this is a very notable place. For although God thunder againſt vs, ſo as to our ſeeming we may iudge by all lykelyhood, that he is minded to make cleane riddance of vs without any mercie: yet notwithſtanding hee ſeeketh our ſaluation by that meanes, and giueth vs alwayes ſpace of repentance: at leaſtwiſe ſo long as his word is preached vnto vs. For ſomtimes the gate is ſhut vp, and we muſt euer beare in minde how the prophet Eſay ſayth, Eſa.55.6. Seeke the Lorde while hee may be found. And againe in another Eſa.49.8. place correſpondent vnto this, he ſayth, I haue heard thee in conuenient time, I haue ſuccored thee in the day of ſaluation. Hereby it is ſhewed vs, that there is ſtill ſpace of repentaunce, and the gate is ſtill open for vs to come vnto God, ſo long as hee giueth vs his worde. But if wee paſſe not to enter while GOD giueth vs the meane: wee ſhall bee bereft of his worde, and then may wee well ſeeke after him, howbeit but as blinde folkes that grope in the darke: for the Lorde will haue ſhut vs out from him. But here Moſes teacheth, that although God ſeeme vnmeaſurably ſharpe in chaſtiſing his children: yet notwithſtanding he giueth them ſpace of repentance, and ceaſeth not to haue a care of their ſaluation. For hee ſayth, *When thou art ſo ſcattered, if thou ſeeke thy God: thou ſhalt finde him: yea verily, if thou ſeeke him with all thy heart and with all thy ſoule.* Now, that wee may the better vnderſtand the thinges that are conteyned here: let vs note firſt of all, that when men are once gone away vnto wickedneſſe, it is very hard to fetch them backe againe, vnleſſe they bee ſubdewed by maine force. And that ment Moſes to expreſſe in ſaying, *Then ſhalt thou ſeeke the Lord thy God.* When is this *then*? not when the people are ful fed, nor when they haue ſtore of al Gods benefites: for wee ſhall ſee in the ſong, how the people are lykened to ouerpampered horſes, which are kicking and wincing againſt their Deut.32.15. maſters, and will not ſuffer thẽſelues to be handled. Moſes then meaneth that the people ſhould be faine to bee reformed after a forcible manner: for (as I ſayd afore) that is our nature. If wee be once gone aſtray, GOD ſhall neuer get vs home againe, till hee haue throughly tamed vs. True it is that hee coulde goe another way to worke, and it is not for that he is vnable to reclayme vs by his holy ſpirite, if hee liſted: but hee intendeth to ſhewe vs what our lewdeneſſe is, and that is the cauſe why he vſeth theſe inferiour meanes. This is the firſt poynt which we haue to marke vppon this place.

And hereunto aunſwereth that which is written in the ſecond of Oſee: for there our Lorde Oſee.2.5. complayneth of the Iewes, ſaying that they bee lyke a harlot that hath forſaken her husband, and giuen ouer her ſelfe to all commers, bearing her ſelfe in hand that ſhe is beſt at eaſe when ſhe may receiue rewardes, and bee catching and ſnatching on all ſides: ſo that (to her ſeeming) if ſhee were an honeſt wife, ſhe ſhould bee faine to be contented with a little, whereas now being a ſtrumpet, ſhee eateth of the deyntieſt morſels, and hath ſtore of preſentes brought her. God therefore ſayth that the Iewes were in the ſame taking, when they were in loue with their idols, and in the meane time fathered all their good thinges vppon them. What ſhall I doe now, ſayth the Lorde? When yee ſay, it is our idols that giue vs meate and drinke: ye be vnthankefull vnto mee: for yee haue receiued all theſe thinges at my hand. Now therefore I muſt be faine to bereaue you of them. I will take away the bread and wine wherewith yee haue bin ſuſteined, and your wool and flaxe & all other thinges. I will bring you out (ſayth he) into the wilderneſſe, I will make you to pine away there, yee ſhall be lyke a wretched harlot, which after ſhe hath played the naughtipacke, and hath runne gadding here and there, and in the ende hath bin driuen to eate her owne dung and filth, is reiected of all men, and dyeth for hunger and thirſt, not hauing wherewith to couer her ſhame. Thus will I handle you (ſayth he:) and then ſhall ye finde that there is nothing better than to ſticke to me. Yee ſhal ſay, Alas where is my husband that dealt ſo gently with me? I muſt be faine to returne to him. By this ſimilitude the prophet doth vs to vnderſtand, yͭ when men giue themſelues to lewdnes, and doe not ſerue and honor GOD, after he hath giuen them his worde: they muſt bee reformed by force. And why? For as long as they liue at their eaſe, they forget themſelues, they flatter themſelues, they be proude, and thinke they may euen deſpiſe God. For when God pincheth vs not, nor maketh vs to feele his ſtrong hand: we take occaſion thereat to ſooth our ſelues in our vices, ſo that wee haue neede (as I ſaid afore) to be reformed by Gods ſtriking vppon vs with maine blowes. For if hee dally with vs, it will breede our deſtruction and decay. And ſurely there is not a notabler poynt than this: For wee thinke it ſtraunge, that God ſhould vſe ſo ſundry ſortes of rigor in this world: but in the meane while wee conſider not the hardneſſe of mens heartes. For although Gods curſes haue their full ſcope, ſo as we ſee warres on the one ſide and famine on the other, and euery man cryes out alas: yet notwithſtanding, who is hee that looketh to the hand that ſmiteth? Howe many returne to GOD for all that? doth it not rather ſeeme that ſinners haue conſpyconſpired to reſiſt God ſtill? Nowe ſeeing it is ſo, let vs marke that Gods ſhewing of himſelfe ſo rigorous,is not without cauſe, and let vs impute it to our owne ſelues. Then if any of vs bee afflicted alone, or all of vs in common, ſo as we bee ſmitten with Gods ſcourges: let vs vnderſtande that wee haue neede of it, and that it ſerueth to ſtoppe our mouthes, that we grudge not againſt God, aſſuring our ſelues that his nipping of vs after that faſhion is not cauſeleſſe.

Beſides this,let vs alſo learne to comfort our ſelues ſith wee ſee the ende that God aymeth at. For like as hee ſheweth himſelfe rough and ſharpe: ſo will he alſo haue vs to taſt of his loue and care towardes vs: that is to wit, that foraſmuch as we haue forgotten him & turned our backes to him,& not ſought to him, but rather indeuored to flee from him:his intent is to drawe vs to him by that meanes,and to induce vs to ſeeke him againe. Ye ſee then that the true comfort of wretched ſinners when God ſcourgeth them, is to conſider thus with them ſelues: yet GOD hath pitie vppon vs: in deede wee remembered not him: but yet for all that, hee hath not forgotten vs, and that doeth hee ſhewe by the effect. Neuertheleſſe, the cheefeſt [comfort] is in this that Moſes addeth, namely, *that they ſhall finde God if they ſeeke him.* For if wee goe to ſeeke God, being onely in diſtreſſe and trouble: can wee haue any courage to come vnto him? True it is that when the wretched vnbeleeuers are diſtreſſed,they toyle themſelues and doe all that they can to ſeeke God. We ſee that euen in the Popedome,when men are in ſorrowe and haue their ſinnes laide afore them, [their ſaying is,] goe to,let vs ſee if wee can pacifie God. But as for them,they haue no warrant that God will receiue them, neither truſt they to his free promiſes, neither pray they in the name of our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt. They can well ſpeake of repentaunce: but (to their owne ſeeming) God ſhould receiue them for their owne worthineſſe, and not otherwiſe. And ſo wee ſee they come thither as it were doubting: for it is certaine that ſuch repentance is ful of hipocriſie. For why? They be not ſure of Gods goodneſſe: nay they neuer wiſt what it ment. But as for vs, let vs put the thing in vre which is ſayd in the pſalme, Lord, thy mercy is euer ready in thee. Hereby it is ſhewed vs that we can neuer returne vnto God,to ſubmit our ſelues vnto him: vnleſſe wee taſte his mercie, that wee may truſt to it and reſt vppon it. That is the cauſe why I tolde you that wee muſt marke the text where Moſes ſayth, *If thou ſeeke the Lorde thy God, thou ſhalt finde him.* Will wee then be prouoked to repentance when we haue ſinned? Let vs hearken to the promiſes that GOD hath giuen vs. For there hee aſſureth vs that as ſoone as wee open our mouth to pray, he will ſtretch out his hand to ſuccour vs at our neede: yea and that he will preuent vs, ſo as wee neede not diſtruſt him that hee will not receiue vs to mercy, ſeeing we haue ſuch a warrant.

Pſal.86.5.

Pſal.32.5.& 50.15.and 145.19.
Eſa.65.23.

Howbeit foraſmuch as men would alwayes pacify God with countenances and ceremonies: Moſes addeth purpoſely, *that wee muſt ſeeke him with heart and with ſoule.* I ſayd that men are euer deſirous to content God with trifling thinges: and wee ſee it too much. For when they ſpeake of repentance or penaunce in poperie: what meane they by that worde, but that men muſt vſe much liplabour, and make a ſorte of Apes toyes? But the heart muſt abide ſtil locked vp, and men muſt in no wiſe rid themſelues of their wicked affections, nor clenſe them away. They will alwayes keepe a backe ſhop behinde, and in the meane ſeaſon if they ſhewe ſome good outward ſigne, they thinke it is enough, and that God ought not to preſſe them any further. They be dubble hearted: and therfore they woulde haue God to receiue but the one halfe of that which he requireth: and the other halfe they woulde pay him as it were in way of raunſome. But as for vs, let vs on our ſide learne to vnderſtand, that to finde him, and to be receiued of him, wee muſt ſeeke him with al our heart, and with all our ſoule. Not that wee can come vnto him with ſuch perfection as were to bee wiſhed: but yet muſt we haue this ſoundneſſe with vs, that wee ſeeke no lurkingholes, but rather examine our ſinnes throughly, and when wee haue condemned them, ſeeke the remedie with ſighing and groning, that it may pleaſe our God to reclayme vs to him, ſo as wee condemning our owne ſinnes, may deſire nothing ſo much as to be reformed according to his righteouſneſſe. Thus yee ſee what it is to ſeeke God with all our heart and with all our ſoule. And when wee go ſo to worke, let vs not thinke that wee ſhall bee diſappointed of the promiſe which hee made to the fathers of olde time. And ſo yee ſee that the thing which we haue to marke vppon this place is that foraſmuch as wee come not to God of our owne good wil, we are faine to be driuen to it by force, and that is the cauſe of the afflictions that God ſendeth vs.

Furthermore we muſt alſo cõſider his fatherly goodnes in ſtriking vs: for he doth it to bring vs home againe to him by that meane. And how come we thither? It would behoue vs to be ſtripped ſtarke naked out of all ſelftruſt,and to be vtterly caſt downe in our ſelues: but wee cannot away with yͤ, becauſe our nature driueth vs yͤ clean contrary way. But yet for al yͤ, we ſee we haue wherwith to cõfort vs in our afflictions. For our Lorde ſeeketh not our deſtruction, but bringeth vs home againe to himſelfe: and yͤ not doubtfully: but aſſuredly warranting vs that if wee come vnto him, it ſhall not be in vaine, neither ſhall we be diſappointed. Why? For if wee ſeeke him, wee ſhall finde him. But therewithall let vs looke well to it, that there be no feining nor dubbleneſſe in vs: for God cannot away with ſuch hipocriſie.

1.Pet.4.12.
Ezech.18.23

And now it is immediatly ſayd, *When theſe aduerſities are come vppon you, yee ſhall returne to your GOD and obey his voyce. And becauſe the Lorde is mercifull, hee will not forget you nor caſte you out of his preſence, nor out of the couenaunt* *of your fathers.* This ſerueth to expreſſe yet better the doctrine which I touched where Moſes ſaide, *When theſe miſeries are come vpon you, then ſhall you ſeeke your God.* For he ſheweth that men play the drunken folke ſo long as God dealeth gently with them: and that they cannot perceiue their ſinnes, except they be mäde to ſmart. *When theſe miſeries haue caught hold of you, thẽ* (ſaith he) &c. By the miſeries ỹ he ſpeaketh of, he meaneth the puniſhments wherewith he had threatened the people before. To be ſhort, God muſt be faine to ſhewe vs his wrath to our faces, and to make vs to feele it: or elſe we conceiue it not. And we ſee it is ſo. For when we be daily told of Gods wrath, we make but a ſport of it, it moues vs not a whit. And why? Becauſe wee be earthly and fleſhly, and therefore God is faine to make vs feele his wrath and vengeance according to our rudeneſſe. Yet notwithſtanding we bee ſtill nice and tender, inſomuch that if wee feele any thing amiſſe in our bodies, and that we haue not our owne deſires: we be by and by vexed & greeued, and by that meanes God amendeth vs. Not that we be humbled at ỹ firſt ſtripe: but we come to it by litle and litle and as it were by degrees, ſo as in the end God maketh his corrections auaylable. And whereas I ſay that God bringeth vs home to him by the chaſtiſements that hee ſendeth vs: that is not generall to all men. Wee ſee that the vnbeleeuers become the frowarder, inſomuch that when God chaſtiſeth them for their ſinnes, they ſtorme againſt him, they gnaſh their teeth, and in the end they fall to deſpaire. But this ſaying concerneth thoſe that are rightly of Gods Church: thoſe when they bee chaſtiſed are willing to returne to God in their aduerſities. Thus ye ſee what Moſes meant to expreſſe in ſaying, *Whẽ theſe miſeries ſhal haue caught hold of thee.* As if he had ſaid, ſo long as your God ſuffreth you to liue in reſt, ſo long as hee ſetteth not your ſinnes before you, ſo long as he calleth you not to a reckoning: you thinke your ſelues out of daunger, and that no man can hurt you, and (which worſe is) your faults neuer come to your remembraunces. But if yee be once pinched with aduerſitie, then will yee cling to your God. Hereby wee be warned againe, to beare the corrections patiently which God ſendeth vs: for they doe vs good: whereas proſperitie blindeth vs and breedeth our deſtruction. True it is ỹ gods gentle handling of vs, ought not to cauſe vs to deſpiſe him nor to neglect him. Whẽ God ſheweth himſelfe louing towards vs, ſurely wee ought to be the more inclined thereby to loue him. But what? Our dragging cleane backward, bewrayeth that proſperitie is not good for vs. And therefore our Lorde muſt be faine to ſcourge vs. Wherefore let vs learne not to bee grieued out of meaſure when God beateth vs ſo with his roddes: but to beare his ſtripes meekely, foraſmuch as wee ſee that the ende thereof is to our welfare according as it is ſayd here, *when thou art pinched with aduerſitie.* Yea and if our Lord hauing ſmitten vs after one ſorte doe dubble his ſtripes: let vs not murmure againſt him as we be inclined to doe. For [ſometimes] they that haue bin patient in ſome one aduerſitie, fall to ſtorming and chafing againſt God whẽ it commeth to the ſecond or the third. But wee muſt not doe ſo. For on the contrarie part, wee ſee our Lorde withdraweth not his hand at the firſt as ſoone as he hath chaſtiſed vs once: and wee abide by it ſtill. In deede when wee feele any aduerſitie, we will ſet a good face vppon it at the firſt, and ſay, very well, ſeeing that God chaſtiſeth mee, I muſt returne vnto him. But let him turne his hãd on the other ſide: and we fal to fretting and chafing by and by. Therefore we muſt be chaſtiſed throughly: that is to ſay, God muſt let vs alone in diſtreſſe, & aduerſitie muſt ſo ouermaiſter vs, as we may be throughly tamed, & it may ſo ſtick by our ribs, that when he ſhall haue withdrawen his hand, we may remember it al our lyfe after. Then let vs learne that wee muſt be patient in our aduerſities, not onely for a day or twayne, or for ſome affection: but ſo as we holde out quietly vnder the hand of our God, euen when he dubleth and increaſeth his ſtripes. That is the effect of the thing which we haue to marke.

Now when Moſes ſayth, *The Lord thy God is mercifull, and therefore hee will not forſake thee nor caſt thee of:* he bringeth back the people to the nature of God that they might hope to be receiued to mercie, if they repented them of their ſinnes. And it is another very notable poynt. In deede I haue touched it heretofore: neuertheleſſe, Moſes maketh a larger declaratiõ thereof, and not without cauſe. For lyke as hee had earſt ſayde that GOD is a fire which conſumeth all thinges: ſo it behoued him to ſhewe on the contrarie part, that Gods nature is louing and gentle, and that he is ready to forgiue the faultes of ſuch as acknowledge them. And that alſo is the cauſe why God telleth vs ſo often of his mercie. But whatſoeuer bee ſayd to vs concerning his goodneſſe: yet can we not truſt in him as wee ought to doe. There is not any thing harder to vs than to aſſure our ſelues of the goodneſſe and fatherly loue of our God. It is a great thing, that whẽ God ſhal haue auowed a hundred thowſand times, ỹ he loueth vs & wil be fauorable to vs: yet we continue ſtill in a wauering, and ſtand diſputing vppon the matter, & feede our owne diſtruſtfulneſſe, as though we would needes diſable the record ỹ God giueth vs of his goodneſſe. Now then, it is not more than needeth, when Moſes telleth vs that God of his owne nature is pitifull. It is a propertie ỹ is euermore attributed vnto him, and that not onely in this text, but alſo in other places as we ſhal ſee hereafter: Deut.5.10. and the Scripture is full of the ſame doctrine. And why? Becauſe that elſe it were not poſſible to aſſure men, Pſa.145.8.9 foraſmuch as they be ſo giuen to vnbeliefe, as they ſtill martyr themſelues, and are alwayes in perplexitie and vnquietneſſe, bearing themſelues in hand that God will neuer be at one ẘ them. True it is ỹ (as I haue ſayd already) we be but too hardy in doing euil: but whẽ we ſhould aſſure our ſelues ỹ God wil haue pittie vpon vs, & when we ſhould ſeeke him: then doth our vnbeliefe bewray it ſelfe. Not without cauſe therefore doth Moſes ſay here ỹ God is mercifull, to the end that the people might conceiue Gods nature and take holde of it, which is altogether contrarie to their owne, as God himſelfe auoweth in other places. Eſa.45.8. My thoughtes (ſayth hee by his prophet Eſay) are not lyke yours. For if a man bee offended, although the wrong that is done him bee but ſmall: yet is there no meanes to pacify him, there will alwayes remain ſome roote of diſpleaſure in his heart. Now we imagine God to be lyke our ſelues, & we meaſure Eſa.45.9. him by our owne yard. For this cauſe hee proteſteth thus: looke how farre heauen is from the earth, ſo farre are my thoughts from yours. And therefore aſſure your ſelues I ſeeke nothing elſe but that all ſuch as haue offended mee ſhould be at one with me. Yea & although your miſdeedes be neuer ſo greiuous & heinous: Yet ſo it is ẏ I am ready to forget them out of hand. So then let vs hearken to ẏ textes of holy ſcripture, where God telleth vs that he is ſlowe to wrath, patient, and ready to forgiue the faultes that are committed againſt him. Let vs beare this in minde, that it may bee as a foundation for vs to builde vpon, when the caſe concerneth the forſaking of our ſins, that we ſhould be ſorie for them, and obtain the mercie that God hath promiſed vs. Thus much concerning that poynt.

But it were not enough for vs to knowe Gods nature, except wee had his promiſe, and that hee ſhewed vs his will there. For the Papiſtes, the Turkes, and the Paynims alſo can well enough ſay (as they haue alwayes ſayde) that God is mercifull: but they cannot ſeeke it to taſte thereof. And the reaſon is, becauſe they doe not ſticke and leane to his promiſes. True it is that when they haue once imagined that God is mercifull, they enter into many queſtions. Yea but in deede (ſay they:) what wote I, whether this mercie ſerue for mee or no? And afterward they put Gods mercy into the ballance with their ſinnes, and ſtand as folke diſmaied at it. Then is there a certaine confuſed imagination of Gods mercy in all men: but yet can they not truſt to it, neither can they returne vnto God, with ful perſwaſion that hee will reach them his hand to ſuccor them. And why? for they haue not his promiſes. So much the more therefore doth it ſtand vs in hand, to marke well this text of Moſes when hee addeth: *The Lorde thy God will not forget the couenant of thy fathers which hee ſware to them.* And ſo beſides ẏ knowledge which wee haue that God is mercifull, and will receiue ſinners when they come vnto him: let vs marke well that it behoueth vs alſo to haue his promiſes to reſt vppon, ſo as our comming vnto him may bee becauſe hee calleth and allureth vs, becauſe hee hath ſhewed vs his will, becauſe wee neede not feare that wee ſhall looſe our labor. And why? for wee haue a warrant that GOD will heare vs. But Moſes ſayth expreſly here, *the couenaunt of thy fathers which hee hath ſworne vnto*. And why [hath hee ſworne vnto it?] Becauſe it is not enough for vs to knowe that God hath promiſed to receiue wretched ſinners & to pardon them: except wee knowe alſo that his promiſes are directed ſpecially vnto vs, and can apply them to our vſe.

True it is that his promiſes ſtand not vppon mens doings, neither is it in euery mans power to warrant himſelfe that God will ſhewe him fauour. For doe wee thinke him bound to vs? Vppon what aſſurance ſhall I conceiue in my head, that God wil accept me? That were a diueliſhe preſumption. God then muſt be faine to preuent vs: hee muſt be faine to promiſe vs of his own free goodneſſe, ẏ although we be wretched & miſerable: yet neuertheleſſe he wil haue pitie vpon vs. So then, if we wil obteyne forgiueneſſe of our ſins: we muſt begin at gods promiſes.

But it is not for naught that Moſes ſayth, *the couenaunt of thy fathers*. That is to ſay, the couenaunt that was made with thy fathers, which is as their peculiar inheritaunce. Now then we ſee how Moſeſes meaning is, that to come vnto God, wee muſt not onely conſider that hee hath promiſed to bee mercifull to ſinners: but alſo euery of vs muſt apply it peculiarly to himſelfe, ſo as he can ſay, in deede I am a wretched creature, I am plunged in curſedneſſe, there is nothing but deſpaire for mee. No verily, if thy God ſhould not ſhewe thee mercie. As how? It is to thee that hee ſpeaketh when hee ſayth, Come vnto mee all ye that are weary and ouer- Matt.11.28. loden, and I will refreſhe you. Thou art of that number. Nowe then aſſure thy ſelfe that thy GOD giueth thee his promiſes, to the intent that thou reſting vppon them, mighteſt be ſure of his goodneſſe, that it cannot faile thee. Wherfore let vs not dout but that the promiſes which God hath made to his Church are ours, & that euery of vs ought to apply them particularly to his owne vſe and benefite, ſo as when any man is in perplexitie, that he woteth not what to ſay, hee muſt alwayes come backe to this poynt, how now? hath not thy GOD promiſed that Pſal.145.19 hee will pitie ſuch as call vpon him? Yes in deed: but I knowe not whether I be of that ſort or no. Why? haue I not bin baptized in the name of our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt? Haue I not his holy Supper as a ſecond pledge, whereby hee ſheweth mee that hee receiueth mee into the number of his children? Be thou out of doubte therefore ſeeing thou haſt ſo many records, that thy God will be fauorable to thee, and feare thou not but hee will ſhewe thee mercie. Thus yee ſee the cauſe why Moſes ſpeaketh here expreſly of the couenaunt of the fathers, as it was made with their father Abraham, and to all his ſeede after him: For otherwiſe it woulde not haue booted at all in the time of Moſes. But foraſmuch as GOD had ſayd, I will bee thy GOD to a thowſand generations: his ofſpring is com- Gen.17.7. prehended in it after his deceaſe. And therefore the Iewes ought to haue aſſured thẽſelues by the vertue of the ſame couenaunt, that they ſhoulde bee receiued: ſo as if they repented thẽ of their ſinnes, they ſhoulde alwayes finde the mercie that they had neede of.

And now let vs vnderſtand, that ſeeing God vouchſafed to extend his goodneſſe to the children of thoſe with whome he had made his couenaunt: and that although they were ſlidden backe and vtterly turned away from him, and had quite forſaken him, yet notwithſtanding he ceaſed not to ſhew them mercie. Now ſeeing he ſpeaketh nowadays vnto vs, and the voyce of our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt ſoundeth lowde in calling vs, to reconcile vs to our God, and that the 2.Cor.5.18. 19.20. Eph.2.17. forgiueneſſe of ſinnes is preached vnto vs in his name, and tidings is brought vnto vs that God deſireth to be friendes with vs, and that all warre ſhould be layd aſide betweene him and vs: let vs aſſure our ſelues I ſay, that it is not for vs to bee wilfull and ſtubborne, but that it behooueth vs to ſubmit our ſelues to our God: and therewithall to aſſure our ſelues throughly, that this promiſe of his is not deceitefull. Why? for the couenant is ours, ſo as our God intendeth not that his promiſes ſhall vaniſh into the aire; but that they ſhall bee ſtedfaſt towards vs, ſo as euery of vs may fare the better by them. Thus much cõcerning this ſaying of *the couenant of the fathers.*

But yet herewithall Moſes faileth not to ſhew, that it was not men that did firſt make the couenant with God, but that God did preuent them: and that it is hee, that of his owne free goodneſſe hath bound himſelfe vnto them. And for that cauſe is it ſayd *that God ſware to that couenant:* and both of them are right neceſſarie. For as I haue told you, if wee take not Gods promiſes as peculiar to our ſelues, it is vnpoſſible for vs to be ſo grounded vppon them, as to call vppon him with a ſtedfaſt heart, but wee ſhal bee euer wauering. Therefore wee muſt be fully perſwaded, that God maketh vs partakers of all the benefites that hee promiſed to our aunceſters. And when wee be once at that poynt, we muſt alſo conſider on the otherſide, that it is not for vs to be on the forehand with God, neither doth our Lorde tarie till wee come to ſeeke him: but it is he yͭ hath preuented vs wͭ his mercie. To be ſhort, it is he yͭ hath vouchſafed to take vs for his children: and although we were ſtraungers vnto him, & had not in any wiſe deſerued to haue any acquaintance with him: yet notwithſtãding he hath vouchſafed of his owne accord to lincke himſelfe with vs. It behoueth vs to thinke ſo. For if wee knowe not that Gods promiſes are of free gift: wee will fal to ſeeking of ſome deſerte and worthineſſe in our ſelues, and wee will ſay, that was the meane whereby to come vnto God: he beſtowed ſuch a benefite or gratious gift vppon vs, becauſe wee deſerued it: wee haue gotten ſuch a thing by the meanes of our own vertues. Let vs beware of ſuch fantaſticall imaginations, and let vs not thinke to doe our ſelues any good yͤ way. So then let vs beare in mind, that wheras God hath declared his couenant vnto vs, & calleth it ours: yet notwithſtãding he wil haue vs to know, yͭ his vouchſafing to vtter himſelf vnto vs, & to giue himſelf vnto vs, is of his owne accord without being bound thereto, inſomuch that wee did rather deſerue to be vtterly reiected at his hand. And Moſes thinketh it not enough to ſay ſingly that God made the ſayd couenant: but hee addeth alſo *that hee ſware it:* and not without cauſe doth he ſet that further here. For as I haue declared already heretofore, when GOD ſpeaketh, wee inquire whether the thing be ſo or no. Truely ſuch manner of inquiring is very wicked. But what for that? Our vnbeliefe beareth ſuch ſway with vs, as we cannot ſimply truſt vnto GOD. Therefore doth he ſupply our want, and ſweareth to warrant his worde the better which hee hath giuen vs. If wee beleeue not a man vppon his bare worde, wee doe him wrong. And therefore are mortall men put to their othe, becauſe they bee inclined ouermuch to vanitie. But when God ſweareth at our requeſt, what a thing is that? For ſeing he is the vnchangeable truthe: why ſhould not men truſt him as ſoone as the worde is ſpoken with his mouth? But hereby we ſee how frowarde wee bee, and on the otherſide we ſee alſo how God beareth with vs in humbling himſelf ſo farre as to ſweare for our ſakes, becauſe hee ſeeth that wee would elſe be alwayes vnquiet, and that we ſhoulde ſtill bee tempted to doubt. Therefore vouchſafeth hee to confirme vs by ſwearing, to the intent wee might bee the better aſſured of the hope of our ſaluation, and not doubt any more of his promiſes. Thus much concerning Gods ſwearing.

Now againe Moſes ſheweth after what maner men ought to ſeeke GOD: and hee ſheweth it by deede. Hee had ſayd afore that ſuch as ſeeke God: with all their heart and with all their ſoule, ſhal find him. And now he ſheweth by what meanes men ſhall yeelde good proofe thereof, that is to wit of their true and vnfeined repentance: that is to wit, *by obeying the voyce of God.* For men will make bragges enowe that they beare a good heart to Godward: and we ſee dayly this ſhameleſneſſe, that ſuch as haue not one veine that tendeth to Godward, ceaſe not for all that to proteſt with full mouth, that they loue God, and they beare the worlde in hand that they bee wonderful zealous. But here Moſes bringeth vs backe to the tryall. Wee muſt ſhewe whereby, (ſayth hee,) ſo as it may appeare by our fruites that our ſinnes miſlyke vs in deede, and that we bee deſirous in very deede to ſeeke God, to ſticke vnto him. And howe may that bee done? Euen by obeying his voyce, according as wee knowe alſo that obedience is the thing which God preferreth before all other 1.Sa.15.22. Pſal.50.5.14 ſacrifices. And that is a thing worthie to be wel marked. For Moſes here ſetteth out two things: The one is, that when men bragge of their willingneſſe to ſeeke God, if they ſhewe it not in good earneſt by their whole lyfe, ſo as it may bee knowen by their fruites: a men may well tell them that they lye, and that they doe but mocke with GOD and the worlde when they ſay, wee bee ſorie for our ſinnes. That is the thing which wee haue to marke for one poynt. Therefore let vs try our repentance by the ſaid rule. When we ſeeme to our ſelues to ſeeke God: let vs looke that it bee with liuely repentance, not in feete, hands, or eyes: but in yͤ reformation of all our affectiõs, ſo as they may be giuen ouer all wholy to follow God & his worde. If it be not ſo with vs: all yͭ euer we can ſay of repentance, is but mockery. Marke that for one poynt.

The other is the obeying of Gods voyce. When as hee ſpeaketh of the obeying of Gods voyce: it is to exclude all the fond deuotions of mans owne inuenting. For when men intend to ſerue God well, how goe they to worke? Mee thinkes (ſay they) that ſuch a thing is good: and thereupon they ſet vp goodly gay ſeruices. Moſes therefore excludeth all theſe thinges, in ſaying that we muſt obey the voyce of our God. Wherfore let vs ſee that wee ſubmit our ſelues vnto him. Becauſe wee ſee the world is ſo greatly giuen to inuent fond deuotions: let vs for our part learne to know, that whatſoeuer is of mans deuiſing, is playne deceit, and euen the high way to leade vs to deſtruction: and that the onely way to pleaſe God and to make our lyfe allowable before him, is ſimply to obey his worde, & to ſubmit our ſelues to him, whẽ he prouoketh vs to repentance, aſſuring our ſelues that it is the very meanes alſo whereby we may obteyne ſaluation, though wee haue deſerued to periſhe a hundred thowſand times.

Now let vs kneele downe in the preſence of our good God with acknowledgement of our ſins, praying him to make vs feele them better than we haue done heretofore, yea euen in ſuch wiſe, as hauing condemned our ſelues for them, wee may not forbeare to reſt vppon his promiſes, and to reſorte vnto him, and to pray vnto him, that hee may haue pitie vppon vs, as hee that deſireth not the death of ſinners, but that they ſhould come home againe to him, for aſmuch as hee is ready to admit them to the ſaluation which hee hath promiſed to his children. Wherefore let vs repayre vnto him, euen in the name of our Lord Ieſus Chriſt, and if wee conuert not at the very firſt as ſoone as hee chaſtiſeth vs, let vs pray him to make vs to proceede in true repentaunce from day to day, by forſaking the vice that is in vs, ſo as he may gouerne vs by his holy ſpirit, and the worlde may perceiue that Gods word hath ſuch authoritie ouer vs, as we deſire nothing but to faſhion our ſelues all wholly thereafter. That it may pleaſe him to grant this grace, not onelie to vs, but alſo to all people and nations of the earth, &c.

On Tewſday the iiii. of Iune. 1555.

The xxvii. Sermon, which is the ninth vpon the fourth Chapter.

32 For inquire thou nowe of the daies paſt, which haue beene before thee, ſince the day that God created man vpon the earth, and from the one end of heauen vnto the other, if euer there were done ſo great a thing as this, or if euer the like thing haue beene heard of.

33 Was there euer anie Nation that hath heard the voice of God ſpeaking out of the middes of fire, as thou haſt heard and yet continueſt aliue?

34 Or was there euer anie God, that aſſaied to goe and take him a people from the middes of another people, by temptations, ſignes, and wonders, by warres and ſtrong hand, by ſtretched out arme and great terribleneſſe, as the Lord your God hath done in Egypt before your eies?

35 He hath made thee to ſee them, to the intent thou ſhouldeſt knowe that the Lord is God, and that there is none other but onelie he.

Although that all the thinges that euer God did, ought to ſerue for our learning, & wee knowe not any thing but by auncient ſtories: yet the later that thinges were done, ſo much the better ought they to touch vs. And although wee ought to profit our ſelues by Gods workes when wee beholde them a farre of: yet ought they to moue vs much more, when they touch our ſelues and concerne our owne perſons. If a thing be tolde vs, which wee neuer ſawe: yet ought the ſtorie to ſerue to waken vs. But if wee bee able to beare witneſſe of it our ſelues, ſo as our eyes haue ſeene it, and wee haue not had it by other mens report, but euery of vs is able to auowe it by his owne experience: ought wee not to bee much better and muche more aſſuredly taught by it? In like caſe is it when any of vs ſhall haue ſeene or perceiued any worke of God: for he ought to be touched ſo much the more to the quick. In the ſelfeſame reſpect doth Moſes now ſpeake vnto the people, *Looke about thee, inquire of the auncient tymes, ſee whether thou canſt finde that euer there haue bin any ſuch wonders wrought ſince the creation of the world, as God hath done in thy ſight*. Seeing it is ſo, thine vnthankfulneſſe ſhalbe the more vnexcuſable, if thou acknowledge not ſo great a benefite, by perſwading thy ſelfe fully, that there is none other God than the ſame that hath vttered himſelfe to thee, & hath giuen thee ſo euidẽt and infallible tokens of his maieſtie. Therefore haue a regard to ſerue the God that hath purchaſed thee: for thou canſt not henceforth alledge any cauſe of ignorance. Now by the way we haue to marke, yͭ the intent of Moſes is, to put a difference here betweene yͤ God of Iſrael, & all thoſe that were worſhipped [for Gods] in the world: and not without cauſe. For when men haue forged any God to themſelues, they may well toyle themſelues to ſerue him, but it ſhall turne to their condemnation. Why ſo? Becauſe they rob God of the honor that belongs to him, to giue it to a creature or rather to a ſhadowe. For if wee make idols, they bee not worthy to bee reckoned among Gods creatures. If wee imagine of God after our owne lyking: it is but vanitie and leaſing. So then, when men worſhip the thing that they haue conceiued in their own fãſie: they conuey the glory of yͤ liuing God, not only to creatures, but alſo to that which is nothing at all. 1.Cor.8.4. Therefore it is very expedient for vs to knowe which is the true God, that wee may worſhip him. For euen at that time the world was peruerted, ſo as al men went wãdring in their owne ſuperſtitions. Although God manifeſted himſelfe ſo many wayes: yet notwithſtanding, lyke as the world was blinde and ceaſed not to intangle it ſelfe in all errors: ſo euery man forged idols to himſelfe. True it is, that all men ſayd, wee haue a religion, and our intent is to ſerue God: but yet for all that, there was no ſoundneſſe, there was no vnderſtanding among them. Gen.17.7. Exod.19.6. 1.Pet.2.9. Behold, God gathered his people together, accordingly as he had choſẽ yͤ houſe of Abraham, and according to his ſaying yͭ the ſame ſhould be to him a holy linage and dedicated to his ſeruice. Seeing then that the Iewes were not mingled with the other nations of the earth: they ſhould haue conſidered that they ought not to haue had any fellowſhip with the vnbelieuers, ſo as their religion ſhould haue beene intangled and doubtfull: but that being ſanctifyed to the maker of heauen and earth, they ſhould haue worſhipped him purely, and ſubmitted themſelues vnder his obeyſance. Now then wee haue here the counſell of Moſes, or rather the counſel which yͤ holy Ghoſt intended to vtter in ſpeaking here by his mouth. And (as I haue told you) that this doctrine is very profitable, ſo ought wee to be the more heedfull in marking it. For naturallie wee be inclined to goe aſtray. Inſomuch that although wee had no occaſions before our eies: yet would euerie of vs deceiue and beguile himſelfe. And againe, the diuell ceaſeth not to offer vs many illuſions, to dazle our wittes withall, and to make vs ſwarue from the right and pure religion. Seeing then that there is ſuch vice in vs, and that wee bee hemmed in on all ſides with ſo many daungers: let vs learn to make our profit by his doctrine.

True it is that the thing cannot bee ſayd to vs nowadayes, which Moſes telleth the people of Iſrael here: for Gods ſhewing of himſelfe to vs, or his ſtretching out of his arme to deliuer vs, hath not bin of any late continuance of time, as was his ſpeaking to that people from the middeſt of the fire: but yet neuertheleſſe the ſame exhortation belongeth vnto vs alſo. And why? For Gods chooſing of the people of Iſraell to himſelfe, and his declaring of his wonderfull power for the recouerie of them, was not to the end that they ſhoulde knowe him and worſhip him as the true God, by the ſpace of a hundred yeeres onely: but to the intent that the rememberaunce of the ſame redemption ſhoulde continue to the worlds end. Then let vs marke well that Gods deliuering of the children of Abraham from the bondage of Egypt, was to the ende that wee alſo in theſe dayes ſhoulde take him for our true GOD which hath all power in his hand, which diſpoſeth of his creatures, and which created the worlde and gouerneth it. Sith it is ſo, although our eyes haue not ſeene the miracles that are rehearſed here: yet ought wee to make our profite of them, and to bee edifyed by them, ſo as wee may bee ſure that wee haue not an vncertaine GOD, nor a religion forged at aladuenture, or at the pleaſure of men: but that it is the very true GOD, who hath giuen ſo good proofe of his power at once already, as wee haue no cauſe to doubt of him, or to think his maieſtie darkſome, or to ſtand skanning whether hee ought to haue ſuperioritie and preheminence or no. For hee hath ſhewed that all the world is his, and that all that euer was worſhipped at that time in the world, was but idols. Thus yee ſee how this text is to bee taken that wee may apply it to our owne profite. For it is not enough for vs to knowe what Moſes ment in ſpeaking to the people of Iſraell: but we muſt vnderſtand lykewiſe, whereto the ſame doctrine ſerueth vs at this day, ſo as we may receiue inſtruction by it.

Now before wee paſſe any further, let vs marke the wordes that are ſet downe here. *Inquire* (ſayth Moſes) *of the dayes of olde time, ſince God created man vppon the earth*. Here hee ſheweth vs that our negligence is partly the cauſe that wee knowe not God. True it is that wee cannot atteyne to his high maieſtie by our owne wit: for our ſight is too ſhort. Nay (which more is) not onely Gods highneſſe is incomprehenſible to vs: but alſo when we think to come neere him, it ouerwhelmeth vs. We be blind wretches that haue nothing but darkeneſſe in vs: and God in reſpect of himſelfe dwelleth in vnapprochable lyght. 1.Tim.6.16 But yet for all that, if it bee well and throughly conſidered and looked to: it will appeare that men make none account of ſeeking GOD, but forſlowe it as a thing of no profite. So then let vs marke the exhortation that is made here, that at leaſtwiſe when God worketh, wee may apply all our wittes earneſtly to conſider it, and that if there be the lyke indeuour in vs as wee make reckoning of, wee may preferre that before all other thinges. For what a thing is it if wee knowe not him that made vs and faſhioned vs, and by whoſe power we haue our being ſtill? When wee ſhall haue raunged about heauen and earth, and yet know not God: muſt wee not needes bee wretched? Now then let vs learne to bee more diligent to know God and religion than wee haue bin. And this ſtretcheth very farre. For we ſee how we be ſharpeſighted and forecaſting in worldely thinges, and we ſpare no paines in yͤ behalfe. If yͤ caſe cõcerne our own cõmoditie or profit: we neede no great calling on, for nature leadeth vs thereunto.

But when wee ſhould go to Godward, and ſeeke his will: then wee haue no leaſure, euerie of vs findeth an excuſe, wee bee letted about other things. And is not this a token of great naughtineſſe? So much the more therefore ought wee to come backe to that which is tolde vs here: namely that wee bee ſo farre of from being excuſed now adayes: that if wee bee negligent and ſeeke not after God, nor inquire how things goe, nor what God hath done, nor what he teacheth in his Church: wee ſhall bee condemned by this text. For it is ſaid, *Inquire of the dayes of olde time, ſince God created the world.* True it is that all can not bee ſo great Clerkes as to knowe all thinges that were requiſite: but yet ought wee not to ſleepe in that behalfe, as though the knowing of God were a thing of no value. Therefore let vs learne to place it in higheſt degree, ſo as all the reſt of our cares and buſineſſes may bee put vnder it as inferiour to it, as good reaſon woulde that they ſhould be. Now Moſes ſaieth expreſſely, *ſince God created man vppon the earth,* bicauſe that that people had bin taught concerning the creation of the world. But that was not knowen eueriwhere: inſomuch that when thoſe which tooke themſelues to bee verie wiſe, were demaunded how long it was ago ſince the worlde was created: ſome woulde make it ſix times as long ago, and otherſome thirtie times. Wherein it appeareth how God puniſhed their ſhamefull negligence. And whereof came it that mē knew not when the world was created: but that they were contented to ſhut their eyes, and to knowe nothing that had bene done? Wherefore ſeeing that men do wilfully ſhun inſtruction: it is good reaſon that God ſhould giue them ouer to ſuch beaſtlineſſe, as they ſhoulde not knowe from whence they came, nor what their original was, but bee vtterly dulled. And for the ſame cauſe Moſes ſpeaking to the people whom God had reſerued to himſelfe, did put them in rememberaunce of the day wherein man was created vppon the earth.

Nowe he ſaieth, *Inquire from the one end of heauen to the other, to wit if euer there were ſo great a thing, or if euer man heard of the like.* After hē hath ſpoken of the time, nowe he ſpeaketh of the places. As if he ſhould ſay, If folke will make good inquiſition, it is not ynough for them to knowe what thinges God hath ſhewed to themſelues: but it were meete for them to ſeeke about euery where, and to marke well what they finde, and to call to minde the things that haue bene done in farre Countries. Therefore conſider well (ſaieth he) what hath bin done from the one end of the heauen to the other. And this is it that I ſayde afore, namely that wee muſt profit our ſelues by all Gods workes, and although we behold them not with our eyes, yet if wee doe but heare of them, and tidings is brought vs of them from a farre, wee muſt honour God in them. In deede if wee bee witneſſes of them, they ought to touche vs ſo much the more. But yet howſoeuer the caſe ſtande, wee ought to doe our indeuour to knowe the things that haue bin done in ſtraunge Countries, according as is ſaid here. And when as Moſes ſaieth, *ſo great a thing*: thereby he ſheweth that the more that God manifeſteth his power: the more ought wee to be rauiſhed with wonderment. In deede there is no worke of God ſo ſmall, which ought not to moue vs to acknowledge ſome token of his Maieſtie therein. If wee doe but looke vpon a flie: ſurely wee haue there wherefore to magnifie God. If wee ſee but the ſlip of an herb, or any other thing bee it neuer ſo little: wee haue therein whereby wee ought to acknowledge the wonderfull workemanſhip of God. But if he doe moreouer worke much more euident myracles, ought not all our wittes to be much more occupied or ſpent about them? Whē God doeth after a ſort alter the order of nature, and worketh after a new and vnaccuſtomed maner: is it not all one as if he ſhould rebuke vs for our negligence and ſay vnto vs: Seeing you knewe mee not for God by the accuſtomed order of nature, at leaſtwiſe thinke vpon mee now when I goe to worke after another ſtraunge faſhion, and conſider ye whether I bee God or no. Thus ye ſee what Moſes meant by ſaying, *There was neuer yet ſo great a thing, neither was there euer the like heard of.* Let vs marke well therefore that to attaine to the right knowledge of God, when wee haue raunged vp and downe through the whole world, and ſpent all our wittes in looking vpon al things whether they be great or ſmall: if God giue vs any ſuch inclings of his Maieſtie as may mooue vs more than ordinarie, we muſt be wholly rauiſhed thereat, and yeeld him the honour that is due vnto him. And how that ought to be done, it ſhall be declared more plainely anon: for as nowe I doe but goe through the wordes of Moſes ſeuerally as they lie.

He ſaieth afterward, *Was there euer any people that heard the voyce of their God ſpeaking out of the middes of fire, as thou haſt done, and yet continueſt aliue?* Here among other things Moſes alledgeth ẏ God had ſpoken to his people out of the mids of fire. For it was a viſible ſigne of Gods Maieſtie, ſo as it was not for them to doubt any more whether he were ẏ liuing God, ſeeing they heard his voyce thundering from heauen, and therewithall ſawe a great thicke cloud and a flaming fire. Nowe ſeeing that this appeared to them: was it for them to inquire any more whether it were God or no? No verily: for the thing was moſt euident. And furthermore, here Moſes vpbraideth the people couertly with their leawdneſſe, if they continue ſlowe ſtill in doing homage to the liuing God, ſeeing that all the heathen were inclined yea and wilfully wedded to their ſuperſtitions, and yet knewe no cauſe why. For had the Heathen men bene asked by what warrant they worſhipped their idoles: they would haue anſwered, by reaſon of their myracles. Yea, but what maner of miracles were they? fantaſticall imaginations, diueliſh illuſions, and inchauntmentes. But beholde, Moſes ſpeaketh here of a thing that was knowen: the hearers of it were preſent to beare witneſſe of it. For he ſaieth, ye heard the voyce of your God from out of the middes of fire. Seeing that your GOD hath ſhewed himſelfe to you ſo familiarly: there remaines no excuſe for you, if you worſhip him not as your GOD. Either ye muſt forſake him through wilfull rebellion, or elſe ye muſt needes graunt that there is neither power, Maieſtie, nor glorie in the whole worlde, other than that which was ſhewed vnto you, when the lawe was giuen you.

But let vs marke by the way, that Moſes matcheth here the worde with the myracles. For the myracles had booted them nothing at all, if doctrine had not bene matched therewith, as hath beene touched heretofore. But yet is it good for vs to bee put in minde of it againe, and it is not for nought alſo that the holy Ghoſt repeateth it in this text: and wee ſhall ſee it mentioned yet againe hereafter. If the people of Iſrael had but onely had ſome viſions, to doe them to vnderſtand which was the liuing God that had brought them out of the lande of Egypt, and in the meane whyle had bene let alone in their ignoraunce, ſo as they had had no lawe, no rule, no promiſe of ſaluation, no inſtruction of Religion: all the reſt had beene to no purpoſe. It is true that they might haue liued, being once deliuered from bondage: but what had the end of it bene? They had become but a barbarous people, and they had corrupted themſelues with ſuperſtitions as the Gentiles did. But when as God, (after his declaring of himſelfe vnto them, and after his ſhewing of his Maieſtie vnto them as it were in a myrrour or rather a liuely picture) did alſo teache them and giue them a ſure Lawe: he ledde them into a Religion that was ſacred and holy. And ſo yee ſee that God gaue them ſuch an euidence as was fitte for their ſaluation.

Deu.4.11.12

Deut.4.36.

Now remaineth how Moſes addeth, *That the people hauing heard Gods voyce, continued ſtill aliue.* Whereby he doeth vs to vnderſtande: that it is a ſpeciall grace of God that wee bee not conſumed by his preſence and by his worde. It is ſaide that the mountaines melt at the ſight of him. And againe, that if he doe but caſt his eye vpon the whole earth, it quaketh. For Gods Maieſtie in it ſelfe is ſo terrible, as it were ynough to ſink the whole worlde. When he ſpeaketh, his voyce doeth not onely ſcare all creatures, but alſo vtterly diſmay them, yea and euen bring them to nothing. Therefore it is a great myracle, that mortall men being ſo frayle and brickle, and being no better than a ſhadowe: are inabled to heare Gods voyce, and yet are not conſumed thereby. So then, Moſes ſheweth here, ẏ God did not onely make the people of Iſrael to perceiue his Maieſtie & heauenly power: but alſo gaue thẽ a louing taſte of his grace and goodneſſe therewithal, to the intent they ſhould not be too much diſmaied at it, but rather haue their wits at libertie and well ſetled to acknowledge, Beholde, my God hath ſhewed himſelf to mee, & therefore it is good reaſon ẏ I ſhoulde ſerue him and ſubmit my ſelf wholly vnto him. Thus in effect wee ſee two things: wherof the one is that God ſhewed not himſelfe to his people without teaching thẽ by his word: & the other is, ẏ the ſame word was not only ſo warranted as they might know it to be the word of God, and ſubmit themſelues vnto it: but alſo was made ſweete & amiable ſo farre forth as was requiſite. The people could not but bee partly afraide (as I haue declared alreadie) when they perceiued the Maieſtie of God: but yet howſoeuer they fared, God did ſo moderate his rigour, as they perceiued him to be their father in that he ſhewed them ſuch reaſon.

Pſal.68.9.& 97.4 5.and 147.
Pſal.50.3.

Moſes addeth immediatly, *Was there euer any God that tooke vppon him to bring a people from among other people, by temptations, ſignes, wonders, warres, and a ſtretched out arme, as thou knoweſt that thy God hath done in bringing thee out of Egypt?* Here Moſes purpoſeth expreſſely to confirme the people in the Religion that had bin giuen them, to the intent they ſhoulde not yeeld themſelues to any of the great nomber of ſuperſtitions that raigned eueriwhere at the ſame time, as wee bee commonly wont to doe. Truely if a people haue auncient cuſtomes, they bee loth to forgo them. And why? Bicauſe pride maketh vs to like well of the thinges that growe in our owne gardine, (as they ſay:) and to our ſeeming, all that euer other men haue is nothing in compariſon of that [which is our owne.] But if God call vs to him, and teach vs faithfully what we haue to doe: we be ſo wildheaded as we cannot abide the things that are ſhewed vs. We fall to ſeeking of this & that: behold (ſay we,) in ſuch a Countrie there is ſuch a cuſtome & ſuch a faſhion: & why ſhould not wee haue the ſame as well as they? Alſo wee ſee howe the vnbeleeuers vpbraide Gods children that they will needes bee too wiſe, if they hold themſelues in awe vnder Gods word. What is it that the Papiſts do caſt vs in the teeth withall now adayes? Theſe are the men (ſay they) which take vpon them to renew the world, they will needes be ſingular by themſelues, as though they had nothing at all to doe with the reſt of mankinde. For this cauſe doeth Moſes ſay here, Paſſe not you for it though you ſee ſo manye Nations haue diuers faſhions, ſo as euery of thẽ hath a Religion contrarie to yours, and that you be alone by your ſelues. For why? Your God hath choſen you in ſuch ſort, as he hath ſhewed you that ye may bee bold to defie all other nations. For hath it euer come to paſſe, that any god hath taken vppon him to conuey a people from out of the mids of another people? Seeing then that you are ſo ſhooled out, haue yee not a ſure warrant that GOD will not haue you to mingle your ſelues with other Nations? Therefore if ye haue an eye to Gods bringing of you out of the lande of Egypt, ye ſhall alwaies bee put in minde, that the Religion which ye hold of him is good and holy, and ye may hold ſcorne of all other religions in the world. And moreouer, although other nations bee greater than you: yet may ye be bold to ſpit at their ſuperſtitions. For God hath ſufficiently ſhewed, that he hath not giuen you his Lawes and Ordinances in vaine. And why? For he hath brought you out by your ſelues: which neuer befell to any people of the world but you.

And to the end that theſe things ſhould bee the better eſteemed: Moſes ſheweth here, that the ſaid deliuerance had no common thing in it. *For it was wrought* (ſaieth he) *by temptations, ſignes, wonders, warres, ſtrong hand, and ſtretched out arme.* When as he ſaieth, *by temptations:* he meaneth that the proofes were ſo notable, as the matter ought to be out of all cnc. Seeing then that God had giuen them ſo many tokens: was it not ynough to lay it wide open to them, that the idols of Egypt were nothing, and that Pharao with all his power was vnable to doe any thing againſt ye God of Abraham? True it is that the woordes *Signes and wonders* import the ſelfe ſame thing: but yet is it not without cauſe that Moſes vſeth ſuch diuerſitie of termes: And why ſo? For wee ſee howe lightly men ouerpaſſe Gods woorkes, and make verie ſlender reckening of them. Therefore was it requiſite that Moſes ſhoulde vſe ſuch termes and ſpeeche, to ſet the more eſtimation vppon the excellent greatneſſe of the thinges that God had done in Egypt. Beholde, (ſaieth he,) thy God hath giuen thee ſignes and wonders, he hath vſed his ſtrong hand & ſtretched out his arme, in deliuering thee from ſuch bondage: and therefore know thou thereby that he hath ſufficiently warranted his Lawe, and the rule whereby he will haue thee to liue, & whereunto he hath put thee in ſubiection.

Now he preſently addeth thereunto, *That this was done before their eyes*, ſo as they were certified yt GOD was their maker, and that he onely was the true GOD, and that there was none other God before him. Here againe Moſes intendeth to prooue the people the more vnthankefull, if they profited not themſelues by the things that they knewe by experience. *Thine eyes* (ſaieth he) *are witneſſes of it.* As if hee ſhoulde ſay, If God of his gratious goodneſſe did but ſend thee meſſengers to tell thee of ye things that he had done: yet oughteſt thou to receiue the thinges that were told thee. But now it is not any other bodie that maketh report of them vnto thee: but euen thy God himſelfe hath ſhewed them vnto thee, and therfore there is no further excuſe for thee, for it hath bin ſhewed euen to the ſight of thine eye: and what more? *that the Lord is the true God,* (ſaieth he) *and that there is none other but onely he.* Here wee haue the ſame thing to marke which hath bin touched alreadie: namely that Moſes ſpeaketh not ſimply of myracles or wonders, as it were to make a rehearſall of them: but alſo ſheweth the ende whereto they tend, which is yt God ſhould be magnified. And it is a verie profitable leſſon, [to vnderſtand] that when we haue ſuch thinges, wee muſt learne in any wiſe to glorifie our God by them. And had this point bene well obſerued, the wretched world had not bene turned aſide to ſo many ſuperſtitions as it hath bin, vnder colour of falſe myracles. Whereof commeth it that creatures are worſhipped in Poperie, but vnder the colour of falſe myracles? O (ſay they) ſuch a Saint hath done a myracle. And vnder yt colour Gods glory muſt be diminiſhed, inſomuch that looke how many myracles there are, ſo many ſtops are there to wholde the wretched world from comming vnto God, and they be euẽ fond gaſingſtocks alſo to make men ſtand poring vpon ye creatures. Therefore doth it ſtand vs on hãd to mark the things ſo much the better, which are told vs here by Moſes: that is to wit ye by myracles God wil haue himſelf only to be knowẽ without matching of any companion wt him. He will haue his glory to ſhine foorth in ſuch wiſe, as men ſhall ſtoope to him alone, and yeeld him all ye preheminence. To bee ſhort, (as Moſes ſaith here) he will haue men to know that there is none other but he, neither aboue nor beneath. According whereunto he forwarneth vs here to make any vndergods or meanegods, and doeth vs to vnderſtand that the ſoueraigne God will keepe his ſtate ſtill, ſo as he will not abyde that men ſhall in any wiſe abaſe it, nor diminiſh his Maieſtie, nor part his offices among his creatures, to allot any peece or portion of it, bee it neuer ſo ſmall, to one or other: No no, he will continue alone by himſelf. Thus ye ſee what we haue to marke in effect as concerning thoſe wordes of Moſes.

But nowe let vs come backe againe to make a ſhort concluſion of the chiefe matter which I haue touched: which is, that Gods declaring of his ſtrength and power in ſuch wiſe, was to the intent he might be diſcerned from all the idoles of the world, and that his people might be tyed to the religiõ that he had deliuered thẽ. Neuertheleſſe it belongeth to vs alſo, and in verie deed it behoueth vs to apply it to our ſelues. And ſurely ſeeing that God hath authorized his lawe by ſo many myracles: let vs aſſure our ſelues yt he deliuered not a doctrine of two or three dais, but ſuch a one as ſhould continue for euer: in ſo much that the ratifying which he added vnto it, ought to haue full force euen among vs at this day. Is Gods Lawe abated, I meane as in reſpect of the ſubſtance? It is true that the Ceremonies are no more in vſe: they were all laide downe at the comming of our Lord Ieſus Chriſt. But as for the doctrine of the Lawe, which containeth the promiſes of ſaluatiõ, the couenant wherby God hath choſen thoſe whõ he will haue to be of his Church, ye records of ye forgiuenes of our ſinnes, and finally his will to ſhewe vs the true rule of good life: all this continueth ſtill, and ſhall continue to the worldes ende. Wherefore let vs marke well that all the myracles and wonders yt were wrought in deliuering the people of Iſrael out of Egypt, doe ſerue vs at this day for a confirmation to cauſe vs to receiue Gods Lawe with all reuerence, and to aſſure and warrant vs that it is not a doctrine of mans deuiſe, but of Gods owne thundering down from heauen. Let that ſerue for one point.

Eph. 2.15.
Col. 2.4.
He. 9.10.11
Mat. 5.17.18.

But yet notwithſtanding, wee haue a greater confirmation giuen vs in our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt. For God hath appeared more viſibly in him, than he did to the fathers in the time of the Lawe. Wee knowe that the whole fulneſſe of the Godhead dwelleth in Ieſus Chriſt, and that the ſame hath bene knowen wel ynough in him. Sith it is ſo then: we may better aſſure our ſelues now adayes, than the Iewes could in their time, that wee haue one God, of whome wee ought not to doubt, and that we haue ſuch a Religion as was

2.Cor. 3.18
Hebr. 1.2.
1.Iohn 1.1.
Coloſ. 2.9.

not inuented by man, and that wee ought not to goe at all aduenture, but that wee haue a moſt ſure way to walke in. And here ye ſee whereof wee ought to glorie. For ſurely it is an ineſtimable benefite, that wee ſtand not in a mamering, to ſay, I would faine doe well but I wote not how: but are fully perſwaded that God alloweth our doings, and that wee haue to doe with the liuing God: and may take vppon vs to compare our ſelues with all the wretched idolaters and infidels throughout the whole world. True it is that the Papiſtes pretend to worſhip the ſame God that wee doe: but wee ſee how they ſwarue from Gods worde. And therefore it ſtandeth vs on hand to put the thing in vre which I haue ſpoken of heretofore: that is to wit, that it is not ynough for vs to conceiue ſome Maieſtie of God, but we muſt alſo learne which is he, to the intent wee wander not away in our owne imaginations. For that is the thing wherein we differ from the Papiſtes and the Iewes. The Iewes can ſay well ynough that they worſhip yͤ God of Abraham, and that they haue the lawe that was giuen by Moſes: but in the meane while they haue Rom.10.4. renounced Ieſus Chriſt who is the end of the law, 2.Cor.3.15. and they haue the vaile that blindfoldeth their eyes, & moreouer they haue ſo peruerted Gods ſeruice, that they be ſtraied quite and cleane frō the right way. Likewiſe the Papiſtes will ſay that they worſhip God, and him whom he hath ſent to be the Redeemer of the world: but yet for all that, men ſee how they haue tranſfigured God, and aboliſhed his ſeruice, & made a hotchpotch of all the ſuperſtitions of the Heathen, with the Religion that God ordained. To be ſhort, there is nothing but vncleannes among them in that behalfe. In reſpect whereof, ye ſee wee ought ſo much the more to acknowledge the infinite grace of our God towardes vs, in that he hath ſo ſhooled vs out frō among the vnbeleeuers. And wee muſt alſo marke the meane: which is, that wee haue not onely the myracles to proue that there is a God in heauen: but alſo that doctrine wherein God ſheweth himſelfe fully to vs, to the intent wee ſhould knowe him, and not haue our eyes bleared any more, nor runne rouing here and there: but follow the doctrine that our God hath giuen vs, and whereby it is his will to draw vs to him.

Thus yee ſee that the meane for vs to put this ſaying of Moſeſes in vre, is not to looke onely to the myracles that haue bene wrought for the ratifying of the Lawe: but to goe to the Goſpell, and there to perceiue that God hath ſhewed himſelfe to vs againe in farre greater perfection than he did to yͤ fathers of olde time. Beſides this, let vs beare in minde the warning that I ſpake of afore: namely that when we once knowe the myracles whereby God vouchſafed to confirme his Maieſtie: we muſt repaire to his worde, aſſuring our ſelues that that is the verie meane whereby God draweth vs to him. Therefore whenſoeuer we haue Gods word preached vnto vs, let vs vnderſtand that it is a confirmation to aſſure vs that he raigneth ouer vs. And therefore let vs take heede that wee make our profit thereby, ſeeing he graunteth vs this grace and priuiledge, which (as we ſee) is not common Eph.1.13. to all men. And let vs pray him to ſeale the doctrine in our heartes by his holy ſpirit, which we heare with our fleſhie eares, that ſeeing he hath once called vs to the knowing of him, he will increaſe the ſame more and more, and ſo guide vs as we may rather looke vp to heauen than pore vpon the creatures and things that are mortall. Therefore let vs haue a conſtant and inuincible fayth in God which hath once manifeſted him ſelfe to vs, ſo as wee may defie Satan and all the abuſes and errours that haue bene brought in by men.

According to this holy doctrine wee will caſt our ſelues downe in the preſence of our good God with acknowledgement of our faults, praying him to make vs ſo to feele them, as it may bring vs to true repentance: and wee therewithall acknowledge the grace and benefites which he hath powred out vpon vs, ſo as we may know better to make our profit by them than we haue done, and not bee negligent in conſidering his workes, but diligent therein as becommeth vs: and moreouer ſo receiue the doctrine yͤ is dayly preached vnto vs, as wee may apply our eyes to the diſcerning of the things that are dayly ſhewed vs, and our good God make vs to finde his power and goodneſſe by experience, as he hath done to others in all ages, that we may bee the better confirmed in the loue and obedience which wee owe him, ſo as wee may neuer be turned from it whatſoeuer the Diuell practiſe to turne vs away from it. That it may pleaſe him to graunt this grace, not onely to vs but alſo to all people and nations of the earth, &c.

On Wedneſday the v. of Iune. 1555.

The xxviij. Sermon, which is the tenth vpon the fourth Chapter.

36 He made thee to heare his voice from heauen, to inſtruct thee withall: and on earth he ſhewed thee his great fire, & thou heardeſt his words out of the middeſt of the fire.

37 Becauſe he loued thy fathers and choſe their ſeede after them, hee made thee to come out of Egypt in his preſence, by his great power:

38 To driue out Nations before thee, greater and mightier than thou, to bring thee in, and to giue thee their lands to inherit, as is ſeene this day.

I Told you heretofore that if God had but only wrought myracles when he brought his people out of Egypt, it would haue beene to ſmall purpoſe: for they had had no inſtruction to leade them to right knowledge. But in aſmuch as his word was matched with them, now there wanted nothing at all. And that is the cauſe why Moſes exhorteth the people yet againe, to conſider howe it is long of none but themſelues that they know not God, yea euen to attaine to the heritage, not onely of the land of promiſe, but alſo of the kingdome of heauen. Furthermore he telleth them that Gods word had ſuch maieſtie, as the people had no cauſe to doubt but it was God that ſpake it. Aſſure thy ſelfe (ſaith he) that the voice which thou herdeſt was not a humain or earthly voice: but thy God ſpake as it were from heauen. It is true that the voyce ſounded from the middes of the fire that was ſeene vpon the mountaine: but here Moſes meaneth that the doctrine was not darke, foraſmuch as God gaue certaine ſignes of his maieſtie, to the ende that the peoples faith might bee aſſured throughly. And for the ſame cauſe doeth he vſe the worde *inſtruction*, which ſignifieth not onely to teach with words, but alſo to traine on with often chaſtiſement. As if he ſhould ſay, thy God in this caſe hath as it were helde thee in awe, ſo as it is not nowe lawfull for thee to deſpiſe his lawe as though it came from an vncertaine place. For why? It hath ſoueraine authoritie, thou canſt not but thereby perceiue that God hath declared himſelfe to thee, to the intẽt thou ſhouldeſt worſhip his maieſtie and do him homage. Now then we ſee that the effect of the thinges which Moſes declareth heere to the Iewes, is that God had giuen them viſible ſignes at hande, and as it were familiarly, to the ende that his worde ſhoulde haue due reuerence, and bee receiued obediently, and all things bee done to the inſtruction of the people. And although Moſes rehearſe but the things yͭ were done in mount Horeb, where the lawe was put forth: yet may we gather a general doctrine thereof. For wee ſee howe God ſtoopeth to our infirmitie. Becauſe we cannot mount ſo high as to come vnto him, he cõmeth down to our ſlender capacitie. Seing that he doeth ſo, ought not we to be the more prouoked to ſubmitte our ſelues to him? and if wee doe it not, ſhall it not bee caſt in our teeth, that there was no lette in him that wee had not meanes and helpes to inſtruct vs withall? But what for that? In ſteede of comming to God, we haue turned our backe vppon him and rebelled againſt him. Wherfore let vs conſider after what manner God applieth himſelfe to our rudeneſſe, that wee may bee the more moued to reſort vnto him. And beſides that, let vs referre all thinges to the ſame ende that Moſes noteth heere: which is, yͭ foraſmuch as God is ſo gracious to vs as to ſhewe vs his truth: wee muſt imbrace it, aſſuring our ſelues that it groweth not in the worlde, but commeth from heauen. Therefore let the doctrine of ſaluation be receiued among vs with al obedience. For elſe it is to no purpoſe for vs to proteſt that we call vppon God and are willing to honor and ſerue him. For the proofe that he requireth thereof, is that we ſhould hearken quietly to his worde, and that our faith ſhould bee ſetled, ſo as wee reſemble not the vnbeleeuers, who are alwayes doubting: but ſtande vpon this ſure foundation, that it is God which ſpeaketh it, & therefore it is not lawful for vs to reply againſt it, but wee muſt ſubmit our ſelues wholly in all points to yͭ which he ſaith. Thus yee ſee what we haue remember vpon this place.

And herewithall let vs marke when this was treated of. For it is not without cauſe that Moſes ſpeaketh of this inſtruction. Why ſo? For if wee bee not ſubdewed, it is hard for vs to ſubmit our ſelues to God: nay rather we draw cleane backe from him. Therefore muſt our Lorde bee faine to correct this loftineſſe in vs: and when he ſeeth vs after that ſort, either rebellious, or ſtubborne, or that wee bee dull vppon the ſpurre: hee muſt vſe ſuch meanes as hee knoweth to bee fit to reclaime vs withall. Wee ſee howe Moſes ſaieth heere, that the wonders which were wrought at the publiſhing of the Lawe, ſerued as it were for a nurturing, to the intent that the people ſhoulde no more be ſo vnruly as they had beene before, but become more fitte to be taught. But this vice reigned not among thẽ Iewes onely: it is to be found continually among al men. Therfore let vs learne to make our own profite of the thinges that our Lorde hath giuen vs for the authoriſing of his word, that we play not the wood beaſtes, but behaue our ſelues as meek ſheepe and lambes, to hearken to the voice of our ſhepherd. This is the thing in effect, which wee haue to gather vpon this place.

And now he ſaith, ***Becauſe God loued thy fathers, therefore hath he choſen their ſeedes after them:*** howbeit that he ſay, *thy ſeede after him.* Moſes chaungeth here the number, and not without cauſe: for after he had ſpoken of the fathers, hee returneth to one alone, that is to wit, to Abraham, becauſe it was he with whom God made the couenant. And againe it ſerueth to magnifie the grace that is mentioned here, as ſhalbe declared anon more at large. The effect of yͤ thing yͭ Moſes intendeth to tell yͤ people, is that it is a great ſhame for thẽ and yͭ they be vnexcuſable, if they know not the goodnes of their God. And why? Becauſe God of his owne free mercy choſe thẽ, not for that they were better than other nations, (as ſhalbe ſhewed more at length hereafter) or for that there was more noblenes, worthines or vertue in them: but for that it pleaſed him to loue their fathers. Nowe we ſee that the meaning of Moſes was as if he ſhold haue ſaid thus: You haue heere an ineſtimable benefite aboue all people, namely that God vouchſafeth to reigne among you, that he hath ſanctified you to himſelfe, that you bee his Churche, that you bee his flocke, that you bee his children, and (as it is ſaide in another place,) that you be a kingly prieſthood. Aſſure your ſelues this is not giuen you for any deſert of yours, for haue you deſerued aught at Gods hand? Are ye better than al yͤ reſt of the world?

Exod.19.6. & 1.Pet.2.9.

worlde? No: why then hath God giuen you ſuch priuiledge? Not for any thing that he hath foũd in you: but becauſe it pleaſed him of his owne good will. And whereof came that? Euen of his chooſing of your forefathers. You were choſen of him before you were borne. And what was the cauſe that he choſe your forefathers? Euen his owne loue, (ſaith he): that is to ſay, becauſe hee marked them of his owne free mercie, to ſhoule them out from the reſt of the world: yea euen at ſuch time as Abraham was barren, and alreadie ſtriken in yeeres, and as good as decayed and halfe deade, when as yet hee had no iſſue at all. Rom.4.19. Hebr.11.12. And yet for all this, God choſe him, ſo as that poore old fellowe became the welſpring of your forefathers. Seeing then that God hath choſen you after ſuch a ſort, yee ſee there is none other cauſe of the comming of ſaluation vnto you, but onely his meere goodneſſe. Now therefore conſider how much you be bound to your God, and bee not vnthankfull to him, neither ſuffer ſuch a benefite to ſlip from you, ſo as yee ſhould be bereft thereof through your owne lewdnes and vnthankfulnes. This in effect is the doctrine that is conteined in this place.

Nowe, that we may fare the better by it, wee haue to marke firſt of all, that when God calleth vs to be of his Church, ſo as he maketh vs partakers of the Goſpell, and of the things depending vpon the ſame: it is not for ẏ we went to him aforehãd, but becauſe he hath choſẽ vs. The word *Choſe* is ſet down here to expreſſe the better that that thing came not of the people themſelues, but that God was the firſt beginner therof. That is one point which wee ought to marke wel. For it is not onely here that the holy Ghoſt ſpeaketh thereof: but all the whole ſcripture is full of that doctrine: namely, of telling vs that we muſt not ſeeke the cauſe of our ſaluation in our ſelues, as who ſhoulde ſay wee were better than other men. 1.Cor.12.4. Wee ſee that God giueth not his graces indifferently to all men: but that to ſet the greater ſhewe vppon his goodneſſe, hee giueth that thing to one man which hee denieth to another. Wee ſee that moſt men are deſtitute of the Goſpell at this day: and we ſee that euen where it is preached, moſt folke are as good as blinde and deafe ſtill. Nowe when the Goſpell is preached in any place, it is a kinde of chooſing, and it is the verie ſame that Moſes ſpeakes of here. Seeing then that God cauſeth his worde to raine vppon vs, ſo as we haue our fill of it euerie day: and in the meane ſeaſon other much greater, richer, and nobler Cities want it and are deſtitute of it: let vs vnderſtande that this ſo great benefite commeth not of our owne ſeeking, neither haue we obtained it by our owne trauell or policie: but it is GOD that hath choſen vs to it of his owne mercie. Marke that for one point.

Eph.2.8. Againe, whereas it pleaſeth him to giue vs faith, ſo as we taſt of his word, and are throughly fed with it, and it toucheth vs inwardly at the very heart: let vs vnderſtand that ẏ is a ſecond ſort of choſing which god maketh of vs. So then, let vs yelde him his deſerued praiſe, for in withholding it from him we bee traitors to him, and wee bereaue him of the thing that belongeth alonely vnto him: and in ſo doing wee ſet vp our ſelues as Idols in his ſteede. For a man cannot take a greater honour to himſelfe, than to beare himſelfe in hand that he is the author of his own ſaluation, and that it is he that preuenteth God. If wee imagin ſo, it is a defacing of Gods glorie. And therfore let vs beare this leſſõ well in mind.

Howbeit forasmuch as men are malicious, & when they cannot aboliſh Gods praiſe altogether, they darken it as much as they can: Moſes excludeth here expreſly all worthineſſe of perſons, and all deſert of workes, in ſaying, *it is the loue of God*. For it is not ynough for vs to knowe that God hath choſen vs to himſelfe: but we muſt alſo know what it is that moued him thereto, and how he was induced thervnto. Did hee ſeeke the cauſe of it out of himſelfe? No: but his owne loue was the cauſe that he choſe vs. Nowe when the ſcripture ſpeaketh of Gods loue: it meaneth that free fauor which he beareth towards vs, ſo as he reſpecteth not our perſons nor ſeruices, nor aught elſe that wee can bring. Sith it is ſo, let vs conſider here Gods goodnes two wayes. For firſt of al when we haue his Goſpel preached among vs, and his Sacraments, whereby he gathereth vs as it were into his fold, and ſheweth himſelfe to be our ſhepherd: it is (ſay I) a chooſing of vs, for the which wee be greatly bounde vnto him: in ſo much that our maliciouſneſſe muſt needes be caſt in our teeth, and bee called to account to receiue horrible vẽgeance, if we make no reckening of ſo great a grace as he hath beſtowed vpon vs. Therefore let vs make much of the benefite that we inioy, that is to wit, of Gods gathering vs heere together in his name, to bee as his houſhold folke. Deut.4.20.

But there is yet a ſeconde chooſing: which is when euerie of vs perceiueth that God hath inlightened him by his holie ſpirit, and made vs to taſt his worde, ſo as wee ſticke to it by faith, and that hee hath graffed vs into the bodie of Ieſus Chriſt, to the ende we ſhoulde bee taken & held for members of him: Rom.6.5. Eph.5.30. which thing wee muſt vnderſtand commeth not of our ſelues, nor of our owne power: but of Gods will, which vouchſafed to marke vs out. And why? Let vs not make long circuits to finde ſome reaſon in our ſelues: but let vs holde vs contented with the free loue of our God, for hee is not bounde to any man. Hee might deſtroye all mankinde by his iuſtice: but yet for all that, he hath pitie vpon vs. And wheras he pitieth not all alike, but letteth whom hee liſt alone: therein he intendeth to giue the greater ſhewe of his goodneſſe (as I haue ſaid alredy) to the ende that wee ſhoulde compare our ſelues with others and ſay, Wherfore am I one of gods elect? wherefore hath God choſen mee to himſelfe? I ſhoulde haue beene as other men are, if God had not reached me his hand. And what moued him to do it? His owne meere goodneſſe. This compariſon then muſt induce vs to glorifie our God, when we ſee that he hath ſtretched out his mighty arme ouer vs. And ſo we ſee, that that doctrine was not vttered onely for the inſtruction of the people of old time: but that the ſame is common to vs alſo at this day.

Remember (ſaith Moſes) *that thy God hath choſen thee.* And why? Becauſe *hee loued thy fathers.* And the ſame alſo is the cauſe why that in that high and excellent redemption which was made by our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt, the ſcripture ſendeth vs to the loue of God: for that is the onely welſpring, Iohn 3.16. God ſo loued the worlde that hee ſpared not his onely ſonne. What is the cauſe then that Ieſus Chriſt is come to bee our Sauiour? What is the cauſe that the ſaluation which he purchaſed for vs, is preached nowadayes vnto vs? What is the verie cauſe that faith is giuen vs, and that God inlighteneth vs by his holy ſpirit? We muſt alwayes reſort to this grounde, that it is becauſe God loued vs. It is true that Saint Iohn ſaith generally, that hee loued the worlde. And why? For Ieſus Chriſt offereth himſelfe generally to all men without exception to be their redeemer. It is ſaide afterwarde in the couenant, that God loued the world when he ſent his only ſonne: but he loued vs, vs (I ſay) which haue beene taught by his Goſpel, becauſe he gathereth vs to him. And the faithful that are inlightened by the holy Eph.1.9. Ghoſt, haue yet a thirde vſe of Gods loue, in Rom.8.16. that he reueileth himſelf more familiarly to thē, Gal.4.6. and ſealeth vp his fatherly adoption by his holy Eph.1.13.14 ſpirit, and ingraueth it in their hearts. Now then let vs in al caſes learn to know this loue of God, & when we be once come to it, let vs goe no further. Thus we ſee three degrees of the loue that god hath ſhewed vs in our Lord Ieſus Chriſt. The firſt is in reſpect of the redemption that was purGal.3.13. chaſed in the perſon of him that gaue himſelfe to death for vs, and became accurſed to reconcile vs to God his father. That is the firſt degree of loue, which extendeth to al men, inaſmuch as Ieſus Chriſt reacheth out his armes to call and allure all men both great and ſmall, and to win them to him. But there is a ſpeciall loue for thoſe to whom the goſpel is preached: which is, ẏ God teſtifieth vnto them that he wil make them partakers of ẏ benefite that was purchaſed for them by the death and paſſion of his ſonne. And foraſmuch as we be of that number, therefore are we dubble bound alreadie to our God: here are two bonds which hold vs as it were ſtrait tyed vnto him. Now let vs come to the third bonde, which dependeth vpon the thirde loue that God ſheweth vs: which is, that he not only cauſeth the goſpel to be preached vnto vs, but alſo maketh vs to feel the power therof, ſo, as we know him to be our father & ſauiour, not douting but that our ſins are forgiuen vs for our Lord Ieſus Chriſtes ſake, who bringeth vs the gift of the holy Ghoſt, to reforme vs after his owne image. When as God doth ſo imprint in our harts the doctrine that is preached vnto vs by the mouthes of men: let vs vnderſtand that he ſheweth vs a third loue. True it is, that to ſpeake properly, God hath not diuers affections: wee muſt not imagine ſo: but I handle theſe matters according to our capacitie, and wee muſt conſider of Gods loue according to our ſlenderneſſe, becauſe wee cannot attaine to his high maieſtie as is ſaid afore, and therfore euen he himſelfe alſo vttereth himſelfe to vs according to our abilitie. And ſo wee ſee now that Gods loue is vttered and ſhewed vnto vs euidently three wayes in our Lorde Ieſus Chriſte: the cheefe whereof are when wee haue the Col.3.16. goſpell preached, and that faith is added vnto it therewithall.

And as I ſaide, when wee once haue this free loue of God, we muſt goe no further. For we ſee what hath happened to all ſuch as haue not held themſelues in ſuch ſoberneſſe. And ſurely when men are inquiſitiue why God loueth ſome more than otherſome: it proceedeth of a certain pride and ſpyte, in that they cannot abide that the whole praiſe of their ſaluation ſhould reſt in god alone. Men ſeeke alwayes to challenge ſomwhat to themſelues. And therefore when it is tolde them that God calleth thoſe whom he hath choſen, and that he chooſeth whom he liſteth of his owne free goodnes: they will needs fall to ſcanning, how ſo? Why doeth God prefer one before another? When they debate after that maner, it is not a ſimple inquiſitiuenes, but a pride as I ſaid, becauſe they would faine be eſteemed and finde ſomewhat in themſelues wherewith to deface Gods meere mercie: And therfore it is good iuſtice that Satan ſhoulde afterwarde bleare their eyes, & ſet many fancies before them. And that is the verie cauſe that maketh them to goe alwayes ſeeking, that God choſeth thoſe whom he foreſawe to be ſuch as would become worthie of his grace. Againe, ſuch as dare not alledge altogether their owne deſeruings, doe ſay that they attaine to faith becauſe God foreſawe that they would be faithfull, and therefore reſerued them to himſelfe. So then, by that meanes faith ſhoulde proceede of mens workes. But ſuch men doe in deede ſhewe that they be as it were blockiſh, when they make ſuch concluſions: and yet notwithſtanding a great part of the worlde ſtandeth vpon that point, and is ſtill blinded therewith. But as for vs, let vs learne that whenſoeuer Gods loue is ſet afore vs we muſt wholly hold vs to it and reſt vpon it, ſo as it muſt ſuffice vs that God is righteous, and yet notwithſtanding not bounde to any perſon, but at his free libertie to chooſe whom he liſteth, becauſe hee receiueth them to mercie. For it is to the ſame purpoſe that he ſaith to Moſes, as S. Paul alledgeth, I will Exo.33.19. haue mercie on whom I will haue mercy, and I Rom.9.15. will haue pitie on whom I haue pitie. As if hee ſhould ſay, let not men fall to controlling of me in this caſe, nor bee ſo malapert as to aske why I ſhewe not mercie to all men: or why all are not delt with alike, or why I chooſe one and leaue another. Let them not diſpute ſo with mee: for I haue power to vſe my free goodneſſe where I liſt, and they muſt ſtoope to me: And whoſoeuer dareth repyne at it, ſhall finally be confounded in his owne pride. Therefore to bee ſhort, let vs learne to glorifie our God. After what manner? Euen for his chooſing of vs. As for the caſtawayes, it is certaine that they will doe nothing but grinde their teeth, to blaſpheme GOD, and wee ſee it to bee ſo. But whereunto doeth Moſes bring vs backe? He ſaith not ẏ they which are choſen ſhall glorifie God for any thing that they haue of their owne. Howe is it then that God wilbe glorified at our hands? Euen in this, that we beholding the benefites which hee hath beſtowed vppon vs, ſhoulde not exalt our ſelues aboue others, thinking our ſelues to be better or more noble and excellent than our neighbors: but acknowledge that hee doeth all thoſe thinges of his owne free goodneſſe. This is the doctrine which wee haue to gather vppon this text.

And it is ſaid here *that God choſe Abrahams ſeede after him, becauſe of the loue that had gone long time before.* And this ſerueth for a larger proofe of the thing that I haue touched: accordingly to Saint Ro.9.11.12 Paules ſaying, that if God ſhewe mercie to men before they be borne, & before they haue done either good or euill: it is an excluding of all deſerts. And that is well worth the marking. For God hauing choſen to himſelfe the ſeede of Abraham becauſe of the adoption that had beene made: hath yet a narrower choyce, as hath bene declared alreadie. For Eſaw was of Abrahams linage as well as Iacob: and ſo was Iſmael as well as Iſaac: and yet yee ſee that both of them were cut off from Gods couenant, and his adoption abideth in the houſe of the others. What is the cauſe thereof? Gods choice, which I termed a teſtimonie of a more ſtrait and deare loue, which is the firſt, and which alſo I placed in the redemption made by Ieſus Chriſt: and I placed the preaching of the Goſpel in the ſeconde degree, and faith in the third degree. But foraſmuch as here is no ſpeaking but of the couenant that God made with Abraham: it is a generall Gen.17.1. couenant that extendeth to all his linage. Therfore all they that came of Abrahams ſeede are comprehended vnder that couenant which god had made. God in reſpect of himſelfe, knew who belonged to his election: but yet for al that, anon after, hee ſhooled out thoſe whom he thought good, and took whom he liſted to be of his houſhold. Foraſmuch then as wee ſee it is ſo: Let vs beare in minde that God continueth his mer-Deut.5.10. cie to a thouſande generations, as hee himſelfe ſaith. And yet notwithſtanding let vs aſſure our ſelues that in ſo doing his minde altereth not. When he ſetteth vp his Church in any place, he doeth it not vppon ſome ſudden braide, but becauſe he loued our fathers. Likewiſe nowadayes when we haue the Goſpel preached and the Sacraments miniſtred: whence ſhoulde we thinke that that commeth? Firſt we muſt vnderſtande, that the goſpel was preached through the whole world, and that our forefathers were gathered into Gods flock, to be made partakers of the ſaluation that was brought by Ieſus Chriſt. Neuertheleſſe by reaſon of their vnthankfulneſſe and wicked dealing, the diuell got the vpper hande of the worlde, ſo as there inſued horrible darkeneſſe and all thinges were put out of order. But nowe God hath as it were raiſed vp his worde againe: and what hath moued him to it? Euen the performance of his promiſe. For when hee had once extended his couenant through the whole worlde: it was his will to renew it againe, becauſe of the promiſe that hee had made afore. And if it be demaunded wherefore God woulde haue his Goſpel preached after that ſort: it was for that it pleaſed him to come neere to ſuch as liued at that time, becauſe he had choſen them before they were borne. Againe we muſt vnder- 1.Cor.10.11 Gal.4.4. ſtande that the accompliſhing of the fulneſſe of time wherof the ſcripture ſpeaketh, is not grounded vppon men, but vppon the good pleaſure of Eph.1.10. God. We muſt come to this point, that God had ordeined the preaching of his Goſpel in his own euerlaſting purpoſe: and that our atteining to the poſſeſſion of ſo great a benefite at this day by the vertue of that vnchangeable ordinãce, is becauſe he had called our fathers before we were borne, & that when they had made themſelues vnworthie of the kingdome of heauen, and baniſhed themſelues from it as much as in them lay: yet notwithſtanding God vouchſafed to cal vs againe, and all through his owne free goodneſſe. Thus yee ſee what wee haue to marke where it is ſaide, that God choſe the ſeede of Abraham after him.

And by the way let vs call to minde the thing that I haue touched alreadie, that is to wit, that Abraham was alone as the Prophet Eſaie vp- Eſa.51.2 braideth the Iewes. The trueth is that he exhorteth them to be of good cheere, though they be ſcattered abrode and caſt downe. Haue an eye (ſaith he) to the quarrie whence ye were taken, and vnto your originall. What was it? was it a great and infinite people? No: It was a ſillie olde man al alone without child or iſſue. Behold, your mother Sara was barren all the time of her life, and her age was a further let that ſhe might not conceiue: and yet hath God taken ye out of that quarrie, that is to ſay, of one man alone. Why then ſhould yee bee afraide though yee were vtterly conſumed? But yet for all this, hee vpbraideth them with their vnthankfulneſſe, becauſe they truſted ſtill in their owne greatneſſe, and if there were any likelihood at all, by and by it puffed them vp. And therefore let vs learne by this text, firſt that Gods chooſing of our forefathers was not for any worthineſſe or nobilitie in them ſelues: but becauſe he had pitie on them, which pitying importeth that they were in wretched caſe, and had beene vtterly forlorne, if God had not gathered them into the hope which they coulde neuer haue conceiued of themſelues. Marke that for one point.

And ſecondly if wee ſee Gods Church ſcattered, ſo as wee be fewe in number, and it ſeemeth that there is no certaintie nor aſſurance for vs, but all is like to goe to hauock in ẏ turning of a hande: Let it not diſmay vs. And why ſo? For God hauing once choſen Abraham did alſo multiplie his ſeede, notwithſtanding that hee was a man ſtricken in yeares, drooping, and childleſſe. So likewiſe nowe, although there be but a handfull of vs, and we be deſpiſed and without power or ſtrength to maintaine our ſelues: yet can God increaſe vs, and hauing increaſed vs he can preſerue vs. Wherefore let vs learne to looke wholly to his goodnes, when the ſtate of the Church lieth in hazarde, and let vs not be out of heart: but

but although that to the worldwarde wee ſee it caſt downe, and ſo diminiſhed as it ſeemeth as good as nothing at all: yet let vs not ceaſe to be of good courage ſtill, and to waite till God performe that which he hath done in all ages. For the manner of ſetting vp of the Church in good ſtate againe, and of the preſeruing thereof, muſt be wonderfull to the ſight of men.

Now after that Moſes hath ſpoken ſo, he addeth, *Thy God choſe thee, euen of purpoſe to bring thee out of the land of Egypt, before his face.* He ſheweth that the deliuerance of the people out of the lande of Egypt, proceeded of the ſaid election, and conſequently of Gods free loue. And it is a point which wee ought to marke well. For it behoueth vs to be led from one thing to another. As for example, when God doeth vs any good, we doe indeede perceiue his goodneſſe: but wee muſt mount yet higher. Wherefore hath GOD prouided ſo for vs? not for any worthines or deſert of ours: but becauſe he had choſen vs. And when or wherefore choſe hee vs? Wee muſt not range any further, but holde our ſelues to this grounde of Moſeſes. But in any wiſe let vs marke whereof hee ſpeaketh, that wee may the better make our profite thereby. *Thy God deliuered thee out of the lande of Egypt, becauſe he had choſen thee before, yea euen before thou wart borne.* In ſo ſaying hee ſheweth, that although this redemption was (to ſee to) but a deliuerance of the bodie: yet was it a figure of ẏ ſaluation that God had promiſed afore in the perſon of the Redeemer: and although the deliuerie of the people of Iſrael out of the lande of Egypt, was but as a temporall redemption: yet doth Moſes ſay that it depended vpon Gods freebeſtowed adoption. Seeing it is ſo in that caſe: what is to bee thought nowe, when wee bee to be brought out of the gulfes of hell to bee conueyed into heauen? Eph.2.3 6. (For by nature wee bee curſed, and plunged in the gulfes of hell:) are wee able to get thence? Doeth it not belong onely vnto God to deliuer vs thence? And if it were meete that God ſhould chooſe the people of Iſrael to deliuer them from the tyrannie of Pharao: let vs conclude, that by a more ſtrong reaſon it was meete that when he ſhoulde deliuer vs from the bondage of the diuell and from the bottomles pittes of hell: hee ſhoulde declare this vnto vs: that he had choſen and adopted vs. Wherfore let vs not onely take holde of the death and paſſion which our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt ſuffered for vs, and of his ſauing of vs by his grace: but alſo let vs come to the meane degree, namely that the cauſe why wee bee made partakers of the ſaluation that Ieſus Chriſt hath brought vs, is for that GOD hath adopted vs. And when did hee that? After hee had founde ſome vertue or ſome good forwardneſſe in vs? no: but before wee were borne, and before wee had done either good or badde, yea Rom.9.11. Eph.2.5. euen at ſuch time as wee were alreadie vowed and giuen vp to endeleſſe deſtruction. This is it which we haue to note in the firſt place.

Neuertheleſſe it is not for nought that Moſes ſaieth alſo, *that God brought out the people before his face:* as if hee ſhoulde ſay, hee was their guide. For had GOD reached out his hande to his people but for once, and thencefoorth haue let them alone: to what purpoſe had that beene? It is not ynough for a mother to helpe vp her young childe when hee is falne downe: for hee may fall a hundred thouſande times, and in the ende breake his necke: but ſhee muſt holde him vp ſtill. Euen ſo our Lorde declareth that it was not ynough for him to haue ſhewed himſelfe to bee a deliuerer of his people for a day or two: but hee helde on ſtill, and conueyed them before his face, as a man that hath his eye continually vppon his childe. To bee ſhort, hee ſheweth heere that his goodneſſe abode with the people euen to the ende, ſo as hee helde on in helping and ſuccoring them, and mainteined them throughout. And why? for elſe his bringing of them out of the lande of Egypt had beene in vaine.

And afterwarde hee addeth, *To deſtroy people mightier and ſtronger than they, that their lande might bee giuen them to inherite.* Hee ſheweth that God ceaſed not to goe through with his fauour towardes the Iewes, till hee had performed the promiſe that hee made to their fathers: that is to wit, of putting them in poſſeſſion of the lande of Chanaan as hee had promiſed. But (as I haue ſaide alreadie) wee muſt compare our ſelues with the ſtate of that people. And therefore let vs learne, that God not onely draweth vs out of the gulfe of hell, and out of the curſedneſſe wherein wee were borne, and which would holde vs alwayes locked vnder his wrath: but alſo holdeth on and continueth his goodnes towards vs, ſo as hee will not miſſe but haue his eye ſtill vpon vs, to watch ouer vs vnto the end. And if our Lorde had not ſuch a care to defende vs: in what taking were wee? Should not the diuell ſnatch vs vp euerie minute of an houre? We ſee he trotteth vp and downe ſeeking euer to deuour, 1.Pet.5.8. and hee hath meanes to doe it. And could we ſcape his pawes if we were not defēded from thē by ẏ goodnes of our God? So then let vs vnderſtande, that God doth not onely beginne our ſaluation, and then let vs alone to ſhift for our ſelues: but that he goeth through with vs as long as we haue nede, and performeth the thing that he hath begunne. Thus *doth he keepe vs alwayes in his ſight:* that is to ſay, hee neuer forgetteth vs, but conſidereth our neceſſities, to prouide for them and to remedie them in due ſeaſon. Now if God haue his eyes ſo open to thinke vppon vs, that hee may ſuccour vs at our neede: Let vs on our ſide alſo walke as before his face. And let Pſal.116.9. Eſa.29.15.& 40.27. vs marke that wee cannot hide our ſelues from him: and therefore ſeeing he yeeldeth vs ſuch fauour and honour as to haue a care of vs: it is good reaſon that all our life ſhould bee anſwerable thereunto. And ſo, Gods goodneſſe ought ſo little to make vs negligent, that it ſhoulde rather ſpurre vs forward to repaire to him with an earneſter minde. In deede a man ſhall ſee ſome dogges and ſwine that will defame this doctrine of Election. When it is tolde them that God knoweth which are his, and that he wil neuer ſuffer them to periſh: very wel (ſay they), then wil I ceaſe to doe well:and ſo they mocke at God and his doctrine, ſhewing indeede that they neuer wiſt what the worde *Election* or *Choyce* meaneth. Phil.2.12. But as for vs, wee muſt take aſſurance by Gods grace, to liue warely and circumſpectly: and good reaſon haue we to humble our ſelues, conſidering that we were damned and forlorne, and our God hath deliuered vs, and moreouer ſhewed Eph.2.5. Col.2.13. 14.15. himſelfe ſo bountifull towardes vs as to make vs heires of his kingdome, euen vs that were the Phil.2.13. bondſlaues of Satan. And on the otherſide it ſtandeth vs on hande to walke in feare, ſeeing wee can do nothing at all of our ſelues, furtherforth than Gods grace vttereth it ſelfe in vs. Againe it behooueth vs to pray vnto him, foraſmuch as if he ſhoulde let vs alone from the one ende to the other, wheras we be now aduaunced vp aloft, we ſhoulde tumble into the pitte euerie minute of an houre. Therefore wee haue cauſe heere to call vpon our God, and to reſort vnder his protection. Furthermore ſeing it is ſaid that Deut.31.21. Ier.16.17. hee guideth vs and keepeth watch for our welfare: it becommeth vs to bee the more wakened to walk as in his preſence, knowing that he marketh, Act.1.24. not onely all our doings, but alſo our affections and thoughts. Beſides this, ſeeing that Moſes knitteth here the deliuerance of the Iſraelits out of Egypt, with their poſſeſſing of the lande of Chanaan: Let vs marke well that God will haue all his benefits linked together which he beſtoweth vpon vs, vntil we be brought to the full perfection of our ſaluation. For it is not to be thought that God letteth vs alone when he hath once called vs vnto himſelfe, ſo as we ſhoulde be in daunger of being left vp to the ſpoyle: but contrariwiſe let vs mark, that he will go through with the thing that he hath begunne, as S. Paul declareth in the firſt to the Philippians, where Phil.1.5.6. hee ſaieth yͤ this his calling of vs, importeth a warrantiſe that wee ſhall neuer bee left deſtitute of his defence, vntill hee haue brought vs to euerlaſting ſaluation. Thus yee ſee that the thing which we haue to beare in mind, is that as God is the beginner of our ſaluation, ſo is he the finiſher thereof alſo.

And as touching Moſeſes interlacing *of Gods deſtroying and driuing out of people that were ſtronger and mightier than they*: it is true that God vſed an extraordinarie manner of dealing, in his rooting out of the Chananites and ſuch other like as dwelt in the countrie which the Iewes poſſeſſed: but yet haue wee cauſe to thinke vppon the like at this day. For whither is it that wee ought to goe? whither doth our Lorde call vs? To the heauenly life frõ whence euen the verie Angels are falne. For wee know that the diuels, which as nowe are not onely baniſhed from the glorie of the heauenly kingdome, but alſo appointed to horrible damnation, were ſometime as the children of God, and helde the roome whereinto our Lorde calleth vs at this day. And nowe, are wee worthyer than the Angels which fell in that ſort from aboue? Moreouer, if wee Rom.11.16.17. come but to men: were not the Iewes a holy lynage? Sprang they not of the roote of Abraham? Eph.2.12. Yes: and what are we on our ſide? did the kingdome of heauen belong to vs? No: no more than to the wilde Canniballes. But yet thoſe natural children and as it were lawful heires by yͤ adoption of their fathers, are caſt off and baniſhed from the ſaluation wherevnto God calleth vs at this time. They be driuen out, and we ſucceede as it were in an emptie place. Haue not wee cauſe then to magnifie the grace that God ſheweth vs in theſe dayes? Doeth it not appeare that this text ſerueth not onely for the Iewes, but alſo ought rather to be applyed to our vſe at this day? Then let vs vnderſtande, that ſeeing God hath choſen vs to himſelfe, wee ought in any wiſe to be wholy his, & to continue ſetled in the poſſeſſion of his grace, howbeit not by walking in ſtatelines & preſumptiõ, ſo as we ſhould be proud of it: but by acknowledging with all lowlineſſe, that wee hang wholly vppon the free goodneſſe of our GOD. And let vs not ceaſe to aſſure our ſelues that he will go through with the thing that hee hath begunne in vs, at leaſtwiſe if wee abide vnder the guiding of his hand, to ſuffer our ſelues to be ruled by him.

Nowe let vs kneele downe in the preſence of our good God with acknowledgement of our faultes, praying him to rid vs of them by forgiuing them for our Lord Ieſus Chriſtes ſake: and therewithall to worke in ſuch ſort as wee may daily labour to renounce all our wicked luſtes, and whatſoeuer elſe hindreth vs to ſerue him, and altogether to rule our ſelues according to his commaundements. And ſo let vs all ſay, Almightie God heauenly father, &c.

On Munday the xvj. of Iune. 1555.

The xxix. Sermon which is the eleuenth vpon the fourth Chapter.

39 Vnderſtand therefore this day, and lay it vp in thyne heart, that the Lord is God in heauen aboue, and vppon the earth beneath, and there is none other but hee.

40 And keepe his ordinances and commaundementes which I command thee this day, that it may goe well with thee and with thy children after thee, and that thou maieſt prolong thy dayes in the lande which the Lord thy God giueth thee for euer.

41 Then Moſes ſeuered three Cities beyond Iordan towards the ſunriſing,

42 That the manſlaier might flee thither, that had ſlaine his neighbour vnwillinglie, and not hated him before: who by fleeing to one of thoſe Cities, ſhould bee in ſafetie.

43 Namelie, Bozor in the wilderneſſe in the plaine countrie, among the Rubenites: and Ramoth in Galaad among the Gaddites: and Golam in Baſan among the Manaſſites,

IT was ſhewed yeſterday, that wee muſt aſſure our ſelues that God will continue his goodneſſe towardes vs, and that when hee hath once begunne, wee muſt not doubt but hee will ſhewe himſelfe a Sauiour vnto the ende. When wee haue founde him ſuch a one, wee muſt walke on in the ſaide truſt, that we may call vppon him all our life long: for elſe wee ſhoulde bee ſaued but for a day, and that were all one as if God had neuer ſhewed himſelfe to vs at all. Therefore our hope muſt extende to the time comming, and when God hath ridde vs from Satans tyrannie wherein wee were to make vs inioy his heritage, we muſt holde on ſtill as Moſes ſaith here. True it is that God hath not brought vs out of Hebr.9.14. Egypt, but hee hath deliuered vs from the bondage of the diuell and of death. And therefore let vs truſt that he will leade vs to the place that he hath promiſed vs, that is to wit, to the immortall life. But in the meane while we muſt conſider to what ende he calleth vs, and to what end Lu.1.74.75. he beſtoweth ſo manie giftes vppon vs: namely Eph.1.4. to the ende that we ſhould ſerue him all our life long. And that is the thing which Moſes addeth as nowe, and which was touched alſo as yeſterday: namely that our truſting in God muſt not make vs ydle and ſlothfull, but rather the more inflame vs to loue and feare him.

Therefore he ſaith here, *vnderſtande thou this day, and thinke well vpon it in thine heart, and beare it in remembrance, that there is none other God but the euerlaſting, neither aboue nor beneath.* The cheefe intent of Moſes is to ſhewe, that Gods reaching of vs his hand vnto vs, it not to the ende that we ſhoulde haue no care to honour him: but rather that we ſhould bend our ſelues wholly thereunto, and that wee perceyuing howe hee hath honored vs ſo highly as to chooſe vs for his people, ſhould ſhewe in verie deed by our ſeruing of him as our God, that his ſo doing is not in vaine. That is ẏ meaning of Moſes. But yet therewithall he doeth vs to vnderſtande, that we ſhall neuer be able to yeelde God his due honour, vntill we knowe him. For if we imagine newe Gods of Ro.1.23.25. our owne heade, we diſguiſe the liuing God, and bereaue him of his chiefe honour. I ſay hee is diſguiſed, when we attribute that thing to the creatures, which is peculiar to him alone, and it is al one as if we did make ydols, though we confeſſe it not with our mouthes, as a great number do deale, which cā proteſt welynough that their intent is to haue no moe but the onely God, and yet notwithſtanding faile not to robbe him of the thinges that are peculiar to his maieſtie, dealing them to the creatures at their owne pleaſure, as though it were ſome bootie. When GOD is ſo ſpoyled, it is all one as if men ſhoulde ſet vp ydoles in deſpyte of him. And ſo yee ſee wherefore Moſes ſaieth, *Nowe vnderſtande that the Lorde is God both aboue and beneath, and that there is none other.* Heere is the foundation where vppon wee muſt grounde Gods ſeruice: namely to knowe that hee cannot abide any companion, but that wee muſte diſcerne him from all mens deuices and imaginations, to ſaye, This is the GOD that hath reueiled himſelfe vnto vs. And Moſes exhorteth the people to thinke vppon it that they might beare it in minde. For if wee haue not that care with vs, we ſhall wonder to ſee howe ſoone ſome wicked fancie will take place in our heade. If ſuch as knowe the trueth doe not ſticke to it, and walke warely and carefully, they ſhall ſoone let themſelues runne at rouers. And why? For naturally wee bee inclyned to leaſings, and thereto wee bee ſo wauering as is Pſal.116.11. & Rom.3.4. pittie to ſee. Therefore it is not ynough for vs to haue knowen the true liuing God for a time: but wee muſt dayly thinke vppon the thing that is tolde vs, and wee muſt continually renewe the remembrance of it. For otherwiſe wee ſhall bee at our wittes ende to ſee what ſuperſtition will ſteppe in our way. Then let vs marke well, that it is a continuall exerciſe for vs all our life long, to knowe which is our true GOD that hath manifeſted himſelfe vnto vs.

And nowe that Moſes hath ſpoken ſo of knowledge: hee ſheweth that our confeſſing with our mouth and our feeling alſo with our heart that there is but onely one GOD is nothing woorth: vnleſſe wee ſhewe by our deedes that wee take him for our father, our maſter, and him, to whome wee belong. And for the ſame cauſe hee ſaieth *that he hath giuen vs his lawes, commaundementes, and ſtatutes.* So then, wee ſee that the knowing of God is not a deade and vneffectuall thing: but that it ought to preuaile with vs, ſo as wee may ſhewe that wee haue beene ſchooled by Gods worde, by keeping his lawes and commaundementes. The ende therefore whereunto God hath choſen vs of his owne free goodneſſe, and the ende whereunto hee mainteyneth vs, and continu- Luk.1.74.75 eth his grace towards vs is this: that we ſhoulde Rom.14.8. glorifie him not onely with our mouthes, but alſo with our whole life. But heere is yet one worde more to be noted: which is, that Moſes addeth, *that he ſetteth before Gods people, his laws & commandements:* wherein he bereueth them of al excuſe of ignorance. As if he ſhould ſay, ye cannot alledge ẏ yee know not how to ſerue God: for I do ſhew you his will, and therfore ſtriue not againſt him. So then after as our Lord granteth vs the grace to be taught purely by his word, let vs mark that we be the more bound vnto him, and the leſſe to bee excuſed, ſo as it is not for vs to vſe any ſhifting. For wherof is it long that we yeeld him not his due praiſe, and that wee liue not as we ought to do, ſeing he teacheth vs what to do, and ſheweth how we ought to liue? Wherfore let vs labor to make the doctrine powerfull which is dayly preached vnto vs, aſſuring our ſelues that the preaching therof is to the end that God ſhould be the better honored among vs. This is the effect of that which is ſet downe here.

Now it is ſet down conſequently, that *before they paſſed Iordan, Moſes did ſeuer out three Cities in the land that had ben conquered from the Amorrhits,* (as we haue ſeene heretofore) *& from their neighbours, as the land of Baſan: and thoſe three Cities, were appointed for ſuch to flie vnto as had ſlaine any bodie through vnaduiſednes.* This Law is declared more Num.35.15 22. fully in other places: and thence muſt wee fetch the expoſition of this preſent text. God had ſaid Deut.19.4. and ordeyned, that if a man bearing no hatred to another man, did ſlea him vnaduiſedly, that is to ſay by chaunce medly (as they term it) without pretenſed purpoſe: hee ſhoulde not be puniſhed. For why? the manſlaughters that are puniſhable muſt either be wilful, or elſe proceed of reuenge, or of ſpyte, or of lying in wait which is worſt, & greateſt fault of al. But if a man ſeing no bodie did ſhoot an arrow & hit a man, & the man dyed: this manſlaughter was not puniſhable as a felonie. Neuertheleſſe God woulde not haue it ſimplie pardoned: and that was for two cauſes. The one was to the ende that men ſhoulde in any wiſe miſlike of any murder and the ſhedding of mans bloude: and the other was, that the kinſfolke of the partie that was ſlaine ſhoulde not be prouoked to reuenge: And therefore God had ordeyned that hee which had giuen the ſtroke ſhoulde get himſelfe out of the way, and keepe himſelfe as a priſoner till the death of the high Prieſt: And then had hee as it were a Iubilee, ſo that when there was once a newe high Prieſt, then the partie that had ſo fled to the place appointed, whether it were at the ende of tenne, twentie, or thirtie yeeres, might returne to his owne houſe if he liſted: but vntil that time, it behoued him to be as a baniſhed man. That is the thing which is ſpoken of here as nowe. Moſes rehearſeth not the Law as it was giuen of God & as it is ſet down in the booke of numbers: Num.35.15 but yet in reporting the ſtorie, therewithall hee giueth an incling of the foreſaide lawe and ordinance as we haue ſaide. Nowe for the better vnderſtanding hereof, we muſt firſt marke the thing that I touched afore: that is to wit, that God abhorreth murther, inſomuch that although he puniſh not vnaduiſed manſlaughters rigorouſly: yet he chaſtiſeth them: wherby hee ſheweth that he miſlyketh of bludſhed. This is a thing well worthy to bee noted. For firſt wee ſee thereby, how greatly God loueth vs: & he ſhew- Gen.9.6. eth the cauſe thereof in the ninth of Geneſis, to be for that we be created after his image. Hee ſaieth that the ſleaing of a man is the doing of wrong to himſelfe. Yee ſee then that God beareth vs ſuch loue, that he taketh himſelfe to bee wounded and miſuſed in our perſons, becauſe he hath made vs after his owne image. And that ought to bee a warrant of his great goodnes and louing kindneſſe towards vs, to make vs to truſt wholy vnto him & to honor him. And ſo ye ſee whereat we ought to beginne, when it is tolde vs that God hateth murther and cannot abide it: and therefore that when a man hath ſlaine his neighbour wilfully, that is to ſay, either through malice, or in quareling, or for reuenge, or by laying waite for him: hee is ſo deteſted of God that he is not worthy to liue in the worlde. And in good ſooth wee ſee the ſame by another Lawe, where god curſeth whole countries for ſuffering Numb.21.1. & 35.33. of murders. For it is ſaide there, that if a deade bodie bee founde, ſearch muſt bee made with all diligence, to finde out the murtherer. Why ſo? To the intent (ſaieth hee) that the lande bee not defiled therewith. Wee ſee hereby that if Magiſtrates and Iudges ſhut their eyes and make np reckoning to puniſh a murder: it is as a cōmon defiling, which prouoketh Gods vengeance vpon the whole land. And therefore it ſtandeth them on hande to conſider that God ſetteth great ſtore by mens liues. Againe if the dooer of the wicked deede bee not founde: let the Iudges (ſaieth hee) make ſolemne proteſtation, in this wiſe: We haue inquired diligently whence this murther ſhoulde proceede, but wee cannot finde the dooer thereof, and therefore are wee cleare and guildeſſe of it before God. And moreouer Gods will was that they ſhoulde offer ſacrifice for the ſame. Nowe then wee ſee howe lothſome wilfull murthers are before GOD. I call them all wilfull murthers which are committed through trecherie or in rage, or howſoeuer elſe it bee where there was any enmitie or variance afore. Yea & although it be lawfull for men to kill their enemies in the 2.Chron.22 8. and 28.3. warres that are good and holie: yet doeth the Scripture vſe a manner of ſpeech to ſhewe vs that GOD hath alwayes miſliked of murthering. For there it is ſaide of a valiaunt man, howbeit without blaming of him, that hee defiled his handes. Is it ſo? Nay rather it is worthie of praiſe that a ſtoute fellowe being inured to the warres, ſhoulde goe through with his duetie. For if hee offer no man any wrong, but behaue himſelfe valiantly when hee commeth to the incounter, doeth that deſerue blame? No: but as I ſaide afore, Gods meaning is to ſhewe vs, that wee ought to tender our neighbours liues in ſuch ſort, as not to wiſhe their death, nor to further the ſame, vnleſſe wee intende to violate his image. That is the thing in effect, which is heere ſet out vnto vs. Nowe then if God doe ſo abhorre the manſlaughters that are committed when men aſſaile vs, ſo as we ſeeme to haue iuſt cauſe to defend our ſelues: I pray you what is to be ſaid to it whē men fall to quareling with their neighbours, & will needes ſhed bloud of ſet purpoſe? What meaneth this? Suppoſe we yͭ Gods curſe is not doubled vpō the lande, land, when ſuch crimes are borne withall and maintained? It is ſaid that if a murther bee let paſſe, and the doer of it ſcapes vnknowen, Gods wrath is thereby prouoked: and if the murtherer be knowen, then is it a more heynous crime to let him ſcape vnpuniſhed. But if a theefe lye in waite for a mā that miſtruſteth no ſuch thing, and ſetteth vppon him: is it not a plaine ſpiting of God, if that bee ſuffered? And if it be not any one man that is aſſaulted, but there are ſuch other luſtie mates as will ſay, let vs kill and ſlea, & when they haue their ſwordes out, they care not againſt how many they drawe, but make a common hauocke, and ſuch ſlaughter as all is on a gore bloud: are not the folkes that ſtirre vp ſuch broyles, worſe than the theeues and robbers in the woods? Men wil at leaſtwiſe miſtruſt theeues in a foreſt: but [who woulde thinke] that where there ſhould be ciuill order, where Lawes [ought to] raigne, where there is a ſeate of Iuſtice: there men would fill all things with bloud, and violate ſo many images of God as come in their way, & that the ſame ſhould be ſuffered? I pray you is it not a bewraying that wee bee loth that GOD ſhoulde raigne among vs, or haue vs vnder his protection? Yes. Therefore let vs marke well what is ſaid here concerning wilfull murthers, how there is no pardon for them, but God will haue them rooted out of the worlde and executed by Iuſtice, which haue violated his image. And why? To the intent wee ſhoulde alwayes beare in minde the thing that I ſpake of before, that is to wit, how greatly he loueth vs, and that foraſmuch as he hath adopted vs to be his children, he will haue a continuall care of vs, and keepe vs as charely as the Apple of his eye, as he ſpeaketh by his Prophet Zacharie. Now if it bee ſo that wee deſire God (as the holy Ghoſt teacheth vs) to keepe vs as the Apple of his eye, that is to ſay, as the tendereſt and delicateſt part of him: I pray you ought not we to gather therby, that ſeeing he loueth vs, he will haue vs alſo to loue one another, yea euen with more than brotherly loue? Yes: and therefore let vs learne to abſtaine from all wrong and outrage. Moreouer whenſoeuer any murther is committed, or whenſoeuer any folke are ſo wicked and cruel as to goe about to ſhed mans bloud: let vs make account of them, not onely as enemies to men, but alſo as deadly enemies to God, for as much as he ſheweth himſelfe to bee their aduerſarie, and telleth vs that he taketh it as an aſſaulting of him in his owne perſon, and in his owne Maieſtie. That is the thing which wee haue to marke.

Zach. 2.8.

And herewithall wee muſt paſſe yet further. For wee knowe how S. Iohn ſaieth, that whoſoeuer hateth his neighbor in his hart, is a murtherer before God. True it is ẏ wee muſt in any wiſe keepe our handes cleane from all iniurie and outrage: but yet muſt our heart alſo be pure and cleane before God. If it bee not ſo: we ſhall bee blamed, not for drawing of our ſwordes, but for deſiring to ouerthrowe our neighbour, and for labouring, ſo much as was in vs, to bring it to paſſe by ouerthwart meanes. Albeit that men can not blame vs, yet doeth God condemne vs for murtherers, yea though our hatred were ſo ſecret as wee neuer made countenance of it. For whereas S. Iohn ſaieth, *he that hateth his brother in his heart:* it is al one as if he ſaide, although the hatred appeare not, nor men can beare witneſſe of it: yet are wee faultie, if our heart be infected with any rancour, or enmitie. Sith it is ſo, let vs beare well in minde, that our Lordes intent is to perſwade vs to brotherly loue among our ſelues, and to agree togither, indeuouring to helpe one another. For all mankinde is knit togither as it were into one bodie. And therfore let vs learn to abhorre all murther, as well which is committed againſt other folkes, as which is meant againſt our ſelues. Howbeit let vs learne to hate (that is to ſay to condemne) cōtinually all murder, without ſaying little or much in excuſe of it: in ſo much that although wee were guiltie of it, yet wee ſhould iudge againſt our ſelues if wee would iudge rightly. Will wee then condemne murther in another man? Let vs condemne hatred in our ſelues, by abſtaining from all malice and reuengement, that our heartes may be rid of it. If we deale with ſuch vprightneſſe, then wil God dwell with vs and make vs to proſper.

1. Iohn 3.15

But yet for al this, it is ſaide that the manſlaughters which are not committed through malice, nor in rage, nor by quarelling, ſhall bee pardoned: and not without cauſe. For as I tolde you, the crimes that are puniſhable, muſt bee committed with a will and intent. Then if one ſhoote, and meaning to leuell at his marke doe hit a man by the way, he is not puniſhable: for euen the Lawes of man haue ordained ſo, and there is an example of it ſet downe in another place of this booke, where it is ſaid that if a man bee cropping of a tree, and his Ax fall downe vpon one that is vnder the tree, he ſhall not bee guiltie of the falling of his Ax vppon the head of him whom he perceiued not. And why? For it was God that did it (ſaieth the text,) whereas we ſay it was by chaunce or fortune: Bicauſe wee cannot conceiue that things happen otherwiſe than by chaunce. Ye ſee here howe it is ſaide to bee Gods doing: that is to ſay, it was the will of God who gouerneth all things by his ſecret prouidence, that ſuch a one ſhould bee taken out of the worlde. Yet notwithſtanding, he that gaue the ſtripe vnawares, ought not to be puniſhed as if he had killed one in anger and in a fray. Thus wee ſee heere what manſlaughters are pardonable.

Deut. 19.5.

Howbeit, there are two thinges to bee noted therewithall: the one is, that inquiſition muſt be made of it: and the other is, that although ſuch a one bee not to bee taken as a felon, yet doeth God ſeparate him from other men, & will haue him to bee as a priſoner for a time, to the intent he ſhould be an example to others to ſhun murder the more, ſeeing that ẏ manſlaughter which was cōmitted vnwillingly is puniſhed after that faſhion. As touching inquiſition and making of ſearch, it is a notable point. For we ſee how men are abuſed with the thinges that are done in fauour of offenders: in ſo much that if any thing be alledged that may moue to pitie, and a countenance bee ſet vppon the matter that the offender is verie ſorie: men muſt ſhut their eyes at him, and ſay, alas, what ſhould a man do? And this is done dayly; and woulde God that examples therof were not ſo common. Iuſtice is commonly abuſed: in ſo much that if there bee any cauſe or reaſon to be ſhewed that ſome mã may happen not to bee ſo faultie as he is accuſed to be: the ſame ſhall bee wreſted to another mans defence, which is not worthy to haue any fauour at all. And why is that? For want of examination. And by that meane wicked men are ſtyll maintained. For were there diligent examination made, and things ſifted to the bottome: men might ſoone diſcerne betweene them that are faultie, and them that are faultleſſe. But what? men are contented to ſhutte their eyes, and although they cannot but ſee, yet will they make countenance as though they knewe it not. And ſo are the wicked diſcharged. The matters lye open to the worlde, they may bee pointed out with ones finger, the euidence is too too apparant: and yet nothing can bee knowen. And why? Bicauſe men liſt not. O ye purblinde folkes which bleare your eyes in ſuch ſort, yee ſhall be driuen in the ende; to knowe what place yee hold, & that he which ordeined you to be iudges, ſeeth for you, yea and that he ſeeth clearely, and writeth ỹ things in his Regiſters which you forget and wilfully ouerſlip; and he will put you in remembraunce of them to your coſt. For when ſo heynous offences are committed, our Lorde will not haue them let ſlip vnder colour of ſimplicitie or pretence of ignorance: but he wil haue them ſifted out, and information giuen of them, & the truth tried by all meanes poſſible, ſo as mẽ may not ſay, where are we nowe? What is to bee done? And when it commeth to iudgement, he wil haue ỹ matter laid forth & handled plainely, ſo as the truth of it may be knowen: and after al this diligence vſed, he will haue ſentence giuen according to ỹ which is knowen. That is the firſt point: namely that wee ſuffer not faultes and crimes to ſlip for want of due inquiſition and examination how the caſe ſtandeth.

There is a ſecond point which I haue touched alreadie: and that is, ỹ God would there ſhould bee ſome correction for ſuch as commit manſlaughter vnawares. And thereby he ſheweth (as I ſaid afore) that he loueth mankinde dearely: in ſo much that if wee offend that way, although it be not of malice, but by chaunce (as they ſay,) & in ſuch wiſe as the lawe which he hath ordained, meaneth, & although we ment not ſo to do: yet neuertheleſſe we muſt feele by experience & ſee with our eyes, howe deare mans life is vnto him. This is another thing which wee haue to marke vpon this place.

And herewithall let vs marke alſo, ỹ God intended to preuent ỹ daungers, (as we haue ſaid) ỹ the kinsfolk might not be prouoked: for we bee too much ſubiect to our paſſions, & therefore he purpoſed to cut of occaſions & obiectes as they terme them. In deede it is a wicked imperfectiõ in me, & it is a vice worthie to bee condemned, when I hate one ỹ hath ſlaine my brother or my neighbour vnwillingly, or when I beare him any grudge. And why? For the poore mã is not blame worthy, bicauſe God acquitteth him, & there is no fault in him. And yet for all that, I can not finde in my heart to looke vppon him: but if he come towards, my heart riſeth againſt him, & I am mooued at him. Therefore am I to blame. Neuertheleſſe GOD ſeeing our frailtie, hath vouchſafed to beare with vs in ỹ behalfe, & hath not left vs without a remedie for it. Now wee are warned thereby, to eſchew the occaſions of al euill to the vttermoſt of our power: & if God on his part haue vouchſafed to deliuer vs from ſuch temptations, do not they ouerthrow themſelues wilfully, which thruſt thẽſelues into them? Sure this leſſon is verie profitable, & extendeth verie farre. For we ſee how a great nõber ſticke not to fling out at randõ & to offẽd God. And wherby? Through raſhnes. To their owne ſeeming they be able to reſiſt whatſoeuer cõmeth in their way: & thereupon they ſtep forth boldly and without diſcretion, & they maruaile greatly ỹ God ſhold diſappoint their ouerluſtineſſe, ſo as they neede not any thing elſe to make them to ſtumble, yea and to tumble into ſome groſſe fault. Seeing then that we be ouer hardy in hazarding our ſelues againſt a nomber of temptations: let vs learne ỹ God by giuing vs ſuch a lawe, doth warne vs generally to walke in feare. It is true ỹ if God call mee to any thing, all the daungers in the worlde muſt not hold me back nor ſtoppe me. For why? God calleth mee, and he will ſhield mee. But if I of mine owne fooliſh raſhneſſe will needes aduenture vppon a thing that God commaundeth mee not: if it fall out to my harme, what is the cauſe thereof but the ouerweening & preſumptuouſnes wherewith I was puffed vp? For I conſidered not mine owne frailtie, that I ſhould haue humbled my ſelfe before God to haue walked in his feare. Then let vs marke well, that wee muſt not caſt our ſelues ouer boldly in daunger, and promiſe our ſelues this and that as we ſee a nomber doe, which ſay, as for mee, I can well ſerue God: Although other men misbehaue themſelues, yet may I liue vertuouſly euen among the wicked. It is true: but art thou ſure ỹ thou doeſt it? No: but this luſtie gallant that ſpeaketh thus ſtoutly, intermingleth himſelfe with the wicked and with their abhominations. If he heare Gods name blaſphemed and outrageouſly miſuſed a hundred thouſand times, he winketh at it and vaileth his bonnet: if he ſee any looſeneſſe and vnhoneſt pranckes hee intermedleth himſelfe with them: and if he happen not to giue his full conſent to them, yet he withſtandeth them not. Thus ye ſee how that vnder the colour of hardineſſe mẽ caſt themſelues into daungers which they ought to ſhunne; conſidering that God warneth them of them after that ſort.

And herewithal Moſes here ſetteth down the inquiſition that was to bee made, that is to ſay, *Whether there were any hatred at that preſent time or before.* Wherein he ſheweth, ỹ it is not ynough to heare a mans confeſſion, and his proteſtation ỹ he did it not vpon any malice, wee muſt not ſtay there. For if the offenders may bee beleeued; there ſhall neuer be anie hanged, they will well ynough cleare themſelues, and it is a common rule among them: but the iudge muſt be of wiſedom to bowlt out things, & to ſeeke out the truth ſome where elſe than at the mouth of the offender. True it is that the confeſſion of offenders ought to be takẽ, but if a mã ſhould tarie til they vtter things of their owne accord, & condemne themſelues: it were too great a mockerie. Therfore they muſt be ſtraitened and conſtrained to ſay the truth, and triall muſt bee made by other meanes, that men may be aſſured and vtterly out of doubt of it. And euen verie nature it ſelfe ſheweth it vs, though there were no lawe written by Moſes. Thus ye ſee what we haue to remember vpon this place.

Whereas it is ſaid *that inquiſition muſt bee made [whether there were any malice borne] to day or yeſterday or of any time afore*: it is a manner of ſpeache that is rife in the Hebrew tongue, whereby is meant whether any hatred or rancour were perceiued to haue bin betwixt them at any time before. And why? For it is to bee preſumed ẏ where there is any hatred, the partie goeth to worke wͭ malice. And contrariwiſe, if it bee found: ẏ there was no quarell, no ill will, no hatred, no rancour: can it bee ſaide that the manſlaughter was committed of malice and ſet purpoſe? No. And hereby we be put in minde, that the life and conuerſation of a man ought to direct and leade vs to the finding out of the matter. True it is that we ought alwais to iudge of matters without reſpect of perſons, and we muſt euer haue an eye to the deede & to the deſert of the caſe as they terme it: but that is for the time comming. I meane not that diffinitiue ſentence ſhoulde bee giuen according to that which hath bene knowen by a man aforetimes: but howe ſhoulde men deale to come to the trueth of things done? Let them conſider what manner a one the man hath bin. I ſee that one is a deſpiſer of GOD, I ſee a lewde vnthrifte that hath neither faith nor honeſtie in him, I ſee a drunkarde that is full of furie and paſſeth no more to murder a man than to cutte the throate of a Capon or a Henne: I ſee this: alſo I ſee he is a quareller, and is euer working of ſome miſchiefe or other, yea I ſee and can point one with my finger that ſeeketh to bring all goodneſſe to decay and to put al things out of order: I ſee al this: now I pray you is not this a good inducement to leade mee to the trueth of the matter, by comparing the faulte that hee ſhall haue committed, with his former life? As for example, a man is founde at ſome murder, or apprehended for ſome other miſdeede that he is charged with: and bicauſe there is not ſufficient witneſſe, he will denie that hee knowes any thing of it: notwithſtanding, by the markes that God ſheweth mee of him, I ſee his whole lyfe is as an euidence againſt him. If I were to take information of the whole matter, and had a dooſen witneſſes that coulde ſay vnto mee, this is the murtherer: I coulde not more clearly perceiue the murther, than by beholding that the partie is a rank naughtipacke, a deſpiſer of God, ſuch a one as hath neither faith nor honeſtie, a cutthrote and robber, of a ſpitefull ſtomacke, and ful of poiſon, ſo as he is vtterly out of all ſquare. I pray you is it meete I ſhould be blinded ſtill when I ſee ſuch proofes? Now then let vs marke well, that whereas Moſes ſpeakes here of the time paſt: it is to ſhew vs that God wil helpe vs to the knowledge of matters and of the truth of them, ſo wee on our ſide ſhut not the gate, nor quenche not the light when it is offered vs. Loe what wee haue to beare in minde.

And on the other part let vs marke alſo, that if wee haue knowen a man to be of a good conſcience, and ſeene none other ſignes in him but of the feare of GOD, of honeſtie, and of vpright dealing: wee muſt not lightly take vpon vs to charge him with any cryme. For to what purpoſe ſhoulde it ſerue ſuch as haue lyued as becommeth them, to haue giuen good example all their lyfe long: if euerie ill report ſhoulde bee admitted againſt them at the firſt daſhe, ſo as they ſhould be condemned without further inquirie? So then let vs marke, that God meant here to reſtraine vs from iudging vnaduiſedly, and from thinking amiſſe on ſuch as haue liued aright.

Nowe for the ſũme and concluſion of all, here is the promiſe that Moſes maketh: that is to wit, *That the people ſhall proſper in the lande that is giuen them to inherite, and that God will bleſſe them for euer, and them alſo that come of their children.* And this doctrine is verie ryfe: namely that if wee ſerue GOD he will bleſſe vs, as though our ſeruice were recompenſed. But yet wee muſt not imagine hereupon as the Papiſtes doe, that wee deſerue any thing at all at Gods hand, & that he yeeldeth vs like for like, as though he were boũd thereunto or as though there were ſome hire or wages due to vs: we muſt not enter into ſuch dotages: but we muſt cõſider ẏ the cauſe why God promiſeth reward to ſuch as ſerue him, is to harten thẽ by doing thẽ to vnderſtand ẏ it is not loſt labor to ſerue God. By ẏ means then God intendeth to incourage vs to ſerue him and to do wel: and not to make vs proude or to put vs in beliefe that wee deſerue aught. Then let vs marke, that wheras God promiſeth vs reward: it is for that hee had earſt giuen vs the grace to ſerue him. Whereof commeth it that wee liue as becommeth vs? Commeth it of our owne freewill? Commeth it of our owne ſelfmoouing? No: but of Gods gouerning of vs by his holy ſpirit. Now then, although it were a recompence: yet ought not the ſame to bee attributed vnto vs: but rather to ẏ grace that God hath put into vs, which grace he crowneth. 1.Cor.15.10

But there is yet one point more: which is, that although God bleſſe vs and make vs to proſper: yet haue not wee ſerued him as we ought to do, for all that: but he ſhould alwayes rather finde ſomewhat wherefore to puniſh vs, if he liſted to vſe rigour towardes vs. Therefore let vs not thinke that euer we haue ſo diſcharged our duetie, as that God ſhould in any thing be bound towards vs. But foraſmuch as he beareth with vs, and imputeth not our ſinnes and offences to vs, but winketh at them & taketh all in good worth as at his childrens handes : therefore doeth he vouchſafe to reward our workes. And ſo wee ſee that all ſuch as attribute any deſerte to themſelues, are ſurely beſotted with fond ſelfweening, & muſt be fain to miſlike of themſelues, & not to make any account of their owne wretchedneſſe. And ſoothly if we wiſt what our workes are, wee ſhould alwayes haue cauſe to ſigh, and to craue pardon at Gods hand : and that will make our workes to be accepted at his hand, notwithſtanding they bee vnperfect. And why ? Bicauſe he beareth with vs as with his children. And ſo he yeeldeth vs, not that which he oweth vs, nor that which we haue deſerued : but that which it pleaſeth him to giue vs of his meere liberalitie. Neuertheleſſe he giueth ſuch recompence to our workes, to the intent wee ſhould be the willinger to ſerue him, and vnderſtand that our ſeruing of him ſhall not bee in vaine : but that we muſt imploy our ſelues for him as for our maiſter and prince, and giue our ſelues wholly to his ſeruice, though it bee not with ſuch perfection as were requiſite.

Nowe let vs kneele downe in the preſence of our good GOD with acknowledgement of our faults, praying him to make vs feele them more and more, that being humbled we may bee drawen to true repentance, and therewithall knowe to what ende wee are choſen to bee his people, namely to the ende wee ſhould worſhip him as our King and obey his lawes, not onely in outward deedes, but alſo with true and heartie affection: and liue in ſuch wiſe vnder him, as we may moreouer bee linked to our neighbours with brotherly loue, and by that meanes bee aſſured more and more that his adopting of vs to bee his children is not in vaine. That it may pleaſe him to graunt this grace, not onely to vs but alſo to all people and nations of the earth, &c.

On Fryday the vij. of Iune. 1555.

The xxx. Sermon, which is the twelfth vpon the fourth Chapter, and the firſt vpon the fifth Chapter.

44 This is the Lawe which Moſes did ſet before the children of Iſrael.

45 Theſe are the Couenants, Ordinances, and Lawes, which Moſes ſhewed to the children of Iſrael, after they were come out of Egypt,

46 Beyond Iordan in the valley againſt Bethphogor, in the Lande of Sehon King of the Amorrhytes which dwelt in Heſebon, whom Moſes and the children of Iſrael ſmote, after they were come out of Egypt,

47 And poſſeſſed his land, and the land of Og King of Baſan, two kings of the Amorrhytes which were beyond Iordan towards the Sunriſing:

48 From Aroer which is vpon the banke of the riuer Arnon, vnto the Hill of Sehon, which is Hermon :

49 And all the plaine beyond Iordan Eaſtwarde, vnto the Sea that is in the plaine vnder Aſdoth of Phaſga.

The fifth Chapter.

ANd Moſes called all Iſrael and ſaid vnto them. Heare O Iſrael the ordinances and Lawes which I ſet before you this day, that ye may learne them and keepe them in deede.

2 The Lord our God made a couenant with vs in Horeb.

3 The Lorde our God made not this couenant with our fathers, but with vs which are all here aliue at this day.

FOr as much as it is hard to keep men in ſubiectiō to GOD: therfore after hee had choſen him a people, he vouchſafed to rule thē, not for once and awaye, but euen ſo long time till they ought to haue bin well inured to his yoke. And after the ſame maner doeth he deale dayly with his Church. One worde ought to bee ynough to make vs vnderſtand the trueth of our God. But foraſmuch as wee beleeue not ſo ſpeedily as were requiſite : & when wee haue begunne, wee ſtart away againe: and finally forget the things that he had taught vs : therefore he thinketh it not ynough to haue tolde vs once what is needefull for our ſaluation, but he doeth alſo put vs oft in minde of it, & printeth it in our heartes as much as is poſſible. That is the cauſe why Moſes rehearſeth in this text, ẏ he not onely deliuered them ẏ law in Horeb, but alſo taught it them new againe, after he had gone about with them a fortie yeres or faſt vpon it, yea and ceaſed not of al that time to ſet the things continually before them which GOD had earſt commaunded hĩm to vtter vnto them, as hath bin touched already heretofore. But the diligence of Moſes is not ſuperfluous in that hee ſayth, *that being come to the ſide of Iordan, and hauing vanquiſhed Sehon king of the Amorrhites, and Og the king of Baſan his neighbour, hee did ſtil put the people in minde of Gods lawes and ordinaunces*, that they might ſtand to them and put them in vre, and that if they had not had ſufficient teaching already, they might at leaſtwiſe euen then know Gods trueth and ſticke to it. That is the matter which moſes meant by this text. And here he ſetteth downe expreſly: *the Lawes, Couenants, Statutes, and ordinances*, to expreſſe the better (as I haue tolde you heretofore) that God taught not his people by halues, ne gaue them a doctrine that was darke, ſhort, or vnperfect: but ſuch a lawe as comprehended al that was for their benefite & welfare, ſo as if they ſticked thereunto, they ſhould not neede to ſeeke any further, for they ſhould haue wherewith to direct themſelues in all poyntes and all reſpectes. Yea verily, for the lawe is a full doctrine accordingly alſo as the worde hath his originall thereof. Againe there are *Couenantes*: which is as much to ſay, as ẏ God couenanteth and indenteth with men, ſo as he neither forgetteth nor leaueth any thing out, that may make for the maintenañce of the couenant betwixt him and vs, in that it hath pleaſed him to adopte vs for his children and Church, to take vs to himſelfe. Whatſoeuer concerneth the ſpirituall aliance betweene him and vs, is comprehended vnder the worde *Couenant*, becauſe they be articles. For when men intende to couenant, they ſet downe articles as well on ẏ one ſide as on the other. We ſee then how God proteſteth here, that the Lawe hath enough to teach men withall, ſo they hold themſelues to it. Afterwarde followe Statutes and ordinances. It is a wonder to ſee how painefull GOD is in teaching of vs, and how hee telleth vs that he hath not omitted any thing: and yet for all that, our wittes are ſo fugitiue, that wee ſtill couet ſome better thing than wee finde in Gods word. This diueliſh curioſitie hath reigned at all times in the worlde. And we ſee that euen at this day, do what wee can, this curſed deſire cannot be ouermaſtered, but that men will ſtill needes be wiſer than God would haue them to be. And why? For when his worde is preached vnto vs, there is no cauſe for vs to finde fault that hee hath not ſhewed vs all that is for our behoofe. Yet notwithſtanding, wee be tickliſh ſtill, and woulde faine haue this and that, beſides that which God hath ſhewed vs. Seeing then that ſuch faultineſſe bewrayeth it ſelfe in vs: it ſtandeth vs ſo much the more on hand to remember the counſel that is giuen vs here: that is wit, that if wee will ſuffer God to bee our maiſter, wee ſhall finde all perfection of wiſedome in his ſchoole. For his lawe is of ſufficient abilitie to make vs wiſe. And againe, (as I haue ſayd heretofore) it conteineth all the poyntes that ſerue to vnite vs vnto our GOD: wherein conſiſteth our whole happineſſe and glorie. Moreouer it ſheweth vs the rule of well doing, ſo as we need not to ſeeke any where elſe what GOD alloweth, for wee haue there his ſtatutes and ordinances. Then may wee well knowe and aſſure our ſelues that our lyfe ſhall pleaſe GOD, when wee paſſe not the boundes that hee hath ſet vs. But if wee adde any thing at al to it, let vs not thinke that GOD alloweth that as righteouſneſſe or as a good thing: for hee forgate not any thing that was neceſſarie or behoofefull. And theſe two poyntes are well worthie to be noted. For they ſerue to make vs to ſet the more ſtore by the doctrine that is dayly ſet foorth to vs in the name of GOD. Sith wee ſee it is the perfect wiſedome, ought wee not to apply all our wittes to it, and to holde vs to it? Sith wee ſee that GOD foreſloweth not, but continueth to teach vs dayly: ought not wee alſo on our ſide to bee attentiue and diligent to profite vnder him? And though wee bee not ſo well giuen to it at the firſt as were meete wee ſhoulde: ought wee not to inforce our ſelues all our lyfe long to know Gods will ſtill more and more, till wee bee quite rid of all ignoraunce, which ſhall bee when wee be taken out of this world, and not before? Surely that which Moſes did, ought to ſerue vs for a rule and example at this day. For hee did it not at aladuenture. And beſides that, GOD ordayned him to bee as a lookingglaſſe to all prophetes, and to all ſuch as haue charge to teache in Gods Church. Let vs vnderſtand therefore that GOD will not haue vs to learne his trueth in one day, as though one leſſon were enough for vs: but hee will haue the thinges often rehearſed to vs which wee haue heard, that they may tary with vs and bee ſo rooted in our heartes, as wee may no more alledge in excuſe of our ſelues, O I haue not yet bin wel inſtructed. God then on his part is alwayes ready, ſo as wee cannot erre except we doe it wittingly, willingly, and wilfully as it were.

Coloſ.1.28. & Deut.6.

1.Cor.1.9.10.11.

But here is expreſſe mention made of: *the Temple of Pheor*, to ſhewe that although the people had an eyſore there to turne them away to ſuperſtition: yet had they a remedie for it alſo, inaſmuch as GOD called earneſtly vppon thẽ by his worde, that they ſhoulde not meddle with the idolatries of the heathen. In deede it was a hard chaſtiſement for them, to bee driuen to haue the temple of an idoll continually in their ſight. It was as if God meaning to haue ſpyted them, ſhoulde haue ſayd, I haue called you to poſſeſſe a lande that is alotted to my ſeruice, where yee ſhoulde haue ſeene nothing ẏ ſhould haue offẽded you: for my Sanctuarie ſhould haue bin ſet vp among you, I ſhould haue bin worſhiped purely, according to my law, ẏ land ſhould not haue bin defiled with old ſuperſtitiõs, al ſuch things ſhould haue bin wiped out, ſo as ye ſhould haue heard nothing ſownde in your eares but my prayers. But now ye bee here in a corner of a countrie, where ye beholde the temple of an idoll, and where ſhameful abhominations are committed. Therefore it is as a vengeance which yee be faine to ſuffer for your ſinnes, becauſe yee be not worthie to enter into the land that I promiſed you. Thus yee ſee how it was Gods will to chaſtiſe his people, whẽ hee did let them dwell by the temple of Pheor. Lykewiſe if wee in theſe dayes bee mingled with idolaters, ſo as wee bee faine to looke vpon the filthineſſe which they commit, and vppon their peruerting of all religion: let vs vnderſtand that by that meanes God puniſheth vs, or at leaſtwiſe humbleth vs becauſe of our ſinnes. And wee ought to bee ſory, not onely for the offences that are committed by the vnbeleeuers, but alſo becauſe wee may well perceiue that wee be not worthie to ſee the whole worlde reformed, ſo as there might bee one accorde and conſent of harmonie in religion, and GOD bee purely worſhipped euery where: I ſay wee bee not worthie to ſee it. Nowe then if ſuperſtitions bee neere vs, and wee bee driuen to beholde the markes of them, or to heare any peece of them: Let vs impute it to our owne ſinnes.

But yet howſoeuer the worlde went, GOD failed not to giue the people of Iſrael a good remedie. For when the lawe was taught them ſo by Moſes: it was as if GOD had ſeparated thoſe that were his, from the blinde wretches that went aſtray in their ſuperſtitions. And hereupon wee haue to note, that although the whole worlde bee peruerted, and great confuſion is to bee ſeene, and all is full of error and corruption: yet notwithſtanding we muſt take Gods worde for our guide, and that muſt ſtrengthen vs to defy all ſuperſtitions and idolatries. And if wee bee ſo full of vanitie, as to fleete too and fro after that God hath giuen vs his worde: there will bee no excuſe for vs. For as I haue ſayd afore, Gods declaring of his will vnto vs, ought to bee a ſufficient bridle for vs. Though all the worlde went the contrary way, and one ſorte followed their owne fancies, and another ſorte had ſome lykelyhood of religion: yet ought none of thoſe thinges to wey with vs, when wee haue once heard the voyce of our GOD, and thereby gotten knowledge of his will. And therefore let vs learne to make this certeine and infallible doctrine auaileable, that it may drawe vs from all wicked opinions, from all errors, and from the thinges which the diuell hath forged and men inuented in the worlde. Thus ye ſee what wee haue to remember, when Moſes maketh mention here of Pheors temple.

Now herewithall hee addeth alſo, *that this [was done] after their ouercomming of the two kinges, Og king of Baſan, and Sehon king of the Amorrhites or of Heſebon.* And this circumſtance ſerued to blame the people, if they yelded not themſelues obedient vnto God. Wee knowe that the more fauor GOD ſheweth vs, the more ought wee to bee prouoked to loue and feare him. God hath ſhewed himſelfe beneficiall to vs: nowe ought not the ſame to drawe vs the more vnto him? Yes. For if wee bynde a mortall man vnto vs by our wel doing: he ſhall bee taken and deemed vnthankefull, if hee acknowledge not the good that wee haue done him: and howe much leſſe are we to be excuſed, if we doe not ſo to the liuing God? Then let vs beare in minde that Moſes maketh expreſſe mention here, of the two kinges that had bin ouercome: to the intent that the people ſhoulde haue conſidered thus with themſelues. Goe to, we haue had here two excellent victories. Heretofore when wee woulde haue attempted it againſt the forbidding of our GOD: wee were ſtoutely beaten back, there was no ſtrength nor courage in vs, our enemies came lyke Waſpes or Hornets to ſting out our eyes, according to the ſimilitude which hath bin ſet downe heeretofore. But now are two ſtrong and mightie kinges ouercome, without any coſt of ours: So as GOD hath giuen them into our handes. Who was the cauſe of theſe two victories? was it not God, who directed and ruled all? Seeing then that he hath pitied vs, and begonne to performe the promiſe which he made to our fathers, and giuen vs ſo good a hanſell of it already: ought wee not to indeuer to giue our ſelues in ſuch wiſe vnto him, as wee may be wholy at his commaundement? Should wee not put our ſelues into his hand, which hee hath ſhewed to be ſo mightie for the loue of vs? Behold (ſay I) how Moſes meant the thinges that he rehearſeth concerning the diſcomfiture of Sehon and Og: namely to blame the people for their vnthankefulneſſe, if they yelded not thẽſelues quietly to yͤ ſeruice of their God, which had bound thẽ ſo greatly vnto him.

But now muſt we alſo apply this doctrine to our vſe. Whenſoeuer wee perceiue any ſloth, or coldnes, or rebelliousneſſe in our ſelues, ſo as our fleſhe falleth to ſtriuing, and wee labor not to Godward with ſo cheareful minde and luſtie courage as were expedient: wee muſt enter into account of the benefites that we haue receiued at his hand, [and thinke thus with our ſelues:] wretched creature how happeneth it that thou art ſo loth to ſticke to thy GOD, ſeeing hee hath ſhewed thee his will? conſider what thou haſt of him, bethinke thee of the benefits which hee hath beſtowed vppon thee vnto this houre. Let euery man examine himſelfe how much hee is bounde vnto GOD, that wee may bee the more inflamed to ſerue him. And let vs vnderſtand, not onely generally that hee hath created vs: but alſo that beſides his redeeming of vs by the bloud of our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt, as hee redeemed the Iſraelites out of Egypt: and beſides his drawing of vs vnto him by his grace: wee haue alſo had the doctrine of the Goſpell, which was all one as to take vs vnder his protection, and hee ſheweth it vs dayly by effect. How many helpes and ſuccours haue wee had in our infirmities? Shoulde not Satan haue ouercome vs a thowſand times, if our God had not reached out his hand to reſcue vs? Surely we ſhould be vtterly ouerthrowen. Yea we ſhould not only be borne downe wͭ temptations, but we ſhould alſo be vtterly ouerwhelmed, if we were not for ſuch reſcue as I ſpeake of. Seeing then that our Lord ceaſeth not to confirme vs dayly in his grace: Let vs on our ſide looke yͭ wee take occaſion thereby, to ſerue him the more earneſtly, as wee ſee is ſpoken of here.

Nowe proceeding herewith, Moſes addeth yͭ he ſpake thus to yͤ people of Iſrael, ſaying: *Hearkē to the Lawe which the Lord hath cauſed to be ſet before ye, that ye may learne it & keepe it.* Here again Moſes rehearſeth yͤ preface which wee haue ſeene heretofore: yͭ is to wit, yͭ Gods law was not giuē, only to yͤ end yͭ men ſhould heare it & know what it is: but to yͤ end we ſhoulde be reformed, & that God might haue proofe of the ſubiection yͭ we yeld vnto him. To be ſhort, we ſee that Gods doctrine conſiſteth in practiſe, & that we muſt ſhew by our deedes that we haue not bin taught it in vaine. Here Moſes ſaith firſt of all, *Heare the Lawe which I ſet foorth to you in your eares to learne it.* As if he ſhould ſay, Gods meaning is not that the doctrine which is preached vnto vs in his name & by his cōmiſſion, ſhould fall to the grounde: but yͭ wee ſhould receiue it diligētly, & ſet our whole mindes vppon it. For what is the cauſe why we profite ſo ſlenderly in Gods worde, but for yͭ wee buſie our ſelues to much about wordly matters? If we come to a Sermon, or if wee reade the holy Scripture, it is but as it were for faſhions ſake, we indeuour not to doe as wee ought to do, yͭ we might obſerue the things yͭ are told vs. Wherefore let vs ſee that we become diligent ſchollers, while God is ſo gratious to vs as to teach vs by his word. And for the ſame cauſe doth Moſes ſay *that hee ſetteth it forth in their eares*. In deed this manner of ſpeech were harſh in our tongue: neuertheleſſe it importeth, that God ſpeaketh not to vs in a darke or ſtrange language: but that he vttereth himſelfe familiarly, ſo farre forth as is requiſite. Seeing then yͭ God commeth down to vs, to the end we might haue his wil familiarly vttered vnto vs: what excuſe will there be for vs, if his word be loſt, or if it ſlippe away, or if we take not hold of it to fare the better by it? True it is yͭ foraſmuch as we be groſſe and ignorant, we ſhall euer finde much darkeneſſe in Gods word, ſo as it ſhalbe to high & profound for vs: but who is to blame for it? Let vs marke then yͭ al ſuch as complayne yͭ Gods word is an vnknowen ſpeach vnto thē: are here rebuked of lying: & they do god wrong in ſlandering him, foraſmuch as they deny and deſpiſe yͤ grace which Moſes proteſteth to haue bin offered to yͤ Iſraelites in the ſetting foorth of the lawe. For he ſaith yͭ at yͤ time God ſpake to the peoples eares by the mouth of him. Sith it is ſo: the doctrine ought to haue bin familiar enough to them. And much leſſe cauſe haue we nowadayes to alledge this ſhift, that wee vnderſtand not the thinges yͭ are contained in the holy ſcripture. For God ſpeaketh merily enough and familiarly enough vnto vs. It is long of none but our ſelues yͭ we haue not our eares bored to heare him. And ſo let vs marke well, that there remaineth nothing for vs to doe, but to be attētiue that we may profite by the doctrine.

But yet herewithall we muſt reſorte to that which I haue touched afore, namely *that it muſt be kept and throughly followed.* for if we doe no more but onely lyke well of Gods worde, & yelde recorde vnto it that it is good, true, and holy: God ſhall be greately beholden to vs for it. What is to be done then? Behold, God will try whether he be our maiſter or no. For the thing whereby to rule our lyfe, is not onely to inquire what he ſayth vnto vs: but alſo to giue ouer our owne deſires and affections, and to deſire nothing elſe but to pleaſe him, and to bee gouerned by him and by his righteouſneſſe. When wee be at that poynt, then is it a good proofe that God hath ſuch authoritie ouer vs as hee deſerueth. But vntill wee bee come to that poynt, we ſhall neuer knowe what it is to haue profited in the doctrine. Therefore let this worde *Doe* or *Performe* runne alwayes in their minds which heare the worde of God. How now, let them ſay? Beholde God hath graunted vs the grace to be taught. And to what ende? not to the ende wee ſhould but only hearken to it to ſay, yea mary, yͭ is well ſayd, this is good: but to the end that our whole lyfe ſhould bee reformed, and that foraſmuch as it is a good and ſure rule, wee ſhoulde no more goe aſtray as wee haue done, and as the ignorant wretches do, which are wandered out of the right way, and haue not the teaching that wee haue, whome the doctrine ought ſo to mortify, as God may reigne ouer vs, and wee be ſubiect vnto him. Thus yee ſee in effect what Moſes meant by proteſting to the people in this preface, that his ſetting foorth of the Lawe vnto thē, was not to the intent they ſhould but only heare it and haue their eares beaten with it: but to the intent they ſhould alſo imbrace it and keepe it.

Rom.7.12, 14.

And for confirmation hereof hee alledgeth, *that God made his couenaunt with the people in Mōut Horeb*, the better to bring them to feare, and to obey him for euer. For if GOD ſhould but onely exact his dew of vs: yet were wee ſufficiently bound to cleaue to him, and to ſtick to his commaundements. But nowe ſeeing it hath pleaſed him of his infinite goodneſſe, to come as it were to a common treatie, and to binde himſelfe interchaungeably vnto vs, whereas there is no cauſe why hee ſhoulde bee bounde: ſo as hee couenanteth to be our father and Sauiour, and to receiue vs into his flocke, to be his inheritance, that wee may liue vnder his protection, and hee ſetteth the euerlaſting lyfe before vs: Seeing hee doth all theſe thinges for vs, ought not our heartes to yeeld, though they were of ſtone? Seeing that the creatures doe ſee that the liuing God abaceth himſelf ſo farre, as to vouchſafe to enter into treatie with thē, as if he ſhould ſay, Go to, let vs ſee at what poynt wee bee: in deede there is an infinite diſtance betwixt you and mee, I might commaunde you what I thinke good without hauing any further to do with you, neither are you worthie to come ny me, or to haue any acquaintāce wͭ him yͭ can cōmaund you what he liſteth, without making any other proteſtation than only this, This will I haue ye do, this is my minde: & yet for all yͭ I forbeare mine own right, I offer my ſelf to you to be your leader & ſauiour, I am willing to gouern you, & you ſhalbe as my litle houſholde, I wil be your if you will bee contented with my worde: and beſides this, thinke not that my making of my couenant with your fathers, was of purpoſe to gayne any thing at your handes: for I haue no neede nor want of any thing, and if I had, what could yee doe for mee? but I ſeeke your welfare and your ſaluation: and therefore I am here ready to enter into couenaunt w̃ you, and to binde my ſelfe to you for mine owne part: Seing that the liuing God ſtoopeth ſo lowe, I pray you muſt wee not needes bee too too vnthankefull, if wee yeeld not to humble our ſelues vnder him, and forbeare all pride and ſtatelyneſſe? So then, it is not without cauſe that Moſes ſpeaketh here, of the couenant that God made with his people, to the ende that his goodneſſe and grace might bee chiefly knowen. And if this tooke place in the time of the Lawe, there is much greater reaſon that it ſhould take place at this day. For our Lordes couenanting was not onely with ẏ Iewes, nor for that one time onely: but when hee ſent his onely ſonne, then did hee ſhewe himſelfe much more fully to bee our father and Sauiour than hee had done afore, and hee did it after as ſweete and friendly a manner as could be, ſo as it is all one as if hee had euen opened his bowels vnto vs. Seeing then that God hath giuen vs his owne hearte in the perſon of our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt, and we heare how Chriſt proteſteth that Iohn 15.15. hee will not hencefoorth call vs his ſeruauntes but his friendes, becauſe hee hath imparted himſelfe vnto vs ſo familiarly: I pray you muſt not the diuell needes haue bewitched vs, if wee bee not moued to yeelde our ſelues wholy vnto him, and to forſake our ſelues and all our owne affections? Therefore whẽ wee feele any naughtineſſe in vs that keepeth vs backe from ſeruing God, if wee finde any ſlothfulneſſe in vs, if wee bee fallen too faſt a ſleepe in this worlde: then to waken vs vp, and to cauſe vs to magnify God, let vs cal to minde the couenant which our Lord hath made with vs.

Now hereupon Moſes addeth, *It was not with your fathers that God made the couenant, but with vs, euen with vs that are all aliue at this day.* This ſentence may haue a dubble vnderſtanding. For it may be taken as though Moſes made a compariſon, to ſhewe the better that the people which liued at that time, might haue bin the more inflamed to ſerue God, becauſe they had receiued more grace than their fathers. And for the ſame purpoſe alſo doth hee ſay in Exodus, Exod. 6.3. I haue not imparted this name of mine to your fathers. God ſpeaking there to Moſes, telleth him that hee had not manifeſted himſelfe ſo playnely to be God, vnto Abraham, Iſaak, and Iacob, as hee did commaund to be done by Moſes. Hereby hee meaneth that the people ought to be ẏ more attentiue as now, becauſe God reuciled himſelfe to them after an vnaccuſtomed manner. And ſo the meaning of this text might bee that God made not the lyke couenant with our fathers. True it is that God ſpake to his ſeruantes Abraham, Iſaak, and Iacob, and inſtructed them ſufficiently. And it is ſayd expreſly in the eighteenth of Geneſis, Ge. 18.17,19 Shall I hide from my ſeruaunt Abraham, what I intend to doe vppon Sodom and Gomor? No: for I know hee will teach his houſholde my decrees, ordinances, iudgementes, and lawes. Yee ſee here that Abraham did ſufficiently inſtruct his houſholde and that not after a ſlender faſhion, but in Gods iudgementes, ſtatutes, and ordinances, ſo as it muſt needes bee ſayd that hee had Gods lawe well printed in his heart. But yet for all that, it was a benefit not to be held ſkorne of, when God ſent his Lawe to the people in two tables, and vouchſafed that there ſhoulde bee wherewith to inſtruct them continually, and alſo that the ſame thinges ſhoulde bee recorded for vs lykewiſe. The thing therefore which wee may gather vppon this text is this proteſtation which Moſes maketh to the people, as if hee ſhould ſay: my friendes, conſider the benefit which God beſtoweth vpon you this day, which (verily) hee beſtowed not vppon our fathers. For hee gaue not them the lawe in writing as he hath done to vs, neither vttered he thinges vnto thẽ by peecelmeale. True it is that he taught them ſufficiently and as much as was requiſite for their ſaluation: but behold, wee all this day are come a ſtep higher than they were: and therfore ought wee to come the neerer vnto him, ſeeing that hee is ſo come downe vnto vs. That is Moſeſes meaning if we take the text after the foreſayd maner.

Lykewiſe might a man ſay to vs at this day, that God hath not delt with our fathers as hee hath dealt with vs. And ſo meant our Lord Ieſus Chriſt when hee ſayd to his diſciples, Matt. 13.17. Luke. 10.24. many kings & prophets haue deſired to ſee the things that you ſee, and to heare the thinges that are preached vnto you, and yet haue not had their wiſhe. Seeing then that God of his infinite mercie hath vouchſafed to preferre vs before the Patriarkes and prophets: according alſo as it is ſayd, that the Prophets ſerued more for our 1. Pet. 1.12. times, than for their owne: thereby wee ought to learne to reſort vnto him, & to giue our ſelues wholy to his doctrine.

Howbeit if all thinges bee well conſidered: although the matter before rehearſed be very profitable, and that the ſame exhortation be oftentimes made in the holy ſcripture: yet if all the woordes be well weyed, Moſes meant that God made not his couenant with thoſe that had heard the Lawe at the firſt giuing of it foorth, ẏ is to ſay, not only with them: but alſo with thoſe that outliued them, and ſucceeded in their place after their deceaſe. So to bee ſhorte, Moſes intended to ſhewe here, that the Lawe was not mortall, to continue onely during the liues of ſuch as had the firſt hearing of it: but that it was a doctrine which ſhoulde continue in force and authoritie for euer. The Lorde our God (ſaith hee) made not his couenant with our fathers: that is to ſay, hee meant not that onely our fathers ſhould bee his people, and ſo to binde himſelfe in ſuch ſort vnto them, ẏ his law ſhould ſerue but for a fortie or fiftie yeres: but he hath made his couenant lykewiſe with vs, and with thoſe that were yet vnborne when the lawe was giuen foorth. Although then that yee were not at mount Horeb, ne ſawe the fire vppon the hill: yet notwithſtanding aſſure your ſelues that your God did adopt you at the ſame time vnto himſelfe, and compriſed you lykewiſe in the couenant that hee made. Therefore it behooueth you to keepe his lawe, becauſe it was ſet forth to laſt for euer, and to continue from age to age, and to be preached vnto the worldes end. That is the true and proper meaning of Moſes. And hereof wee may gather a good leſſon: which is, that although we were not at the firſt ſetting abroad of the Goſpell, nor ſawe the thinges that are reported to vs of the lawe: yet muſt not Gods word forgoe his authoritie with vs. And why? True it is that Gods rayſing vp of Moſes was a ſpeciall prerogatiue to the people that liued in that time: but yet muſt not the authoritie of the Lawe bee impeached for all that: for it conteineth Gods trueth, which indureth for euer, and is not variable nor tranſitorie after the maner of men. It is ſayde that men are lyke a flower or as the graſſe yͤ withereth and dryeth away out of hand: but Gods trueth endureth for euer. And this trueth which is vnchangable and vnuariable, is conteined in the Lawe. True it is that the Lawe as concerning the ceremonies is quite aboliſhed: but as concerning the ſubſtance of it, & the doctrine yͤ is cõteined in it, it keepeth his force for euer and neuer decayeth. Nowe let vs marke that although wee were not in the time of Moſes, yet is it not for vs to deſpiſe the thinges that are reported to haue bin done [at that time,] or which are contayned in the lawe. And why? For hee ſpake them to vs. Hee ſpake not onely to the multitude that was aſſembled at mount Horeb: but alſo generally to the whole worlde. Now if this bee verifyed of the lawe: much more reaſon is it that it ſhould bee ſo of the Goſpell. For as I ſayd, the lawe, as concerning the ſhadowes and figures, is gone to decay: but in the Goſpel there is no ſuch lyke thing. For here our Lord maketh his newe and euerlaſting couenant: it is a couenant that indureth from age to age [without ceaſing.] What is to be done then, when the Goſpel is preached? Wee muſt aſſure our ſelues that the ſonne of GOD is come into the worlde: not onely to teache thoſe with whome hee was conuerſant when he was a mortal man: but alſo to purchaſe them vnto God his father, and to call the world to ſaluation, by giuing his Apoſtles commiſſion to ſound foorth their voyces through the whole worlde, that euen thoſe might bee made partakers of his doctrine which neuer heard them: which doctrine wee alſo muſt receiue ſtill at this day, as if Ieſus Chriſt himſelfe were ſtil among vs, or as if the Apoſtles ſpake to vs with their owne mouthes. That (ſay I) is the thing which wee haue to remember vppon this place. And therefore let vs not make any alteratiõ in Gods Church, or attempt to innouate any thing in his worde, foraſmuch as we knowe that hee will haue it to holde on continually in one equall courſe and trayne. For ſeeing hee hath giuen vs his Goſpel, and ſtabliſhed a certaine gouernment in the time of the Apoſtles and in the primatiue Church: it behoueth vs to come to the ſame, and to ſtay there. If wee doe otherwiſe: it is all one as if wee would make Gods worde mortall and corruptible as wee our ſelues are. Wherefore let vs learne, that although the worlde bee variable, ſo as there bee turnes and returnes euery day, and there is not any of vs all which hath not a number of opinions running in his head: yet muſt wee not looke to haue the libertie to doe now one thing and now another. Why ſo? For God hath not made his couenant with our fathers, but with vs that are aliue this day. Then let vs vnderſtand that as long as wee bee in this world, God gouerneth vs here and ſheweth vs the way, to the end wee ſhould not bee as wandering Pilgrims roming vp and downe, to gad after our owne luſtes: but bee guided as it were by his hand. To be ſhort, whereas Moſes ſayth here, *vs that are all aliue this day*: it ſerueth to ſhewe that men muſt not of all their lyfe long inuent any newe lawe, nor haue one to day and another to morrowe. For why? Our lyfe dependeth vpon Gods Lawe, and that ought to content vs: therefore let vs but onely profite in that, and haue an eye to the thinges that tend thereunto.

Eſa.40.6.7.8
1.Pet.1.24.
Pſal.103.10
Pſal.117.2.& 119.90.152.150.&1.Pet.1.25.
Pſal.119.142.
Pſal.146.6.
2.Cor.3.11.
Eph.2.15.
Col.2.14.
He.9.10.11.
Mat.5.17.18
He.8.8.9.13
He.8.8.9 10.
Matt.17.5.
Act.20.28.
Matt.28.19.& Mar.16.15.16.
Leuit.18.5.
Ezec.20.11.
Rom.10.5.
Gal.3.12.

Furthermore, no doubt but that Moſes vpbraideth the people here with their vnthãkefulneſſe, if they ſhould not dedicate their liues to the ſeruice of GOD. As if hee ſhould ſay, By what meanes liue wee? Is it not becauſe our Lorde hath placed vs in this world? Againe, ſeeing that the lyfe which wee haue commeth of him, ought wee not to beſtowe it in his ſeruice? Ought it not to bee wholy conſecrated vnto his wil? Thus then ye ſee how Moſes tanteth al ſuch as runne aſtray and follow not Gods worde. But yet herewithall wee muſt beare in minde the thing which I haue touched afore: that is to wit, that wee haue not a doctrine of two or three dayes continuance: but that wee muſt bee confirmed in it as long as wee liue. When wee haue once receiued the thinges that are conteined in yͤ holy ſcripture: we muſt indeuer to profite in them: and to goe forewarde ſtill in ſuch wiſe, as wee may ſtill growe in them vntill God take vs out of the world: aſſuring our ſelues that he wil keep couenant with vs, ſo as he for his part wil not bee vnfaithfull nor vnconſtant, but ſtedfaſt in his purpoſe. Seeing that hee is ſo: let vs bee the lyke, and ſo long as wee liue, let vs haue none other reſpect but to ſticke to him, euen in ſuch wiſe as hee ſheweth vs by his word. For wee muſt not goe about to knit and linke our ſelues to our GOD by our owne fancies: but looke as hee commeth to vs, ſo muſt wee goe to him, and when wee bee there, wee muſt beware that wee keepe vs there. Thus ye ſee what wee haue to gather vppon this text, that wee may bee the better diſpoſed to receiue the inſtruction that ſhall bee giuen vs hereafter, concerning Gods Lawe and commaundementes.

Phil.3.12.
Eph.4.15.

Nowe let vs kneele downe in the preſence of our good GOD with acknowledgement of our faultes, praying him to make vs feele them better than we haue done, ſo as our whole ſeeking may bee to ſubmit our ſelues vnto him, and hee may vouchſafe to reach vs his hand, not ſuffering vs to bee any more giuen to our owne fancies and affections, but that wee may magnify his goodneſſe which he vſeth towardes vs, and fare the better by it by yeelding him the obedience that hee deſerueth: ſpecially becauſe hee hath vouchſafed to bring vs his lawe and declare it to vs, and hath not onely ſhewed vs the way how to liue well, but alſo vouchſafed to adopt vs to bee his children, and too ſhewe himſelfe to bee our father and Sauiour for our Lorde Ieſus Chriſtes ſake. That it may pleaſe him to graunt this grace not onely to vs, but alſo to all people. &c.

On Wedneſday the xij. of Iune. 1555.

The xxxj. Sermon, which is the ſecond vpon the fifth Chapter.

4 The Lord God talked with you face to face vpon the mountaine, out of the middes of the fire.

5 The ſame time I ſtoode betweene the Lord and you, to ſhewe you the word of the Lord. For yee were afraid at the preſence of the fire, and went not vp into the mount: And hee ſaid,

6 I am the Lord thy God which brought thee out of the Land of Egypt, from the houſe of bondage.

7 Thou ſhalt haue none other Gods in my ſight.

WE haue ſeene heretofore howe Moſes tooke great payne to make the people perceiue the maieſtie that is in Gods word, that they might receiue it with all reuerēce. For although men proteſt enough that they be willing to ſerue God: (for euen nature driueth them thereunto:) yet can they not ſubmit themſelues to his word, notwithſtanding that that is the true proofe whereby to knowe whether wee bee ſubiect to GOD or no. But therein appeareth the rebellioufneſſe of the worlde. For albeit that they graunt that Gods word is to bee receiued without gaineſaying: yet ſhall yee skarſly finde one among a hundred, that humbleth himſelfe in good earneſt, to yeelde it the authoritie which it ought to haue. And why is that? Becauſe wee conceiue not the maieſtie of GOD which is vttered there.

Yee ſee then that it is not for naught that Moſes hath tolde vs ſo often heretofore, that Gods worde ought to beare ſuch a maieſtie towardes vs, as all creatures ought to quake at it. And now againe hee addeth another confirmation of the ſame matter, ſaying, *that God talked with the people face to face in the mount, out of the middeſt of the fire.* As if hee ſhoulde ſay, yee haue now no cauſe at all to doubt, whether the doctrine that I deliuer vnto you bee of God or of men. For it is warranted enough and more than enough: God hath declared himſelfe to you by viſible and apparant ſignes, ſo as yee cannot but knowe that it is hee which ſpake to you. Now wee ſee Moſeſes meaning.

But before wee goe any further, here a queſtion might be put, how it may bee ſayd that God ſpake face to face, ſeeing that men cannot comprehend his infinite glorie: and with what eye can wee beholde Gods ſubſtance? Wee be ſo weakeſighted, that if God ſhould caſt but one little beame of his brightneſſe vppon vs, by and by wee ſhould bee altogether daſeled and confounded. Agayne, wee knowe how it is ſayde that wee cannot beholde God face to face, vntill wee bee renewed, which ſhall not bee till the laſt day. For as now (ſayth Saint Paule) 1 Cor. 13. 12. wee ſee but as in a glaſſe, and in parte, and darkly.

Moreouer hee ſayth in another place, that as now the Goſpell repreſenteth Gods maieſtie 2 Cor. 3. 15. in ſuch wiſe vnto vs, as wee may ſee him there: 18. but the lawe was darke, and there hung a veile before it, which hindered the fathers frō knowing God in ſuch ſorte and ſo familiarly as wee doe nowadayes. But all this agreeth very wel. For if the Lawe bee compared with the Goſpel: it is certeine that the thing ſhall bee founde to bee true, which Saint Paul ſpeaketh heere. For God declared not himſelfe ſo familiarly at that time, as hee doth to vs by meanes of our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt, who is his liuely image. Therefore at this day the greate treaſures of Gods Coloſ. 1. 15. wiſedome are layde foorth, ſo as GOD calleth Heb. 1. 2. 3. Col. 2. 3. vs to the kingdome of heauen, and ſheweth Eph. 1. 5. 14. that hee taketh vs for his children and heires: 1. Theſſ. 2. 12. it was not ſō in the time of the Lawe. Againe, although wee haue ſo great & familiar knowledge nowadayes: yet doth ẏ thing ſtand alwayes true which I ſayd. ẏ is to wit, ẏ we ſee but in part. And why ſo?

why ſo? For wee be not yet made partakers of Gods glory, and therefore wee cannot come neere him, but hee muſt be faine to reueile himſelfe to vs according to our rudeneſſe and infirmitie. And albeit that God haue appeared to men euen from the beginning of the worlde: yet hath hee not ſhewed himſelfe as hee is in deede, but according as men might be able to abide it. Therefore wee muſt alwayes come to this poynt, that God neither was knowen of the fathers, nor appeareth to vs at this day in his ſubſtance: but applyeth himſelfe to vs, inſomuch as hee is faine to ſtoope to make vs perceiue his preſence according to our abilitie.

Neuertheleſſe it is not for naught that Moſes ſayth here, *that God ſpake face to face*. For hee meaneth that the people had not ſome glimering or geſſe onely, ſo as they might doubt or onely conceiue ſome opinion of him, but that they had an infallible warrant, ſo as they might conclude thus: here is our GOD, who hath ſo communicated himſelfe vnto vs, as our faith ought not to be any more vncertaine, neither ought the doctrine that is ſet foorth to vs in his name, to be any more debated in way of diſputation, As whether it bee meete to bee receiued or no. And why? For God hath giuen vs a ſure marke, which cannot deceiue vs, nor leaue vs in doubt that it proceeded not from him. Thus wee ſee nowe the meaning of Moſes.

Hereupon wee haue a good leſſon to gather: which is, that if GOD vtter not himſelfe in ſuch ſtately maner as our lyking could afoorde: wee muſt aſſure our ſelues that his ſo dooing is for our profite and welfare. For if wee conſider our owne infirmitie, it will pull downe our ouerluſtineſſe whereto our nature prouoketh vs continually. For wee woulde bee inquiring of Gods ſecretes without ende or meaſure. And why? Becauſe wee feele not our own vnabilitie. Wherfore let vs magnify the goodneſſe of our GOD for that it pleaſeth him to haue regard of vs and of our rudeneſſe, and to hide his glory from vs leaſt wee ſhoulde be ouerwhelmed by it. For as I ſayd afore, wee coulde not abide it, being ſo fraile as wee bee. And herewithall let vs vnderſtande, that there is no excuſe for vs, if wee yeelde not GOD his due honor when hee ſhall haue giuen vs any euident token of his preſence.

Therefore let vs not looke that God ſhould come to vs in his ineſtimable glorie, that the heauens ſhould cleaue a ſunder, and that all the Angels of paradiſe ſhould appeare to vs: But when our Lord ſheweth vs that it is hee that ſpeaketh, let that ſuffiſe vs, and let vs humble our ſelues out of hand. For if wee will needes bee ſlothfull in that caſe: it ſhall bee caſt in our teeth that wee turned our backs vpon him when hee ſhewed vs his face. In deede it is ſayd vnto vs in another place, that men cannot beholde Gods face without periſhing. Inſomuch that although hee ſhewed himſelfe in ſuch wiſe to Moſes as is ſpoken of in Numery, ſo that he was familiar with him as with his friend: yet is it ſayd that hee ſawe no more of him but onely his backe partes. But that is to ſhewe vs alwayes that wee muſt not preſume to preace vnto GOD, ſo long as wee beare this fleſhe about vs: we muſt not think to attain ſo high. For if the very Angels of heauen vnder the ſhape of Seraphins, doe hide themſelues when GOD ſheweth himſelfe: what ſhall wee doe, which doe but creepe heere on earth? But howſoeuer the caſe ſtand, yet will God condemne vs for our vnthankefulneſſe, if we haue no liſt to behold his face, and that the tokens of his preſence which hee ſheweth vs doe not ſuffiſe vs. Aboue all thinges let vs beare this in minde, namely that the caſe concerneth our ſubmitting of our ſelues as well to the lawe as to the Goſpell. For it is there chiefly that God will be knowen of men to the ende they ſhould worſhip him, ſimply receiuing whatſoeuer commeth out of his mouth. Whereunto then ſhall wee apply his ſaying of Moſes? To this ende verily that whenſoeuer the ſcripture is ſet afore vs, ſo as it is either preched or expounded vnto vs, or wee our ſelues reade it: this preface muſt ſerue to humble vs, that we may exalt God with all reuerence, and not aduenture to reply againſt his worde, but tremble at it, as is ſayde in the prophet Eſay. For all that euer is conteined in the holy ſcripture, is ſo throughly warranted vnto vs, as it may well be ſayd that GOD hath talked with men, yea and euen ſhewed himſelfe to them after a viſible manner.

Num.33.11
30.23.

Eſa.6.2.

Eſa.66.2.5.

Nowe hereunto Moſes addeth, *that he himſelfe had bin as a mediator betweene God and men, becauſe the people were afraide and durſt not goe vp into the mountaine*. Whereby Moſes doth vs to wit, that the deliuering foorth of the lawe by a mortall man, ought not to diminiſhe the authoritie thereof. And why? Becauſe the infirmitie of the people required it: that was their fault. And it is a text well worthie to bee marked. For wee doe alwayes ſeeke ſtartingholes, that wee might deſpiſe Gods worde. In deede wee will not pretend it openly: but yet are all of vs ſo lewdely diſpoſed, that wee thinke our ſelues well at eaſe if wee can finde any color to ſay, Tuſh I knowe not whether this bee Gods word or no, I cannot tell whether it ſpeake to me or no, I wote not what condition is annexed to it. Thus wee ſee how the worlde ſtriueth continually to exempt themſelues from the obedience of Gods worde: and it is a very common excuſe to ſay, yea, it is true that GOD ought to be obeyed, but yet for all that, they that preach are but men lyke our ſelues: and muſt their doctrine bee hearkened to, as though they were men that came from heauen? Many men beare themſelues in hand that this ſhoulde goe for payment, notwithſtanding that they be rebels againſt GOD, or rather that they paſſe not at all to ſubmitte themſelues to him and to his worde.

But wee haue an aunſwere heere, wherewith to cut off the occaſion of all this: which is, that whereas GOD ſendeth his worde by the hand of men, hee doeth it in reſpect of mens default and infirmitie. Neuertheleſſe hee ceaſeth not to giue vs ſome marke of his glory, whereby his word is ſufficiently knowen to be heauenly: inſomuch that if the matter bee duely ſcanned, it appeareth that God hath warranted it throughly. So then, it is not onely for the auncient fathers, that Moſes ſpake: but this warning is directed to vs alſo: that is to wit, that although men bee appointed as meſſengers to preach Gods worde to vs, yet ought not that to diminiſhe the maieſtie thereof any whit at all. And in deede wee doe miſconſider our owne frailetie, when wee deſire that God ſhoulde worke miracles dayly: nay verily wee cannot tell what is meete for vs. For as touching miracles, there haue bin enowe wrought already for the warranting of the trueth as well of the Lawe as of the Goſpel, that wee might bee fully certifyed of them. Yet notwithſtanding it is expedient for vs at this day, that God ſhoulde ſend vs men like our ſelues, with commiſſion from him to teach vs in his name and in his ſtead, as one that allureth vs to him with all gentleneſſe and courteſie. Thinke we that wee were able to abide his preſence, if hee ſhoulde come to vs in ſuch ſort as hee is in deede? Alas no: there were no ſhift for vs but wee ſhould bee all conſumed. If God ſhould ſpeake in his ſtrength: wee knowe how it is ſayd that it would make the very rockes and mountaines to melt: Pſal.97.5. Eſa.64.1.3. Mich.1.4. and could we that are as feeble as any thing may bee, bee able to outſtand ſuch force, that it ſhould not thunder downe vpon vs and deſtroy vs? Therefore let vs marke well that when God ordeined that his word ſhould bee preached vnto vs, and that we ſhould haue it in writing, therein he applyed himſelfe to our weakeneſſe, dealing with vs as if himſelf were a mortal man, to the intent we ſhould not be afraide to come vnto him, but be drawen to him with all gentleneſſe. Againe, how highly doth hee honor vs, in that it pleaſeth him to chooſe men of no reputation among vs, to repreſent his perſon and to ſpeake to vs in his name? For what could hee giue more to the Angels of heauen? Coulde hee giue them a more honorable charge or office? Seeing then that hee vouchſafeth to ſet men in ſo noble and excellent a roome, as to beare abroad his word: thererein hee ſheweth how great his goodneſſe is towardes vs, namely that it is more than fatherly.

And on the otherſide, hee tryeth our humilitie. For if hee thundered from heauen, if he appeared viſibly vnto vs, if the Angels came downe vnto vs: it were no maruell though men beleeued his worde. But when both great and ſmall imbrace the order that hee hath ſet in his Church, that is to wit, when they obey his worde that is preached vnto them: that is a good tryall of our faith. Neuertheleſſe, let vs ſtill come backe to this, that God hath ſhewed himſelfe ſufficiently to men, ſo as wee haue no cauſe to doubt of his worde, or to ſtande ſcanning from whence it came. For wee bee ſure enough of his will, if wee bee not wilfull in refuſing the ſignes that hee hath giuen vs. Thus yee ſee what wee haue to gather vppon this ſentence of Moſes, where hee ſaith that the people durſt not goe vp into the mount, by reaſon of the feare which they had conceiued. And although wee in theſe dayes woulde not refuſe that God ſhould ſpeake vnto vs: yet if all thinges bee wel conſidered, it would not bee for our profite. And therfore let vs vnderſtand, that Gods vſing of mens ſeruice in that wiſe, ought not to diminiſhe the certeintie of our faith.

It is ſayd conſequently, that God taught the people, ſaying: *I am the Euerlaſting, thy GOD which brought thee out of the lande of Egypt. Thou ſhalt not haue any other God in my ſight.* Here to keep the people of Iſrael in awe, GOD telleth them that the knowledge which they haue of him, ought to keepe them aloofe from all ſuperſtitions. For it was not to bee marueiled at, that the heathenfolke had idols, and went wandering after their owne errors and fancies. Wee muſt vnderſtand that it is mans propertie of himſelfe, to doe ſo. It is pitie to ſee howe much wee be inclined to vanitie. We neede not to goe to ſchoole to learne to bee deceiued: for euery of vs is clearke greate enough in that caſe. To bee ſhorte, wee goe alwayes forewarde to euill, yea euen vnder colour of good: inſomuch that in ſtead of ſeruing GOD, there is nothing in vs but corruption and idolatrie. Therefore the Heathen had their diuerſities of ſuperſtitions: for euery man might forge what hee would of his own braine,) and in the meane while the liuing GOD was let alone of all men. And why? For hee was not ſo gratious to the whole worlde, as to ſhewe himſelfe to all men. And ſo, men became brutiſhe, but that was for want of teaching. Neuertheleſſe, that excuſed them not: for they bee ſtill guiltie before GOD. Moreouer, the fountaine from whence idolatrie ſpringes, is the vnthankefulneſſe and lewdeneſſe of men in that they forſooke the liuing GOD of their owne accord.

And when the worlde was once growen out of kinde (as I haue ſayd afore,) the wretched Paynims ran aſtray lyke blinde folkes: for they had no light to ſhew them the way of ſaluation. Now here GOD chargeth the people of Iſraell with rebellion, if they helde not themſelues to the lawe that hee gaue them. And why? For *I am the Euerlaſting, thy God.* When as he ſayth, *I am the Euerlaſting:* it is an excluding of al the Gods that haue bin inuented by men. As if hee ſhould ſay, there is but onely one Godhead, and that is in mee. Therefore it is to bee concluded, that ſuch as knowe mee and yet doe turne away to idols, cannot excuſe themſelues, but yͭ they haue wilfully forſaken yͤ liuing God.

And whereas hee addeth *that hee is the God of that people:* it is to ſhewe that hee had declared himſelfe ſufficiently. As if hee ſhould ſay, I haue ſhouled you out from all other men: You ſee how all other men goe wandering aſtray, and that is for want of guiding and direction. But I haue choſen you for my people, and giuen my ſelfe vnto you.

Seeing then that I am your GOD: holde your ſelues henceforth to mee, or elſe ye ſhalbe leſſe excuſable than the Heathen. Your puniſhment muſt needes be dubble,yea and a hundred fold grieuouſer than theirs,bicauſe ye ſhall haue falſified your faith which ye haue plighted vnto me,and broken the Couenant that I haue made with you.

He alledgeth yet furthermore the fauour that he had ſhewed to the people, ſaying *That he had brought them out of Egypt,from the houſe of bondage.* Whereby he meaneth that he hath bounde the people in ſuch wiſe vnto him, as they can not ſtart away,but they muſt deſerue to bee ſtill puniſhed. For inaſmuch as they ſhall haue forgotten their deliueraunce: their vnthankefulneſſe ſhall bee dubble. Seeing they had bene redeemed by the hand of God: it behoued them to giue ouer themſelues wholly to the ſeruice of him that was their Redeemer. And he termeth Egypt *the houſe of bondage* purpoſely, to make the people conſider throughly in what plight they had beene there. For we ſee that they which ſighed and cried out when they were oppreſſed with ſuch violence and tyrannie as wee reade of in Exodus: deſired to returne thither againe as ſoone as God had deliuered them. And whereof came that, but that they remembred not their oppreſſion any more,and the diuel ſtopped their eyes, that Gods grace might not bee eſteemed among them as it deſerued? That is the cauſe why Moſes termeth Egypt *the houſe of bondage.* In the end the commaundement is added, that the people *ſhould not haue any other gods before his face,* whom they ought to account for their God.

Exod.2.23. & 14.12.& 17.3.
Num.14.3,4

Now let vs apply all this doctrine to our own vſe. Firſt of all whereas he ſaieth,*I am the Euerlaſting:* let vs learne to weigh this ſaying in ſuch ſort,that ſeeing Gods Maieſtie is appeared vnto vs, wee imagine not any other Godhead. For God cannot abide any cõpanion. If the Sunne doe darken the light of all the Starres: is it not reaſon that when God ſheweth himſelfe, al men ſhould worſhip him, and that all the glorie that was before ſhould be then as it were vtterly defaced? Yes: and therefore is it ſaid by the Prophetes,that when the Lord raigneth, there ſhall bee none other light but his: inſomuch that euen the Sunne ſhall be dimmed, and the Moone bee turned into darkneſſe. This ſerueth to ſhew vs, that if wee mingle any of the fanſies of our owne heads with God: it is a diminiſhing of the right that belongeth vnto him. For he can not away with any companion. Therefore this word *Euerlaſting* muſt driue all fantaſticalneſſe from vs,that wee take not leaue to imagine one thing or other. Let vs be contented to haue the onely one God, & let him ſuffice vs. And for the ſame cauſe alſo is it ſaid,that when our Lord Ieſus ſetteth vp his ſeate in the world,then ſhall the idols of Egypt fall downe. Now this text belongeth to vs. For like as Moſes ſaide to the people of olde time, The euerlaſting hath appeared vnto you, and therefore you muſt driue away all idols frõ among you: ſo now,ſeeing that God hath declared himſelfe vnto vs in the perſon of his onely ſonne,it is meete that all idolles ſhould downe. Wee knowe that the Countrie of Egypt was full fraught with them aboue all the reſt of ẏ world. Now then wheras we were plundged in lyes & darkneſſe before,& had an infinite number of idols: all thoſe thinges muſt melt & vaniſh away, when as God telleth vs that hee is the Euerlaſting. And whereas moreouer he termeth himſelfe our God: it is to acquaint vs with him,that wee may knowe his Maieſtie after a louing faſhion. For if God ſhould ſpeake but onely of his euerlaſtingnes and of his being: we ſhould for ẏ moſt part be vtterly abaſhed. True it is,ẏ this were ſufficient to condemne all our dotages: But yet for all that,ſo it falleth out, that wee can not be properly inſtructed thereby to our owne vſe and profite. Therefore when God hath once ſhewed vs that he onely is to be worſhipped and honoured: then muſt he alſo come to vs after a gentle and familiar maner, that wee may feele him to bee our father and maiſter, and knowe that his will is to make a couenaunt with vs, to the intent that wee ſhould ſticke to him. This is the thing that is meant by the title that is attributed to him in this text, as if he ſhoulde ſay,I come not onely as the euerlaſting to make thee afraide: but therewithall I am alſo thy God, I haue choſen thee to my ſelfe, I intend to haue thee for mine heritage. Now then wee ſee howe GOD authorizeth his Lawe, to the intent wee ſhould receiue it with all reuerence and lowelineſſe: and yet therewithal vouchſafeth to make it amiable,to the end wee ſhould taſte of it, and take pleaſure to ſubmit our ſelues to it,and ſuffer our ſelues to bee ruled by the doctrine therein contained. And ſo to bee ſhort all excuſe is bereft vs,if wee honour not our God nowe adayes by renouncing all ſuperſtitions, and all thinges that are contrarie to his ſeruice. Why ſo? Bicauſe the titles which he attributeth here to him ſelfe to holde vs in awe, ought to drawe vs vnto him. When as he ſpeaketh of his ſouereintie ouer vs, and ſaieth he is our God: that ought to make vs to taſte of his fatherly goodneſſe. And both of them are contained here. Wee ſee then that there remaineth no more to doe, but to hearken to the thinges that are tolde vs in Gods Lawe,and to hold our ſelues ſimply to the ſame. And that is ẏ cauſe why he vpbrayded the people of Iſrael,that they neither loued him nor feared him. If I bee thy God and maiſter, where is thy feare? And if I bee thy father, where is thy loue, ſaieth hee by his Prophet Malachie? No doubt but the Prophet hath an eye to the thing that Moſes toucheth briefely here. For when God nameth himſelfe the euerlaſting: it is to the end we ſhould yeeld him the reuerence that is due to him. And whereas he nameth himſelfe the God of that people: it is to the end to winne them by friendlineſſe, and to ſhewe them that ſeeing he had choſen them, it was good reaſon that they ſhould put themſelues wholly into his handes. Nowe if it were ſo vnder the lawe: it agreeth much more to vs nowe adayes. For although God haue vouchſafed to bee as it were abaſed in the perſon of his onely ſonne: yet notwithſtanding he continued ſtill in his glorie,and it was no abatement of the highneſſe whereof

Ezec.13.10.
Ezech.23.7.
Eſa.19.1.
1.Tim.3.16.
Deut.4.20.
Mal.1.6.
Phil.2.7.

mention is made here. The abaſing of our Lord Ieſus Chriſt, was an infallible euidence of the mercie of our God: but yet howſoeuer it were, it ought not to make vs to deſpiſe him. For it was Gods wil to draw vs to his infinite glory by that means, to the intent yͭ we ſhold worſhip him ſeeing he came down after yͤ faſhion vnto vs. Iuſtly then may he vpbraid vs now adayes, that we be vtterly vnexcuſable, if we doe not both feare him and loue him. For he ſheweth himſelf to be both our God and our maiſter. Where then is our feare, if we make none account of his commandements, but bee ſo hard hearted at his threatnings, as to ſet light by them, and to goe on ſtil in euill deedes, & to make but a mocke of it though he ſhew himſelfe to be our iudge and call vs to a reckening? Where is the reuerence that we owe to our God? For if it were a mortall creature, we would ſtand in more awe of him than we do of the liuing God, who hath all ſuperioritie ouer vs. Againe, it is not ynough for vs to feare God after a ſlauiſh maner, as by conſtraint: but our feare muſt bee matched with loue. And for the ſame cauſe he nameth himſelfe our father. Yea and wee haue to note, that in ſhewing himſelfe to bee the GOD of Iſrael, vnder that ſaying he meant to bee our Sauiour alſo. Thou art our GOD (ſayeth the Prophet Abacuck) and wee Abac.1.12. can not periſh. Nowe then, let vs beare theſe titles well in minde, for they belong to vs, that is to ſay, they ought to ſerue for our inſtruction at 1.Tim.3.16. this day, when the Maieſtie of God is appeared in our Lord Ieſus Chriſt.

And herewithall wee muſt alſo note what he addeth concerning the fauour that he ſhewed to his people. *I haue brought thee* (ſaieth he) *out of the land of Egypt.* Of a trueth God meant hereby to bind the people of Iſrael to him moſt ſpecially aboue al other natiõs. And that is the cauſe why hee maketh expreſſe mention of their deliuerance. Neuertheleſſe, when God ſpeaketh, wee muſt bethinke vs of all the benefites whereby he hath bound vs to himſelfe, which are infinite & ineſtimable. But yet muſt we taſte of them after our abilitie, and apply all our vnderſtanding to them, and foraſmuch as wee ſee that wee come ſhort, wee muſt ſtraine our ſelues the more, to know at leaſtwiſe ſo much by them, as may teach vs to feare and loue our God. Doeth God then ſpeake? We muſt firſt conſider, that it is he which hath created and faſhioned vs: and therefore wee bee his. Loe here a benefite that is ſingular ynough alreadie. Were there no more but his ſetting of vs in this worlde and his maintaining of vs here: could wee recompence it as wee bee bound to do, though euery of vs imployed himſelfe to ſerue him to the vttermoſt of our power? No: But yet further when we behold yͤ recordes Gen.1.28. of his loue which he giueth vs both aboue and Pſal.8.7. beneath, as that he hath made the world for our Gen.1.26. ſakes, that he hath ordained and appointed all 27.& 9.6. things to our vſe, that he hath printed his image Heb.9.15.& in vs to the intent wee ſhould be immortall: and 11.16. 1.Pet.1.4. that he hath prepared a better inheritance for vs than this tranſitorie life: when we ſee al theſe things, muſt it not needes be that wee bee worſe than blockiſh, if we be not rauiſhed with earneſt affection to worſhip our God, and to vowe and dedicate our ſelues wholly to him? Yes: but beſides this, wee muſt bethinke vs of all the good turnes which God hath done vs, as well in generall as in particular: and then muſt we confeſſe with Dauid, Lord, when I thinke vpon thy benefites, behold, my wit is plundged as it were into a bottomleſſe pit: yea they be moe in nomber thã Pſa.40.6.13 the haires of my head, as it is ſaid in the fortith Pſalme. Againe, when wee haue acknowledged how much we be beholden to our God generally: let vs alſo conſider the benefites that euerie of vs haue receiued at Gods hand particularly. And whereas it was ſaide to the people of Iſrael in olde time, *I brought thee out of the land of Egypt:* let vs conſider whence our Lorde deliuered vs, when he vouchſafed to admit vs into his houſehold and Church. For we be Adams childrẽ, by Rom.5.14. nature curſed, heires of death, altogither ſinne- Eph.2.3.12. full, and conſequently muſt needes be lothſome 1.Co.15.12 Act.26.18. to our God. Let men like of themſelues and 2.Tim.2.26. glorie of themſelues as much as they liſt: yet notwithſtanding this is their pedegree, this is al their nobilitie, namely yͭ they bee Satans bondſlaues, that they haue a ſinke of ſinne and cor- Eph.2.12.& ruption in them, 4.18. and that they haue nothing but Gods wrath and curſe hanging ouer their heads: and to bee ſhort, that being baniſhed from the kingdome of heauen, they be deliuered vp to all miſchiefe and woe. But our Lord hath deliuered vs from theſe things by the hand of his ſonne, he hath not ſent vs a Moſes as he did to the people of olde time: nay he hath not ſpared his onely Rom.8.32. ſonne, but hath deliuered him to death for vs. Seeing then that we be raũſomed with ſo deare 1.Pet.1.19. and ineſtimable a price, as is the holy bloud of the ſonne of God: ought wee not to giue our ſelues wholly vnto him? Furthermore if Egypt were termed a houſe of bondage: I praye you what is it when yͤ diuell holdeth vs in his bondes and vnder his tyrannie, ſo as we haue no meanes to ſcape death, but are ſhut out from all hope of ſaluation, and God is vtterly againſt vs? Seeing wee bee deliuered from all theſe things, is it not a much more excellent deliuerance, than that which Moſes here ſpeaketh of? Yes: and therefore whereas it was ſaide to the people of olde time, thy GOD hath brought thee out of the lande of Egypt: nowe it is ſayde that we be not our owne, as ſaieth Saint Paul in the fourteenth to the Romanes, and alſo in the ſeuenth of the Ro.14.7.8.9 firſt Epiſtle to the Corinthians. Wee bee not 1.Cor.7.20. our owne: 24. the faithfull muſt not take leaue to doe what they liſt, nor to liue euerie man after his owne liking. And why? Bicauſe our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt dyed, and is riſen againe to raigne both ouer quicke and dead. Then is it good reaſon that Ieſus Chriſt ſhoulde bee Lord of life and death, ſeeing he ſpared not himſelfe when our redemption & ſaluation were to be wrought.

And moreouer, beſides that the ſonne of God hath offered vp himſelfe for redemption: let vs vnderſtand that he maketh vs partakers of that benefite at this day, by meanes of the Goſpell. Eph.1.13. For hee gathereth vs to him to the intent wee Eph.1.10.

ſhould

John 1.29. 2.Tim.1.9. 10.& Rom. 5.10.and 2.Cor.5.19.

ſhould bee of his flocke. True it is that hee is the Lambe without ſpot which wypeth awaye the ſinnes of the world, and that he hath offered himſelfe vp to reconcile men vnto God. But yet for all that, wee ſee a great nomber of people that are let alone, againſt whome the gate is ſhut, and GOD doeth not graunt them the grace to bee inlightened by faith as wee bee. And therefore let vs marke well that ſeeing the Goſpell is preached vnto vs, and wee haue there a warrant that the ſonne of God will make the redemption auailable in vs which he hath once wrought, and cauſe vs to inioye the benefite thereof: wee muſt learne that our thankeleſneſſe will bee the ſhamefuller, if wee doe not our indeuour to giue our ſelues to our God, who hath bounde vs to himſelfe after that ſorte. If the vnbeleeuers play the looſe Coltes, and ouerſhoote themſelues in their ſuperſtitions, and in wantonneſſe of life: well, it is bicauſe they haue no bridle, he hath not reyned them backe as he doeth his houſholde folke. Wee ſee the horrible confuſion that is in Poperie: but yet there is not any doctrine to plucke men backe to God: nay rather, that doctrine which is there, doeth drawe them quite and cleane from him. And we ſee that the diuell hath gottẽ ſuch footing there, that all is full of trumperie and illuſions, and the liuing God is quite forſaken. And ſo ye ſee that there is a horrible confuſion. But as for our part, ſeeing that God draweth vs to himſelfe, is it not a ſtraiter bond to make vs to linke in throughly with him, and to holde our ſelues vnder obedience of the doctrine that is ſet foorth to vs in his name? Yes: and therefore let vs learne to ſticke ſo to our God as wee may renounce all that euer wee can imagine of our owne head: and let vs conſider that it is not for vs to ſwarue one way or other any more, or to be toſſed too and fro in any wiſe, aſſuring our ſelues that there is but onely one God, who will poſſeſſe vs, yea and poſſeſſe vs in ſuch wiſe, as his honour bee not taken from him and beſtowed vppon creatures, and that he watcheth ouer vs to the end wee ſhould knowe that it is onely he on whom wee ought to call, and to whoſe grace we ought to repaire for ſuccour. And finally foraſmuch as it is his will to haue and accept vs to bee of his houſhold: let vs walke as in his preſence and in his ſight, and that in ſuch wiſe as wee worſhippe him as our onely God, not onely with Ceremonies and outward proteſtation, but alſo in our hearts, as they that knowe that his ſeruice is ſpirituall, and to be ſhort, let him poſſeſſe both our bodies and our ſoules, that he may bee throughly glorified in all reſpectes.

Pſal. 116.9.

Now let vs kneele downe in the preſence of our good God with acknowledgement of our faultes, praying him to make vs feele them better, that it may leade vs to true repentance to be mortified more and more, ſo as our wicked luſtes may be cut off, and we bee wholy giuen to feare and honour him; & that foraſmuch as wee cannot ſerue him throughly as he deſerueth, ſo long as we be hild downe vnder the infirmities of our fleſh: it may pleaſe him to vphold vs, vntill hee haue clothed vs with his own righteouſnes. And ſo let vs all ſay, Almighty God, &c.

On Munday the xvij. of Iune. 1555.

The xxxij. Sermon, which is the third vpon the fifth Chapter.

8 Thou ſhalt not make thee any grauen image nor the likeneſſe of anye thing that is in heauen aboue, or in the earth beneath, or in the waters vnder the earth.

9 Thou ſhalt not bow downe to them nor worſhip them. For I am the Lord thy God, a ielous God, viſiting the ſinnes of the fathers vppon the children, euen vpon the third and fourth generation of them that hate mee:

10 And ſhewing mercie in a thouſand generations, to them that loue mee and keepe my commaundementes.

Foraſmuch as men are ſo inclined to corrupt Gods ſeruice with wicked ſuperſtitions: God is faine to threaten them, that they may bee helde vnder as it were by force, or els their fondneſſe would carie them away to ſurmiſe of God, contrarie to that which may beſeeme his Maieſtie. And this is a verie notable point, as I haue touched heretofore. For in as much as the people of Iſrael knew the liuing God: it may ſeeme to bee as it were needeleſſe to forbid them to make any image. Howbeit by reaſon of our curſed inclination; it was behoofefull that this forbidding ſhould bee added as ſtraite as wee ſee it here. And it is well for vs that it is ſo. For this ſinne is rooted as it were in our verie bones: in ſo much that if God tolde vs not that he cannot away with idolatrie, and that he wounded vs not with that threate: there is none of vs all which would not forge infinite idols to himſelfe, and by that meanes the honour of ẏ liuing God ſhould be conueied ouer vnto our own imaginations. Wherefore let vs marke well, that here wee bee conuinced to haue a froward and curſed nature which draweth alwaies to ſuperſtition, and that it is requiſite for vs to bee reſtrained after a violent maner. For of our owne will wee can neuer ſerue GOD ſo purely, as to imagine nothing of him but as may beſeeme him. And herewithall wee ſee alſo whereunto our good intentes ſerue vs. For if there bee any thing wherein men may excuſe themſelues, by imagining that they doe well: it is in forging of idols. For to what end do they make them, but to ſerue GOD, that they may bee ſtirred vp to the greater deuotion, and be the ſurer that God will graunt their requeſts? Therefore by this meanes men might ſhroude themſelues vnder colour of good intent. But we ſee on the contrarie part, that God abhorreth it: wee ſee howe he vttereth the grieuous ſentence of condemnation, againſt all ſuch as proceede to behaue themſelues ſo after their owne imagination. They may well ynough ſay, (and ſo it is in deede) that their meaning is to ſerue God. But what for that? He accepteth no ſuch ſeruice, but rather curſeth it and vtterly miſliketh it, & that iuſtly. For (as I haue ſhewed afore) it is a diſguiſing of his Maieſtie, to make any viſible image vnto him. Therefore this text teacheth vs to forbeare to doe the thinges that ſeeme good to our ſelues, and ſpecially that when Gods ſeruice commeth in queſtion, we muſt not attempt any thing vpon our owne head, but in all ſimplicitie followe that which he ordaineth by his woord, ẇout putting any thing at all therto. For looke how ſoone wee ſwarue neuer ſo little from that: alledge wee what wee can, and ſet wee neuer ſo good countenance vpon our caſe: God will not faile to puniſh vs. For this threatening of his is not in vaine where he ſaieth, *That he is a ielous & angrie God, which viſiteth the wickedneſſe of the fathers vpon the Children.*

Ye ſee then how there are two pointes for vs to remember in this text. The one is, that foraſmuch as we be naturally too much giuen to idolatrie, wee muſt alwayes ſet this threate of God before our eyes, that wee take not vppon vs to mingle any thing with his word, or to deuiſe any worſhipping of images, but ſerue God purely according to his owne nature, and not after our owne fanſie. Let that ſerue for one point. The other is, that we muſt conſider, that we muſt not pretend our owne good intentes, to iuſtifie the things that we our ſelues haue inuẽted: but contrariwiſe beare in minde, that the chiefe ſeruice which God requireth, is obedience. 1.Sa.15.22. Eccle.4.17.

But now let vs come to the wordes that are ſet downe here. Firſt God ſaieth, *I am thine euerlaſting God*, yea euen *the ſtrong* or rather *mightie God.* Here againe he ſetteth himſelfe againſt idols. For wee haue ſeene heretofore, that to correct ſuperſtition, he did ſet himſelfe forth in his Maieſtie. And ſurely Gods manifeſting of himſelfe, is to bereaue men of all excuſe. So long as we knowe not the true Religion, no nor can diſcerne which is the true God: it is no maruaile though our wits runne at rouers, and we gad vp and downe without any certaine ſtay, ſo as we be euer ſtraying. But contrariwiſe, when God hath once ſhewed himſelf vnto vs, & giuẽ vs knoledge of his trueth: it is good reaſon that all our owne dotages ſhould ſinke, and that wee ſhould ſticke to the thing that wee knowe. For this cauſe God repeateth the matter, how he had declared himſelfe to the people of Iſrael, and choſen them to himſelfe of purpoſe to gouerne them, euen by his Lawe which is nowe publiſhed. And he termeth himſelfe expreſſely a *ielous* or *angrie God*: for the Hebrew word that is placed here, betokeneth both twaine. And although he call himſelfe God here: yet the word that he vſeth commeth of ſtrength. Now then whereas he termeth himſelfe *ielous*: no doubt but his meaning is, that he cannot abide the violating of his honour, or that men ſhould rob him of that which is his owne, to giue it vnto creatures: he is not ſo patient as to ſuffer ſuch treacherie. And therefore although Gods honour be not ſo greatly regarded of vs as it deſerueth: this argueth not ẏ he neglecteth it: for in the ende wee ſhall finde that he hath not forgotten himſelfe; but that he will maintaine his glory, accordingly alſo as he declareth throughout the whole holy ſcripture. Num.14.18 Leuit.10.3.

Truely, if we had but one drop of good reaſon, we would be ielous ouer the honour of our God, ſo as wee ſhould neede no incouragement thereto, but rather ſhould indeuour to performe this ſaying of the Pſalme, that the zeale of him ſhould euen conſume vs, and we ſhould be ſo ſet on fire within, that whenſoeuer we ſawe his Maieſtie diſhonored or lightly eſteemed, we ſhould feele as it were a burning fire within vs. But what? We be nice in maintaining our own honor but in the meane while wee ſuffer Gods honour to be trodẽ vnder foote, and to be ſcoffed at, and to be made ſport of, or rather to be rent in peeces, when the world giueth it ſelfe to idolatrie. Howbeit, for as much as we doe not our duetie: our Lorde hauing caſt vs in the teeth with our lewdneſſe and vnthankfulneſſe, muſt be faine to ſhewe vs, that although we haue bin laſie & negligent, yet will not he faile to haue ſuch a zeale as is requiſite for the maintenance of his honour, ſo as he will be reuenged of men for defacing of it after that maner. Pſal.69.10.

And to the end we ſhould know that God being ielous of his honour, is alſo well able to puniſh idolaters: he vſeth that name of his which betokeneth ſtrength or mightineſſe, as I haue declared alreadie. And it behoueth vs to ioyne thoſe two wordes togither. For Moſes meaneth the ſame thing that is better expreſſed in the Prophet Nahum where he ſaieth, The Lord is a ielous God, a God of vengeance, a God that puniſheth ſuch as haue offended him, a God that watcheth ouer his enemies, a God that wil come with whirlewind and tempeſt. The Prophet vſeth this manner of ſpeache, that God is ielous, that is to ſay that he forgetteth not himſelfe, ne ſhutteth his eyes when men deſpiſe him, but marketh euerie whit of it, and inregiſtreth it be-

fore Nahum.1.2.

fore him, and they muſt come to account for it. And hauing ſpoken of the ſaide diſpoſition, that is to ſaye, that God will maintaine his honour: hee ſheweth immediatly that hee hath wherewith to doe it, and that hee is armed with power to puniſh his foes, ſo as they cannot ſcape his hande. That is the cauſe why hee ſpeaketh of whirlwind and tempeſt: that is the cauſe why he ſpeaketh of vengeance: inſomuch that if God ſeeme to diſſemble thinges for a time, yet hee hath an eye to his enemies, and will in conuenient ſeaſon make them to feele with whome they had to doe, and that they prouoked the liuing God. Nowe wee ſee what Moſes meant here: that is to wit, that God ſetteth great ſtore by his own honour: and yͭ although we beare our ſelues in hande that wee ſhall ſcape vnpuniſhed when wee haue violated his ſeruice, or by any meanes corrupted it: yet notwithſtanding hee will ſhewe that hee hath not forgotten himſelfe, and that he will maintaine himſelfe. Marke that for one point.

Beſides this, hee is alſo mightie to put the ſame ielouſie in execution. He is not like mortall men, which are angrie and colerike when diſhonor, diſhoneſtie, or wrong is offered them, but yet are not able to doe as they woulde. God is no ſuch a one: for hee is armed with power to confounde all his enemies. In deede wee Deu. 32.39. 41. muſt not imagine any humaine affections in God, that hee ſhoulde bee moued as wee ſee that men bee. There is no wrathfulneſſe in God. But foraſmuch as wee cannot conceiue him as hee is: hee is faine to apply himſelfe to our rudeneſſe. Therefore whenſoeuer the ſcripture ſpeaketh of anger, of wrath, or of indignation: it is not for that God is inclynable, or for that hee reſembleth vs, or for that hee is moued thereto: [no,] hee ſtandeth alwayes at one ſtay, and there is not ſo much as any little ouerſhadowing in him, as ſaith S.Iames, who Iam.1.17. vſeth the ſame ſimilitude to ſhewe that there can bee no chaunge in his beeing. Howbeit foraſmuch as wee conceiue not Gods iudgementes and threatenings, but by the termes of yre, anger, wrath, and indignation: therefore doth the holy ſcripture ſpeake ſo of him. Wherefore let vs marke firſt of all, howe GOD hath Hebr.10.31. ſhewed vs in this text, that it is a dreadfull thing to fall into his handes. And ſpecially that if wee corrupt the pureneſſe of his ſeruice with our wicked inuentions, and will needes attempt whatſoeuer our owne braine deuyſeth: we ſhall feele with whom we haue to doe, and that he is too great a Lorde for vs to dally with after that faſhion.

Moreouer God thinketh it not ynough to threaten the parties themſelues that turne away from this Lawe through their idolatrouſneſſe: hee thinkes it not ynough to tell them that hee will puniſh the perſons themſelues: but hee extendeth his vengeance euen to their iſſue alſo. *I am* (ſaieth hee) *a iealous God which viſiteth the ſinnes of the fathers vppon the children, vnto the third and fourth generation.* It ſhoulde ſeeme at the firſt bluſh to bee vnſeemely for Gods Iuſtice, that hee ſhoulde puniſh the children for the offẽces of their fathers and mothers. And beſides that it is vtterly againſt naturall reaſon: wee ſee what is ſaide of it in the propheſie of Ezechiel: Ezech.18.19 namely that the partie which ſinneth ſhall beare his owne burthen: ſo as the ſonne ſhall no more beare the ſinne of his father, than the father ſhall beare the ſinne of his ſonne. This text then may ſeeme ſomewhat rough and ſharpe, yea and to deface the vprightneſſe and equitie that is in God: for ſinne craueth his wages, that is to ſay the death of him that committeth it. Why then ſhoulde hee dye which is guiltleſſe? Againe, although this reaſon Ezech.18.2. were not ſo euident: yet doeth the holy ſcripture auowe, that God telleth vs hee will not puniſh the guiltleſſe children for the ſinnes of their parentes. Yea and hee rebuketh the Iewes for this blaſphemie which ranne in their mouthes, whereof they had made a common prouerb: Our fathers haue eaten ſower grapes, and our teeth are ſet on edge with it: Gods handling of vs thus rigorouſly is not for any fault of our owne committing, for wee haue liued as wee ought to do: but he ouer reacheth vs with the ſinnes of our fathers. After that manner did the Iewes grudge againſt GOD. But hee ſweareth that ſuch blaſphemie ſhall take place no more.

Nowe if all bee well conſidered, there is no contrarietie at all. For in the ſaide texte of Ezechiels, GOD meant nothing elſe but that thoſe whome hee puniſhed coulde not alledge innocencie, nor ſaye hee did them wrong in vſing rigour againſt them, but that euerie one of them ſhoulde finde themſelues guiltie, ſo as hee himſelfe ſhoulde bee iuſtified, and they well perceiue that hee went not beyonde meaſure and reaſon. And this is verie certeine. For although GOD puniſhe the children for their fathers ſakes: yet ceaſeth hee not to bee righteous in ſuch chaſtiſementes. For if the children bee well examined, they ſhall finde themſelues guiltie on their owne behalfe: yea (ſay I), euen though they were but newely borne, and had neuer done any open fault that were knowen to the worlde. For what manner of ofſpring are wee? What bring wee with vs by nature but vtter naughtineſſe? Yee ſee then that euen infantes are ſinners aforehande: they bee condemned before GOD being yet in their mothers wombes. The euill is not yet perceiued: but yet for all that their nature is ſinfull and frowarde, they haue a ſecret Rom.5.14. ſeede within them, and they bee alreadie in condemnation, becauſe of the originall ſinne that is come from Adam vpon all mankinde.

Eph.2.3. Nowe ſeeing that the little babes are not exempted from the wrath and curſe of GOD, in ſo much that if hee puniſhe them it is not without cauſe, neither can men ſaye but that hee proceedeth alwayes vprightlye as a good Iudge: much leſſe canne they that are men growen auowe themſelues to be innocent, but they ſhall much rather bee founde guiltie. And ſo as concerning Ezechiels purpoſe, it is an euident matter that God puniſheth not the guiltleſſe children for their fathers ſakes: for there is fault to bee founde euen in them alſo.

Furthermore where as hee ſaieth *that hee puniſheth the ſinnes of the fathers vppon the children*: let vs marke howe that is done, and then will this doubt be yet better diſcuſſed. Firſt of all wee knowe that God is not any thing indetted vnto vs, and that if hee doe vs any good, it is of his owne free goodneſſe, and not for that hee is bounde vnto vs. Nowe if he liſt to vſe rigour towardes vs, hee may leaue vs all in condemnation as thoſe that are there alreadie. Let God but onely withholde his mercie, and ſhewe himſelfe as a iudge to the whole worlde, and what will become of it? Wee bee all forlorne, there is no remedie for vs, both great and ſmal, fathers and children, I ſay all of vs without exception are damned euerychone, if God drawe vs not out of the curſed caſe wherein wee be, yea and that hee do it not of his owne freebeſtowed goodneſſe, without being bound thervnto. Now then ſeeing that God might deſtroy vs and caſt vs all away: is he to be blamed, is there any fault to bee founde with him, if it pleaſe him to vſe his goodneſſe and mercie towardes ſome, and to call them to him, and to deliuer them out of the bottomleſſe pitte wherein they bee? No. For our eye muſt not bee ſpitefull becauſe hee hath Matt. 20,15 pittie vppon his creatures. And although hee vſe not like courteſie towards all men: yet doth it become vs to keepe our mouthes ſhutte: yea and ſometimes againe wee ought to open them wide to confeſſe that all his doings are in vp- Psal. 33.4. rightneſſe and equitie, though they ſurmount our capacitie. For wee cannot alwayes perceiue why God diſpoſeth ſo of men: but our pratling muſt bee put downe, and wee muſt learne to reuerence God in his iudgementes when they bee too high and too ſecret for vs to attaine to. How ſoeuer the caſe ſtand, let this ſtand for a generall rule, that God might let vs alone in the deſtruction wherein we bee if he thought good, and that by that meanes all the worlde might periſh: but foraſmuch as it pleaſeth him to ſhewe himſelfe pitifull and gentle, not towardes all, but towardes one part of them, therefore putteth he a difference betweene the one and the other. And there vppon hee leaueth whom he liſteth in their owne curſednes wherein they were borne.

Nowe if it bee demaunded why GOD vſeth mercie after that manner towardes the one ſorte and rigour towardes the other: truely the firſt cauſe thereof is vnknowen to vs, and wee ought not to bee inquiſitiue of it. And why? for it becommeth our wittes to bee locked vp and impriſoned in that behalfe, and wee ought to confeſſe that God hath free power to chooſe whom hee liſteth and to caſt away the reſt. But howſoeuer the caſe ſtande, hee maketh this promiſe to the faithfull, that hee will haue mercie vppon their children: and that as hee hath begunne his mercie vppon the parentes themſelues, ſo hee will holde out with it continually vnto a thouſande generations. We ſee nowe that there is ſome cauſe why God hath pitie vppon the one ſort rather than vppon the other. Againe on the contrarie part, he threateneth the vnbeleeuers that he will curſe them, not onely in themſelues, but alſo in their raſe, and in thoſe that ſhall ſpring of them.

But nowe let vs come to the mercie that God graunteth, and to the puniſhment that hee extendeth. His bleſſing of the faithfull folkes children, is not in riches, in health, and in all other ſuch thinges, or in making them to proſper to the worlde warde: Thoſe are not the greateſt bleſſings which God graunteth: that is not the ende which hee beginneth at: but rather the mercie that hee ſheweth them, is that hee gouerneth them by his holy ſpirite, that hee giueth them the badge of his adopted children, and that he correcteth them and purgeth them from their ſinnes, to faſhion them againe after his owne image. Yee ſee then that the mercie which God extendeth towardes the children of the faithfull, is that hee ſuffereth them not to abide in their owne corruption and naughtineſſe, but reformeth and ruleth them by his holy ſpirite. This done, hee proceedeth yet further, and maketh them to proſper, euen in this worlde, vntill the full meaſure of his mercie bee heaped vppon them, that is to wit, till he haue taken them vp into his heauenly kingdome, and there giuen them euerlaſting life.

On the contrarie parte, whereas hee puniſheth the ſinnes of the fathers vppon the children: it is as much to ſay, as hee letteth their ofſpring alone in the ſame plyght that they bee in. There is a wicked man, there is a deſpiſer of GOD, there is an hypocrite, there is an vnbeleeuer: well may hee haue children, but God careth not for them (as yee woulde ſaye) and taketh them as ſtraungers: and foraſmuch as hee acknowledgeth them not to bee of the number of his, hee vouchſafeth not to ſhewe himſelfe fatherlike towardes them, but letteth them runne at rouers, ſo as Sathan muſt needes poſſeſſe them. And when they bee ſo deſtitute of Gods ſpirite, what can betide them but vtter miſchiefe, ſo as they muſt prouoke him to wrath more and more? Nowe then doeth our Lorde puniſhe them without cauſe? Can they ſay that they be guiltleſſe? No: for there is fault ynough in them beforehande. Wee ſee then much better, that the thing which God hath ſpoken by Ezechiel is true: that is to wit, that the partie which hath ſinned ſhall receiue his owne hyre as hee deſerueth: and that the guiltleſſe ſhall not bee puniſhed for the guiltie and for the offenders ſake. Neuertheleſſe wee ſee alſo, that his ſaying that hee will puniſh the ſinne of the fathers vppon their children, is not without cauſe. For why? It is in him to withholde his grace from the children of the wicked and faithleſſe, or of the deſpiſers of his worde, or of hypocrites that abuſe his name: God is at free libertie to withdrawe his ſpirite from all the whole race of them. And when their children are ſo alienated from God: what haue they, but the corruption of Adam? There Rom.8.7. is nothing in them but ſinne and corruption, and therefore they muſt needes be enemies vnto God. Yee ſee then how he puniſheth them iuſtly, and that they cannot ſhift themſelues from his hande, to ſay that hee doeth them wrong, or that he is cruell to them. All mouthes muſt bee ſtopped in that behalfe. True it is that the rebellious ſorte will neuer bee contented: for wee ſee howe there are ſome, which aduance themſelues againſt God with ſuch boldneſſe, as all modeſt and ſober folke may bee aſhamed of them. But let vs ſuffer thoſe dogges to bark their fill, and let vs in the meane while glorifie our God with all lowlineſſe, acknowledging neuer- Exod.33.19 theleſſe that hee hath authoritie and good right to bee gracious and fauourable to whome hee liſteth. By reaſon whereof wee muſt conclude, that if God withholde his ſpirite from the linage of the wicked, hee cannot bee blamed of crueltie for it: for yee ſee they bee puniſhable when they bee ſo forſaken of him, and are not gouerned by his holy ſpirit. Wherefore let vs marke well, that this ſaying impugneth not the ſaying of Ezechiell.

But let vs come backe againe to the intent of Moſes. It is not to bee doubted but hee ment to imprint a greater feare of God in vs, than if he had ſaid but ſingly, God will puniſh you when yee ſhall haue corrupted his ſeruice, by chaunging any thing in Religion: and thinke not to ſcape his vengeance, if yee deuiſe any ſhape of him: for hee cannot abide to haue his honour defaced after that faſhion. Had Moſes ſpoken after that manner, men are ſo ſtubborne and hardharted, yͭ they woulde not haue beene ſufficiently touched with feare. But heere hee proceedeth further. God (ſaieth hee) will not onely puniſh you in your owne perſons, but alſo extende his vengeance to your iſſue, and not onely to your children, but alſo to the vttermoſt of your ofſpring, ſo as you ſhal alwayes feele his wrath as a burning fire, and the markes of your wickedneſſe ſhal appeare ſtil after your deceaſe. God will put you to open ſhame: ſo as yee ſhall needes bee a gazingſtocke. Although ye be rotten in the earth: yet ſhall Gods vengeance purſue you in ſuch ſort, as your ſinnes ſhalbe remẽbered from age to age, and the world ſhall know that yee haue beene diſobedient, vnto him that had beſtowed ſo many benefites vppon you, as yee ought at leaſtwiſe to haue beene as ſheepe of his flocke, to bee ruled by him according to his worde.

Nowe therefore let vs learne to bee no more ſo drowſie when God wakeneth vs after that faſhion. Surely if hee gaue vs but ſome incling of his diſpleaſure by ſome worde or outward ſigne: it ought to touch vs with feare and terrour. But wee bee dull vppon the ſpurre: and therefore ſeeing GOD telleth vs, that beſides his puniſhing of vs in our ſelues, hee will continue his vengeance ſtill vppon all our linage, and that thoſe which are begottẽ of vs muſt be condemned after our death: his ſpeaking after that maner ought at leaſtwiſe to make vs more ware, to liue in awe of him and to call our ſelues home to him, leaſt we ſhould prouoke his wrath, ſeeing it is ſo terrible. Thus yee ſee howe we may profite our ſelues by this text.

Nowe he ſaieth, *of them that hate him*. By this terme hee meaneth all ſuch as breake his Lawe. If it bee demaunded whether all ſuch as ſwarue from their obedience to Godwarde doe therefore hate him: this text ſheweth that they do ſo. [Howbeit] not to their owne ſeeming, but yet in verie deede. And in this caſe we muſt not reſt vppon our owne iudgement: for onely God is competent iudge to determine of that matter. And foraſmuch as men when they giue themſelues to naughtineſſe, will not ſay, no nor think in their hearts yͭ they hate God in doing amiſſe: it is requiſite that that fault ſhoulde bee diſcouered. True it is that the hypocrites will indeede pretende, that the loue of God cauſeth them to ſhew ſome good countenance, and in verie deed they may well haue ſome ſeede of it: howbeit, that is but a baſtardly and ſinful ſeede, inſomuch that this hatred of God appeareth not in the hypocrites, no nor euen in thoſe that leade a diſordered and looſe life: but yet is it in them though wee perceiue it not. For like as malefactors coulde finde in their heartes, that there were no iudge nor order nor gouernement in the worlde: ſo all ſuch as acknowledge not themſelues ſubiect to God (at leaſtwiſe willingly) are contemptuous againſt him, and coulde bee contented to haue him plucked out of heauen. This is apparant ynough in ſuch as are vtterly giuen to wilfulneſſe. When men haue once let themſelues looſe to all wickedneſſe: they can no more away with any correction, and thervpon they become ſo much the leſſe teachable. If a man threaten them, they gnaſh their teeth at him, they ſtorme at him, and they become as good as madde againſt God. Nowe then, this hatred of God is apparant ynough in ſuch as haue taken laweleſſe leaue to doe euill, and are caryed away with their owne leawdneſſe, and as it were ſaped in their ſinnes. Againe, it is true that this appeareth not in ſuch as haue yet any feare of God in them, & feele ſome remorſe when a man ſpeakes to them of God and of his iuſtice: but yet is there ſome hate of God in them. Indeede they thinke it not: but God ſeeth much more clearely than wee, and whereas we perceiue not things, he noteth them. Wee muſt alwayes remember how ſaint Iohn ſaieth, that God is greater than our 1.Ioh.3.20. conſciences, that is to ſay, that if our conſciences beare recorde of our offences, God will not ſleepe in the meane while. And ſo let vs briefely beare in minde, that all ſuch as ſubmit not themſelues obediently vnto God, ne humble themſelues vnder his maieſtie to ſerue him and to honour him: do euerie one of them hate him, although they ſhewe it not at the firſt by their deedes, nor can bee deemed of the worlde ſo to doe. And for the ſame cauſe doeth God begin at loue, when hee ſpeaketh of ſuch as keepe his commaundements.

He ſaieth *that hee will ſhewe mercie in a thouſand deſcentes to ſuch as loue him.* And why? For it is vnpoſſible that wee ſhoulde bee deſirous to honour God and to bee obedient vnto him, vnleſſe wee haue felt the loue that is ſpoken of heere. And this may ſerue vs for a good leſſon: according as we ſhall ſee hereafter, howe Moſes intending to giue vs a briefe ſumme of the Lawe, ſaith: What Deut.10.12. doeth the Lorde thy God require of thee O Iſrael, but that thou ſhouldeſt loue him with all thy hart, & that thou ſhouldeſt ſticke vnto him? Neuer (ſay I) doe we knowe what it is to keepe Gods Law, and to behaue our ſelues thereafter, vnleſſe wee beginne at the ſaide loue. And why? For God requireth willing ſeruice. Hee will not 2.Cor.9.7. haue vs to ſerue him, onely vpon a ſlauiſh feare: Rom.8.15. but hee will haue vs to goe to it with a free and cheerefull courage, that wee may euen take pleaſure in honouring him: and that cannot be done without we loue him. Wherefore let vs marke, that the beginning and as it were the welſpring, foundation, and roote of obedience, is the ſaide loue of God, ſo as wee be not forced to come vnto him, but haue a ſingular pleaſure in doing it, aſſuring our ſelues that our true bleſſedneſſe is to deſire to bee gouerned altogether according to his will, and to frame our ſelues wholly therevnto.

Moreouer let vs marke alſo, that this loue cannot be in vs, vntil we haue taſted of the goodneſſe of our God. For ſo long as wee imagine God to be againſt vs, wee muſt needes ſhunne him. Will wee then loue him? will wee frame our ſelues to the obeying of him, to take all our delight in ſeruing of him? Wee muſt firſt knowe that hee is our father and ſauiour, and that hee ſeeketh nothing but to bee fauourable vnto vs. Ioh.14.15. When we haue ſo taſted his loue towards vs: thẽ ſhal wee bee prouoked to loue him as our father. Inſomuch that if that loue be in vs, no doubt but we will obey him, and his lawe ſhall reigne in our mindes, in our affections, and in all our members. For what is the cauſe why we be ſo diſobedient vnto God, but for that wee hate him, as I ſaide afore? So on the contrarie part the loue of God will drawe vs to ſerue him, and to ſubmit our ſelues to his righteouſneſſe, ſo as men ſhall ſee a certaine conformitie and agreeableneſſe betwixt Gods lawe and all our deſires and affections. But yet for the better vnderſtanding hereof, let vs conſider what God is: For hee will not be knowen according to our nature. And when we heare him ſpoken of, it is not ynough for vs to giue him the title of God: but he will be knowen as hee is in deede: that is to wit, to bee righteous and good, as the perfection and fountaine of all wiſedome, of all power, of all right, and of all equitie. Nowe then let vs conceiue God as he is: that is to wit, with his iuſtice, righteouſneſſe and equitie: and then ſhall wee not deſire any thing elſe than to faſhion our ſelues like to him. Contrariwiſe if we loue naughtineſſe and be wrapped in it, we muſt needes hate God. For why? Heere is no talke of a naked being: wee muſt not imagine God to bee as an ydoll: wee muſt conceiue him with his righteouſneſſe and equitie. Therefore when wee hate the thinges that are in God, that is to ſay his iuſtice and righteouſneſſe: wee muſt needes hate his owne ſelfe: for hee cannot forſake himſelfe, hee cannot diſguiſe himſelfe, hee cannot transforme 2.Tim.2.13. himſelfe after our faſhion: hee continueth euermore like himſelfe. So then, (as I ſaide afore) all ſuch as loue God, neede not bee afraide that they ſhall not obey his Lawe and keepe his commaundementes: for they bee thinges vnited and vnſeparable. That is the thing whiche wee haue to marke vppon this place.

And heereby wee bee warned to ſhunne all ſtubborneneſſe and all offending, more than we haue done: for it is no ſmall matter for vs to bee declared to bee Gods enemies, and as makers of warre againſt him. And yet the caſe ſtandeth ſo, as we cannot aduance our ſelues aboue him, nor turne away from him, nor ſhake off his yoke: but wee be conuicted to haue beene his enemies, and to haue made open warre againſt him. And is not that a curſed thing? So then let vs learne to abhorre our owne ſinnes and vices, becauſe they attaint vs as traitors to God, and hee muſt needes ſhewe himſelfe to bee our aduerſarie partie. Alſo herewithall we be warned to reſort vnto God with a pure and right meaning minde. For it is not ynough for vs to haue with helde our feete, hands and eyes from euill doing: but the heart muſt goe before, and wee muſt ſerue God with a true affection: and this affection muſt not bee inforced, but it muſt proceede of verie loue to Godwarde. Therefore if wee minde to keepe the Lawe well: wee muſt firſt knowe that God is a good and kindeharted father towardes vs, to the ende we may be fully perſwaded of his loue towardes vs. And therewithall let it neuer ſinke in our heartes to dally in proteſting that wee loue God, except the ſame may appeare by our whole life. For when as Moſes ſpeaketh heere of the louing of GOD: hee addeth, *That thoſe which loue him doe alſo keepe his commaundementes.* Therefore our life muſt bee anſwerable in that behalfe, and bee as a certificate whether we loue him or hate him.

Furthermore it is not without cauſe that God comparing here his wrath and vengeance with his mercie, ſaieth *that hee will puniſh thoſe that hate him, euen in three or foure deſcentes: and ſhewe mercie in a thouſande deſcentes to them that loue him.* For thereby hee ſheweth the thing which is yet better expreſſed in other ſentences of the ſcripture: which is, that hee is ſlowe to wrath and forwarde to mercie, and therewithall long ſuffering, Pſal. 102,8, 9.17. ſo that whereas his anger laſteth but a verie ſhort time, his mercie is euerlaſting all the life long. Yee ſee then that the verie nature of God is ſuch, as hee ſeeketh nothing but to drawe men to him by all manner of gentleneſſe, and to vſe his goodneſſe towardes them. When hee puniſheth them, it is (as yee woulde ſay) againſt his nature. Not that it is not meete for

God to puniſh as well as to ſhewe mercie: but his meaning is to ſhewe vs that his goodneſſe is farre the greater: and to be ſhort, that he is not rigorous, but that his onely deſire is to vtter his good will to vs, if wee woulde ſuffer him: for in very deede hee woulde faine bee knowen to bee good and pitifull, and it is the thing wherein his glorie doeth chiefly ſhine foorth. Therefore let vs marke well how it is not for nought that Moſes hath aſſigned heere a thouſande generations to Gods mercie: and reſtrained his wrath and vengeance to a three or foure generations. As if hee ſhoulde ſaye: It is true that our Lorde will not ſuffer ſuperſtition vnpuniſhed. When yee ſhall haue corrupted his ſeruice and defaced his honour by gadding after your owne dotages, yee ſhall feele the puniſhment thereof, yea and euen your children after you muſt bee faine to feele it to: inſomuch that when the fire of his wrath is once kindled vppon you, it ſhall not bee quenched againe ſo ſoone as yee weene for: but yet for all that hee will not faile to bee pitifull ſtill, and his mercie ſhall alwayes bee greater than his wrath. And in deede, like as by the threate which wee haue hearde, GOD intended to holde the worlde in the true religion, to the ende they ſhoulde not make ydols and puppets to themſelues: ſo was it his will alſo, that the promiſe which is conteined heere ſhoulde allure vs to him, if wee beare him the loue and reuerence which wee ought to doe: and hee had leuer to winne vs by his goodneſſe, than to reſtraine vs by his threatnings. And therefore hee ſaith, My children, looke not that I ſhoulde puniſh you. Truely if yee prouoke mee, I will not ſuffer my ſelfe to bee ſo mocked at your hands: but yet for all that, when I haue told you of my diſpleaſure, I had much leuer to traine you and to winne you to me by mercie. Therefore I tell you that if you abide pure and ſounde in my obedience: I alſo will continue in doing good vnto you euen vnto a thouſande generations, ſo as your children after you ſhall find me the ſame ſtill. Thus yee ſee what we haue to remember vppon that ſentence.

Moreouer for a concluſion, it is not for nought that God vſeth the terme *Mercie*, notwithſtanding that it bee as a rewarde for the ſeruice that is done vnto him. Hee might well haue ſaide, I will conſider the ſeruice of ſuch as ſhall haue honoured and ſerued mee: and when men ſhall haue loued mee by keeping my commaundementes, I will ſhewe them that they haue not loſt their labour in taking paines to honour me. God might haue ſpoken ſo: but hee ſaieth, *I will ſhewe mercie.* And howe may that bee? Doeth it not ſeeme that if we ſerue God, hee oweth vs recompence? No: but hee ſheweth that his doing of good to ſuch as honour him and followe his commaundements, is not of bounde duetie nor for any deſert of theirs: for euen in ſo doing hee vſeth mercie ſtill. And the terme *Mercie* ſerueth to beate down all pride of men, ſo as they may not boaſt of their owne workes, as though they were worthy of recompence: but rather conſider that thereby God ment to declare, that when we ſerue him the beſt that we can, we haue ſtill neede to be borne withall at his hande, and to haue our faultes and infirmities forgiuen vs. Thus are there two thinges for vs to marke in this place. The one is that although wee ſerue God neuer ſo purely, yet his recompenſing of vs is not vppon any duetie that hee oweth vnto vs. 1.Cor.15.10. For indeede whence commeth our ſeruing of him, but of his meere grace? And what can hee then owe vnto vs? Nay, there is yet a further matter: namely that we ſhould all of vs be found Rom.3.4. faultie in his ſight, if he liſted to examine vs rigorouſly. So then, whereas God recompenſeth vs for our ſeruing of him: hee doeth it for his owne meere goodneſſe, and therfore not of any bounde duetie: but (which more is) hee is faine to pardon our ſinnes and to beare with vs, yea euen in the good that wee doe. Wherefore let vs conſider that God ſheweth himſelfe ſo gratious and freeharted towards vs, that where as hee might make vs to feele his rigour, hee is contented to make vs taſt of his mercie by bearing with vs in our infirmities. For let vs not think but that without his mercie we were al vndone: and that although we ſtroue neuer ſo much to obey him, yet wee ſhoulde be found faultie, if he vſed not ẏ foreſaid gratious goodnes wherof he ſpeaketh. So then, that is the thing whereunto we muſt flee for refuge, if we intend to be ſure of our ſaluation.

Nowe let vs kneele downe in the preſence of our good God with acknowledgement of our ſinnes, praying him to make vs feele them better than wee haue done, that it may leade vs to true repentance, ſo as being taught to feare him, wee may ſtande in ſuch awe, that as ſoone as he threateneth vs with his wrath, wee may conceiue the power that is in him, to the ende that being humbled in our ſelues, wee may haue recourſe to his fatherly goodneſſe, not doubting but that when hee hath once begunne to ſhewe himſelfe a father and Sauiour towards vs, he will continue ſo ſtil yea euen after our deceaſe, ſo that wee ſhrinke not from him through our owne naughtineſſe and diſobedience. That it may pleaſe him to graunt this grace, not onely to vs, but alſo to all people and nations of the earth, &c.

On Wedneſday the xix. of Iune. 1555.

The xxxiij. Sermon which is the fourth vpon the fift Chapter.

11 Thou ſhalt not take the name of the Lorde thy God in vaine: for the Lorde

will not holde him guiltleſſe which taketh his name in vaine.

IF we were well aduiſed, we needed not to bee taught to yeelde reuerence to our God: for nature ought to leade vs thereto. To what ende are we created in this worlde? To what ende liue we here, but to honour him to whom wee be beholden for al good things, and to giue our ſelues to the glorifying of his maieſtie? That then is the end and whole ſumme of our life. But in the meane ſeaſon, in ſteede of honouring our God, and of applying our ſelues that way: we ſeeme to haue conſpyred the cleane contrarie. For ſome of vs woulde haue all remembrance of God buried: ſome deſpiſe him and mocke him: and otherſome blaſpheme him with open mouth: ſo as we ſhewe ſufficiently, that wee knowe not to what end we liue or ſhould liue. Now foraſmuch as there is this vice in vs: God intending to redreſſe the ſame, telleth vs that we ought at leaſtwiſe to refraine from abuſing his holy name: for that is as an vnhallowing thereof. And therefore hath hee forbidden men *to take his name in vaine.* By theſe wordes he meaneth, that wee muſt conſider well which is the right and lawfull vſe of his name. Of a trueth wee be not worthie to take Gods name in our mouth after any manner at all, for wee muſt remember what the Prophet Eſay ſaide in his ſixt Chapter: Lorde (quoth he) I haue vncleane lippes, and dwell among a people that is altogether defiled. Seeing then that we haue nothing but infection and filthineſſe in vs: it is certain that we may not take Gods name [in our mouth,] at leaſtwiſe if it were not that God of his goodnes were willing that we ſhould vſe his name, ſo it bee to glorifie him withall. Therefore let vs marke well, that when as it is ſaide *that we ſhall not take the name of God in vaine:* our Lord rebuketh vs for our vnthankfulneſſe, if we haue not the skill to vſe his name as he hath giuen vs leaue, by following the rule that is ſet downe in his worde: for that is the lawful meane whereby wee may rightly vſe the name of God.

Eſa.6.5.

Neuertheleſſe to the end that this may be yet plainlyer vnderſtoode: wee muſt marke, that vnder one particular, God meant to ſhewe vs here what a maieſtie is in his name, to the intent we ſhoulde not ſpeake of it, but with all reuerence and honour. Therefore he taketh one particular kinde, to wit, of an othe, ſpecially when occaſion ſerueth to ſweare: and vſeth it for all prophaning of God his name whatſoeuer. We ſee howe our Lorde loueth vs, ſeeing he lendeth vs his name whereby to communicate with our neighbours, ſo as if there happen any doubt or variance among vs, it may bee diſpatched by that meane: that is to wit, if we be not beleeued, and a matter hang in doubt, the name of GOD may come in as an vmper, to diſpatch all controuerſie, ſo as the matter may bee certaine and ſure by ſuch confirmation. Is it not an ineſtimable goodneſſe, that our God humbleth himſelfe in ſuch ſort, as to giue vs leaue to vſe his name? Yes. And why? for it is certaine that Gods maieſtie is ſo precious, as it ought not to bee abaſed ſo lowe: but yet he vouchſafeth to aply himſelfe vnto vs, and therefore ſo much the greater is the vilanie, if wee vnhallowe Gods name in our othes. And that is done, not onely by forſwearing our ſelues: but alſo by taking Gods name at aduenture, without regarding to ſpeake with good diſcretion; or whether the thing that wee haue in hande, is worthie to bee ſo confirmed or no. Therefore when men goe to it ſo at aladuenture, Gods name is as it were vnhallowed. It is true that GOD taketh it as a kinde of his ſeruice, when men ſweare by his name: not that hee is beholden to vs for it, but cleane contrariwiſe. For as I haue touched alredie, we muſt in this caſe conſider howe GOD beareth with vs, in that he giueth vs leaue to vſe his name. But yet doe wee by our ſwearing acknowledge that God hath all ſuperioritie ouer vs. The inferiour ſweareth by his ſuperior, ſaith the Apoſtle to the Hebrewes. And ſurely if wee wiſt to what ende an othe ſerueth, it cannot agree but onely to the maieſtie of GOD. For our meaning is to warrant ſuch thinges as are ſecret and haue no proofe among men. But that cannot bee done by any creature: God muſt bee faine to ſhewe himſelfe in that behalfe, as hee that ſercheth mens hearts to the verie bottome. And againe it is not for nought that he chalengeth to himſelfe the title of trueth. Wee ſee then that in ſwearing, wee do homage vnto God by proteſting him to bee our iudge, and the only partie to whome wee haue recourſe in all doubtfull and ſecret caſes, becauſe it is his office to bring them to light, and againe hee will maintaine the trueth, ſith the ſame belongeth to his honour. That is the cauſe why God taketh it to bee a kinde of ſeruing of him, when men doe ſweare by his name, howe be it ſo as the othes bee not needeleſſe. And hereby wee ſee that the fault of ſuch as forſweare them ſelues, or as ſweare raſhly, is ſo much the greeuouſer: for it is as a violating of Gods ſeruice, and as an aboliſhing of it, as much as in vs lyeth.

Exod.22.10 11.
Hebr.6.16.
Hebr.6.16.
Ier.17.10.
2.Chron.6.30.
Pſal.31.6.
1.Cor.4.5.
Ier.5.3.

As touching them that commit periurie: they bee not onely guiltie of taking Gods name in vain, and of abuſing the ſame falſly: but alſo they bee traitors and wicked caitifes. Can wee deuiſe to doe a greater outrage to our GOD, than to aboliſh or deface his trueth? No: for there is nothing more peculiar vnto him. And therefore it is all one as if wee woulde plucke him out of his ſeate, yea and vtterly bereaue him of all diuine honour and glorie: whiche thing is done when men turne his trueth into a lye. Therefore whoſoeuer forſweareth himſelfe, that is to ſaye, whoſoeuer taketh Gods name with an euill conſcience, whether it bee to colour lies, or to beguile, or to diſguiſe matters: ſurely hee blaſphemeth in ſo doing. And I ſay expreſly, if wee goe about to diſguiſe matters. Why ſo? For many doe diſpence with themſelues, vnder colour that they cannot be conuicted of periurie before men. And why is that? Becauſe they turne the cat in the pan, and ſet ſuch a face vppon their matters, as it may ſeeme that they forſware not themſelues at all. But God liketh not any ſuch ſuttleties. Wherefore let vs not imagine that wee ſhalbee quitte and ſcape ſcotfree before him, when wee ſhall haue vſed ſuch fetches and ſtartingholes. Thus wee ſee in effect, that all ſuch as take Gods name otherwiſe than ſoundly and ſimply, doe commit blaſphemie. Let that ſerue for one point.

Nowe as for them that ſweare to no purpoſe and vnaduiſedly: they ſhewe well ynough that they make none account of God, and that they doe but dally with him. In deede they proteſt the contrarie: they can welynough ſay that their intent is nothing ſo: but that is but hypocriſie: for the deede it ſelfe ſheweth ſufficiently that they beare no reuerence vnto GOD. If wee haue a mortall man in eſtimation, wee will not take his name in vaine, wee woulde not that men ſhoulde make a babling of it, or intermeddle it with ſcornefull and ſcoffing words. Nay we woulde take that in reproch. And would wee haue more priuiledge than the liuing God? We bee wretched carions and dung: and yet would wee be had in honour and eſtimation, and that our God ſhoulde be our vnderling? We ſee then that there are verie fewe of good religion nowadayes in the world. Although a great number pretende to bee Chriſtians: yet they neuer wiſt what it is to worſhippe God, or to doe him homage, or to yeelde him the ſeruice that belongs vnto him. For howe doeth Gods name trotte about? Men cannot bargaine for a quart [of wine,] but ſome othe muſt bee rapt out with it. If Gods honour were eſteemed among vs: ſurely we would abſtaine from ſuch needleſſe othes: nay rather wee woulde abhorre them. And yet nowadayes men make but a ſport of them, and if a man bee rebuked for his ſwearing, hee thinkes he hath great wrong done him. If there bee any talke that is not for a mans profite, he will be wearie of it and grieued at it, yea and finde fault with it: but if any of vs bee ſo zealous to Godward, as to be grieued at the abaſing of his name: by and by a quarell is picked to him, they deſpite him, and gnaſh their teeth at him. But ſeeing that the worlde taketh ſo faſt holde of the deſpiſing of GOD, and is ſo hardened in it: it is a ſigne that there is no more knowledge of his maieſtie.

Againe although men take ſo lawleſſe leaue vnder coulour that it is an ordinarie matter, and haue made cuſtome a Lawe: yet will God ſhew in the end, that hee maketh more account of his name than men haue done, and that if we make hauocke of it, wee ſhall paye deerely for it, and wee ſhall bee driuen in the ende, to knowe that wee haue defiled the lande where wee dwelt, and wee muſt bee called to a reckening for al the benefits that we receiued there, and which GOD beſtowed vppon vs with his hande, becauſe wee acknowledged not the author of them, to yeelde him his due honour for them. Yee ſee then that the firſt thing which we haue to marke in this text, is that God beareth with vs and vſeth ſuch gentleneſſe towards vs, as hee is well contented that wee ſhall vſe his name in all lawfull caſes: by the which grant of his wee may well perceiue, that hee is more than fatherly towardes vs. Neuertheleſſe hee warneth vs therewithall, to bee more ware in abſtayning from all wicked othes. For as for periurie, (as I ſaid afore) it is an offering of too outragious and curſed vilanie vnto him, becauſe his trueth is turned into lying, and wee bee falſedealers to the vttermoſt of our power. And ſo ye ſee that that is a paſſing deadly crime.

But it is not ynough for vs to refraine from periurie: it behooueth vs alſo to looke that our othes be ſober, and that Gods name be not toſſed among vs like a tennisball: but that neceſſitie may excuſe vs in our vſing thereof. And foraſmuch as by our ſwearing we giue to vnderſtande that GOD hath all ſuperioritie ouer vs: therein we ſee that the othes which are made by creatures are wicked and proceede of ſuperſtition. As for example, whereas in the Popedome men ſweare by S. Antonie or by S. Iohn: it is all one as if they made ydols of them. And why ſo? For we muſt always bethinke vs of this ſaying of the Apoſtle which I alledged afore, namely that by our ſwearing by the name of God, wee auow him to bee our ſuperiour, yea and our ſoueraine Lord. And that is the cauſe alſo why God ſweareth to confirme vs in his promiſes, or rather to waken vs when he ſeeth vs wilfull and hardened in our ſinnes, ſo as we be not afraid of his iuſtice. He ſweareth: and by whom? Euen by himſelfe. He reſerueth that honor to himſelfe, as ſhall bee declared more at large in the 6. Chapter of this Deut.6.13. booke. And therefore they that ſweare by creatures are ydolaters. By reaſon whereof, in ſpeaking of ſuperſtitions, the othe is ſet downe as a record to proue that men are turned away from Soph.1.5.6. the purenes of the Law. The ſhepherds (ſaith Ieremie) which haue the charge of leading Gods Ier.12.16. people, muſt teach them to ſweare by the name of God: that is to ſay, to lay away all other othes, and to intermingle no creatures in that behalfe.

Furthermore whereas the name of GOD is mentioned: let vs marke that it is not the onely ſpeaking of that word, that is forbidden vs: but that we muſt haue a regarde to the ſubſtance of it, as I haue ſaid alreadie. God is not a ſophiſter to vſe trifling ſuttleties towards vs: but hee hath an eye to the deede it ſelfe. There are that will not ſweare expreſly by the name of GOD: but yet they ceaſe not to bee faultie and offenders. For wee muſt refer our ſelues to that which our Lord Ieſus Chriſt ſpeaketh in the fift of ſaint Mathew. When yee ſweare by heauen (ſaith he) is it not the ſeate of the liuing God? If yee ſweare Mat.5.34. 35. by his temple: is it not the place where his maieſtie reſteth? Then if wee thinke wee ſhall not bee condemned, ſo wee expreſſe not the name of God: it is a fondneſſe. Let vs not beguile our ſelues therewithal: for it is too childiſh an excuſe. For why? Doeth not the heauen beare a repreſentation of Gods Maieſtie?

Yee ſee then that his glorie is thereby diminiſhed. As much is to be ſaide of the earth. For it is his footeſtoole, as Ieſus Chriſt auoucheth in the forealleadged text. Wherefore let vs learne in fewe wordes, that we muſt yeelde ſuch reuerence to the name of God, as to put away all othes from among vs, ſauing ſo farre forth as neceſſitie requireth, and as God giueth vs leaue to borrowe his name. And moreouer, let vs alwayes followe this, to keepe this ſimplicitie in our talke, to ſay it is ſo: aſſuring our ſelues that whatſoeuer is more, is euil and condemned Matt.5.37. by the lawe, that is to wit, if wee take the name of God in vaine. And indeede there is a dubble miſchiefe to bee ſeene in all needleſſe othes, and wherein Gods name is not honoured as it ought to bee. For when men let them flie ſo at all aduenture: it is a token that they paſſe not what they ſaye. Againe, whereof commeth it, but onely of this, that folke are ſo full of lying and deceit, as no man can beleeue that which is ſaide to him, when one ſpeakes to another? Needes muſt there bee greate frowardneſſe and naughtineſſe among them. Whereas God hath giuen vs a tongue, it is partly to the intent wee ſhoulde common one with another thereby: for it is as yee woulde ſaye the meſſenger of the hearte, ſo as thereby wee expreſſe the thinges that we haue conceiued in our minde. Wee ſee then that needeleſſe othes ſpring of the vntruſtineſſe of men. And there needes no inquiſition or long trial of the matter: for euerie man hath his owne witneſſe in that behalfe. Howe ſo euer the caſe ſtande let vs learne to vſe ſuch modeſtie in this reſpect, as God commaundeth that we ſweare not without cauſe nor vnrequired.

Howbeit to make this matter the eaſier to bee vnderſtoode, many do beare themſelues in hand that when they ſweare by their faith, it is not materiall. Indeede the moſt part of them ſweare by nothing at al: for they haue no more faith thã dogges: they haue neither conſcience nor Religion. But yet ſhall not the name of *Faith* faile therefore to be eſteemed afore God: for hee ſetteth much ſtore by it, and counteth it as a holy thing, which cannot nor ought not to bee ſo vnhallowed, except we will needs make our ſelues guiltie, and runne in daunger of the threat that is vttered here, as we ſee. Now then let vs mark wel that it is not ynough for vs to haue forborne to ſweare expreſſly *By God*: but alſo that if a man ſweare by his faith, or vſe any confirmation wherein there is any marke of Gods maieſtie: his name is vnhallowed in ſo doing. And what ſhall then become of ſuch as not onelye vſe falſe othes to countenaunce their matters withall, and ſweare at all aduenture and as it were in ſcorne and mockerie: but doe alſo ſpite God with horrible blaſphemies, ſo as they ſpare neither fleſhe, bloude, nor death nor anye thing elſe? Are ſuch men to bee helde as onely guiltie of ſimple abuſing of Gods name? No: but as guiltie of the heynouſeſt vilanie that can bee doone. Beholde our Lorde Ieſus Chriſte the Lorde of glorie, abaſed himſelfe for a time, as ſaieth S. Paul. Phil.2.7. Now if there were no more but this, that he being the fountain of life, became a mortall man, and that he hauing dominion ouer the Angels of heauen, tooke vppon him the ſhape of a ſeruant, yea euen to ſhed his bloud for our redemption, and in the end to ſuffer the curſe that was due vnto vs: Gal.3.13. were it conuenient that notwithſtanding all this, he ſhould nowadayes in recompence thereof bee torne in peeces, by the ſtinking mouthes of ſuch as name themſelues Chriſtians? For when they ſweare by his bloud, by his death, by his woundes and by whatſoeuer elſe: is it not a crucifying of Gods ſonne againe as much as in them lyeth, and as a rending of him in peeces? And are not ſuch folk worthie to bee cut off from Gods Church, yea and euen from the worlde, and to bee no more nombered in the aray of creatures? Should our Lord Ieſus haue ſuch reward at our handes, for his abacing and humbling of himſelfe after that manner? God in vpbrayding his people ſaieth Mich.6.3. thus: My people, what haue I doone to thee? I haue brought thee out of Egypt, I haue ledde thee through the wilderneſſe, I haue brought thee vp with all gentleneſſe and louingkindneſſe, I haue planted thee as it were in mine owne inheritance, to the intent thou ſhouldeſt haue beene a vine that ſhould haue brought me forth good fruite, and I haue tilled thee and manured thee: and muſt thou nowe bee bitter to me, and bring foorth ſower fruite to choke mee withall? The ſame belongeth to vs at this day. For when the ſonne of God, who is ordeined to bee iudge of the worlde, ſhall come at the laſt Iohn 5.22. day: hee may well ſay to vs: howe nowe ſyrs? Ye haue borne my name, yee haue beene baptiſed in rememberance and recorde that I was your redeemer, I haue drawen yee out of the dungeons where into yee were plunged, I deliuered you from endeleſſe death by ſuffering moſte cruell death my ſelfe, and for the ſame cauſe I became man, and ſubmitted my ſelfe euen to the curſe of GOD my father, that you might be bleſſed by my grace and by my meane: and beholde, the rewarde that you haue yeelded mee for all this, is that yee haue (after a ſorte) torne mee in peeces and made a ieſtingſtocke of mee, and the death that I ſuffered for you hath beene made a mockerie among you, the bloode whiche is the waſhing and cleanſing of your ſoules hath beene as good as trampled vnder your feete, and to bee ſhort, you haue taken occaſion to banne and blaſpheme mee, as though I had beene ſome wretched and curſed creature. When the ſoueraine Iudge ſhall charge vs with theſe thinges, I praye you will it not bee as thundering vppon vs, to ding vs downe to the bottome of hell? Yes: and yet are there verie fewe that thinke vpon it. For if needeles othes were as greatly abhorred nowadayes among men as they ought to be: they woulde not by & by after take ſuch leaue and boldneſſe as they doe to fleſh themſelues in periurie and forſwearing.

As touching blaſphemie, doth not ẏ world ſee what commeth of it? And yet woulde wee bee ielous of our owne honeſtie and reputation, when in the meane ſeaſon Gods name is troden vnder foote among vs. If a man haue ſpoken amiſſe of ones father, hee coulde finde in his heart to make a quarrell of it, and eyther to ſew him at the Lawe, or elſe much rather to bee reuenged of him with his owne handes, and men beare themſelues in hande that they may with honeſtie maintayne the quarrels of their parentes. Beholde, our ſoueraigne Father is iniured after the ſame manner, euen the ſame father who not without cauſe is named the Lorde Pſal.24.7. of glorie, before whoſe ſonne all knees ought to bow, as Saint Paule reporteth to the Philippians, euen hee ſhall bee ſo mocked as a man Phil.2.10. coulde doe no worſe to him, except he ſhoulde ſpitte in his face: and yet notwithſtanding euen they that name themſelues Chriſtians, and which pretend in deede to ſeeke his honour, ſhall bee the greateſt and horribleſt blaſphemers of him. But yet for all that, as I ſaid afore, our Lorde will not ceaſe to maintayne his owne honour,(as hee himſelfe auoweth.) When hee ſeeth men ſo heatheniſh as to deface his Maieſtie after that faſhion, to the vttermoſt of their power: He maketh a ſolemne othe that he will bee reuenged of it. Eſa.42.8.& 48.11. As truely as I liue (ſayeth the Lorde) I will not giue myne honour to another. And like as hee will not haue his honour conueyed ouer vnto idols: ſo is it certaine that the ſame ſaying hath a further reache, that is to wit, that if men doe falſely abuſe his holy name, they ſhall feele in what eſtimation hee had it. And therefore let vs not looke till this bee accompliſhed vppon our ſelues: but let vs learne to yeelde reuerence to our GOD, and to him that hath all ſoueraigne Maieſtie, that is to wit, to our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt: and let vs learne therewithall, to ſweare in ſuch wiſe, as it may alwayes bee a warrant vnto vs, that it is he to whom wee belong, and that hee is our Father, our Maker, and our Iudge. Thus yee ſee what wee haue in effect to gather vppon this text.

But withall there is a threatening added: whereby wee ſee mens dulneſſe, and howe Satan hath as yee woulde ſay bewitched them, ſo as they conceyue not Gods wrath, when it is ſet afore them. *I will not holde him giltleſſe that taketh my name in vaine.* Loe it is GOD that ſpeaketh. I pray you ought not the haire of them to ſtande vp ſtiffe vppon their heades, which ſweare ſo vilanouſly as I haue mentioned afore? If a man ſweare by his faith vnaduiſedly: beholde, God armeth himſelfe and ſayeth: no ſir, ſeeing thou haſt not honoured mee, thou muſt yeelde an account of ſuch treacherie. God can not away with a ſimple lye: and if periurie be added thereto, it is yet worſe. If a third fall to blaſpheming, it is the vttermoſt poynt of all leudneſſe, and as bad as an open defying of GOD, as though we woulde runne vpon him and wounde him. Now if in this caſe a man thinke not vppon the puniſhment that is prepared for all ſuch as doe ſo falſely miſuſe the name of GOD: or haue diſhonoured it, may it not bee ſaid that he is beaſtly drunken, and as it were out of his wittes, and that Satan hath made him ſtarke blinde? Alas yes: and yet neuertheleſſe, it is as common a thing as may bee. If a maiſter ſhoulde ſaye in his houſe, I will bee obeyed in all things: but yet there is one thing aboue all the reſt which I am deſirous to haue done, and I can not abide that any man ſhall tranſgreſſe it, but that hee ſhall by and by bee thruſt out of the doores, and bee puniſhed for it as he deſerueth: If a Maiſter haue a thing in ſuch eſtimation, although his men be not ſo circumſpect in all the reſt, yet will they ſtand in ſome feare of this.

Nowe then, beholde, God curſeth all ſuch as ſhall haue tranſgreſſed his Lawe in any point. Deut.27.16. 20,24.26. Curſed bee he that honoureth not his Father and mother: Curſed bee he that ſtealeth: Curſed bee he that committeth adulterie: Curſed bee he that perfourmeth not all things contained in the Lawe. And here ſpecially, there is a threate vppon all ſuch as ſhal haue abuſed Gods name. Hereby he ſheweth vs that although he will haue vs to keepe his Lawe in all pointes, and to direct our liues thereby: yet notwithſtanding he reſerueth ſtill this point to himſelfe, and will haue his name to bee priuiledged. Nowe if this threatening ſlippe away for all that, ſo as it ſinketh not in our mindes, nor reſtraineth vs at all from preſuming to dally ſo with God and his Maieſtie: muſt it not needes bee ſaid (as I haue touched alreadie) that the diuell hath carryed vs away, and that wee bee bereft of all witte and reaſon? Yes: but if this threate doe not waken vs nowe: wee muſt finde in the ende that Gods publiſhing of it was no falſe alarum. And therefore let vs learne to bee touched to the quicke, ſith wee ſee that our Lorde ſetteth himſelfe ſo expreſſely againſt vs, and ſheweth himſelfe to bee an aduerſarie to all ſuch as abuſe his name. For what coſt is it to vs to abſtaine, as well from all falſe othes, as from all vnaduiſed othes, and ſpecially from all blaſphemies? The greateſt excuſe that they haue which would leſſen their fault, is that they cannot refraine bicauſe they bee inured to it by cuſtome. Yea, but if euerye man woulde ſet before his eyes that God is his Iudge: ſurely he might ſoon forget his ſwearing: and when the name of GOD were to bee vſed, men would not doe it but with great ſingleneſſe of heart. In ſo much that if men went to lawe, they ſhoulde haue as it were Gods Maieſtie preſent there, ſo as hee myght bee beholde ſitting there as Iudge when he were called to witneſſe, and men ſhoulde not vſe his name but in ſuch wiſe, as Saint Paul ſpeakes of, where he ſaieth 2.Tim.2.19. that wee muſt not take Gods name but in all holineſſe.

This therefore might well be done. But what? Our tongue runnes ryot euen ſo farre as to the foreſaid deſpiſing of Gods name: ſo that crie what men can, yea and (as yee would ſay) beate they it into vs with beetles: (for the things that the holy Scripture telleth vs concerning the abuſe of Gods name, are like mightie blowes with a beetle wherewith GOD ſtriketh vppon vs:)

and yet for all that, wee continue ſtill the ſame wee were afore, and Gods name hath neyther honour nor Maieſtie more than it had before. Yet notwithſtanding, all ſuch as haue any vnderſtanding and feeling of Gods name, ought to thinke well vppon that which is ſaide here. And moreouer (as I haue declared alreadie) when wee bee once warned of that which wee haue ſeene heretofore, that is to wit, that hee which ſpeaketh is the Euerlaſting, and our Creator and Redeemer, which hath ſhewed himſelfe more than a Father and Sauiour towardes vs: if this bee well printed in our minde, ſurely all othes wil eaſily be forgotten. But if we keepe on Zach.12,10. our way ſtil: the ſaying of the Prophet Zacharie ſhall be fulfilled vpon vs: which is, they ſhal ſee him whom they haue perced, that is to ſay, whō they haue wounded. For although men flatter one another, and make but a laughing at their othes, and imagine that their ſwearing ſhall eaſily bee forgiuen them: yet is God wounded by it, and hee wil ſhewe in the end, that it is not for men to ruſh againſt him after that faſhion.

Herewithall wee haue to marke, that vnder one kinde, GOD meant to ſhewe what reuerence wee ought to yeelde in effect to his name. In deede he ſpeaketh here expreſſely of Othes: but yet this doctrine ought to bee ſtretched further: namely that when wee thinke of God, or heare any ſpeaking of him, it muſt be done with all reuerence, ſo as wee may bee wakened vp, not onely to honour and praiſe him aboue all, Iob.41,16. but alſo to conſider, that euen the Angels doe tremble at the ſight of his ineſtimable glorie, and therefore that we which are wretched creatures and as tranſitorie as maye bee, ought at leaſtwiſe to doe homage to the ſoueraigne Maieſtie of our GOD, whenſoeuer hee is ſpoken of. That is a principall point which we ought to marke well in this text.

Truely this doctrine is eaſie ynough of it ſelf: but it is darke to vs, bicauſe it is ſo ill put in practiſe. What a ſort of vaine thoughtes come in our heades when wee thinke vppon GOD? In deede our nature is inclyned therunto, as of folk that are fraughted with all vntrueth, ſo as there is nothing but darkeneſſe in vs. But yet for all that, if a man feede his owne humour with lewd and wicked imaginations conceiued againſt the honour of GOD: he ſheweth ſufficiently that he hath conſpired and confederate himſelfe with the diuell. Neuerthelater howe many are there that bethinke themſelues, when any leawd fanſie commeth in their minde, or which labour to ſuppreſſe and beate downe the thinges by force, which their owne conſcience telleth them to be wicked and againſt the glorie of GOD? Nay, they rather take pleaſure in them, and welter in them. Nowe when mens ſpirite, that is to ſay, their vnderſtanding is ſo defyled, the reſidue is eaſily corrupted. And for proofe thereof: howe doe men moſt commonly ſpeake of God? What manner of talke haue they of him? It ſhoulde ſeeme that their whole ſeeking is to bee corrup- 1.Cor.5.6. ted: there needeth but a little leauen to ſowre the whole lump of Dowe, as ſayeth Saint Paule treating of this naughtie talke which marreth and infecteth vs with wicked vices. But the worſt is when men ſpeake of GOD in way of mockage. For what a thing is it that he ſhoulde bee ſcoffed at, and that he ſhoulde bee ſcorned in woordes, not onely vayne and fond, but alſo ſhamefull and horrible? Is it not a wilfull violating of his Maieſtie? And yet men doe ſo, yea euen ouer commonly, in ſo much as yee ſhall hardly haue long talke in any companie, but ſomewhat ſhall be intermingled that may ſound to the contempt of GOD. And doe wee not ſhewe thereby, that wee neuer wiſt what it is to worſhippe GOD? Wee can well ynough ſay dayly, Hallowed bee thy name: and yet we doe the cleane contrarie. Needeth there any other ſentence of condemnation againſt vs than that? When wee come here to Church, wee proteſt with our mouthes that wee deſire that Gods name ſhoulde bee maintayned in due honour: wee ſay as much at the table: and likewiſe doeth euerie man both at his riſing and at his going to bedde, (I meane ſuch as are not vtterly brutiſh: for there are which wote not what praying to God meaneth.) But as for thoſe which haue yet ſo much honeſtie as to pray vnto God, they will well ynough ſay with their mouth, hallowed be thy name: but it is no ſooner from their tongues end, but by and by a falſe othe is in their mouth, and they make Gods name to runne too and fro. And what elſe is ſuch falſhood, than a violating of Gods Maieſtie, and as a ſtriking of him with a Dagger, or as a ſpitting in the face of him? Therefore as I haue tolde you alreadie, there needs none other Iudge to condemne vs for our fooliſh othes, than the proteſtation that wee our ſelues make when we deſire GOD to maintaine the holineſſe of his name, and yet in the meane whyle indeuour to deface it as much as wee can.

But nowe remayneth that we ſpeake of God in al reuerence, ſpecially when his workes come in talke. As howe? In ſpeaking of the weather, bee it faire or bee it rainie, they bee markes of his Maieſtie. If he ſende vs ſadde weather, hee ſheweth himſelfe a Iudge to make vs perceiue his diſpleaſure, to the intent to make vs enter into the examination of our ſinnes, that wee myght bee ſorie for them and bee ledde to amendment. But in ſtead of humbling our ſelues before GOD, and of being ſorie that wee haue offended: wee become wayward as wee ſee men commonly bee, who fall to repyning, and ſaye, muſt this weather laſt euer? and ſo wee flee not to our GOD, ne aske him forgiueneſſe of our ſinnes. And after the ſame maner deale wee in all other thinges: for I alledge but onely one example, to ſhewe that when wee ſpeake of Gods workes, wee muſt eyther perceiue him to bee a Father by his goodneſſe, or feele him to bee a Iudge by his rigour. Therefore whenſoeuer God doeth any thing that miſliketh vs, and is contrarie to our deſire and wiſhing; let vs vnderſtand that hee chaſtiſeth and tameth vs, to the ende wee ſhould enter into the examination of 1.Cor.10.31 32. our ſinnes to condemne them and to bee ſorie for them. If we glorifie not God in that behalfe, wee vnhallowe his holy name. Againe on the contrarie part,when God draweth vs to him by gentleneſſe as a louing and pitifull father: it is to the intent wee ſhould bee brought vnto him, and honour him the more. And if our vnthankfulneſſe bee to bee condemned for not honouring of him at the firſt worde that he ſpeaketh to vs: howe ſhall wee doe when all things vpbraide vs,ſo as God hauing layd hold on vs on all ſides, can by no meanes win vs to him, whereby hee ſheweth that wee bee vtter deſpiſers of his Maieſtie, and that wee haue trampled his woorkes vnder our feete, or ouerturned them with our ſnoutes like ſwine? I pray you ſhall it not redoũd to our dreadfull condemnation, if this may bee laid to our charge?

Nowe although God haue ſet his marke vppon all his workes, ſo as wee ought to know him both in fayre weather and in fowle, in heate and in colde, and (to bee ſhort,) in all the order of nature: yet hath he ſet his marke chiefely vppon his woord. Of a trueth it is an vnexcuſable crime, when wee acknowledge him not in the good thinges that he hath made and done for vs. Wee holde our life of him: it is in him that Act.17.28. wee liue,as ſpeaketh Saint Paul. If all theſe benefites make vs not to bee mindefull of God: it is too vnmeaſurable a churliſhneſſe alreadie:but yet (as I ſaide afore) it hath bene his will that his marke ſhoulde bee printed aboue all thinges in his woord. Let vs looke vppon Heauen and earth,and wee ſhall ſee GOD eueriwhere. For Rom.1.20. what elſe is the worlde than (as ſayeth S. Paul) a liuely image wherein God ſetteth foorth himſelfe? Although he bee vnuiſible in his owne being: yet doeth he ſhewe himſelfe there, to the intent that wee ſhould worſhip him. But come wee once to the holy Scripture: there is an image 2.Cor.3.18. wherein God ſheweth himſelf much more familiarly vnto vs, than he doeth either in the skies or in the earth. Neither Sun nor Moone, (though they giue light to the worlde,) doe ſo ſet foorth the Maieſtie of God, as the Lawe, the Prophetes and the Goſpell doe. And yet for all that, after what manner doe men ſpeake of them? Howe boldly doe they deale with them? I pray you doe not men take leaue nowe adayes to ſpeake of Gods name after their owne fanſie? And when they fall to reaſoning vppon the holy Scripture among Cuppes, in Tauernes and at Tables,doeth their talke tend to the humbling of themſelues, that they may all knowe their owne rudeneſſe and infirmitie, and aske of God the gift of his holy ſpirit,to the end that we may handle his myſteries as becommeth vs? No:but thoſe diſputations are made as it were in way of mockerie,and thereby it appeareth well, yea much more than were requiſite, that there are verie fewe true Chriſtians nowe adayes in the worlde. It is apparant that ſome dally with the holy ſcripture,and wreſt it to prouerbs of laughter,making it a matter to ſport and play withal, as though it were but as a noſe of waxe for euery man to faſhion and vnfaſhion at his owne pleaſure. Otherſome holde fond diſcourſes on it, demaunding,why is this, and why is that? And againe, when wee come to Gods high myſteries: if any thing miſlike vs, wee would haue it euerie whit wyped out. And that is all one as if wee would pull God out of heauen.

Nowe then let vs learne that God commendeth the honour and authoritie of his word vnto vs aboue all thinges: as if he ſhould tell vs that looke whatſoeuer is contained in the holy ſcripture,wee muſt receiue it with al lowelineſſe,and yeelde our ſelues plyable to that which is contained therein. Yea and although the ſame bee contrarie to our vnderſtanding, and wee coulde finde in our heartes that God had ſpoken after our maner: yet let vs doe him the honour to impriſon all our owne wittes,and to ſay: Lord,wee be thy ſcholers, and therefore we receiue quietly whatſoeuer thou haſt vouchſafed to teach vs, aſſuring our ſelues that the ſame is for our benefite and welfare. Therefore whatſoeuer is contained in the holy Scripture, let it bee receiued reuerently without exception. And when Gods holy myſteries come in queſtion:let vs not iudge of them according to our owne vnderſtanding: but if it happen that any thing ſeeme not good and conuenient vnto vs, let vs bridle our ſelues, and let God haue his full ſcope, ſo as his woord may haue all the libertie that may be. Alſo therwithall,when wee reade the holy Scriptures or come to a Sermon,let vs alwayes beare in minde to thinke thus with our ſelues: behold, our God ſheweth himſelfe here, and he is ſet down as our iudge: and therefore it is not for vs to kicke and ſpurne againſt him, as wee ſee a great ſorte doe when they come to Sermons. But what? They haue conceiued rancour in their heart againſt God and his word,and therefore they can reape nothing by it but vtter naughtineſſe: in ſo much that they gather venim more and more, to belk out their blaſphemies at tables when mẽ ſpeake not to their liking. And is that (thinke you) a good honouring of Gods name? Now therefore, whether it be that wee reade the holy Scripture, or that it be treated of in Sermons: let vs learne to haue Gods name alwayes in ſuch reuerence, as to quake at it when we heare it ſpoken of, ſpecially whẽ his word is preached, as is ſaid by the Prophet Eſay. Eſa.66.2.5. For ſo ſhall wee ſhewe, not onely in wordes but alſo in deede, that wee be true beleeuers: and God alſo wil auowe vs for his people,and in the end gather vs into the heritage of the kingdome of heauen.

Now let vs kneele downe in the preſence of our good God with acknowledgement of our faultes,praying him,not to impute thoſe vnto vs which we haue committed heretofore: but that it may pleaſe him ſo to reforme vs to himſelfe,as our whole ſeeking may bee to honour him, and to giue our ſelues to his ſeruice, yͭ he may dwell among vs, and our Lorde Ieſus raigne ouer vs, both by his holy ſpirit and by his woord. And ſo let vs all ſay,Almighty God heauenly father, &c.

On Thurſday the xx. of Iune. 1555.

The xxxiiij. Sermon, which is the fifth vpon the fifth Chapter.

12 Keepe the day of reſt, to hallowe it as the Lord thy God hath commaunded thee.

13 Sixe dayes ſhalt thou labour, and doe all thy buſineſſes:

14 But the ſeuenth day is the reſt of the Lorde thy God. Thou ſhalt not doe any worke therein.

AFter that he had ſpoken of the pure worſhipping and ſeruing of GOD, to the glorifying of his name, without taking of it either in othes or in other thinges, otherwiſe than in way of honour, nowe mention is made of Gods ſeruice accordingly as he hath required it in his lawe, and of the order which he hath ſet downe for the faithfull to exerciſe themſelues in. As for example, the [Sabaoth or] day of reſt was a figure, partly to ſhewe that men could not ſerue God duetifully, but by mortifying all that euer is of our owne nature, and by dedicating themſelues therewithall in ſuch ſort vnto him, as they may bee as it were quite ſeparated from the world. Secondly the day of reſt was a Ceremonie to bring the people togither, that they might heare the Lawe, and call vppon the name of GOD, and offer thẽ ſacrifices, and all other thinges that concerne the ſpirituall gouernment. Thus then wee ſee nowe after what ſorte the Sabaoth day was ſpoken of: but yet would it not be well vnderſtoode without diſtinction, and without laying forth of the ſaid two partes by peece meale. Therefore we haue to note, that the Sabaoth or day of reſt, was a ſhadow vnder the Law till the comming of our Lord Ieſus Chriſt, to doe mẽ to vnderſtand that God requireth that they ſhould vtterly ceaſſe from their owne workes: and that is it which I meant in one word, when I ſaid ẏ we muſt mortifie all that euer is of our own nature, if wee will conforme our ſelues to our God. And that it is ſo, Saint Paule declareth: and beſides that, wee haue recordes ynow thereof in the newe Teſtament. But it ſhall ſuffice to haue alledged that which is moſt apparant, namely to the Coloſſians, Col.2.17. where it is ſaide that wee haue the ſubſtance and the body of the thinges that were vnder the Lawe, wee haue it (ſayeth he) in Ieſus Chriſt. And therefore it was requiſite for the fathers of old time to bee trained in this hope, as well by the day of reſt, as by ſome other Ceremonies. But nowe that the thing it ſelfe is giuen vnto vs, wee muſt no more ſtay vppon the ſhadowes. In deede the lawe is not ſo aboliſhed, Matt.5.18. Eph.2.15. Col.2.14.17. but that we ought to holde ſtill the ſubſtance and trueth of it: but yet is the ſhadowe of it done away by the comming of our Lord Ieſus Chriſt. If it bee demaunded how the fathers of olde time knewe that: Moſes hath giuen vs vnderſtanding thereof, as is ſhewed ſufficiently in the Booke of Exodus, Exod.31.13. 17. For God hauing ſet foorth his Lawe in the twentieth of Exodus, which hee vttered vnto Moſes, telleth him to what ende it tended, ſaying that he had ordeyned the Sabaoth daye, to bee as a warrant of the ſanctifying of the people of Iſrael vnto him. It is (ſayeth he) a badge of my holyneſſe which I haue ordayned among you. Now when as the ſcripture ſpeaketh to vs of being made holy vnto GOD: it is to ſeparate vs from all thinges that are contrarie to his ſeruice. But where is ſuch pureneſſe to bee founde? Wee bee in the worlde, and wee knowe that in the worlde there is nothing but vtter frowardneſſe and naughtineſſe as ſayeth Saint Iohn in his 1.Ioh.5.19. Canonicall Epiſtle. But men neede not to goe out of themſelues to haue battell againſt God and his righteouſneſſe: for all our ſenſes and all our affections (ſayeth Saint Paule in the eyght Rom.8.7. to the Romanes) are enemies vnto God. When men giue heede to their owne thoughts, deſires, likings, and luſtes: they make open warre againſt God. Wee knowe howe it is tolde vs in the ſixth of Geneſis, that all that euer man can imagine is alwayes euill, Gen.6.5. and that all that euer man deuiſeth in himſelfe and hath of his owne ſtore, is vtterly vntowarde and corrupt afore God. So then, wee ſee well that wee cannot bee ſanctifyed to our God, that is to ſay, wee cannot ſerue him vndefyledly, except wee bee ſeparated from the defylings that are contrarie to him, and that the thinges which are of our owne nature bee aboliſhed. Nowe it was requiſite that all theſe thinges ſhould bee figured to the auncient fathers, bicauſe Ieſus Chriſt was not yet fully reuealed vnto them. But wee in theſe dayes haue the full accompliſhment and performance of all thinges in Ieſus Chriſt. And for proofe thereof, Saint Paule ſaieth that the olde man is Rom.6.6. crucified with him. Whereas Saint Paul ſpeakes after that ſort of the olde man, he meaneth the things that we haue from Adam, all which muſt be rypened and done away. Not as touching the ſubſtance of our bodie or of our ſoule, but as touching ẏ naughtines that is in vs. The blindnes that maketh vs to go aſtray, and the wicked luſtes & likings which are vtterly diſobedient to Gods rightuouſneſſe, muſt be beaten downe, bicauſe they be drawen frõ Adam. And how is that done? Not by our owne power or policie: but by our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt: 1.Cor.15.3. who by dying for vs, to wipe away our ſinnes ẏ they might no more bee Rom.6.4.5.

imputed vnto vs, hath alſo purchaſed vs this prerogatiue, yͭ by yͤ power of his holy ſpirit we be able to forſake the world & our ſelues, ſo as our fleſhly affectiōs ſhall not ouermaiſter vs. And although we be ful of diſobedience: yet ſhall Gods ſpirit ouerrule vs, to hold them downe & to keep thē in awe. And therefore it is ſayd yͭ wee be riſen Col.2.12. againe with him, as S. Paul declareth lykewiſe in yͤ forealledged text to yͤ Coloſſians. But this was not yet manifeſted vnder yͤ Law. Therfore it was requiſit yͭ the fathers which liued at yͭ time, ſhold haue ſome help, ſuch as yͤ ſacrifices were, to feed thē in the hope of the death of our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt, ſo as they might know yͭ their ſinnes were cleanſed away by yͤ bloud of yͤ mediator. Likewiſe they had yͤ Saboth day as a warrāt of the grace yͭ was purchaſed vs to mortify our thoughtes & affections, Gal.2.19,20 that God might liue in vs by yͤ power of his holy ſpirit.

Now we haue ſom entrance to cōceiue yͭ which was touched briefely before: yͭ is to wit, yͭ the Saboth day was as a figure, to repreſēt yͤ thing yͭ was fulfilled in deede at yͤ comming of our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt. And therefore let vs marke wel, yͭ the Saboth day extēded to yͤ whole ſeruice of God, to ſhewe that men could not honor him purely, but by renouncing thēſelues, & by being ſeparated from the defilemēts of yͤ world & of their owne Eze.20.21. & 22.8.& 32.38. fleſh. And for the ſame cauſe were the Iewes rebuked lykewiſe by the prophet Ezechiel for not keeping the Saboth day. And it is tolde them in ſuch wiſe as if they had broken the whole lawe generally. And not without cauſe: for he yͭ deſpiſeth the Saboth day, hath (as much as in him lyeth) thruſt the whole ſeruice of God vnder foot. And if the day of reſt be not kept: all the reſidewe is nothing woorth, according to this ſaying of yͤ Prophet Eſay, yͭ men muſt bereaue themſelues of Esa.58,13. their owne vertues, and be contented to forgoe them: or elſe it is not the Lordes Saboth, neither doth he lyke or alowe of it. Hereby we ſee yͭ it is to no purpoſe to obſerue the ceremonie alone. For had the Iewes kept the ceremonie neuer ſo ſtraitly in aſſembling together on the Saboth day, without ſtirring one finger in their houſholde buſineſſe, & yet in the meane while nouriſh their own wicked affectiōs, & afterward put them in effect: it had bin but a mocking of God, by abuſing of his name, and by defacing and falſifying the whole order that he had ordeined accordingly alſo as he vpbraideth them. But the chiefe thing was to haue an eye to the true meaning of the figure: that is to wit, to the ſpirituall ſeruing of God. And yet therewithal it behooued the Iewes to keepe the ceremonie alſo that was commaunded them. For God did ſo bridle them, as he vouchſafed not to let them haue the ſubſtance of things [alone by it ſelfe,] but he would that they ſhould alſo haue the ſhadowes of them therewithall, vntil the comming of our Lord Ieſus Chriſt.

Col.2.20. And hereby wee ſee the thing that S. Paul ſpeaketh: namely that as now we be no more tyed to the old bondage of keping the Saboth day. For we muſt doe ſo much honor to Ieſus Chriſt, as to holde our ſelues contented with that which hee hath brought vs in his owne perſon, without the hauing of the outward thinges any more yͭ were vnder the law. Now we ſee how this obſeruation concerneth vs at this day. As touching the ceremonie it ſelfe, it is paſt as I ſayde, and therefore wee muſt come to the ſubſtance: which is, yͭ to ſerue God wel, wee muſt learne to forbeare al our own wils, & all our own thoughts & affections. And why? Becauſe yͭ when wee will needes be wiſe in our owne conceites to imagine this or yͭ to ſerue God withal, we marre al. Therfore our own wiſedom muſt be layd down, & we muſt heare God ſpeake, without following our own wil or fancie. Thus the firſt entrāce to keep the Saboth day as we ought to doe, is, not to beleeue the thing yͭ ſeemeth good to our ſelues: for wee muſt reſt. And how muſt we reſt? Wee muſt ſtand at a ſtay, ſo as our thoughtes runne not rouing abroade, to inuent one thing or other. We muſt (ſay I) continue quietly at one ſtay in the obedience of our God. And when wee be tempted Rom.8.7. by our owne luſtes, we muſt conſider that all our lewde and diſobedient affections, are enemies to God euerichone of them. Therefore we muſt reſt ſtil in that behalfe, and referre our ſelues vnto God, that he onely may worke in vs, and guide and gouerne vs by his holy ſpirit.

Hereby we ſee God ouerſlipped not any thing, when hee ordeined the Saboth day. And ſith it hath ſo large a ſcope: what want wee more to teach vs a perfect doctrine of holyneſſe, when we haue the thinges which the holy Ghoſt hath ſet before vs? The matter is that we ſhoulde liue holily in the obedience of our God. And how is that to be done? Euen by receiuing his ſingle worde, and by faſhioning our ſelues according to his righteouſneſſe. Now foraſmuch as the thinges which we haue of our owne nature, are cōtrarie thereunto: we muſt begin at this end of Matt.6.14. Luk.9.23. renoūcing our ſelues. That being done, we haue all that is requiſite to the ſeruing of God. But yͭ is very hard to be done. And therefore when we heare yͭ God commandeth vs to keepe the Saboth day, let vs looke that we marke, and conſider that it wil not be done with playing, but yͭ we muſt inforce our ſelues: & we ſhall haue profited greatly all our lyfe, if we keepe it well, that is to wit by renouncing whatſoeuer wee haue of our owne, and by dedicating our ſelues wholy vnto our God. And we ought to bee the more inflamed to the ſpirituall keeping of the Saboth of the Lord, ſeing we be ſet free frō the ſlauiſh ſubiection of the law, and God hath graunted greater priuiledge to vs, than he did to the fathers of olde time: inſomuch that hee is contented with our mortifying of the old man, to be renewed again by the power of his holy ſpirit, & we be no more boūd to the ceremonie that was kept ſo ſtraitly vnder the law. Seing yͭ God handleth vs ſo louingly: it bindeth vs the more to haue an eye to the principal, yͭ we may obſerue it duely. Yea & we muſt not alledge yͭ the aūcient fathers had yͤ ceremonie to quickē thē vp, which ſerued thē as a ſpurre: for inaſmuch as our Lord Ieſus Chriſt is come, we haue much more than the outwarde and viſible ſigne. And foraſmuch as al the things that were figured in thoſe ſhadowes, are accompliſhed in him: Col 2.17. we muſt not craue ſtil the thinges that were vnder the lawe. Thus ye ſee how the thing that is ordeined here concerning the Saboth day, is nowe fulfilled, at leaſtwiſe as in reſpect of the truth of the figure, which the fathers had but in ſhadowe. And in very deede looke what was commaunded concerning the day of reſt, muſt needes belong to vs as well as to thẽ. For let vs take Gods lawe in it ſelfe, and we ſhall haue an euerlaſting rule of righteouſneſſe. And it is certeine that vnder the tenne commaundementes, God intended to giue a rule that ſhould indure for euer. Therefore let vs not thinke that Pſal.19.8.9.10. the thinges which Moſes ſpeaketh of the Saboth Matt.5.18. day, are needeleſſe for vs: not for that the figure remaineth ſtill in force, but becauſe we haue the trueth thereof. And for the ſame cauſe the Apoſtle in the fourth to the Hebrewes, applyeth the Heb.4.3.10. thinges that were ſpoken of the Saboth day, to the inſtruction of the Chriſtians and of the new Church. For hee ſheweth vs that we muſt faſhion our ſelues lyke to our GOD, and that this is our full felicitie and perfection, becauſe the whole ſoueréigne welfare of man conſiſteth in being created after the image of God. What is to be done now, ſeeing that the ſaid image is defaced by ſin, but that it may bee repaired againe? Ye ſee then that the way for vs to atteine to perfection, is to faſhion our ſelues lyke to our God and to yeelde to his will, and to inquire of his workes: that wee may doe the lyke. Wherefore let vs vnderſtand that to ſerue God well, we at this day be commaunded to ſtreine our ſelues to the vttermoſt of our power, to ſubdew our owne thoughtes, affections and deſires, that God may reigne in vs and rule vs by his holy ſpirit. And therefore it is in vaine for all hipocrites to gloſe, & to ſet a faire countenance vpon their doinges. For ſo lõg as wicked couetouſneſſe lyeth lurking in their heartes: ſo long as they bee ful of enuie, rancor, ambition, crueltie, or guile: it is certeine that they do nothing elſe but breake the Saboth day. And therefore we may conclude that they ouerthrow the whole ſeruice of God, according to that which I alledged afore out of Ezechiel. Iere.17.24. As much is ſayd thereof in Ieremy. And in deed that is ẏ cauſe why the ceremonie was ſo straitly looked to vnder ẏ lawe. Thinke we that God did euer take pleaſure in mens idleneſſe? no ſurely. But he puniſhed the partie as ſore ẏ wrought vppon the Saboth day, as him that had murdered a man. And why ſo? It ſeemeth to be a crueltie, that a man ſhould bee put to death for cleauing of a litle wood vppon ẏ Saboth day, Num.15.32.35. as if he had cõmitted a murther. But yet doth God condemne him to death ẏ cleaued wood vpon ẏ Saboth day. And why? Becauſe ẏ vnder that figure was cõprehended ẏ whole ſeruice of God. And Ier.17.21.22.28. for ẏ ſame cauſe is it ſayd in Ieremie, ẏ they bare burthens, and went to cart vpon the Saboth day. And why? It ſhould ſeeme that God ſtãdeth too much vpon a trifling and childiſh matter: but he had an eye to the thing that was betokened by the Saboth day: and when that was ſo deſpiſed by the Iewes, it was a trayterouſneſſe, whereby they ſhewed that they made no reckoning of the lawe at all. So then, to come againe to our ſelues, ſeeing that wee haue not this figure ſo ſtraitly nowadayes, but God hath giuen vs a greater libertie, which was purchaſed for vs by Col.2.14. the death and paſſion of our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt: let vs learne to giue our ſelues earneſtly vnto him, and to vnderſtand (as I ſayd afore) that we may all trauel in all the reſidewe, and yet it ſhalbe to no purpoſe vnleſſe our affections be brideled, ſo as wee ſtriue to renounce all our owne thoughtes and deſires, in ſuch ſort as God may haue the whole gouerning of vs, and we proteſt that we deſire nothing elſe than to reſt in him. And for the ſame cauſe alſo doth God ſet foorth himſelfe to vs for an example. For hee thinkes it not enough to commaund men to reſt: but alſo ſheweth them the way. For after he had created Gen.2.2. the worlde and all that is therein, hee himſelfe reſted. Not that he was weary or had any neede of reſt: but to allure vs to behold his workes, that we might reſt in them, and therewithall faſhion our ſelues lyke vnto him. Wil we then keepe the ſpiritual reſt? lyke as it is ſaid that God reſted frõ his workes: ſo muſt we reſt alſo, ceaſing to doe what ſeemeth good to our ſelues, and whatſoeuer our owne nature coueteth. If this example of God prouoke vs not: wee ſhewe well thereby that we neither ſeeke nor in any wiſe couet our owne welfare, but that we will needes continew wilfully in our wretched and curſed ſtate. The ſoueréigne welfare of men (as I ſayd afore) is to ſticke vnto God & to be knit vnto him. Beholde, our Lord calleth vs to him, & telleth vs that wee can haue no true holyneſſe nor vnion with him, but by reſting from our owne workes. Now if we be ſo vnruly, that we will alwayes be occupying of our armes & legges, & be ſtill doing what wee thinke good: ſurely it is as a breaking of ẏ band that is betweene God and vs, & a ſeparating and eſtranging of our ſelues from him as much as in vs lyeth. And doth it not appeare thereby, ẏ we ſeeke to be left vp as a pray to Satan, to be caryed & haryed away by him, for want of being any more vnder the protection of our God? Yes: but what for that? There are very fewe ẏ thinke of ẏ. The world ſees what libertie al men take to thẽſelues. If one come & tel a man that he muſt not walke after his owne fancie. Tuſh (ſaith hee) I knowe how to behaue my ſelfe. But a man could not deuiſe to ſpite God more manifeſtly, than by ſuch rebelliouſneſſe. It is all one as if we woulde needes ſhewe that wee will not ẏ he ſhould haue any ſuperioritie ouer vs. In deede men will not be acknowẽ ẏ it is ſo: but yet it is ſo in very deede. For (as I haue ſayd already) it is no ſeruing of God, vnleſſe we begin at the abſteyning frõ our owne thoughtes & affections. Therefore when men will needes be ſelfwiſe & truſt to their owne wit, ſo as they take leaue to doe what they liſt, & to follow their own affections & fancies, & labor not to repreſſe thẽ, but are offended whẽ others goe about to reclaime them: it is a ſigne ẏ they neuer wiſt what it is to ſerue God, nor ẏ it is the chiefeſt poynt of the lawe. And therefore let vs marke wel, ẏ whereas God alledgeth his owne example: it is to allure vs gently to ẏ keeping of ẏ ſpiritual Saboth or reſt,ẏ we might thinke our ſelues vnhappy to be ſeparated frõ him,as I touched afore.And behold,ẏ band of this cõiunctiõ is ẏ we withdraw not our ſelues from his religion & trueth,but ſuffer our ſelues to be ruled by him.

But now it may be demaunded, why ẏ Iewes were commaunded to reſt but onely the ſeuenth day: for our renowncing of our owne thoughtes & affectiõs,muſt not be for one day in a weeke: but we muſt continue in ẏ minde al ẏ time of our lyfe. To be ſhort, the reſt ẏ God cõmandeth vs is euerlaſting, and not by pangs or fittes as they ſay. And why then choſe he but one day of the week? It was to ſhew vs,that when we haue done what we can to renounce our wicked luſtes, our falſe pretences,and whatſoeuer elſe is of our own nature: yet ſhall we neuer be able to atteine fully thereunto, till we be quite & cleane bereft of our fleſhe. True it is ẏ faithful ought to keepe a continual Sabboth all their life long, by forbearing their own wils and workes,& by indeuoring to giue themſelues ouer vnto God ẇ all humilitie & ſubmiſſion,ſo as they may obey him quietly:I ſay we muſt doe ſo,or elſe al ẏ ſeruice ẏ we be deſirous to doe vnto God,ſhall be but a feining, & he wil diſalowe it & reiect it. Neuertheleſſe we cannot ſo diſcharge our ſelues in renoũcing our affections,but ẏ there will alwayes be ſomewhat worthie of blame in vs. S.Paul doth in deed glory ẏ the world was crucified vnto him, & he vnto ẏ world:but yet for al ẏ,he ceaſeth not to ſay, ẏ his fleſhe fighteth againſt his ſpirit, ſo as there is neuer any agreemẽt betwixt thẽ. Yea and hee confeſſeth in ẏ ſeuenth to ẏ Romans,that he felt ſuch ſtrife cõtinually in himſelfe,as he did not ẏ good ẏ he would haue done,ẏ is to ſay,he performed it not ẇ ſo earneſt affection,nor was ſo fully determined to walke according to ẏ will of God, but ẏ he had alwayes ſome lets to hinder him,ſo as to his own ſeming, in ſted of running ſtrongly, he did but go limpingly. Sith it is ſo:let vs marke ẏ Gods ordeining of ẏ ſeuẽth day to reſt in,was not ẇout cauſe: for thereby he doth vs to vnderſtand, ẏ we cannot atteyne to ẏ perfect holineſſe which he requireth at our hands, neither in one day,nor in one moneth.Why ſo?Becauſe ẏ when we haue fought neuer ſo luſtily againſt the affectiõs of our fleſh,& againſt our wicked thoughts: there will alwayes remaine ſome dregges ſtil, till we be fully vnited to our God,& that he haue taken vs vp into his heauenly kingome. Vntill ẏ time, we ſhall alwayes haue ſome temptations, trouble,& vnquietneſſe in vs,ſo as wee ſhall well perceiue(I meane ſuch of vs as indeuer to ſerue God)that we be ſtil ſubiect to many tẽptations, & to the feeling of a number of ſtinges whereby we be prouoked to this or that. And are not all thoſe thinges as many hinderances to holde vs backe frõ the ſpiritual reſt? If a man reſted himſelfe in God as he ſhould doe:he ſhould not conceiue any thing at all in his minde, that might turne him aſide from the right way. He ſhoulde not haue any wicked luſtes or lykinges. All ſuch thinges ſhoulde bee farre from him. Now then when as we conceiue a number of lewde imaginations: then doth Satan ſtep in to aſſaile vs,& to vexe vs ẇ vnquietneſſe.And when our minde is once inclined to doe euill:there are a number of thinges in vs,ẏ tickle vs & ſet vs ſtill foreward. And although we hate ẏ euil,yet ſo it is,ẏ by ſuch tẽptations we are prouoked to goe through with it. And thereby it appeareth ẏ it is not an eaſie matter to winde our ſelues frõ our wicked luſtes, & to bring to paſſe ẏ they may no more reigne in vs. So then let vs go foreward with this indeuer of keeping Gods ſpiritual Saboth,for we ſhal neuer atteine fully to it, vntill ẏ end of our lyfe.

Gal.6.14.& 5.17.

Ro.7.15.19.

But hereby we be put in minde of two things. The one is to miſlyke of our ſelues,& to mourne continually, & to conſider that although to our owne ſeeming we haue takẽ neuer ſo great pain to obey our GOD: yet notwithſtanding we be but yet on our way ſtil,and we come far ſhort of fulfilling the thinges that are required and commaunded in the lawe.Thus haue wee a cauſe to humble our ſelues,becauſe God ſhal always find enough and too much to condemne in vs as cõcerning our ſeruing of him,and alſo becauſe that the ſpirituall reſt is not yet ſuch as he hath commaunded,nothing neere. And lyke as wee haue occaſion to humble our ſelues & to be ſorie with true repentance: ſo ought we on the other ſide to be ẏ more moued & quickened vp to goe forward,ſith we ſee our owne wants as thus: True it is that God hath giuen me the grace to bee deſirous to ſerue him: but how doe I behaue my ſelf therin? alas I am yet far off frõ doing it.Sith we ſee it is ſo: what ſhould we do but inforce our ſelues?Therfore ẇ our abhorring of ẏ euil which is in vs,let vs alſo be the more earneſt to profit ſtil in this reſt,& to go foreward in it,& let euery of vs dayly call himſelfe to account. Ye ſee then that God hauing giuen vs occaſiõ to humble our ſelues all the time of our life,ſheweth vs that we muſt be earneſt in correcting our vices,& in mortifying our fleſh dayly more & more,& conſider ẏ it is not enough for vs to haue our olde man crucifyed in part,vnleſſe we be alſo quite buried ẇ Ieſus Chriſt,as ſaith S.Paul in ẏ ſeuenth to the Romans before alledged.Thus much cõcerning ẏ ſeuẽth day,wherof mẽtiõ is made in this place.

Rom.7.4.

Now muſt we come to the ſecond point:which is,ẏ (as I haue ſayd already) ẏ Saboth day was a policy or order whereby to exerciſe the faithfull in the ſeruice of God. For that day was ordeined for men to aſſemble in, to heare the doctrine of the lawe preached,to communicate together ẇ ſacrifices, and to call vpon the name of God.As touching theſe poyntes, it belongeth as well to vs as to the people of olde time. For albeit ẏ the figure be ceaſed,(I meane the ſame that S. Paul ſpeaketh of in the epiſte to the Coleſſians:) yet notwithſtanding, ſo much as cõcerneth the order, continueth ſtill and hath his vſe. And to what end ſerueth this order? To aſſemble our ſelues in the name of God. True it is that this ought to be done cõtinually: howbeit for our infirmities ſake,or rather by reaſon of our ſlothfulneſſe,it is requiſite that ſome one day ſhould be choſen out.If we were as erneſt in ſeruing of God as we ought to bee: wee ſhould not appoynte one day in a weeke, onely but euery man ought to meete both morning and euening without lawe written, to bee edifyed more and more by Gods worde. And truely this exerciſe is more than needefull for vs, conſidering that wee bee ſo inclined to euill, as there needeth not any thing to thruſt vs out of the way: and therefore it were expedient for vs to come together dayly in the name of God. But what? We ſee that men wil ſcarſe meete vpon the Lord his day, and that moſte of them muſt bee held to it as it were by force. Conſidering then that there is ſuch infirmitie in vs: let vs vnderſtand that this order was not made al onely for the Iewes, that they might haue ſome day wherin to come together: but alſo for vs, ſo as it belongeth to vs as well as to thẽ.

But yet herewithall we haue to marke, that this is not all: for it were a very ſlender order to haue a reſt of our handes and feete, and to go no further than ſo. What then? we muſt apply this reſt to a higher purpoſe: we muſt refraine from our owne buſineſſe which might hinder vs from the minding of Gods workes: and wee muſt call vpon his name and exerciſe our ſelues in his worde. If wee ſpende the Lordes day in making good cheere, and in playing and gaming: is that a good honoring of God? Nay, is it not a mockerie, yea and a very vnhalowing of his name? Yes. But when the Shopwindowes are ſhut in on the Lords day, and men trauel not as they do on other dayes: it is to the ende wee ſhoulde haue the more leaſure and libertie, to intend to the thinges that God commaundeth: that is to wit, to be taught by his worde, to meete together to make confeſſion of our faith, to call vppon his name, & to exerciſe our ſelues in ẏ vſe of his Sacramentes. That is the purpoſe whereunto this order ought to ſerue vs. But now let vs ſee if thoſe which name themſelues Chriſtians, diſcharge themſelues as they ought to do. Behold, a great number thinke to haue ẏ Lordes day moſt free to followe their owne buſines, & reſerue that day for the ſame purpoſe, as though there were none other day for them to appoynt vppon of all the weeke long. And though the bell tole to bring them to the ſermon, yet it ſeemeth vnto them, that they haue nothing elſe to doe, but to thinke vpon their buſines, and to caſt vp their accounts concerning this and that matter. Otherſome fall to gluttonie, and ſhut vp thẽſelues in their houſes, becauſe they dare not ſhewe a manifeſt contempt in the open ſtreetes: but yet the Lord his day is to them but as a couert to ſhrinke aſide in from the Church of God. And hereby it appeareth what affection we haue towardes all Chriſtianitie, & towardes ẏ ſeruing of God, ſeeing we make that thing an occaſion of withdrawing our ſelues further of from God, which is giuen vs for a helpe to bring vs neerer vnto him. And againe, be we once gone aſtray: it ſerueth to pul vs quite and cleane away. And is not ẏ a diueliſh ſpite of men? yet notwithſtanding it is ſo cõmon a thing, as is pitie to ſee: and would God that examples were more rare and further of to be found. But ẏ worlde ſees how all thinges are vnhallowed, inſomuch that moſt folke haue no regard at al of ẏ vſing of that day, which was ordayned to withdrawe vs from all earthly cares and affaires, that wee might giue our ſelues wholy vnto God.

Furthermore wee muſt vnderſtand, that the Lord his day was not appoynted al onely to the hearing of Sermons: but to the ende wee ſhould apply the reſt of the time to ẏ prayſing of God. Yea verily. For although he feede vs euery day: yet doe wee not minde his gratious benefites ſufficiently to magnify them. In deede it were a poore thing if wee minded not Gods benefites but vpon the Lordes day: But becauſe we be occupied too much about our owne affaires on the other dayes, therefore wee bee not ſo much giuen to ſerue God in them, as vppon the day which is aſſigned wholy therunto. The Lord his day then muſt ſerue vs for a tower to mount vp into, to vewe Gods workes a farre of, as a time wherein we haue nothing to let vs or to keepe vs occupied, but that we may imploy all our wits to conſider thẽ benefites and gratious gifts that he hath beſtowed vppon vs. And if wee can put this thing wel in vre (that is to ſay, if we can conſider Gods workes), vpon the Lordes day, ſurely we ſhall be the more giuen vnto it all the reſte of the weeke after, and the minding thereof wil as it were faſhion and poliſh vs aforehand, ſo as our muſing vppon his workes long afore to the intent wee may knowe how to fare the better by them, wil leade vs to yeeld thanks vnto our God vppon the munday and all the weeke after. But if the Lordes day be ſpent not onely in games & paſtimes full of vanitie, but alſo in thinges quite contrarie to God, ſo as men thinke they haue not kept holy the Lorde his day, except God be offended diuers wayes: if the holy order which God ordeyned to bring vs to him, be broken after that faſhion: is it any woonder though men play the beaſtes all the weeke after? What is to be done then? Let vs aſſure our ſelues that it is not enough for vs to goe to ſome Sermon vppon the Lordes day, to receiue ſome good inſtruction & to cal vpon the name of God: but we muſt alſo digeſt the ſame thinges, and bende all our wittes to conſider the gratious thinges that God hath done for vs: and by that meanes wee muſt frame our ſelues to the thinges that may leade vs to our God, without further trauel on ẏ Munday or of all the weeke after. And to the intent we may not doe aught elſe than record ẏ thinges by good leaſure, which we had learned afore: let our mindes be diſcharged of all things that may hinder vs, or plucke vs backe from the conſidering of Gods workes. Thus ye ſee what the order is which we muſt keepe at this day. It is not to keepe the ceremonie ſo ſtraite as it was vnder the bondage of ẏ lawe: for we haue not the figure or ſhadowe any more. But it ſerueth tõ cal vs together, that we may be inured according to our infirmitie, to apply our ſelues the better to ẏ ſeruing of God, and to dedicate that day wholy vnto him, ſo as we may bee vtterly withdrawen from the worlde, and the ſame may ſtand vs in ſtead all the reſt of the weeke, as I ſayd afore.

Yea and wee haue to marke alſo, that it is not enough for vs to thinke vpon God and his works

Col.2.11.12 14.

vppon the Lordes day euery man alone by himſelfe: but that wee muſt meete together vppon ſome day certeine to make open confeſſion of our faith. In deede this ought to be done euery day as I haue ſayd afore. But yet in reſpect of mens rawneſſe, and by reaſon of their ſlothfulneſſe: it is neceſſarie to haue one ſpeciall day dedicated wholy thereunto. It is true that we bee not bound to the ſeuenth day: neither doe wee (in deede) keepe the ſame day that was appointed to the Iewes: for that was the Saterday. But to the intent to ſhewe the libertie of Chriſtians, the day was chaunged becauſe Ieſus Chriſt in his reſurrection did ſet vs free from the bondage of the law, & cancelled the obligation therof. That was the cauſe why the day was ſhifted. But yet muſt wee obſerue the ſame order of hauing ſome day in the weeke, be it one or be it two, for that is left to the free choyce of Chriſtians. Neuertheleſſe, if a people aſſemble to haue the Sacramentes miniſtred, and to make common prayer vnto GOD, and to ſhewe one agreement and vnion of faith: it is conuenient to haue ſome one day certeine for that purpoſe. Then is it not enough for euery man to withdrawe himſelfe into his owne houſe, whether it bee to reade the holy ſcripture or to pray vnto GOD: but it is meete that wee ſhoulde come into the companie of the faithfull, and there ſhewe the agreement which wee haue with all the whole body of the Church, by keeping this order which our Lord hath ſo commanded. But what? There a man may ſee too apparant vnhallowing of Gods ſeruice. For (as I haue touched afore) are there not a great ſorte which could well finde in their heartes to ſhewe that they doe but mocke God, and that they would faine be exempted from the common lawe? It is true that they wil come to a ſermon a fiue or ſixe times a yeere. And what to doe there? Forſooth euen to mocke at God & at all his doctrine. In deede they be very ſwine, which come to defile Gods temple, and are worthier to be in ſtables than there, and they were better to keepe themſelues at home in their ſtinking cabans. To bee ſhort, it were better that ſuch raſcals and filthie vilaines were quite cut off from the Church of God, than that they ſhould come and intermingle themſelues after that ſort in companie with the faithfull. But yet how many times come they thither? The bel may ring wel enough: for looke where a man left them, there ſhall he finde thē. So then we ought to bee the more diligent and careful, in quickening vp our ſelues to make ſuch confeſſion of our faith, as God may be honored with one common conſent among vs. And beſides that, all ſuperſtitions muſt bee baniſhed. For we ſe how it is an opinion in poperie, that God is ſerued with idleneſſe. It is not after that ſorte that we muſt keepe holy the Saboth day. But to the intent it may bee applyed to the right and lawfull vſe, we muſt conſider (as I ſayd afore) how our Lord requireth to haue this day beſtowed in nothing elſe, but in hearing of his worde, in making common prayer, in making confeſſion of our faith, and in hauing the vſe of the Sacramentes. Thoſe are the thinges that wee bee called to. Howbeit, we ſee how al things haue bin corrupted & confounded in the popedome. For lyke as they haue alotted dayes to honoring of their hee Saints and ſhee Saints, and ſet vp images of thē: ſo haue they ſurmiſed that they were to be worſhipped with idleneſſe. But ſeeing that yͤ world is ſo giuen to corruption: it ſtandeth vs ſo much the more in hand to marke well this diſcourſe concerning the Saboth day, as it is ſet downe here by Moſes. And let vs conſider to what ende our Lorde commaunded the people of olde time, to haue one day in the weeke to reſt in: to the intent that wee knowing how the ſame is aboliſhed by the comming of our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt, may take our ſelues to the ſpiritual reſt, that is to ſay, dedicate out ſelues wholy vnto God, forſaking all our owne reaſon and affections. Againe let vs reteine ſtill the outward order, ſo farre as is meete for vs, that is to wit, of forbearing our owne affaires and worldly buſineſſes, that we may intend wholy to the minding of Gods workes, and occupy our ſelues in the conſideration of the good thinges that hee hath done for vs. And aboue all thinges let vs ſtreine our ſelues to acknowledge the grace that hee offereth vs dayly in his Goſpel that we may be ſtrengthened in it ſtill more and more. And when wee haue beſtowed the Lord his day in prayſing and magnifying Gods name, and in minding his workes: let vs ſhewe all the weeke after, that wee haue profited in the ſame.

Now let vs kneele downe in the preſence of our good GOD with acknowledgement of our faultes, praying him to make vs feele them better than we haue done. And foraſmuch as wee can by no meanes ſerue him, vntill the frowardneſſe that is in vs be done away, and inaſmuch as he hath tolde vs that wee ſhall not ceaſe to fight againſt his righteouſneſſe, ſo long as wee giue heade to our owne luſts and imaginations: it may pleaſe our good God to graunt vs ſuch grace by the power of his holy ſpirit, as wee may be fully faſhioned lyke vnto him that dyed and roſe again for vs to mortify vs and to quicken vs. So then let vs beare the marke of our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt euen in renouncing our ſelues, and let vs ſo ſubmit vs to his will, as our whole ſeeking may bee to be faſhioned lyke to his righteouſneſſe, that his lawe may bee fulfilled in vs euen as it is ſpirituall, and wee be changed from fleſh to ſpirit, to liue vnder his obeiſance. And becauſe there is alwayes ſo much in vs to be miſlyked: it may pleaſe the ſame good GOD to beare with our infirmities, vntill his reſt be fully brought to paſſe in vs, and that he haue taken vs vp into his heauenly kingdome. That it may pleaſe him to graunt this grace not onely. &c.

On Friday the xxj. of Iune.1555.

The xxxv Sermon which is the ſixth vpon the fiſt Chapter.

13 Six dayes ſhalt thou labour &c.

14 Thou ſhalt not doe anie worke therein, thy ſelfe, thy Sonne, thy daughter, thy manſeruaunt, thy womanſeruaunt, thyne Ox, thyne Aſſe, and thy cattle, and thy Straunger which is within thy gates, that thy manſeruaunt and thy womanſeruaunt may haue reſt as well as thy ſelfe.

15 Remember that thou waſt a ſeruaunt in the land of Egypt, and that the Lorde thy God brought thee thence with ſtrong hande and arme ſtretched out. And therefore the Lord thy God hath commaunded thee to keepe holie the Saboth day.

I Declared yeſterday how and why the commaundement of keeping the Saboth day was giuen to the Iewes. I told you briefly how it was a figure of the ſpirituall reſt which the faithfull ought to obſerue, to

Col.2,14.17 20.

ſerue God in. Howbeit our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt hath brought vs the performance thereof, ſo as wee muſt no more ſtay vppon the ſhadowe of

Rom.6.6.

the Lawe, but content our ſelues with the crucifying of our olde man by the power of ẏ death and paſſion of our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt, that wee may bee renued to ſerue our G O D throughly. But yet in the mean while we haue need of ſome policie and order among vs. Therefore it is expedient that there bee a day of reſt for vs to meete together, that we be confirmed in the doctrine of God, and profite daily therein, that is to ſay, all the time of our life, and alſo bee occupied in calling vppon his name, and in making confeſſion of our faith: and that therewithall the reſidewe of the day be ſpent in conſidering the benefits that wee receiue from time to time at Gods hand, that he may be the better gloriſyed for them.

And now we haue to marke what is ſayd in Moſeſes text. *Six dayes ſhalt thou labor*, ſayth the Lorde. This muſt not be taken as though God commaunded vs to labor. It is true that we bee borne thereto, and wee knowe that God intendeth not that wee ſhould be idle, while we liue in this world: for hee hath giuen men handes and feete and cunning and wit. Yea and euen

Gen.2,15.

before there was any ſin, it is ſayd that Adam was put into the garden to dreſſe it. But the labor that men take now, is a chaſtiſement for ſin. For it is ſayd vnto them, Thou ſhalt eate thy bread in the ſweate of thy browes: that is a curſe which is layd vppon all mankinde. For wee be not worthie to inioy the ſtate that was giuen to our firſt father, which was to liue in pleaſure without much troubling of himſelfe. Notwithſtanding, euen before ſin came into the world, and before we were condemned of God to this paynful and conſtreyned labor, it behoued men to occupy themſelues in ſome exerciſe. And why? For it is againſt our nature to be as vnprofitable blockes of wood. So then it is very certeine that we muſt apply the whole time of our lyfe to ſome labor. Neuertheleſſe here is no preciſe commaundement giuen of laboring ſix dayes. For in very deede there were other ſolemnities beſides the Saboth day, vnder the Lawe: There were other feaſtes which might fall in the middeſt of the weeke. But for as much as the number of them was ſmall, (for they were but fower dayes in the yeere:) here is no mention made of them: hee ſpeaketh but only of the Saboth day. And whereas it is ſayd, thou ſhalt labor ſixe dayes: our Lord ſheweth vs that wee haue no cauſe to grudge of the giuing and beſtowing of one day vppon him, ſeeing he leaueth vs ſixe for one. As if he ſhould ſay, is it a great matter to you that I ſhould choſe out one day to be reſerued wholy to my ſeruice, ſo as ye ſhall doe nothing therein but reade and exerciſe your ſelues in my lawe, or heare the doctrine that ſhalbe preached vntô you, and come to the temple to be there confirmed by the ſacrifices that ſhall be offered, and to call vppon my name, and to proteſt that you bee of the felowſhip of my people? Shold this grieue you ſeing you haue ſixe dayes free and whole to doe your buſineſſe and affaires in? Seing then that I deale ſo courteouſly with you: as to require but one day of ſeuen: is it not too great an vnthankefulneſſe, if yee complayne of that time as though it were miſbeſtowed, as who ſhoulde ſay yee were ſo churliſh and nigardly, as to grudge mee the ſeuenth part of your time? I giue you your whole life: ẏ ſunne neuer ſhineth vpō you, but you ought to conſider my goodneſſe, & that I am a freehearted father towardes you. For I make my ſunne to ſhine, to giue you light to goe by, Pſal.104.22 23. that euery of you might doe his buſineſſe. And why then ſhould not I haue one day of ſeuen, wherein euery man ſhall ſurceaſe from his owne buſineſſe, ſo as ye ſhall not be intangled in any worldly care, but that ye may haue leaſure to thinke vppon me? We ſee then that this ſaying of laboring ſixe dayes, is not ſet downe as a cōmaundement, but rather as a graunt that God maketh euen in way of vpbraiding men with their vnthankefulneſſe, if they doe not obſerue the Saboth day and keepe it holy as is ſpoken of it here.

But hereof we may gather a good and profitable leſſon: which is that when we be ſlow to obey God, we muſt cōſider his benefits. For what ſhould more ſharpen our deſire to follow Gods commaundementes, than to conſider that hee dealeth not roughly with vs, ne ouerpreſſeth vs not? behold God coulde reine vs with a ſtreite bit if it pleaſed him: he could driue vs to ſo hard thinges as there ſhould be no meanes to get out of them: but hee hath a conſideration to guide vs as a father doth his children. Seing then ẏ he doth ſo beare with vs: ought wee not to be the more prouoked to doe as he appointeth vs? yes. So then, as oft as Gods commaundements are hard vnto vs, or at leaſtwiſe ſeeme to bee ſo: let vs aſſure our ſelues that hee doth not preſſe vs ſo much as hee could, nothing neere. For if God liſted to vſe his right with extremitie: we ſhould be tormented out of all meaſure. Therefore let vs vnderſtand that he beareth with vs, and that hee vſeth more than fatherly goodneſſe in that behalfe. It is true that the lawe of GOD is Ro.7,14.15 vnpoſſible vnto vs, inſomuch that wee bee not onely vnable to obſerue it throughout: but alſo if a man would of his owne naturall power diſcharge himſelfe to Godward, he could not ſtirre one finger, nor haue one good thought, to know which way to begin. And ſo farre off are wee from being able to obey GOD, and to execute the thinges that are conteined in his lawe: that Rom.8.7. all our thoughtes and affections are enmities againſt God. If men could through their owne power performe the Lawe: it ſhould bee ſayd to them, *Labor thou*. But contrariwiſe it is ſayd, *Reſt yee*, to the end that God may worke. The lawe then may well be vnpoſſible as in reſpect of vs, but yet is it poſſible for GOD to printe it in our heartes, and to gouerne vs by his holy ſpirit, yea euen in ſuch wiſe as it ſhall bee a ſweete and light yoke vnto vs, and there ſhall bee no hardneſſe in it that may weary vs. Therfore when men haue looked well about them: they ſhall finde that God beareth with them, as a father that pitieth his children. And therefore let vs learne to bee thankfull, and to be the more forewarde to ſerue our God, ſeeing hee commaundeth vs no ſuch thinges as ought to ſeeme ouer bitter or paynefull to vs, but hath a regarde of our abilitie.

Thus yee ſee what wee haue to marke vpon this text, where our Lord ſheweth that he leaueth men their commoditie. True it is (as was touched yeſterday) that wee ought to bee ſo ſpirituall, as to aſſemble euery day to call vpō the name of God, and that we ought to mount vp to the heauenly lyfe, leauing all our worldly buſineſſes. But what? God ſeeth that wee be compaſſed about with our fleſh, that we creep vppon the earth, and that our infirmities cary vs away in ſuch ſorte, as we cannot leade the life of Angels. God therefore beholding ſuch rawnes & weakenes in vs, and rewing our vnabilitie to diſcharge our ſelues fully of our dutie: releaſeth vs, and vttereth not his vttermoſt rigor, but ſayth hee is contented if wee alowe him one day: or rather if that day ſerue vs for all the reſt of the weeke, God is contented with it. And why? For (as I ſayd) hee goeth not to extremitie: becauſe hee knoweth that wee bee too feeble. Seeing then that hee beareth ſo with vs, and leaueth our commodities to vs: we be ſo much the more lewde, vnhoneſt and vnexcuſable, if wee bee not inflamed to giue our ſelues ouer vnto him.

Now it is ſayd therewithall, *that neither manſeruant, nor womanſeruant, nor Ox, nor Aſſe, nor any other Cattell muſt labour on the Saboth day, no nor any ſtraunger within thy gates*. As concerning cattel, it might bee thought ſtraunge that God ſhoulde comprehende them vnder the keeping of the Saboth or day of reſt, ſeeing it is a high and heauenly myſterie, as was declared yeſterday. Doeth ſuch geere belong to Oxen and Aſſes? GOD ſayth, I haue giuen you the Saboth day, Exod.31,13. 17. to bee as a ſigne that I make you holy, and that I am your GOD which reigneth among you. Eze.20.12. This is not common to all mortall men. For God graunteth not ſuch grace and priuiledge to the paynims and infidels, as to make them holy: Hee ſpeaketh but onely to the people whome hee adopted and choſe to bee his heritage. But nowe ſeeing that the Saboth day is a ſigne of Gods ſeparating of his faithfull Church from all the reſt of the worlde: wherefore is it extended vnto Oxen and Aſſes? Let vs marke that it is not done for the brute beaſtes ſakes: but to the intent that men ſhoulde haue a monument before their eyes, to bee the more touched therewith. This Sacrament then concerneth not the beaſtes, which haue no vnderſtanding nor reaſon: but it concerneth men, who ought to make their profit of it. Wee ſee that the Sacrifices were made of the brute beaſtes: wee ſee there was greate preparation in that behalfe: there were veſſels of gold and ſiluer & ſuch other lyke thinges: and whereas all theſe things were hallowed, is it meant that God did put his ſpirit into the corruptible mettals, and into the other thinges that haue no feeling? No: but all this is referred to the men, for whoſe vſe and commoditie they are made. God doth not onely ſerue his owne turne with them in this Gen.1.28, preſent and brittle lyfe: Pſal.8.7. but alſo giue them to vs as tokens of his fauour, to bee as meanes and helpes to drawe vs vp to heauen. Now then, whereas God would haue the Oxen and Aſſes to reſt the ſeuenth day: it is not meant thereby that hee maketh them partakers of the ſpirituall reſt that wee ſpake of before; but it was done to ỳ end that ỳ Iewes beholding their Stables and ſtalles ſhut vp, ſhoulde conſider thus with themſelues: Lo: God ſetteth vs downe this ſigne and viſible Sacrament before our eyes, and extendeth it euen to the bruite beaſtes: and that is to the end that wee on our part ſhoulde be held the better to his ſeruice, and conſider that it were a breaking of the whole lawe, if wee ſhould not thinke vpon the thing that is chiefeſt in all our whole lyfe: namely if wee ſhoulde not learne to forſake our ſelues, and no more followe our owne lykings, reaſon, and wiſedome, but ſuffer our God to rule vs, and become as dead creatures, that hee may liue in vs, and not followe our own ſwindge any more, which is vtterly corrupted. After this maner ſhould the Iewes haue looked vpon the viſible ſigne that extended euen to the beaſtes, to the end it might haue reſtreined them ſo much the more, and they by that meane haue bin put in minde to haue kept the Saboth day with all reuerence.

Gal.2,20.

Alſo wee ſee how God at all times handleth men according to their hardneſſe, and how he hath prouided conuenient remedies for them, becauſe they bee not ouerhaſtie to come vnto him, vntill they bee drawen thither after that faſhion. And this ſerueth not onely for the Iewes, but alſo for vs. Then let vs conſider the goodneſſe of our God, ſith wee ſee hee is not vnmindefull of vs, nor ouerſlippeth any thing at all that may remedy our vices. And therewithall let vs alſo conſider the vntowardneſſe that is in our ſelues, to the ende that wee flatter not our ſelues ne giue head to our affections, ſeeing it is ſo that wee haue neede to bee conſtreined, and that God ſhould giue vs ſtrokes with the ſpurre, as it were to reſtie horſes. Seeing then that God quickeneth vs vp after that faſhion, let vs aſſure our ſelues hee doth it not cauſeleſſe, but becauſe wee be froward and ſtubborne. And therfore let vs miſlike of all our affections, and learne to impriſon our ſelues, ſo as nothing may withhold vs from following the trace that God commandeth vs. And although our nature ſtriue againſt it, yet let vs ſo bridle the ſame, as wee may goe through without ceaſing, euen til wee be fully obedient to our God.

Thus ye ſee what we haue to remember vpon this place, beſides that which ſhall be ſpoken anon concerning menſeruaunts and womenſeruaunts, wherby God putteth the Iewes in mind, that *they had bin ſeruantes in the land of Egipt*, and therefore that they ought to deale gently with ſuch as were vnder their power. *Thy manſeruant* (ſayth hee) *and thy womanſeruant ſhall reſt themſelues.* And why? for thou thy ſelfe haſt bin in bondage. [The time hath bin that] thou wouldeſt faine haue had ſome reſt and refreſhing giuen thee. Therefore now thou muſt vſe the lyke gentleneſſe towards ſuch as are vnder thy hand. Heere it ſhoulde ſeeme that God ordeined not the Saboth day for a ſpirituall order onely, as is ſayd afore: but alſo for charities ſake. For hee ſayth, if thou thy ſelfe weart in bondage, wouldeſt thou not that other men ſhould giue thee ſome releaſe? couldeſt thou finde in thy heart to be alwayes toyling? No ſurely. Therefore muſt thou alſo beare with others. Now this is not done for the ſeruice of God, but rather for common charities ſake which ought to be betweene neighbor and neighbor, how farre ſoeuer they bee vnderlings to vs in degree. Howbeit inaſmuch as this commaundement is contayned in the firſt table of the Lawe: ſurely the thing that is touched here, is but an acceſſorie, I ſay the firſt table. For not without cauſe hath God deuided his lawe in ſuch ſorte, as that he wrote it in two ſtones. Coulde he not haue written it all in one ſtone if hee had liſted? Yes. Why then was it made in two partes? It was not without cauſe. For there are two principall poyntes in Gods Lawe. The one concerneth our duetie towards him, & the other concerneth our duetie towardes our neighbours in being conuerſant with them. For the end wherunto our whole life ought to bee referred, is firſt of all, that vppon knowledge that wee haue a God to whome wee belong, wee ſhould walke in his obedience, and that foraſmuch as wee holde our lyfe of him, wee ſhould doe him homage for it: and that foraſmuch as he hath created vs to a better hope, and adopted vs for his children, wee ſhould glorify him for ſuch goodneſſe: and that foraſmuch as hee hath redeemed vs with the bloud of his ſonne, wee ſhould bee wholy his, indeuoring to withdrawe our ſelues from the defilementes of this world, ỳ we may be true ſacrifices vnto him, calling vpon him alone, fleeing to him alone for ſuccor, & yelding him thanks for all his benefits. Ye ſee then ỳ the firſt poynt of our life, is the honour that we ought to yeeld to our God.

Another poynt is this: that foraſmuch as it is his will to trye our obedientneſſe by liuing vprightly among men: none of vs muſt bee giuen to his owne peculiar profit, but euery of vs muſt indeuour to ſerue other, and mainteine mutuall honeſtie among our ſelues, ſo as wee not onely abſteine from deceite, violence, and crueltie: but alſo leade a ſober and modeſt life, without looſeneſſe, lewdeneſſe, or beaſtlyneſſe. That is the ſecond poynt of our lyfe.

Now ſith it is ſo that the commandement of the Saboth day is conteined in the firſt table: it followeth that it belongeth to the ſpirituall ſeruice of God, and that it concerneth not the charitie which ought to bee betwixt neighbor and neighbor. And why then is it treated of in that place? It is all one as if our Lord ſhould ſay, This Saboth day ſhall ſerue you for an ouerplus, that your manſeruantes and womenſeruauntes may haue ſome eaſe as well as your ſelues. Not that that was the drift of Gods purpoſe: his chiefe intent was not ỳ there ſhould be a day in ỳ week wherein mẽ ſhould ceaſe frõ labor, ỳ they might take breath & not be continually ouerhaled, ſo as they ſhoulde be tyred: ỳ was not the cauſe which moued God to appoint the Saboth day: But his ordeining of it was to do ỳ faithfull to vnderſtand ỳ they ought to liue after ſuch a holy maner, as to reſt from all their owne luſtes and deſires, that God might worke wholy in them.

Alſo here is a verie excellent benefite, as men terme it. Behold (ſaieth our Lord) in as much as ye haue this warrant among you, that I do ſanctifie you: ſee that you alſo indeuour to giue your ſelues vnto mee. For loe, this thing ſhal doe you ſeruice, and it is to your profite: that is to wit, your houſholde ſhall not bee alwaies ouerhaled: for your menſeruants and your womenſeruantes and your cattell muſt haue ſome reſt. Therefore ye ſhall haue this as an ouerplus. Nowe wee ſee why here is expreſſe mention made, ẏ the Iewes had bin bondſeruantes in Egypt, and therefore ẏ they ought to haue regard of ſuch as were held as priſoners vnder their hand. For whereas Moſes ſpeaketh of menſeruants & womenſeruants: he meaneth not ẏ maner of ſeruice that is common among vs nowe adayes: for in thoſe dayes ſeruantes were ſlaues, and they were held downe like Oxen & Aſſes: they were handled ſo roughly and vnkindly, as was pitie to ſee. God therfore telleth ẏ Iewiſh people, ẏ in keeping the Saboth day, they ſhould euen benefite & proſper their owne houſhold. So little cauſe haue you (ſaieth he) to repine at the time that I haue reſerued to my ſelfe, in taking one of ſeuen: ẏ if ye were not ouercruell and tyrannous to ſuch as are at your deuotion, [ye would ſee that] the ſame day is to your benefite. If ye had no further regard than to ciuill order, that is to wit that in that day your ſeruauntes ſhall haue ſome refreſhing: it ought to perſwade you thereunto. But ye muſt vnderſtand that I haue not ordained it alonly for your houſholdes ſake: but to the intent ye ſhould bethinke ye of the thing ẏ I haue told you: namely that in as much as ye be ſholed out from the Infidels, you muſt be to mee a kingly prieſthood, ſo
Exo.19.5.6 as you muſt ſeeke nothing but to ſerue me in all ſoundneſſe and pureneſſe of conſcience. Haue yee once that regard, ye ſhall perceiue that the ſame day will yeelde ye moreouer ſome earthly commoditie, but yet is not that the thing which you muſt ſeeke thereby. To bee ſhort, our Lorde ſheweth vs here ẏ ſame thing which is auowed by Ieſus Chriſt: which is, that if wee ſeeke the
Matt.6.33. kingdome of heauen, all other thinges ſhall bee caſt vppon vs. For we beare our ſelues on hand, that if we ſeeke the heauenly life, we ſhall ſtarue for hunger, & it wil be a meane to turne vs out of all our cõmodities. To be ſhort, the deuil comes, & alwaies temptes vs to miſlike of Gods ſeruice, vnder this pretence & guile, that if wee giue our ſelues to the ſeruing of God, wee muſt ſtarue for hunger, ſo as we ſhall bee in rufull caſe, & all the world will forſake vs. But ſurely we cannot ſerue God, vnleſſe we be bereft of our own affections, & ſhake off the worldly cares that preſſe vs too ſore. Neuertheleſſe wee muſt repoſe our ſelues vppon the bleſſing that is promiſed vs: which is, that if we ſeeke the kingdome of God, we ſhalbe bleſſed euen in theſe tranſitorie things, ſo as our Lord will pitie vs, & giue vs all thinges which he knoweth to be requiſite for this preſent life: only let vs but waite vppon him for the things which we cãnot attaine to by our own power & policie. That is ẏ thing which is ſhewed vs in this place.

Now this ſaying ought to ſerue vs continually for a ſpurre, to make vs goe foreward with the things that God commandeth vs. For the chiefe thing that ſtaieth vs from ruling and directing our life in the obedience of God, is that being too much wedded to our ſelues, we thinke ẏ this thing or that thing will be more for our profite, and whatſoeuer come of it, we will needs lay for our own commoditie, & for the things that pertaine to the world. Wee ſee here ẏ men cannot finde in their heartes to follow God: but rather ſhrink away frõ him & drawe cleane backe from his law, bicauſe ẏ to their ſeeming, if they ſhould ſerue God they ſhould neuer thriue. But that is ſuch a ſhamefull thankleſneſſe, as inhaunceth their rebelliouſnes a hundredfold more. What is to be done then? Let vs marke well ẏ we can neuer ſerue God ẇ a free & cheerful heart, except we be fully reſolued ẏ he wil prouide for vs al our life long, & not forget vs as is ſaid in the perſon
Ioſua 1.5.6. He.4.8.11. of Ioſua. For in the Epiſtle to the Hebrewes, the Apoſtle applieth this doctrine to all the faithful, euen of purpoſe to withdraw them frõ ouergreat carefulnes: he ſaieth, *Thy God will not forſake thee, neither will he forget thee.* Now if we could once be throughly perſwaded that God watcheth ouer vs, and that he will prouide for al our neceſſities: it is certaine that we ſhould not bee ſo ouerplunged in our earthly affections, wee ſhould not bee turned away frõ the ſeruing of him, neither ſhold we be letted to minde the ſpirituall life: but wee ſhould paſſe through the world & vſe the creatures as though wee vſed them not, bicauſe wee would conſider that wee had yet further to goe. Thus ye ſee the effect that we haue to gather of this leſſon, is that where our Lorde ſheweth vs ẏ his commanding of the Saboth day to bee kept, hath a ſpirituall meaning: yet notwithſtanding men ſhal not faile to finde the ſame profitable to them, and that God will bleſſe them for it, if they looke rightforth to him, and be not too eagre in ſeeking their earthly commodities.

And by the way wee bee warned, that if any haue authoritie ouer others, they muſt not deſpiſe their neighbors though they be their inferiours. And this reacheth very farre. For wee muſt not interprete it onely of menſeruants and womenſeruants: but alſo of the poore, of ſuch as are not of authoritie or eſtimation, of all vnderlings & ſubiects, & of all ſuch as (to our ſeeming) are not worthy to be compared or matched with vs in reſpect of the worlde. For wee ſee what the pride of men is. Although there be no cauſe why we ſhould aduaunce our ſelues: yet doth euerie of vs couet ſome preheminence. Now then, if we be ſo high minded, that euerie of vs could finde in his heart to ouerpeere his neighbour, yea euẽ though there be no reaſon why: what will we do if we be aduanced in deede? Looke vpon ſuch as ſit in ſeat of Iuſtice: they beare thẽſelues in hand ẏ the whole world (as ye wold ſay) was made for none but thẽ, except God bridle thẽ by his holy ſpirit, & ſhewe them ẏ they ought to walke in all maner of mildnes, & not oppreſſe thoſe that are vnder their charge, but rather behaue thẽſelues as fathers, & account of their ſubiects as of their children, yea & that bicauſe God honoreth thẽ, therefore they ought to liue in the greater humilitie. As for thoſe that preache Gods worde, and haue yͤ charge to direct others: if they think they ought to bee exempted from the common ſort,& deſpiſe other men: woe worth them. For it were better for them to breake their neckes in going vp into the Pulpit, than not to ſtraine thẽſelues to be the firſt yͭ ſhould leade a godly conuerſation,& liue quietly with their neighbors, & ſhew thẽſelues to be ſheepe of the flocke of our Lord Ieſus Chriſt. But yet for all this, it is true yͭ rich men may well be ſerued by the poore. If a man haue menſeruantes & womenſeruantes for wages, he will not ſet his ſeruant aboue himſelfe at the table, neither will he lay him in his owne bed: but yet, (notwithſtanding all ſuperioritie,) Gen.9.6. we muſt come to this point,yͭ we be knit togither as one fleſh,& that all of vs are created after the image of God. If we conſidered that as many as come of Adams race are our owne fleſh & bone: ought it not to moue vs vnto kindnes,though we were as wild beaſtes one to another? When the Eſa.58.7. Prophet Eſay ment to reproue men for their vnnaturalneſſe: he ſaid,thou ſhalt not deſpiſe thine owne fleſh. There ought I to behold my ſelf as in a lookingglaſſe: namely in as many men & women as are in the world. Marke yͭ for one point.

But there is yet more: namely that the image of God is printed in all men. Therefore whenſoeuer I goe about to oppreſſe any man, I not only deſpiſe mine owne fleſh, but alſo hurte Gods image as much as in mee lyeth. So then let vs mark well,that by this text,God meant to ſhewe to all ſuch as are in authoritie & eſtimation, and to all ſuch as are richer than others,& to all ſuch as are in any degree of honour: that they ought not to abuſe thoſe yͭ are vnder their hand, nor to vex or tormẽt thẽ out of meaſure, but euermore to beare in minde how wee bee all deſcended of Adams race,& are all of one kinde,yea & that al of vs haue Gods image printed in vs. That is the thing which we haue to note, ſpecially now that our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt is come downe to vs,and Phil.2.7. hath abaſed himſelfe to condemne all pride, and to ſhew that there is none other meane to ſerue 1.Cor.12.13 God than wͭ lowlines, & moreouer hath made Gal.3.27.28 vs all members of his body, as well ſeruants[& vnderlings)as maiſters & ſuperiors,ſo as there is no diſtinction in yͤ behalf. When we come to our Lord Ieſus Chriſt, and haue an eye to him: wee muſt follow him. And ſeeing that all of vs both great and ſmall are members of his bodie, and hee is our head: it is good reaſon that euerie of vs ſhould faſhion himſelfe like to his neighbors. And beſides that, ſeeing that God hath ſhewed himſelfe a father more familiarly to vs, than he did to them that liued vnder the Lawe: let the ſame mooue vs to maintaine brotherly loue among vs. Thus ye ſee further what we had to remember vpon this place.

Howbeit there is yet one poynt more, concerning Gods ordaining of this monument to put the Iewes in rememberaunce, *That they had bene as wretched bondſlaues in the land of Egypt:* And wee knowe that they were naughtily and cruelly handled there. Now foraſmuch as they would faine haue bin borne withall in yͤ caſe, and God hearkened to them whẽ they ſighed and groned: Exod.2.23. therefore doeth he tell thẽ, that they alſo ought to doe the like to others. And this containeth a good leſſon: which is,yͭ if wee conſider our ſelues, we may continually be induced to diſcharge our dueties. On the contrarie part,if we be cruell towards our neighbors: it is bicauſe wee bee (as ye would ſay) beſotted in our own eaſe,& think not vpon our wretchednes & miſerie. He yͭ hath ſuffered hunger and thirſt, bicauſe he hath longed to bee ſuccoured at his neede, will thinke thus with himſelfe when he ſees a poore man: Go to, I my ſelfe haue bene in the like neceſſitie, and I would haue bin glad to haue bin ſuccored,& mee thought that other men ought to haue had pitie vpon me to releeue me. Now (ſay I) if a man bethinke him of ſuch things when he beholdeth a poore man in neede: will it not make his heart to relent? Yes verily: but what for that? When we be at our eaſe,we thinke no more vpon our humane wretchednes: but rather we imagin yͭ we be exempted,and yͭ we be no more of the cõmon ſort. And that cauſeth vs to forget our ſelues,ſo as we haue no more compaſſion of our neighbours, nor of any thing yͭ they indure. Therefore haue we ſo much the more neede to mark this matter: namely,yͭ bicauſe our Lord ſeeth vs blinded with ſelfloue,ſo as it is ynough for vs to welter in pleaſure,& wee neuer thinke vpon ſuch as are in diſtreſſe & neceſſitie: therfore he ſheweth vs[our ſtate,ſaying:]who be you? Were ye neuer in any aduerſitie? Yea & though ye happen to ouerſhoot your ſelues towards them: doe ye not bethinke your ſelues againe[and ſay,] Lo, theſe are creatures ſhaped after the image of God,& if we miſuſe thẽ, God will haue no pitie vpon vs? And ſo let vs practiſe this doctrine all our life lõg. Therfore whenſoeuer wee ſee any folke pinched with aduerſitie,let vs call our ſelues to remembrance in this wiſe: Haue not I bin in neede as well as they? And if I were in like taking againe, would I not be glad to bee ſuccoured? Seeing it is ſo: why ſhoulde wee exempt our ſelues from ſuch condition? We ought at leaſtwiſe to do to other folkes,as we our ſelues would be done vnto. Nature teacheth vs that, and wee neede not goe to ſchole to learne it. Then needeth there not any other euidence to condemne vs, thã our Lordes teaching of vs aforehand by experience. If wee haue that: ſurely we ſhalbe touched with kindnes & compaſſion to ſuccour ſuch as haue neede and want, and we ſhalbe moued wͭ pitie towards them that are in durance,ſo that if wee haue the meane and power to releeue them, euerie of vs will ſtraine himſelfe to doe it. That is the thing which wee haue to marke in this place, where it is ſaid, *Thou wart a ſtraunger in the land of Egypt,* & therefore thou muſt now haue a care to releeue them that are vnder thy hand: for at that time when thou thy ſelf waſt a ſeruant, thou wouldeſt faine haue bin borne withall.

But let vs come nowe to ſuch as were not of the Iewiſh nation, but onely traffickers among them. God will haue them alſo to keepe the Sabboth day,& yet were they not ſanctified of God, neither could this ſigne belong to thẽ, as I haue ſaid already. It ſeemeth then ẏ God vnhalloweth the Sacrament, when he maketh it ſo common to the Infidels, & to ſuch as were not circumciſed to beare the mark of the couenant, & to ſuch as had not the law & the promiſes. But we haue to marke, that Gods ſpeaking of ſtrãgers in this place, is as hauing alwayes an eye to the people whom he had choſen and adopted. For we know ẏ if things ſhould bee permitted which are contrarie to Gods ſeruice: although it might bee ſayde that they bee no people of our bodie: wee might bee induced to followe them by their euill example. If ſtrangers had bin ſuffered to trauell among the Iewes: what would haue come of it? The Iewes would haue dealt with thẽ, & ſo haue defiled themſelues, and there would haue bin no difference at that time, For when occaſions offer themſelues, wee bee eaſily intiſed to euill. And although there be no great occaſion: yet is our nature ſo much inclined to euill, that wee be allured to it by and by. And what will become of vs then, when all ſhall bee out of order? So then the libertie that had bin giuen to ſtraungers to labour & trauell among the people of Iſrael [on the Sabaoth day,] would haue led them to corruption. Euery man would haue diſpenced with himſelfe, and taken leaue to breake the Saboth day and not to keepe it. Therefore to cut off ſuch occaſion of euill, and to haue that day obſerued with the greater reuerẽce: like as Gods will was that the cattell ſhould reſt, ſo ordayned he the like alſo for ſtraungers. And nowe muſt this ſerue for vs too. For it ſheweth vs that vices may not bee ſuffered among people that make profeſſion of Chriſtianitie, ſo as they ſhould goe vnpuniſhed, no not euen in ſuch as are but trauellers or ſoiourners. As howe? Whereas blaſphemie is condemned among vs, if a man heare one blaſpheme in paſſing by, ſo as he ſcorneth God, and yet ſuffereth it and winketh at it: is not his bearing with ſuch blaſphemie, ſo as it hath full ſcope vnrepreſſed, as good as a defiling to make al other things ſtinke? Yes: and yet is it to bee ſeene. Surely ſo farre of is it that blaſphemie is puniſhed as it deſerueth, among ſuch as are not of our religion: that euen in thoſe which are mingled with vs and profeſſe Chriſtianitie as we doe, men doe as it were harden themſelues: and that is to our greater ſhame. But yet for all that, if any man, bee he Papiſt or bee he of any other ſect, (as nowe adayes the worlde is fraught full of deſpiſers of God:) I ſay if any man bee ſuffered to rayle againſt the doctrine of the Goſpell, and to blaſpheme Gods name: corruption will inſue of it, ſo as it ſhall not bee eaſie to redreſſe it. If Whooremaiſters and Ruffians may bee ſuffered to bring in their lewde trickes, and to ſowe more wickedneſſe among vs than wee had afore: If wanton perſons & vnthriftes may bee ſuffered to come and play their lewde pranckes here: muſt it not needes bee that wee ſhall play the vnthrifts with them, & bee vtterly corrupted? Yes: and therefore let vs marke well, that our Lord intendeth to keepe his people occupied in all cleanneſſe, ſo as the profeſſors of Chriſtianitie ſhall not onely abſtaine from euill themſelues, but alſo not ſuffer any, ſo farre as in them lyeth. For wee muſt vnderſtande that the earth is as it were vnhallowed, when Gods ſeruice is defyled, and his holye name diſhonoured. The lande wherein hee will haue vs to dwel, is as it were defyled and accurſed, or at leaſtwiſe it is not long of vs if it bee not ſo. But if GOD haue giuen his children prerogatiue, ſo as they bee able to ridde idolatrie out of the Countrie where they dwell: ſurely if they doe it not, they prouoke Gods wrath and vengeaunce againſt themſelues. Nowe then if wee ſhoulde graunt the abhominations of the Popedome, to bee mingled here with the pure ſeruice of GOD, ſo as the wilfull Papiſtes that liſt to liue here, ſhoulde haue Maſſe graunted them by priuiledge, and they ſhoulde bee ſuffered to haue ſome corner to worke their idolatrie and ſuperſtition in: it were a drawing of Gods wrath vppon vs, and a kindling of the fyre of his vengeaunce againſt vs. And why? Bicauſe that in as much as God hath put the ſworde of Iuſtice into the hand of ſuch as haue the rule of things in this life, and giuen them power to driue away idolatrie and all infections of Papiſtrie: ſurely if they maintayne them, it is as if they draue away GOD, that hee ſhoulde no more dwell among them nor raigne ouer them. So then let vs mark well, that it is not without cauſe that our Lord woulde that the ſtraungers which dwelt among his people, (notwithſtanding that they were of another faith and Religion,) ſhould bee compelled to keepe the ſeuenth daye. Not for their owne ſakes nor for their owne inſtruction, (for they were not capable therof:) but to the ende there ſhoulde bee no ſtumblingblocke to diſorder his people, or to deface his ſeruice, but that the land which he had giuen to his ſeruaunt Abraham to inherit, might bee wholly dedicated vnto him.

And hereby we bee warned, not onely to ſanctifie our ſelues by Gods worde: but alſo not to ſuffer anye occaſion of offence or diſorder to bee committed among vs, but to ſee that all ſuch things be cleane rid away. Moreouer ſeeing our Lorde will haue vs to be ſo zealous in the maintenance of his ſeruice, as to conſtraine euen thẽ that profeſſe not thẽſelues to be of his Church, to yeeld and frame themſelues vnto vs as long as they be in our companie: I pray you how ſhall wee excuſe our ſelues, if wee on our ſide bee not wholly giuen vnto him, nor ſet foorth our ſelues as mirrours to drawe wretched vnbeleeuers vnto vs, and to winne them to our GOD? For if wee rebuke them when they doe amiſſe, & in the meane while they perceiue the like or greater faultes in vs: ſhall they not haue occaſion to laugh all our ſayinges to ſcorne? Nowe then ſeeing it was forbidden to ſuffer ſtraungers to doe thinges contrarie to Gods ſeruice: let vs aſſure our ſelues that wee be dubble commanded to walke warely and in ſuch humilitie & ſoberneſſe, as ſtraungers may ſee by experience, ẏ our deſiring that God ſhould be honoured, is in good earneſt & without counterfetting, & that wee cannot abide that any man ſhould woorke reproche to his Maieſtie and glorie. That is the thing which we haue to marke vppon this place, if wee minde to obſerue the thing nowe adayes which was commaunded the Iewes, accordingly alſo as it belongeth to vs in trueth and ſubſtance. For like as our Lord in olde time deliuered that people out of Egypt: ſo hath he nowe deliuered vs from the gulfe of hell, and rid vs frõ Col.1.13. Heb.2.14. euerlaſting death, and from the bottomleſſe pit of hell wherein wee were plundged, of purpoſe to take vs vp into his heauenly kingdome, purchaſed for vs by the bloud of his deare beloued ſonne our Lord Ieſus Chriſt.

Nowe let vs kneele down in yͤ preſence of our good God, with acknowledgment of our ſinnes, praying him to make vs feele them better than wee haue done; to the ende that wee indeuouring to refourme our ſelues more and more according to his righteouſneſſe, may fight dayly againſt the luſtes of our fleſh, and ſhunne al that is againſt the pure ſeruice of our God; holding out in the ſame incounter till he haue fully ridde vs of it, and faſhioned vs againe after his owne image, according whereunto we were created at the firſt. That it may pleaſe him to graunt this grace, not onely to vs but alſo to all people and nations of the earth, &c.

On Wedneſday the xxvj. of Iune. 1555.

The xxxvj. Sermon, which is the ſeuenth vpon the fifth Chapter.

16 Honor thy father and thy mother, as the Lord thy God hath commaunded thee, that thy dayes may be prolonged, and that it may goe well with thee in the land which the Lord thy God giueth thee.

Nowe wee bee come to the ſecond table of the Lawe, where GOD ſheweth vs howe wee ought to liue one with another. For as hath bene touched heretofore, there are two principall thinges in our life: firſt that wee ſerue God purely, and afterward that wee liue honeſtly and vprightly with other men, yeelding euerie man his due. Nowe like as the honour of God excelleth all thinges that concerne man: ſo was it meete that the rule thereof ſhould bee ſet downe in firſt and chiefe place, that wee might honour him as wee ought to doe: which thing is diſpatched in the firſt table. Here therefore GOD beginneth to tell vs howe to direct Pſal.16. Deut.30.19 20. our life, if wee intend to ſerue him as in reſpect of men. Alſo I haue ſhewed you that God requireth not any honour at our handes for that he hath neede of it or is euer the better for it: but hee doeth it for our benefite and welfare. Nowe then his intent is to trie our obedience, and the loue that wee beare him, by commaunding vs to behaue our ſelues vprightly and honeſtly towardes our neighbours, and to liue togither in ſuch fellowſhip and concord, as none of vs bee giuen to himſelfe, but all of vs communicate togither, and euerie man ſtraine and imploye himſelfe to doe good, according to ſuch power and abilitie as they haue. That (ſay I) is the proofe to knowe if wee worſhippe him with our heartes. For wee may well make many faire countenances and Ceremonies: but God will Matt.23.23 not take them for payment. And euen that is the cauſe why our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt ſaieth, that the chiefe pointes of the Law are Iuſtice, Iudgement, vprightneſſe, and faith, that is to ſay faithfulneſſe or truſtineſſe, for ſo doeth the woorde *Faith* betoken there. Then if wee liue vprightly among men, ſo as wee bee neither guilefull nor malicious, but deſirous to ſerue euerie mannes turne, maintaining the good and reſiſting the euill as neere as wee can: it is the chiefe point of the Lawe. Not that the ſeruice of God ought to bee forgotten in the meane while, or that it is of leſſe importaunce: but bicauſe it is vnpoſſible for men to diſcharge their duetie towardes their neighbours, if they bee not led by the feare of God.

Now let vs treate of the forerehearſed commaundement, which is *of the honouring of our father and mother.* Although mention bee made here of father and mother by name: no doubt but he meant to deliuer a generall doctrine for the honouring of all Superiours. For proofe whereof, wee knowe that the Lawe is a perfect Pſal.19.8. rule wherein nothing is wanting. But if there were nothing included concerning other ſuperiours, as Princes, Magiſtrates, and ſuch as haue the ſworde of Iuſtice, and Maiſters: there were ſome want. Therefore it is to bee concluded, that here GOD hath commaunded the honoring and obeying of all ſuch as are in degree of ſuperioritie. Moreouer ſeeing it is ſo that all preheminence commeth of GOD, and Rom.13.14 that it is an order ſet by him, without the which the worlde coulde not continue: what a thing were it that God ſhoulde haue made none account of it, in giuing vs the ſure fourme of good and holy life? It is not to bee thought ſtraunge, that he ſhoulde comprehend all vnder one particular: for I haue tolde you alreadie, that that maner of dealing is to bee found in the Law, and wee ſhal ſee more of it againe hereafter. Neither was that doone bicauſe GOD coulde not haue ſpoken otherwiſe: but bicauſe it was beſt for our commoditie and inſtruction. For we know that although men couet to ſeeme ſuttle and ſharpe-witted: yet they ceaſe not to ſhroud themſelues vnder the couert of ignorance, when they ſee that Gods lawe preſſeth them: for then wee woulde faine haue ſome excuſe to exempt vs from the ſubiection thereof. Now if Gods Lawe Pſal.19.8. were not meete to teach the rude & vnlearned: many would alledge that they be no clarkes, and that they neuer went to ſchoole, and ſo they woulde beare themſelues in hande, that Gods Lawe bounde them not. But in aſmuch as we ſee that God hath ſtooped to our rudeneſſe, and ſpoken groſly according to our vnderſtanding: it bereaueth vs of all excuſe, and cutteth off all occaſion of quarelling, ſo as euery of vs muſt be faine to ſubmit our ſelues, and to acknowledge that there is none other impediment, but that wee be ſtubborne againſt God, and loth to beare his yoke. Thus ye ſee that Gods comprehending of all vnder one particular, was to traine vs on as little children, which are not of full capacitie to bee taught throughly and perfectly. Neuertheleſſe, that is the true and natural ſenſe of the text, as we ſhall ſee hereafter. For like as God gaue the tenne Sentences, as hee termeth them: ſo added he an expoſition of them, to the ende that nothing ſhoulde bee darke, nor men call the thinges in queſtion and diſputation which they had hearde. Wee ſee then that God hath opened himſelfe more fullie, and ſhewed howe his will is, that not onely fathers and mothers, but alſo all ſuperiours without exception ſhoulde be obeyed.

Beſides this, let vs marke that God ſpeaketh here of the honouring of fathers and mothers, of purpoſe to drawe vs by meanes moſt conuenient and agreeable to our nature. Wee knowe there is ſuch pride in men, as they bee loth to ſtoope one to another, and euerie man thinkes hee ought to bee a maſter. And ſurely it is harde for men to yeelde and come downe ſo lowe, as ſimply to obey thoſe that are in any authoritie ouer them: vntill GOD haue reclaymed them. GOD therefore perceiuing ſubiection to bee a thing ſo ſore againſt our nature: hath ſet vs downe the termes of *Father and Mother*, to drawe vs to it by a more louing manner. Nowe it is an owgly and vnnaturall thing, that the childe ſhoulde not know thoſe by whom he came into the world, and by whom he was nouriſhed and brought vp. Therefore if the childe diſdaine his father or his mother: he is a monſter, & euerie man wil abhorre him. And why? For without Gods ſpeaking, without hauing any holye ſcripture, without much preaching vnto vs, nature it ſelfe ſheweth vs, that the duetie which the childe oweth to his father and mother, is ſuch a one as cannot bee broken off. Wee ſee then that the intent of our God is to winne vs to himſelfe by ſetting downe the termes of father and mother, to the end we ſhould not be ſtubborn, but come meekly to receiue the ſubiection that he layeth vpon Rom.13.1. vs. And becauſe all the authoritie which men haue proceedeth from him, he ſpeaketh according to the Lawe of ciuill order: meaning that we ſhoulde be diligent in doing him his due honour, and euery of vs on his owne behalfe obey thoſe that haue ſuperioritie ouer vs, and euerie Eph.6.1.5. Col.3.20. 22. 1.Pet.2.13. 18. man haue an eye to his owne ſtate and calling, ſo as the children honour their fathers and mothers, the people the Magiſtrates, and ſeruants likewiſe their maſters: and to be ſhort, that there be a good harmonie of concorde among vs, according to the order that our Lorde hath ſet, which ought to be inuiolable.

Furthermore whereas here is mention made of honour: it is not ment that children ſhoulde but onely ſpeake fayre to their father and mother, or put off their Cappes or bow their knees to them: for God ſtaieth not vpon ſuch things: but *Honouring* importeth much more, that is to wit, that the children ſhould follow their fathers and mothers counſell, that they ſhoulde ſuffer themſelues to bee ruled by them, that they ſhoulde ſtraine themſelues to doe their duetie to them, and to bee ſhort, that they ſhoulde knowe that they be not at their owne libertie, ſo long as they haue father and mother. That is in effect the thing that God ment by the worde, Honour. And that it is ſo, we cannot haue a better or faithfuller interpreter of this law, than the holy Ghoſt which ſpake by the mouth of Moſes, and of all the Prophets, and alſo of S. Paul. For Deut.21.18. 20. we ſhall ſee hereafter, that God expoundeth the effect of this ſentence, that is to witte, that it is not ynough for children to ſhewe ſome reuerence with the heade or with the knee to their parentes: but that they muſt bee ſubiect to them, and imploy themſelues in their ſeruice to the vttermoſt of their power. And Saint Eph 6.1. Col.3.20. Paules auoching thereof is not to exhort vs to obſerue ſome ceremonie: but his meaning is that children ſhoulde bee ſubiecte to their Fathers and mothers. He ſetteth downe expreſly the worde *Subiection.* So then we ſee now what this importeth, and what the natural meaning of this place is.

Nowe let vs returne to the thing that I touched briefely before, that wee may profite by it, by gathering ſome profitable leſſon of it. Firſt and formoſt let children vnderſtande, that ſeeing GOD hath giuen them fathers and mothers, it is good reaſon that they ſhoulde obey them, or elſe they ſhewe themſelues to bee deſpiſers of God: and the ſtubborneneſſe which they vſe to their ſuperiors, concerneth not men nor mortall creatures, but is all one as if Gods maieſtie and glorie were troden vnder foote. It Matt.23.9. is ſaide that (to ſpeake properly) wee haue but one father, which is in heauen: and that is ment, not onely in reſpect of our ſoules, but alſo in reſpect of our bodies. Nowe then this honor of bearing the name of *Father*, belongeth peculiarly to GOD alone, and cannot agree to men, furtherforth than it pleaſeth him to make them partakers thereof. Seing then that the title of father is as a marke which God hath ſet vpon men: wee ſee that when children make no account of their fathers and mothers, they doe wrong vnto God. As much is to bee ſaide of all ſuch as diſobey their princes & magiſtrates: and likewiſe of ſeruants that would haue all degrees confounded, and raigne without order. And for the ſame cauſe alſo did the Heathen mẽ apply this worde *Godlineſſe* to that honour that wee giue to fathers and mothers, and to all ſuch as are in authoritie ouer vs. Godlineſſe (to ſpeak properly) is the reuerence that wee owe vnto God: and yet the heathen, (notwithſtanding that they were blinde wretches) knew that God will bee ſerued, not onely in his owne maieſtie, but alſo by our obeying of ſuch folke as haue authoritie ouer vs: To be ſhort his will is to trie our obedientneſſe in that behalfe. And therefore in aſmuch as fathers and mothers, magiſtrates and all ſuch as haue ſuperioritie, are Gods Lieutenants and repreſent his perſon: ſurely if a man deſpiſe them and make light of them, it is all one as if he bewrayed that hee woulde not obey God. Hee may well proteſt the contrarie: but yet is it ſo in deede for all that. If the wretched infidels knew this, & that God left thẽ ſuch an affection: what excuſe will there be for vs, if wee knowe it not yet better? Sith we heare that all fatherhoode proceedeth of God, (as Saint Eph. 3.15. Paul auoweth,) and that we be directed thither by the vnion of Ieſus Chriſt: haue wee not a moſt expreſſe declaration of it? Muſt the heathen men bee faine to bee our teachers ſtill? But if thoſe which call themſelues Chriſtians, doe playe the blinde beetles in this behalfe, or ſtoppe their eares leaſt they might vnderſtande Rom.13.2. the thing that GOD hath tolde them by ſillie ignorant ſoules: woe worth them, for their condemnation wil be the more horrible. Wherfore let vs well marke this: that wee cannot indeede liue heere belowe on the earth together, except this order that God hath eſtabliſhed be holily and religiouſly kept, that is to ſay: Except thoſe that bee in authoritie bee honoured, eſteemed, and obeyed: verily without that, there wilbe nothing but horrible confuſion. They then that cannot finde in their hearts to be ſubiect to magiſtrates, they that diſobey their fathers and mothers, they that will beare no yoke of maſters and miſtreſſes, doe well ſhewe that it is not long of themſelues that the whole order of nature is not peruerted, and heauen and earth confounded together as they ſaye. For that is the onelie meane whereby it is Gods will to preſerue mankind. And of a trueth we ſee that (as he himſelfe ſaith) when he ſendeth magiſtrates and princes, 1.Pet.2.14. he ſtriketh a feare of them, not onely into men, Dan.2.38. but alſo into beaſtes. After that maner is it ſpoken of in Daniel.

And therevppon wee may gather, that ſuch as riſe againſt the ciuill magiſtrate ordeined of god, and labour to ſet thinges in a broile and to bring all thinges to confuſion, are worſe than brute beaſts and worthie to be ſent thither to ſchoole. For our Lorde, to ſhame men which are reaſonable creatures, ſaieth that the feare of princes and magiſtrates ought to extende euen to brute beaſtes. Is it not apparant then, that the diuell poſſeſſeth all ſuch as cannot finde in their hearts to ſubmit themſelues meekely to the ſubiection which God hath ordeyned, and without the which all muſt needes periſh and goe to hauocke in this worlde, as I haue declared afore? Yes: and therefore if wee finde our ſelues ouerhighminded, ſo as it greeueth vs to be ſubiect: let vs ſtriue againſt pride, and let Gods authoritie ſuffice to bridle vs. For though wee were worſe than wild: yet ought this to bee as a fetter vnto vs, that wee heare how God telleth vs he is not honoured at our hande, except we honor him in the perſons of thoſe whome hee hath ſet in his place, and in whom hee hath printed his image. To be ſhort, wee ſee that charitie beginneth at the humbling and meekening of our ſelues, ſo as none of vs aduance himſelfe through pride and preſumptiõ, nor make too great account of him ſelfe, but be willing to ſtoope and to yeeld to what ſoeuer pleaſeth God. And for the ſame cauſe doeth Saint Paul bring vs back to charitie, when he ſetteth forth the commaundement of obeying Rom.13.8. the Magiſtrate. For hee ſheweth vs that if wee haue not the meekeneſſe in vs to bow down our neckes, when our Lorde layeth the yoke vpon vs: we haue no loue towards our neighbors. And if we couet diſorder and turmoile, ſo as the ſuperiors ſhould no more be reuerenced: al muſt needes goe to hauocke and ſpoile. It were much better for euerie man to liue alone by himſelfe and without companie: than to ſee ſuch confuſion as woulde growe of it, if we ſhould not keepe the ciuill order which GOD hath ſet. Wherefore let vs beare well in minde, that if we will liue among neighbours, euerie of vs muſt pull downe this loftineſſe and ouerweening, and not harbrough it in our heartes, but learne to be lowly and meeke, aſſuring our ſelues that it is our duetie to ſubmit our ſelues euen to the meaneſt, Rom.12.16. as S. Paul ſaith. Eph.4.2.& And that we may the better doe it, let vs conſider what may enhable vs 5.21. thereto. For behold, the thing that makes vs ouerſhoote our ſelues, is that euery man woulde haue greater preheminence than God alloweth him: for our blindneſſe maketh vs to forget our ſelues. And beſides this we knowe not our owne wretchedneſſe and ſinfulneſſe. By reaſon whereof euery of vs thinkes himſelfe a marueilous fellowe, wheras indeede he is nothing at all. Again, wee bee ſo inclined to make no reckening of our neighbours, that wee deſpiſe euen the vertues which God hath put into them. Then is it ſpitefulnes and churliſhnes that prouoke vs to pride, by meanes whereof euerie man takes more vppon him than becommeth him. And that is the cauſe why wee cannot ſubmit our ſelues as wee ought to do. But inſteed of doing ſo, let vs learne to do homage to our God, foraſmuch as we ſee he hath commanded vs to obey our ſuperiors, & againe we knowe that whatſoeuer they bee, it is he that hath giuen vs them. If a child haue a father or a mother, he muſt not ſay, Tuſh, my father is not altogether ſuch a one as hee ought to be, I finde defaultes in him. But yet is hee thy father, and that ought to content thee: at leaſt wiſe if thou minde not to bring all to naught, and vtterly to deface the order of nature. Either the thing that God hath ordained muſt be diſanulled

Rom.13.1.
Job 12.18.
1.Tim.2.2.
1.Pet.2.14.

and adnihilated: or elſe thou muſt honour thy father whatſoeuer he be. And why? Becauſe that whatſoeuer father thou haſt, hee is of his giuing which hath commaunded thee to honor thy father and thy mother. As much is to bee ſaide of Maſters, Princes, and all ſuperiors. For they come not by haphazard: but they bee of Gods ſending, as S. Paul auoweth, and as all the ſcripture witneſſeth. Yea and we bee led expreſly euen by experience, to knowe Gods prouidence and fatherly care towardes vs, in ordeyning of Magiſtrates. Therefore let vs learne to behold Gods goodneſſe, in all ſuch as haue ſuperioritie ouer vs, to the ende to ſubmit our ſelues obediently vnto them. Thus yee ſee what wee haue to remember.

Ephe.6.1.

Now ſeeing that ſo it is that God hath in one worde and in a briefe ſumme giuen vs heere the rule of obedience to all ſuperiors: let vs marke that in ſo doing he reſigneth not his owne right ne forgoeth that which belongeth to himſelfe. Therefore God muſt holde ſtill the higheſt degree. And indeede ſeeing that all fatherhoode proceedeth of him, (according to S.Pauls text afore alledged): let vs marke that when we obey father or mother, prince or magiſtrate, maſter or miſtreſſe: it is done vnto them as officers of God. God then muſt be honoured aboue al, and that in ſuch ſort, as the honour which we yeelde vnto mortall men, hinder not the doing of the ſeruice and honour which wee owe vnto him, but that euery of vs indeuer to diſcharge our dueties chiefly towards him. It were a goodly ſight to ſee a man obey an vnderofficer, & therewithall to ſpitte in the face of the iudge or of the Prince. What a dealing were that? But euen in like caſe is it with vs, when we diſpoſſeſſe God of his preheminence, and obey men in ſuch ſort, as in the meane while wee make no reckening of him that is aboue all. For it is againſt nature, that the authoritie which men haue, ſhould in any wiſe deface the glorie of God. Therefore let vs marke well, that whereas we be commaunded to obey our ſuperiors: this exception is implyed, that the ſame be no derogation or impeachmēt to the right that belongeth to God, which hath beene treated of alreadie in the firſte table. For wee knowe that the ſeruice wherewith God is honored, ought to be preferred before all things. And for yͤ ſame cauſe S.Paul minding to giue vs an expoſition of this text, addeth expreſly that children muſt obey their fathers and mothers, howbeit in the Lorde. And I told you alſo, that the foundation whereon we ought to build, that wee may bee obedient lowly and ſubiect to our ſuperiors: is to know that God is repreſēted in their perſons. Now take me away the foundation, and muſt not all the whole building fall and go down to the ground? But all they yͭ regard not god, do take away the fundation of this doctrine: & ſo their proceeding is too faulty and froward.

Eph.6.4.
1.Tim.2.2.
Ephe.6.9.
Coloſ.4.1.

Howbeit, this thing muſt as well warne them that are in autoritie, as them that are vnder ſubiection. Then if men and women haue children: they muſt vnderſtand that there is no ſubiection due vnto them, except they themſelues be ouerruled by God. Now then what is to be done? Let the father traine vp his childe diligently in the feare of God, and begin himſelf to ſhew him the way. Let the mother do the like, yͭ God may haue his honor both of great & ſmal, old and yong. Let magiſtrats indeuer to haue God ſerued and honored, & (as much as in them lieth) maintaine all things that may make thereto: and ſeeing he hath done them yͤ honor to make them worthie to ſit in the ſeat that is dedicated to his maieſtie, & to beare the ſword yͭ is conſecrated vnto him: let them ſhewe themſelues to bee his officers in deed. Seing then that he hath aduanced them to ſuch dignitie, whereof they were not worthy: let them at the leaſt ſhew that they beare autoritie in his name, & let them refer the ſame vnto him. After this manner ought princes to diſcharge their dueties. The like ought euery man to do in his owne houſe and family. Let thoſe to whom God hath granted the prerogatiue to haue menſeruants & womenſeruants, beare well in minde yͭ they themſelues haue a Maſter aboue al, & that he muſt be ſo obeyed, as his whole right be reſerued to him vnminiſhed. Loe what inſtruction all Superiors (of what degree ſoeuer they be) ought to take of this that they are cōmāded to obey God. Furthermore when fathers & mothers and magiſtrats wil needs auance themſelues againſt God with ſuch tyranny, as to take vpon thē that which belongeth only to god, & to turne vs away from the obeying of him: it is an exceptiō which I haue ſet down before, for the which they ought not to be obeyed. God then muſt go foremoſt, & afterward the creatures muſt followe, euery one in his order of aray. And in very deed, oftētimes the cauſe why meekenes & humility be ſo il kept in the world, that childrē ſet themſelues againſt their fathers and mothers, and become like mad beaſts: that ſubiects are ful of ſpitefulnes and rebellion: that ſeruants are vntruſty & ſtubborne: and that none of all theſe can by any meanes be reclaimed: is the iuſt puniſhment of God vpon ſuperiors, for abuſing of the dignitie which God hath giuen them. For oftentimes wee ſee that Princes reigne not to magnifie Gods name, and to cauſe him to be honored as he deſerueth: but cleane contrariwiſe they would faine make thēſelues ydols, and as it were plucke God out of his ſeate to ſit in it themſelues. This is apparant: at leaſtwiſe a man may ſee that Princes reigne looſely: & therfore God muſt needs be reuēged of them. What zeale or minde haue fathers and mothers to bring vp their childrē in the feare of God? They paſſe not for that, ſo they may aduance them to the worldwarde. Nay rather it ſhould ſeeme that their intent is to traine them vp in all vngodlyneſſe, and in the contempt of God and his worde. If the fathers bee woolues, they would haue their children wooluiſh: if they be olde Foxes, they would haue them to be foxiſh: & if they be ſerpentes, they would haue their linage and ofſpring like themſelues. This is to be ſeene. Therefore it is good reaſon that GOD ſhould be reuenged of the creatures, when they forget themſelues after that ſort, ſpecially when men conſider not howe God hath reached them his hande to aduaunce them, and to make them partakers of his honour, one vnder another. This is alwayes to bee borne in rememberance. But is it not a ſhamefull vnthankfulneſſe, when a man that is in authority of iuſtice, conſidereth not with himſelfe: what am I? Beholde, I am a wretched worme of the earth, and yet GOD vouchſafeth me to beare his name as from him ſelfe, and withal to put the authoritie in practiſe which hee hath giuen me? Is not a man too vnthankfull when hee acknowledgeth not that? Againe, when fathers conſider not: Beholde, God is the father of all mankinde, and yet hath hee giuen mee the ſame honorable title: Therefore it is good reaſon that I ſhoulde looke to yeelde him an account of it: When maſters and miſtreſſes acknowledge not: We be no better than other folkes, and yet hath God vouchſafed to inhonour vs, not onely by creating vs after his owne image, but alſo by giuing vs this moreouer, that others are ſubiect vnto vs: if men (ſay I) acknowledge not this: is it not to be ſaid that they be become ſtarke beaſtes?

Then let vs marke well, that diuers times the ground of rebellion & diſobedience is this, that they which are in authoritie knowe not their owne duetie, namely that aboue al thinges they ſhould finde the meanes to haue God honored, ſerued, and obeyed. True it is that children, ſubiects and ſeruants ſhall not bee excuſed by that: 1.Pet.2.18. but yet we ſee it is the iuſt vengeance of God, & therefore ſo much the more ought we to be prouoked to followe that which is told vs, as well in this text as in all the holie Scripture, where this commandement is declared vnto vs. Then to be ſhort, let vs be wel aduiſed, that we diſchardge our dueties euerie of vs in his owne calling and ſtate. Let thoſe to whome God hath done the honor to giue them the mace of Iuſtice, & whom he hath ſet in his ſeate, be wel aduiſed that they reigne in his name, that they cauſe all men to ſerue and honour him, that they be as mirrours to giue good example to their people, and ý they holde their ſubiects in ſuch good awe and order, as Gods name bee bleſſed, and the mouthes of all euill ſpeakers be ſtopped. Marke that for one point.

Againe let fathers and mothers haue a care to bring vp their children wel, and to make them knowe God for their onely father. And as touching their menſeruantes and womenſeruants, let them ſo vſe their ſeruice, as God haue always the preheminence. Let them not followe the common trade: for men doe commonly paſſe for nothing elſe, ſo as they may bee ſerued to their owne profite and contentation. As for God, he is forgotten all the while. But let maſters vnderſtande, that God muſt reigne both ouer themſelues and ouer thoſe that are vnder them. Thus much concerning thoſe that are in authoritie.

Now for our part, let vs beare wel in minde, ý when we haue Magiſtrates, if wee rebell againſt them, or riſe againſt the State, indeuouring to Rom.13.2. ouerthrowe the order that God hath ſet: wee reſiſt not mortall creatures, but it is God whom we aſſaile. And what can we winne by making warre againſt him? Can we ouermaſter him? No: but he will reuenge himſelfe without handieſtrokes, ſo as men ſhalbe vtterly abaſhed, to ſee howe he maintaineth the thing that hee had ſpoken with his mouth, yea euen by wonderfull power. Thus much concerning the firſt point.

Againe let children beware that they bee not highminded, nor wildheaded, nor wilfull, but that they ſubmit themſelues quietly to their fathers and mothers, aſſuring themſelues that they fight againſt God, when they cannot finde in their heartes to ſtoope to the yoke which our Lorde putteth vppon them. And let ſeruauntes Eph.6.5.6. knowe that if they refuſe the ſubiection of the men whom they ſerue, God is offended at it, and in the end they muſt bee blamed for refuſing to be gouerned by his hand.

But let vs marke herewithall, that God muſte be honoured firſt, and the ſubiectes muſt ſo obey their Princes and Magiſtrates, as the ſame may be no derogation to the right that God reſerueth to himſelfe, as he is worthie. And if Princes will needs inforce vs to doe euill, and ouerthrowe the pure doctrine of God, (as we ſee too commonly in the worlde, inſomuch that a number are ſo madde as they woulde faine wreſt religion after their owne fancie, to make as it were an image of wax of it, that they might writh it which way they liſted, as all men may ſee): God will not like of it that they ſhoulde bee obeyed in that behalfe. For who bee they? When they once reuolt and climbe aboue him that hath all Eſa.45.23. ſoueraine Dominion: forthwith they forgoe all Phil.2.10. their authoritie. The verie diuels muſt bow their knees before God and our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt: and beholde, mortall men vſurpe ſuch ſuperioritie, as the honour of God is defaced and all religion thruſt downe. So then let vs learne to obey both princes and fathers and mothers in ſuch wiſe, as God may holde ſtill his right vnimpayred, and wee not be letted to yeelde him his due honour. Neuertheleſſe we muſt obey them quietly, ſo farre forth as wee may without hurt of conſcience. And although that ſuch as haue authoritie ouer vs diſcharge not their duetie: yet muſt not children misbehaue themſelues when their parents are too ſharp and rigorous to them. True it is that the parentes are forbidden to vſe any crueltie towards their children, & ſpecialy to Eph.6.4. Col.3.21. diſcorage them: but yet for all that though the parents bee not ſo well aduiſed as to gouerne their children with mildeneſſe: the children muſt beare it patiently. Finally wee muſt ſuffer at the handes of all ſuch as haue authoritie ouer vs. And ſo yee ſee what God ment to ſet out in this commaundement.

Nowe hee addeth a promiſe. *That thy dayes* (ſaith hee) *may bee prolonged, and that thou maiſt proſper in the Lande which the Lorde thy God giueth thee.* But there is yet one thing more: which is, that foraſmuch as we be loth to yelde our ſelues to humilitie: God giueth vs here a ſtroke with the ſpurre, ſaying: *thy God commaundeth thee.* And it ſerueth to confirme the doctrine that I haue touched alredie: that is to wit, that it is but a fond & trifling ſhift, to diſpute whether ſuch as are in ſtate of honour aboue vs, doe deſerue to haue that roome: Or whether they do diſcharge their dutie, as well as they are aduanced therto. All ſuch geere muſt bee laide aſide. And why? For wee muſt holde vs contented with Gods ordinance, and reſt altogether vppon his good pleaſure. And that is yͤ cauſe why Moſes addeth here expreſly, *according as the Euerlaſting thy God hath commaunded thee.* As if he ſhoulde ſay, true it is that men doe alwayes kicke againſt it as much as they can. If one woulde bring them vnder awe, they will not abide it by their good will: Againe they haue ſuch loftineſſe in them, as prouoketh them continually to bee deſirous to exalt themſelues too much. By meanes whereof there will neuer be any willing ſubiection, vntill God haue wrought it. But you be alwayes rebellious againſt God (ſaith hee) when yee once enter into ſuch debatings as this: Shoulde ſuch a one raigne ouer mee, and I obey him, ſeeing hee is no better than I? If yee beare ſuch ſpite towardes men: God himſelfe ſteppeth forth, and deſireth to knowe whether yee will ſerue him or no: And if yee will not receiue his leeuetenantes when hee ſendeth them vnto you: it is a certaine ſigne that yee refuſe his yoke likewiſe, by meanes whereof his iuſtice is impeached, and hee feeleth himſelfe to bee iniuried by you.

Sith it is ſo then, knowe yee (ſaieth Moſes) that the children which are diſobedient to their fathers and mothers, may well alledge this and that: and the folke that rebell againſt their ſuperiors, may well make excuſes: but none of thoſe thinges ſhall ſtande them in any ſteede. The reaſon is, that God, who hath ordeined ſuperioritie in the worlde, will alſo haue it maintained: hee hath ſpoken the word, and it cannot be called backe. al.3 9.10. When God hath once giuen his definitiue ſentence, it is not for vs to call the matter in queſtion any more: but we muſt ſtand to it and holde our mouthes ſhut. Yet notwithſtanding, our Lorde vſeth ſtill his goodneſſe in this commaundement: and he doeth it to winne vs and to drawe vs the better to him, that wee might the willinglyer obey our ſuperiors, ſeeing he addeth a promiſe. For (as ſaieth S. Paul) it is the firſt commaundement of the lawe, that hath any ſpeciall promiſe. ph.6.2. In deede wee haue ſeene heretofore, how God ſheweth mercie in a thouſand generations, to ſuch as loue him. And that was added to the commaundement wherein God ſhewed vs, that he woulde haue his ſeruice maintained in al pureneſſe, without ſwaruing aſide to idolatrie or ſuperſtition. But that promiſe extended to the whole Lawe, as wee ſawe there: whereas this is annexed onely to the commandement of obeying our fathers and mothers. For as much then as wee ſee it is an acceptable ſacrifice to God: let ſuch as are in ſubiection holde themſelues to it, and not play the rebels and madde bedlems, but bowe downe their neckes and ſubmit themſelues, ſo as it may appeare in deede that they bee willing to obey GOD, becauſe they refuſe not to obey the mortall men whom he hath ſent, and appointed in his name.

Thus yee ſee to what purpoſe this promiſe was giuen: namely, that God perceiuing vs to bee dull vppon the ſpurre, ment to ſoften our hearts, and to winne vs to him by mieldneſſe and gentleneſſe, to the intent it ſhould not grieue vs nor be yrkeſome to vs to obey our ſuperiors. But foraſmuch as all cannot bee diſpatched at this preſent: Let vs beare in minde at a worde, that to ſerue God wel, we muſt lay down al pride and preſumptuouſnes. Although we haue naturally in vs the curſed roote of deſirouſnes to climbe, ſo as ambition reigneth both in great and ſmal: yet muſt the ſame bee laide downe, if we meane to prepare our ſelues to Gods ſeruice. And why? For lowlineſſe is the thing whereat the true obedience muſt beginne. And as concerning men, let vs marke well that we ſhal neuer bee able to liue in peace and concorde, except that thoſe whom God hath ſet in place of authoritie and preheminence, bee obeyed and receiued for his ſake, ſo as men ſubmit themſelues to them. For elſe all muſt needes goe to wrecke, and wee ſhalbee worſe than the wilde beaſtes that are abroade in the woods. Therefore al they yͤ are diſobedient to lawful ſuperioritie, are as enemies to God and nature, and to all mankind: yea they be as monſters whom al men ought to abhorre.

But when wee haue ſhewed our obedientnes by being ſubiect to thoſe whom God hath ſet ouer vs: let vs learne alſo, that it is good reaſon wee ſhoulde be humbled vnder him, and that in ſuch wiſe, as hee bee ſerued by vs: not in Iohn 4.24. way of ceremonie, but in trueth and pureneſſe 1.Tim.1.5. of minde, ſo as wee doe him his due homage, and make account of his honor aboue al things. Yea and all the ciuill orders of the worlde muſt leade vs therevnto: namely that God may haue his throne exalted aboue the heauens. And whereas children obey their fathers and mothers, and ſubiectes their Magiſtrates, and the like order is to bee ſeene in euerie houſe according to Gods ordinance, who hath appointed that there ſhoulde be ſome difference of degrees euerie where: Let the ſame drawe vs vp higher, to conſider that God who holdeth the chiefe ſoueraintie of the worlde, ought to ouerrule all creatures, and to be Maſter of our whole life in effect. And ſo wee ſee that all the obedience which is yeelded to mortall creatures muſt tend to the pure worſhipping of God. Whereby we perceiue the more plainly howe much we ought to abhorre the curſed Popedome. For it is an ouerſtatelineſſe crept vp in the worlde, to none other end than to driue God out of his ſeate, & to bereaue him of the honor yͤ belongeth to him. For the Pope will graunt well ynough that hee ought to bee ſubiect to his Superiors: But what thoe? Keepeth hee any order either of God or of nature? No: but cōtrariwiſe his meaning is to deſpiſe al that is cōteined in the holy Scripture, ouerthrowing all the order and policie that God hath commaunded vs. Hee termeth himſelfe Chriſts Vicar: and yet notwithſtanding the worlde ſeeth, that hee hath thruſt Ieſus Chriſt out of his ſeate, ſo as hee is no more the heade of his Church. Therefore let vs learne to abhorre the thing, which the diuell hath ſo ſet vp on the contrarie part, quite and cleane againſt that which God hath ordeined in the worlde. And therewithall though wee ſee that ſometimes thinges goe not as they ought to do, but that ſuperiors abuſe their power: let vs aſſure our ſelues they cannot ouerthrowe Gods ordinance as in reſpect of kingdomes and Empyres, and as in reſpect of the grounde of Iuſtice: but that all thoſe things muſt be mainteined ſtill. For they haue their foundation of God: and it is not with them as with this helliſh Popedome which hath no foundation at all: but contrariwiſe wee knowe that God will haue kinges and princes and magiſtrates of Iuſtice to continue ſtill: and therfore thoſe muſt needes bee maintained. And if the fathers doe not their duetie, but vſe tyrannie towardes their children: let vs bee ſorie for it, and aſſure our ſelues that the ſame ſpringeth of our ſinnes. Alſo when God ſuffereth his ordinance to bee vnobſerued, ſo as all is out of order: let vs vnderſtande that wee ought to runne vnto him the more carefully, and to beſeech him to ſet thoſe things in order againe, ſo as it may bee knowen that our whole deſire is to be gouerned by him, as the onely meane whereby hee worketh our welfare.

Nowe let vs kneele downe in the preſence of our good God with acknowledgement of our faults, praying him to vouchſafe to make vs feele them better, that wee may with true repentance learn to miſlike of our ſelues for them, and ſo returne vnto him as we may profite more & more, euen vntill we be rid of al our ſinnes & throughly faſhioned againe like to him in righteouſnes. And ſo let vs all ſay, Almightie God heauenly father, &c.

On Munday the firſt of Iuly. 1555.

The xxxvij Sermon which is the eight vpon the fift Chapter.

17 Thou ſhalt not be a murtherer.

WE haue ſeene alreadie, howe that to liue well with men, wee muſt obey our ſuperiors. For it is the firſt thing that God commaundeth vs in the ſecond table of his lawe: becauſe the meane in deſcending from him to men, is to honour thoſe whom he hath ſet ouer vs. In deede when wee ſpeake of men, there is ſome equall fellowſhip: for wee come all of Adams race: we
Rom.13.1. be all of one kinde: and all this importeth an equalitie among men. Neuertheleſſe foraſmuch as it hath pleaſed God to ſet certaine degrees: wee muſt holde vs thereunto, and keepe that order, ſo as the partie which hath any preheminence and dignitie, may bee acknowledged for ſuch a one as is to bee honoured. And in this caſe we muſt not alledge, why is he more eſtemed than I? For that commeth not of any worthines that is in one more than in another: but of Gods will, who will haue them ſo honoured to whom hee hath giuen any preheminence. And it is not ynough for yͤ children to honor their parents by yeelding them ſome reuerence: but they muſt alſo ſuccour them, and ſpende themſelues
Matt.15.4.5.6. to the vttermoſt for them, accordingly as our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt ſheweth howe it is but hypocriſie, when children doe but make ſome countenance of honoring their fathers and mothers, and in the meane while let them alone in their neceſſitie, without regarde of diſcharging their duetie towardes them at their neede. It is a defrauding of the parentes of that which is due to them, and a ſcorning of Gods Lawe, when men obſerue it ſo by way of Ceremonie. In like caſe is it with all manner of ſubiection. For it is not ment that men ſhoulde but onely yeelde Rom.13.5. Eph.6.5.6. Col.3.22.23.
ſome ſigne of honour: but that they ſhould yeeld the partie his full right, which hath any preheminence, yea and that the ſame ſhoulde bee done willingly. True it is (as I haue declared heretofore) that men would faine be exempted from all bondage. Howebeit foraſmuch as God hath ſet a contrarie order: wee muſt ſubmit our ſelues to it with a good wil, and not by force. For to what purpoſe is it to obey God ſpite of our teeth, when our heart goeth cleane againſt? Thē muſt our will goe with it, and whatſoeuer our Lord commaundeth vs wee muſt thinke it good and amiable. Thus the entrance into good conuerſation among men, is to conſider that our fathers and mothers and all our ſuperiors are aduanced to that preheminence aboue others, to the intent they ſhoulde be honored: Otherwiſe, Rom.13.2.
God is miſuſed in their perſons, and it is all one as if we refuſed to honour him and to be ſubiect to him.

Nowe after that Moſes hath ſet downe this fift commaundement: he addeth, *That wee muſt not be murtherers.* In deede it may ſeeme at the firſt bluſh, that God ledde not his people to great perfection in forbidding them to commit murther. But wee muſt marke, that God intended to compriſe (as it were in a ſhort abridgment) all that is requiſite for the well ruling of this our life: and therefore it was not for him to forget any thing, or to leaue any thing behinde. Nowe wee muſt vnderſtande that the Pſal.15.
way for men to rule their liues well & orderly, is to abſtaine from al euil doing, iniury, & violence, and therwithall to liue chaſtly and honeſtly without hurting or hindering of any man, and on the other

other ſide, to keepe their tongues from harming any man by any manner of falſhood and lying. All theſe good properties muſt be in vs, if wee wil frame our ſelues to Gods will and righteouſneſſe. So then, it is not to bee marueiled at, that God ſhoulde ſpeake here of murthers. For it is done to holde vs in awe, that we ſhoulde not goe about to doe any outrage or harme to our neighbours. But yet for all this, we muſt come backe againe to that which I haue touched alreadie: that is to wit, that God ſpeaketh after a rude and groſſe faſhion, to apply himſelfe both to great and ſmall, and euen to the very ydiots. For wee ſee howe euery man excuſeth himſelfe by ignorance: and if a thing bee ſomewhat darke and hard, we thinke we haue wherewith to waſh our handes of the matter. When wee haue done amiſſe, [wee thinke all is ſafe,] if wee can ſay, Oh, it was too high and too profounde for mee, I vnderſtoode neuer a whit of it. To the end therfore that men ſhould haue no ſuch ſtartingholes: Gods will was to ſpeake after ſuch a faſhion, as euen little babes might vnderſtande what hee ſaide. That is the cauſe why he ſaith in ſhort wordes, *Thou ſhalt not bee a murtherer.*

Let vs marke moreouer, that God, to the intent to leade vs by little and little to liue well, ſetteth vs downe the thinges that are moſt hatefull that we might learn to keepe our ſelues from euill doing. As for example, hee coulde haue ſaide, yee ſhall doe no wrong nor violence to your neighbours: hee could well haue ſaide ſo: but he liſted to ſet downe the word *Murther.* And why? Becauſe it is a thing againſt nature, when men goe about to wipe out Gods image after yͤ faſhion. Needes then muſt we abhorre murther, if we be not ſtarke beaſtes. Howe be it, this teacheth vs that there is not a more heinous thing, nor a thing that wee ought to abhorre more, than murther. GOD therefore to tye vs the ſhorter and to withhold vs from all anoying, and from all wrong dealing, telleth vs that wee muſte not defile our handes with the bloude of our neighbours. Well then: If a man abſtaine from murther, is that all? No not by a great deale, as ſhall bee ſhewed anon, and as the matter afordeth alreadie at the firſt enterance into it. For Gods intent is to holde both our heartes and our thoughtes in ſubiection, and he will be ſerued ſo purely at our hands, as we nouriſh not any ill will towards our neighbours. Why then ſpeaketh he of murther? [It is all one] as if hee ſhould ſay, although ye had no lawe written, but were as heathen men: yet ought yee to haue this printed in your heartes, that murther is a ſhamefull and owgly thing. Nowe I tell you, that as many as doe any outrage to their neighbours, as manie as deuiſe any miſchiefe againſt them, and as many as nouriſh 1.Ioh.3.15. any hatred and rancour in their heartes: I account and condemne them all for murtherers. Thus yee ſee the cauſe why GOD vſeth that terme.

And nowe let vs marke well, that it is not for nought that God forbiddeth murther. Why ſo? For wee can haue no fellowſhippe with men, vnleſſe we abſtaine from al wrong and violence. And vnder one particular kind, God forbiddeth all. Why ſo? for had hee vſed long ſpeech: a man might haue ſaide, I cannot well beare my leſſon in minde, and it is too hard for me. Therfore hath God ſpoken here in one worde, to the intent that his doctrine might be ſoone learned, and his lawe bee eaſily borne in rememberaunce. There needes no great turning ouer of leaues: wee need not to haue many great volumes and regiſters: God hath comprehended the rule of good life in tenne wordes, and that is ynough for vs. Who is hee nowe that can alledge, I haue forgotten ſuch an article, I haue not borne it away? Howe ſo? Are wee not able to remember ſo much as halfe a ſcore wordes? Nowe then wee ſee it was Gods will to holde men conuicted of ſhameleſneſſe, if they vnderſtande not what they ought to doe. And ſo yee ſee the cauſe why hee ſpake ſo briefely. Moreouer he hath (as yee woulde ſay) chawed the thinges to vs, that we might learne to ſubmit our ſelues quietly to him, and that euen the verieſt ydiots might knowe, that they neede not to bee greate clearkes to vnderſtande his Lawe, foraſmuch as hee hath ſtooped ſo lowe, that there is not ſo ignorant a poore ſoule, but hee vnderſtandeth what is conteined in the Lawe. That is the effect of the matter which wee haue to remember here.

Furthermore ſeeing God hath forbidden murther as an owgly and outragious thing: let vs aſſure our ſelues that hee which riſeth vp againſt his neighbour to murther him, is not worthy to liue vpon the earth: for he is worſe than a wood beaſte. Wee ſee howe Beares, Lyons, and other wilde beaſtes doe play together. And why is that? Becauſe that although they haue no reaſon nor diſcretion, although they haue no Lawe nor equitie: yet notwithſtanding the common knowledge [or inſtinct] of nature holdeth them in order. Yee ſee then that the verie beaſts haue skill to liue well together with the beaſtes of their owne kinde, without hurting one another. And ſhoulde not men bee reſtreined by ſome conſideration, ſeeing that God hath imprinted it in their hearts that murther is a wicked thing? They ſee they bee all of one nature, and euerie man beholdes the image of God in his neighbor. And ſhoulde not this ſerue them for a bridle, to withholde them from all violence? What a dealing were it elſe? So then, let vs beare well in minde, that although God had neuer ſpoken to vs, yet haue wee ſufficient proofe in our ſelues alreadie, that if any man ſet himſelfe againſt his neighbour, hee defieth nature, and is vnworthy to be reckened in yͤ aray of men. But nowe ſeeing that the authoritie of God is matched with the knowledge which wee ought to haue had aforehande, and that hee ſheweth vs that there ſhall no bloude of man bee ſhed, but the ſame ſhall come to account before him: let the hearing thereof teach vs to liue without doing any man wrong, or els let vs aſſure our ſelues he will become our mortall enemie: for hee telleth vs that men are in his protection.

In deede the threate is not expreſſed heere: but yet is it all one, for as much as it is ſpoken of in other places. Seeing it is ſaid that man is Gen.9.6. created after the image of God: it is not lawfull to make any aſſault vppon him. For it were all one as if our Lorde ſhoulde ſay, yee bidde mee battell when yee goe about to hurt one another after that faſhion: for I haue printed mine image in you. If a man ſhoulde but deface the armes of a Prince, it were ſo great an iniurie as ſhould bee puniſhed as a murther. And why? Becauſe it tendeth to the confuſion of the ſtate. Beholde, Gods image is printed in men, and it is deſpiſed: and ſhoulde not ſuch an outrage be puniſhed dubble? Yes. Now then let vs mark, that God in telling vs that we aſſault him when we do any man wrong, intendeth to ſhew vs that that ought to reſtraine vs, or elſe we be too witleſſe and madde. Yea and to the intent wee ſhould the better bethinke vs thereof: our Lord Num.35.33 telleth vs that a murther cannot bee committed, but the lande is defiled with it, as is declared in another texte, where it is ſaide that the ſhedding of mans bloude bringeth ſuch a ſtayning and defiling with it, as can ſcarſly bee wyped out. When there is any ſpeaking of man-1.Chro.22.8 ſlaughter, yea though it bee done lawfully, as in warre, which is allowed: yet is it ſaide to bee a defiling. And why? To the intent that wee ſhoulde learne to abhorre the ſhedding of bloud the more. If an enemie bee ſlaine in open warre, although GOD pardon it becauſe the ſlaier hath iuſt and lawfull cauſe, and doeth it of neceſſitie: yet notwithſtanding it is ſaide ſtill to bee a ſtaine, and the dooer thereof is ſaide to bee defiled. And why is that? To the intent wee ſhoulde knowe that God hath created vs to liue quietly together, and that wee cannot giue a fillippe (as they ſay), but that it is ſtreitwayes a ſpotte vpon vs, and wee be by and by defiled before God. Seeing then that the holy ſcripture vſeth all theſe formes of ſpeech, ought we not to be held the better in awe, to liue without doing of any wrong to our neighbours? Yes.

Howbeit foraſmuch as God doeth ſo chawe thinges to vs heere, according to our raweneſſe and infirmitie: let vs marke further, that it is not ynough for vs to abſtaine from bloudſhed: but that wee muſt alſo abſtaine from all outrage and violence. To bee ſhort, mens perſons muſt bee deare and precious vnto vs, For till we bee come to that point: God will take vs ſtill for murtherers. If a man doe but ſtrike his neighbour, although hee kill him not: yet is he a murtherer alreadie in Gods ſight. And why? I haue tolde you alreadie howe GOD vſed that worde of ſet purpoſe to ſhewe vs that although wee take a quarrelling or the giuing of a blowe ouerthwartly, to bee ſmall and light faultes: yet they bee not ſo before God. And why? Becauſe there is alway a murtherous intent in it. And that is yͤ cauſe why God calleth it murther. And beſides that, if we be forbidden to commit murther, let vs vnderſtande that wee bee likewiſe forbidden to doe any wrong, or to make any aſſault vppon our neighbours. If wee doe but liſt vp our fiſt againſt one, or touch him in anger: by and by there is murther committed before God. If wee thought well on this: woulde we not be mielder than we be? Wee ſee ſome men ſo teſtie, that if a word doe but miſlike them, by and by their fiſt is vp, to ſmite and beate the partie. For they thinke it is a ſmall matter, ſo they ſhedde no bloude. But wee muſt not make God to eate his worde, in that he telleth vs that all quarellers are murtherers. So then let vs learne to forbeare our owne fancies when we intend to iudge of our faults, and let vs quietly imbrace the ſentence that god hath giuen, aſſuring our ſelues that all ſuch as offer any violence to their neighbours, are alreadie guiltie of murther before God. That is the thing in effect which we haue to remember here.

But haue wee abſtained from all anoyance? Haue we done no outrage to the perſons of our neighbors? Then muſt we go euen to the heart. For God hath not giuen a ciuill Lawe, onely to make vs liue honeſtly: but he hath giuen a Lawe agreeable to his owne nature. We knowe he is a ſpirit, and he will haue vs to ſerue him in ſpirite Iohn 4.24. and trueth. Seeing it is ſo, we muſt vnderſtand yͤ he hath giuen vs a rule, not only for our hands and feete, but alſo for our affections & thoughts. True it is, that inaſmuch as men are fleſhly, when gods lawe is firſt vttered vnto them, they thinke they haue well diſcharged themſelues, if they cannot be blamed before the world: and ſo on yͤ otherſide they doe eaſily grant & take leaue to do euill. And for the ſame cauſe, euen yͤ Iewes themſelues, who ought to haue bin grounded in yͤ lawe of God from their childhood, tooke this ſaying too groſly, *Thou ſhalt not kill.* For they vnderſtood it, yͤ they offẽded not god, ſo they made no open aſſault vpon their neighbour to wound him. And therfore if the fault were not apparant to the eye: they bare themſelues in hand yͤ they ought not to bee charged with it before God. Which thing our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt rebuketh, Mat.5.21.22 ſhewing that the law was too fõdly expounded. Becauſe it is ſaid *Thou ſhalt not kil:* you beare your ſelues in hand (ſaith he) that yee ſhalbe quit before God, if men cannot bring yee to the bar for it. But whoſoeuer calleth his neighbor foole, yͤ is to ſay, whoſoeuer doth but ſhew ſom tokẽ of diſpleaſure againſt him, is forthwith worthy of helfire. Whoſoeuer doth another man wrong: is in danger of iudgement from heauen, yͤ God and al his Angels ſhal ſet themſelues again him. And whoſoeuer doth but murmure againſt his neighbour, ſo as he doth but mũble ſomwhat betwixt the teeth though he vtter nothing at all: he is already in danger of iudgement. Wee ſee whereto our Lord Ieſus ſendeth vs: namely that when we may proteſt that we haue not done any outrage, nor giuen any blow, and yͤ we haue ſo litle ment to wounde our neighbour, that wee haue not ſo much as once drawen our ſworde at him: yet is not al this ynough, but wee muſt conſider that God wil ouer rule both our tõgues, our thoughts and all our affections, as good reaſon is hee ſhoulde. Sith it is ſo: whoſoeuer miſuſeth his neighbour[in ſpeeche,]ſheweth himſelfe alreadie to bee a murtherer: for the tongue cutteth as a ſworde. Although then that yee haue not your ſworde in your fiſt to ſtrike: yet if your tongue bee armed to ſpeake euill of your neighbour, ſo as yee haue railed vppon him: it is a kinde of murther, as in reſpect of God. And although yee haue not ſo miſuſed him as all the worlde may bee priuie to it: yet thinke not that ye ſhall therefore goe cleare. For if ye doe but mumble betwixt the teeth: it is ynough to make yee guiltie in the ſight of GOD, and ye ſhall be condemned before the heauēly throne, though ye bee quit before men, and though worldly Iuſtice take no holde of you. When wee heare this: we may well perceiue, that he which ſpeaketh it is the ſame perſon whom God the father hath giuen to bee the iudge of the world. Therfore wee muſt not giue our ſelues too large ſcope in this behalfe. For wee ſhall win nothing by our caueling and ſhifting. But let vs learne to looke at God, if wee will haue the right and naturall expoſition of the Lawe. Who is he that ſpeaketh? Euen hee that raigneth ouer our heartes and thoughtes: euen hee that can not abide to bee ſerued with eyeſeruice, nor that wee ſhould abſtaine from euill onely to the worldward, but which will be ſerued in ſpirit and trueth. He will haue our conſciences to be pure & cleane, ſo as wee bee clenſed from all naughtineſſe. Seeing it is ſo: if wee conſider the nature of GOD, wee muſt no more reſtraine his Lawe to the outward deedes: but wee muſt conclude that when God ſpeaketh of murther, he ſpeaketh likewiſe of all enmitie, diſpleaſure, anger, and rancor that we haue againſt our neighbours. And in deede that is the verie cauſe why S. Iohn ſayeth, that he which hateth his neighbour in his heart is a murtherer. As if hee ſhould ſay, yee maye well ſet a fayre countenaunce vppon the matter: but bee the hatred neuer ſo ſecretly hidden in your hearte, and although yee diſſemble neuer ſo much, ſo as ye vtter no ſigne of any malice: yet thinke not that Gods eyes are ſhut for all that. Men may well bee ignoraunt of the thing that yee haue not bewrayed: but haue yee once hated your neighbours in your hearts, that is to ſay ſo ſecretly as no man may perceiue it: by and by ye bee murtherers before God. And truely the reaſon hereof is too too apparant. In deed when Princes and Magiſtrates make lawes, it is not after the maner of God. It is but onely to the end that men ſhoulde behaue themſelues well as touching outward ciuill order, ſo as no man bee miſuſed, but euerie man haue his right, & peace and concord bee maintained among men. That is the intent of Magiſtrates in making of their lawes. And why? For they bee mortall men, and cannot reforme the inward & hidden affections. That belongeth to God. Againe they cannot ſearch mens hearts, for yͤ is Gods peculiar office, and ſo doeth the holy ſcripture attribute it vnto him. Neuertheleſſe, when a ciuill lawe is once made: although there be not one drop of bloud ſhed: yet is the offender worthie to bee caried to the gallowes, if he be knowen to haue done what he could to haue murthered one. If one draw his ſword vpon a man, who notwithſtanding doth ſo ward his blowes as they neuer touche any bare of him: the Lawes euen of the heathen doe neuertheleſſe condemne ſuch a one to the gibbet as he is worthie. For why? The Lawe reſpecteth not the ſucceſſe, but the purpoſe and intent. Nowe ſeeing it is ſo that earthly Princes and Magiſtrates doe puniſh ſuch as haue indeuoured themſelues to doe amiſſe, though they haue bene diſappointed of their purpoſe, and not brought their attempt to paſſe: what ſhall God doe? Shall he haue leſſe authoritie than a mortall creature? To that point (ſay I) muſt wee come, to knowe that GOD doeth iuſtly condemne all ſuch for murtherers, as hate their neighbours. Why ſo? As I ſaid afore, let vs conſider what his nature is. Will wee then keepe his commaundement? Wee muſt in effect begin at murthering: And why? For God meant to ſtrike a feare into vs aforehande, to the intent that whenſoeuer wee went about to hurt our neyghbours, or to doe any extorſion or wrong: wee might vnderſtand that it is a deteſtable and horrible thing vnto them, and ſuch a one as hee cannot abide. Why ſo? Bicauſe it is a kinde of murthering. Ye ſee then howe God meant to daunt vs at the firſt blowe: and that is the end that we muſt begin at.

1.Pet.4.5.
1.Sa.16.17.
Pſal.7.10.
Iohn 4.24.
1.Tim.1.5.
1.Ioh.3.15.
Pſal.7.10.

Moreouer if we thinke it ſtraunge that God ſhould condemne a blowe to be murther, yea or a wrong offered but in wordes, yea and euen a frowne though the tongue haue bewrayed nothing at all, yea and euen the ſecret and vneſpied hartburning that is deeply ouercouered within: I ſay if we thinke it ſtraunge that theſe things ſhould bee condemned for murther before God: let vs conſider what his nature is, and howe he is worthie that wee ſhould allow more to him than to mortall men. For if earthly Iudges haue power to puniſh a wicked intent when it bewrayeth it ſelfe: what ſhall GOD haue, from whom nothing is hidden? Againe wee muſt conſider howe the Apoſtle in the Epiſtle to the Hebrewes ſayeth, that the word of God reſembleth him that is the author therof, ſo as it muſt needs be as a two edged ſword, pearcing in ſuch wiſe to the verie marie of the bones, that there is not a thought within vs, which it eſpieth not out. And why is that? Bicauſe nothing is hid in the preſence of GOD. Nowe ſeeing that nothing is hidden before God: his woorde muſt needes ſearche and ſifte mennes heartes to the harde bottome. So then, the things that are vnknowen to men, muſt needes come all to account before God: whereby wee muſt take warning to liue in ſuch ſort, as wee beare no enmitie nor ill will to our neighbours.

Heb.4.12.13

But yet notwithſtanding we muſt go yet further. For it is not ynough for men to abſtaine frō euill dooing: but foraſmuch as they bee created to helpe one another, they muſt ſeeke one anothers maintenance. God thē in forbidding vs to murther, ſheweth vs on the contrarie part yͤ wee muſt ſet ſtore by our neighbors liues, & indeuour to maintaine & preſerue them to yͤ vttermoſt of our power. But it was his will to begin at that end, to ſhewe vs what he commanded. And why? For we ſee howe ſinfull we bee. Looke how many thoughts wee haue, and ſo many briers and thornes wee haue. Looke howe many affections wee haue: and ſo many buſhes, brambles, and ſuch other things wee haue. Not without cauſe therefore intended God to weede out ỹ naughtineſſe and vice out of our heartes, yea and to amend all the partes in vs that are ſinfull and corrupted. For without that, it were vnpoſſible to ſet ſo much as one finger to the dooing of any good, that wee ſhould but ſo much as thinke one good thought. That is the cauſe why ỹ Prophet Ier.4.4. ſaith that men breake vp their layes & ſowe not among buſhes. As if he ſhould ſay, I ſee how the world goeth w̃ you: if a man tell ye ỹ ye haue offended God, ye wil make ſome faire coũtenãce, & pretend as though ye were reformed, & yet in the meane while continue ſtill the ſame ye were before. But it is not ynough to ſowe corne in a field: but ye muſt alſo ſtub vp the buſhes & clenſe the ground. So long as ye doe but indeuour to make ſome faire ſhowe: thornes, briers, thiſtles, and other euill weedes growe ſtill within. Therfore there can bee no good ſowing, & much leſſe can ye bring forth good fruite before God. And for the ſame cauſe doth our Lord ſay here, *Thou ſhalt not kill*, in ſtead of ſaying, *Looke that thou preſerue thy neighbors life.* Now we ſee by experience howe men would faine diſcharge themſelues to Godward w̃ faire countenances, and yet retaine ſtill their vices and corruptions, according to ỹ which I haue alledged out of the Prophet. For if a man ſpeake to vs of doing good to our neighbours: in deede we dare not altogither gaineſay him. So then wee would diſcharge our ſelues after a ſort. But in the meane ſeaſon our ſores doe rancle within, & we doe but plaſter them aboue, like vnto thoſe that are loth to open their purſes whẽ their houſes decay: but what do they? They parget them ouer, & ſtop the holes and rifts, but yet in the meane while their houſe is ſtill in decay. Euen ſo is it with vs: wee doe but parget or plaſter our ſelues ouer, of purpoſe to diſcharge our ſelues as lightly as might bee. But yet doeth nature teach vs the cleane contrarie. For if a mã be minded to ſowe a field, will he caſt his corne among the briers and thornes? No: but when he ſees his field faire and cleane, then breakes he it vp & tils it: and ſo muſt we do. Let vs learne then that it is not without cauſe that God doeth firſt of all condemne the vices. For hee ſees they bee rooted ſo deepely in our nature: that it is hard to weede them out, yea and that he can neuer hold vs at ſuch a ſtay, as to cauſe vs to liue in his righteouſneſſe, vnleſſe he plucke vp the curſed rootes of this naughtineſſe which he knoweth to be in vs. That is the cauſe why he ſaieth, thou ſhalt not kill. As if he ſhoulde ſay, will ye liue in good loue one with another? Euerie man muſt enter into himſelf, and examine wel whether he haue there any hatred, enmity, or ill wil towards his neighbours. Ye muſt looke whether ye haue not ſome hartriſings & eagerneſſe in you, which prouoketh you to threaten your neighbors or to attempt ſomewhat againſt them. Ye muſt conſider all theſe things. For when ye be cleare from all anger, hatred, and enmitie: then muſt yee come to this point, that it is not ynough for you to abſtaine frõ anoyance, wrongfulneſſe, & violence, ſo as yee haue not practiſed any thing againſt ỹ perſons of your neighbors, nor noriſhed any rancor or malice againſt thẽ in your hearts, nor bin infected with euill will: but you muſt alſo liue in charitie, and ye muſt bee as brethren one to another, worſhipping God as your father. Lo to what point we muſt come.

So then let vs marke, that if we intend to profit well in Gods Law, we muſt haue an eye to the vices and imperfections that are in vs, and bee ſorie for them: and moreouer ſtraine our ſelues to weed them out. Haue we done ſo? that is not all that wee haue to doe. For God will not haue vs idle in this worlde. His creating of vs, is not onely to abſtaine from euill: (for ſtones and trees and other ſenſeleſſe things doe as much as that comes to:) but wee muſt giue and applye our ſelues to the doing of good. Then let vs vnder- Pſal.34.15. ſtand, that whereas our Lord will haue the life of our neighbours to bee deare and precious to vs: he ſheweth therewithall ỹ he which helpeth not his neighbor at his neede, doeth what he can to murther him: in ſo much ỹ we become murtherers, not onely whẽ we beare any ill will, or keepe any hatred priuily towards our neighbours: but alſo euen whẽ wee ſuccour them not in their neceſſitie. If we vouchſafe not to beſtow our trauel for them when they haue neede of our helpe, we ſhall be blamed before God. Sith it is ſo, it is not for vs to flatter our ſelues any more in this caſe: for wee ſee howe ſtraite the Law is: and yet not ſtraiter than it ought to bee. For can wee refuſe to bee knit togither in charitie at Gods commandement, ſeeing he hath created vs after his owne image? Or to yeelde him ſuch reuerence being our father, as to maintaine brotherhood among our ſelues, ſeeing he hath vouchſafed to vnite vs in ſuch bond? Shall wee ſay that God is too ſtraite to vs, and layeth too heauie a burthẽ vpon vs, bicauſe he leadeth vs to ſuch indifferẽcie & vprightnes? No: but howſoeuer come of it, let vs beware we flatter not our ſelues, ſeeing we vnderſtand ỹ our Lord will haue vs to do our indeuour in helping one another, and that wee ſhould ſet as much ſtore by the life of our neighbour, as he himſelfe doeth.

Nowe haue we the effect of this commandement, *Of not killing.* What remaineth then, but ỹ we pray God ſo to guide vs, as wee may frame our ſelues to his will? For it is to no purpoſe to alledge that his ſpeeche is darke: Or to alledge that there be ſo many commandements, as wee cannot beare them in rememberance: (for God ſpeaketh in a worde or twaine, and vſeth briefeneſſe to take away all excuſe.) Or to alledge that wee wote not whereat to begin: for he ſheweth vs it: namely that in ſtead of taking leaue to doe euill as wee haue bin wont to doe, bearing our ſelues in hand that the thing which we doe is no great nor no deadly crime: wee muſt contrariwiſe thinke alwayes thus, if I doe my neighbour the leaſt harme that is poſſible to bee named, I am a murtherer before God. When wee bee willing to doe euill, ſee howe the diuell blindeth vs, to bee deſirous at the firſt daſh to kill one and to cut his throte. This (as I ſayd) is an ougly thing. For euen nature reſtraineth vs, that wee can not bee ſo madde as to ſay, I will kill. But if a man diſpleaſe vs, and we bee no more but angry with him: all is well, it paſſeth away as a ſmoke, and to our owne ſeeming, it is nothing. Againe, haue wee once conceyued any grudge, wee thinke it is to bee pardoned if wee requite like for like, ſo wee doe it not with ouergreat violence. Moreouer if a man doe but bend his fiſte to ſtrike or to beate: tuſh, it is ſtill but a blowe, it is no deadly offence. Loe howe men diſpence with themſelues. And why? Bicauſe all their imagining is howe to leſſen their faultes. But wee muſt keepe a contrarie way to this, as GOD telleth vs: namely that when wee goe aboute to ſtrike and to beate, or when we goe about to doe wrong, or when wee go about to conceiue any hatred or hearteburning: wee muſt ſet murther before our faces, and thinke thus with our ſelues: Wretched creature, whither goeſt thou? whither throweſt thou thy ſelfe? Wilt thou make thy ſelf guiltie of murther before God? So thē let vs no more alledge that wee wote not whereat to begin: for God ſheweth it vs, and we cānot be ignorant of any thing but through our owne wilfulneſſe: & therefore in the end it muſt needes be knowen, ẏ we liſted not to lift vp our eyes, to ſee the things which we ought to haue ſeene moſt manifeſtly. Thoſe are the things which wee haue to gather vpon this place.

Againe, there is this further, that God hath not without cauſe forbidden murther before he come to command charitie, & to ſhewe vs howe we be bound to ſuccour one another, according as neede requireth. And why? For we be full of euill affections which had neede to be rooted out. Therfore like as a peece of ground that is ful of thornes & briers, had neede to be clenſed before it be ſowed: ſo haue we neede to be clenſed from the vices that are naturally in vs, or elſe we ſhall neuer bee diſpoſed to liue in good loue one towards another. But yet muſt euery man haue an eye to his owne abilitie. If I haue wherewith to helpe my neighbors: I muſt be fully reſolued ẇ my ſelf, ẏ the things which God hath giuen mee are not mine own, ẏ is to ſay, that I muſt not loue my ſelf ſo much, as to haue no regard of others: but if I be of abilitie to ſuccour other folkes that haue want of my reliefe, I muſt beſtowe it vppon them. For there is a commō fellowſhip amōg all men. It was not Gods wil to make ſo many ſeuerall worldes, euery one by it ſelf as there be ſeueral mē & women: but he hath knit vs al togither. Seeing then ẏ God hath brought vs one neere another: we muſt keepe & maintaine ẏ fellowſhip that God hath ſet among vs, & we muſt alwayes come to this point, that it is againſt kind to hate our owne fleſh. But yet there is a farre other reſpect than this among ẏ faithfull. For they muſt not only cōſider themſelues to be created after the image of God: but alſo remember ẏ they be members of our Lord Ieſus Chriſt, ſo as there is a much ſtraiter & holier bond, than the bond of Eph.5.30. nature which is common to all mankinde. And therfore ſo much the more ought we to miſlike of thoſe, which do ſo forget the vnion that God hath ſet among his people, ſeeking nothing elſe but to put the thinges aſunder which God hath ioyned togither, by diſſeuering the body of his Church, as we ſee theſe vnderlings of Satan do, who practiſe nothing but all maner of miſchief, as though they were wilfully bent to defie God bicauſe he bindeth them to men, & therfore doe ſeparate themſelues frō ſuch as are not for their profit (as it ſeemes to thē,) nor yet for their fanſie. Now when ſo brutiſh a diſpoſition & ſo far out of ſquare is entred into a mans mind, is it not a token that the diuell dwelleth in him, and that ẏ ſpirit of God raigneth not there, no nor any drop of him is there? Yes: and therefore let vs learne to frame our ſelues in ſuch wiſe to that which is ſpoken here, that being rid of all rancour and malice, wee determine to imploy our ſelues in the ſeruice of our neighbours, & to diſcharge our duetie according to the abilitie that God giueth vs. Again, if wicked affections, (notwithſtanding that they bee hidden) bee taken for murther before GOD: what ſhall violence & outrage be, when men ouerſhoote themſelues ſo farre, as to ſtrike & ſlea one another as much as they can? Muſt it not needes bee that they be worſe than all the Paynims in the world? Yes: but whatſoeuer come of it, let vs aſſure our ſelues that wee haue ill profited in Gods ſchole, if wee onely keepe our handes from dooing euill, and in the meane while leaue our heartes vnreformed. Nowe then, to ſhew which is the true perfection of Chriſtians, they muſt not only refraine from bearing any priuie euill will in their heartes: but they muſt alſo be as true bro- 1.Pet.2.17. thers, to ſpend themſelues in their neighbours behalfe to the vttermoſt of their power. And if it bee not lawfull to nouriſh any ſecret ill will: much leſſe is it lawfull for a man to ouerſhoote himſelfe ſo farre, as to ſmite, to kill, and to doe outrage: and they that doe ſo, are worſe than wild beaſtes. Yea and if that that diſpoſition was condemned euen among the heathen, & by the lawes of men: much more ſhall it be condemned by the Lawe of God. And therefore let vs learne to ſubmit our ſelues to him, not after our owne imagination, but according to his owne nature. But foraſmuch as he is a ſpirit, he will haue vs to Iohn 4.24. ſerue him with ſuch ſoundneſſe, that beſides the reſtrayning of our feete and handes, our heartes alſo muſt be ſubmitted vnto him, and that with ſuch ſubiection and obedience, as our whole indeuour be to ſhew by our deedes, that we be his true children, in as much as we maintaine brotherlineſſe with all thoſe whom he hath called to the ſame alyance with vs.

Nowe let vs kneele down in ẏ preſence of our good God, with acknowledgment of our faults, praying him to make vs feele them better, and that wee conſidering howe hee hath bounde vs to our neighbours, and will haue vs to ſhewe the reuerence ẏ that wee beare towardes him by abſtaining from all euill & wrongfull dealing: may liue in ſuch brotherly loue one with another, as the chiefe marke that we ſhoote at, may bee to honour him as our father, and to ſuffer our ſelues to bee gouerned by him and by his holy ſpirit according to his word, ſo as we may bee ſtrengthened more and more in it, knowing that his reaching of his hand to vs, is to the end to guide vs and to hold vs vnder his protection. That it may pleaſe him to graunt this grace, not onely to vs but alſo to all people and Nations of the earth, &c.

On Tewſday the ij. of Iuly. 1555.

The xxxviij. Sermon, which is the ninth vpon the fifth Chapter.

18 Thou ſhalt not bee an Aduouterer.

SAint Paul ſpeaking of the life of Chriſtians, and hauing exhorted them to the feare of God, addeth ý they muſt walk vprightly and ſoberly. Now it is not to be doubted, but that the ſame is to be referred to the ſecond table of the law. Wil we then obſerue the things that our Lord hath commaunded vs in the ſecond table? It is not ynough for vs to hurt no mã either in his perſon or in his goods: but beſides this rightfulneſſe, it is required that we ſhould liue ſtayedly and honeſtly, as is declared in another place. And in the former text of Tit.2.12. the Epiſtle to Titus which I haue touched, hee ſaith that we were redeemed by the grace of our Lord Ieſus Chriſt, to the intent we ſhould liue in the feare of God in this world, and alſo in ſober- 1.Tim.2.2. neſſe and vprightneſſe. In another place to Timothie he ſaieth, that if there bee good gouernment, ſo as the Magiſtrates doe their duetie, we ſhall liue vprightly and honeſtly in godlineſſe. And as touching the feare of God, it is the ſame ſpirituall ſeruice that we haue ſpoken of before, which cõſiſteth of our pure worſhipping of him, by indeuouring to truſt in him, by calling vppon him, and by yeelding him his deſerued reuerence: and in reſpect of our neighbors, [it conſiſteth] of knowing howe wee ought to behaue our ſelues one towardes another. Theſe are the two pointes that he ſetteth downe heare. The firſt, which is vprightneſſe, is that wee offer no man any violence, extortion or deceite as in reſpect of his goods: and the other, which hee ſetteth downe by the name of honeſtie, ſobrietie, or ſtayedneſſe, is that there be no looſeneſſe, wantonneſſe, leawdeneſſe, or vnrulineſſe in our lyfe. Wee haue ſeene that in expounding the commaundement where GOD forbadde to kill, I told you how he meant that we ſhould abſtaine from all outrage and iniurie: and not onely that: but alſo that wee ſhoulde indeuour to liue quietly with our neighbours, and not ſuffer any man to be troubled. And is it ſo? When wee come to treating of goods, it ſhall bee declared that wee muſt not play the theeues, nor beare falſe witneſſe againſt our neighbours: which things pertaine to Iuſtice or vprightneſſe. Nowe if wee will yeelde euerie man his right: we ſhal doe no hurt nor wrong to any bodie: and as touching goods alſo, wee ſhall not attempt to rob any of their ſubſtance.

But here God interlaceth a lawe that forbiddeth to commit adulterie: & that is comprehended vnder the terme of ſobrietie or ſtayedneſſe. For although we ſteale awaye no mans goods, nor be murtherers and barreters: yet if wee bee vnchaſt, wanton, or of beaſtly conuerſation: we muſt not thinke that God is contented with vs. Vprightnes & Sobernes are things inſeparable: for God hath ioyned them togither in his lawe, and we ſee that he confirmeth it by his Apoſtle, who largely expoundeth the thing ý is here touched in fewe words. And therfore if we wil haue the true meaning of this text: wee muſt vnderſtand that God commaundeth vs here to leade an honeſt and chaſt life, ſo as there be no diſhoneſtie nor looſeneſſe in vs. That is the effect of this commandement. True it is that here we be expreſly forbidden to *commit Adulterie*, that is to ſay, to breake the faith of mariage by intiſing other mens wiues to naughtineſſe. But let vs alſo weigh ý thing that I haue touched here: namely how that vnder one particular, God comprehendeth the whole, and ſetteth vs downe the thing that ought to miſlike vs euen of nature, to the end we ſhould abhorre all maner of whoredome the more. I told you yeſterday, that when men are tempted to doe euill, they beguile them ſelues, weening that the fault is but ſmall, and ſo from the leſſer they proceede to the greater. Contrariwiſe, to hold vs in awe, God ſetteth before vs the ſins that are heynouſeſt, to ý end we ſhould be ſtriken with feare aforehand, and not bee ledde ſo eaſily to commit any fault. As if he ſhould ſay, beware ye fall not: for it will make ye to breake your necke: beare not your ſelfe in hand that you ſhall but ſlide, for the fall will bee deadly: and therefore take heede of it. Thus ye ſee in effect why God proceeded in ſuch order in his law: & why he ſpeaketh not now generally of all whoredome, but of Adulterie, which is the breaking of Mariage. Nowe wee knowe that if any thing ought to bee taken for holye in the whole life of man: it is the fayth which the huſbande plyghteth to his wife, and the wife to her huſbande. In deede all the couenants and promiſes ý we make, ought to be kept faithfully. Pſal.15.4.

But if wee compare them together: it is not without cauſe that mariage is called the couenant of God. For in ſo ſaying, Salomon ſheweth that God is the Lorde of mariage, and therefore that if the husband breake the promiſe which hee hath made to his wife, hee is forſworne, not onely towardes her, but alſo towardes God. In lyke caſe is it on the womans behalfe. Shee doth wrong, not onely to her husband, but alſo to the liuing God. For it is he to whom ſhe bindeth her ſelfe: & like as he hath ordeined wedlock and is the author thereof, ſo will hee haue a care for the maintaining therof. Therfore whẽ we heare the word *Aduowtrie*: we ought to lothe it, as an expreſſe defying of God, by wilfull breaking of the holy bond which he hath ſet in mariage, like mad beaſtes. And hereby we ſee in what eſtimation he hath honeſtie. Why ſo? When hee will haue vs ſober, chaſte, and modeſt: he ſayth, If ye be not honeſt and well ſtayed, yee bee no better than Aduowterers. That is to ſay, whatſoeuer excuſe ye pretend before men, and make ye your faults neuer ſo ſmall and light: I hate ye, for yee ſtinke, & your whole life is infected in my ſight. We ſee thẽ as I ſayde afore, that here is a ſtrait commaundement to keepe our ſelues honeſt & chaſte. And hereby it appeareth how fond their excuſe is, which ſay they do no man wrong, whẽ they be full of diſorder and vnrulineſſe. For our Lord knoweth well enough to what end he vſed ſuch ſpeach. It was not for ẏ he was toungtied & wiſt not how to vtter things in order: but becauſe he intended to ſhew, that if men made but a ſmal matter of wantonneſſe and vnchaſtitie: there is another balance [for thẽ to be tryed by:] namely that he condemneth & accurſeth all thoſe for aduouterers, which behaue thẽſelues vnhoneſtly or vnchaſtely. Therefore we haue ſo much the more neede to wey well ẏ wordes ẏ are ſet downe here, where he ſayth *Thou ſhalt not be an Aduowterer.* But yet herewithall we muſt follow the degrees ẏ are conteined vnder this cõmandement.

Prou.2.17.

Firſt (as I ſayd afore) let vs vnderſtand ẏ God will haue wedlocke to be kept holy. For as our perſons & liues are deere vnto him: ſo will hee haue ẏ faith and troth that is plighted betweene man & wife, to be mainteined in their price and eſtimation, that ſo holy a thing as mariage, be not giuen vp to ſhame & reproch. This ought to bring to paſſe, that no man ſhould looke vpon his neighbors wife with vnchaſte eye. And why? For God hath matched her to a husband already, & he wil haue her husband to ſhadow her. And whẽ we thinke any euill, or feele any vnhoneſt luſt: he will haue vs to ſhun it for feare of that which is tolde vs, namely that God himſelfe taketh vengeance of them that breake the holy fellowſhip which was knit in his name. In lyke caſe is it with women in reſpect of their husbandes: ſo as a wife may not yeelde to wicked luſtes when ſhe beholdeth a maryed man. Why ſo? For God hath aſſigned her, her make. If we wil not make warre againſt our maker, we muſt liue euery one in his own houſe, wͭ ſuch match as he hath: & ẏ order muſt be mainteined wͭout breach, becauſe god is ẏ author of it. That is one principal point.

Gen.20,16.

Prou.2.17.

But beſides this, we muſt alwayes come back to the nature of God: & remember that he is not an earthly lawemaker, which forbiddeth but only the outward deede, and in the meane while letteth the lewd affections alone: for God will admit no eyeſeruice, neither is he lyke to vs. Men are contented if they perceiue no fault: but God who ſearcheth mens heartes, reſpecteth the trueth as it is ſayd in Ieremie. Therefore hee in his lawe meant not to reſtreine our bodyes only: but alſo had a ſpeciall regarde to our ſoules. So then let vs marke, that God not onely forbiddeth the act, ſo as wedlocke be not broken by any actuall deede: but alſo hee forbiddeth all wicked luſtes and lykinges. And therefore doth our Lord Ieſus Chriſt ſay, that he which looketh vpon another mans wife with a wicked eye, is an Aduowter already before God. Though he cannot be blamed by the lawes of men, nor puniſhed as an aduowterer: yet is hee condemned already before God, as hauing tranſgreſſed this commaundement. Therefore when we heare this word Aduowtrie, which is ſo greatly condẽned: let vs learne, not onely to abſteine from all whoredome as touching the actuall deede, but alſo to keepe our thoughts and conceits chaſte, ſo as we be vndefiled both of eye and heart. For after that maner doth S. Paul define true chaſtitie, when he ſaith that ſuch as are vnmaried ought to haue a care how to pleaſe GOD, by keeping themſelues pure and cleane both in bodie and minde. He ſaith not that thoſe continue chaſt which haue not defiled their bodies with whoredome: but which haue indeuored to keepe themſelues vndefiled both in body and minde.

1.Sam.16.7.

Ier.5.3.

Matt.5.28.

1.Cor.7.34.

And when we haue thus conſidered how God curſeth and abhorreth all aduowtries: wee muſt proceede further, and reache out and apply the ſame to all maner of whoredome. True it is that he which breaketh the faith of wedlocke committeth a dubble offence, and it is much more haynous as I haue ſayd already. But yet muſt we alwayes come backe to this poynt, that Gods meaning is that men ſhal not only not commit any thing againſt mariage, but alſo that they ſhall not leade a beaſtely lyfe, ſo as whoredome may haue full ſcope, and vnmaryed folke runne looſe to giue ouer themſelues to lewdeneſſe with euery one whom they meete with, lyke brute beaſtes: but that we ſhoulde be pure and cleane both in body and minde. For it is ſayd, that not onely our ſoules, but alſo our bodies are the temples of the holy Ghoſt, as was declared euen now. And they be Saint Paules owne wordes, where he telleth the Corinthians that it was too too much to their reproche and ſhame, to ſuffer fornication and whoredome among them as they did. Knowe ye not (ſayth he) that your bodyes are the temples of the holy Ghoſte? Beholde, God hath done vs the honor to chooſe theſe wretched bodies of ours which not onely are fraile veſſels but alſo rotten carcaſes and earth. GOD (I ſay) notwithſtanding this, hath ſo inhonored them, as to vouchſafe to make them the temples of his holy ſpirit, that he may dwell there: & ſhall we goe welter them

1.Cor.6,19.

Note that he ſpeaketh this, becauſe ẏ day at the Sermõ a mariage was ſolemniſed.

in all filthineſſe,and make hoggeſcotes or ſwines ſtyes of them? What a treacherie is that? Again, 1.Cor.6.15. that is not all. Let vs haue an eye whereunto S. Paule leadeth vs. Our bodies are members of Ieſus Chriſt: therefore if a man giue ouer his body to whoredom,it is all one as if he tore Chriſts body aſunder. For it is certeine that wee cannot mingle Gods ſonne the fountaine of all cleaneſſe, with our filth and lothſomneſſe. Now then if a man caſt himſelfe into whoredome: it is as much as a rending of the body of our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt in peeces, as much as in vs lyeth. Not that wee can doe it in deede: for the ſonne of God is not ſubiect to vs to be ſo diſhonored at our handes: but yet are wee guiltie of ſuch trayterouſneſſe, foraſmuch as wee would haue committed ſuch iniurie againſt him. Now then let vs learne that God wil haue euery of vs not only to keepe our faith and troth in mariage for his own parte: but alſo generally to bee chaſte, to walke in pureneſſe of lyfe, and not to giue our ſelues the bridle to any vncleaneneſſe or diſhoneſtie. And why? The reaſons that I haue alledged, ought much to moue vs thereunto. And therefore looke what hath bin ſayd already concerning aduowtrie: let vs apply it lykewiſe to this preſent caſe: Namely that we hold al our ſenſes in awe with ſuch ſtayedneſſe, as the diuell may alwayes bee driuen backe when he tempteth vs to any vnchaſtneſſe, and not get any enterance into vs. Pericles. There was a certeine heathen man that coulde wel skil to ſay, that it was not enough for a mā to haue ſtay of his hands, (that is to ſay, that hee coulde refraine from rauine, outrage, and doing of wrong:) but alſo that he ought to haue ſtay of his eyes, that is to ſay, that hee ought not to caſte any vnchaſte looke. If the blinde and ignorant wretches were able to teach vs thus much: what ſhall become of vs when it is tolde vs (as I ſayd afore,) that God hath done vs ſo much honour, as to repayre for himſelfe, not onely our ſoules but alſo our bodies, notwithſtanding that they be corruptible, and that (as wee ſee) there is nothing but rottenneſſe in them? Seeing then that God taketh them for his owne, and voutſafeth to dwell in them: ought we not to learne to liue warely, that no vncleaneneſſe or filthineſſe bee committed that may driue God away from vs, when as he would haue vs to be his dwelling place and holy temple? Yea and we muſt call to minde how S. 1.Cor.6.18. Paule ſayth, that all other ſinnes are committed outwardly of mans body: but whoredome is committed in the body it ſelfe. For it is right certeine that wee defile our handes by robberie and ſtealth (as is auowed in the holy ſcripture:) inſomuch that when we do any man wrong, we haue Eſa.1.15.& 59.3. bloudy handes, as ſayth the prophet Eſay. But Saint Paule very well perceiuing whoredome to bee yet more ſhamefull, and that men haue ſo much the more neede to beware of it: telleth them that there remaineth ſome ſcarre thereof ſtill printed in the bodie of the whoremonger, ſo that his body is put to reproch by it. Surely wee would be very chare of the preſeruing of our honeſtie, and it would greatly greeue vs ẏ it ſhoulde be ſteyned or blemiſhed by any man: & why thē doe we make ſo light account of it, as to ſteyne and imbrewe it with infamie, before God, before his Angels, & before men? So then let vs beare this in minde, and we ſhall be bridled. Although wee finde ſuch frailtie in our ſelues, and the diuell doe continually tempt vs: yet muſt this ſerue 1.Cor.6.20. vs as a bridle to pul vs back to the foreſaid clearneſſe, not onely of body, but alſo of minde.

Furthermore we muſt marke lykewiſe howe it is ſayd, that no man muſt deceiue himſelfe Eph.5.6. through vaine words: for by reaſō of ſuch thinges Gods wrath commeth vpon the vnbeleeuers. It is not now of late that men begin to flatter thēſelues, and to beare themſelues in hand that it is not ſo great and deadly a ſin, to commit whordome. Nay wee ſee howe theſe ſcoffers doe skorne God, terming whoredome a naturall ſin, and a matter of ſmall importance. There are ſome ſuch filthie ſwine which ſpeake after that faſhion. Now for that cauſe S. Paul ſayth, let no man deceiue you. Such skoffes flewe abroad in the mouthes of the diſpiſers of God euen at that time, and many were blinded with them, after the maner of the world, which is to be giuen to ſelfſoothing. Let no man beguile yee with ſuch lyes, ſayth S Paul. Why ſo? For whoredome is a deteſtable thing before God, as he ſheweth by the puniſhmentes which he hath ſent for it, as Numb.25.9 1.Cor.10.8. S. Paul noteth in ẏ tenth chapter of the firſt Epiſtle to ẏ Corinthians. There he alledgeth this example, that a great nūber of men were ſlayne for whoredome: whereby it appeareth that God cannot abide it. For ẏ lyfe of man is precious in Gods ſight, as was ſhewed yeſterday: they bee creatures faſhioned after his own image. Seeing then that a two or three and twentie thowſande men were ſo diſpatched, & God deſtroyed ſuch a number of his owne images, that is to ſay of ẏ creatures ẏ he had made: is it not to be ſayd that there was a terrible fire of his vengeāce kindled? Yes: and wherefore? Euen for whoredome. Then let vs conclude that it is not for vs to deceiue our ſelues, as though it were a light fault and eaſie to be pardoned, ſeeing ẏ our Lord, who is not ouerrigorous, did puniſh it ſo ſore: but rather let vs aſſure our ſelues, that we muſt come to account for it before the heauenly Iudge. Whē men haue pardoned vs neuer ſo much, and we be of opinion that ſuch maner of vncleaneſſe and filthines is but a ſporte: then muſt God ſet to his hand. Therefore let vs haue an eye to him and to the examples that he giueth vs, that we may continue vnder his feare, and indeuer the earneſtlyer to keepe our ſelues from all ſpottes. And ſo ye ſee in effect how this ſeuenth commaundement of the lawe is to be vnderſtoode: namely that we muſt not defile our ſelues with any vnchaſtitie or vnſtayedneſſe.

Now if it behoue vs to keepe both our bodies and our ſoules vndefiled: ought wee not alſo to eſchewe the occaſions ẏ may intiſe vs to whoredome? Yes ſurely. Let vs marke then, that whoſoeuer doe giue themſelues to any looſenes, doe ſeeke nothing elſe than to caſt themſelues into Satans ſnares. And although they be not reproued for it to the worldward: yet are they whoremaiſters already before God. Were this wel cōſidered: we ſhould ſee no more of the wantonnes in apparel, geſture and wordes, that is commonly in the world, which taketh too much libertie in that behalfe. And when men and women attire themſelues of purpoſe to intice one another and as it were to lay baytes of lewdneſſe: are not ſuch doinges very trickes of baudrie? In deede their excuſe ſhal be, as for me, I haue committed no whoredom: but yet they ſet themſelues forth as a pray to Satan, & are willing to drawe others with them, as much as they can. Then are they kindes of whoredome before God: and all the looſneſſe and ſuperfluitie that is vſed in apparell and attire, is nothing elſe but a laying of ſnares for men. Lykewiſe againe there are geſtures and wordes. When a man and a woman haunt one anothers companie, to open a gap to Satan by acquainting thēſelues together, ſo as they may bee caught in his nette, and giue themſelues ouer vnto him in bondage: it is whoredome before God. And although there be no deed done, no nor any thing fully agreed vppon: yet will not God leaue ſuch doings vnpuniſhed: for it is too manifeſt that they were attempted. And hereby it appeareth how fond and childiſh a ſhift it is to excuſe ones ſelfe by ſaying that it is not euill to doe this or that, ſo there be no intent to doe euill. As for example, ſuch as delight in daūcing and diſſoluteneſſe: is that ſo euill a thing (ſay they,) ſo long as there bee no whoredome committed? yea truely: It is all one as if they would mocke God of ſet purpoſe, and blindfold his eyes to buffet him, and in the meane while bid him geſſe whether it be euill or no. It is well knowen that dancing can be no better but a prelude to whoredome, to open an entrie purpoſely vnto Satan: and a crying out alowd vnto him, ẏ he ſhould be bold to come in. That is alwayes the very effect and ſubſtance of dauncing. If thou ſay, I meant no euill: thou makeſt God a lyer. Behold, S. Paul auoweth that lewde wordes corrupt good manners. 1.Cor.15.33 Yea and hee alledgeth that ſaying of an heathen man, Menander. of purpoſe to make vs the more aſhamed. If we admit not the doctrine giuen by S. Paul: let vs goe to ſchoole to ẏ wretched infidels and idolaters: for they coulde good ſkill to alledge, that vnhoneſt ſpeech corrupteth good manners. Now when mens tongues are infected with naughtie and vnchaſte talke, and there is nothing in their behauiour and wordes, but ſignes and marks of vtter diſhoneſtie: if they ſay hereupon, that they had none euill meaning: is it not a manifeſt belying of the holy Ghoſt? Yes: and therefore let vs marke, that whereas al whoredome is forbidden: it is meant that wee ſhould behaue our ſelues modeſtly both in our wordes and in our geſtures, & that there ſhould be no inkling of looſenes in vs that may tend to whoredome or whoriſhneſſe. It is true that all Tit.1.15. thinges are cleane to them that haue a cleane conſcience: but yet for all that, we muſt beware that Satan ouertake vs not, leaſt hee make ſome breach vpon vs. Thus ye ſee ẏ this precept ought to be conſidered in ſuch wiſe, as we muſt haue an eye, not onely to the very deede of whoredome: but alſo to all that matcheth with it, to al appurtenances of it, to all that commeth neere it, and to all that may intice or induce vs to it. To be ſhorte, wee muſt come backe to that which I touched euen now out of S. Paul: namely that as wee muſt not doe any man wrong either in his perſon or in his goods: ſo muſt wee alſo liue honeſtly, and put away all looſeneſſe and diſorderedneſſe from vs.

And lyke as all lewde talke, and dauncing, and other vnchaſte dealinges are condemned before God for kindes of whoredome: ſo let vs marke that all other looſe misbehauiours ſhall be condemned lykewiſe. Yee ſhall ſee a ſorte of drunkardes that cram themſelues lyke brute beaſtes. And when they be ſo full that they be ready to burſt: thē fling they themſelues into all maner of filthineſſe till they euen ſtincke again, not perceiuing their own ſhame. Therefore whē men behaue themſelues ſo beaſtly, ẏ they play the drunkardes and gluttons, and moreouer abandon their bodies to all villanie: thinke wee that they ſhall ſcape Gods hand, and not be curſed as whoremongers, though they commit not whoredome in actuall deede? Yes. Yee ſee then that the ſoberneſſe which Paul ſpeaketh of, doth tell vs that if wee will bee chaſte and ſtayed before God: wee muſt not onely abſteine from whoredome it ſelfe: but alſo vſe our eating and drinking ſoberly for our nouriſhment, and not to prouoke vs to lecherie, ſo as wee ſhould haue no more ſtay nor holde of our ſelues. That is a thing which we haue to marke further.

But now it will be alledged: and howe then can we abſteine from al vncleanneſſe, conſidering the frailtie that is in our fleſhe? For we ſee how little ſtay men haue of themſelues: whereby it appeareth (doe what they can) how ſinnefull our nature is. True it is that men be not able to be chaſte: for our Lorde will haue vs to feele the curſedneſſe of Adams ſinne in that behalfe, that is to ſay in the vnrulyneſſe of ẏ fleſh, if hee himſelfe preſerue vs not by ſpeciall gift, accordingly as it is ſayd that it is not giuen to all 1.Cor.7.7. men, but euery man muſt conſider what GOD hath giuen to himſelfe, and he muſt vſe the gift 1.Cor.7.9. that hee hath, aſſuring himſelfe that hee is ſo much the more bound vnto God. But yet howſoeuer he fare: mariage is prouided for a remedy to all ſuch as haue no ſtay of themſelues. Although then that God liſt to leaue this marke of infirmitie in vs: yet doth hee appoynt a conuenient remedy for it. Is a man fraile in his fleſh, or a woman lykewiſe? In deede it is a vice: and although it bee as it were a naturall inclination, (yea proceeding of the corrupt nature that wee take from Adam:) yet is it to bee condemned of it ſelfe. For all ſuch vnſtayedneſſe is farre off from the excellent dignitie which God did put in mankinde, of purpoſe that wee ſhould haue borne his marke, & haue bin as Angels. Therefore all vnrulineſſe of the fleſhe is ſinne. Notwithſtanding, foraſmuch as our Lorde beareth with vs, he hath ordeyned a meane whereby ẏ ſayd vice ſhal not be imputed to vs for ſinne. Now then whereas the vnrulineſſe of the fleſhe is of it ſelfe ſinfull and damnable: it ſhall not be imputed to vs before God, if it be couered with mariage. And when a man ſeeth that hee cannot forbeare, and thereupon prayeth vnto God, and hauing commited himſelfe vnto him, taketh a wife to the intent hee may not leade a lewde lyfe, by running at randon lyke a dogge, or a bull, or a brute beaſt: his entering into wedlock after ſuch maner as God hath ordeined, doth couer and hide his vice, ſo as it commeth not to account. And herein we ſee the ineſtimable goodneſſe of our God, that whereas hee leaueth this vice in vs, yea in ſuch wiſe as ought to make vs aſhamed: yet notwithſtanding hee ordeineth a good meane whereby to bury it. And although men be vnchaſte, yet are they not blamed for it before God and before his iudgement ſeate, ſo they hold thẽſelues within the boundes of mariage. For all vnchaſtitie is vnlawfull. As for example, if a man take too much libertie with his wife, or the wife with her husband: it is no reaſon that they ſhoulde make their bed a brothelhouſe. But if a man liue honeſtly with his wife in the feare of God: although the companying in bed be ſhamefull, yet hath it no reproch or ſhame before God and his Angels. And why? Becauſe the couert of mariage ſerueth to ſanctify the thing that is vncleane and vnholy of it ſelfe, and to make cleane the thing that is foule and filthie of it ſelfe. Seeing then that our Lorde is ſo gratious, as to ordeine ſuch a remedie: are not wee the more lewde and vnthankefull if wee vſe it not, and put not away all the excuſes that men alledge, as who ſhould ſay that God had not prouided for their neceſſitie, nor played the good phiſition with vs in healing our diſeaſes, yea and euen preuented vs as wee ſee? Now then, ſeeing that our Lorde hath vouchſafed to ſuccour vs in this behalfe, and ordeined holy mariage to keepe men from abandoning thẽſelues to al naughtineſſe, which haue not yͤ gift of chaſtitie: let vs put away al ſhifts of frailtie. That is the thing which wee haue to marke.

Heb.13.4. And hereupon let vs marke well how the Apoſtle ſayth, that when men and women holde themſelues within the feare of God and ſobrietie, the bedde of mariage is honorable: And whereas it ſhould iuſtly bee ſhamefull: our Lord conuerteth all to honor. It is no ſmall matter, yͭ the Apoſtle calleth the thing honorable before God, which would be ſhamefull euẽ before men, if God pardoned it not: & yet pronounceth curſe & vengeance againſt al adulterers. Sith we heare ſuch a ſentence: let vs learne to ſhrowde our ſelues vnder this honorable ſhadow, (if we haue neede of it,) to the end that our ſhamefull dealings be not accurſed and condẽned before God and his Angels: and therewithall let vs ſtand in awe of the dreadfull ſentence that is giuen againſt all aduowterers and whorehunters. 1.Cor.7.5. Yea & if any be able to forbeare mariage, let them take good heede that they forbeare it not but for the preſent time, ſo as they reiect not the remedie that God hath appointed them, if they finde not that God giueth them a ſtay of themſelues. And ſo let their liuing out of mariage be but frõ morrow to morrow, being alwayes ready to ſubmit themſelues to God, whenſoeuer he ſhall call them to that ſtate.

But here we ſee how Satan hath diſplaced al order, yea and that vnder pretence of holyneſſe. The world ſees what abhominations haue come of it. Inſomuch yͭ in poperie it ſeemeth to be the moſt Angelike vertue that can be, to liue vnmaryed. The ſtate of perfection (ſay the Munkes) is to be vnmaryed. The prieſtes ſay that they be vowed to God. Seeing wee bee the Cleargie (ſay they) and as it were the flower of yͤ Church: it behoueth vs to be ſeparated from the common defilementes of the world. So then, in poperie it is counted an approching to yͤ Angels of heauen, when men forſake mariage. But in the mean while, we ſee how God is mocked with ſuch diueliſh pride: for worſe than beaſtely abhominations haue happened through the diſpiſing of mariage after that ſorte. See how the Prieſtes, Munkes, and Nunnes defy God, by refuſing the benefite which he offereth thẽ: which is, that if they finde infirmitie in themſelues, they ſhould marrie. But this doe they diſpiſe and diſdayne, eſteeming it as an vncleane thing: and that is a fighting euen againſt nature. And therefore, was it not meete that God ſhould be reuenged of ſuch preſumption, when men trode the remedie vnder their feete, which he had giuen them? Is not that ſicke man out of his witte, which in ſteade of taking a medicine for his health, dooth fling it againſt the ground in diſpight of his phiſition? As much is done by theſe helhoundes of the popedome, euen all this vermine of Prieſts, Munkes, and Nunnes which haue refuſed holy mariage: wherein they haue made open warre againſt God. And they bee not contented with that: but wee ſee they haue ouerſhot themſelues ſo farre, as to be bolde to vtter blaſphemies, that ought to make all mens haires ſtand vp vpon their heades. If there were no more but that: the world may ſee that the diuell hath altogether ouermaiſtered them, and that the Apoſtatike or backeſlyding Church of Rome is the very ſeate of Antichriſte, inaſmuch as it hath giuen ſentence, that ſuch as are in the fleſhe cannot pleaſe God, Rom.8.8. but wee muſt bee ſeparated from all vncleaneſſe: And therefore mariage ought to be forbidden vnto prieſtes. Thoſe are the very wordes of a Pope: and yet notwithſtanding, they haue bin regiſtred as an Oracle comming from heauen. Now if the diuell had his full ſcope, yea and were incarnate in this world: coulde hee ſpeake more deteſtably in diſpite of God and holy wedlocke, than to apply this ſaying, *they that are in the fleſh cãnot pleaſe God*, vnto maryed folke? It is as much as if he condemned all mankinde: For in ſo doing hee condemneth not onely thoſe that are aliue at this day: but alſo all the holy fathers that liued vnder the Lawe, and all the holy Patriarches, Apoſtles, and martyrs.

Yee ſee then that the diuell of Rome intendeth to baniſhe both the Apoſtles, and martyrs,

and all the holy fathers out of heauen. And therefore whoſoeuer liſteth to bee in the Popes paradiſe, muſt bee a fellowe with the diuels in hell. For although it bee a monſtrous thing, that the vngratious Pope *Syricius* ſhoulde vtter ſuch blaſphemie, as to goe about to ſhut the moſt part of the holyeſt folke that euer haue bin, out of the kingdome of heauen: yet would God neuer haue ſuffered ſo horrible blaſphemie to bee ſpoken, but that it was his will to make the Sea of Rome abhominable, by letting thoſe diuels haue their own ſwindge ſo farre, as to reiect mariage vnder pretence of holineſſe, by meanes whereof (euen through iuſt vengeance) they tooke libertie to commit all wicked filthineſſe, and ſo infected the worlde with their deteſtable Sodomie, that euen the very Paynims themſelues did abhorre it. And hereby wee be warned (as I ſayd afore) not to diſpiſe Gods giftes: but to vſe them with all modeſtie. And as for ſuch as haue not ſtay of themſelues: let them
1.Cor.7.9. learne to bow downe their neckes, to receiue
Ep.5.22.25 the yoke of mariage, and to ſubmit themſelues
Col.3.18.19. therunto, aſſuring themſelues that if the huſ-
1.Pet.3.5.7 bandes beare with their wiues and the wiues in-
1.Tim.2.15. deuour to liue quietly with their husbands: it is an acceptable ſacrifice to God. And if they haue charge of children: let them looke to the bringing vp of them, and to the finding of them, whether they bee poore or riche: aſſuring themſelues that God accepteth that ſeruice. Alſo when the women take paynes and are troubled about their houſhold buſineſſe: let them vnderſtand that their doinges are acceptable ſacrifices to God. And although mariage be deſpiſed by thoſe feendes, who in deſpight of GOD, doe ſurmiſe an Angelicall perfection in abſteining from it: yet notwithſtanding let ſuch as bee in that ſtate vnderſtand, that God accepteth and receiueth them, yea and that hee go-
Matt.19.5. uerneth their houſehold. For ſeeing he auow-
Prou.2.17. eth himſelfe to bee the author of mariage: hee will bleſſe it, if folke proceede to it according to his will. Let ſuch as are vnmaried bee well aduiſed to walke neuertheleſſe in the feare of God, and to haue mariage in eſtimation, and to honour it accordingly. And let both ſorts bee carefull to maintaine themſelues in all cleaneſſe both of body and minde, as S. Paul de-
clareth in the ſeuenth of the firſt Epiſtle to the 1.Cor.7.34.
Corinthians. In that place he condemneth not widowes and ſuch others as abſteine from mari-
age: but exhorteth them to doe their dueties. 1.Cor.7.32.
For widowes and maydes and ſuch as are vn- 34.35.
maried, ought to ſticke the faſter vnto God, and to liue as folke that are leſſe hindered to giue
themſelues wholy vnto him. Why ſo? for they 1.Cor.7.33.
haue not ſo many worldely thinges to drawe 34.
them away. Maryed folkes haue mo incumberances: but yet muſt they beware that they giue not themſelues the bridle, ſo as they ſhould not walke cōtinually in feare and carefulneſſe. Thus yee ſee how that in all ſtates wee muſt haue ſobrietie and honeſtie in ſuch eſtimation, as wee
may not onely ſhewe tokens of chaſtitie and 1.Cor.6.20.
honeſtie in our perſons: but alſo make offerings & ſacrifices both of our bodies and of our ſoules
vnto God, ſeeing hee hath bought them ſo dere- 1.Cor.6.18.
ly by the bloud of our Lord Ieſus Chriſt, and will haue them dedicated to himſelfe, to dwell in them as in his temples.

Now let vs kneele downe in the preſence of our good GOD with acknowledgement of our faultes, praying him to voutſafe to make vs feele them better than we haue done, yea euen in ſuch ſorte, that being rightly ſory for them, wee may learne to repayre vnto him, with acknowledgement of the faultes whereof wee bee guiltie, ſeeking to giue our ſelues to his obedience, and to pleaſe him in all things, euen vntill we haue finiſhed our courſe and pilgrimage vpon earth, and bee come to the ſaluation that is prepared for vs, as it is already in the kingdome of heauen. That it may pleaſe him to graunt this grace, not onely to vs but alſo to all people and nations of the earth, &c.

On Wedneſday the iij. of Iuly. 1555.

The xxxix. Sermon, which is the tenth vpon the fifth Chapter.

19 Thou ſhalt not be a thiefe.

IF wee vnderſtoode Gods will in one worde, as hee declareth it familiarly enough vnto vs: wee ſhould not neede any long ſtudy, to know how to behaue our ſelues well, and to leade a holy and righteous lyfe. But there is not ſo lewde and ignorant a perſon, as he that wil not vnderſtand: nor ſo deafe a man as hee that wil not heare, as they ſay in the prouerbe. And that is the cauſe why wee play the blinde buſzardes, though our Lorde ſhewe vs his light to our faces. And wee ſee it as well in this cōmaundement of the lawe, as in the reſt that haue bin touched. For if euery man would enter into his owne conſcience to make true ſearch: ſhould hee not finde it eaſie to iudge, that howſoeuer things be cloaked, we bee guiltie of theft before God if we deceiue our neighbour, or doe him any wrong in his goods? Yes. But what for that? So we may hide our ſhame to the worldewarde: it is enough for vs. And in the mean while Gods Iuſtice is thruſt vnder foote, & we thinke not on it. Yet notwithſtanding, all theſe figge leaues ſhall ſtand vs in no ſtead, we muſt be faine at length to come to account before ÿ heauenly Iudge: and thē ſhall wee feele how it was not for naught ÿ he ſayd by his prophet Zacharie, ÿ his curſe ſhal light vpon Zach.5.3.4 the forſworne perſon, and vppon ÿ theefe: ÿ is to ſay, wherſoeuer we offend, what poynt of ÿ lawe ſoeuer it bee: he will finde meanes well enough how to puniſhe vs for it. Men then may well either iuſtify or flatter themſelues: but yet for all that, God will in the end vtter his wrath, both againſt forſwearers and againſt theeues.

Howbeit, to the intent wee may know Gods will the better, let vs marke that hee vſeth the worde *Theft*, to make vs hate all deceite and robbery, and all maner of wrong that wee can deuiſe to doe to our neighbor, as hath bin ſhewed heretofore in the expounding of murder and aduowtrie. If a man call one theefe, he will take diſpleaſure at it, (for it is a worde of iniurie) inſomuch that hee will not abide to bee ſo diſhoneſted before the worlde. Now God to bring vs to the hating of all fraud, couin, deceit, guile, harme, hurte, & extortion which we may doe to another man in his goods: ſetteth them all downe by the one name of theft. He coulde well enough haue ſpoken after another maner: hee could haue ſayd, keepe your ſelues from catching or plucking of other mens goods vnto you: keepe your ſelues from working any harme or loſſe to your neighbors: keepe your ſelues frō doing any maner of violence: but hee ſayth in one worde, *Steale not*. And why? To the intent wee ſhoulde the more abhorre all deceite, all pilling and polling, all ſcratching and catching, and al maner of anoyance: and to the intent we ſhould bee aſhamed, once to make mention of doing any man wrong, yea and euen abhorre it from our heartes, ſeeing wee ſhall bee guiltie of theft for it before God. Moreouer, let vs mark ÿ there are diuers kinds of theft. For ſome vſe priuie packing and deceite in drawing other mens goods to themſelues by ſubtil meanes and practiſes. Some vſe open force, and that is properly termed either robberie, or extortiō, or ſpoyling. And otherſome deale yet more couertly, ſo as they ſeem not to touch a man, neither can they be accuſed to ÿ worldward: neuertheleſſe foraſmuch as they deale not playnly and vprightly, they be theeues before God. After ÿ maner muſt wee come to the particular kinds of theft, if wee intend to know what is forbidden vs in this text.

But by the way wee haue to note, that God iudgeth not of theft after the maner of men. For they that are in authoritie and eſtimation, ſhall not faile for all that to bee condemned before Exo.22.23. GOD, yea euen though no man accuſe them Deut.24.15. but onely the crying out of the poore for vengeance, whome they haue deuowred. And although they ſay neuer a word, yet the afflictions which they ſuffer ſhall cry out lowde and ſhrill enough before God, and make an inditement ſubſtantiall enough without vttering any word. So then wee muſt not bring our owne imaginations hither to iudge of theftes, nor thinke our ſelues eſcaped from Gods hand, when wee bee not puniſhed by men nor by worldely iuſtice: for GOD looketh farre deeper. And therefore let vs beare in minde at a worde, that all maner of harme and all maner of coueting to rake to our ſelues that which is none of our owne, is called theft in reſpect of God throughout the whole holy ſcripture. And in deede when as GOD threateneth by his Eſa.33.1. prophet Eſay, that he which hath ſpoyled and robbed, ſhall haue his turne [to bee ſpoyled and robbed lykewiſe:] hee ſpeaketh not of the petie theeues that are caryed to the gallowes: but of the great princes and monarkes that bare ſway in the worlde. Alſo in the Eſa.1.23. firſt chapter when hee ſpeaketh to the holy people that were the Church of GOD: Thy princes and gouerners (ſayth hee) are companions of Theeues. Yet notwithſtanding it is certeine that they were not arreigned: Nay, they themſelues arreigned other men: and yet neuertheleſſe they failed not to bee condemned before GOD. So then the theeues that are honorable here beneath, faile not to be accurſed by the Lawe, and God hath giuen ſentence of them in this text. Therefore wee muſt be faine to caſt downe our eyes knowing ÿ it ſhall not boote vs though our theeuery be excuſable before ÿ world, nor though it bee cōcealed or faced out. For yet for all ÿ, Gods Lawe ſhal haue his courſe, & the execution of it is ready at hand. God hath not forbidden any thing, which he calleth not to accoūt. Thus ye ſee what we haue to remember vppon this text.

But now muſt the thinges which I haue touched breefely, bee layde foorth by parcelmeale and ſpecifyed by examples, that they may bee expreſſed the better. As I ſayd afore, if we were diligent in harkening to the things that God declareth: there ſhould neede no long expoſition in this behalfe. But what? All our ſeeking is to intangle our ſelues, and to take occaſiō of doubting though the matter be knowen vnto vs. And therefore doth it ſtand vs in hand to be preſſed the more. I haue tolde you already that there are moe kindes of ſtelth or theft than one. For ſome play the theeues by ſtealing away other mens goodes: as if a man ſay, ſuch a one hath ſtolne a horſe, he hath ſtolne monie, he hath ſtolne bedding, pottes, platters or ſuch other lyke thinges. Well the worlde can iudge well enough of theſe kindes of theft.

But when a marchant taketh more for his ware than it is woorth, or if hee ſell vnlawfull wares, and the ſimple man that knoweth nothing of it is beguiled, and woteth not how to winde himſelfe out of the ſnare: men deeme not this to be theft. Yet notwithſtanding ſuch a marchant is a theef though no man condemne him, becauſe hee hath dealt ſo vnconſcionably. Surely hee that hath bin bitten willbee a good and rightfull iudge in that caſe: if hee ſpy the colluſion, hee will by and by ſay, hee doth me wrong. We need not to goe to any doctor, [Sergeant, Coūſeller,] or great cleark to ſhewe vs ÿ we haue wrōg don vs: euery of vs knowes it wel enough: but yet for al this, we diſcern not ÿ ſame kinde of theft in our ſelues, neither doe we ſuf-

ſicientficiently conſider it. Yet notwithſtanding, God will not faile to iudge him for a thiefe, which ſhal haue ſo abuſed a ſimple man, by deliuering him vnlawfull wares, ſeeing hee hath beguiled him for want of iudgement and ſkil. Lykewiſe hee that ouerſelleth his wares to an vnskilful perſon therein, is a thiefe as wel as the other. Againe, if a handicraftes man make ſlight or falſe ſtuffe, and the fault be not perceiued, but hee maketh what hee can of it, not regarding to ſell it according to the valew of it, but how to inrich himſelfe, alledging theſe excuſes for himſelfe: hee with whome I haue to deale is a rich man, it is al one to me, he hath a good purſe. A man doth in deed vſe theſe ſpeeches: but yet true it is, that albeit his ſhifts may well ſerue him to the worldward, yet ſhall Gods Iuſtice ſtill haue his courſe and take holde of him. When euery man hath bin asked his opinion, and all agree that it is no theft at all: yet will not God vnſay his worde for our pleaſure. Ye ſee then that the theftes which men let ſlip, ſhall neuertheleſſe come to accoũt before God, notwithſtanding that the takers of ſuch libertie, woulde neuer ſo faine haue the lewdeneſſe pardoned them. For beholde, Gods Lawe is vnchaungeable, as I haue tolde you already: and it ſhall be ſhewed hereafter that it caryeth execution with it.

Againe ſith it is ſo that we muſt not goe to worke with craft and ſubtiltie: wee muſt come Matt.7.12. backe to natural vprightneſſe, which is to do nothing to another which we wold not haue don to our ſelues. Seeing we haue ſuch a rule, we neede no huge volumes to teach vs that wee ſhoulde not ſteale: for euery man may know in one word, how to behaue himſelfe towardes his neighbors: that is to wit, that he deale not lewdely, that hee goe not about to inrich himſelfe by other mens loſſes, and that hee take not other mens goods to him as his owne. Thus needeth there not any moe wordes than this: and then the faireſt couerings & countenances that we haue, would vaniſh away. For when we haue once beguiled men: we beare our ſelues in hand that wee haue lykewiſe bleared the eyes of God. Let vs take an example whereby this poynt may bee plainlyer perceiued. He that hath gotten away another mans goods by ſute at the lawe, thinkes himſelfe to haue as iuſt title as can bee to poſſeſſe them. Why ſo? becauſe he hath them by order of lawe. I will forbeare to ſay, that perchaunce the lawe was corrupted. Of a trueth there are that make lawe a flat theeuery by their bribing and other wicked practiſes, ſo as they ouerthrow all right and equitie, and the courte of Iuſtice becommeth oftentimes as a market to ſell other mens right in, and to peruert all equitie. And although it be not ſo: yet if a man finde the means to get another mans goods by craft and ſubtiltie: alledge he neuer ſo much that Lawe hath ſo iudged it, and therefore that there is not a better nor a rightfuller title in the world: yet is it dubble theft, and hee had bin much better to haue robbed and ſpoyled his neighbors houſe, than to haue gotten his goods ſo vniuſtly by order of lawe. Why ſo? For in ſo doing there is theft, yea and the theft is committed vnder colour of Iuſtice, which is a moſt holy thing: and that is a treacherie that God cannot abide. If a houſe be robbed, it ſhall be grieuouſly puniſhed: and is it not farre woorſe than robberie, when the ſeate of Iuſtice which God hath dedicated to his owne maieſtie, is ſo diſordered that all things are turned vpſide down and confounded? So then let vs marke well, that what pretence ſoeuer we can make before men: Gods lawe ſhal ſtill keepe on his courſe: inſomuch that if wee vſe any craftineſſe or krinking, or any extortion or violence: wee ſhalbe condemned for theeues. If a man miſuſe his poore neighbor vnder colour that he is in authoritie, and by that meanes oppreſſe him: he is a theefe, and halfe a murtherer, and it is not ſingle theft or robberie, but (as yee would ſay) qualifyed with murder: and yet for all that, it ſcapeth and is pardoned. It is true that men will now and then mutter at it: but that is but with halfe mouth: and in the meane while hee that hath misbehaued himſelfe, ſootheth himſelfe, and (which woorſe is) the greater thief that he is, the more is he honored. For the more a man hath gotten to himſelfe, and the richer that hee is become: the more doe men ſtoope to him, and the highlier is hee aduanced. Yee ſee then that oftentimes men come to greate honor in the worlde by theeuery. And therefore let vs not take any of thoſe ſkarffes to couer our eyes: but rather let vs conſider what yͤ holy ſcripture ſayth: namely that we be theeues, if we doe not vnto others as we our ſelues would be done vnto, ne yeelde to euery man his right. For we muſt define a vice by the contrary vertue. If we will knowe well what theft is: let vs cõſider what it is to doe right to our neighbors. Now, we doe not right to our neighbors, when we ſpoyle thẽ of their goods, and by any meanes take yͤ things to vs which are theirs. To be ſhort, if we vſe any couin, violence, or extortion, it is proofe good enough of our theeuery.

Hereby wee ſee that theft is committed, not onely by taking away of mony and other thinges with our handes: but alſo by withholding a mãs owne from him, and by neglecting to preſerue the thinges that God hath put into our handes, according as his will is that euery man ſhoulde keepe that which he hath. As for example: If a ſeruant waſte or deuour his maiſters goods, hee is a thiefe. If a laboring man look to haue his wages, and in the meane while loue to loyter and to haue his hand in the platter: ſurely hee is a theefe, and wee can well skill to deeme him ſo. But it were expedient for vs to come to the other kindes alſo, and to make this compariſon, that if wee render not euery man the right yͤ belongeth to him, ſuch vnindifferent dealing ſhall alwayes bee taken for theft before God, and wee ſhall bee condemned for it.

But now remaineth to ſee how we may liue in ſuch ſorte, as God may not curſe vs as if wee were theeues. The firſt poynt thereof is to learne to loue our neighbors, as Saint Paul ſheweth in the thirteenth to the Romans. And it Rom.13.8.9.10. is a wonder that men ſhould make ſo light of the taking away of other mens goods, ſeeing that if a man aske vs whether it be ſo harde a matter to loue our neighbors: wee will aunſwere, no. For nature hath voutſafed to linke men together in vnitie, and God hath created them all after his owne image: and therefore it ought to bee no hard nor comberſome matter to vs, to loue one another. Now it is ſo, that if a man haue loue hee will neuer bee a theefe, as ſayth Saint Paul: yea and if wee did willingly conſider, what wee owe to other men of right, and howe wee be bound vnto them: wee ſhould not neede all theſe warninges, *Thou ſhalt not play the theefe, Thou ſhalt not play the aduowterer, Thou ſhalt not play the murderer.* All this were needeleſſe, as Saint Paul ſheweth in the ſame place. But what? there are very fewe that thinke vpon that. Nay contrariwiſe, (as I haue told ye already,) when wee haue ſtolne other mens goods, wee fall by and by to ſeeking of vaine excuſes: and when we haue done any deceit, ſhrewd turn, or extortion, ſtrightwais we ſhift it off with an excuſe redy at hand: But yet in ſo doing it appeareth that wee haue no loue in vs, and that wee bee as wilde beaſtes, ſo as wee be not worthie to bee taken for men, becauſe wee breake the bonde of vnitie which GOD had ſet among all the children of Adam. Thus much for that one poynt, namely that it behoueth vs to minde this leſſon of charitie, if wee will not bee counted theeues.

1.Tim. 6.9, 10.

Againe there is another poynt, which is that wee muſt not couet to bee rich. For as ſoone as the deſire of gayning is ſetled in vs: it is certeine that wee ſhall become theeues, and it cannot bee otherwiſe. This will ſeeme ſtrange at the firſt bluſh: but when euerie of vs ſhal haue gathered home his wittes to himſelfe, [we ſhall finde] (as the heathen themſelues coulde well skill to ſay) that euen nature teacheth vs, it is vnpoſſible for vs to couet to bee riche, but wee ſhall bee inflamed to rake to our ſelues by hooke or by crooke. Will wee then ſhunne theft? Wee muſt lay aſide couetouſneſſe, that is to ſay the deſirouſneſſe of inriching our ſelues. To the intent this worde be not cauilled at: how ſhall wee doe it? Let vs learne to bee contented with our ſtate. For as for him that hath no certaine ſtay, but is alwayes toſſed and turmoyled with coueting: his affections harrye him to and fro, ſo as hee can neuer haue any reſt, to ſay, Here muſt I hold my ſelfe within my bounds, I ſay that the ſtate which GOD hath giuen to euery man, muſt bee as a bound to hedge him in, as though it were ſayd to him: Beholde, thy God will haue thee to ſtay vppon that which hee giueth thee, content thy ſelfe therewith: if thou doe not, thou not onely troubleſt the whole order of the worlde, but alſo defyeſt thy GOD, as though thou meanteſt to bid him battell.

Phil. 4.12.

Yee ſee then that the thing which we haue to marke, is that inaſmuch as we haue the rule of charitie to leade vs, wee muſt learne to bee contented with our ſtate. And why? Becauſe wee knowe it is Gods will, and that hee will haue a triall of our obedience. And that cannot bee done without keeping of Saint Pauls rule: which is, that wee haue learned to bee riche and to be poore, to bee hungrie and thirſtie, and likewiſe to haue aboundance. Saint Pauls ſaying is, not onely that wee muſt bee patient in pouertie, whereof hee proteſteth himſelfe to haue felt his part, and therefore hath giuen vs an example thereof, and ſhewed vs the way: but alſo that wee muſt learne to bee riche and to haue aboundance. And how is that? They ſeeme to bee but wordes to no purpoſe: for euery man knowes wee haue neede to bee exhorted to patience when wee be in pouertie. Why ſo? For wee ſhall bee tempted: and it is a harde and grieuous thing, when a man hath not breade to eate. And although hee had but browne bread, yet would hee faine haue eaſe and quietneſſe with it.

So then as touching pouertie, euery man will graunt that wee haue neede to bee comforted, and to bee tolde that wee muſt not grudge againſt GOD, nor bee inticed to doe euill. But when hee ſayth that wee muſt know how to bee riche: men will laugh that ſpeach to ſkorne, as if it were not grounded vppon any reaſon, and yet is that leſſon needefuller than the former. And why? Let vs conſider a little what rich men are: They be gulfes that can neuer bee filled, yea and much more vneaſie to bee contented than poore men. If a man compare the rich and the poore together: lyke as hee ſhall finde poore men which martyr themſelues, and repine, and are induced to filching and to doe many lewde turnes: ſo ſhall hee finde the moſt part of them contented with that which God giueth them, and ſo keeping on their courſe. But if a man goe to the rich ſorte, ſpecially to kings and princes: hee ſhall finde them ſo inflamed, and ſo farre in loue with the riches of this worlde: as they cannot be ſatisfied. Nay, it euen greeues them at the heart, that the ſunne ſhineth vppon the poore. To be ſhort, it is ſeene that if God ſhoulde giue the whole earth in poſſeſſion to the riche: yet the moſte parte of them would neuer thinke it enough. For (as I ſayd) it greeueth them that the light of the ſunne ſhould be common to the poore, or that they ſhould haue water to drinke. Yea and although the poore take paynes, and do the beſt they can: yet doth the rich man malice him. Although hee ſhed ſweate and bloud for him: yet the riche man thinkes that hee plucketh the guttes and bowels out of his bellie, whē he eateth of his coſt. This nigardſhip, or rather beaſtly crueltie of the richer ſorte, is apparant: & it is too common a thing. Not without cauſe therefore doth Saint Paul ſay that wee haue greatly profited, when we haue learned to bee rich: that is to wit, when we be not deſirous to gather ſtill more and more, ſo as if GOD haue giuen vs any aboundance, we followe our trade ſtill without coueting in this wiſe: O, ſuch a peece of ground were good for me: I muſt needes purchace that, and the next to it.

Againe, not to be deſirous to be ſtil increaſing, is not all that a riche man hath to doe. Wee

Iob.1.21.

Prou.30.9.

muſt alſo bee poore in our heartes: that is to ſay, wee muſt not bee proude to truſt in our riches, nor take occaſion by them to oppreſſe the weaker ſorte, and ſuch as haue no eſtimation nor friendes in the worlde to maintaine them. And finally wee muſt bee readie to become poore whenſoeuer it ſhall pleaſe God. Let him that is nowe verie riche, which hath his garners, ſtorehouſes, and Cellars full, which hath his purſe well ſtuffed, which hath Landes and poſſeſſions, and which hath a good trade of marchandize: let him (ſay I) not thinke it ſtraunge if GOD liſt to bereaue him of all, neyther let it grieue him and vexe him ouermuch, but let him bee patient as Iob was and ſay, ſeeing it is Gods will to take againe the things that he had giuen mee, his name bee bleſſed for it. It is a verie hard thing (ſay I) to haue skill howe to be riche: yea verily, if wee ſubmit not our ſelues to Gods will, to accept quietly whatſoeuer he giueth vs, that is to ſay to beare pouertie patiently when he ſendeth it, and to holde our ſelues contented with the goods that he hath put into our hands, without ſetting of our heartes vppon them. Otherwiſe wee muſt alwayes needes be theeues. For the poore ſhall bee tempted to doe euill, and they beare themſelues in hand that God diſpenſeth with them for it: in ſo much that nowe and then they vſe this ſhift, O, I ſee howe ſuch a man goes about to eate the fleſh from my backe, and he would deſtroy mee if he could: & why then ſhould it not bee lawfull for me to bee reuenged of him? See how euerie man would be his owne caruer: but it is not for vs to doe ſo. Verily when a man is become riche euen by pilling and powling, by ſuttletie and deceite: yet is it not for vs to ſpoile him of that which he hath, bicauſe he muſt make account of it vnto God. Nowe then if wee bee poore, wee ſhall by and by bee prouoked to theft, if wee haue not this bridle to ſay, What thoe? It is our Lordes will to exerciſe vs, and therefore are wee needie of worldly goods: wee haue not as we would wiſh, and that is bicauſe God mindeth to humble vs by that meanes. Marke that for one point. And therewithall, let vs labour to ouercome this temptation. For wee ſee howe that euen Salomon deſireth that hee may not bee poore, for feare leaſt he ſhould bee prouoked to ſteale. Seeing that ſuch a perſon was afrayd, yea and made ſute vnto GOD in the name of the faithfull: ought not wee to ſtand vpon our garde? Yes: and therefore let al ſuch as haue lacke and ſcarcetie of bread and drinke, and wote not which way to turne them, but leade a verie ſlender life, ſo as ſome time they can ſcarcely get halfe their fill of bread: and let others alſo which haue not their commodities as they woulde deſire: let them (ſay I) put themſelues into Gods hand, and pray him to graunt them the grace to liue in ſuch ſort, as they may not bee caried to doe any man wrong or harme, vnder pretence that need driueth them vnto it. And as for them that haue the world at will, and money in their purſe: let them take good heede that they oppreſſe not the poore, as they commonly doe, by laying their ſnares for them. Loe howe the rich men deale. If they ſee a poore man going to decaye: they play the Hunters, they fall by and by vpon him, and they neuer leaue toſſing and turning of him about, till the poore ſoule bee at length intrapped. Therefore let ſuch as are wealthie beware that they bee not ouergreedie, but rather let them holde themſelues backe, ſo as they abuſe not their abundance. Let not ſuch as haue abundance ſteppe vp to oppreſſe ſuch as haue it not. After that manner muſt wee proceede in this caſe. Yea and in ſtead of being ſuttle to ſeeke thinges a farre off, let vs when occaſion ſerueth to doe it, let vs aduiſedly repulſe all ſuch naughtineſſe. And in ſtead of imagining all to bee well wonne when wee can inriche our ſelues by other mens loſſes: let vs aſſure our ſelues that ſuch riche folke doe cut the poore folkes throtes, & that they make many widowes and fatherleſſe children, though they thinke it not. Howbeit for as much as our fleſh is ſharpe witted and ſuttle in ſeeking ſuch occaſions: let vs thinke vpon our God, who intendeth to trie vs. Wee may well haue a ſword in our hand: but let vs beware wee doe no harme with it, and let vs conſider that if wee were in like caſe as poore folkes are, wee would gladly bee ſuccoured. To be ſhort, if we wil abſtaine from theft, let vs bee neither wolues nor Foxes. For as many as deale by deceit and craftineſſe, they be like foxes: and what neede ſo euer the poore haue, if they followe the prouocation to doe euill, they ſhewe themſelues to bee no more men, by their vniuſt raking of other mens goods vnto them. And as for them that rob with violence: they be like wilde beaſtes, which ſeeke nothing elſe but to deuour all. So then, to ỹ intent we be not theeues, let vs not be cruell.

Therewithall, whatſoeuer worldly thing wee want, let vs waite for it to haue it by the bleſſing of God. If wee helde this rule: ſurely all couetouſneſſe, all fleecing, all fraude, and all other like thinges woulde ſoone bee amended. Wee ſhould neede none other medicine to heale all our diſeaſes than this, namely that we coulde lifte vp our eyes to heauen to ſaye, God is our Father, hee will prouide all that wee want, it is hee to whom wee muſt truſt for all things that belong to the mayntenaunce of this preſent lyfe, and at a woord, his bleſſing is the welſpring of all riches. If wee were well perſwaded of this: wee ſhoulde not neede any more, eyther preceptes of the Lawe to forbid vs theft, or any other warnings and aduertiſementes. This onely one woord woulde ſuffice vs. But what? Wee aske GOD our dayly breade, proteſting that it is his peculiar office to feede vs: and yet in the meane whyle wee fall to filching, deceyuing, and malicing: and is not that an vtter ſcorning of God? I ſay with my mouth, giue me my dayly bread: and in the meane ſeaſon I goe and ſeeke it at the diuels hand. For if wee vſe vnlawfull meanes, ſo as wee beguile one and fleece another: at whoſe hand fetch wee our welfare? Is it at Gods hande? Are wee not companions with theeues and robbers? So then, it is certaine that

that our whole ſeeking is to bee inriched by the Diuell, when wee giue our ſelues ſo to craft and extorſion. And moreouer the ſame is a ſure token of our vnbeliefe, and that wee looke not for anye thing by Gods bleſſing, ne thinke him riche ynough to finde vs. Loe at what poynt we bee. Neuertheleſſe theſe things ought to profite vs. When wee heare that our Lorde curſeth theft and robberie, and that he abhorreth it: let vs likewiſe hate and abhorre it, aſſuring our ſelues that he iudgeth not after the fanſie of man, but will haue vs to liue in ſuch vprightneſſe, as euerie man may haue his right, and no man bee hindred or impeached in his goods and ſubſtaunce, and therefore wee muſt ſtill haue the more ſtaye of our ſelues. Againe, foraſmuch as wee bee ſo inclined vnto euill: let vs ſeeke meanes to holde vs in awe of our God, and to reſtraine vs from ſtealing as I haue ſhewed you before. And ſith wee knowe that hee hath knit vs togither: let vs keepe that Law and rule of equitie. Furthermore let vs not couet to bee riche: but to bee ſhort, let vs put this leſſon in vre, of bearing pouertie patiently, and let vs not bee eager of getting, and of promoting our ſelues out of meaſure. And finally let vs abhorre all crueltie and deceite: and ſpecially let vs learne not to bee ſo beaſtly, as to thinke that our catching & ſnatching by hooke and by crooke, is able to inriche vs. Let vs not beguile our ſelues in that poynt. Why ſo? For the true richeneſſe (as I ſaide afore,) is the bleſſing of GOD. Then muſt wee drinke of that fountaine, and bee filled with it, if wee will abſtaine from all theft.

But nowe herewithall let vs come alſo to Gods threateninges. When he hath ſhewed vs ſufficiently that this commaundement is exceeding rightfull, and hath alſo giuen vs meanes to liue vprightly without hurting or wronging of any man: perceyuing vs to bee harde hearted ſtill, and that our wicked luſtes doe turne vs the contrarie waye: hee addeth threates to make vs afraide. And is it a ſmall matter when 1.Cor.6.10. Eph.5.5. he ſayeth, that theeues and robbers ſhal not enter into the kingdome of God? Nowe then, ſhall wee ſet ſo much ſtore by this preſent life, that to gather a little good for the maintaining of it in this worlde, wee ſhall wilfully prouoke God to diſpleaſure? He telleth vs that we ſhall be baniſhed out of his kingdome. If we had any ſpark of fayth at all, woulde not this threatening pearce vs to the heart? Yes: but our Lorde proceedeth yet further. For in as much as he ſees vs to bee ſo fleſhly, and ſo greatly giuen to the earth: he telleth vs that euen in this worlde he will make vs to goe backewarde: in ſo much that he which thinketh to further himſelfe by his crinking, pilling, and deceyuing, ſhall bee conſumed, and a ſecrete curſe ſhall waſte him away. According whereunto it is ſayde in the forealledged text of Zacharie, that Gods curſe ſhall lyght vppon the houſe of the theefe, and Miche.6.11.13.14.15. there abide vntill he bee conſumed. Alſo wee ſee howe hee ſpeaketh of it by the reſt of the Prophets: In ſo much that our Lorde telleth vs, that when men weene they haue inriched themſelues and doone much: hee will blowe vppon them, yea and he will blowe after ſuch a ſorte, as all ſhall vaniſh away, and that ſo ſodainely, as a man woulde neuer haue looked for. But God paſſeth yet further. In deede it is ynough and too much alreadie, when wee ſee howe our Lorde mocketh at thoſe which martyr themſelues ſo much in heaping vp of riches, when all goes to decay and ſlippeth away like water: but a man ſhall ſee moreouer, that the ſame goods are a cauſe of the ouerthrowe of ſuch as haue beene in ſome reputation. Looke mee vpon a father that hath pilled & powled and prouoked Gods wrath againſt himſelfe all the time of his life: When he dyeth, hee beareth himſelfe in hand that his children ſhall become little princes. Nowe had he left them but a little, that they might haue falne in trade of occupying, and had he taught them to haue trauailed honeſtly, then they might haue had competent wherewith to find thẽſelues. But behold, the father ſpinneth a halter for euery of his children, by making them to truſt after that faſhion in their euill gotten goods, ſo as they muſt needes eyther goe to the gallowes, or come to ſome other vnhappie ende. And what is the cauſe of it? The wrath of God which is preſent with them to conſume all the goods that were gotten by ſtealth and by powling. The houſe of them muſt needes bee accurſed: and God muſt needes ſhewe himſelfe a iuſt iudge, both againſt the theeues, and againſt all ſuch as dally with his diuine Maieſtie. If a man tell them of it, they make but a ieſt of it, as theſe ſcoffers doe, who will ſay, well well ſir, the tyme is worth the money they thinke, all is one. And if a poore man bee neither of abilitie nor of credite to make his part good againſt them: O how they welter themſelues in the meane whyle in their wickedneſſe! But wote yee what? When God ſeeth men ſo ſotted, and that hee can not bring them backe to the heauenly lyfe, in ſo much that they make no reckening of being baniſhed from the kingdome of heauen: well then goe to (ſaieth he:) I ſummon you aforehand, for I will begin to put my ſentence in execution. I will ſhew how my curſe lyes vppon euill gotten goods, and that they which haue poſſeſſed them for a time, muſt be diſpoſſeſſed of them, and that themſelues and their goods with all their whole ofſpring muſt be conſumed togither. Now when wee ſee all theſe things: muſt wee not needes be mooued at them, if the diuell haue not vtterly bewitched vs? Yes. What remayneth then? We muſt holde faſte the good conſcience which God requireth of thoſe that are his, ſo as euerie Pſal.127.a. of vs trauell quietly for our liuing, and goe not about to grieue other mẽ, but ſeeke by al meanes to paſſe our life without offending of God, that if we haue no great reuenew nor much to ſpend: ſobrietie may ſerue vs for a dubble portiõ. After that maner muſt wee deale.

But now if theft [to manward] be ſo condemned of God: what ſhall bee done if wee rob him of his honour? For wee muſt compare thefte towardes man, and theft towards God togither.

Beholde, it is God that hath forbidden vs to bee theeues. And why? Bicauſe he will haue vs to keepe equitie and vprightneſſe one towards another. Yea and looke what goods ſoeuer he appointeth to our vſe, he will haue them ſo vſed, as wee poſſeſſe them not by wicked ſhiftes. He that hath much, muſt ſpend them as one that hath but onely the laying out of them, and not the ownerſhip of them: and he that hath but litle, muſt be contented with it, as I haue ſaide alreadie. Now if God will haue vs to keepe ſuch an euen hand towards our neighbours, for the preſeruing of their goods which they haue in their hands: if he make ſuch account of the goods ẏ he hath created, as he wil not haue them defiled by guilefulnes, by violence, or by ſuch other like dealings: what will he doe in the thing which he ſetteth much more ſtore by? So then, when wee haue liued ſoundly & vprightly in all reſpects among our neighbours, ſo as we haue indeuoured to giue euery man his due: let vs alſo yeelde our God his right: ẏ is to ſay; let vs glorifie him, and beware ẏ he remaine vnimpeached in his Maieſtie, ſo as we take not more vpon vs than is lawful for vs as we ſee men commōly do, who are ſo bolde, that when they haue bin ſo mad as to oppreſſe their neighbors, by & by they ſet vp their hornes againſt God. When they haue ſpoiled other men of their goods, they woulde make God their vnderling too, and they will not obey him further than they liſt themſelues. Therefore we muſt beware of al theſe things. And to conclude, let vs alſo beware, not onely ẏ we abſtaine from all iniurie and anoyance: but alſo ẏ as neere as we can we ſuffer not any man to be vexed or in-
Eſa.56.1. domaged. For theſe are the two things that God
Ier.22.3. commaundeth: namely Iuſtice and iudgement:
Ezech.45.9 Iuſtice conſiſteth in yeelding euery mā his right: and Iudgement conſenteth not to any euils, nor ſuffereth the poore to be miſuſed, which haue no meane to maintayne themſelues. For if I ſee a man oppreſſed before my face, & indeuour not to helpe him: I am conſenting to the theefe, ſo
as the ſaying of the fiftith Pſalme may be veri- Pſal.50.18.
fied of mee, thou ſaweſt a theefe & ranneſt with him. Now is it not a running with theeues, when we labour not to reſtraine them, but either wink at them, or giue thē the bridle [to doe what they liſt?] Yes: and [in ſo doing] we be conſenting to the robberie that is committed, and we muſt anſwere for it, as theeues before God, although no reckening be made of it among men. Therefore let no man thinke that he is bound but onely to keepe his own goods: but let vs alſo beware that we indeuour to maintaine and procure the welfare of our neighbours as we would our own, and as the rule of charitie willeth vs to doe. Thus ye ſee how we ſhal not be found to be theeues both before God & man, & how the goods ẏ he hath put into our hands may be bleſſed, ſo as he ſhall make them to proſper, and wee haue ſuch contentment, as we ſhall euer mount vp to the heauenly heritage, being ſure that there wee ſhall haue the perfect fulneſſe of all good things.

Nowe let vs kneele down in ẏ preſence of our good God, with acknowledgment of our ſinnes, praying him to make vs feele them better than wee haue doone, and that wee may profit more and more in the keeping of his holy Lawe. And bicauſe wee bee ſo corrupt and frowarde, that all our thoughtes and affections goe the contrarie way: it may pleaſe him to reforme vs by his holy ſpirit, and to draw vs in ſuch wiſe vnto him, as we renouncing the world and deſpiſing theſe mortall and tranſitorie things, may mount vp to the heauenly kingdome, where we ſhall haue all contentation and reſt. And ſo let vs all ſay, Almightie God heauenly father, &c.

On Thurſday the iiij. of Iuly. 1555.

The xl. Sermon, which is the eleuenth vpon the fifth Chapter.

20 Thou ſhalt not beare falſe witneſſe againſt thy neighbour.

WEe haue ſeene heretofore, that it is not lawfull for vs in anye wiſe to vexe our neighbours in their perſons, or to do them any domage in their goods. Notwithſtanding for as much as harme may bee doone by the tongue: God hath vouchſafed to make mention of ẏ alſo in his Law, as we ſee in this text. Now then like as heretofore he forbad the doing of any outrage to our neighbors, (which thing he comprehended vnder ẏ word *Murther*:) & likewiſe all grieuing of them and all anoying of them by any meanes in their goods: ſo he ſheweth here ẏ we muſt not ſpeake euill of them, nor vſe any ſuch words as may caſt any blemiſh or ſtaine vppon them. It is true that he ſpeaketh expreſſely of *Falſe witneſſe*: howbeit, that is according to the rule that I haue ſet downe, namely ẏ he ſetteth forth the thinges formoſt which we ought moſt to miſlyke, to the intent wee ſhoulde miſlyke the ſinnes that come neere them. Then if wee ſpeake euill of our neighbors, ſo as wee ſlaunder them: although it bee not taken for a grieuous ſinne before men: yet doeth God take it for a falſe witneſſing. But here a mā might demaund a queſtion, why GOD ſpeaketh here of falſe witneſſing and periurie: ſeeing he had alreadie ſaid, Thou ſhalt not take ẏ name of ẏ Lord thy God in vayne. For it ſeemeth to bee a needleſſe repetition. For in ſo ſhort a ſum of ẏ law, where there be not aboue ten ſentēces, it ſeemeth vnconuenient to repeate one thing twiſe. But we muſt marke that the things which haue beene ſet downe heretofore, concerning the not taking of Gods name in vayne: were in the firſt table, where GOD reſpected onely the Maieſtie of his name, to the intent it ſhoulde bee had in reuerence. Therefore whenſoeuer wee ſpeake of God, wee muſt thinke vppon the infinite glorie that is in him, that wee may neuer open our mouth but with reuerence and humilitie. And whether wee intend to ſweare, or to ſpeake of him in any other wiſe: wee muſt euer thinke that his name is to bee reuerenced, and that wee muſt not fling it foorth at aduenture. Thus much concerning the thinges that wee haue ſeene alreadie vppon this matter. Now God ſpeaketh of another thing: namely of the not hurting or harming of our neighbours in any wiſe by our wicked tongue. So then, in as much as there is a dubble intent: wee ſee nowe that theſe two ſentences differ, & alſo that there is no ſuperfluitie at all. Wherefore let vs marke well, that for as much as it is ſhewed here howe men ought to liue togither charitably and vprightly: although Gods name be diſhonoured by lewd witneſſing: yet the lawe is not ſuperfluous which ſaieth, *That we muſt not beare falſe witneſſe againſt our neighbours.*

I tolde you before, that Gods meaning here, is to condemne generally all ſlaunders, all falſe reportes, all diffamations, and all other ſuch like things. And for proofe therof it is expreſſely ſaide in another place, Thou ſhalt not bring vp any euill reporte, nor ſpeake euill on thy neighbour, to caſt any blot vppon him. If the Law of God containe all perfection of good life: it inſueth that this alſo is comprehended therein. And where ſhall wee put it, but vnder this ſentence? Therefore wee muſt conclude, that although GOD haue peculiarly ſet down here the name of *Falſe witneſſe*: yet notwithſtanding hee meant to extend the doctrine thereof to all ſlaunders, miſreportes, and crooked ſpeeches that tend to the diffaming or defacing of our neighbours, or to the hurting of their good name. Wee ſee then that Gods meaning here, is to keepe vs in good friendſhip one towards another, and that ſo farre, as he ſuffereth not any man to bee impeached any more in his name, than in his perſon or his goods. Therefore whoſoeuer diffameth his neighbour, or in any wiſe backebyteth him: doeth (to the vttermoſt of his power) breake the bond of charitie among men, and proclaime open warre. And if we conſider all thinges well: it is certaine that ſometimes miſreportes, ſlaunders, and backebytings, doe much more harme than robberies. Wherefore let vs vnderſtand that if wee minde to obey our God, wee muſt maintaine the honeſtie and honour of our neighbours, to the vttermoſt of our power. For ſeeing he hath forbidden vs to hurt any mans good name: it is his will on the contrarie part, that wee ſhould indeuour to preſerue all mens honeſties. For it is not ynough to abſtaine from dooing of euill: vnleſſe a man doe good therewithall.

Leuit.19.16 17.

Pſal.34.15.

Now muſt we proceede by the degrees which God meant to ſet out vnto vs in this place, ſpeaking of *Falſe witneſſe.* The firſt then is to beware that wee vtter not any falſe report, Lye, or periurie in place of Iuſtice, whereby to hurt them whoſe honeſtie, honour and welfare we be boũd to procure. For hee that beareth falſe witneſſe againſt his neighbour, doeth kill him and robbe him as much as in him lyeth, and doeth all the euill that may growe of his periurie. In deede moſt commonly men thinke it not to bee ſo: but yet is it ſo in trueth. And for the ſame cauſe did God expreſſely command in his Lawe, that the witneſſe ſhould be the firſt in executing the partie that was to bee puniſhed for any miſdeede: to the intent a man might knowe, that their words and their tongues put him to death: and that the witneſſes themſelues might ſtande the more in awe, & conſider yͤ they ſhould yeeld account vnto God, of their witneſſe bearing againſt any man. Therfore when any euidence is to bee giuen, it ſtandeth euery man in hand to looke neerely to himſelfe, that he inlarge not his conſcience, but ſpeake the thing ſimply & plainly which he knoweth to be true before God.

Deut.17.7.

But the caſe concerneth not onely the giuing of falſe euidence in matters of life & death: but alſo in all matters that touch mens honour, honeſtie, good name, or goods. Therefore let vs haue a care to preſerue the honour and welfare of our neighbour in all reſpectes, when we be to beare witneſſe. Yet notwithſtanding wee muſt not vnder this colour, cloake the offence of him that hath doone amiſſe, or lye againſt God to maintaine his good ſtate. For if the honour of men bee precious vnto vs: howe much more precious ought Gods honour to bee? Gods forbidding of mee to beare falſe witnes againſt my neighbour, is bicauſe he will haue friendlineſſe maintayned among men, and that no mã ſhould bee impayred in his name or goods. Now if God haue ſuch regard of vs which are but wretched Earthwormes: thinke wee that he forgetteth himſelfe in the meane while? No. But if I by my falſe record, doe goe about to ſupport or bolſtar an offender, ſo as I couer or conceale his crime: it is certaine that I diſhonour God as much as in mee is. Why ſo? For I proteſt to ſay the truth, & yet notwithſtanding I make a lie. And is not yͭ a defacing of Gods honor? Is it not an imbacing of his glory? Yes: & therfore let vs vnderſtand, that when God ſaid, *Thou ſhalt not beare falſe witneſſe againſt thy neighbour:* he meant not to gratifie or pleaſure euil doers, or to couer mens faults; but to ſhew in few words, that we ought (as much as in vs lyeth) to maintaine our neighbours honeſtie, ſo it may be done with trueth.

And let vs marke further, that heere God had an eye to the wicked affections that proceede of malice and rancour, rather than to the deede it ſelfe, as wee ſhall perceyue better in the thinges that remayne as yet to bee diſcuſſed. For I haue tolde yee alreadye, that in this place, GOD ſpeaketh not onely of the giuing of falſe euidence in place of Iuſtice, and in caſes where ſolemne othe is to bee taken:

but alſo of all ſlaunders and diffamations, becauſe that after what ſort ſoeuer a man backebite his neighbour, hee ſhall euer bee counted a falſe witneſſe before God. If I wiſper any man in the eare to diffame my neighbour withall: ſurely it is a falſe witneſſing. It was true that I was not called before a iudge: I laide not my hande vppon the Booke: I performed not the reſt of the ceremonies in taking of an othe: but yet wee ſee howe God ſpeaketh of it: and therefore am I guiltie in that behalfe. But now muſt this bee conſidered: if I ſpie a fault in a man without bearing him any ill will, whether am I to bee counted a falſe witneſſe before God or men for ſo doing? No. For God hath a ſpeciall reſpect to the euill will and enmitie. Then if I hate a man and therevppon miſreport him, caried thereto by the ildiſpoſed minde that I beare towardes him: in ſo doing I am to bee condemned for a falſe witneſſe. If I haue deſire to backebite, and that vice doth ſo reigne in mee, as I muſt needes be ſnatching at euerie man: ſurely I am a falſe witneſſe. And that is the cauſe why it is ſaide that loue couereth the multitude of ſinnes, but hatred bewrayeth them to ſhame a man. Prou.10.12. 1.Pet.4.8. Loe howe Salomon hath in fewe wordes, in this ſentence touched the roote of the falſe witneſſing which GOD hath forbidden and condemned by his Lawe: namely, that we bee ledde by hatred. And why? For if wee loue one another, ſurely wee will endeuour to maintaine one another. We knowe it is as a kindling of a fire, when wee backbite any man, ſo as hee muſt needes bee angrie with vs in defence of his owne honeſtie: by meanes whereof all friendſhip is broken. So then, if wee had any care to maintaine charitie: we woulde hide other mens faultes as much as wee coulde. But if there bee any enmitie, then will our tongues runne ryot. If the heart bee venemous, it muſt needes haue a vent, and we muſt needes vtter the malice that lay lurking within. Let vs marke wel then, that in this text God condemneth all backebitings that proceede of malice, and ill will, when we hate any man, and woulde wiſh him vndone, ſo as if wee cannot anoy his perſon, nor hurt him in his goods, by bereauing him of his ſubſtance: wee fall to touching of him with ſome priuie nippe, and we will goe about to diffame him. If we doe ſo: it is a wicked roote, which cannot but bring foorth like fruits. That is the point that we muſt reſort vnto, to haue the right vnderſtanding of this commaundement of God.

Howbeit let vs marke by the way, that wheras it is ſaide that loue couereth the multitude of ſinnes: it is not ment that wee ſhoulde flatter one another, and foſter our vices by lying: but that we ſhould not blowe them abrode vpon deſire to diffame the parties, who poſſiblie might take ſuch a ſtomacke thereat, that they might giue themſelues ouer to al naughtineſſe through ſhameleſneſſe, as deſperate perſons do. Wherefore let vs marke well, that the holy Ghoſt intendeth not to make vs flatterers and foſterers of our neighbours vyces, nor yet lyers: but that wee ſhoulde labour to reforme their vyces as much as wee can, and yet notwithſtanding beare with them, that we make them not deſperate when they haue done amiſſe. For when a man ſeeth himſelfe defaced, and that it is done vppon reuenge: it ſpyteth him, & he giueth himſelfe to the doing of euill, and ſo hee hardeneth in it. Therefore when men are in an euill plight alreadie, if we reproue them boyſtowſly without any charitable affection: wee cauſe them to diſorder themſelues the more. And therefore if wee rebuke mens vyces: let it bee doone with mieldneſſe, Gal.6.1. that the parties which are ſo rebuked may perceiue that our meaning is to drawe them backe from the way of deſtruction. And for the ſame cauſe doth Saint Iames apply this text to ſuch as labour to drawe their neighbours to God, Iam.5.20. by good, gentle, and friendely corrections. Therefore if I ſee a man deale leawdely, and I tell him his faulte, ſo as by my warning I win him, that he returneth into the right way: beholde (ſaith he) then is this ſaying fulfilled, that loue couereth the multitude of ſinnes. True it is that Salomon ſpeaketh it to another end: but yet hath not S. Iames miſapplyed this leſſon of Salomons by a ſimilitude, for he doeth vs to vnderſtande, that our couering of mens ſinnes, muſt not bee by winking at them, nor by holding of our peace when God is offended: (if a man deſtroy himſelfe, wee muſt not then diſſemble to conceale his vyces through loue: that is an ill practiſing of this leſſon:) but we muſt rather vſe good and brotherly correction, & therewithall finde the meanes that his faults may bee buried before God, & alſo not come in remembrance before men. Therefore it muſt content vs to haue brought our neighbours home againe; and wee muſt alwayes keepe this meaſure, that when the faults are amended, we muſt not diffame the parties if it bee poſſible, leaſt they haue ſhame of their repentance, and fall into diſpaire to the worldwarde. But this is ill put in vre: and we ſee how men do amiſſe in going too farre both the ways. For the meane way, (that is to wit of correcting mens faultes with gentleneſſe, and of ſeeking to couer them to the ende that euerie man ſhould be reclaimed, and in the meane while not bee diffamed:) will in manner neuer be kept. Why ſo? For our deſire to haue friendſhippe with men, is by flattering them. When wee ſee them offende God diuers wayes, we let it ſlip: and as wee woulde that our friends ſhould ſpare vs, ſo do we beare with the naughtineſſe that is in them. Yee ſee then that this is a wicked cloking, becauſe Satan blindeth the wretched ſinners by it: and we bee the cauſe of it, foraſmuch as wee winke at the faults which we ought to rebuke. And yet that inconuenience ſufficeth vs not. For the worlde is come to that point nowadayes, that we cannot ſeeme to be good friendes, nor to be faithful and truſtie to thoſe whom we mach withall, vnleſſe we agree to all naughtineſſe for their ſakes. If they haue offended, & it come to the point that they muſt receiue rebuke or ſhame for it: we muſt rather fall to flatte periurie. And howe? Euen thus men ſpeake, Shal I willingly hurt my neighbour? I am beholden to him: and ſhall I depoſe againſt him? What a thing were that? Lo howe wee eſteeme Gods trueth. Loe howe wee turne it into a lye. Loe howe wee abuſe the commaundement that forbiddeth vs to diffame our neighbours. Wherefore let vs learne that this ouercockering is wicked when wee ſupport the euill, and feed mens vyces. And ſpecially when we be called and required to giue record, if we bewray not the euill truely which is to be corrected: wee ſhall bee guiltie of it as acceſſories to our power. I conceale a murther, a robberie, a leawde, pranke, a briberie, a falſe packing: ſurely in ſo doing I intangle my ſelfe in al thoſe crimes both before God and man. So then the foreſaide couering of our neighbours ſinnes through loue, doeth no whitte hinder the bewraying of them, when it is needful and meete to be done, & when we be required thereunto.

But there is yet another foule extremitie, worthie of blame: which is that wee be too haſtie in blaſing abroade the miſdeedes which ought to bee reformed quietly, and without making too great brute of them. And this groweth ſomtimes of enmitie, ſometimes of ambition or vaineglorie, and ſometimes of a fonde deſire to vaunt our ſelues. Sometimes it is of enmitie. For vnder colour that wee bee deſirous to chaſtiſe vice, and that we be loth to haue God offended: wee fall to lying in waite for thoſe whome wee hate, and to whom we beare any priuie grudge: and if we find any thing to be blamed or caught holde of againſt them: by and by their tale ſhalbee tolde, and wee abuſe Gods name falſely in playing the zealous perſons after that faſhion, when wee ſeeke nothing elſe but to vndermine our enemies. And our malice appeareth the better in this, that hauing rebuked a vyce in one whom wee hate, we beare with it and cloke it as much as wee can in our friends, and keepe not an indifferent hande. And doeth not that bewray that wee doe it not of any good wil, and that wee make not warre againſt the ſinnes and vyces, but againſt the perſons rather? It may be diſcerned too eaſily. And therefore whenſoeuer we goe obout to bewray mens vyces and ſinnes, let vs vnderſtand that our hearts muſt be cleare and free from all ill will, ſo as wee may proteſt before GOD that wee bee deſirous both of the welfare and of the profite of him whome wee finde fault with. Let that ſerue for one point.

Againe wee muſt keepe our ſelues from all fonde ambition or vaineglorie, (as I touched afore:) which is, that we muſt not bee deſirous to vant our ſelues before men as a number do, who woulde faine make themſelues as holy as ſaints, by crying out againſt other men, and by finding fault with them. As ſoone as they ſpie a thing amiſſe: by and by men muſt bee charged with it, and all the world muſt know it. O this is a good zealous man: and yet in the meane while all is but a fooliſh deſirouſneſſe to vaunt himſelfe. For this cauſe God doth oftentimes puniſh ſuch pride, becauſe they beare themſelues in hande, that ſo they rebuke other men ſharpelie, they themſelues are ſaintes and halfe Angels: whereas notwithſtanding, they diſpence with many miſdemeanors in themſelues, and though they offende more groſſely than thoſe whome they finde fault with, yet will they needes haue men to beare with them. And why? Becauſe they haue well chidden others. Yea and yee ſhall ſee ſome that are not aſhamed to ſay, What? haue I not done well in rebuking euill? Seeing I haue behaued my ſelf ſo ſtoutly, is it not ynough for mee? Yes, and if thou couldeſt not beare with other men, how wouldeſt thou haue other men to beare with thee? If thou haddeſt but one droppe of good diſpoſition in thee, wouldſt thou not hate the vice in thy ſelfe, as well as in another man? So then, when we crie out againſt our neighbours in rebuking them: let vs beware that we be cleare from all ambition. If wee will diſcouer the euill that wee perceiue in another bodie: let vs deale ſo orderly, as to beginne at our ſelues. If wee intende to condemne other mens faultes: let vs ſerch and examine well what is in our ſelues, and reproue our ſelues firſt: and then let vs ſteppe to our neighbours. That is the order which we muſt keep if we intend to proceed according to Godlineſſe. But let vs marke that here God condemneth generally al iniuries and all backebitings, ſo as if wee doe but open our mouth to ſpeak any maner of euill of our neighbours, we be condemned for falſe witneſſes before God. Neuertheles it is not ment herby, that men ſhoulde conceale the euill that is knowen. For as I haue ſhewed heretofore, that wee muſt not foſter mens ſinnes through flatterie and lying, vnder pretẽce of charitable hiding of them, ſo muſt wee not ſay that blacke is white, vnder colour that wee bee forbidden to doe men wrong. And that is to bee marked well. For there are ſome which would faine that nothing at all ſhoulde bee condemned, but that men ſhoulde alter their ſpeech, ſo as if there be a robberie committed, it ſhoulde bee termed by ſome other title, and vyces ſhoulde not bee condemned by their proper names. This is to bee ſeene: inſomuch that if wicked men bee to bee reproued, which haue not onely offended God, but alſo cauſed others to play the naughtipackes as well as themſelues, and are as an infection to poyſon all the reſt: if a man fall to rebuking of them luſtilie as hee ought to doe: by and by there are a ſort of theſe nycelings which take greefe at it. Yea (ſay they)? And ought men to proceede ſo farre as to goe vp euen into the pulpit, when they will crie out againſt vyces? A man ſhall ſee blaſphemie reigning, and a man ſhall ſee open wickedneſſe againſt God and his word, a man ſhall ſee as ſhamefull diſobedience as may bee, a man ſhall ſee ſo outragious occaſions of offence as he cannot poſſiblie beare with them, except hee will be a traitour to God: and yet if he crie out againſt them, by and by he ſhalbee anſwered, what now? The Goſpell teacheth you to win all men by gentlenes. Did not Ieſus Chriſt cal ſinners louingly vnto him, by forgiuing them their faultes? Nowe then ſhoulde the preachers of the Goſpel vſe ſuch rigour? Verily as who ſhoulde ſay that Ieſus Chriſtes will were that men ſhoulde abuſe his grace, to ſtabliſh the kingdome of Sathan, that ſinne might haue full 2.Cor.10.4.5.6. ſcope, and men winke at it and let it paſſe vncondemned. Nay, contrariwiſe, he ſaith that by the Goſpel hee exerciſeth a iuriſdiction, to condemne the whole world. Beholde, the thing that he ameth at, is that when we be tolde of our naughtineſſe, wee ſhoulde bee ſo aſhamed of it, as wee ſhoulde not knowe whither to flee for refuge, but onely to his grace, and that wee ſhoulde bee vtterly confounded in our ſelues. Therefore let vs marke well howe wee bee forbidden to diffame our neighbours, vpon any hatred or euill will: but yet wee bee commaunded on the contrarie part, to blame the euill, and to rebuke them luſtily that doe amiſſe, to the ende wee may aſſay to bring them to good againe, and alſo make other men take heede, that they bee not corrupted by euill examples. This wil be the better vnderſtoode, if on the one ſide wee take ẏ meaning of our Lord Ieſus Chriſt, where Matt.5,22. hee ſaieth that whoſoeuer calleth his brother foole, ſhall bee in daunger of hell fire: and whoſoeuer doeth but grunt at him, is alreadie damnable. And on the otherſide, whereas it is ſaide Eph.5.11. that wee muſt rebuke the fruitleſſe workes of darkeneſſe: let vs abhorre the euill as ſainct 1.Cor.14.24.25. Paul himſelfe ſaith, auouching to the Corinthians that if the Goſpell bee preached as it ought to bee, they that heare it ſhall bee conſtrained to glorifie GOD, by caſting themſelues vppon the earth, that is to ſay, by beeing aſhamed of their ſinnes. And why? Becauſe they be brought to light, where as they were hidden before. Whereas their ſinnes were not knowen: they ſee themſelues as it were diffamed before GOD, and that it is not for them to hide themſelues any more. Then if I doe but grunt of ill will againſt my neighbour, yea though it cannot be ſaide that I haue called him naughtipacke, vnthrift or foole, but that I haue but onely nodded my head at him, or made but a flirt at him with my finger: behold, it is a falſe witneſſing before God. And why? For I deſpiſe my neighbour, and am deſirous to ſhame him. And what moued me thereto? The miſliking of him which I haue conceiued againſt him.

But on the contrarie part, if I bee deſirous to giue my neighbour good counſell, and to ſeeke his weldoing, ſo as I am not ledde by any euill affection, but I woulde procure his welfare as much as in me is: I may well ſay vnhappie man, looke to thy ſelfe, it ſeemeth that thou intendeſt to ſell thy ſelfe to the deuill, wilt thou bee a ſlaue vnder that curſed bondage? Thou ſheweſt indeede that thou art witleſſe and ſtarke madde, ſeeing thou wilt receiue no warning. Wilt thou needes periſh ſo vnhappily? Go like a wretch as thou art, euerie man ought to ſpitte in thy face. I may alledge all this to a man, and yet doe him no wrong. For why? I coulde not otherwiſe reclaime him. When I ſee that Sathan hath ſo hardened him, that hee had neede to bee quickened vp with maine ſtrokes of the hammer: I may deale thus vehemently ẇ him, and it is the next way to couer his faultes For to what intent doe I ſo, but that they ſhoulde be pardoned at Gods hande, and that he ſhould no more be diffamed to the worldward? It greeueth me to ſee him pointed at with the finger, it greeueth mee to ſee him a laughingſtocke to al men, it greeueth me to ſee him ſet as it were vppon a ſcaffolde for all men to gaſe at: I ſay this geere greeueth mee: and therefore I labour to bring him into the right way againe. In ſo dealing there is no wrong at all. But yet for all this we muſt not take leaue to bee ouer bitter. For although wee bee verie well minded, and bee not caried with any euill intent: yet may wee ſoone doe amiſſe, if we be too ſharpe in rebuking. And Gal.6.1. therefore doeth Sainct Paul warne vs expreſly, to deale mieldly in rebuking ſuch as haue offended. And why? Conſider (ſaieth hee) that thou thy ſelfe alſo maiſt fall. Therefore let vs bee mielde and gentle to our neighbours, as wee woulde they ſhoulde bee to vs in like caſe. But howe ſoeuer the worlde goe, let vs ſpeake of vyces without colouring of them, and let vs indeuour luſtilie to correct offenders, according as they bee able to beare, and after as wee ſee them diſpoſed: and let charitie and brotherly loue moue vs thereunto, for if wee pray God to guide and gouerne vs in this caſe by his holy ſpirite: the thinges that are ſpoken roundly and charitablie cannot bee counted an iniurie. Yee ſee then that the way for vs to keepe this commaundement, is to beware that wee doe not ſo much as once open our mouthes to ſpeake one worde of rayling or ſlaundering, vppon enmitie or euill will: and yet notwithſtanding to rebuke offenders plainly and mieldly as wee would that others ſhould do to correct vs in like caſe if neede required. If we vſe this vprightnes; then ſhall we not bee falſe witneſſes againſt our neighbours.

Furthermore let vs marke, that where as *Falſehoode* or *Falſeneſſe* is ſpoken of: wee bee not onely forbidden to inuent or forge any lye, ſo as the thing that wee ſpeake ſhoulde bee contriued without any colour of trueth: but if a man doe maliciouſly marre deface or diſgrace the thing that is not euill of it ſelfe: beholde, it is alreadie a falſe witneſſing. According whereunto it is ſaide that the parties which gaue euidence againſt our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt, that he Matt.26.60.61. had ſaide, Deſtroye yee this Temple, and in three dayes I will builde it vp againe, were falſewitneſſes: and yet notwithſtanding it is verie certaine that Ieſus Chriſte had ſaide ſo, and that hee had ſpoken the ſelfe ſame wordes with his owne mouth. Why then are the reporters of them called falſewitneſſes? The reaſon is, becauſe they wreſted the wordes of the ſonne of GOD, to another ſenſe than hee had ſpoken then, and therevpon went about to ground their owne furie, and to charge him with wicked ſlaunders, as though hee had ſpoken of the materiall temple of Ieruſalem, whereas he ment his owne bodie, which is the very temple where- Col.2.9. in dwelleth the fulneſſe of the whole Godhead:

for

1.Tim.3.16.

for he is God manifeſted in the fleſh. So then, we ſee in fewe wordes, that the falſeneſſe which God condemneth here, is not the contriuing of ſome lie, nor the forging of ſome thing that was neuer done nor ſaide, ſo as we ſhould report ſome fable, and men ſhould not knowe what it is: but alſo a malicious wreſting or defacing of words that might haue beene well taken, and a turning of them to euill: if we doe ſo we are falſe witneſſes. As for example ſome are ſo frowarde, that as ſoone as they ſpie a thing that miſlyketh them, although it be not altogether wicked and vngodly: yet they fall to picking of ſome quarrell to it. O ſay they, ſee, ſuch a man hath done ſuch a thing. If they ſpie neuer ſo little a ſpot or ſpecke, there needes no more with them to make vertue become vice. If wee doe but miſconſter ſome one worde that is well ſpoken, beholde, wee miſcharge the partie, and his good reputation is wounded. Yee ſee then that we bee falſe witneſſes, not onely when wee inuent thinges that were neuer doone nor ſaide: but alſo when either by ſuttle cauiling, or by any leawde and indirect ſlight, we wreſt the thing amiſſe which might haue bin wel taken. Nowe (as I ſaide) this commeth to paſſe nowe and then by reaſon that men are ouercaptious. And if they bee frowarde: needes muſt they turne all thinges to yͤ worſt. But it is ſaide that loue is not miſtruſtful, as Saint Paul ſpeaketh of it: & therefore wee muſt be ſure that a thing is euill, before we condemne it. It is true that wee may ſometimes bee deceiued in diſcerning of good and euill: But when there are apparant ſignes and tokẽs, and the matter is manifeſt as we may bee able to ſay, This is ill done: if wee be ſtill too much wedded vnto it, it cannot bee but ſinfull. And ſpecially if our nature bee ſo malicious as to bite men and to ſlaunder them where there is no cauſe: ſurely we be condemned for falſe witneſſes before God.

1.Cor.13.5.

Nowe if they that are ſtout in rebuking vyces be to be condemned, whẽ their ſtoutnes proceedeth of too rigorous a minde: what ſhall they be whoſe doings ſpring of manifeſt hatred and which will needes miſconſter ſuch ſayings and doings, as might neuertheleſſe be wel taken, and haue no apparant fault in them? If they marre ſuch thinges by their lewde conſtructions: are they not falſe witneſſes before GOD? So then, let vs learne in fewe wordes to maintaine the honeſtie and welfare of our neighbours in ſuch ſorte, that whether wee rebuke them, or whether we ſpeake of their vyces to the intent they ſhoulde bee puniſhed, and that ſuch as might bee ſeduced and miſcaried by their euill example may bee reclaymed: let vs alwayes haue this regarde in our ſpeaking, namely that wee ſeeke their welfare and benefite as much as in vs lyeth, and that wee keepe ſuch an euen hand continually, as we diffame not men after ſuch a ſort as they ſhoulde bee out of heart with it. For wee ſhoulde rather burie their faultes to the vttermoſt of our power both before GOD and man, to the intent they may call themſelues home againe, and not forgoe all ſhamefaſtneſſe, and ſo ruſh out into all naughtineſſe. That is a thing which we muſt needs take heede of.

Nowe if wee will obſerue the thinges that are conteined heere: we muſt reſort to a higher grounde: which is, to conſider for what purpoſe God hath made our tongues, and to what ende hee hath giuen vs ſpeech: namely to the intent wee might impart our mindes one to another by communication. And whereunto ſhoulde the communication of men tende, but to the maintaining of themſelues in charitie and loue? Therefore at a word, wee muſt learne ſo to bridle our tongues, as the vnion which GOD hath commaunded, may alwayes bee mainteined as much as is poſſible. And that is the cauſe why ſaint Iames vſeth ſuch earneſtneſſe in ſpeaking of euill wordes. The tongue (ſaieth he) is a ſmall thing, and but a little peece of fleſh: and yet it kindleth ſuch a fire, as is able to burne vp the greateſt woods in the worlde. Nowe let vs come backe to the ſaide grounde: which is, to vnderſtande that God wrought vs a ſingular benefite, in giuing vs abilitie to common together. Beholde, the thoughtes of men are ſecret: and yet the tongue ſerues vs to vtter our minds. Therefore let vs be circumſpect in vſing ſuch a benefite, that it bee not ſteined by our vice and naughtineſſe. And ſeeing that God hath giuen it vs to maintaine loue and brotherly good will one towardes another: let vs not abuſe it in babling, or in gadding vp and downe with it to ſowe rancour & malice among our ſelues, by wreſting our words amiſſe. Thus ye ſee whereto we muſt come backe.

Iam.3.5.6.

And when wee knowe generally, howe to auoide the crime of falſe witneſſing: foraſmuch as it is a hard thing to bridle our tongues: let vs take the more paine and heede to doe it. We ſee that many euill wordes doe eaſily ſcape vs. And when we haue talked to and fro vnaduiſedly: becauſe wee bee accuſtomed to it, we thinke it is no fault before God. But let vs marke that foraſmuch as wee bee naturally too much inclined to ſpeake vndiſcreetely, and to caſt foorth wordes of blame and reproch againſt our neighbours: wee haue the more neede to indeuour to impriſon our tongues and to holde them downe. For though wee bee giuen to ſome one ſinne more than to others: that will not ſerue vs for excuſe before God. But when wee perceiue any fault in our ſelues, we muſt not flatter our ſelues in it, but rather bee ſorie for it and ſay, Alas I ſee this diſeaſe reigneth too much in me, and therefore I muſt fight the more ſtoutly againſt it, and I muſt by Gods grace inforce my ſelfe to attaine to the repreſſing thereof, ſeeing I perceiue that God condemneth it. And herewithall let vs bethinke vs of the threates that are giuen out againſt it. For whenas ſainct Paul ſaieth that neither whoremongers, nor drunkardes, nor theeues, nor murtherers ſhall inherite the kingdome of heauen: he addeth alſo *Curſed ſpeakers*, and he baniſheth them likewiſe from all hope of life and ſaluation.

1.Cor.6.10.

Nowe when wee heare theſe thinges, is it for vs to couer our ſelues any more with leaues, or to beare our ſelues on hande that there is no harme in ſpeaking euil of our neighbors? Thinke wee that the threate which God hath vttered by the mouth of S. Paul, ſerueth but to ſcare little children, and ſhall not bee executed vppon ſuch as will needes exempt themſelues from it, as it were in deſpyte of him? Yes.

So then let vs take paine in this behalfe: and to conclude, let vs ſpecially make this compariſon, that if God will haue vs to mainteine the good name of our neighbours, forbidding vs ſo ſtreitly to lay blame or miſreport vpon it, whereby their honeſtie may bee defaced: hee will much more haue vs to regarde his honour. For are wee not a hundredfolde more bounde to Pſal.16.2. maintaine Gods honour, than to preſerue the good eſtimation of men: ſeeing wee cannot by any meanes benefite him? Yes: And therefore let vs beware that we beare not falſe witneſſe a- 1.Cor.15.15. gainſt God, according to Sainct Paules ſaying, who auoweth that ſuch as corrupt the pureneſſe of the Goſpel, are falſewitneſſes, againſt God and not againſt men. What is to be done then? Wee muſt maintaine Gods trueth, and deale ſo roundly in it, that foraſmuch as wee ſee the doctrine is good, wee beare it abroade and maintaine it, knowing that God hath ordeyned vs to bee as his deputies. Then if I ſee the trueth oppreſſed, I muſt not ſuffer it, to my power. Why ſo? God hath appointed mee to ſee that lying and vntrueth bee ſuppreſſed in his name. And this is to bee obſerued moſt ſpecially, when the doctrine of ſaluation commeth in queſtion. As for example, when wee ſee the doctrine in daunger to bee falſified, and that men woulde mingle Leuen with it, to imbrewe men with falſhood and leaſings: in that caſe we muſt be zealous indeede, not ſuffer falſe witneſſes to haue their full ſwindge againſt God, vnleſſe we mind to conſent to them, and to bee partakers with them, as I haue declared alreadie. Finally let vs learne, that when wee haue liued in ſuch plaineneſſe among men, as it cannot bee laide to our charge that wee haue gone about to deface any man by ſlaundering, rayling, or backbyting: wee muſt alſo haue ſuch zeale to Godwarde as his trueth may continue ſounde, and be maintained to reigne among vs. Thus ye ſee in effect what wee haue to conſider vppon this commaundement.

Nowe let vs kneele downe in the preſence of our good God with acknowledgement of our faultes, praying him to make vs perceiue them better than we haue done, and to leade vs more and more to ſuch repentance, as we may learne to bethinke vs of our ſinnes, to be ſorie for them, and to miſlike of them, that hauing obtained forgiuenes of them, we may learne to direct our life according to his holy commaundementes, ſo as he may be honored of vs with true obedience, & not onely with confeſſion of the mouth. That it may pleaſe him to graunt this grace, not onely to vs, but alſo to all people & nations of yͤ earth &c.

On Friday the fift of Iuly. 1555.

The xli. Sermon, which is the twelfth vpon the fifth Chapter.

21 Thou ſhalt not luſt after thy neighbours wife, neither ſhalt thou couet thy neighbours houſe, nor his fielde, nor his manſeruant, nor his womanſeruaunt, nor his Oxe, nor his Aſſe, nor any thing that is thy neighbours.

IT might ſeeme at the firſt ſight that this commandement were more than needeth, becauſe that in condemning of thefte & whoredome, God ment therby to repreſſe all wicked affections. For I told you that we muſt expounde theſe commandements according to gods nature, and 1.Chr.28.9. 2.Chr.6.30. Pſal.7.11.& 26.2. Ier.11.20.& 17.10. we knowe that it is Gods peculiar office to ſerch mens hearts, ſo as he knoweth euen the deepeſt, ſecreteſt, and hiddeneſt thoughtes. It followeth then that in forbidding men to be theeues and whoremaſters, hee ment alſo to bridle their affections and luſtes. And indeede, if it were not ſo: God had no more power in making of lawes, thã mortal men. For if an earthly man condemneth whoredome, he will alſo condemne the intent of it. If there appeare a wicked intent, it ſhal be puniſhed. If Gods Lawe were no more but ſo: it were a matter of no great importance: for it were but a ciuil order to gouerne vs honeſtly to the worldward. But there is much more in it: for we ſee howe S. Paul ſaith, that the lawe cannot 1.Tim.1.5. be kept without a pure conſcience and an vnfeined faith. If it bee requiſite for vs to haue ſuch a ſoundneſſe in vs, for the well keeping of Gods Lawe: it followeth that all wicked luſts were forbidden vnder the name of whoredome. As much is to be ſaid of the word *Theft.* Alſo we might alledge the authoritie of our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt, Matt.5.28. 1.Pet.3.19. who is a faithfull expounder of the Lawe. For it is by his ſpirite, that Moſes and all the Prophets ſpake. Why then is it added heere, that we muſt not couet? If all wicked luſtes were ſpoken of before: why ſhoulde they bee repeted againe? Wee muſt marke, that in this place God meaneth not to repreſſe the affections that are fully intended and determined vpon: but the other affections or motions that ſtirre vs vp and prouoke vs although we neither ſticke to them nor conſent to them. This requireth a longer and plainer expoſition.

Sometimes *Couetouſneſſe* or *Luſt* betokeneth the will in man. As for example, when I ſee my neighbours goods and am tempted to couet them, and to luſt after them: Now if I feede this temptation in my ſelf, and giue my ſelfe the bridle: then doth the ſinne ſo ouermaſter me, that my wil is fully reſolued vpon it, and I would faine that thoſe goods were mine. This is a kinde of couetouſnes or luſt that carieth the will with it: for the partie conſenteth to the ſinne, and hee would put his wicked intent in execution, if hee were able. Nowe ſuch kinde of wicked couetings and luſtings were forbidden heretofore where it is ſaide, *Thou ſhalt not ſteale*, *Thou ſhalt not commit aduoutrie*. For there God hath forbidden vs, not onely the actuall deeds of theft and whordome: but alſo the verie luſting and longing after another mans wife, goods, or poſſeſſions.

But there is another kinde of couetouſneſſe or luſt, wherevnto we doe not altogether cleaue, as to conſent thereto and yet notwithſtanding it tickleth and moueth vs in ſuch ſort, as wee feele ſome euill prouocation in our ſelues, which is againſt God, & ſtriueth againſt the righteouſnes that is conteined in the Law. Thoſe are the luſts that are forbidden in this place.

And ſo we ſee, that God hauing alreadie condemned all wicked intents and purpoſes: doeth iuſtly adde, that that is not yet ſuch a perfection as he requireth at our handes: but that we muſt vnderſtande that all manner of affections which ſtirre vs vp to euill, [are ſinfull:] inſomuch that although wee determine not vppon any thing in our ſelues, ne purpoſe it at all, but onely that ſome luſting or liking doe glaunce through our heart: A ſinne is forthwith committed, and wee bee guiltie before God. We ſee then what manner of ſoundneſſe is required in this text: namely howe that our Lorde hauing alreadie forbidden wicked intents, addeth that all our ſenſes & wits muſt be ſo impriſoned vnder the feare of him, and ſo inflamed with loue and deſire to liue in all holineſſe: as wee may not bee moued or ſtirred one way nor other, by any wicked paſſion, to luſte after another mans goodes or wife.

Seeing wee haue Gods meaning: nowe let vs ſee whereto he bindeth vs: for the Lawe ſhoulde be as a lookingglaſſe vnto vs, to behold our own wretchedneſſe in. And when we once knowe our dutie: let vs aſſure our ſelues we be worthy to be condemned, if we draw not to the perfection which God calleth vs vnto. Thus yee ſee wherevppon wee muſt ſtand, that wee may make our profite by this laſt commandement of the Law. And to the end we may take the better heede to it, and conſider that it is ſuch a doctrine as deſerueth well to haue our whole mindes applyed vnto it: let vs beare in minde howe ſaint Paul ſaieth, that whereas hee had beene counted a great doctor, and a wiſe man, and had beene trained vp in Gods lawe from his childhood: yet notwithſtanding he had beene ſo blinde that he wiſt not what Gods Lawe ment, vntill hee had beene conuerted, and that our Lord Ieſus Chriſt had inlightened him by his Goſpel, and ſo made him to knowe wherevnto the Lawe ought to leade vs.

Rom.7.9. Act.22.3. Gal.1.13. Phil.3.5.6.

Yee ſee then howe S. Paul had beene brought vp in ſuch ſort, that he was of great reputation among men, howbeit not among the heathen, as who ſhould ſay hee had beene ſome Philoſopher, but as one that had beene trayned vp in the Lawe of God. And as in reſpect of his life, he proteſteth yͤ he had bin vnblameable before men. Yee ſee then that S. Paul was a holie and a wiſe man in common account: and yet for all that, hee is but a ſillie beaſt as in reſpect of Gods Lawe. Why ſo? He ſaith that he thought himſelfe to bee aliue, and to haue beene righteous before God, not knowing that hee needed the mercy which God offereth to all ſinners. For hee abſteined from whoredome, and robberie and ſuch other things: and againe he had no euill intentes that any man coulde perceiue or knowe, by reaſon whereof hee thought himſelfe to be a righteous man. But at the length when God had pitied him, hee opened his eyes and made him to vnderſtande by this laſt word, *Thou ſhalt not luſt.* Rom.7.7. Loe howe S. Paul began to learne the lawe newe againe, whereof he had beene a teacher before. S. Paul making profeſſion of the Lawe wherein he had beene brought vp from his tender age, ſaith that vntill ſuch time as he had throughly bethought him of the meaning of this text: hee poſted ouer it as it had beene vppon burning coales as they ſay, ſo as he taſted not the ſtrength and power of the lawe, ne knewe what ſinne was that hee might condemne himſelfe and flee to Gods mercie for refuge, wherein the hope of our ſaluation lyeth, and ought to bee grounded. Seing that S. Paul could not conceiue the meaning of the lawe, nor attaine to the right vnderſtanding thereof, but by this clauſe let vs determine with our ſelues to trauell yͤ earneſtlyer in it. And ſith hee was ſo blinde all the time of his life vntill his conuerſion, that he vnderſtoode not that ſaying: wee ought to take the better heede of it, as I tolde you before. For wee be not of better abilitie than hee: but God muſt bee faine to ſhewe vs by his holy ſpirite, what is ment by this coueting or luſting, which is condemned in this place.

But nowe beſides this, we haue here another warning which is right neceſſarie for vs. For the diuel hath labored to couer this commandemẽt after ſuch a ſort, as Gods intent and meaning might not be knowen, but that men might lightly paſſe ouer all wicked luſtes, which were ſeene to be ſinne, and whereof euery man might haue proofe in himſelfe. Inſomuch that men reſtreined this worde *luſt*, to none other affections than ſuch as import a reſolute purpoſe or full intent: but that is contrarie to the plaine meaning of Moſes. And let vs conſider what is come to paſſe in the Popedome. For although the Papiſtes cannot denie, but that to be prouoked and ſtirred vp to euill deſires, is a damnable fault, and ſpringeth of originall ſinne, and of the corruption which wee receiue from our father Adam: yet notwithſtanding they imagine that after baptiſme it is no longer ſinne, though there come a thought into a mans minde to doubt of Gods promiſes, and to grudge and repine againſt him. If a man bee afflicted, and his heart riſeth againſt it, ſo as he blameth God of vnrighteouſneſſe and crueltie: that is no ſinne ſay the Papiſtes. And they be not the ſmall fooles that ſay ſo: but it is a generall reſolution in all their diuelliſh Synagogues or Schooles. There is not any ſynagogue in the Popedome, wherein this point is not receiued as an article of the faith, namely yͤ though a man bee moued and prouoked by any wicked luſt, yet it is no ſinne: inſomuch that if hee bee tempted to murther, to poyſon, to committe whoredome, and to doe all the crimes and outrages of the world: yet if he do not *conſent thereto*, nor *aſſent*, (for thoſe are the two termes that they vſe) that is to ſay, ſo they determine not fully vpon the matter to ſay I will goe through with my wicked intent, nor ſtande vpon it to delight in that wicked affection: it is no ſinne at all, it is but an exerciſing of our ſelues in battell, whereby wee ſhewe our ſelues to bee valiant championſ, and that ſinne ouermaſtreth vs not. Indeed it is true that the faithfull doe well ſhewe that Gods ſpirite reigneth in them, by their beating backe of ſuch temptations. And when they hold themſelues in awe, and as it were impriſon them ſelues, and reſiſt thoſe things becauſe they know they bee contrarie to Gods will, and that hee condemneth them: it is certaine that thing ſheweth, that God hath giuen them the vpper hande of ſinne, and that his power is reſident in them, and that they be ſtout champions to fight againſt Satan: but yet doeth it not followe, that they bee cleare from all fault, and that they can pluck vp ſin, and fully deliuer themſelues from it, as though there were not any ſpot or blemiſh more in them. Alas, we come farre ſhort of that. For ſurely on the one ſide wee haue cauſe to praiſe God, for giuing vs the grace by his holie ſpirite to ouercome all wicked affections. But yet muſt wee ſigh with all humilitie, acknowledging our ſelues to be weake on our part, and that if he pitied vs not, we haue ſuch a wicked minde alredy in vs, as prouoketh his vengeance againſt vs, ſo as we ſhoulde well deſerue to be vtterly deſtroied at his hande. Moreouer it was requiſite that God ſhould diſcouer the ſhame of the popedome, and ſhewe that the greateſt clarks there, are duller witted than the ſillie Infidels that neuer hard one word of holy ſcripture. Why ſo? For we muſt take that which is written in the Law. It is ſaide that the whole ſumme of the lawe is that wee ſhoulde loue God with all our heart, with al our ſoule, with all our minde, and with all our powers. If it had beene ſaide, Thou ſhalt loue GOD with all thy heart: very well, a man might haue concluded, that it is no ſinne vnleſſe the wil doe fully reſolue vpon it and purpoſe it. For although the word *Heart*, doe ſometime ſignifie the vnderſtãding: yet doth the holy ſcripture take it alſo for the will. Nowe then a man might alledge this ſhift: it is ſaide that wee muſt loue God with all our heart: therfore ſo we haue not our will bent contrarie to goodneſſe, it is ynough, we be quite diſcharged before GOD. For men woulde take the wil for the wicked affection, and ſo it woulde ſeeme that the wicked luſtes which ſtirre vs vp and prouoke vs, are not compriſed vnder the name of ſinne, ſo long as they holde vs not captiue. But when as hee addeth, with all thy heart, with all thy thoughts, and with all thy powers: let vs ſee whether a peece of my ſoule or minde be not alreadie corrupted, when I conceiue any thing againſt God, or when I conceiue any wicked luſt of whoredome or robberie, although I ſticke not to it. Is it to bee ſaide that I loue God with all my heart, when a peece of my minde is bent againſt him? The caſe concerneth not the very heart or will, as I haue declared afore: but the conceit that is in the ſoule of man. Now then, I ſhew that there is vanitie in mee, and that the feare and reuerence of God reſtraine mee not as they ſhoulde doe: and therefore it followeth that I am condemned as blameable, becauſe I haue not diſcharged my ſelf in louing my God as I am commaunded. Again, is there no power of my ſoule which is not applyed to the thinking of ſome one thing or other that is contrarie to God and his righteouſnes? Yes. We ſee then that naughtie and wicked thoughts are to bee condemned, and wee muſt no more qualifie them that they ſhoulde not bee puniſhed at Gods hand: and alſo that the men which neuer conſented to euill ſo farre as to purpoſe and fully intende it, ſhould not faile to be curſed before God, if hee liſted to vſe rigor againſt them. Nowe therefore we haue the true and plaine meaning of this text, whereby we ſee that it behoueth vs to looke neerer to it, that we be not beguiled nor miſledde. And S. Pauls example ought to pricke vs the more forwarde, ſeeing he confeſſeth himſelfe to haue bin ignorant of Gods lawe, vntill our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt had inlightened him by his holy ſpirit, to the intent he ſhould know what was ment by the word *Luſt*, or *Concupiſcence*.

Deut.6.5.& 10.12. Matt.22.37

Nowe muſt we apply the foretouched things to our benefite, and vſe. Firſt therefore let vs learne, that to ſerue God well, we muſt not onely be deſirous to doe well, and go forwarde therein to effect: but alſo ridde our hearts from all euill affections and corrupt thoughts, ſo as al our ſenſes may tende to the giuing of our ſelues all wholly vnto God. Let vs not ſhewe our ſelues to haue beene drawen aſide to reele one way or other: but let vs bee throughly ſtayed, to runne forwarde without ſtopping or ſtunting, yea euen to runne forwarde in the way that GOD ſheweth vs, ſo as there may be nothing but perfect pureneſſe in vs. And when we once knowe that well: then muſt wee take warning to ſtande vppon our garde. For we ſee howe men runne aſtraye and diſpence with themſelues. And what is the cauſe thereof? It is for that they make their reckening without their hoſte, as wee ſay. For they conſter Gods lawe after their owne fancie, bearing themſelues in hand that it is ynough for them, ſo they had none euill intent with them, nor reſted vppon the thing with determinate purpoſe. Tuſh ſay they, God imputeth none of all this. And thereupon they walke

for warde in leawde luſts, with a towell of their owne tying before their eyes, that they may not diſcerne their owne ſecret deceiuing of thẽſelues. But yet when men haue ſpoken ſo, they cannot ſcape the hande of the heauenly iudge. And therefore let vs looke to the reſtreyning of our luſtes. For God hath condemned not onely the wicked intents and purpoſes: but alſo all the luſtes that prouoke vs & thruſt vs forward vnto euill. Wherefore let vs liue in the greater awe, and let euerie man holde himſelfe ſhort, euen becauſe there is no part in vs which is not infected with ſin. Let vs make a trial of al the powers of our ſoule, and wee ſhall finde that ſinne is ſhed throughout, like as when a poyſon is ſoked into a mans bodie, it infecteth him throughout, and ſo is there as it were an vniuerſall leproſie which hath ouergrowen the whole man, both bones, and marrowe, and thoughts, and affections, and all that euer is of him. Seeing then that our nature is ſo corrupted, ought we not to be the more vigilant to holde our ſelues in awe, conſidering that God by his lawe condemneth all wicked thoughts, that tende to the prouoking of vs vnto euill, inaſmuch as there is a certaine inward mouing that tickleth vs, and wee feele our will pricked forwarde, although it be not ledde quite and cleane away as a priſoner? Sith we ſee this, haue wee not good cauſe to gather our wittes to vs, and to walke the more warely and carefully vnder the hande of God? So then whereas wee bee drowſie and ſlothfull, and woulde faine diſcharge our ſelues to Godward with eaſe: yee ſee howe this commaundement ought to waken vs. But wee muſt vnderſtande that it is not for vs to ſcape by ſuch ſhiftes. And why? After that God hath condemned wicked intentes: hee proceedeth ſtill to the condemning of euill luſtes too. And that ought to ſtande vs to a dubble vſe. The one is, that we muſt pray to God the earneſtlyer, to gouerne vs with his holye ſpirite, and to clenſe vs from all vices and corruptions, & that hauing prayed vnto him, euery of vs ſhoulde inforce himſelfe, and as it were doe violence to our nature, and to all our ſenſes and powers of minde, foraſmuch as there is nothing in vs but rebelliouſneſſe againſt the Lawe of God, euen
Rom.8.7. as Saint Paul ſpeaketh not onely of mens willes, when he ſaith: that men in their owne frowarde nature are enemies to God, but alſo of their affections and thoughts. Hee vſeth a worde there, which extẽdeth euen to the thoughts ẏ we conceiue. Al of thẽ (ſaith he) are enemies vnto God.

Seeing it is ſo: let vs aſſure our ſelues, that when we haue takẽ neuer ſo much paine to hold our ſelues impriſoned vnder the awe of God: yet there will ſcape manie euill luſtes from vs, the which it behoueth vs to bewaile before God. And ſo the firſt point is, that we muſt be earneſt in calling vppon God, to gouerne vs by his holy ſpirit, and doe our indeuer and diligence to bridle our ſelues in ſuch wiſe as ſatan may not haue any hoole to enter at, nor bee able to make any breach vpõ vs, to win the poſſeſſion of our harts: but that we driue them a great way of, ſo as if we perceiue any thought tending vnto euill, wee ſtraitwayes preuent it and ſet a barre in the way ſaying: No not ſo, Thy God muſt haue the whol dominion of thee, ſo as he poſſeſſe, not only thy heart, but alſo all thy ſenſes. And for the ſecond point wee muſt learne to condemne our ſelues, that we may glorifie God in cõfeſſing our ſelues to bee all giltie, and that if hee call vs to a reckening, we be all vndone and caſt away, if he vſe rigor againſt vs. To that point muſt wee come, or elſe we ſhall neuer profite in Gods Lawe as wee ſhoulde doe. But here it might bee demaunded, ſeeing that God knoweth mens frailtie, why hee doth not either ſtrengthen them better, or elſe make a Lawe that were leſſe ſtraite and ſeuere? For it ſhould ſeeme that God ment to oppreſſe vs, when he forbiddeth wicked luſtes, and thinks it not ynough for vs to yeld him obediẽce in our willes, without adding of the other worde. And that is the cauſe why ſcoffers ſay that God ment to mocke men in his lawe, and intended (as yee would ſay) to forbidde men to ſcratch, when hee made them to itch. But wee muſt come to the curſednes that is in our ſelues: namely that wee haue neither thought nor affectiõ in vs, (as I ſaid afore) but the ſame is diſobedient to Gods righteouſneſſe. Therefore let vs not wonder though there be ſuch a battle betwene Gods law & mens luſts. For why? when we haue throughly ſerched what is in vs: we ſhall find nothing there but vtter corruptiõ and damnable vice: for we cannot conceiue ſo much as one thought which tẽdeth not to euill. Foraſmuch as it is ſo: beholde, God giueth vs here a perfect rule of all goodnes and righteouſnes. Needes therefore muſt there riſe vp as it were a thundering, and the fire & water muſt needes ſhewe their contrarie workings. Nowe there is leſſe agreement betweene mans nature and Gods righteouſnes, than is betwixt fire and water. Therefore let vs not thinke it ſtraunge, that God doth ſo repreſſe all our luſts And when we heare the blaſphemies which the ſcoffers that I ſpake of, doe ſpew out: let vs abhor them as monſters. For inſteade of glorifying God for his righteouſnes, they come daſhing againſt him like wild and mad beaſts. Thus much concerning this point of the frailtie of men.

Nowe although it be ſuch: yet is it not to bee marueiled at, that God hath condemned it in his law. Why ſo? For in ordering of our life and in ſhewing vs howe we ſhould walke, God reſpecteth not what we be able to doe, nor ẏ meaſure of our ſtrength: but what duety we owe to him, & what righteouſneſſe is, although it be not to be foũd in vs. We be Gods creatures: and ought we not then to giue our ſelues wholly to his ſeruice? Yes certainly. That is a peremptory reaſon. And men may well grunt at it, but yet ſhall they alwayes finde proofe in themſelues, that foraſmuch as they belong to GOD, they ought to dedicate all their ſenſes, all their affections, and all that euer is in them both in bodie and ſoule vnto him. Howbeit let vs mark well herewithall, that wee cannot diſcharge our ſelues thereof: and what is the cauſe thereof but our owne naughtineſſe? And we take that from Adam. That followeth not. For although wee bee helde in bondage vnder ſinne, and this bondage hindereth vs from wel doing, and driueth vs to all euill: yet howſoeuer wee fare, the roote of it is in our ſelues, and euery man ſhall feele himſelfe blame worthie, ſo as wee ſhall not neede to ſay that wee bee driuen by any other force: but euerie man is caried and driuen to it Iam.1.14. by his owne luſt. And ſo is there no more excuſe for vs. Whereby it appeareth, that it is not for vs to meaſure Gods Lawe by our owne power and abilities. Why ſo? As I ſayde afore, GOD reſpecteth not what wee can doe, nor what our abilitie can brouk: but he reſpecteth wherein wee bee bounde vnto him, and hee hath an eye to the perfection that is without vs. That is the thing which wee haue to marke. And it is the thing that beguyleth the Papiſtes. For they haue this principle among them, That Gods Lawe is not vnpoſſible to men. It is a wonder that they ſhould bee ſo ſtraught, and that the diuell ſhoulde bewitch them after that faſhion. For it is moſt euident and apparant doctrine throughout the whole Scripture, that men ſhall alwayes bee condemned by the Lawe, and that they muſt bee fayne to flee for refuge Gal.3.10. to Gods onely mercie. When Saint Paule goes about to prooue that all men are curſed for as much as all men are ſinners, and that there is not ſo much as one righteous man: what argument vſeth he? He alledgeth this text of Moſes, Deut.27,26 Curſed are all they that perfourme not the whole contentes of the Lawe. Nowe at the firſt bluſh, it ſhoulde ſeeme that Saint Paule reaſoneth amiſſe, and that the ſayde allegation is impertinent. Well then, it is ſayde that all ſuch as tranſgreſſe Gods Lawe are curſed: but yet it followeth not therefore that all mankinde is accurſed. For if a man keepe the lawe and diſcharge his duetie: in ſo dooing hee is exempted from the ſentence of condemnation. Some then there are to bee founde that haue perfourmed the lawe: and therefore all are not accurſed. Yes. But Saint Paule preſuppoſeth, that the lawe is vnpoſſible. And if he ſhould not preſuppoſe that: he had ſpoken as a witleſſe and vnreaſonable man. Therefore we ſee that the Papiſtes haue taken a grounde that is cleane contrarie to Gods ſpirit: and ſurely hee beſotteth them in ſuch wiſe, as they knowe not the verye Apſie of the Chriſtian faith and Religion. So then let vs marke well, that when wee treate of Gods lawe, wee muſt not meaſure it by our abilitie, nor looke what wee can doe: but wee muſt looke what wee owe vnto God. Yea but ſaye they, not ſo: howe ſhall wee doe then? For to their ſeeming all the worlde ſhoulde bee damned. It is true, and ſo is it meete that it ſhoulde bee: that is to wit, that wee ſhoulde all be damned, if wee will not haue ſaluation in Ieſus Chriſt. For howe ſhall wee ſeeke Gods grace, vnleſſe wee thinke wee haue neede of it? Men will not begge by their good willes. So long as we thinke our ſelues to haue any rightuouſneſſe of our owne, wee will not paſſe to ſeeke any elſe where than in our ſelues. Therefore it behooueth vs to bee vtterly ridde of it, and to feele Gods wrath and death lying heauie vppon vs: for without that, wee will neuer vouchſafe to ſubmit our ſelues to God to obtaine mercie. But this deſerueth to bee layde foorth more at large.

Therefore let vs beare well in minde firſt of all, that when wee feele any ſinfull thought in vs, and our luſtes doe tickle vs vnto euill: we be guiltie before God. But here it might bee demaunded, how then? If a man doe but conceiue a thought, ſo as he not onely hath no will to abyde by it, but alſo miſlyketh of it euen before he haue felte any ſting or pricke of it: is this ſinne? Nowe there are thoughtes which touche not our heart at all, neither are wee mooued with them, neither doe wee conceiue any euill deſire. A thought commeth vppon a man as it were ſleeping, and it flittereth afore him. What? ſo as his heart is moued with it, or his deſire inclyned to it? No. When it happeneth but euen ſo to vs, ſurely it behooueth vs to bewayle it before GOD, and to conſider that if we were not helde backe by his grace: there were a gap open for Satan, and he woulde by and by winne the aduauntage of vs. Therefore wee muſt ſtil ſigh in this caſe. But yet doeth not God impute this for ſinne.

The ſecond poynt is, when wee not onely conceiue ſome euill thought in our minde, and ſome thing preſenteth it ſelfe before vs: but alſo wee bee ſomewhat mooued with it, ſo as wee feele ſome ſting of Satan pricking vs, and then is the ſinne conceiued: that is to ſay, although there bee no conſent as they terme it, nor any reſolute purpoſe: yet is the ſinne full ſhaped before God, and it is damnable. It is expedient to alledge examples hereof. It may bee that a man beholding another mans houſe or ground, conceiueth ſome lyght imagination, and yet is nowhit mooued therewithall in his heart, ne hath any deſire to ſay, I woulde this were mine, but paſſeth it ouer and ſees it but vanitie. Hee can not let the comming of it into his minde, but yet (as I ſayde afore:) although it bee not matched with any euill affection, GOD doeth thereby warne vs of the infirmitie that is in vs, and it behooueth vs to humble our ſelues, and to bee ſorie, and to conſider that it is ſuch a fault alreadie, as wee are well worthie to bee condemned for. For let vs ſee if this bee to be founde in the Angels of heauen. No vndoubtedly. And yet the rightuouſneſſe of the Angels is hardly and ſcantly anſwearable to the Lawe of God. In deede there is a rightuouſneſſe of God (as wee haue ſeene in the Booke of Iob) Iob.4.18. which ſurmounteth the righteouſneſſe of the Lawe. But though the Angels of heauen giue themſelues neuer ſo much to the keeping of Gods lawe: ſurely the vttermoſt that they can doe, is but to frame themſelues to the rule that is giuen vs here. Nowe then wee ſee how it is a fault alreadie, for the which men ought to condemne themſelues, though they haue not had any wicked thing preſented before them, but euen a little heartriſing, ſo as a man ſhoulde ſay, I woulde, and yet for all that he doeth verie ſodainely beate it back, and yeeldeth not thereto, though I ſay, he ſo cut it off, yet is he guiltie of that coueting or luſting whereof mention is made here. And ſeeing it is ſo, let vs learne to condemne our ſelues in all reſpectes.

Againe let vs looke that wee condemne our ſelues dubble, when wee haue not onely had ſome heartriſing to prouoke vs to euill: but alſo ſome ſettled affection by nouriſhing the ſaid heartriſing, as when a woman breedeth childe and nouriſheth the conception till it come to the birth. Now then, when wee haue giuen head after that faſhion to our euill luſtes, ſo farre forth that our will is ouercome, and wee reſt vppon the euill to conſent vnto it: behold (ſay I) there lyeth a dubble condemnation vpon vs. And then muſt wee bewaile our wretchedneſſe yet more bicauſe we ſee a dubble condemnation hanging ouer our heades, vnleſſe GOD of his infinite goodneſſe doe ſpare vs. Thus ye ſee what wee haue to marke.

Iam.1.15.

But nowe herewithall wee muſt reſorte to the remedie. For wee ſhoulde fall into vtter diſpayre and confuſion, if wee had not Gods grace to ſuccour vs withall. Therefore if wee acknowledge our ſelues blamewoorthie in all reſpectes: then doeth GOD call vs to him, and ſhewe vs that although the wicked luſtes which are in vs, bee ſinne of their owne nature: yet hee will not impute them to vs for ſinne. Then if it bee demaunded whether euill luſt, bee imputed for ſinne to the faithfull: I ſay no: but they bee two diuers thinges. For if ye haue an eye to the nature of the vice: ye ſhall euer finde it to bee ſinne: but yet GOD pardoneth it. After that manner ſhall no euill luſtes bee layde to the charge of the faithfull, for as much as they bee forgiuen through Gods free goodneſſe: and wee knowe alſo that all our ſpottes are wyped out by the bloud of our Lord Ieſus Chriſt: and therof is Baptiſme a good warrant vnto vs. For there haue wee our ſpirituall waſhing, to clenſe vs from all the filth and vncleanneſſe that is in vs, that wee may appeare pure and cleane before GOD. So then our wicked luſtes ſhall not come to account. Nay (which more is) euen the deadly ſinnes, notwithſtanding that they proceede euen into the acte or deede dooing, ſhall not bee imputed vnto vs: verily euen bicauſe (as I ſaide before) God reſpecteth not that: and yet notwithſtanding he will that we haue an eye to it. Howbeit, if any man beguile himſelfe by bearing himſelfe in hand that he hath not conceyued any wicked luſt: it cauſeth GOD to call him to account. And why? For in as much as men ſoothe themſelues, it is meete that they ſhould be condemned. And for the ſame cauſe hath the Diuell brought to paſſe to bleare mens eyes by making them beleeue that none of all thoſe things is ſinne: in ſo much that wee ſee howe the Papiſtes imagine, that euen the groſſeſt faultes that bee, are blotted out by the ſigne of the Croſſe, or taken away with the ſprinkling of holy water. To their ſeeming they be matters of no weight, and they dally with God as with a little babie. But on the contrarie part let vs alwayes beare this in minde. And for as much as wee be not only too negligent, but alſo inclined to ſooth our ſelues in our own vices: let vs take this lookingglaſſe to behold our ſelues in. Let vs not deceiue our ſelues. A man may bee ſmeared or grimed, and euerie man ſhall laugh at him, and yet he himſelfe ſhall not perceiue it a whit. But if he go to a glaſſe, and there ſpie his face all beſpotted, he will ſhrinke away and go waſh it of. Euen ſo muſt wee doe. Surely the whole Lawe of God is as a glaſſe to ſhewe vs our fouleneſſe, to the intent wee ſhould bee ſorie and aſhamed of our lewd doings. And if we will haue a true lookingglaſſe, we muſt come to this preſent commaundement as I haue ſaide alreadie. For as long as we reade no more but *Thou ſhalt not ſteale, Thou ſhalt not murther, Thou ſhalt not commit adulterie*: all is well, euerie man will beare himſelfe in hand that he is not guiltie. But when wee come once to this poynt, *Thou ſhalt not luſt*: it is a ſharp lancing knife wherewith God launceth deeper, to ſearch not only the bottom of our hearts, but alſo of al our thoughts, imaginatiōs and conceits. There is not that thing in vs which commeth not then to triall and knowledge. In ſo much that the things which we tooke to be no faultes at all, muſt be condemned before God, and hee muſt haue the iudging of them, vnleſſe wee play the iudges with our ſelues aforehand. And herewithall wee haue to magnifie the mercie of our God, in that although we be faultie ſo greatly & ſo many wayes, yet notwithſtanding he accepteth vs for righteous. Let vs make compariſon here betweene the righteouſneſſe which we obtaine by faith, and the curſe that is vppon vs. Whereinto be we plundged? Are we faultie but in ſome one offence, or in ſome two or three, or in ſome certaine nomber? Nay we be plundged in ſuch a gulfe, that if wee begin once to fall to reckening, wee muſt needes be confounded. A hundred Millions of faultes is not the hundred part of the offences that wee haue committed before God. Then are we ſo guiltie, as there is none ende nor meaſure of our ſinnes. Yet notwithſtanding God receiueth vs to mercie, ſo as wee bee counted as righteous before him, as though there were ſuch full ſoundneſſe and perfection in vs, that nothing were amiſſe, but that we had performed the whole Lawe. Seeing then that God forgiueth vs ſuch an infinite nomber of offences, and clotheth vs with his owne righteouſneſſe, through the operation of the death and paſſion of our Lord Ieſus Chriſt, in as much as wee lay hold by faith vppon the grace that is purchaſed for vs, and do him the honour to ſay, Lord, it is in thy meere and free beſtowed goodneſſe that our ſaluation conſiſteth: doeth it not appeare therein, how much wee bee bound vnto him? Yes. So then, whē Gods Law hath brought vs to our wittes end, not only bicauſe of the infinite nomber of our luſtes, but alſo bicauſe wee ſhoulde lye buried vnder them as vnder huge mountaines, if God ſhould deale rigorouſly with vs: let vs call to minde that Gods intent is not to leaue vs in deſpaire, but to lift vs vp againe as

1.Iohn 1.7.
Eph.5.20.
Rom.3.22. 23.

ſoone as wee be ſunke downe. When he ſees our feebleneſſe, he reacheth vs his hand, and calleth vs to him, and will haue vs to bee comforted, for as much as he of his mercie layeth not any of al our ſinnes to our charge. Thus ye ſee howe the faithfull ceaſſe not to be of good cheere, though they bee ſo condemned in themſelues. But yet muſt wee begin at this ende of being vtterly diſmayed in our ſelues, that our Lorde may deliuer vs from the dungeon of death, and wee acknowledge ỹ our ſaluation conſiſteth in his only grace. Howbeit let vs notwithſtanding liue warely and keepe good watch, aſſuring our ſelues ỹ when we haue trauailed neuer ſo much, and taken neuer ſo much paine to ſerue God, ſo as wee haue on the one ſide eſchewed all occaſions of euill, and on the otherſide ſubdued our affections, & luſts, & alſo indeuored to repreſſe al wicked thoughts: yet wee muſt not ceaſſe to condemne our ſelues ſtill, and to ſtand ſtill in awe. Although we haue had victory through the grace of God, and ſinne hath not ouermaiſtred vs: yet doth it dwell cõtinually in vs, and there is ſtill ſome vncleanneſſe and ſpot in vs. Therefore let vs ſigh, and let vs ſigh in ſuch ſort, as it may ſharpen vs to doe our duetie. We ſee how S. Paule ſpeaketh of it. After he had profited as much as might bee, and was come to an Angelicall holineſſe: yet notwithſtanding he ſaith ſtill, wretch that I am, Rom.7.24. who ſhall deliuer mee from this body of death? And what is the cauſe that he conſidereth death in himſelfe, but for that he ſawe ſinne there? Neuertheleſſe let vs vnderſtand that wee muſt not bee out of heart. Although wee perceiue a Million of ſinnes day by day in vs: yet muſt wee ſtill paſſe on further. And therefore when Saint Paule exhorteth the faithfull to eſchew ſinne: He ſaieth not, Let not ſinne dwell in you: but Rom.6.12. he ſayeth, Let not ſinne raigne in you. In deede it were to be wiſhed that ſinne dwelled not in vs: but ſeeing it is in vs, yet muſt wee not bee too much diſcomforted. For whereas it is ſaide that ſinne dwelleth in vs: firſt it warneth vs of our wretched ſtate: and ſecondly it willeth vs to conſider that wee muſt bee occupyed in continuall warfare, and therefore flee the earneſtlyer to our God for ſuccour, praying him to ſtrengthen vs with his power, by the grace of his holy ſpirit which he hath giuen vs for our Lord Ieſus Chriſtes ſake.

Nowe let vs fall downe in yͤ preſence of our good God, with acknowledgment of our faultes, praying him to make vs feele them better, and that wee may learne to frame our lyues to the obeying of him, which beholdeth not onely our outward woorkes, intentes and affections: but alſo euen all our thoughtes and conceytes. And for as much as wee can not attayne to ſuch perfection out of hand: let [vs beſeeche God] that the ſame may bee an occaſion to humble vs: and therewithall to ſtirre vs vp continually to fyght luſtilyer, ſo as euerie of vs may inforce himſelfe to correct the vyces that are in his nature, vntill our Lorde hauing rid vs from this corrupt fleſhe, doe clothe vs againe with his owne righteouſneſſe, and faſhion vs al wholly like to his glorious image. That it may pleaſe him to graunt this grace, not onely to vs but alſo to all people, &c.

On Tewſday the xvj. of Iuly. 1555.

The xlij. Sermon, which is the thirteenth vpon the fifth Chapter.

22 Theſe are the woordes which the Lorde ſpake to your multitude, vpon the Mount from the middes of the fire, out of the Cloud and darkeneſſe, with a great voyce. And he added no more thereunto, but wrate them in two tables of ſtone, and gaue them vnto mee.

FOr as much as wee finde not a better excuſe of our lewdneſſe & diſobedience towardes God, than to pleade ignoraunce: we coulde finde in our heartes to haue alwayes that ſhrouding ſheete, ſo as wee myght ſaye wee vnderſtand not what GOD ſayeth, or that hee ſpeakes not vnto vs, or elſe that his voyce is too farre off for vs to heare. But GOD foreſeeing ſuch lewdneſſe, meant to preuent all that men could alledge, to the ende they might haue nothing to defend themſelues withall. And therefore in ſetting forth his Lawe, it was his wil that the doctrine which is contained therein, ſhould be vttered with a loud & ſhirle voyce. Yea & he ſpake it not onely to three or foure, *but to all the people*, both great & ſmall without exception. Beſides this, it was his will that the lawe ſhould be put in Matt.5.18. writing, that it might continue, and not ſerue for one age onely, but ſtand in force and authoritie to yͤ worldes end. And yͤ is the cauſe why it is ſaid in this place, *That God ſpake with a loude voyce.* Hereby Moſes ſheweth that the Lawe is no hidden doctrine, and that men can not alledge that they bee not of ſufficient learning: for not without cauſe did God ſo lift vp his voyce, when he intended to giue a rule for men to liue by. It is added expreſſely, *That it was doone to the whole multitude.* As if he ſhould ſay, It is true that God hath choſen men from among you to gouerne you, and that he hath giuen them his ſpirit: but yet for all that, he will haue his lawe knowen euen Pſal.19.8. of the rudeſt and moſt ignorant, ſo as it may be a wiſedome common to all men. That is one of the pointes which we haue to marke here.

The ſeconde is, *That God added not any thing more,* after thoſe ten ſentences. Wherein Moſes doeth the people to vnderſtand, that this briefeneſſe which God vſeth, ought to incourage vs to receiue the thinges that he ſpeaketh. For if he ſhould lay great volumes before vs: we might replie, that all our life would not ſuffice to ſtudie them. God therefore was not ouerlong in giuing vs his woord. There are but onely ten verſes of them. Let vs count them vpon our fingers, and wee ſhall haue inſtruction ynough in all things that are requiſite for our life. Yea & herewithall Moſes meant to doe vs to wit alſo, that ſeeing God hath giuen vs ſuch a ſure rule, as he intended not to adde any whit at all to yͤ which he had ſpoken alreadie: it behoueth vs to holde vs to it, and it is not lawfull for any creature to adde aught vnto it. Thus much concerning the ſecond point.

For the third point he rehearſeth that againe which he had ſayde heretofore: that is to wit, Deut.4.11. *That God in ſetting forth his lawe, ſpake from out of the cloud, and that the mountaine ſmoked, and that there were flames of fire,* and flaſhes of lightening flew to and fro. Whereto tendeth all this? That the doctrine might carrie the greater Maieſtie, and that men might be moued to humble themſelues reuerently before GOD, and to ſubmit themſelues wholly to his word, and to obey the ſame. Theſe are the three notable points which Moſes rehearſeth here, before he proceede to the reſt.

Now as touching yͤ firſt, let vs remember what hath bene ſaid afore, that is to ſay, *That God ſpake loud and ſhirle:* and not to a fewe folke, but *generally to all the people:* which thing was doone to make vs vnderſtand, that Gods woord ſhall bee cleare and certaine to vs, ſo wee playe not the deafe folkes wilfully. True it is that our wits are ſo weake, as we ſhall neuer vnderſtand one word of the things that God ſpeaketh to vs, except he 1.Cor.2.13. inlighten vs by his holy ſpirit: for the ſenſuall man vnderſtandeth not the heauenly thinges. Thoſe then are too high for vs. But whereof cōmeth that fault and vice but of our owne blindneſſe? Yet notwithſtanding, Gods trueth, as in reſpect of it ſelfe and in it owne nature, is eaſie & open ynough: and therefore let vs not charge it with darkſomneſſe. Againe, what is to be done, if we would haue God to make vs profite in his word? Let vs be lowely and of ſmall reputation: for it is not in vaine, that he hath promiſed to Pſal.25.9. teache the lowely. Then let vs not truſt to our own wit, let vs not come with ouerweening and loftineſſe, as though wee thought our ſelues of ſufficient capacitie to iudge of the thinges that ſhall bee ſaid vnto vs: but let vs rather beſeeche God to open our eyes and to reach vs his hand, and let vs confeſſe that we haue not the aptneſſe to profite in his ſchoole, further foorth than he giueth it vs. If wee bee at that point: let vs not doubt but that Gods word will be eaſie to vs, and wee ſhall vnderſtand what he intendeth to ſay. Hereby we ſee what wretchednes hath bin in yͤ world, whereby the cōmon people, and welneere all other men haue bene plucked backe from reading the holy ſcriptures. For it hath bene an opinion, that it belonged to none but Monkes & Prieſtes: yea & in the end there was ſuch beaſtlineſſe, as it ſeemed that diuinitie ought to bee locked vp in cheſtes or caskets. But yet for all that, this record hath indured, and muſt indure to the worldes ende, namely that God hath ſpoken with a loude voyce, & not hidden or ſhrunke himſelfe aſide into ſome litle odde nooke. Therfore it was too ſhamefull a thankleſneſſe, that men haue ſo left Gods woord as it were in a wilderneſſe. And wee ought to marke this text ſo much the more, where it is ſaide, that God ſpake not to ſome Doctor onely, but to all the people in common, yea euen to the verie ſimpleſt ſort of them. In reſpect whereof we haue cauſe to magnifie the goodneſſe of our God, in reſtoring the benefite vnto vs, whereof wee ſee the moſt part of the world bereft, for their churliſhneſſe and retchleſneſſe ſake, ſo that now adays Gods word ſoundeth among vs, and we may reade it, and be partakers of it both openly and ſecretly, and the treaſures thereof are ſet foorth to vs, ſo as wee may inioy them: and that is an ineſtimable benefite, which wee ought to magnifie. Againe let vs be diligent in giuing eare to our God, and let no man alledge excuſes to ſhift himſelfe from him. For ſeeing that God ſpeaketh to all yͤ companie of the faithfull, euen to as many as are baptized in the name of our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt: let euery man on his owne behalfe and in his degree, indeuour to profite thereby, and let all of vs in common take God for our ſchoolemaiſter, and bee readie to hearken to him whenſoeuer it pleaſeth him to ſpeake vnto vs, which thing he doth daily. Thus much concerning the firſt point, where it is ſaid that God ſpake to the whole multitude.

Now let vs come to the ſecond point, that is to wit, *That he added not any thing:* and that is to the end that we ſhould be the willinger to heare what is contained in the Lawe. It is true that all that euer is ſet downe in writing by Moſes, belongeth to the Lawe. Likewiſe the thinges that the Prophets haue left vnto vs, and finally that which is added in the Goſpell, containe all one ſubſtance. And though the Byble be very great: yet notwithſtanding GOD hath made it all to ame at one certaine marke, to the intent wee ſhould not goe wandering at rouers, nor bee driuen to make too much ſeeking whither wee ſhould goe. For why? All is referred to ten verſes, as I haue ſaid alreadie. Let vs recken vppon our fingers, and wee ſhall haue Gods commaundements, we ſhall haue a ſumme of the thinges which we ought to beare in minde, that we may be good ſchollers to Godward. Seeing there is ſuch briefeneſſe, muſt it not needes be that men are too froward,if they refuſe ſuch teaching,and can finde no leaſure to profite in Gods worde? Now then, let vs forbeare all ſuch trifling replies as this, Oh ſir, the holy ſcripture is a deepe ſea, it is a bottomleſſe pit.If a man would enter into it,how ſhould he get out againe? Let vs alledge 1.Pet.1,12. no ſuch thinges. It is true ẏ in the ſcripture God ſheweth ſuch ſecrets,as euen ẏ Angels doe reuerēce. It is true ẏ we can haue but a ſmall taſt of 1.Cor.13,12 thē ſo long as we be in this world. It is enough ẏ we know in part(as ſayth Saint Paul)& darkely, and ẏ we ſee ẏ thinges now as it were through a glaſſe,which we cannot ſee as yet face to face. All this is very true.But yet for all ẏ,God hath ſo abaſed and applyed himſelfe to our ſlenderneſſe: that the thinges are become eaſie vnto vs, or at leaſtwiſe wee conceiue ſo much of them, as is auailable to our ſaluation.If we meet with things that are doubtfull: let vs haue this modeſtie with vs, that wee ruſh not too farre forewarde, till wee haue firſt asked counſell at Gods mouth, knowing that wee bee yet farre of from our perfection. Yet notwithſtanding, wee may alwayes glorie, that according to the abilitie that is giuen vs, our Lord will not leaue vs in doubt and ignorāce, without giuing of vs ſuch certeintie, as we may walke ſafely on our way, ſo as we ſhall knowe that his calling of vs to him is not in vaine, and that wee bee not let looſe to runne at rouers: but that wee haue a certeine marke ſet vp for vs to runne at, whereunto if wee hold on our way, wee ought not to miſtruſt that we ſhall miſſe, foraſmuch as wee haue ſo good direction. Therefore let vs beare in minde, that our Lorde ſpeaketh not here according to his owne nature.

For if he ſhould ſpeake in his owne language, ſhould it bee vnderſtood of mortall creatures? Alas no. But how is it that hee hath ſpoken to vs in the holy ſcripture? As nurces doe to their 1.Cor.3.1,2 little babes. Saint Paul ſayth that hee did as a nurce doth with her little children, when hee preached the Goſpel. And in ſpeaking of himſelfe, no doubt but hee ſheweth the goodneſſe of God, who ruled him after that ſort by his holy ſpirite. And looke what was in Paul: the ſame doe wee finde lykewiſe in Moſes, and in all the prophets. Then let vs marke, that God made himſelfe nurcelyke, who talketh not to her little babe as ſhee woulde doe to a man, but hath a reſpect of the childes capacitie. So then, GOD did as it were ſtoope, becauſe wee ſhould not haue vnderſtood what hee ſayd, vnleſſe he had lowlyed himſelfe vnto vs. That is the cauſe why that in the holy ſcripture, hee ſhewes himſelfe the rather lyke a nucre, to the intent to conceale his high and infinite maieſtie, whereunto wee could not atteine, no nor once come neere it. Seeing that GOD hath yeelded himſelfe ſo courteouſly vnto vs: there hangeth the greeuouſer condemnation ouer our heades, if wee indeuer not to profite in the doctrine, which is (as yee would ſay) chawed to vs aforehand, to the intent that we ſhould doe no more but ſwallowe it downe and digeſt it.Furthermore let vs marke well, ẏ where as Moſes ſayth, *that God added not any thing to theſe ten ſentences:* it is to the end that this breefeneſſe ſhould ſtirre vs vp, and incourage vs, knowing that Gods intent is not to make vs to wander as in a thing that hath neither brim, nor bottome: but to ſet vs downe theſe onely ten ſentences. True it is that he expoundeth theſe ten ſentences by Moſes, and conſequently by all the prophets: and in the ende wee haue had Heb.1,1.2. a finall expoſition of them, made by our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt, as it is giuen vs nowadayes in the Goſpell. But what for that? Yet haue wee ſtill this one marke to aime at, *that there are but tenne ſentences.* Sith it is ſo, muſt it not needes bee that men are too frowarde, when they diſpiſe ſuch grace of GOD, and cannot finde in their heartes to come to him when he intreateth them ſo gently? Yes. So then this is the effect of that which wee haue to remember here concerning the eaſineſſe which Moſes ſheweth to bee in Gods word.

And by the way let vs marke alſo, that hee intended to cut off all occaſiion of quareling, to the ende wee ſhoulde learne to bee contented with the ſimplicitie of the lawe: that is to ſay, that wee ſhould not fall to controlling of GOD, by adding of collups and morſells of our owne to his worde. For when hee ſpake: hee ſpake once for all. And hee will haue vs to holde our ſelues to that which hee hath ſpoken, as we ſhall ſee hereafter, where he forbiddeth vs ſtraitly to ſwarue Deut.5.32. to the right hand or to the left, or to adde any thing at all to the doctrine thereof. And in deede, ſeeing that GOD himſelfe hath not added aught vnto it: what are wee, that wee ſhoulde preſume to take vppon vs aboue him? Thinke wee that when GOD gaue his Lawe, hee had loſt his remembrance, and wiſt not what was for our profite? Can a man bethinke himſelfe of any thing that is vnknowen to God?

Againe moreouer, when as our Lorde hath applyed himſelfe ſo familiarly vnto vs: thinke wee hee meant to teach vs by halues, and to leaue vs in the middeſt of our way? No. Then let vs remember that ſeeing God added not any thing after hee had once ſpoken thoſe ten wordes: it becommeth vs to yeelde our ſelues wholy to the ſimple doctrine that is conteined in his Lawe, without interlacing of any thing of our owne, aſſuring our ſelues that our perfect wiſedome is to obey our God. Had this bin wel obſerued: we ſhould not be ſo greatly cumbered nowadayes in correcting ẏ corruptions ẏ reigne in the world. For whereof came the corruptiō of Gods religion & ſeruice, that is is to be ſeene in the Popedome? The Papiſtes vaunt they ſerue God, when they vſe their kyrieleyſons, their holy, holy, holy, their ceremonies & other petie traſh. And why? Becauſe they tooke vppon them to adde to Gods word, ſo as they thought it not enough to ſerue God after his owne deuiſing: vnleſſe men alſo did forge what they liſted in their owne brayne. Therfore all ẏ euer is termed by the name of Gods ſeruice in poperie, is but toyes of mens inuention. And not onely ſo: but alſo the ſaying of the prophet Eſa.29.13. Ier.11.13. is fulfilled in them, namely that they haue deſpiſed Gods commaundementes, and in the meane while giuen themſelues to their own inuentions. The worlde ſees what miſchiefe hath inſued through this diueliſh malapeartneſſe, that men durſt diſguiſe Gods word ẇ their owne dreames and dotages. So much the more therefore doth it ſtand vs in hand to marke this text where it is ſayd, that after GOD had once ſpoken, hee added not any thing to that which he had ſayd. And in deede, (as I ſayd afore) it is an horrible blaſphemie, when men take vpon them to finde ſome better thing than is conteyned in Gods lawe. It is all one as if they would reproue him as a lyer, or ſay he was miſaduiſed, or that he had forgotten what hee ſhould haue commaunded. But can men finde any better way? No. Then let vs learne to ſubmit our ſelues in ſuch wiſe vnto God, as wee may alwayes beare in minde, that when God had once ſpoken, hee made a finall ende and concluſion, as if hee ſhould haue ſayd, Holde yee there, theſe are my boundes and liſtes: whoſoeuer goes any further, hee ſhal breake his necke: ſo as there will bee nothing but falling, if wee keepe not the right way which God hath made and hedged in after that faſhion. And although God ſpeake not preſently after a viſible maner as hee did then: yet ought we to bethink vs oftentimes of this leſſon which is conteined in his lawe. In deede God ſpake not twice: but hee ſpake once for all, as they ſay. Wee on our part ought to heare it often, according to this ſaying of the threeſcore and Pſal.62.12. ſecond pſalme, the Lord hath ſpoken once, and I haue heard him: but my hearing of it was not for once and away, I haue heard it twice. Hereby wee bee warned, that it is not enough for vs to beſtowe one dayes hearing vpon the thinges which our Lord hath willed to be ſet forth in his name: but wee muſt minde them continually. Pſal.1.2. Then let euery of vs occupy himſelfe in them morning and euening all the time of his lyfe, and let vs not ceaſe to recorde well the thinges which our Lord hath told and declared vnto vs. For though wee ſhould apply our ſelues to them all the dayes of our lyfe: hardely ſhoulde we atteine to the one halfe of our iourney. It is true (as I ſayd afore) that our Lord will inſtruct vs ſo far forth as ſhall be expedient for our ſaluation: but yet for all, wee ſhall alwayes finde our ſelues to haue neede to profit more and more in Gods worde. Therefore let vs bee diligent, and let vs not think our labor loſt when we take ẏ way, and apply our whole ſtody dayly thereunto, ſo as we neuer leaue ſearching and ſeeking out of the thinges which our Lord teacheth vs. Thus yee ſee how wee muſt put this ſentence in practiſe, where it is ſayd, *that our Lorde added not any thing more.*

Now let vs come to the third poynt, which is: *that hee ſpake from the middeſt of fyre, Clowdes, and whirlewinde.* In deede this hath bin expounded already heretofore: Howbeit foraſmuch as it is repeated by Moſes: let vs marke that it is not ſuperfluous. And in deede, it cannot bee tolde vs too often, that Gods worde ought to carry a maieſtie towardes vs, to make all our wittes to ſtoope and to ſubmit themſelues to it. And why? Firſt wee ſee there is ſuch pride in men, as they cannot bowe their neckes. It is true that they will not ſay that they intend to reſiſt God or to bid him battell: but whatſoeuer they ſay, are they plyable and meeke as they ought to bee? No: they come farre ſhorte of it. Againe, there is a blockiſhneſſe in vs, ſo as wee dote vppon theſe worldly thinges. Wee cannot rayſe vp our wittes to apply them to the hearing of God. Wee cannot attaine to that ſpirituall wiſedome, becauſe our wittes are occupyed afore hand aboute the affaires and cares of the world, and we neede nothing to holde vs here beneath. Therfore it is greatly for our benefite, that our Lord ſhoulde touch vs to the quicke, to the intent we may yeelde ſuch reuerence to his worde, as it may not dye, partely through our ſtubbornnes and partely through our blockiſhneſſe: that is to ſay becauſe we be partly ſo dull, groſſe, and earthly, and partely ſo forepoſſeſſed with vanities, that we mount not vpwarde, but are helde downe heere in theſe corruptible thinges. And therefore not without cauſe did God ſpeake from the middeſt of fire, clowdes, and whirlewinde, when hee went aboute to ſet forth his Lawe. For it was expedient that the people ſhoulde bee touched with ſome feare, ſo as they might ſay, it is not for vs to daly with our God. Seeing he appeareth to vs with ſo greate and terrible maieſtie: what ſhould wee doe but tremble vnder him, and yeelde him ſuch ſubiection as hee may rule vs as ſheepe, and wee all of vs bowe downe our neckes and holde downe our heades, ſuffering him to wealde vs at his will, and giuing our ſelues in ſuch wiſe vnto him, as wee may bee abaſhed when hee ſpeaketh, and haue none other deſire, but onely to ſerue and honor him, and to ſubmit our ſelues wholy to his guiding? Lo here the cauſe why God did ſo magnify his lawe at the ſetting forth thereof. He could wel haue ſpoken without the caſting forth of flames of fyre, without making the hill to ſmoke, and without hauing any thicke or darke clowdes about him: but it was his will to adde all theſe miracles, to the intent that the people ſhoulde bee afrayde. And therefore let vs marke, that hee intended to bring the prophet Eſayes ſaying to paſſe: namely, that his Eſa.66.2. ſpirit ſhoulde not reſt vppon vs, excepte wee tremble at the preſence of his worde. For the thing wherein he will try our obedientneſſe towardes him, is if wee doe loue him ſo well, that as ſoone as hee ſpeaketh, wee receiue his word without gaineſaying, ſo as wee thinke it good and agree thereunto, ſaying amen, not onely with our mouthes but alſo with our heartes, and ſeruing him quietly all our lyfe long. For Gods requiring of the ſeruice whereby hee will bee honored at our handes, is to ſhewe the obedience which wee owe vnto his worde. Howbeit, foraſmuch as wee bee ſo hard and heauy that we rather dragge backe, and cannot abide to bowe downe our neckes to beare his yoke: we haue neede to be helped by all the meanes that are mentioned here. And therefore let vs marke that theſe flames of fire appeared not for that time onely, to ſerue no moe but them that ſawe it: but alſo to the intent that the Lawe of GOD ſhould beare record ſtil at this day, of how great authoritie it ought to bee, and to the intent the remembrance therof ſhould be renued vnto vs, that by calling to minde what happened at that time, wee may bee humbled vnder the maieſtie of our God, and that whenſoeuer wee goe about to aduaunce our ſelues, or to bee tempted with preſumption and pride, the burning fire that made the people agaſt at that time, & the thickneſſe and darkeneſſe of the cloude, and the ſight of the ſmoking mountaine, may come before our eyes and ſerue to holde vs in ſuch awe, as all loftineſſe my be beaten downe in vs, and we bee ſo wakened in good earneſt, as we may come & yeeld our ſelues to our God to deale with vs as he liſt, and to leade vs whither he will, ſo as wee may follow him whitherſoeuer we bee called by his mouth. Thus ye ſee whereto we muſt referre the things that are ſpoken here concerning *the ſmoking of the mount, the flaming of the fire, and the thickneſſe of the cloude.*

Beſides this, let vs marke further that Gods appearing in whirlewindes, and thicke cloudes after that ſort, ſerueth to repreſſe mens fooliſhe curioſitie. True it is (as I haue ſaide alreadie) that God ſpeaketh to the intent to bee vnderſtoode, and therefore vſeth no doubtful wordes, nor goeth about the buſhe (as they ſay): but hath vttered his will ſo plainely, as wee cannot but be throughly inſtructed, vnleſſe we ourſelues bee to blame for that wee will not hearken to him. But yet for all this, we muſt not bee too curious and inquiſitiue in ſeeking whatſoeuer ſeemeth good to our ſelues, as we ſee men commonly bee, who are inclined to ſuch a deſire of glorie, that their eares are euer itching, to heare and knowe this and that. But behold, here our Lord ſaith the contrarie: would ye faine knowe? Behold, here is a cloude to ſtoppe yee: ſee what a darkeneſſe is here. So then let vs learne that if we wilbe good ſcholers to Godward, wee muſt not giue our owne deſires the head, to ſearche the thinges that ought to bee hidden from vs: but content our ſelues to knowe what GOD telleth vs, and tary vntill the day of full diſcouerie for yͤ knowing of the reſt which we cannot yet comprehend. To be ſhort, let vs be ignorant in the thinges that God voutſafeth not to ſhew vnto vs. For this ignorance of not coueting to knowe more than our Lord giueth vs leaue to knowe, excelleth all the wiſedome of the world.

Nowe let vs come to that which Moſes addeth. Hee ſayth, *that the lawe was written in two tables of ſtone, and deliuered vnto him.* Whereas hee ſpeaketh of the two tables: wee muſt call Deut.4.13. to remẽberance what hath bin treated of heretofore: namely that God could well haue written all his lawe in one ſtone: but it was his will to write it in two that the deſtinction might the better leade vs to the vnderſtãding of the things conteined in the law. For wee ſee that our Lord doth as it were chawe the thinges to vs which are ſet downe there, to the intent wee ſhoulde not alledge yͭ he ſpeaketh to high for vs. Becauſe there are two principall poyntes of our lyfe: our Lord hath deuided his lawe into two tables, of purpoſe to make vs to know how wee ſhoulde behaue our ſelues towardes him, and alſo how wee ought to liue with our neighbors. Is a man deſirous to rule his life aright in all perfection? Firſt hee muſt giue himſelfe to the ſeruing of God, ſo as hee be ſure what thinges God requireth and alloweth: and ſecondly he muſt liue ſo vprightly and euenly with his neighbors, as he may ſhewe by his doinges that hee is the very childe of God. The firſt poynt then is, to know how God wil be honored at our handes: and the ſecond is to yeelde our neighbors their dewes, and to keepe this indifferencie of nature, of doing nothing to another, which wee would Matt.7.12. not haue done to our ſelues. So then, in the one table God hath ſhewed how he himſelfe will bee ſerued, accordingly as I haue tolde you already yͭ he did ſet himſelfe alone there, to the intent yͭ men ſhould not inuent newe Gods: declaring therewithall that he will not be reſembled by any images or puppets: but that foraſmuch as he is a ſpirit, he wil haue vs to ſerue him ſpiritually, Iohn 4.24. and not to deuiſe one thing or other on our own heades, but to yeelde him ſpirituall ſeruice: & moreouer that he will haue his name ſanctified, by our exerciſing of our ſelues in his worde, & ſpecially by forbearing [our owne wits,] & by Eſa.58.13. renouncing our owne imaginations & affectiõs, ſo as we reſt from our owne doings, to ſuffer our ſelues to be gouerned of God. Theſe are the thinges conteined in the firſt table. As touching the ſecond, we haue ſeene how he commanded vs there, to honor our father & our mother, and how he forbad vs murder, whoredome, theft, euil ſpeach, & all maner of wicked luſting or coueting. That is the cauſe why God diuided his Lawe into two tables.

Now then, wil we lead our lyfe aright? Let vs alwayes haue regard, firſt to honor our God, & afterward to liue vprightly and indifferẽly wͭ our neighbors. For there are ſome yͭ forbeare to doe harme to their neighbors, but in yͤ meane while they make no reckoning of God: but they thinke they ſhall go quite & cleare, ſo no man cõplayne of thẽ in the world. And I pray you what matter is it though we ſteale not frõ men, if we rob God of his honor? Is it not a heynouſer crime to rob God of his honor, than to rob a man, or to cut his purſe, or to rifle his cofer? Yes. Then let vs not think we haue all done, whẽ men cannot indite vs nor complayne of vs. For yͤ caſe ſtandeth vpon yelding vnto God yͭ which he demandeth, yͭ which alſo is dewe vnto him. For we be bound to honor him all our lyfe long. Therefore it ſtãdeth vs ſo much the more in hand, to apply our minds to yͤ keeping of yͤ firſt table of the lawe, ſo as we lead not a philoſophical lyfe lyke yͤ heathẽ, onely to behaue our ſelues honeſtly amõg men: but ſpecially yͭ we haue Gods honor in eſtimatiõ & make that the firſt poynt which wee begin at.

Lykewiſe there are ſome others which wil needs cary a countenance of deuotion towardes God, and of great zeale to ſerue and honor him: and yet when they come to bee conuerſant among men, they pill, they poull, they quarell, and they be ful of crueltie, enuy, and malice. But let vs marke that God hath not ſeparated the two tables of his lawe. In deede he hath put a differẽce betwixt them: but he hath not deliuered to ſome men the firſt table, and to otherſome the ſecond to keepe. Hee hath ſayd, this is my lawe: and looke what I haue ioyned together, muſt not be put aſunder. True it is that ye muſt be put in remembraunce of the loue that yee owe to your neighbors, that ye may goe through with it: But yet notwithſtanding, when ye haue diſcharged your ſelues of that poynt, yee muſt frame your ſelues to the other alſo. Lykewiſe when yee ſhall haue ſhewed great deuotion in the worſhipping and ſeruing of me: ye muſt not bee careleſſe to liue iuſtly and vprightly with your neighbors. Alſo there are many that bee deſirous to ſerue God: but after what ſorte? Euen as the papiſtes doe: after their owne fancie. But our Lordes wil was to bridle vs in his giuing forth of the firſt table, to the end we ſhould learne to ſerue him as he commaundeth vs, and not lyke well of any thing but that which he alloweth for good. Thus ye ſee whereto this ſaying is referred, *that God wrate the lawe in two tables.*

And his wil was to write it in two tables *of ſtone*, purpoſely to the intent it ſhould continue: For it was not giuen for any little time, neither is it tranſitorie. True it is that the ceremonies had an end. 2.Cor.3.11. Gal.3,19. He.7.18.19. and 9.8.10. Ephe.2.15. Col.2.14.17 And in that reſpect the lawe is called temporall: namely becauſe the order that had bin ſtabliſhed among the people of olde time, to continue till the comming of our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt, was then aboliſhed, and thinges were made perfect, ſo as wee be no more vnder the ſhadowes & figures which ſerued for that time. Neuertheleſſe the ſubſtance and trueth of the Matt.5.18. lawe ſerued not for that one age onely, but is a thing that ſhall indure for euer, and neuer faile. Wherfore let vs learne, that Gods ſetting forth of his wil at the going of his people out of Egypt, and his ſpeaking to them vppon mount Sinay was after ſuch a ſorte, as he prouided and tooke order therewithal, that his doctrine ſhould ſtand in force for euermore. And for that cauſe did he ſet downe his lawe in two tables of ſtone, and not write it in barckes of trees as the maner of wryting was in thoſe dayes, or (as we might ſay nowadayes) in paper or parchment: but his will was to ingraue it in ſtone as an euerlaſting monument, to confirme vs the better in the thinges that he had ſayd. For he was not ſatiſfied with the ſpeaking of it for that onely day: but by ingrauing it in ſtone, his intent was that wee all our life long, ſhould giue attentiue eare to heare what he tolde vs. Yet notwithſtanding, ſurely Gods ingrauing of his lawe in ſtone after that ſorte, would ſerue to ſmall purpoſe, vnleſſe it 2.Cor.3.3. were alſo ingrauen in our hearts. What is to be done then? Let vs aſſure our ſelues that the doctrine which God ſetteth downe vnto vs, is behoofefull and neceſſarie for vs, and yet it ſhould ſtand vs in no ſtead, vnleſſe hee added a ſecond grace, which is, ẏ the thing which he hath vttred be forthwith printed in our heartes and bowels. Then lyke as God wrate his lawe at that time in two tables of ſtone with his finger, that is to ſay with his power: ſo now he muſt be fain to write it with his holy ſpirit in our heartes, which are ſtony and hard as the prophet ſheweth, where he prayeth God to giue vs heartes of fleſhe, that Ezec.11.19. may be ſoft, lythe, and plyable to receiue whatſoeuer he ſhall ſay. Nowe then ſeeing that God hath ſhewed vs viſibly, ẏ it belongeth to him to write his Lawe, that it may be well knowen: let vs beſeech him to vouchſafe to write it in vs now adayes by the power of his holy ſpirit, to the end wee may holde it faſt, as the diuell may neuer wype it out of our rememberances, doe what he can.

And herewithall Moſes concludeth, that the Lawe was deliuered vnto him to bee the preſeruer and keeper therof, and to bee the miniſter and dealer forth of it to the people, ſo as euerie man might acknowledge him for a Prophet. For otherwiſe he could not haue executed his office, nor haue builded Gods Church, except mẽ had knowen that that charge had bin committed vnto him. Likewiſe now adayes, if we were not perſwaded that it is Gods will, ẏ his Goſpell ſhould be preached by the mouthes of men, and that there ſhould be Shepheardes in his Church to beare abrode his worde: who would vouchſafe to come togither? Neither I, nor any other creature is of abilitie to traine men to come to receiue the thinges that are to bee vttered by my mouth. When I ſpeake here in the name of God, and men giue eare to the doctrine, to ſubmit themſelues to it and to doe him homage: it is more than all the lawes and proclamations of kings and Emperors can doe. Is the mortal man the doer thereof? No. But when we once knowe it to be Gods will, that this order ſhoulde bee in his Church, and that it ſhould bee kept vnuiolably: namely that there ſhould bee ſheepheards to beare abroad his worde and to expounde the ſame, which ſhould be as meſſengers to bring tidings of the forgiueneſſe of ſinnes in the name of our Lord Ieſus Chriſt, and to rebuke, reproue, comfort, and exhort: when we (I ſay) doe vnderſtand it to be Gods wil, that there ſhould be ſuch gouernment in his Church: then are wee aſhamed to withſtand him ẏ hath created and faſhioned vs. So then, ye ſee now why Moſes ſayd in this text, that God deliuered him his lawe for himſelfe. Trueth it is that God gaue it for all the people in generall, as I ſayd afore. Why then is Moſes now the poſſeſſor of it? It ſhould ſeeme that God meant to bereaue all his people thereof, and that none ſhould bee priuiledged but Moſes, ſo as the lawe ſhould be reſtrained vnto him, and the reſidewe be as it were ſhut out from it. But it is not ſo. For although the Lawe was giuen for all the people: yet was Moſes made the protector of it. And looke what God hath ſpoken of him: we muſt extend it yet further, accordingly as we heare that the prophets

Deut.31. Ier.1.5.7. & 2.2. phets were put in the ſame commiſſion, to bee as it were diſpoſers or dealers foorth of the treaſure of ſaluation, and of Gods couenant, ſo as their office was to ſhewe Gods will from time to time, and to bring vs worde of it in his name. 1.Cor.4.1. And the generall rule which Saint Paul giueth vs, is that men muſt eſteem vs as Gods miniſters & as dealers forth of the ſecretes which he ſendeth to the world. Now whereas Saint Paul ſayth wee bee dealers forth of Gods ſecretes: he ſheweth vs thereby, that it is not enough for vs to haue the holy ſcripture, and to reade it euery man at home in his houſe: but it is required that it ſhould bee preached vnto vs, that wee ſhould haue this order of being taught by the mouthes of men, and that there ſhould bee ſhepheardes to ſerue Gods turne, to the ende ỷ by giuing eare vnto them, wee might profite more and more in the doctrine of ſaluation. And for the ſame cauſe doth Saint Paule ſay in ano- 1.Tim.3.15. ther place, that the Church is the piller of trueth, and as it were the ground and ſtandard of the trueth. The Papiſtes alledge this text full doltiſhly, to clayme priuiledge to themſelues to deuiſe newe articles of fayth, and to lode men with lawes at their owne pleaſure. But Saint Paul meant the cleane contrarie: For hee ſaith that the Church is the piller or ground of Gods truth, becauſe that ſeeing God hath vttered his trueth to men by his Lawe, and by the Prophetes and Apoſtles: his will is that the ſame miniſterie ſhould indure continualy, namely that there ſhould bee men ordeined and appointed to the office of expounding his worde, and of building vp his Church. Then let vs vnderſtand, that after that maner the Church is the meane of vpholding Gods trueth ſounde and vnappayred. For when God rayſeth vppe men indued with his ſpirite, to confirme vs in the faith, and to inlighten vs, and to ſhewe vs the right way: by that meane Gods trueth continueth in the worlde, ſo as it is not quenched nor vtterly done away. Let vs mark then that Moſeſes meaning here, is not to make himſelfe the onely poſſeſſor or owner of Gods lawe, and to ſhake off the people and to ſhutte them out of the gate: but to vtter his minde plainely to this effect: my friendes, in deede the Lawe is common to vs all, all of vs are Gods children, I chalendge no more to my ſelfe in that behalfe than to you: but yet will I diſchardge my ſelfe of the commiſſion that God hath giuen mee, which is that I ſhould ſerue you for a faithfull expounder of the Lawe, and bee as a keeper thereof, that yee might not thruſt it vnder foote, nor forget it for euer, but alwayes bee put in minde of it by mee. Sith it is ſo: let all miniſters of Gods worde looke that they bee readie prepared to ſerue the ignoraunt: and let all men conſider howe it is not for vs onely to reade the holy ſcripture, but wee muſt alſo be diligent to profite therein, and humbly come to ỷ hearing of thoſe whom he hath appointed to be his miniſters, to giue vs the expoſition & vnderſtanding therof. Thus ye ſee whereto this text is to be referred.

Now let vs kneele downe in the preſence of our good God with acknowledgement of our faultes, praying him to make vs feele them better, and to drawe vs dayly to ſuch repentance, as our whole deſire may be to ſerue him and to pleaſe him, without ſeeking any whit of our own will. And that foraſmuch as we be ſo greatly giuen to worldly thinges, it may pleaſe him to drawe vs from them, and therewithall to graunt that wee may ſubmit our lyfe to his will, and frame it to his righteouſneſſe, and that for the bringing thereof to paſſe, his worde may ſo ouerrule vs, as wee may bee gouerned by it, and all our whole lyfe be framed thereafter, vntill that being quite rid of all our fleſhly affections, wee be clothed againe with his heauenly glory, at ſuch time as wee ſhall haue no more neede, neither of writing nor of preaching. That it may pleaſe him to graunt this grace, not onely to vs but alſo to all people and nations of the earth. &c.

On Wedneſday the xvij. of Iuly. 1555.

The xliij Sermon which is the fourteenth vpon the fifth Chapter.

23 And when yee heard the voice from the middeſt of darkeneſſe: becauſe the Hill burned, yee came to mee, all the heades of your tribes, and your Elders.

24 Then ſaide you, Behold, the Lord our God hath ſhewed vs his glorie and his greatneſſe, and wee haue hearde his voice from the middeſt of the fire: This day haue wee ſeene that GOD hath ſpoken with man, and man is ſtill aliue.

25 Now then: why die wee? for if wee heare the voice of our Lord God againe, this great fire will deuour vs, and we ſhall die.

26 For what man is hee that may heare the voice of the liuing God ſpeaking from the middeſt of the fire as we doe, and yet liue?

27 Goe thou and heare whatſoeuer the Lord our God ſhall ſay, and then tell

thou vs what the Lord our GOD ſaieth to thee: and wee will heare it and doe it.

VEe bee of opinion, that where as God cauſeth his worde to be preached vnto vs by ẏ meanes of men, if he ſpake to vs in his owne maieſtie, or ſent ſome Angell to appeare vnto vs, wee would bee the better touched, and all the world would bee conuerted by and by, and euery man obey without gainesaying or rebelling: but wee knowe not what is for our owne benefite and behoofe. For if wee looke vppon our owne frailtie: it is not poſſible that God ſhould make vs feele his power, but it ſhoulde be to our vtter vndooing and deſtruction. Now therefore when men are deſirous that God ſhould come downe from heauen, or manifeſt himſelfe by ſome viſible token: they know not what they bee, nor how frayle their ſtate is. For did they wel conſider it, they would bee agaſt at Gods infinite glorie, knowing well that they were not able to abide it. Beſides this, let vs aſſure our ſelues that God tendereth our welfare and ſaluation, in ſhewing vs his will by the mouth of men, when hee ordeyneth and appoynteth them to be miniſters of his worde, to bring vs ſuch meſſage as hee knoweth to bee for our benefite. Neuertheleſſe, it was his pleaſure to auowe it by open proofe to mens faces, that it is not good for them to heare his voyce thunder from heauen. And that is the cauſe why hee thought good to giue forth his lawe, not ſimply by Moſes, but by comming downe in his owne perſon, as I haue declared already, and as I tolde you yeſterday that the lightninges and whirlewindes, and the flaming of the fire, and all that is written in the nineteenth and twentith chapters of Exodus, was
Exod.19.18. 19, & 20.18 done euery whit of it to the end that the people of Iſraell ſhould learne to yeede reuerence to Gods word. And this leſſon belongeth to vs alſo. For Gods intẽt was that the remembrance of thoſe thinges ſhoulde indure for euer, and that they ſhould be put in vre continually. So then, we ſee here that God hath vttered his glorious maieſtie once for all, to teach vs to receiue his worde with all reuerence and lowlyneſſe.

But yet furthermore hee intended lykewiſe ẏ the people ſhould bee driuen of themſelues to ſay, *It is not good that God ſhould ſpeake to vs againe. Onely let vs haue a man to bring vs the doctrine which it ſhall pleaſe him to ſend vs.* And this rule ſerueth to condemne vs, if wee followe not this people which ſtepped forth to ſay ſo. And if any man alledge, that the thinges which were ſpoken at that time cannot binde vs: The anſwere is eaſie, namely that if God ſhould doe the lyke at this day, that is to wit, if hee ſhould ſpeake ẏ thinges with his owne mouth, which we heare at the mouthes of men: it were impoſſible for vs to abide his glory, wee ſhould bee vtterly vndone. And therefore let vs learne that this is rehearſed vnto vs, to the ende that in the perſon of the people of Iſraell, wee might vnderſtand that God applyeth himſelfe to our ſlenderneſſe and infirmitie, and that in voutſafing to ſend vs his worde, to bee preached vnto vs by men lyke our ſelues, whome hee maketh his meſſengers: hee hath reſpect to our benefite and commoditie: and therefore it proceedeth of a fooliſh and inordinate luſt in vs, to deſire that hee ſhoulde appeare to vs from heauen, or that hee ſhoulde worke any viſible miracle: for wee cannot comprehend his glory and maieſtie.

Furthermore although the proper nature of the lawe bee to fray folke: yet notwithſtanding, the ſame may alſo bee verifyed of the Goſpell. For wee muſt take it for a generall rule, that as ſoone as wee perceiue Gods preſence, we muſt needes bee abaſhed. Wee ſee how the very Angels doe hide their eyes, becauſe Gods glory Eſa.6.2.
is too great for them, and they be driuen to confeſſe that they bee too feeble, as creatures. And what will become of vs then? For wee be inferior to the Angels, and beſides that, wee holde not ſtill thẽ vncorruptneſſe of our nature. Wee be not as wee were created: that is to ſay, we be not earthly men as our father Adam was, but wee bee vtterly corrupted, ſo as there is nothing but ſinne in vs: and therefore God is faine to be as an enemie to vs, and wee bee faine to ſhunne his throne, as offenders ſhunne the ſeate of the Iudge to the vttermoſt of their power. To bee ſhort, we be but wretched wormes and caryons. Nowe then, looke how ſoone God commeth neere vs, wee muſt needes be diſmaied, yea and vtterly ſtryken downe. And therefore (as I haue touched already) it is to our benefite that God ſheweth himſelfe after that faſhion: that is to wit, by the meanes of men, ſo as hee appoynteth men to ſhewe vs his will as well as if hee ſpake himſelfe, and hee will haue vs to receiue his word with as great reuerence, as if we heard him thundering from heauen. But yet it will bee good for vs to vnderſtand more at large, the thing that I haue touched in one worde: namely that the Lawe frayeth vs far more in compariſon than the Goſpel, as is declared alſo more at length elſewhere. And why is that? Becauſe that in the Lawe God requireth that which is due to him at mens handes. But now let vs ſee if wee be able to diſcharge our ſelues of it. No: but contrariwiſe wee bee lyke wretched detters, which haue not one dodkin nor dodkins woorth.

Now then wee be vtterly vndone. For whatſoeuer come of it, God diſchargeth vs not, but ſheweth vs that wee deſerue to bee curſed and damned at his hand. And for the ſame cauſe, after he hath ſhewed how the lyfe of man ought to bee ruled: he addeth this curſe thundering downe vpon them: That they be all accurſed which performe not all the thinges that are con- Deut.27.26.
teined there. As if hee ſhould ſay: All men muſt bee faine to yeelde themſelues guiltie in this behalfe, and from the greateſt to the leaſt they muſt all knowe that they be in my daunger, and that I may ſinke thẽ downe to the bottom of hel.

I doe already pronounce this ſentence, & there is no man able to reply againſt it, Behold then ye are all loſt and condemned: This is the language of the Lawe, and the ſpeach that God vſeth there: and now muſt not all men needes quake at it? Yes. So then it is not ſayd for nought that the lawe frayeth vs, and that we muſt needs bee forlorne, ſo long as God liſteth to demaund his due at our handes with rigor. But the caſe Eze.11.19. &2.Cor.3.3 ſtandeth not ſo with the Goſpell. For there God beareth with vs, and not onely forgiueth vs our ſinnes, but alſo wryteth his lawe in our heartes. And moreouer although wee ſerue him but by halues: yet doth hee pardon vs our defaultes, and as it were winke at them. And lyke as a father will not preſſe his childe too ſtraitly: ſo doth God vſe a fatherly gentleneſſe towardes vs in the Goſpell, to the intent wee ſhould not bee afraid to come vnto him. In reſpect where- He.12.18.20 of the Apoſtle in the Epiſtle to the Hebrewes, ſayth that wee bee not come to this ſmoking mountaine, wee be not come to mount Sinay to bee aſtoniſhed at the ſight of burning fyre, and at the ſight of the lightnings and of all the other thinges that were done there to abaſh the people: but that wee heare a gratious and pleaſaunt melody, wherein we be accompanyed with the Angels of heauen, with the ſoules of the holy patriarkes and other fathers that liued vnder the hope of lyfe, notwithſtanding that they had as then but darke ſhadowes of it, and ſo GOD coupleth vs with thoſe that waited in olde time for the comming of our Lord Ieſus Chriſt. Seing it is ſo: we muſt not recoyle backe, but goe ſtill on foreward with a chearefull courage to heare our God, becauſe he ſpeaketh to vs ſo kindely, and with ſo fatherly ſpeach, as doth not ſcarre away his children, but rather (as ye would ſay) allure them. This difference then is to be marked well, that it may make the Goſpell amiable to vs in compariſon of the Lawe.

But yet for all this we muſt come backe againe to the generall principle: which is, that it is much better for vs that Gods word ſhould be preached vnto vs by the mouthes of men, than ẏ God himſelf ſhold thunder it downfrom heauen. And why? For let vs but here the naturall thunder, and by and by we be aſtoniſhed, and yet is nothing expreſſed there, God doth but (as yee would ſay) braye with a confuſed noyſe. What would come of it then if hee ſhould ſpeake to vs, & ſhew vs his glory? We feele ſuch a weakeneſſe in all our ſenſes that we cannot ſo much as looke vpon the ſunne which is a corruptible creature: and how then can we beholde gods maieſtie, if it ſhewe it ſelfe to vs playnely and in full perfection? And therefore it is ſayd that no man liuing can ſee God, and not dye and bee vtterly conſumed. Trueth it is that God ſhewed himſelfe to Moſes, and that, not as he did to the prophets, not in dreame nor in viſion: but with a ſpe- Exo.33.11. ciall priuiledge, and (as it is ſayd in Exodus) face to face as a man ſpeaketh to his friend, and with ſo great familiaritie, that he was after a ſort exempted from the companie of men, that hee might become the more familiar with God.

But yet for all that, the trueth is ſo that GOD ſhewed himſelf vnto him but in portion & meaſure. For had he ſhewed himſelfe in his infinite being: what grace of the holy ghoſt ſoeuer Moſes had receiued, hee muſt needes haue bin vtterly ouerwhelmed. In deede once in his lyfe God ſhewed him his glory more fully than euer he did: but yet for all that, he ſawe but as it were the backe parte of him. In the which ſimilitude is expreſſed vnto vs, that when wee ſee but the backe of a man, wee ſee not the chiefe part of him, (for the chiefe ſight of a man is in his face:) ſo although Moſes had ſpeciall familiaritie with God, inſomuch that in ẏ ſoueraigne ſight which was ſhewed him in the mountaine, he was ſeparated from the ſtate of this mortall and tranſitory lyfe, and was as an Angell of paradiſe: yet notwithſtanding he ſawe God but in part, as if wee ſhould ſee a man but on the back. Therfore let vs be contented when God vſeth the lyke order with vs: (that is to wit, that his worde bee preached vnto vs by men:) and let vs receiue it as if wee ſawe his maieſtie face to face. And why? For it is good for vs that ſhepheardes are ordeined to bee miniſters of his worde, becauſe we ſhoulde be vtterly confounded by the glory of God, if it were manifeſted to vs to the full.

And to the ende that no man ſhoulde haue cauſe to complayne, as though Gods doctrine were not ſufficiently ratifyed, but ẏ it were to be doubted whether a man might holde him to it or no: therefore did hee ſhewe himſelfe in the ſetting forth of his lawe. And wee haue record of it heere, in that the people ſay, *It is the Lorde. This day hath hee made vs to ſee his glorie, and his greatneſſe: and wee haue ſeene that it is euen hee that hath ſpoken vnto vs*: hee hath not put any other perſon in his place, but we haue heard his voyce with our owne eares. This was done but once for all. Howbeit let vs take the thinges that are reported here, to bee as a record that Moſes ſpake not on his owne head, nor deuiſed the doctrine of his owne brayne, which we receiue of him: but that hee was a faithfull ſtewarde to Godwarde, who aduoweth him ſo to bee, and not onely ratifyed his doctrine with miracles, but alſo declared in his owne perſon, howe it was hee himſelfe that was the author of the doctrine that Moſes taught. And foraſmuch as it was good reaſon that the Goſpell ſhould bee authoriſed as well as the Lawe: wee haue had recorde likewiſe from heauen, that the ſame is not a doctrine of man, but that it proceedeth of God. And this is the thing which Saint Peter 1.Pet.1.17.18. toucheth in his ſecond Epiſtle, ſaying that hee & his fellowes had heard the voyce from heauē, whereby the father proclaymed his ſonne the chiefe maiſter and teacher of all his Church, ſaying, this is my welbeloued ſonne, heare yee him.

Seeing then that this voyce hath thundered from heauen: God hath ſhewed that wee muſt not take the Goſpel as a doctrine bred here belowe, but we muſt alwayes haue the ſayd maieſtie before our eyes. Lykewiſe nowe a dayes if we will bee Gods true diſciples, wee muſt at our reſorting to ſermons, remember what Moſes rehearſeth, namely that the lawe was giuen forth in ſuch ſort, as God was the ſpeaker thereof. Againe in the ſecond place we muſt adde the teſtimonie that I am about to alledge, ſo as the foreſayd ſaying of God may euer ring in our eares, whereby he proclaymeth our Lord Ieſus Chriſt to be the onely partie whom he will haue men to heare. Loe here the perfect ſeale whereby Gods worde hath full and perfect authoritie among vs as it deſerueth, notwithſtanding that it be brought vnto vs by mortall men.

Furthermore to the intent that men may not thinke that Ieſus Chriſt is not to bee heard, but onely in his owne perſon: hee ſayth, hee that Luke 10. 16. heareth you, heareth me, and hee that refuſeth or deſpiſeth you, deſpiſeth mee, and him that ſent me. In deede the Pope and his champions lyke a ſort of traytors to God, vſurpe that ſaying to mainteine their owne tyrannie: but it belongeth as much to them as to the diuell of hell. And why? for firſt they ſhould bring vs the pure doctrine of our Lord Ieſus Chriſt. For the ſonne of God hath not reſigned his office to men to be ſpoyled thereof, hee will not haue vs gouerned after the lyking of men: but hee himſelfe will alwayes haue the preheminence and ſoueraigntie ouer vs that was giuen vnto him. Now then, whereas hee ſayth that in hearkening to thoſe whome hee ſendeth, wee hearken to him: his meaning is, that if wee obey the doctrine of his Goſpell, without deſpiſing of it when it is preached to vs by men: it is all one as if hee himſelfe ſpake to vs, and wee muſt not in this caſe reſt vppon the outward appearance. And that is it that Saint Paul meaneth in ſaying, 2. Cor. 4. 7. that although wee be brittle veſſels, yea and as broken veſſels of no valewe nor worthineſſe: yet the ineſtimable treaſure that is committed vnto vs, is not ẏ worſe or of leſſe eſtimation & valewe therefore. True it is ẏ we cannot purchaſe the word of God ſuch reuerence as we faine would. And why? For we haue not any thing in vs (I meane of our own) wherby it may be ſayd ẏ God ſhoulde bee exalted: but yet muſt wee approue our obedience in this behalfe, namely that wee deliuer God his worde with ſuch boldeneſſe, courage, and power as if hee himſelfe ſpake in vs. And herewithall let all loftineſſe be corrected in this caſe, and let euery man receiue the doctrine of the Goſpell in ſimplicitie, and without diſputing or ſcanning why we be bound to ſubmit our ſelues to mortall men. For inaſ- Luke 10. 16 Matt. 17. 5. much as it were a deſpiſing of Gods ſonne, yea and of the heauenly father himſelfe who ordeined him to bee the chiefe teacher, if wee ſhould not heare thoſe whome hee ſendeth as his meſſengers: it ſtandeth vs in hand to yeelde in Luke 9. 35. ẏ behalfe. So then let vs learne to bowe downe our neckes and to beare the yoke of Gods ſonne by receiuing ẏ doctrine of ẏ Goſpel with all humilitie, though it bee preached vnto vs by men.

And as I ſayd afore, let vs thinke well vpon the ratification that was giuen thereof, which ought to bee enough to make vs to vnderſtand, that the lawe was brought from God himſelfe, and that the Goſpell alſo was warranted and ratified from heauen, when God pronounced with his owne mouth that he would haue vs to hearken to his ſonne. That is the effect of the thinges which wee haue to remember vppon this text. And therefore let vs followe the example of thoſe which are ſpoken of here, and let vs not couet that God ſhould come down frõ heauen to feede our humors: but let it ſuffice vs ẏ he voutſafeth to cõmunicate his word vnto vs.

But it ſhould ſeeeme at the firſt ſight, that heere were ſome contrarietie. For firſt the people ſay, *This day haue wee ſeene how God ſpeaketh with men, and that they continue aliue ſtill*: and afterwarde they ſay againe: *wee dye if God ſpeake to vs*. For by all lykelyhoode, if wee haue once found by experience ẏ God ſpeaketh to vs without deſtroying of vs: it ought to imbolden vs. And why? For ſeeing wee remaine aliue ſtill after wee haue heard the voyce of God once: why ſhould wee not doe ſo ſtill after twiſe or thrice, as well as after once? And here the people ſay, *Wee haue heard the voyce of God: but if hee ſpeake to vs againe, wee dye for it*, wee bee vndone, wee bee forlorne. It ſeemeth that they truſt not to Gods goodneſſe, but rather that they be vnthankefull, in that they acknowledge not the benefite which God did for them in letting thẽ continue in their ſtrength. But wee muſt marke how the people ſhew here, that they wil not try God any further, and that it is enough for them to haue had that one experience, that the lawe was not a thing inuented by man, but that God was the author thereof. Therefore it muſt be taken as if they had ſayd thus: This day haue we ſeene that God hath ſpokẽ to men, and they remaine ſtill aliue: that is enough for vs: we intend not to abuſe Gods patience in this caſe: he hath ſpared vs to day, but wee muſt not looke ẏ he ſhould doe ſo euer: he hath giuen vs a tryall for this once, & that was becauſe of ẏ lewdneſſe & hardneſſe of our heartes. For were we worthie to haue him appeare to vs in his glory? No: but he knew ẏ we would neuer be fully tamed & ſubdued to his obediẽce, except he had come in his viſible glorie, & made vs ſo afraide as we had bin at our wits end. Therfore if he had not won vs ſo by force, he knew wel that we would haue bin alwayes as wild beaſts. But ſeing it hath pleaſed him to pardon the fault that we haue cõmitted, & to beare with vs this time: we wil not fal to it againe: for ẏ were ouermuch: it were a ſkorning of his patience. So then, this one recorde ſufficeth vs, both for our owne liues and for the liues of our children, & ſo forth for euer to the worlds end, ẏ they which come after vs may knowe ẏ it is not for vs to draw God out of heauen any more, as though he ought to be but our mate. Thus yee ſee how theſe two ſayings agree very wel.

Now hereupon we haue to note, ẏ although Gods word be of force to bring vs to naught: yet he vſeth ſuch mercy towards vs, that wheras it ſhould cõſume vs, it giueth vs life. And whẽ I ſay ẏ Gods word can bring vs to nought: I meane not ẏ word alonely as Moſes diſcribeth it here: but alſo that if our Lord liſt to make vs feele the power of his word, it would vtterly vndo vs, notwithſtanding that it be vttered by men. Neuertheleſſe wee ſee how our Lord quickeneth vs by his word, ſpecially now adayes by the preaching of his Goſpell. For that which is ſpoken in the fifth of Saint Iohn, is dayly accompliſhed: namely that as many as heare the voyce of the Sonne of man, are reſtored to life. For naturally we bee ſtraungers to God, and baniſhed from his kingdome, and ſo by that meanes wee bee as it were in our graues. But here our Lord Ieſus Chriſt offereth vs the remiſſion of our ſinnes, and God his father adopteth vs for his children: and ſo doeth he ſhewe vs the light of ſaluation, and we bee quickened againe by meanes of the Goſpel. And therefore wee haue good cauſe to glorifie our GOD in that he maketh his woorde to ſerue to deliuer vs from death and to reſtore vs to life, notwithſtanding that it bee of power to conſume vs, at leaſtwiſe if he turned it not to the contrarie vſe. Iohn 5.24. 25.

But by the way let vs marke well, that if our Lorde haue at one time giuen vs more than we deſerue: wee muſt not therefore take leaue to tempt him, and to ſubdue him ſtill to our luſtes, as wee ſee the Papiſtes doe nowe adayes, who excuſe themſelues of their not comming to the Goſpell, bicauſe they ſee no myracles wrought in our time. No ſurely. But whereto ſerue the myracles that our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt wrought, and which he committed to his Apoſtles to doe likewiſe? Shoulde thoſe ſerue to no purpoſe at this day? Ye ſee then yͤ God vttered an excellent power at the firſt comming vp of yͤ Goſpel: heauen & earth were ſhaken at that time: there was no part of the world wherin God printed not ſome marke of his Maieſtie, to the intent that yͤ Goſpell ſhould bee authorized. The Angels came downe at the birth of our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt to beare witneſſe of him: the Sunne was darkened at his death: the vaile of the temple was rent aſunder to ſhew that the ſanctuarie was opened, and that there was more free acceſſe to God thā euer there had bin: the ſea was calmed: the diuels themſelues did homage to yͤ glorie of God which was vttered at that time: and to be ſhort, GOD ſhewed both from aboue and beneath, that the Goſpel came from him, (as I haue tolde you already,) as well by the healing of diſeaſes, as by al the other myracles yͭ were wrought. And this ſerued not for yͤ time onely, but the remembrance thereof continueth vnto this day, and it behoueth vs to receiue that record to ſeale vp our faith withall, to the end wee may not doubt, but that our Lord maketh his Goſpel of as great force by them at this day, as he did at the ſame time that they were ſhewed. Yet notwithſtāding wee ſee howe the faithleſſe doe ſtill alledge, that if they ſawe myracles, it woulde conuert them. But it is certaine that if they ſaw neuer ſo many myracles, yet would they continue in their ſtubbornneſſe, & take occaſion of greater rancor againſt God. What is to bee doone then? Let vs learne to bee contented, as I ſaid afore. If God haue giuen vs more than he owed vs, let vs receiue it with thankſgiuing, & learne not to prouoke him to wrath, nor to tēpt his patience. That is the thing which we haue to remember in this text, where the people ſaith, let not yͤ Lord ſpeak to vs any more, for it ſuffiſeth vs that wee haue heard his voyce once already, and that yet notwithſtanding, he hath let vs liue ſtill.

Ioel.3.16.

Luke, 2.9.10 11.

Matt.27.45 51.

Matt.18,26.
Luke 4.41.

And to the end that the thinges which I haue declared heretofore may bee the certainer: let vs beare in minde how it is ſaid here, *Was there euer man that heard the voyce of the liuing God, and continued ſtill aliue?* Here it is ſhewed vs that the people of Iſrael ſpake not in their name onely: but as it were for all mankinde in common. They ſay not onely, who are wee, but what is all fleſh? And in deede, (as I ſaide at the firſt,) it muſt needes bee that men are beſotted, when they cannot humble themſelues. For they neede no more but to looke to their owne ſtate and to ſay, what are wee? There is nothing neither in our bodyes nor in our ſoules, but all maner of frailtie, (I mean not, as we may be conſidered in our nature as we were firſt created:) But now being fallen as wee bee, what are wee but as water that glydeth away, & as a ſmoke that vaniſheth away? Nay, which wors is, we be enemies to god, and he muſt needes be againſt vs, bicauſe he findeth nothing in vs but ſin and frowardneſſe. And therefore when wee bee tickled with our fonde luſts, ſo as we would faine that God ſhould work myracles, and that we might heare Angels from heauen: let vs repaire to that which is tolde vs here, and ſay, *What is all fleſh?* Let vs (ſay I) enter into conſideration to ſee what wee bee: and our owne vnabilitie will teach vs ſufficiently, to praiſe God for not making vs to feele his preſence to conſume vs and confounde vs: but to make vs feele it in ſuch wiſe as it may drawe vs to him with amiable gentleneſſe, by hearing mē like our ſelues, and our owne brethren ſpeaking as it were in his perſon.

Rom.8.7.
Eph.2.3.

And whereas the people of Iſrael ſay, *What people is it that euer heard the voyce of the liuing God, and continueth ſtill aliue, as wee haue done:* it is to ſhewe that this deede of his ſhould not bee drawen into a common example, [ſo as others ſhoulde looke to haue him doe the like.] And therefore let vs not ſay, why doeth not GOD ſpeake to vs now adayes after a viſible maner, as he did vpon Mount Sinay? It pleaſed him ſo to doe: but it is not for vs to lode him with any law, or to binde him to do ſtill as he hath done once heretofore. Therfore (as I ſaid erſt) let vs not abuſe Gods grace; neither let vs fall to diſputing with him, to ſay, ſeeing that God did ſo at other times, why ſhould he not do yͤ like now adayes? For when men auaunce themſelues after that faſhion, it is a diueliſh preſumption. Wherefore let vs yeelde God ſo much honour, as to giue him leaue to manifeſt himſelfe to vs as he himſelfe liſteth, and as he knoweth to be expedient, and let vs not bind him to any neceſſitie, vnder colour that he hath vouchſafed to ſhewe ſome ſpeciall fauour at ſome time before. Let not vs threape vpon him to doe the like againe, but let vs be contented with his ſingle wil, for it becommeth vs to be ſubiect therevnto.

In the ende it is ſayde, *Goe thou to God, and heare what hee will ſay to thee, and bring vs woorde thereof, and wee will heare it and doe it.* Heare we ſee firſt, that the people deſireth Moſes to bee their Spokeſman, and to bring them woorde what he receyueth at Gods hand. Nowe this is written for vs, that all men ſhoulde ſubmit themſelues to the order that GOD hath ſet in his Church. For (as I haue ſayde afore) his will is to ſpeake to vs by the mouthes of men. That is the cauſe why hee woulde there ſhould Matt.28.19. bee Miniſters. It was not deuiſed by men: but Luke.10.16. our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt hath tolde vs that hee will haue that kinde of gouernment in his Churche. Nowe then, that there ſhoulde bee ſhepheardes in the Churche, to preache godly doctrine, which it behoooueth vs to receiue for our owne ſaluation: it is an inuiolable ordinaunce, and ſuch a one as proceedeth from GOD. Sith it is ſo: let no man ſtriue againſt it, but let vs beare it patiently, and when GOD raiſeth vp men to ſerue him, in bringing vs the meſſage of ſaluation: let vs not grudge that euerie of vs hath not the ſame preheminence: for it is his will that his bodye (that is to ſaye his Church) ſhoulde bee gouerned after that faſhion. Ye ſee then that the thing which wee haue to gather vppon this text, is, that ſeeing God hath ordayned Miniſters of his woorde, we muſt hearken to them quietly, and not beare any ſpyte or malice in our heartes, though all of vs bee not teachers, nor put in that office by GOD: for wee muſt yeelde our ſelues to his will as I haue told you before. Let that ſerue for one point.

But by the waye, let vs marke alſo with what condition wee muſt haue ſhepheardes. For this text teacheth vs to diſcerne betweene ẏ deceyuers ẏ abuſe Gods name falſly, by taking vppon them ẏ title of prelates without cauſe or reaſon: & the true Prophets, the good ſeruants of God, & the Miniſters of the Goſpell. The Pope & all his rable will ſurely ſay that men ought to hearken vnto them, and to receiue their doctrine ẇout gainſaying. And why ſo? Bicauſe it is Gods will ẏ there ſhould be prelats in the Church, and that men ſhould heare them and obey them. All this is true. But yet for al that, hath he ſet vp the title of Prelacie without diſcretion? No, but he hath alſo declared therewithall, that he himſelfe will continue chiefe ſtil, ſo as we muſt obey him, and not be in bondage vnto men. Seeing it is ſo, we muſt conſider what maner of Prelates & teachers God ſendeth vs. And that is, (according to the contentes of this text) ẏ they muſt hearken what God ſayes vnto them, & afterward report the ſame faithfully to the people. Therfore they that are deſirous to be heard in Gods name, and will haue their doctrine receiued reuerently: muſt firſt hearken vnto God, ſo as they take not vpon them to adde any thing to his woorde, but yeeld themſelues teachable vnto him. And whē they haue learned at his hand: let them deale forth the things to others, which they haue receiued. For no man ſhall euer bee a good Miniſter of Gods word, vnleſſe he bee a ſcholer firſt, ſo as he take not vpon him as a Maiſter ouer other men, to tell them what he liſteth. And a mā muſt not be ouerwiſe in this caſe: for God reſerueth to himſelfe the office of appointing what things he will haue vs to know. It is not ſaid here ſimply, Hearken what the Lord will ſay to thee, and then come and bring vs word: but it is ſaid, Hearken vnto all ẏ the Lord ſhall ſay vnto thee, ſo as there bee not one point nor one article omitted. By meanes whereof Moſes is reſtrained of all libertie here, and not permitted to report any thing, but that which God cōmandeth him, as we haue ſeene alreadie in other places. And Deut.4.2. what are nowe theſe raſcals, that dare auaunce themſelues aboue Moſes? We ſhall ſee in the end of this booke, that there was neuer any Prophet Deut.34.10. raiſed vp with ſuch grace. And in deed, although we ſee there was a wonderfull ſpirit in Eſay, & in all the reſt of the Prophets: yet is Moſes preferred before them all. Whereas it is ſaid, be mindfull of the Lawe that was giuen you in Horeb: Malachie which ſpake laſt of all the Prophetes, Mal.4.4. doth notwithſtanding referre all to Moſes, as if he had bin the firſt teacher, & as though the law were the fountaine from whence wee ought to draw all things. Now ſeeing that Moſes being ſo greatly preferred, & hauing ſo excellent preheminence giuen him of God, might not for all ẏ, take vpon him to ſpeake aught of his own head, but was bound to deale forth the things faithfully to the people, as he had heard them of God: is it not too diueliſh a pride now adayes, that lewd lozels ſhould aduaunce themſelues ſo farre as to ſay, ẏ it is in their power to lay lawes vpon mens conſciences, and to binde them vnder paine of deadly ſinne? Is it not too barbarous a tyrannie? Therfore to the end we fall not into the two extreme vices: let vs hold the meane way that is ſhewed vs heere: which is, that ſith it is Gods will to haue his Churche gouerned by the outward preaching of his word: euerie of vs muſt ſubmit himſelfe thereto, and be diligent in hearing of Sermons, and hold this as a holy & reuerent order: to wit, ẏ we ſhould be taught by the mouth of men. And yet in the meane while, men muſt not haue authoritie to bring vs what they liſt, but they muſt be faithfull dealers foorth of 1.Cor.4.2. Gods word, ſo as we may euer be able to proteſt, that our faith is grounded vppon Gods will, and that we depend not vpon the wiſedome of men, but that our Lord holdeth vs ſo in obedience towards him, as we may ſay ẏ wee heare him from heauen, though he vſe the meane and trauell of men in the doing thereof.

Now let vs kneele down in ẏ preſence of our good God, with acknowledgement of our faults, praying him to make vs ſo to feele them, as wee maye learne to miſlike more and more of our ſelues for them. And for as much as the verie remedie to rid vs from al our diſeaſes and corruptions, is to heare his holye woorde: it maye pleaſe him ſo to open our eares, as wee maye receyue it with all reuerence and humilitie, and ſo print it in our heartes, as wee may make it auayle to the vſe for which hee ordeyned it, namely to quicken vs and to drawe vs to ſaluation,

tion,that wee may deſire it with all our heartes, and apply our indeuour thereunto more and more. And therefore let vs all ſaye, Almightie God heauenly father,&c.

On Thurſday the xviij. of Iuly. 1555.

The xliiij. Sermon which is the fifteenth and laſt vpon the fifth Chapter.

28 At the ſame time the Lord heard the voyce of your words when you ſpake to mee: wherevpon the Lord ſaid to mee,I haue heard the voyce of this peoples words which they haue ſpoken vnto thee: all that they haue ſaid is good.

29 I would they had ſuch heart to feare mee, and to keepe my commaundementes alwayes, that it might goe well with them and with their children for euer.

30 Go ſay vnto them,Returne ye into your tentes.

31 But as for thee, tarie thou here with mee, and I will tell thee all the commaundements,Ordinaunces and Lawes which thou ſhalt teache them, that they may do them in the land which I giue them to poſſeſſe.

32 Therefore ſee that ye doe as the Lord your God hath commanded you. Ye ſhall not bow aſide to the right hand nor to the left:

33 But walke in all the wayes which the Lorde your God hath commaunded you,that ye may liue,and that it may bee well with you, and that your dayes may bee lengthened in the land which you ſhall poſſeſſe.

ACcording to that which was declared yeſterday, God in this text ſheweth that he graunteth the peoples requeſt, and giueth them the choiſe of that which ſhoulde bee beſt for them. And hereby wee ſee,that he meant to make the people to feele his goodnes, of purpoſe to win them the better. True it is that he might iuſtly ſubdue vs to him by authoritie, and he could doe it: but hee had much leuer to deale with vs by fatherly gentleneſſe. That then is the cauſe why he ſhewed himſelf agreeable to the people. Therefore let vs marke well, that God hath ſuch regard of our weldoing and welfare,as if the choiſe were in our owne hands,we could not wiſh better thã he doeth. It ſeemeth not ſo at all times: but yet is it ſo in deede. Furthermore he addeth ẏ he graunted not the peoples deſire in any other reſpect, than for that he himſelfe liked of it.For now and then God graunteth men their requeſtes,howbeit,it is for their importunatneſſe ſake, and the thing turneth to their condemnation. As for example, when the people were deſirous to eate fleſh,it is true that they had their fill of it: but they paide right deare for their ſhot, for they ſpited God by their wilfull deſiring of the thing that was withheld from them.Neuertheleſſe it is true that God did fully ſatiſfie the murmurers,ſo as they had wherewith to fill their bellies: but it had bin much better for them to haue ſtarued for hunger. But it is not ſo in this requeſt whereof Moſes ſpeaketh here: for GOD ſayeth expreſſely, *That they meant rightly.* As if he ſhould ſaye, keepe that courſe ſtill, and yee ſhall ſee howe I will pleaſure you. Yee haue deſired that yee myght haue a man to ſpeake to you in my name, and I am contented with it. Nowe then it ought to perſwade you the more, to receiue the doctrine that ſhall bee preached vnto you from mee,on my behalfe, for as much as I haue done it at your deſire and choyſe. But yet yee muſt not thinke that I meant to pleaſe you without reaſon or cauſe why. For I aſſure you, all thinges ſhall goe well with you, if yee keepe on this courſe of profiting in my woorde, ſo as whenſoeuer Moſes ſhall come vnto you of my ſending, you giue reuerent eare to the thinges that hee ſhall tell you for your welfare. And ſo let vs marke well, that when Gods woorde is preached vnto vs by men, they doe it not vpon their owne head, but bicauſe GOD hath giuen vs here the doctrine that is for our benefite. And this ought to ſettle vs the better,that wee bee not mooued with any fond affection, to chaunge as our manner is, to delyght alwayes too much in Nouelties. Let vs vnderſtande that the thing whereunto wee muſt holde our ſelues, is that wee muſt giue eare to the preaching of Gods woorde, all the time of our lyfe. And why? For it is not onely his will that wee ſhould doe ſo: but alſo he ſheweth vs that it is for our behoofe.

Num.11,33.

Beſides this, GOD wakeneth the people here, to the ende they ſhould thinke better vppon the keeping of the commaundements of his Lawe, than they had doone. For the people had ſaide,we wil do it. And ſayth God on his ſide, who will giue them the heart to doe it, and who will giue them ſuch diſpoſition of minde? And by thoſe wordes he doth vs to wit, that it was an eaſie matter for them to promiſe, as men commonly make great proteſtations with full mouth, but whẽ it commeth to the performance they ſhewe well that their promiſing was at alauenture. God therefore to make the people perceiue how hard a matter it is to keepe the lawe, ſayeth here, I would fayne it were ſo. For the Hebrew woord which he vſeth where he ſayth, who wil giue thẽ the heart, importeth as much as when wee ſay, be it ſo: I would faine it were ſo. True it is that here God ſpeaketh after the maner of men: for he needeth no more but wiſh things done, all things are in his hand. And therefore it might be replyed, Lord it belongeth to thee, and askeſt thou who ſhall giue them the heart? To whom belonges that to doe? Man of himſelfe will neuer incline to good, but he muſt bee driuen to it by ſome other meanes, and that can no creature doe, but it is thy ſpirit that muſt doe it. Now then ſeeke not thou who ſhall giue them the heart, but let the power of thy ſpirit vtter it ſelfe, and then ſhall they doe it. Likewiſe Deut.30.6. we ſhall ſee howe God will ſay, I will giue you a heart to feare mee. If it were in vs, why ſhoulde he ſay ſo? But he ſaieth that it belongeth to him to doe it, like as he addeth by the Prophet, I will Ie.32.39.& giue them a heart to obey mee. As much ſhall Ezec.11.19. wee ſee hereafter, where he ſaieth, I will cauſe and 36.27. them to keepe my commandements. God then chalengeth to himſelfe the inſtructing of men, and the gouerning of them by his holy Ghoſt, to the intent they ſhould be ſubiect vnto him, & ſubmit themſelues to his righteouſneſſe. And why then doth he pretend to wiſh it in this text? It is bicauſe he ſpeaketh after the maner of men, as he doeth in many other places. And (as I ſaid afore) it is to the ende that when there is any mention made of walking in obedience to Godward, wee ſhould vnderſtand that it cannot bee done without hardneſſe, and that our wits ſhould be wakened to apply our ſelues earneſtly to that ſtudie. Therefore whereas men promiſe vnaduiſedly, that they will worke wonders in obeying God and in keeping his Lawe: let vs vnderſtand that we muſt examine our owne abilitie, and then we ſhall finde that there is nothing but all maner of weakeneſſe in vs. So farre off are wee from being able to perfourme all that is commaunded vs: that wee knowe not at which ende Phil.2.13. to begin. Nay, wee haue not the skil to conceiue one good thought, vntil God haue reformed vs, drawen vs to him, giuen vs the minde, and therunto added abilitie to put our deſires in execution. Thus ye ſee what is ment by this ſaying, And who ſhal giue thẽ the heart? or I would it were ſo.

Hereby wee be warned to take heede, that we preſume not vpon our owne ſtrength, to bee too bolde. For when we beare our ſelues in hand that wee can doe all things, it is the cauſe of our ruin. And God doeth iuſtly laugh ſuch ouerweening to ſcorne. But let vs learne to feele that we can do nothing: and that although we be bound to fulfill all that euer God commaundeth vs: yet it followeth not therefore that wee bee able to doe it, but rather that we be vtterly vnable. Neither is it ſo ſmall and common a matter to loue God with all our heart, with all our minde, and with all our power, as if wee needed no more but to ſay, yea, I will goe about it out of hand: but it is a thing that paſſeth all that is in man. When we once know that the law containeth too high a righteouſneſſe for vs to attaine vnto, and that wee on our part are ſo weake as is pitie to ſee: then will we learne to ſigh before God, and conſider well that wee bee bound to doe whatſoeuer he appointeth, but yet wee will craue power at his hande, that it may pleaſe him to helpe vs with his holy ſpirit, and not onely ſupplye our frailtie, but alſo be the beginner and perfourmer of all thinges in vs, ſo as he make vs willing, and confirme vs in that willingneſſe, and with that conſtancie match alſo power to accompliſh our deſires.

And by the way God ſheweth here, that his ſending of his worde vnto vs, is to the intent to be ioyned vnto vs, and that wee alſo ſhould bee vnited vnto him: ſo as he requireth nothing but obedience, that we might be his children, and he ſhewe himſelfe to bee our father. And ſo Gods intent in cauſing his word to bee preached vnto vs, is to gather vs as it were vnder his winges, that wee may bee defended and ſaued, yea verily ſo wee come vnto him quietly, and ſuffer our ſelues to bee ruled by his woord, and bee ſubiect thereunto. But it is true (as I ſaid afore) that it is not in our owne power to doe this, but God muſt giue vs that grace, and he giueth it not to all mẽ. Neuertheleſſe it is not for vs to bee inquiſitiue of Gods ſecrete purpoſe in that behalfe, why he reformeth the one ſort by his holy ſpirit, and letteth the other ſort goe on ſtill in their corruption, without bringing of them backe. Wee muſt not enter into that maze: but it muſt ſuffice vs that God liſteth to make men vnexcuſable, in ſaying, I would faine it were ſo. As if he ſhould ſay, that after we haue once beene taught by his word, wee haue no more excuſe: God is not to blame if wee be not ſaued. Why ſo? For we ſhall perceiue that to walke as he hath commaunded vs, is the way to attaine to all goodneſſe. And therefore let vs lay the blame of all our miſeries [vpon our ſelues:] and if God afflict vs and puniſh vs with aduerſitie, let vs vnderſtande that wee haue no cauſe to grudge or complayne of him, for wee be faultie, bicauſe wee haue not followed his lawe. That is the thing in effect, which wee haue to marke vpon this text. Yet notwithſtanding, it is true that wee muſt haue recourſe to his aide, knowing that wee of our ſelues are too weake to performe his lawe, in ſo much that we be neuer able to come at it, no nor any thing neere it. But yet if we liue not as becommeth vs, we muſt alwayes yeelde our ſelues guiltie, knowing that the fault remaineth in our ſelues, ſo as if God doe beate vs with his rod, we can not ſay it is vndeſerued on our part. For why? Seeing we haue Gods word, wee haue matter of record that he is deſirous to bee at one with vs, and to doe the ductie of a father, and to maintaine vs in all proſperitie, if wee burie not his grace, ne withhold the thing that is due on our part. Yee ſee then that men are iuſtly conuicted and condemned for refuſing Gods grace, and for ſhutting

ting the doore againſt him, in that they profited not in his worde when they were taught it. And ſo it is a very profitable warning for vs, when we ſee in this texte howe God wiſheth that wee ſhoulde doe the thinges that hee commaundeth vs, to the intent it might go well with vs. Wherby wee ſee that if wee receiue the doctrine with humilitie, and deſire to obey it, the ende thereof cannot bee but happie, ſo as wee ſhall bee ſure of our ſaluation. Howbeit wee muſt alwayes come backe to this point, that wee pray to God to giue vs heartes: (for it belongeth to him to doe that): and yet if wee doe amiſſe, wee muſt learn to condemne our ſelues, that he may acquite vs.

On the otherſide let vs reioyce inaſmuch as we ſee howe hee procureth our ſaluation, and intendeth the furtherance thereof, as oft as his worde is preached vnto vs. And let vs remember Prou.3,31. howe it is ſaide in Salomons prouerbs, That it is the delight and pleaſure of Gods wiſedome to dwell among men. See heere howe God auoweth, that his ſending of his worde vnto vs, is to teach vs the full perfection of wiſedome, as if hee ſhoulde ſende his owne wiſedome from heauen. Yea, and to what ende? Wiſedome is brought in their ſaying thus, All my delight is to dwell among men. And that is as much as if God ſhoulde open his heart and ſay, Beholde, my teaching of men by my worde, is of purpoſe to binde my ſelfe to them with a holy band. And if they on their ſide bee not ſtubborne, they ſhall perceiue that I wil alwayes be among them without departing from them at any time. This ought to inflame vs greatly with a reuerence to Gods worde, ſo as we may ſeeke to profite in it, and neuer ſuffer our ſelues to bee turned from it, foraſmuch as it bringeth ineſtimable benefite vnto vs, namely that our Lorde vniteth himſelfe vnto vs thereby.

Nowe it followeth in Moſeſes texte, that God commaundeth the people to *goe euerie man to his tent, and Moſes to tarie there ſtill:* and then he addeth, *I will ſhewe vnto thee all the commaundements, ſtatutes, and ordinances which thou muſt teach to all the people.* Heere God ſheweth againe, that hee ceaſeth not to continue his teaching of the people, though he vſe the foredeclared meanes, that is to wit, though hee make Moſes as it were the vtterer of his will, and the bearer of his meſſage. This is to bee marked well: for it ſerueth to make vs knowe, that God intendeth to holde vs alwayes to himſelfe, and will not haue our faith grounded vpon men, nor to depend vpon them. And that is a very requiſite thing. Truely as for them that followe their owne good intentes, or ſay they holde the thinges that haue beene determined by the Church, or by the auncient fathers: they may many times be groſſely deceiued. And if a man tell them they doe but as it were hang in the aire, and haue no certaintie in beeing ſo wedded vnto men: they bee wilfull in their owne opinions, as we ſee the Papiſtes are, whome the diuell hath ſo bewitched, that they content themſelues with the reſolutions made by men, and boldely deſpiſe the worde of God. Inſomuch that if a man bring record from thence, to reproue their ſuperſtitions: they bee at a full point, for they bee ſo doted that they regarde not to haue God againſt them. Men then may well for a time haue this ouerluſtineſſe of running boldly whither ſoeuer their fooliſh imagination carieth them, & they may harden themſelues againſt God: but when it commeth to the verie puſh, they be ſo diſmaied as they wote not where to become. And therefore let vs note that wee ſhall neuer haue any ſure and longlaſting ſtay, vnleſſe our faith be grounded vppon Gods worde, and that wee bee able to ſay, that looke whatſoeuer wee haue wee holde it of him, and that it is the verie trueth, ſo as wee wander not in our owne imagination, nor take the doctrine of men for our ſtay. And wheras we heare God ſay in this text, *I will tell thee the things which thou muſt teach:* Let vs marke that wee likewiſe muſt reſt wholly vppon him and vpon his infallible truth, ẏ our faith may not be wauering and doubtfull. And the thing which wee haue to ſeeke when we come to ſermons, is to haue this point well warranted and ſealed in our conſciences, namely that we haue Gods word wherein lyeth our life.

And herewithall let vs marke alſo, that God ment to holde the preachers of his word in ſuch awe, as they ſhoulde not preſume to put forth any thing of their owne, but be contented to bee 1.Cor.4.1. faithfull ſetters forth of the things that he commaundeth, ſo as they may alwayes proteſt, that they haue ſerued god in executing his commaundement, and in deliuering it foorth from hand to hand. This is a thing which wee haue to marke, we (I ſay) whom God hath appointed his miniſters to preach his worde, and to whom hee hath committed the office of teaching: namely that we adde not aught of our owne deuiſing, but deliuer the thing ſimply which we knowe to bee proceeded from God.

And to the end that folke ſhould knowe ẏ God ment not to teach them by halues: he reherſeth the thing again which we haue ſeene heretofore namely his *ſtatutes, ordinances, commandements and Ceremonies.* As if he ſhould ſay there wanteth not any thing in his doctrine, neither ought the people to couet any thing more. This hath bene declared more at large alreadie. Notwithſtanding, whenſoeuer God vſeth ſuch diuerſitie of wordes to vs, wheras he might ſay in one word *the Lawe:* let vs marke, that it ſerueth to reſtraine men the better from fond curioſitie of adding any thing to his law, as the thing which wee ſee we bee too much giuen vnto by nature, foraſmuch as our fleſh prouoketh vs continually to inuent, I know not what new thing. And ẏ is the cauſe why in popery euery mā hath aduētured to caſt to his collup, & to make ſo many lawes one vpon another. For why? They thought it not ynough to liue plainly according to gods word, but ẏ it would be good to ad ſtill ſome minglemangle. But contrariwiſe God telleth vs that if we haue his law, we haue ſtatuts, commandements, ordinances and rites ynow: as if he ſhould ſay ẏ mortal mē ought not to ſtand ſo much in their own conceits, as to goe about to be wiſer than hee. For when they haue made neuer ſo large diſcourſes, yet can they not amende any part[of his doings]nor ad any thing to them, but whatſoeuer they put too further of their owne, it ſhall bee not onely ſuperfluous and vnprofitable:but alſo a marring to all the reſt, as if a man ſhoulde mingle vineger with good wine.

And now God hauing ſpoken after that manner, addeth *that they ſhoulde take good heede that they kept the things which he commaunded them, without bowing to the right hand or to the left.* Here our Lorde ſheweth vs againe, that the honoring of his Lawe which he requireth at our hands, muſt not be an onely allowing of it with our mouthes, after which manner wee woulde faine diſcharge our ſelues thereof: but hee telleth vs that his giuing of it forth, is to holde vs in his ſubiection & ſeruice, and that to the ſame ende he will haue it preached ſtill at this day. For thereby he intendeth to trie whether he can weeld vs as quiet people that ſubmit themſelues to him. Therefore let vs marke, that our reſorting vnto ſermons muſt not be to commend the doctrine for good and holie: for God ſhalbe much beholden to vs for ſaying that his word is worthie to be receiued: hee will not haue vs to be his iudges. It is true that we owe him that acknowledgement, ſo as when wee haue hearde his worde, euery of vs ought to confeſſe it to bee the pure trueth, and that there is none other rightneſſe, righteouſnes, nor wiſedome than is contained there. But yet muſt we paſſe further therewithall, and yeeld our ſelues to the ſeruing of our God. That is one point which wee haue to gather vpon this text. Another point is *that we muſt beware that we keepe it.* Wherein God ſheweth, that wee muſt applie all our ſtrength earneſtly in that behalfe: For men ſhall neuer followe God by ſleeping. Although they inforce themſelues neuer ſo much, yet the infirmitie of their nature is ſuch, as they can hardly keepe their feete. Therefore let vs not think that we can diſcharge our ſelues to Godwarde without taking of paine. For the thing is too hard conſidering what we be, namely ſlowe and ſluggiſh to good thinges, yea euen though God haue already made vs willing, and do gouerne vs by his holy ſpirit. And if he let vs alone as we be of our ſelues, we ſhall not only be ſlowe, but alſo drawe cleane backe from his wil. If he call vs to him, we ſhall go from him: yea & wee ſhalbe ſo little able to couet any good at all: that wee ſhalbe inforced to doe euill. But let vs marke what I haue touched afore, namely that although our Lord haue giuen vs ſome good diſpoſition of minde, and ſet vs in ſome good forwardneſſe: yet are we ſlothfull ſtill, and when we ſhould ſteppe one pace forth, whereas the ſame ſhold be done in leſſe than a minute of an houre, we muſt haue a whole houre to do it in. Nay we fall to kicking, or elſe by that time that we haue gone one pace, ofttimes we ſtumble; or retyre backe, or elſe take ſuch foule falles as is piteous to ſee. Therefore it is not for nought that God ſaith here *Take heede that yee doe them.* As if hee ſhould ſay, in deede my lawe is giuen you to the intent you ſhoulde put it in execution and obey it: but yet thinke not you that it is ſo eaſie a matter to be done. What is to be done then? Prepare your ſelues to walke after my commaundements, thinke vpon them, put to your indeuour, be diligent therein, take a taſt & ſauour of them, keepe good watch for feare of being turned away, and take very good heede to your ſelues. Thus we ſee in effect, that our Lorde exhorteth vs here to labor erneſtly, when the caſe ſtandeth vpon walking in obedience towardes him. And why? For the thinges that he requireth of vs are not ſo eaſie to be don. And beſides that, we be ſo ill diſpoſed therevnto, as is pitie to ſee: inſomuch that if we be not ſpurred and driuen by force, we cannot goe forward. Therefore it ſtandeth vs in hand to awake, and to take heede, and to ſtande continually vppon our garde, that wee may performe ẏ things that our Lord hath commanded vs. Nowe afterward he addeth, *that this muſt bee done without bowing to the right hand or to the left, ſo as men walke throughout in the way that he hath ſhewed them.* In deede this text ſhalbe expounded more at length in the twelfth chapter: but yet muſt we not paſſe it ouer without knowing what God ment by it. In forbidding vs to bowe to the right hand or to the left, he ſheweth vs that hee will haue vs to harken to him in all things without exception. And this importeth two thinges: namely that wee muſt neither put any thing to his lawe, nor take any thing from it. As concerning putting to, it is as if we would *go to the right hand*: for they ẏ ad to Gods law, do it vpon an imaginatiō ẏ the keeping of the things conteined there, is not al that they haue to do, & therfore ẏ it is good to put ſomewhat more to it. Loe howe men would giue place to their owne fancies, ſo as if any thing come in their heades, they thinke that God forgate that, and that it were good to be done. And that was the very cauſe of the great number of ordinances, lawes, and ceremonies that are ſet vp in poperie. The Iewes had the like vice among them, according as they be blamed for deſpiſing of Gods commandementes & ſtatutes, for their owne traditions ſakes. Nowe then, let vs keepe vs from walking on the right hand, ſo as we ſhould turne from the way which God hath ſhewed vs. And why? For the *right hand* is when we will needs bee too wiſe and too righteous, bearing our ſelues in hande that it is good for vs to do more than we be commaunded. But in ſo doing we be the diuels ſeruants, for God vtterly refuſeth all that euer we adde to his word: he will haue no ſuch mingling.

Deut,12,32

Matt.15,6.

And we decline or bowe to *the left hand*, when wee diminiſh Gods worde, that is to ſay, when wee bee contented to ſerue him by halues, and therewithall would haue him to giue vs leaue to follow our owne luſts. Some man peraduenture is not ſubiect to ſome vices: and well coulde hee find in his heart to diſcharge his duetie to Godward in ſeruing him ſo farre forth: but foraſmuch as he cannot ouermaiſter himſelf in ſome other vyces, hee woulde haue God to holde himſelfe contented, & to enter into a bargaine with him, as if he ſhould ſay, very well, if I faile in this behalfe,

halfe, I will recompence it in another. But let vs keepe our ſelues from walking on the left hande, that is to ſay, from taking any thing away from Gods worde. For as he hath forbidden to murther: ſo hath hee alſo forbidden to ſteale and to commit adulterie: and therefore we muſt ſubmit our ſelues to his commaundements in all points and all reſpectes without making of any reply thereto. For as wee muſt not in any wiſe adde aught to his Law: ſo is it not lawfull to take any thing from it, but we muſt walke in all the wayes that he ſheweth vs.

And whereas hee termeth it *a way*, it is to the ende to exhort vs to keepe vs in it, according as we ſhal ſee in the ende of this booke, where Moſes will ſay, This is the way, walke therein. Deut.28.9. As if he ſhould ſay, whoſoeuer turneth away from the doctrine that I ſet before you, goeth aſtray, hee doth but runne gadding ouer the fields, and yet for all that hee commeth neuer the neerer his wayes ende, but rather is ſtill further and further from it. Therefore in this place, *walke in the way* is as much to ſay, as wander not ye wretches wilfully, goe not aſtray. Sith your God is your guide, you cannot goe amiſſe in following him. But if you followe your owne heade: in the ende God muſt bee faine to ſhewe you, that yee ſhalbe no better than ſtray beaſtes, and that yee haue not helde the right way. Know ye therefore that Gods doctrine is your way. If this ſaying were well printed in our mindes, we ſhoulde be helde ſo in awe, as our itching appetites ſhoulde not be able to make vs runne aſtray as wee doe, but our life ſhould bee reſtreined by it. For God ſheweth vs dayly which is the way, & yet notwithſtanding men diſpute & make much queſtioning with What is to be done? & what is to be done? Verily as who ſhould ſay it were not told vs, that God neuer openeth his mouth, but it is to ſhewe vs the right way. And ſeing he ſheweth it vs, do not we offer him wrong and iniurie if we followe it not? Do we not blame him as though hee had loſt his time & trauel about vs? Now we ſee what this worde *way* importeth: that is to wit, that out of Gods doctrine there is nothing but error and deceit, and that men beguile themſelues when they thinke they do wel, furtherforth than when they ſuffer themſelues to be ruled by gods word, which ſheweth vs the good and right way.

And he ſaith purpoſely, *Al the wayes*. For he intendeth not to make ſuch a parting of ſtakes in this behalfe, as men woulde that he ſhould, ſo as they would faine reſerue ſomewhat alwayes to themſelues. Here God ſaith contrariwiſe, either you muſt obey me throughout in all pointes, or elſe I renounce you. So then, are wee deſirous to make our life alowable to God? Wee muſt not be obedient vnto him in part, but we muſt loke that all our whole life be framed according to his cōmandements, ſo as we may ſay wee haue kept all ways. But here it might be demāded, whether it be poſſible for vs to walk throughout in the way of the Lord. For on the contrarie part, ſeing that men do not the good which they faine would: it is much for vs if we ſhal haue indeuored to come to yͤ good way, & to go towards the ende, though we be not come at it. S. Paul himſelf complaineth that he was not able to do as he would in the diſcharge of his duety towards god. Rom 7.15. Here is no ſpeking of ſuch perfection as is required by yͤ Lawe: but we muſt only vnderſtand that God will haue men to yeeld & giue ouer themſelues vnto him, & inforce themſelues to run thitherward though they attain not to the mark. Although then that we do as it were drag our legs after vs in our going all our life long, and neuer come fully vnto God: yet muſt we keepe on to himward, and that not in part, but in all the things that are conteined in the lawe. Truth it is that we cannot ſo diſcharge our ſelues, as there may bee a full anſwerablenes betwixt Gods word and our liues: but if wee bee deſirous to ſubmit our ſelues vnto God, and to frame our ſelues thereafter, not in ſome one point but in all without exception, indeuouring the ſame to the vttermoſt of our power: it is as a keeping of all the wayes of God. For he beareth with vs, and taketh ſuch willingnes in good worth, when he ſeeth vs go to it roundly, & that we be not dubble minded, nor deſirous to reſerue any peece of our owne willes or to take leaue to do them, but labour [and ſtriue to the contrarie] as much as in vs lyeth, according to the grace that is giuen vs.

Nowe hereunto he addeth alſo, *That they may proſper, and that it may goe well with them and with their children*. Whereof hee ſheweth, (as I haue touched alredie) that all the miſeries and griefes which we indure in this world, are chaſtiſements for our ſinnes. And we cannot wite our vnhappineſſe vpon any thing elſe than our owne faultes. True it is that euery man couets to liue at eaſe and in proſperitie: we neede no teaching to deſire that: for our owne nature leadeth vs thervnto. But in the meane while it ſhold ſeeme that we haue conſpired our owne miſchiefe. For yͤ meane of proſperitie is to obey our God. And then will he bleſſe vs in ſuch ſort, as we ſhal feele the fruits of his grace and fauour in all reſpects. But what? We be loth to yeeld him his due obedience: and therefore muſt we alſo bee bereft of his bleſſing, and reiected as vnworthy to be of the number of his creatures. And ſo let vs marke, that here our Lorde ment to rebuke men, and to ſhewe them that they themſelues are to be blamed for al the aduerſities and miſeries which they indure in this worlde, and that they muſt wyte the ſame vppon their ſinnes. But yet moreouer hee ment therewith to drawe his owne to him, by ſetting the reward before them. As if he ſhoulde ſay, Go to, I deſerue well to be ſerued at your hand without looking for any thing at my hande for it: for ſeeing you bee my creatures, is it not reaſon that you ſhould be ſubiect to me? Ought not all your life to bee giuen vnto me? Yes: but yet intende not I that you ſhall ſerue mee for nought, I will forbeare mine owne right, which is that you ſhoulde bee bounde to doe whatſoeuer I cōmaunde you, without looking for any thing: and I tell you that I am readie to bleſſe you, and to make you to proſper if you ſerue me. Our Lorde then in ſaying ſo, ſheweth that his meaning is to winne his ſeruants to him by gentleneſſe, & as it were to breake their harts,that they may be the willinger to ſerue him, ſeeing hee goeth not to worke with ſuch rigour as he might,but forbeareth his right, and rather playeth the father, telling vs that if wee behaue our ſelues like children towards him,he wilbe gratious and liberall towards vs, and although hee owe vs not any thing, yet will he not faile to rewarde vs for the ſeruice that we yeelde vnto him.

Hereby we bee warned that Gods intent is to drawe vs vnto him, but yet muſt wee not inferre therevpon, that men can deſerue any thing in ſeruing of God, as the Papiſtes doe, who when they heare ſuch texts doe by and by fall to their merits,and beare themſelues on hand that God is beholden to them therefore. But contrariwiſe Gods meaning is to ſhewe vs that he is readie to apply himſelfe to vs after the manner of men,ſo as he ſeeketh nothing elſe but to induce vs to obey him. And that is not for any benefite to him ſelfe: for what profite can hee receiue by vs, though wee ſhoulde performe his whole Lawe? Should that aduantage him any thing at al? No. Yee ſee then whereat God ameth, and what we haue to marke vppon this ſentence. Wherefore let vs learn,that if we haue obeyed our God,and he make vs to proſper: it is not for that hee oweth vs any thing,or for that wee haue deſerued aught, and can boaſt that he recompenſeth our deſerts: but becauſe it pleaſeth him to vtter his free goodneſſe ſo farre forth vnto vs,as to terme that thing a wages,[hyre,or recompẽce],which hee giueth vs of his owne onely free liberalitie, without being bounde any thing at all thervnto. Againe, when he chaſtiſeth vs, and wee bee diſtreſſed with many miſeries: let vs aſſure our ſelues that we reape the fruits of our own ſeede: and becauſe we haue liued amiſſe, our Lord alſo muſt be faine to giue vs ſome ſigne of his wrath, to the ende that hee may bee knowen to be the iudge of the worlde. But yet hath hee alſo a regarde of our welfare, namely to miſlike of our faults and to bee ſorie for them, and to reſort to him by true repentance. Thus yee ſee that God in ſhewing of himſelf angrie with vs ceaſeth not to vtter his loue towards vs.For he indeuoreth to bring vs home to himſelfe therby. He ſeeth that we be falne aſleepe in our ſinnes, and hee waketh vs, as one knowing it to be expedient for vs ſo to be. That is the thing which wee haue to marke vpon this place.

Nowe in the end Moſes ſpeaketh of the land, and ſaith: *That thou maiſt proſper in the lande which I will giue thee:* and afterwarde he ſetteth downe this ſaying againe, *That it may goe well with you in the land which yee muſt poſſeſſe.* Nowe it ſeemeth heere at the firſt ſight,that God promiſeth none othere rewarde than in this earthly and tranſitorie life. And if it had beene ſo, then had the hope of the children of Iſrael bene quite daſhed. But wee muſt note that our Lorde vſed another maner of dealing towards that people,than hee doth towards vs,though they tende both to one end.For the ſacrifices that were ordeined by the lawe,ſerued not to drawe the people away from the ſaluation which we haue in Ieſus Chriſt: but rather to leade them to it: ſo as Gods mind was to doe men to vnderſtande, that they were condemned, and that there was none other meane of reconciliation,but by the bloude of our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt. But yet in the meane while men ceaſed not to kill brute beaſts, and God ſaid vnto them,your ſinnes ſhal bee forgiuen you when you ſhall haue offered me a Calfe,a Lambe, or a Sheepe. It ſhould ſeeme by this, that God ment to ſet the remiſſion of ſinnes in the ſacrificing of brute beaſtes. But hee did not ſo.That was done to leade the people after that groſſe manner to the redemption that was at the length purchaſed for vs by our Lord Ieſus Chriſts owne perſon.In like caſe is it with the land of Chanaan. For firſt of all Gods will was to ſet foorth the euerlaſting heritage of ſaluation to the children of Abraham, in ſaying to Abraham, I am thy large reward. He promiſeth not Abraham the lande as though he would haue him to ſtay himſelf there, but willed him to put his whole truſt in him,and to raiſe vp himſelfe aboue the worlde, & to looke for the heauenly life both for himſelfe and for his ofſpring.Howbeit foraſmuch as our Lord Ieſus Chriſt was not yet come, nor the veile of the temple was not as yet broken, I ſay it was meete that the Land of Chanaan ſhould be as a pledge of it, becauſe it was fully behighted him for an inheritance. Then let vs marke well,that wheras God ſaith, *that thou maiſt proſper in the land*:his intent is not that his people ſhoulde ſet their mindes vpon this preſent life, but to guide them higher by that meane, namely to the hope of the immortalitie which hee had promiſed them. Neuertheleſſe our Lorde promiſeth his bleſſing in ſuch ſort to his people, as they ſhall feele it euen in this worlde and haue ſome taſt of it here, in waiting for the diſcouerie of the full inioyment thereof, at ſuch time as they ſhalbe taken out of the worlde. And euen at this day alſo wee muſt bethinke vs of this text of Saint Paul, that if we feare God,we ſhall haue the promiſes both of the life preſent and of the life to come. For God will make vs to feele his goodneſſe in this worlde, to the ende to drawe vs vp higher, and to teach vs ſo to receiue his benefites heere, as wee may looke to haue our fill of them when we be come to his kingdom, where we ſhal haue the whole fulneſſe of them.

Heb.9.8.13.
14.22.

Leu.16.15.16

Gen.15.1.

1.Tim.4.8.

Nowe let vs fall downe in the preſence of our good God with acknowledgement of our faultes, praying him to make vs feele them better than we haue done,euen till they haue drawen vs to true repentance, and that wee acknowledging our wretchedneſſe more and more,may learne to ſtriue againſt all the affections of our fleſh, and againſt all our wicked and frowarde luſtes, and moreouer to withſtande the curſed preſumptuouſnes that is in vs which alſo woulde haue vs to doe that which we our ſelues beſt like of, ſo as nothing may ſtay vs from following the pure and ſimple worde of our God, aſſuring our ſelues ẏ it is the true & perfite rule wherunto we muſt ſubmit our ſelues, and that we muſt not attempt to ad any thing to it, but ſimplie reſt vpon that which is conteined there,and goe forwarde more and more therein, vntill that hauing finiſhed this earthly race, wee be come to the heauenly reſt whereunto hee calleth vs. And let vs pray him to reach vs his hande in the meane while, whenſoeuer we ſeeke him and call vppon him in our neede. That it may pleaſe him to graunt this grace, not onely to vs but alſo to all people and nations of the earth, &c.

On Friday the nineteenth of Iuly. 1555.

The xlv. Sermon, which is the firſt vpon the ſixt Chapter.

THeſe are the Commaundements, Ordinances and Lawes which the Lorde your God commaunded me to teach you: to the end that you ſhould doe them in the Land whereinto you ſhall enter to poſſeſſe it.

2 That thou maiſt feare the Lord thy God, in keeping al his ordinances & commaundements which I commaund thee, all the dayes of thy life, both thou and thy children and thy childrens children, that thy dayes may be prolonged.

3 Hearken therefore O Iſrael and take heede that thou doe them, that it may goe well with thee, and that thou maiſt be mightilie multiplied in the land that floweth with milke and honnie, as the Lorde God of thy fathers hath ſayde vnto thee.

4 Heare O Iſrael, the Lord our God is the onelie Lord.

WE haue ſene oft heretofore howe Moſes ſpake to the people concerning yͤ contents of the law: yea and euen yeſter day we ſaw yͤ hee made mētion therof: and here we ſee the like againe. And yet for all that, it is not a needeleſſe repetition, conſidering howe ſoone men forget the thinges they haue learned of God, if they be not put in mind of them: and wee knowe that we neede not any thing to turne vs away from them. For we be ſo giuen to vanitie, that nothing is harder to vs, than to holde our ſelues in obedience vnto God. As ſoone as any toy takes vs in the heade, it carieth vs away, and wee minde no more what God had ſaide vnto vs. Againe foraſmuch as he is very deſirous to winne vs to him: he muſt bee faine to plucke vp yͤ falſe opinions by the roote, wherewith we be ouergrowen aforehande. For when a grounde is buſhie, it will aske much labour before it can be put to any vſe: and euen ſo is it with vs. And that is the cauſe why Moſes ſaieth againe, *that theſe are the commaundements, ſtatutes and ordinances which the Lorde committed to him, to giue them forth to the people, that they might be kept*. Nowe by theſe wordes hee giueth an incling, that Gods intent is to holde the people vnder his obedience. What meane yee wretched folke to goe aſtray after that faſhion? I giue you my Lawe: and hauing that doctrine ye cannot goe amiſſe: it is the way of ſaluation, and therfore holde you to it. But yet for all this, men are fickle and fleeting to and fro: and God reigneth them with a ſtrong bitte: like as when a horſe is harde to bee ruled, hee is faine to bee raigned backe more than once, and if hee fling out and will not ſuffer himſelfe to be handled, the ryder is faine to reine him ſtreyt againe & againe. After the ſame manner doeth God deale with his people. And thereby hee ſheweth that mans minde is full of ſtubborneneſſe, or elſe of lightneſſe, ſo as hee cannot reſt vppon Gods worde, wherein notwithſtanding lyeth our whole ſaluation and welfare. Sith it is ſo: let vs marke that in the perſon of the people of Iſrael, wee bee warned heere, that when God ſetteth his worde before vs, wee muſt not onely minde it for one day, but wee muſt exerciſe vs in it all the dayes of our life, and wee muſt alwayes haue this ſaying before our eyes, theſe are the Statutes, theſe are the Ordinances, theſe are the Commaundementes, ſo as it is not for vs to frame rules and Lawes wherewith to gouerne our life, foraſmuch as that authoritie belongeth only to God.

Beſides this wee bee alſo put in minde, that God hath ſhewed vs the right way. Therefore let vs followe it, and not ſtand queſtioning what wee haue to doe. For there is no more cauſe of doubt when our Lorde hath once ſpoken. Wee muſt not any more alledge, I cannot tell whether it bee good, I wote not whether I neede to do more or no: but let vs be contented with that which God hath ſhewed vs. For hee will alwayes be a good ſchoolemaſter vnto vs, if we bee not euill ſcholers vnto him. And for the ſame cauſe ſpeaketh hee here againe of Commandements Statutes and Ordinances, to the intent we ſhold not think that God ment to teach vs by halues.

Then is the perfection of wiſedome conteined in the Lawe: and there remaineth no more for Pſal.19.8. vs to doe, but to obey it, ſo as we be not curious in coueting more than God hath ſhewed vs, or in fonde deuotions to draw vs one way or other, but perſwade our ſelues that God hath not enuied thoſe of whome hee tooke the charge, but hath taught them all that is for their benefite. Let vs behaue our ſelues according to his will, and apply all our wittes therevnto, and let his lawe ſuffice vs. Although all the worlde reiect vs, wee ſhall not paſſe for it, for wee haue our iudge. And therefore although the worlde wander away in vaine imaginations, and euerie man deuiſeth what hee thinketh good: Let vs alwayes remember that wee muſt appeare Rom.2.16. before the iudgement ſeate of our God, ſo as it is hee to whome wee muſt make our account. But hee hath giuen vs his Lawe, and Rom.2.12. according therevnto will he iudge vs. And therfore let vs leaue al worldly imaginations, aſſuring ourſelues that they are al but vanity and leaſing.

Herevnto Moſes addeth, that as concerning his office he had not brought them any thing of his owne deuiſing, but had ſet forth Gods Lawe faithfully according as hee had giuen him in charge. And this proteſtation is well to be marked. For wee muſt bethinke vs of the thing that hath beene treated of heretofore: namely that Moſes was the excellenteſt Prophet that euer Deut.34.10 God raiſed vp: and yet notwithſtanding he taketh no libertie here to teach what hee himſelfe deemed good: for he knew himſelfe to be a mortall man, and ſubiect to the Lawe as wel as other men. That is the cauſe why hee proteſteth that the things which hee bringeth are the ſame ẏ he receiued of God, ſo as he deliuereth them as it were from hand to hand. Seeing ẏ Moſes did ſo: who dareth ſay that it is lawful for him to paſſe further? And yet we ſee what hath come to paſſe. For in the whole Popedom is there any hearkening what God ſaieth, that they might put a difference betwixt it and the doctrines of men? No: but they haue their holy mother ẏ Church as they terme it, they haue determinations and decrees of their owne, and they thinke it ynough to take couert vnder the name of the Church: and in the meane while they rob God of his authoritie to beſtowe it vpon men, which are no better but dung. Therefore it is an intollerable traiterouſneſſe, that God ſhould not bee ſuffered to be any more the Lawemaker that hee might guide his people, and holde them vnder his yoke but that men ſhould vſurpe ſuch authoritie againſt him. And therfore we haue ſo much the more need to marke what is conteined here: namely that although Moſes was as an Angel of heauen, and had beene exalted aboue all men by God, and had beene fortie dayes and fortie nights with him vpon the mount without eating or drinking, to ſhewe that he was no more of the common aray of other men: yet notwithſtanding when hee came from that heauenly glorie and as it were from the company of Angels: hee humbled himſelfe ſtill, and ſhewed that hee did not put forth aught of his owne, ne followe his owne fancie in that behalfe, but was contented to harken what God ſaid, and reported the ſame as a good ſeruant that had neither added any thing, nor falſified the commiſſion that was giuen him. That is another thing which we had to marke againe vppon this text.

Nowe followeth an exhortation *that the people ſhould diſcharge themſelues in doing the Lawe*. As if hee ſhould ſaie, that the giuing thereof was not to the ende that men ſhoulde but onely confeſſe that all that is conteined therein is good, iuſt and rightfull: but alſo that men ſhoulde thereby ſhew whether they were obedient to God or no. And in that reſpect he ſaith, *to the ende that thou ſhouldeſt feare the Lorde thy God, and keepe his commaundements and ſtatutes*. By this word *Feare* he doth vs to wit, that God in giuing forth his Law, ment to trie what we be, and whether we be willing to ſerue him or no. For although we coulde doe all his commaundements in ſuch ſort as no fault could be found in vs to the worldward, if in the meane whyle the feare of God be not rooted in our hearts, to yeelde him ſuch reuerence as to be willing to be his: all our life ſhalbe but a fond pompe: for wee muſt not thinke that God is ſatiſfied with outward apparances. Howmuchſoeuer they be commended of men, they bee but Luke 6.15 ſmoke before him. Then if wee minde to keepe his Lawe dewly, and to haue our life acceptable vnto him: we muſt beginne at this point of yeelding him ſuch reuerence, as to be deſirous to bee vnder his hande and gouernement, and to doe him homage as to our ſoueraine Lord & to giue ouer our ſelues to him as to our maker, and to honour him as our father. If we be thus minded, it is the beginning of all the Lawe and of al righteouſnes. And that is the cauſe why it is ſayde that the true wiſedom is to feare God. Prou.1.7. & 9.10. And if we will know whether we haue profited in gods lawe or no: we muſt alwayes ſift & ſearch our ſelues whether we haue ſuch deſire & zeale that God ſhold be honored & glorified by vs. For if there be that feare in our hearts, ẏ fruits therof wil ſhew themſelues both in our feete and in our handes, ẏ is to ſay in al our members, according to ẏ rule which he hath ſet downe in publiſhing his law. And as for them that boaſt of the feare of God, & neuertheleſſe behaue themſelues lewdly in their conuerſation: they belie thẽſelues ẇ their own mouthes, & bewray ẏ they be ſhameles in bragging ſo of the feare of God. Now then we ſee here a text which is well worthie to be marked: wherin Moſes declareth, that to ſerue god well, firſt we muſt giue our hearts vnto him, ſo as it ſufficeth not to haue all ẏ vertues ẏ can be imagined to outward ſhew, vnleſſe a vertuous mind go before them: & ſecondly that the feare of God is no ſecret or ydle thing, but ẏ although it bee incloſed in mens harts, yet neuertheles it muſt ſhew it ſelf in their liues: for it is the heart that gouerneth both the hands and the feete and all that euer is beſides. Therefore if wee feare God, we muſt learne to ſhew it by our deeds and by proofe, euen by framing our life according to his will.

Now herevpon we may gather, that God diſalloweth all that euer men can doe, when they turne away from his worde. As for example, the Papiſtes are alwayes ſeruing of God (as they themſelues ſay): but in the meane ſeaſon what doe they? They take much paine, but they bee neuer a whit the forwarder, becauſe they haue nothing among them but mens inuentions. Their ſeruing of God, is to biblebable or to kneele downe before puppets or idols, to ſcudde from altar to altar, to cauſe Maſſes to be chaunted, to gadde on pilgrimage, to faſt ſuch a day in the honour of ſuch a ſaint, and to eate no fleſh vppon fridayes and ſaturdayes. To bee ſhort, it is a gulfe of all baggage, couered with the name and title of Gods ſeruice. But ſhall ye find that euer God vttered one word or ſyllable concerning ſuch thinges? No. It was euerywhit of it deuiſed by men. Nowe let vs conſider by this texte, whether God accepteth ſuch ſeruice for good and lawfull. Nay contrariwiſe he ſaith, thou ſhalt feare the Lorde thy God, and keepe all his commaundements and ſtatutes. So then, when men turne from that way, and followe their owne imaginations and the inuentions of men: thereby they ſhewe ſufficiently that they haue no feare of God in them, for elſe they woulde offer him the ſacrifice which hee preferreth before all things: namely the ſacrifice of obedience, as is ſhewed in the firſt booke of Samuel the fifteenth Chapter. Inſomuch that if a man herken not vnto Gods voice to ſubmit him ſelfe thereto, but contrariwiſe followeth the inuention of his owne braine, or the thinges that other men haue deuiſed: ſurely it is an ydolatry, and as badde as witchcraft, which God abhorreth. After that manner doth Gods ſpirit ſpeake of it, notwithſtanding that mortall men doe deeme the cleane contrarie. Now then wee ſee howe Moſes declareth here, that if we feare God in good earneſt, we will alſo doe him the honour to be ruled by his will, ſo as we wil not take leaue at mens handes to doe what they thinke good, but ſtop all mens mouthes when God ſpeaketh, and open our eares to hearken what hee ſaieth, and receiue the ſame.

1.Sam.15. 22.23.

But yet for all this, it is not ynough for euery of vs to imploye himſelfe in the ſeruing of God: wee muſt alſo procure to the vttermoſt of our power, that he may be worſhipped of al men: yea and that his ſeruice may continue euen after our deceaſe, ſo as his honour may abide faſt ſetled when we bee deade and gone out of the worlde, & not be aboliſhed with our tranſitorie life. And that is the cauſe why Moſes ſaith, *thy children, and they that iſſue of their race,* ſhal continue in ſeruing God & in keeping his law. Therfore let vs mark well, that here Moſes not onely exhorteth euerie man to ſerue God by framing his owne life according to the Law that he hath giuen vs: but alſo willeth fathers to take paine in bringing vp their children, and to leaue ſuch ſeed after them (ſo neere as they can), as God may be honored in their ofſpring, and his name bee euer purely called vpon, that by that meane ſuch as deſcend of vs may bee bleſſed, and his couenant (which conteineth our ſaluation) indure for euer, & not periſh though we our ſelues be mortall. But wee ſee that fathers are ſo farre of from diſcharging their dueties in this behalfe: that they giue ſuch examples to their children, as they may ſeeme to haue conſpired to aboliſh al feare of God, and all keeping of his Lawe. And therefore no maruell though God withdraw himſelfe from vs, and ſeeme to be minded to cut off the benefits which he hath beſtowed vpon vs. For are we worthy of ẏ continuance of them towards vs, ſeeing we bee ſo negligent in cauſing his ſeruice to continue in perfect and vnappaired ſtate? But yet for al that, this muſt not bee ſpoken to vs in vaine. Therefore let vs indeuour to teach ſuch as ſhal ſucceed vs, ſo as God may euer bee worſhipped, and knowen to bee the father and Sauiour of the whole worlde, and men giue themſelues whollie vnto him.

Immediatly herevppon, Moſes addeth that which he had ſaid afore: namely, to the end that *their dayes might bee prolonged, and that God might make the people to proſper, according as he had promiſed to their fathers to giue them a land that flowed with milke and honnie.* I haue declared alreadie heretofore, what Moſes ment by this ſaying: that is to wit, that although God might at one worde haue compelled vs to ſerue him, yet notwithſtanding he vſeth a more louing kinde of dealing towards vs: which is, that hee promiſeth vs rewarde for ſeruing of him: not that our workes deſerue aught, or that hee is any whit bounde vnto vs: but that his benefiting of vs after that ſort, is to the end that we ſhoulde be the better allured to ſerue him the more earneſtly. For is it not too ſhamefull a thankleſneſſe, that when wee heare howe God bindeth himſelfe to vs after that maner, of his owne accorde, and vouchſafeth to ſet rewarde before vs, is it not (ſay I) too great a ſhame and vnthankfulneſſe, if we giue not our ſelues wholly to his ſeruice? Wee bee his, and whatſoeuer we can doe, wee be beholden to him for it, as our Lord Ieſus Chriſt ſpeaketh thereof. Howe ſay you, ſaieth hee? tell mee, if a man haue a ſeruant, or rather a ſlaue whom he may put to toyle like an Oxe or a horſe, and the ſame haue done him ſome ſeruice: will his maſter riſe from the table to ſerue him at his turne? No: for whatſoeuer a man doeth that is in bondage, hee oweth it to him that hath the ſuperioritie ouer him. So owe you all thinges to God (ſaith Chriſt), and God oweth you nothing. Yet notwithſtanding God binding himſelfe of his owne free good will, promiſeth that if wee ſerue him wee ſhalbe well recompenſed, and not loſe our labour. To what purpoſe doth hee ſo? euen to breake our hearts, for (as I ſaide afore) we bee too churliſh if wee bee not wholly inflamed to ſerue God, when wee ſee that he of his owne free goodneſſe vouchſafeth to beheight vs rewarde, whereof we be not worthie.

Luke 17.7.

And herewithall let vs marke alſo, that if God had couenanted a thouſande times with vs to rewarde our workes: yet coulde wee ſo little ſay that hee owed vs any thing, as hee might rather curſe and abhorre vs. For which of vs performeth his Law as we ought to do? If wee doe one point, we faile in a hundred: and when we thinke we do the thinges that God commandeth vs in his Lawe: we do but drag our legges, and there is alwayes much imperfection in vs, ſo as wee can neuer runne as were requiſite. Therefore wee ſhould be curſed and damned, if God liſted to iudge vs with rigour. Then is it not for men to vaunt thẽſelues in this behalfe of the obteining of any rewarde for deſertes ſake, or to boaſt of their workes. But rather they muſt vnderſtand that all the promiſes which God hath giuen in his Law, import a condition, and therefore that they ſhould not boote vs at all, becauſe none of vs diſchargeth his dutie, if God did not accept vs & beare with vs of his own mere goodnes. And hereby we ſee how mad the papiſts are to boaſt of their merites, ſo as it ſeemeth to them that they haue to bargaine with God, and thereupon enter boldly into account with him through deuiliſh malapeartnes, bearing themſelues in hand that God is greatly bounde vnto them. And for what maner of dealinges? They alleage their ſatiſfactions, their workes, and their merites. And where ſhall a man finde theſe merites? O (ſay they) we haue done this and that: and therefore we neede not ſticke to enter into account with God. But on the contrary parte, God requireth here that we ſhoulde ſerue him throughly in all reſpectes: which thing we can not do as we haue ſeene heeretofore, and as is declared in many Ro.7.14,18. other places. For lette all the worlde examine themſelues, and ſee if euer there were anie one that performed the Lawe. Nay, ſo farre off is that to be found, that there is none which may proteſt that he hath done the hundreth parte of it. Therefore all muſt needes confeſſe themſelues to bee accurſed. Beſides this, euen in that little portion which men can bring, howe ſmall ſo euer it be, there is alwayes ſome default and blot: by reaſon whereof God might well refuſe it and abhorre it. Nowe then let men continue confounded in their ſhame, and confeſſe themſelues to be all faultie before God. And let vs note that this promiſe can not be performed, vnleſſe God beare with vs, and reſpecte not the great number of infirmities and vices that are Pſal.32.1,2. in vs, but bury them through his mercy. Our workes then are receiued at Gods hande, inaſmuch as he reſpecteth not what they be, but accepteth them as good and holy, through the power of the death and paſſion of our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt. And although there be euer ſom blemiſh and blot in them, yea and that God could finde euen ſome filthineſſe in them if it were not blotted out by the bloud of Ieſus Chriſt: yet doth he accept vs by that meane, and not otherwiſe. Wherefore let vs learne to glorie in Gods meere mercie, and not to boaſt of any deſeruings. And yet therewithall let vs not ceaſe to ſteppe vppe with the better courage to ſerue him: when wee ſee that he vouchſafeth to drawe vs ſo vnto him and to winne vs by ſuch gentleneſſe.

Verily Moſes ſheweth that all that euer God promiſeth to his people for keeping of his Law, ſpringeth from the ſame fountaine, rather than from any bond. And that is it which he meaneth by ſaying, *As God promiſed to thy Fathers*. As if he ſhould ſay, my friendes, ſerue God and hee will be good maiſter vnto you: and thinke not that ye ſhall haue loſt your time when yee ſhall haue kept his Lawe: for ye ſhall haue the large rewarde that is behighted you. But yet for all that, conſider from whence the ſame commeth. The fountaine thereof (ſayth he) is, that before yee were borne into the worlde, God promiſed your fathers to bring them into a lande that floweth with milke and honnie. Moſes by bringing the people thus backe to the promiſe that had beene made to the Patriarkes, ſheweth ſufficiently that God promiſed not any thing anewe, but onely that he performeth the thing that hee had promiſed afore. And why ſo? Was it for that hee was bounde to them, which were not yet borne into the worlde? No: but becauſe he Deut.4.37. loued their fathers as is ſaide heretofore. It is true that heere Moſes ſheweth that the people ſhould be partakers of that promiſe, ſo they kept Gods Lawe. But what for that? Yet behoued it them to come backe ſtill to this point, that men are vtterly vndone if they ſet themſelues againſt God, and that if they alledge any worthines, they ſhall abide ſtill in their condemnation, and finde themſelues all accurſed. Therefore they muſt haue none other refuge but to Gods mercy, & they muſt vnderſtand that when they haue inforced themſelues neuer ſo much to liue according to Gods Law: yet ſhall God owe them nothing at all, neuertheleſſe hee will not faile to performe his promiſe to them euen of his owne mere and freebeſtowed goodneſſe. And ſo ye ſee how this text is to bee vnderſtoode. Nowe foraſmuch as here is mention made of the Land that was promiſed to the Iewes: let vs marke that we nowadays ought to bee much more prouoked to ſerue God, ſeeing hee hath dedicated the whole Iohn 4.21. earth to himſelf, & wil haue his name to bee called vpon euery where. For the bloudſhed of our Lord Ieſus Chriſt, hath ſãctified the whole world which was then in vncleanneſſe. For we knowe there were no moe lands but this, which God reſerued to himſelfe, and wherein he would reigne til the comming of his ſonne. But when our Lord Ieſus Chriſt was once come: then got hee the Pſal.2.8. Mat.28.19. Coloſ.1.6. poſſeſſion of the whole worlde, ſo as his kingdome was extended from the one ſide thereof to the other, ſpecially at the publiſhing of the Goſpel. Seeing it is ſo, let vs marke that we nowadayes are ſo much the more ſtraitly bounde to ſerue God, becauſe hee hath ſanctified the whole earth by the precious bloude of his ſonne, that wee might dwell in it and liue vnder his reigne, and beware that we addict our ſelues vnto him, as well as we would that hee ſhould haue vs in his protection and ſafekeeping.

Howbeit foraſmuch as men are alwayes ſo tickliſh, that (as I haue ſaide alreadie) they can not bee bridled ynough to reſtraine them: Moſes confirmeth the whole doctrine that hee had vttered heere, ſaying, ***Harken therefore O Iſraell, the Lorde thy God is one God***. Hee had ſaide afore, ***Hearken***: he had ſaide, ***take heede***: hee had ſaide that it behoued them to keepe the law: but heere hee confirmeth the whole matter much better,by ſetting downe expreſly that the God of Iſrael is the one God. And hereby his meaning is to exclude all the Gods which the world forged to it ſelfe,and to ſhew that it is not lawfull for vs to conceiue any thing in our owne imagination, whereof wee haue not warrant in Gods woord. Therefore whereas the God of Iſrael is called the one God, it is all one as if Moſes ſhould compare the God that had ſet foorth his lawe,(who had alſo manifeſted himſelfe before to his ſeruant Abraham, and to the Patriarkes,)with all thoſe whom the worlde weened to be Gods,and ſhould ſet him againſt them all. For in deede God had beene called vpon in all ages,and that name was common to the heathē. But what for that? The Heathen wandered at rouers,ſo as euerie man ſaid I worſhip God.And yet in the meane while,what was it they did?nothing but dreames and fantaſies : for when men take vpon them to worſhip God without knowing him: no doubt but they worſhip idols. The Turkes at this day doe ſay they worſhip the God that made heauen and earth: but yet is it but an idoll which they worſhip. And howe ſo? They name him the maker of heauen and earth, and they haue none images. That is true : but yet for all that, they haue but an idoll in ſtead of Col.1.15.& Hebr.1.3. God, bicauſe they admit not our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt, who is ỹ liuely image of God his father. 1.Ioh.2.23. And we knowe how S.Iohn ſaieth that he which denieth the ſonne,denieth the father too.Therfore they haue not God,but an idoll. As much is to be ſaid of the Iewes. The Iewes boaſt of their hauing of the lawe, and of their worſhipping of the God of Abraham, Iſaac and Iacob. But what Rom.10.4. Col.2.17. for that? They bee but backſliders and haue renounced Gods lawe, for as much as they haue reiected Ieſus Chriſt who is the ſoule of the law. It is he in whom God the father intendeth to manifeſt himſelfe vnto vs: It is he,whom he will haue to bee worſhipped. And in that reſpect he ſaieth, Kiſſe the ſonne whom I ſend vnto you. Pſal.2.12. Ioh.5.23. And againe, he that honoureth not the ſonnē, honoreth not the father that ſent him. Let vs marke wel then, that here Moſes meant to compare the God which vttered himſelf by his word, with al the Gods that are honored through the whole world, and to ſhew that in them all there is nothing but mockerie and leaſing. And why? For wee can neuer worſhip God aright, vnleſſe we firſt knowe him. And wee muſt alwayes haue an eye to this ſaying of Ieſus Chriſt which hee Iohn 4.21. ſpake to the woman of Samaria, yee knowe not what ye worſhippe. Ieſus Chriſtes vſing of ſuch ſpeach, is as much as if he ſhoulde ſpit at all the worſhippings which ỹ world had ſet vp in thoſe dayes.There was not that nation which boaſted not themſelues to ſerue God : but Ieſus Chriſt reiecteth quite and cleane the things which mē tooke to bee good and holy. Ye knowe not what ye worſhip ſaieth he. Hereby he ſheweth that it is expedient for vs to be told of it. We muſt not goe to it at all aduenture, but wee muſt bee ſure which is the God whom wee ſerue. And ſeeing it ſtandeth vs on hand to knowe God, if wee will worſhip him and ſerue him aright: let vs conſider from whence this knowledge cōmeth. Groweth it in our owne garden as they ſay:May wee get it by our owne trauell or policie? Is it lawfull for euerie man to imagine what he liſteth, and to ſay,I knowe God? No no: but God muſt bee faine to vtter himſelfe,and to come vnto vs.And ſo the onely meane to knowe God aright,is to be taught by his woorde. And that is the cauſe why he ſaieth, *The Lord thy God.* For this people had receiued the lawe: and beſide,the couenant had bin made with their fathers: God had ſhooled out that flocke from the reſt of the world. Iuſtly therefore doeth Moſes here bring back the people to the knowledge of God, to the ende they ſhoulde reſtraine themſelues from all the ſuperſtitions of the heathen, and haue nothing at all to doe with the vnbeleeuers,but know that in as much as God had manifeſted himſelfe ſo familiarly vnto them: they had the certaine and infallible trueth.

Now although this was ſpoken in the time of the lawe: yet doeth it agree better ſtill to vs.For although God gaue the Iewes ſufficient warning that they ſhould not haue to doe with the defilings and idolatries of the heathē: yet haue wee a much larger light nowe adayes, ſince the comming of our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt. Hee is the Col.1.15. liuely image of God his father (as I haue ſayde Hebr.1.3. alreadie,)and we may well agree to this ſaying in the firſt of Saint Iohn, That no man euer ſaw Iohn 1.18. God, but the ſonne who hath alwayes beene in the boſome of the father hath reuealed him vnto vs. The fathers of olde time had a knowledge as I ſaid, but that knowledge is eſteemed as none at all, in compariſon of the knowledge which we haue now adayes by the Goſpell.God Matt.4.2. ſheweth himſelfe more plainely vnto vs by the ſhining forth of the dayſunne of righteouſneſſe. And for the ſame cauſe the Prophet Eſay trea- Eſa.25.9. ting of the redemption that was to bee perfourmed in the perſon of the ſonne of God, ſaith expreſſely: Behold,this is he: beholde, this is our God. The Prophet crieth out, this is he, this is our God. He contenteth not himſelfe to ſay,behold our God : but he ſpeaketh as if the thing were preſent,and as though God had appeared vnto him. How ſo? And was not God in ỹ mids of his people?Yes: for he ſaid,I will dwel among Exod.25.8. you. And againe,This is my reſt, Sion is ỹ place where I will dwell. Pſal.131.13. 14. And afterward he proteſteth that he will neuer depart thence, and that the people is his temple and a royall Prieſthood. Why then doeth the Prophet Eſay ſay, Behold, behold our God: this is he,this is he: when our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt was to come into the world? Euen bicauſe God reuealed himſelfe to vs in greater perfection. Now then we be the leſſe to be excuſed,if we run gadding nowe adayes without holding of our ſelues to the pure trueth,ſo as euerie of vs turneth away after his own dotages, to ſay,it ſeemeth ſo to mee, this thinke I good. Let vs aſſure our ſelues that all this is nothing worth,but we muſt repaire to the certaintie that is brought vs by our Lord Ieſus Chriſt.

Neuertheleſſe,ſo farre off is the worlde from knowing this, that it ſhould ſeeme they bee all bent to ſpyte God, and haue conſpired to turne their backes vppon him, and to ſhake off all ſubiection, that they may haue libertie to continue in their diſorders, and to ſcape in the meane while vneſpyed with their lewdneſſe. The Iewes are vnexcuſable, according as wee ſee howe Eſ.42.19.20 & 65.10.11. the Prophetes vpbrayde them with their wilfull forſaking of God, ſo as they coulde not excuſe themſelues by ſaying ỹ they had not heard Eſa.55.11. any thing, as the poore Paynims might doe: for God proteſteth that he ſpake not in vaine. And 2.Cor.3.18 now adayes when God ſpeaketh to vs with open mouth, and wee haue him perfectly diſcouered vnto vs by the Goſpell, is it not too great a lewdneſſe that men ſhould runne aſtray after that faſhion? Were there euer any ſuperſtitions more groſſe and more outragious, than are to bee ſeene nowe adayes in the Popedome? It is true that the Iewes medled with the ſuperſtitions of the Heathen, and tooke much filth and vncleanneſſe of them: but if all bee well ſearched, it will bee founde that the Papiſts haue farre exceeded them. For Gods word is as it were, at this day buryed among them. When they treate of fayth, they fetch the points of it from mens inuentions: and the holy ſcripture is in as much reuerence among them as if it were dead, and that all thinges went to hauocke. Loe at what poynt they bee. And if a man ſpeake to them of Gods ſeruice, (as I ſayde) they bee buſie about their owne inuentions. Yea verily, myne intent is good ſay they: and ſo they beare themſelues in hand, that God will ſuffer himſelfe to bee dandled lyke a little babe, and will neuer come to examine any whit of the doctrine of Poperie. Againe if they ſpeake of fayth: exhort they men to reſort to Gods free promiſes? No, but they chalendge all to themſelues. When they take in hand to treate of the office of Ieſus Chriſt, they ouerthrowe the vertue of his death and paſſion, as much as they can. When they treate of their ſaluation: then ſtep forth their owne freeRo.7.17.18 will, their merites, and their ſatiſfactions. But contrariwiſe we ſhould reſort to the mere grace of the holy Ghoſt, acknowledging our ſelues to bee in bondage to ſinne, vntill God deliuer vs from it through his mercie. And thereuppon it commeth that the holy Scripture calleth the Rom.3.22.23.24. forgiueneſſe of ſinnes our righteouſneſſe. That is the point which wee muſt reſort vnto, to know that when wee haue done amiſſe, wee can bring none other amendes or payment for it, than ſuch as wee borrowe of the death and paſſion of our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt. But there is not a word of all this in Poperie. When God is to be prayed vnto, they make their vagaries to their Heeſaintes and Sheeſaintes: & in the meane while Ieſus Chriſt is not knowen to bee as he is, neither is let alone with the office that is giuen him by God his father: but they depoſe him, lyke a ſorte of theeues and traytours that ſeeke nothing elſe but to burie him againe, and to make hauocke of all the glorie that was giuen him by God his Father. After the ſame ſort deale they alſo in all other things. Wee ſee how the Sacramentes are defiled to the vttermoſt. In ſtead of the Supper of our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt, they haue ſet vp that ſame helliſh abhomination of the Maſſe, wherein they ſay that Ieſus Chriſt is ſacrificed, as though he had done nothing alreadie, nor were appointed to be the onely & euerlaſting Prieſt by God his father. Heb.7.24. Wee ſee then that the Papiſts haue ſo dalyed with Gods word wherein he hath reuealed himſelfe: as it ſhould ſeeme that they meant of ſet purpoſe to wype away the knowledge that is in the Goſpell. And therefore wee haue ſo much the more neede to marke well this ſaying. *That the Lord is God, yea euen the onely one God.*

Nowe then, as oft as this word *God* commeth to our minde, let vs aſſure our ſelues that it ſerueth to cut off all toyes that may come in our heades, and all inuentions of men, and all other things whereof we haue not warrant in the holy ſcriptures. For God will haue vs to conſider him in ſuch wiſe, as wee ſnarle not our ſelues in the imaginations and errours of idolatrie. And of a truth, we cannot haue the true God, except wee haue him alone: that is to ſay, without adding any companion vnto him. For as ſoone as we fall to bringing in of vndergoddes, we forſake the liuing God. And why? Bicauſe his will is to bee alone, as he auoweth in another place by his Prophet Eſay ſaying, I am the liuing God (ſaieth the Eſa.42.8. Lord) and I will not giue my glory to any other. Againe we haue ſeene heretofore how he called himſelfe a iealous God. And why was that, but to withdrawe vs from all corruptions, as S. Paule 2.Cor.11.2. affirmeth in the ſecond to the Corinthians? For as ſoone as we be turned aſide from the ſimplicitie of Gods word, it is all one as if a wife ſhould hearken to a bawde that came to whiſper hir in the eare. By and by we be corrupted, and ſo wee commit foule whoredome againſt God, when we falſifie the faith that we haue plighted him in Baptiſme. We caſt away his law, and ſtain al religion, when wee ſwarue neuer ſo little from the pure Religion. Wherefore let vs beare well in minde, that as oft as this word *God* commeth to our rememberance, God muſt be all alone. And if wee accompanie him with any creatures: he forſaketh vs as backſliders, and as folk vnworthy to haue any thing to doe with him, bicauſe wee vouchſafed not to yeelde him his deſerued honour: that is to wit, to take him for our [onely] Lord, but haue vnhallowed that name by imparting the ſame to creatures, or rather to our owne dreames.

And herewithall let vs marke, that it is not ynough for vs to reſerue to the liuing God the tytle of *the onely God*: but all that euer belongeth vnto him muſt alſo abide vnminiſhed and vnappaired. As howe? His meaning is not alonely to be called the onely God: but alſo to be acknowledged to be almightie, and to be our father and Sauiour, which hath all authoritie ouer vs to gouerne vs, in whom wee ought to put our whole truſt, and whom wee ought to call vpon. Thoſe are the chiefe things which wee ought to minde when mention is made of the honoring of the onely one God. Trueth it is that the Papiſts will well ynough ſay, that S.Michael and S. William are not their Gods :but yet for all that they worſhip them, yea euen the ſtockes of them. Although they hope to ſcape by this ſhift, that the images are not the Saintes themſelues whome they pray vnto, but onely rememberances ſet vp there to repreſent them : yet is it expreſſely againſt Gods forbidding. And againe, we ſee that they cannot by any meanes diſcerne the difference how God will bee worſhipped, when they intangle themſelues after that maner with their idols of ſtone and timber, whereby they ſurmiſe themſelues to repreſent their Saints. True it is ẏ they countenance the matter with the termes of ***Doulia*** & ***Latria***, which they themſelues vnderſtand not, ſaying that they ſerue their puppets and yeelde reuerence vnto God : for that is the thing which they meane by thoſe woordes. But ſurely God is much beholden to them, in ẏ they ſhew that they doe but honour him, and in the meane ſeaſon ſerue their idols. Againe, is it not a holy thing to pray vnto God? Yes: for it is ẏ very ſeruice that he requireth, as it is ſaide in the fiftith Pſalme. So then, we ſee that the world doth dally too ſhameleſly with God, in corrupting his ſeruice ſo lewdly, yea and that it is too deteſtable a thing, that men ſhould runne aſtray ſo, after ſo cleare and open reuelation or diſcouerie of thinges, as is contained in the Goſpell. And therefore it behoooueth vs ſo much the more to ſtand to this doctrine, knowing that our Lorde will haue vs tyed wholly to himſelfe alone, ſo as there may be an inuiolable vnion betwixt him & vs. Which thing will come to paſſe, if wee holde our ſelues ſimply within the boundes and liſtes of his word, ſo as we giue no enterance to mens inuentions, nor ſuffer our mindes to wander at rouers, but hearken to the thinges ẏ are contayned in the holy ſcripture, & not only ſay amen to them readily with our mouthes, but alſo ſettle our faith throughly vppon the thinges that are proceeded out of the mouth of our God.

Pſal.50.15.

Now let vs kneele downe in ẏ preſence of our good God, with acknowledgement of our faults, praying him to make vs feele them better than wee haue doone, ſo as wee may knowe more and more wherein wee bee bounde vnto him, and not thinke to diſcharge our ſelues thereof lightly, but bend our ſelues wholly to him and to his ſeruice, not hauing any other intent or deſire than to keepe his holy Lawe. And ſeeing wee bee yet verie farre off from it, ſo that ſtraine wee our ſelues neuer ſo much, wee ſtop in the middes of our waye : let vs flee for ſuccour to the forgiueneſſe of our ſinnes, praying him to vouchſafe to receiue vs to mercie, and to beare with vs in ſuch ſort, as he neuer ceaſſe to guide vs with his holy ſpirit, though wee deſerue to bee vtterly ſhaken off at his hand. And therewithall it may pleaſe him ſo to open our eyes, that wee beholding the brightneſſe of our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt, may bee wholly rauiſhed thereat, to renounce theſe worldly things and our fleſhly affections, which carrie vs awaye : ſo as wee may haue none other deſire than to humble our ſelues vnder him, to the ende that beyng ſtriken downe in our ſelues, wee may bee lifted vp at his hand by his woorde, wayting till it pleaſe him to transfigure vs after his owne image at the latter daye. That it maye pleaſe him to graunt this grace not onely to vs but alſo, &c.

On Saturday the xx. of Iuly. 1555.

The xlvj Sermon which is the ſecond vpon the ſixth Chapter.

4 Hearken O Iſrael &c.

5 Therefore thou ſhalt loue the Lord thy God with all thy heart, with all thy ſoule, and with all thy ſtrength.

6 And theſe woordes which I commaund thee this day, ſhall be in thy heart.

7 Thou ſhalt rehearſe them to thy children, and talke of them when thou art at home in thy houſe, and as thou walkeſt by the way, and when thou lieſt down, and when thou riſeſt vp.

8 And thou ſhalt binde them as a ſigne vpon thy handes, and they ſhall bee as frontlets written betweene thine eyes.

7 Alſo thou ſhalt write them vppon the entries of thy houſe, and vppon thy gates.

I Beganne yeſterday to tell you wherefore Moſes auoweth that *There is but onely one God*: that is to wit, bicauſe mē can neuer giue themſelues to the ſeruing of the true God, vnleſſe they diſcerne him from all things imagined by the world. For euerie man forgeth gods at his owne pleaſure, and the verie fountaine and welſpring of all ſuperſtition and idolatrie, is that men cannot bee contented with the liuing God, but giue heade to their owne fanſies, and thereuppon builde a great ſort of fables to beguile themſelues. Therfore it is requiſit before all other things, to know which is the true God, that wee may holde our ſelues wholly vnto him, and worſhip him ſimply without adding any thing at all to his word. For as ſoone as any thing is mingled thereunto, by and by it is corrupted. And here is expreſſe mẽtion made of *the God of Iſrael*, bicauſe God muſt needes haue manifeſted himſelfe, or elſe wee could neuer haue knowen him. For where are the wings wherewith we ſhould flie to ſo infinite a height, as to comprehẽd the Maieſtie of God? But when it pleaſeth him to reueale himſelfe to vs by his word: it is as though he came downe to acquaint himſelfe with vs: and then doe wee knowe him. And this certaintie of being fully reſolued that we worſhip not a new forged god, or a god that is brought in by men, but the ſame God to whom all praiſe is due: is the verie foundation of all Religion. Herewithall let vs beare in minde, that he will bee worſhipped all alone, not onely by reſeruing to himſelfe the name of God: but alſo by hauing all that is his, that is to wit, all that belongeth to his Maieſtie, and as ye woulde ſay to his office. I ſpeake after this maner, to expreſſe the better, that God hath not reſpect alonely to his being. His will is not that men ſhould onely call him the euerlaſting, or confeſſe him to be the maker of the world: but that they ſhould alſo knowe him to bee almightie, and that it is he to whom the gouernment of vs belongeth, it is he in whom is all vertue, wiſedome, goodneſſe, and righteouſneſſe, it is he to whom wee muſt runne for ſuccour, it is hee in whom we muſt put all our truſt, it is he to whom wee owe all glorie. Yee ſee then how Moſes, in ſhewing that there is but onely one God, meaneth that men ſhould commit themſelues vnto him, knowing that they be in his hand, that they bee maintained by his onely power, that it is he at whoſe hand they muſt looke for ſaluation and all welfare, and finally that it is he in whom they haue their lyfe, moouing and being: and therefore Act.17.28. that it is he whom wee muſt honour, as well Pſal.50.14. 15. with prayer and ſupplications, as alſo by praiſe and thanſgiuing.

And nowe to ſhewe his meaning the better, Moſes addeth, *Thou ſhalt loue the Lorde thy God with all thy heart, with all thy ſoule, and with all thy ſtrength.* In theſe wordes wee ſee the thing that hath bin touched alreadie: that is to wit, that Gods intent is to hold vs wholly to himſelfe, and to poſſeſſe vs in ſuch ſort, as wee ſerue him not by halues, ne wander in the meane while to and fro. Then like as God of his gratious goodneſſe giueth himſelfe to vs: ſo doeth it behooue vs to bee altogether his poſſeſſion and inheritaunce. That is the ſumme of the thinges contained in theſe wordes of Moſes, where he ſpeaketh of the louing of GOD with all our heart, with all our ſoule, and with all our ſtrength. As if he ſhoulde ſay, There is no meane way in this caſe, deceiue not your ſelues by imagining to ſerue God by parcelmeale, and by making any reſtraint from him: for he will keepe his owne right throughout in all points. What is to be done then? You muſt giue your hearts wholly vnto him, ſo as ye reſerue not any peece of it to idoles. For that were a corrupting and a baſtarding of his ſeruice: eyther he muſt haue all whole, or elſe he will haue none at all, accordingly as we ſee how he renounceth the people in Ezechiel, for mingling of ſuperſtitions with his Lawe. Eze.20.39. Goe your wayes (ſaieth he) and ſerue your owne idoles: I will no more of you. He giueth them leaue and caſteth them vp to Satan, telling them that hee liketh not any of all the things which they doe: for he will not bee matched with idoles. What an outrage and blaſphemie is that? Thus then we ſee now the meaning of Moſes.

Now as concerning theſe words, *Soule, Minde, and Strength*: the Iewes did miſunderſtãd them. Their ſaying is, that *Thou ſhalt loue God with all thy ſoule*, is as much to ſay as thou ſhalt not ſpare thy life for the loue of thy God, but thou ſhalt ſet ſo much ſtore by his glorie, that in compariſon thereof thou ſhalt not eſteeme thine owne lyfe, ſo as if neede require that thou ſhouldeſt die to ſhewe the loue which thou beareſt vnto God: thou ſhouldeſt doe it. Againe *Thou ſhalt loue thy God with all thy minde or Heart*, betokeneth with them but as it were a compariſon, ſo as a man ſhoulde preferre GOD aboue all other things. And finally, *Thou ſhalt loue God with all thy ſtrength*, importeth among them, that thou muſt loue him with all thy ſubſtance and with all thy goods, ſo as if the caſe required that thou ſhouldeſt bee impoueriſhed, thou ſhouldeſt rather giue ouer thy worldely goods, than forſake thy God. But this expoſition is too ſtraite laced, and attaineth not to the verie meaning of Moſes. For proofe whereof there needeth nowe no long diſcourſe. For what better expounder of the Lawe is there to bee found, than our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt, by whoſe ſpirit it was giuen? For it was at his hand and by his authoritie, that Moſes receiued the Lawe which wee holde of him. So then, we muſt fetch the expoſition thereof at his mouth, and we muſt receiue it without gainſaying. And for the ſame cauſe doe the three Euangeliſts S. Matthew, in the 22. S. Mark in yͤ 12. Matt.22.37 & Mar.12.30. & Luke.10.27. and S. Luke in the 10. ſet downe this louing of God to be the whole ſumme of the wellkeeping of the lawe. True it is that he addeth, *Thou ſhalt loue thy neighbour as thy ſelfe*. Howbeit, in anſwering he ſaieth, thou ſhalt loue thy God with all thy heart, with all thy ſoule, with all thy minde, and with all thy ſtrength. Our Lord Ieſus Chriſt addeth there one woorde more: not to make a new ſenſe, but to aſſure vs the better of the ſame thing that Moſes meant by the wordes *Soule* and *Heart*. So then he ſetteth downe *Soule, Heart, and Minde*, as if he ſhould ſay, The man that intendeth to keepe Gods Lawe well, muſt yeeld himſelfe wholly and throughly to the obeying and louing of God. Nowe wee ſee that in our ſoules, firſt there is the power of thinking, when wee conceiue thinges to iudge and diſcerne of them. That is the firſt power of the ſoule: namely that vpon the inſight of things, we enter into deliberation and iudgement, and conclude one way or other. Gods will then is to reſtraine all theſe thoughtes to himſelfe. Againe there is the ſoule, which is not onely the life, but alſo the meane betwixt the thoughtes and the heart. For the Heart betokeneth the affections, deſires, & will.

It is one thing to think a thing, & another thing to deſire it, and to ſet a hartie affection vpon it. Ye ſee then that the heart is matched with the thoughtes, to ſhewe that we muſt loue our God with all our mind. And there is the Soule, which is as it were betweene both: as if it were ſayd, that whether wee debate and take counſell of our owne affaires we muſt alwayes begin at the loue of God, and referre all thinges thereunto: or whether wee couet one thing or other in ſeeking our own profite, Gods loue muſt alwais gouerne vs, ſo as al our deſires be as it were reſtreined and bridled vnder it. Yee ſee then that the whole ſoule with all the powers thereof ought to bee throughly poſſeſſed with the loue towardes God. And the word *ſtrength* ſerueth to ſhewe yet better, that God admitteth not any exception, neither may wee reply in this behalfe, and ſay, is my doing of this or that an impeaching of any part of my loue towards God? No no, if thou doe neuer ſo little a thing, & that al thy thoughts tend not to the louing of God, ſo as the loue of God doe guide thee: all is mard, and there is nothing but ſinne in thee & in all thy whole ſoule. For haſt thou any ſtrẽgth or power there, which is not giuen thee from aboue? No. Therefore muſt thou reknowledge it vnto God of whome thou holdeſt it. Now then, ſeeing that our Lord Ieſus Chriſt hath expounded vs this text, wee neede not to make long diſcourſe of it, as I ſayde afore, but onely to holde vs to the authoritie of him which is the very Lawegiuer.

Now remaineth the practiſing of this doctrine, that is to ſay, to knowe how wee ſhould put it in effect and execution. And let vs marke firſt of all, how this onely one text ſheweth vs ſufficiently, that Gods law paſſeth al our abilities, ſo as it is not poſſible for vs to fulfill it, & to diſcharge our ſelues of it, or of the hundreth part of it, as long as wee liue here beneath. For why? doe we knowe God throughly as we ought to doe? No no, wee come farre ſhort of it. Then is it impoſſible for vs to loue him with all our ſtrength and with all our affections: for knowledge goeth before loue. If our knowing of God bee but in part, ſo as wee be wrapped as yet in much darkneſſe: our louing of God muſt alſo be weake lykewiſe. Moreouer wee ſee what the fondneſſe of our minde is: for in ſtead of ſeeking heauenly thinges, wee looke alwayes downeward. And if wee be deſirous but ſo much as to lift vp our head: wee muſt be faine to ſtriue and to goe to it by maine force, and yet wee returne ſtill to our owne nature. How fickle are our deſires? and how fight they one againſt another? So as men are toſſed and turmoyled without ende or meaſure, and haue no reſt at all, but are tormented with vnquietneſſe, of ambition on the one ſide, and of couetouſneſſe on the other. Againe they would faine liue at eaſe and in pleaſure, and they would faine be had in honor and eſtimation. Finally they be combered with fleſhly luſtes and ſuch other lyke thinges. Hereby then it appeareth enough and too much, that wee come farre ſhort of louing God with all our heart, and of giuing our ſelues wholy ouer vnto him, as wee be commaunded here. And ſo let vs marke, that the righteouſneſſe of the Lawe reſpecteth not what men can doe, but what they ought to doe. We be bound to loue our GOD with all our heart, with all our minde, and with all our ſoule. Although we haue no ſuch perfection in vs as to come any thing neere it, yet notwithſtanding wee bee bound vnto it. If any man ſay, How ſo? why ſhould God require more of vs than we be able to performe? we muſt conſider from whẽce the miſchief ſpringeth: namely euen from our owne fault. The originall ſin that is in vs is the cauſe thereof, ſo as we take it by byrth. And is it meet yͭ becauſe we be naughtie and frowarde, therefore God ſhould bee bereft of his ſeruice and loſe his right? No. If a man haue played the vnthrift and waſted away both his owne goods and other mens: ſhall his creditor bee bound to bring him his obligation and to ſay, take thee here thy bond, thou oweſt me nothing? The creditor will at leaſtwiſe keepe ſtill his obligation, and although the vnthrift haue not wherewith to pay: yet ought he to doe homage to his creditor, and to ſtand bound vnto him ſtill, and not to deny him his dette. Now God deſerueth well to bee much more priuiledged than mortall men. Wherefore let vs conſider that we owe him a hundred thowſand fold more than al the debts of gold and ſiluer in the world. So then, Gods righteouſneſſe is an inuiolable thing, ſo that the order of nature ought rather to bee aboliſhed. Now then if men bee lewde and froward, doth it follow therefore, that they ſhould pluck the ſonne out of the skie, or make the earth to bee confounded? True it is that there happen many confuſions by reaſon of our ſinnes, inſomuch that our Lorde ſendeth both raine, and thunder, hayles, and tempeſtes, and ſuch other like thinges: but yet for all that, the order of nature continueth vnappayred after ſuch turmoyling. Therefore wee muſt vnderſtande, that although wee bee lewde, and there is nothing but vnrighteouſneſſe and naughtineſſe in vs: Yet muſt Gods iuſtice and righte continue perfecte and vnappayred as in reſpecte of the commaundementes: and we muſt needes ſtoope to them, and ſuffer our ſelues to bee condemned for not diſcharging our dueties. Do we then heare this ſumme of the Law, *Thou ſhalt loue the Lord thy God with al thy hearte, with all thy ſoule, with all thy minde, and with all thy ſtrength*? Let it make vs conclude that we be all damned and accurſed before God, and that there is none other ſhifte for vs, but to flee to his mercie: aad that we bee not condemned for any one ſinne, or for two or three: but yͤ God findeth vs guiltie in al pointes & al reſpects. And for proofe therof, let vs examine wel yͤ beſt works that we can haue done in all our life: and there wil be ſtil ſome fancie or other to turn vs away, ſo as we ſhal not goe on ſo freely towardes God, but yͭ there wil be ſome temptatiõ mingled therwith, or ſom toy to pluck vs back, & the diuel ſhal haue endeuered to coole vs. And when it fareth ſo wͭ vs, it is a plaine corruption to infect yͤ thing yͭ ſhold be good and commendable in our works.

Ye ſee then that wee take not any deliberation, any counſel, or any deſire in our whole life, but the curſe of God is with vs and vpon our heads. Were this well printed in our heartes: all glorying to the worldeward ſhould bee beaten downe in vs, and there would be no more ſo much meriting, wherewith the Papiſts are ſo bewitched, that (to their owne ſeeming) they may enter into account before GOD. Alas, they ſhoulde then ſee that they be far off from their account. Howebeit foraſmuch as the Diuell hath blinded them with ſuch pride: let vs on our ſide make our commoditie of this text.

And ſith wee heare that God requireth that we ſhould loue him perfectly with all our heart, with all our minde, and with al our ſoule: let vs be of opinion that hee condemneth vs vtterly, vntil hee haue acquit vs of his owne infinite goodneſſe. But yet for all this, we muſt plucke vp our hearts and quicken vp our ſpirites, ſith wee ſee that our Lorde prouoketh vs after that faſhion. For what maketh vs ſo cold and negligent? It is our bearing of our ſelues in hande that wee bee diſcharged. The cauſe therefore why men doe flatter themſelues, is for ẏ they take themſelues to be perfect, when they haue brought ſome petie trifles vnto God. When we bee at that point, let vs bethinke vs how it is ſaid here, Thou ſhalt loue God with all thy heart. If it happen that we be not very diſordered in our life, but that wee haue praied vnto God at our vpriſing in ẏ morning, wee haue done no man wrong all the day long, we haue not played the whoremaſters, nor the drunkardes, wee haue not hurt any of our neighbors, we haue not conſpyred any euil, we haue not blaſphemed God, but wee haue occupied our ſelues about ſome good matters, inſomuch as wee haue indeuoured to doe good to ſuch as were in neceſſitie, and laboured to apply our ſelues to the things that God commandeth, and haue done them ſome ſeruice which had neede thereof: when night commeth, we thinke our ſelues to be litle Angels, and that God hath no more to demaund of vs. That is the cauſe that cooleth vs, and why we ſerue not GOD ſo earneſtly as were requiſite. For wee beare our ſelues in hand, that wee bee perfect, and we bee contented with our ſelues, and we need nothing elſe to content vs withall, for we be too much inclined to like well of our ſelues. But behold here is wherwith to waken vs frō ſuch follie, namely, Thou ſhalt loue ẏ Lord thy God. And after what manner? after our owne meaſure? No no: but ẇ al our heart, ẇ al our ſoule, & with al our ſtrēgth. And therefore let vs looke that wee ſearche well our thoughtes: and in examining of our liues, let vs conſider what a number of vaine and fonde fancies haue paſſed vs. And if it be alleaged, yea but I yelded not to them: very well, diddeſt thou not conceiue any ſuch thought? Will not thy God poſſeſſe thy whole ſoule? Shal ẏ diuel beare rule ouer thy thoughts, & God in ẏ meane while haue nothing to doe ẇ thē? And ſeeing he hath giuen thee thoſe thoughtes, if thou fall to mingling of thē ẇ any corruptiō, whence procedeth ẏ, but frō ẏ affection of our mindes? Therefore if wee were well fraughted aforehand with the loue of God, ſhould not all the powers of our ſoules be brought vnder his obedience? Yes. So then, our forging of ſo many fond imaginations, our letting of our deſires and delightes looſe to followe this and that, and our forgetting of God in the meane while, or rather our excluding of him from bearing any ſway at all in vs, doth prooue ſufficiently that the true loue of God is not receiued into our ſoules. Alas, doth it not appeare that we be yet farre off from diſcharging the hundreth part of our duetie?

Beſides this foreſayd condēning of our ſelues, wee muſt alſo quicken vp our ſelues, and ſay, what doeſt thou wretched creature? doeſt thou giue thy ſelfe to doe well ſith god exhorteth thee ſo earneſtly? In the meanwhile thou ſeeſt ẏ thou haſt much adoe euen to begin. Thus ye ſee how wee ought to beare this text in minde, that it may inflame vs with the loue of God, ſeeing we be yet ſo farre off from the perfection which hee requireth and commaundeth. Againe let vs marke well, that our Lordes vppening of all the abilities of our ſoule here, is to make vs looke better to the good turnes that he hath done vs, to yeelde him homage for the ſame, and to apply them to his honor. For what a thing is it that wee haue the gift of conſulting, the choyce of diſcerning betweene good and euill, and the abilitie to cōceiue things ſo as we can ſay we wil doe this or that? Lo here an excellent gift wherwith wee be indued. Now then ſeeing wee haue will to chooſe, ſo as wee can ſay, go to, I finde this to bee good: and againe, ſeeing wee haue a ſoule which beareth Gods image printed in it, and ſeeing we haue ſo many goodly vertues, wherethrough wee excell all other creatures: ought not the conſideration thereof to prouoke vs the more to ſerue God, and to honour him with thoſe ſo precious giftes which hee hath put in vs? Yes: and therefore let vs learne, that whē our thoughtes are ſet vppon vaine and wicked thinges, and when our deſires runne at rouers and rebell againſt God: we vnhallowe ſo holy a treaſure, as wee deſerue well to bee vtterly caſt vp at Gods hand, becauſe of our vnthākfulneſſe. Now then whereas Moſes ſpeaketh here of the thoughts and the will: and our Lord Ieſus Chriſt addeth one word more, that is to wit, minde, Soule, and will: let vs vnderſtand that hereby we be warned, that if we ſubmit not our ſelues wholy vnto God, it happeneth for want of conſidering the good thinges that hee hath beſtowed vppon vs. For if wee feele him liberall, as hee ſheweth himſelfe towardes vs: ſurely it wil drawe vs wholy vnto him So then let vs conſider, that Gods making of vs ſo excellent as to haue his image printed in vs, was not to any other end, thā ẏ we ſhould do him homage for them, & by that meane be ẏ more moued to loue him, & to keepe our ſelues well from defiling ſo precious gifts, as reaſon, will, diſcretion, & all ẏ reſt of the powers of our ſoules which he hath giuē vs. Thus ye ſe in effect what we haue to remēber vpon this place.

But yet herewithall wee muſt marke alſo the thing that I haue tolde you heretofore: that is to wit, that God wil not be ſerued by conſtraint, but of free loue. He could ſay, Thou ſhalt honour Deut.13. thy God, thou ſhalt obey thy God, thou ſhalt feare thy G O D: and ſo hee doeth in other textes, and it is good reaſon that it ſhould be ſo: but he ſpeaketh expreſſely of loue. And why? To ſhewe that if our ſeruing of him bee by conſtreint, ſo as wee goe to it againſt our wils: though wee honor him neuer ſo much, and doe all that is poſſible to glorify his name: yet if the ſame proceede not of loue, ſo as our heart yeeld vnto him freely and without gaineſaying: hee vtterly diſaloweth it, and ſuch ſeruice is not acceptable vnto him, for he loueth him that giueth with a free will and pure affection, as ſayth 2.Cor.9.7. Saint Paul treating of Almesdeedes. Seeing then that God loueth him which giueth with a chearefull courage: thereby hee ſheweth that if a man ſhould ſpend all his goods, yet ſhould it not boote him at al as to Godward, vnleſſe hee haue a delight in well doing. And why? Becauſe God hath commaunded it, and wee ought aboue all thinges to deſire that hee be glorifyed, that his righteouſneſſe bee obeyed, that he bee exalted at our handes, that hee reigne ouer vs, and that we be his people in very deede. Ye ſee then that the chiefe ioy which wee ſhould haue to incline vs to doe well, is a hartie and free affection. And that is the cauſe why the worde *Loue* was playnely ſet downe in this text.

Notwithſtanding, God will not haue vs to loue him as our fellowe: but hee will haue vs to loue him, honor him, and ſerue him as our God. And therefore let vs marke well, that if wee will obſerue Gods lawe as we ought to doe: we muſt not conſider him alonly in the degree of a maiſter, thereby to yeelde him reuerence: but wee muſt alſo ſet before vs the title of father, and aſſure our ſelues that Gods intent is to win vs to him by gentleneſſe, that our heart may bee as it were tyed vnto him, according to this ſaying Mal.1.6. of his by his prophet, If I be your maiſter, where is my feare? and if I be your father, where is my loue? In deede he ſetteth downe honor in that place, to betoken that a ſeruant ought to feare his maiſter: but yet immediatly after hee ſetteth downe the worde Loue alſo, of purpoſe to ſhewe what honour the childe yeeldeth to his father.

And therefore let vs remember, that the firſt point of ſeruing God aright, is to bee led vnto him, yea and to be led thither vpō knowledge of this worde Sauiour, ſo as we couet aboue all things to be ſo knit vnto him, as all our ioy, contentation and reſt bee there, that by that meane we may no more be giuen to the thinges that are contrarie to his righteouſneſſe. And that is the cauſe why wee ſay, that we muſt firſt know Gods grace and goodneſſe, before we can ſerue him. For as for ſuch as ſerue God for feare of being damned, not knowing that hee will bee their ſauiour: what doe they? They ſeeme to inforce themſelues greatly foreward: but in deede they drawe cleane backe. Though they breake both their armes and their legges, yet are they neuer the forewarder. And for that cauſe is it ſayde in the hundred and thirtith pſalme, Pſal.130.7. Becauſe the Lord hath bin mercifull, and men haue found him gentle and gratious: therefore is hee feared and dreaded. In deede the world thinketh to ſerue G O D well enough, without knowing him, and wee ſee that the Papiſtes doe this and that vpon ſuch opinion. But what for that? In the meane while they haue no truſt in God, they neuer knewe his will nor his louing kindeneſſe: and therefore are they alwayes in terror and vnquietneſſe.

True it is that they yeelde ſome outward ſeruice vnto God: but all that euer they doe is not woorth a pin, inſomuch that God reiectes euen their keeping of the Lawe: for wee muſt be led by loue and by a franke and free goodwill, as I ſayd afore. And how may that bee done? Euen by knowing God to be our father and Sauiour, as I alledged out of the text of malachie, Pſal.130.7. & 131.24. and as is yet better expreſſed in this verſe of the pſalme, that wee muſt firſt know Gods mercy, and reſt thereupon, or elſe wee can neuer feare him, and come neere him to ſerue him. That is the true & plaine meaning of this text, and ſo muſt wee apply it.

Moſes hauing ſpoken after that faſhion, addeth now, that the Lawe muſt bee ſo deare vnto vs, as to take it for our chiefe treaſure. And foraſmuch as wee bee too much ſubiect to the ſeeking of the corruptible thinges of this world, and forget God out of hand, and withdrawe our ſelues too farre from him: hee ſayth, *that men muſt haue Gods lawe continually in their ſight, and make as it were a Headroll thereof,* as if a woman were attyred after the auncient maner, with borders on her head, bracelets on her armes: or as if a man ſhould make borders of thē about his houſe, or ingrauers vppon the doores of his houſe, ſo as Gods glorie might be euery where. And whereas hee ſpeaketh heere of frontlets and bracelets, and of painting and ingrauing of Gods lawe vpon doore poſtes: it is to ſhewe that whereas men giue themſelues to vaine glory in decking and attyring of themſelues, and the ſame turneth them away from God: they muſt make all their deckinges of Gods Lawe: that muſt bee their Iewels. Like as if a man or a woman haue a coſtly Iewell vpon their finger, and take pleaſure therein: in ſteade thereof they ſhoulde haue Gods Lawe continually before their eyes, ſo as a man ſhould no ſooner looke vpon himſelfe, no though it were but vpon his nayles, but it ſhoulde come to his minde to thinke, Thou haſt a maker who faſhioned thee, and whoſe will it is that thou ſhouldeſt ſerue him by yeelding thy ſelfe wholly to his obedience. Although thou bee a ſillie vnprofitable creature: yet will thy God bee glorified in thee. Thus yee ſee howe we muſt make all our deckinges of Gods Lawe. Againe, in ſtead of the beautifying of houſes, with thinges of goodly ſhewe and furniture, to the ende it may bee ſaide, this is the houſe of ſome man of eſtimation: the Lawe of God muſt be written vpon it. Now wee ſee what the meaning of Moſes was.

But by the way we haue here to bewaile yͤ corruption of mankinde. For it is manifeſt, that euen of the holyeſt thinges in the world, men take occaſion to mocke God, and to marre all, and to turne them to a contrary ende. As how? This ſaying, *Hearken O Iſraell, the Lorde thy God is one onely God*, is a notable ſaying, and worthie to be had in remembrance aboue all others. For it ſerueth to magnify the liuing G O D, that hee might bee diſcerned from the idols that haue bin forged, to the ende that our religion might be certeine and infallible. Then is it as excellent a leſſon, as a man ſhall reade any: and yet what haue the Iewes which were Gods people fared the better for it? They haue turned it into a charme and ſorcerie, imagining ỳ the ſpeaking of thoſe words would make a coniuration, lyke to the *Agnus Dei* in poperie, and to ſuch other geugawes as the papiſts hang about their necks, in the which *Agnus Dei* they write ỳ beginning of Saint Iohns Goſpell and I wote not what els, wherewith they beare themſelues in hand that they can coniure both God and the diuill. As much haue the Iewes done with this leſſon: inſomuch that they haue abuſed euen the very letters of it. There is one letter (ſay they) which importeth foure, betokening that God is Lorde of the fowre partes of the worlde. They haue taken otherſome according to their numbers and ciphers, to ſignify thinges which they haue deuiſed of their owne brayne. And in the meane while they had no reuerence to God, but would that hee ſhould haue no more power nor authoritie ouer them. And that doe they ſhewe full well, not onely by their deſpiſing, ſhunning, & reiecting of Ieſus Chriſt, who ought to haue reigned ouer them: but alſo by their crucifying of him in deſpite of God, and by their turning away from the ſaluation that had bin promiſed them. And euen as much haue they done with this text. For they haue turned to pride and ambition the thing that is ſayd here, as wee ſee Matt.32.5. how our Lord Ieſus Chriſt in the Goſpell vpbraideth the Scribes and Phariſies with their large gardes, inſomuch that if the common people had any narrowe garde of wryting, wherein the commaundements were ſet downe, theſe great Rabbies (to the intent to become holyer than other men,) had gardes of an handbredth vppon their garments, wherein Gods lawe was written in great letters, that it might be ſeene a great way off. O, thoſe were holy perſons, for they had Gods lawe written in great letters, whereas the common people had it in ſmall. They knew the lawe much better, and therefore was God much magnifyed in them. Nay, contrariwiſe, ſuch vaine bragging was a flatte mocking of God: but yet it was the faſhion of all men, as I haue declared already. And by this which befell the Iewes, let vs take vnderſtanding and inſtruction, that the ſame muſt ſerue vs to behold that we bee ſo froward, that whereas God laboreth to drawe vs familiarly vnto him, we deſpiſe it, and in ſtead of profiting our ſelues by the doctrine that is ſet before vs, wee turne it vnto laughter, wee vnhalowe it lyke Churchrobbers, and we turne quite and cleane contrarie to his meaning, ſo as it had bin better for vs neuer to haue heard one worde of his mouth. Thus yee ſee what wee haue to marke.

But now herewithall we muſt come to the meaning of Moſes, which I haue touched ſhortly already. *Remember theſe wordes* ſayth hee. And howe? *By talking and conferring of them in thy houſe, and as thou goeſt abroad.* Here wee ſee well how our Lordes meaning was not to be honored with gardes of garmentes and ſuch other thinges, but to haue his lawe printed in his peoples heartes, and to haue it kept alwayes freſh in remembrance. Therefore let vs conſider, that whereas wee haue ſo much needeleſſe talke our Lord will haue his people exerciſed in talking and conferring vppon his lawe, whether it bee in reſting, or in iourneying, or when they be at home in their howſes. If wee minded this warning well, ſurely it would be a bridle to reine vs backe and to withdrawe vs from the vnprofitable talke whereunto wee bee ſo much giuen. For wee can ſpend, I ſay not ſome forenoone, but the whole day continually in light talke: but if wee ſpeake but two or three wordes of God, by and by wee bee wearie and it greeueth vs. Yet notwithſtanding, this talking of him is not the chiefe poynt. For wee muſt come to this ſaying of the pſalme, I beleeue, and therfore will I ſpeake. Pſal.116.10 For oftentimes and moſt commonly, they that haue Gods lawe in their mouth and at their tongues end, haue it not at all in their heart and affection. Therefore wee muſt ſpeake of Gods lawe, much more with our heartes than with our mouthes. But yet muſt we talke of it alſo, to edify our neighbors, that the father may teach his children and the maiſter his ſeruantes, to ſerue God. That is the cauſe why our Lord commaundeth men to talk of his Lawe: not to diſcharge themſelues lightly of it, as though the whole matter lay in ſpeaking of it: but to quicken vp and correct our vnluſtineſſe, ſo as euery man help foreward his neighbor, and drawe him with him, and the fathers and maiſters in the meane while be careful to teach their children and ſeruants, as I ſayd afore. That is Moſeſes ſimple meaning when he ſpeaketh here of talking either at home or abroad: namely that mens talke muſt alwayes be of Gods Lawe.

Afterward here inſueth, *thou ſhalt muſe vpon it in thy heart*. Herein wee ſee how our Lord rebuketh vs, and ſheweth vs how fickle headed we bee, inſomuch that if wee be not helde faſt by diuers meanes, wee forget God his lawe out of hand. For what is the cauſe that he ſetteth as it were frontlets here before our eyes? Wherefore is it that hee will haue vs to weare as it were Tablets, Ringes, and Bracelets: but for that wheras we bee woont to gaſe chiefly at ſuch thinges, and to make a ſhewing of them, he will haue his own law to be ſet in them? Now the excellenteſt part of man is his face and his eyes: and our Lorde wil haue his lawe to be there. Againe he will haue it vppon our handes: and we cannot doe any thing, but our handes muſt needs goe foremoſt ſtill in it. Now our Lordes will is that wee ſhould not be able to ſtirre one finger, but we ſhould be put in minde of his law by it. Hereby he ſheweth vs (as I ſayde afore) that if wee haue not good ſtore of bridles, we ſhall play the looſe coltes: and if the lawe be not brought to our minde, and the remembrance thereof refreſhed by many meanes: we wil ſoone haue forgotten it. Wee neede no more but to cloſe our eye, and the thinges that wee had learned and which had bin tolde vs and retold vs afore, are ſtreightways out of our thought. Let vs vnderſtand therefore that our Lord blameth and condemneth vs in this text, for being ſo cuſtomably carried too and fro, and that hee muſt bee fayne to quicken vs vp, and to giue vs ſo many helps, if hee will enioy vs and haue vs to obeye hym. That is one thing which wee haue to marke vpon this text.

Beſides this let vs marke alſo, that our Lord could not better haue taūted the vanities wherunto men and women are giuen in all their pretie toyes and trifles, in attyring and decking themſelues with gardes, imbroyderies, and borders and ſuch other lyke thinges: God (I ſay) could not haue skorned ſuch vanities better, thā by telling vs that in the meane while wee forget the chiefeſt poynt of all, which is the minding of his lawe which wee forget eaſily, to occupy our ſelues about vaine and vnprofitable thinges. And this is ſpoken chiefly to women, becauſe they giue thēſelues ouer curiouſly to theſe nice attires and deckings. For if they conſidered that they ſhoulde apply themſelues to the minding of Gods lawe, they would not be ſo much occupied in decking or rather in diſguiſing of themſelues: but they would rather conſider which is the true decking of faithfull women: that is to wit, to feare God, to liue honeſtly, mildely, chaſtely, and ſoberly, to gouerne well their houſholdes, and to occupy themſelues in bringing vp of their children. This is a beautifull attyre, and ſuch a one as is precious in Gods ſight, as Saint Peter termeth it. 1.Pet.3.3.4 So then let vs marke, that whereas the worldlinges doe decke and diſguiſe themſelues, and make ſo many deuiſes to pleaſe and allure one another: we muſt beware that wee take the true decking which wil make vs acceptable before God: that is to wit, that wee beare his Lawe in minde, and can glory that wee haue a God which guideth and gouerneth vs accordingly as it hath pleaſed him to receiue vs for his people, and to giue vs his word to rule our liues by.

Now let vs kneele downe in the preſence of our good God with acknowledgement of our faultes, praying him to make vs ſo to feele them, as we may learn to miſlyke thē more and more, and to flee for refuge to his mercie, being vtterly voyde of all truſt in any ſtrength of our owne: And yet notwithſtanding that wee may not leaue to inforce our ſelues, ſo as we may be the more giuen to his ſeruice, knowing that we bee not yet come to perfection by a great way, no nor yet to the midde way thereof: and therefore that theſe warnings which hee giueth vs may inflame vs more and more to yeelde him prayſe al our life long, by acknowledging the benefites which hee hath beſtowed vppon vs, and the nobilitie and worthineſſe which hee hath giuen vs aboue all creatures, that we may learne thereby to withdrawe our ſelues from all the vaine and tranſitorie thinges of this world, and to ſeeke the ſpirituall and heauenly thinges, to the intent that being knit vnto our God, wee may not onely withſtand all worldly temptations, but alſo drawe our neighbors from the ſame by our example. That it may pleaſe him to grāt this grace not only to vs but alſo to al.&c.

On Wednesday the xxiiij. of Iuly. 1555.

The xlvij. Sermon, which is the third vpon the ſixt Chapter.

10 And when the Lord thy God ſhal haue brought thee into the land, which he ſware to thy fathers Abraham, Iſaac, and Iacob, to giue thee great and goodly Cities which thou buildedſt not:

11 And houſes full of all maner of goods which thou filledſt not: and welles which thou diggedſt not: and vineyardes and Oliuegardens which thou plantedſt not: and thou ſhall haue eaten and filled thy ſelfe:

12 Then beware, leaſt peraduenture thou forget the Lord which brought thee out of the land of Egypt, from the houſe of bondage.

13 Thou ſhalt feare the Lorde thy GOD, and ſerue him, and ſweare by his name.

WE haue ſeene how it was Gods wil that his law ſhould alwayes bee before his peoples eyes, and that the remembraunce thereof ſhould bee renewed by all meanes. For this cauſe hee commaunded them to ſet gardes vppon their garments, and to wryte the ſentences of the Lawe therein, and to weare them in ſtead of bracelets, and other ornaments, and to haue thē in their cappes and in the reſt of their apparell, and to ingraue them vpon the poſtes of their houſes. All this rehearſall tended to this ende, that becauſe men are too forgetfull of GODS Lawe, they muſt haue certeine helpes and meanes to put them in minde thereof: and ſpecially that whereas the children of this worlde are curious in decking themſelues, and in making themſelues braue to the eye, and giue themſelues to pompe when they bee rich: in ſtead thereof GOD woulde that his faithfull ones ſhoulde decke them ſelues with holineſſe of lyfe. For it is not enough for them to beare ſkroules of the lawe aboute them vnleſſe all of it be referred to the right end.

Now we muſt alſo cal to minde what hath bin touched afore: namely that if we were as wel inclined to thinke vppon God and vppon the doctrine which hee ſetteth forth vnto vs, as were requiſite: we ſhould not neede any other helpes. Therefore it is a token that wee bee full of vanities, and that our wittes wander too and fro, and that it is very harde for vs to ſettle our ſelues vpon God.

But yet notwithſtanding wee ſhall bee neuer the more excuſed for all that. Seeing then that wee be eaſily led away after our owne follies, and there are a great number of temptations in this world to bleare our eyes withal, and to wipe Gods law out of our hearts and mindes: it ſtandeth vs in hand to take the more payne in the thing that is commaunded vs here, namely that wee make a continual exerciſe of returning vnto God, ſo as it be our whole ſtudie, and that whereas wee ſee the vnbeleuers caryed away in their owne follies, wee ſeeke vnto God, to ſettle our ſelues vppon him, and to referre all our thoughtes and deſires vnto him, ſo that euen in making mirth wee haue him before our eyes, and in our remembrance, to the end he may be glorifyed in the thinges that wee take pleaſure in.

And now Moſes addeth, *that when the people ſhall bee come into the land that was promiſed them, & inioy the goods that are there:* (for we know it was a fruitful & fat land:) they muſt beware that they forget not him to whome they were beholden for all thinges, but rather honor and ſerue him, and ſhewe themſelues to holde all things of him who is their God. Now at the firſt ſight it might ſeeme ſuperfluous to warne the people that they ſhould not forget the Lord their God, after they had poſſeſſed the land that was giuen them to inherite. For is it poſſible ẏ a people which hath bin guided by the hand of God, and ſeene ſo many miracles, ſhould turne away, yea and bee ſo blinded, as to bee vnmindefull of him to whome they were ſo much bound? That were againſt nature. But what? The vnthankfulneſſe of men is ſo great, that notwithſtanding all the benefites which they haue receiued at Gods hand, yet they ceaſe not to defy him, or at leaſtwiſe to ſhew that they haue no further care of ẏ thinges that were tolde them. True it is that here Moſes ſpeaketh to the people of Iſraell. But yet in that people hee ſetteth vs forth a lookingglaſſe, wherein to ſhewe vs our frowardneſſe in that we cannot finde in our heartes to doe homage to God for all his benefites, but that all that euer hee beſtoweth vpon vs is loſt, becauſe it is miſbeſtowed, vnleſſe wee be exhorted and pricked foreward to doe our duetie better. Therefore let vs not thinke that this doctrine was written for the Iewes onely: but let vs rather vnderſtand that it is directed vnto vs alſo.

Howbeit, firſt of all wee muſt marke what Moſes meant: and afterward the doctrine conteyned therein muſt bee applyed to the inſtruction of our ſelues. *When thou art come* (ſaith hee) *into the land which the Lord thy God promiſed to thy fathers Abraham, Iſaac, and Iacob.* Moſes ſpeaketh expreſſely of Gods promiſe, to the intent that the people might bee throughly perſwaded, that their going into that land was not by haphaſard, nor their winning of ſo many victories againſt their enemies was by good fortune (as they terme it) or by their owne ſtrength and pollicie: but that it was wrought by Gods owne hand, and all came of his power. True it is that the wonders which were ſhewed at that time, were ſufficient enough to haue made them beleeue, ſo as they needed not to haue ſought any further.

When the people ſawe Gods ſcourges vppon the Egyptians, was it not a ſure recorde of the diuine and heauenly power which ſhewed it ſelfe there? Againe, whereas they paſſed the red ſea, whereas they were guided with a clowd by day and with a fire by night, whereas they were fed with manna from heauen, and whereas they ſawe the clowd vpon the tabernacle which was a token of Gods preſence & maieſtie: ſhould they not haue concluded that God bare rule ouer them and ſhewed himſelfe to be their guide? yes: and yet for all that, Moſes beholding the hardheartedneſſe of the people, thought it not enough to tell them of the thinges which were ſeene at that time, but alſo alledged the promiſe that had beene made fowre hundred yeeres afore.

Behold (ſayth hee,) the Lorde thy GOD will bring thee into the land of Chanaan. If thou aske what proofe thou haſt that it is Gods hand: thou needeſt no long diſputing of the matter, thou knoweſt what promiſe was made thereof. This heritage thẽ was aſſigned vnto you aforehand by the free goodneſſe of your God, euen before you were borne. If God had giuen this land ſimply to the people of Iſraell without promiſing of it before: it had bin ſomewhat the darkeſomer.

But ſeeing that GOD made an agreement and as it were a ſolemne league with Abraham, ſaying, this is the ſigne that I enter into couenant with thee and with thine ofſpring this day, namely that thou ſhalt inherite this land: howbeit, that ſhall not bee preſently, but thou thy ſelfe muſt liue and dye there as a ſtraunger, and alſo they that come of thee and their ofſpring lykewiſe, muſt bee ſoiourners in a ſtraunge lande, and

Gen,13.15.

bee there vexed and greeued with continuall tyrannie: neuertheleſſe they ſhall returne thence at the end of foure hundred yeeres, and then will I performe my promiſe: Doth it not appeare by theſe ſayinges, that God wrought in that behalfe? Should any further proofe be ſought therof? may not euen blinde folkes feele it with their hands? We ſee then for what purpoſe Moſes alledgeth here yͤ promiſe yͭ had bin made to Abraham, Iſaac, & Iacob: yea and Gods rehearſing of his promiſe againe, was a larger proofe thereof, ſo as the thing became the better knowen and of more authoritie. In deede the people are alſo put in minde therewithall, that this inheritance Pſal.44.4. befell them not by their owne policie, nor for any worthyneſſe that was in themſelues, nor was conquered by their own power or ſtrength, but was giuen them freely of God, ſo as it behoued them to acknowledge that they had receiued it, and that their poſſeſſing of it was not as though they had obteined it by their owne power. The Lord (ſayth hee) promiſed you this land. At what time? when none of them was yet borne or bred. Then coulde they not haue earned or deſerued aught. And therfore it behoued them to acknowlege that Gods onely free gift was the cauſe of it, and that they obteyned not any thing but through his freebeſtowed mercie, becauſe it pleaſed him ſo to doe. For men will neuer ſufficiently perceiue themſelues bound vnto God, vntill they bee vtterly bereft of all their merites and that it bee ſhewed them that they haue not any thing of their owne to bring, but that it is God which doth all, not of duetie, but of good will. Men muſt bee fully perſwaded of that, or elſe they will neuer duely perceiue themſelues to bee bound vnto God.

And whereas Moſes ſpeaketh afterward of the great and goodly Cities, of howſes full of gooddes, of vineyardes, oliuegardens, and of all other commodities: it is to make the people to vnderſtand the better, that God delt not nigardly with them, but had powred forth his treſures, to the intent that they ſhould be the more prouoked to ſerue him. And that is another point well worthie to bee marked. For ſo long as God dealeth with vs but after the ordinarie mañer, wee will not perceiue that he is willing to bee our father, becauſe wee conſider but the order of nature and ſtand muſing therupon. That then was the cauſe why God voutſafed to adde the full meaſure of all liberalitie, by handling his people as is ſhewed here, ſo as hee gaue them not a meane land, that was neither barrein nor abundant, of which ſort ſome are to bee found: but hee gaue them faire and ſtrong cities, houſes throughly furniſhed, and groundes throughly manured. Seeing it is ſo: the people ought to haue bin the more prouoked to acknowledge, that ſeeing God had ſhewed himſelfe ſo bountifull, it became not them to fall a ſleepe, but to knowe him to whom they were ſo greatly bound. And it is ſayd expreſſely heere, *that the people ſhould poſſeſſe the thinges which they had not made, or gotten to themſelues*. There is not any thing of thine owne labor, ſayth hee. Diddeſt thou build the houſes wherein thou dwelleſt or ſhalt dwel? (For hee ſpeaketh here of the time to come.) When yee come into the land, yee ſhall finde fayre houſes, and that of other mens building: ye ſhall finde all maner of houſholde ſtuffe and neceſſaries ready made: yee ſhall finde vineyardes and Oliuegardens throughly planted: ye ſhall want nothing: yee ſhall finde welles ready digged: for that land had not water at will. We know what payne and diſtreſſe the holy fathers were driuen vnto, onely to haue water for themſelues and their cattell, namely Gen.21.25. & 26.19. 20.21.22. 32. how they were driuen from place to place, yea and that not for any pretious thinges, but when they digged ſome poore pitte, their neighbors came and draue them from it. Not without cauſe therefore is here expreſſe mention made of pittes or welles, to ſhewe that the people ſhould finde all commodities there, without the putting too of one finger to take any paynes for them.

And therefore hee addeth, *take good heede that thou forget not the Lord thy God when thou art full*. This is the chiefe matter which we haue to wey. For Moſes doth vs to vnderſtand, that mē are a kin to reſtie horſes: if they be ouerpampered, they fall to kicking, and will not be handled nor ordered any more: and this ſimilitude is ſet downe more expreſſely in the two and thirtith chapter. Deut.32.15 But in this place hee ſheweth playnely, that ouermuch eaſe is the cauſe of wilfull ſtubbornneſſe: ſo that if God hath once pampered vs, wee forget him, and play the drunkardes ſo as we cannot order our ſelues in ſuch wiſe in the inioying of the benefites which hee beſtoweth vppon vs, as to yeelde him thāks for them and to ſerue him the more effectually, but contrariwiſe we deuoure them vp with ſuch greedineſſe and exceſſe, as our nature becommeth vtterly brutiſh, and God hath no more authoritie ouer vs, but wee beare our ſelues in hand that wee could well enough forbeare him. Yee ſee then that men become brutiſh through pleaſures and abundance of wealth. And that is the thing which Moſes hath noted here, in ſaying: *take good heede that thou forget not the Lorde God when thou art full*.

Finally hee concludeth, that wee *muſt feare God, and honor him, and take him for our GOD*, which thing he betokeneth by this word *Sweare*. For wheras yͤ people are commanded to ſweare by the name of God, as wee ſhall ſee more fully heareafter: it ſerueth to ſhewe how it was his wil that they ſhould kepe the Religion that was giuen them by the lawe, and not mingle it with any idolatrie, ſo as they might throughly proteſt that they had not any moe Gods than that one which had ſhewed himſelfe by his lawe and word. That is the effect of the matter which is conteined here. In deede the land of Chanaan which had bin promiſed to the fathers of olde time, and giuen to the people of Iſraell by ſo many miracles, had more to be conſidered in it, than haue the countryes wherein the faithfull dwell at this day. For wee bee not ſetled in them by the mightie and miraculous hand of God, as it ſhewed it ſelfe in thoſe dayes. But yet for al that wee muſt come backe to this poynt, that none of vs commeth into this worlde by his owne power, and that our dwelling in it is the ſingular benefite of God. For there ſhould bee no earth at all, if God liſted not to aſſigne it vnto men.

It is for our ſakes that the ſeas & waters withholde themſelues: or elſe they would ouerflowe and drowne the whole earth. And therefore although there were no more but the order of nature, it were a miracle great enough to ſhewe vs that God voutſafeth to nouriſh vs here. We Deut.32.8. know what is ſayd in another text which we ſhall ſee hereafter: that is to wit, that God did ſpred out his meetelines ouer all the nations of the world, ſo as hee deuided the countries and did ſet the boundes of them. Then let vs vnderſtand, that wee cannot bee in any nooke or corner of the world, without Gods mainteyning of vs there, nor haue any place to dwell in, which is not giuen vs of his free fauour. And as the land of Chanaan was dedicated to the ſeruice of God at that time: ſo is the whole world conſecrated thereunto at this day. For it is ſayde that our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt is a king, and that Pſal.2,6,8. hee hath inlarged his dominion from the one ende of the worlde to the other. Wherefore let vs vnderſtand, that our Lordes ſetting of vs here and his mainteyning of vs here, is to receiue ſuch prayſe at our handes as hee deſerueth.

Now it is certeine that wee muſt liue of our labor, and moſt men ſhal not haue the world at will, but a number haue much a doe to get bread, and God will handle them very hardly: but yet howſoeuer they fare, one bit of bread is enough to make them beholden to the Lorde. Yea and although men labor for their liuing: yet muſt they be fully reſolued of this which we ſhall ſee hereafter, namely that it is not their labor that findeth them, but the bleſſing of God, whereby the children of Iſraell were fed in the wilderneſſe. Trueth it is that the falling of the Manna from heauen was a more manifeſt token. But yet howſoeuer the caſe ſtand, God hath left a continuall preſident, that by what meanes ſoeuer wee liue: it is hee that mainteyneth vs, and it is at his hand that wee receiue both ſuſtenance and nouriſhment and all that euer wee haue. Yee ſee then that no man can exempt himſelfe from ſeruing of his God, and from ſhewing by our deedes that we thinke our ſelues beholden vnto him, both for our lyfe and for all thinges belonging thereunto. Again the more bountifully and liberally that GOD dealeth with vs, the more ought wee to be prouoked to ſerue him. Therefore let euery of vs on his owne behalfe learne to beare Gods benefites well in minde. Let not the poore murmur though they wot not oftentimes which way to turne them: but let them aſſure themſelues that GOD will ſo bleſſe the little which they haue, as it ſhall well ynough ſuſteine them to liue therewith. And as for the richer ſorte which haue more aboundance, let them vnderſtand that Gods ſhewing of himſelfe ſo gratious towardes them, is to the ende they ſhoulde the better knowe him and honor him.

For although the riche ſorte may now and then alledge that they haue taken much payne in gathering the thinges which they poſſeſſe, or that they haue atteyned to them by ſome other meane, and that they haue them by ſucceſſion from their fathers and aunceſters: Yet will not God loſe his right, for (as I ſayd afore) it is his bleſſing that maketh men riche. Therefore they that poſſeſſe moſt muſt knowe that Gods being liberal to them after that faſhion, is to the ende to binde them the ſtreitlyer to him, and to allure them the more to ſerue and honour him as their father, yea and as a kindehearted father which deſireth nothing but to giue his children their fill of al good thinges, ſo as they may not want any thing.

Thus haue wee heere a generall rule: which is, that after as GOD giueth vs eaſe and the commodities of this world, ſo muſt wee bee the more diſpoſed to loue him: for that gentleneſſe of his draweth vs vnto him. And when we haue ſo taſted of his goodneſſe and found ſauour in it: needes muſt there bee too great vnkindeneſſe and churliſhneſſe in vs, if wee bee not moued to loue him as we ought to doe. And that muſt be not only in our eating & drinking, but alſo in all thinges that concerne this preſent lyfe. As for example, if GOD giue vs peace and quietneſſe, whiles others are in trouble or at warres: if wee bee vnuexed of plagues and diſeaſes, while wee ſee a number of other folkes afflicted: let vs vnderſtand that our Lord allureth vs gently vnto him, and would faine winne vs by ſuch kindeneſſe, and therefore if wee voutſafe not to come vnto him, wee ſhall pay right deare for the thinges that wee ſhall haue receiued at his hand. True it is that God requireth not any payment at our handes: for we haue not any thing to giue him: but yet will he haue vs to bee thankefull towardes him for our dueties ſake. If wee doe not ſo: it muſt bee layd to our charge, that being not his children, wee haue treacherouſly robbed him of his goods.

For what right haue wee to the inioying of them, but that hee is our father? And if wee honor him not, dare wee ſay wee bee of the number and company of his children? Rom.2.4. And that is the cauſe why Saint Paul is ſo hotte againſt ſuch as returne not vnto GOD when hee ſpareth them. What meane yee you wretches (ſayth hee?) know yee not that yee abuſe the great treaſures of Gods goodneſſe? For his dealing ſo gently with you, is as an alluring of you to repentaunce. True it is that GOD doth ſometimes chaſtiſe vs ſharpely, to waken vs and to make vs knowe our faultes, that wee may bee ſory for them: But yet for all that, if hee deale mildely with vs, it is as much to ſay as he woulde faine winne vs by friendly meanes, as hath bin ſaide already. Nowe if this can beare no ſway with vs, wee ſhewe our ſelues to be too too leud, and ỿ we deſpiſe Gods goodneſſe, yea and that wee make but a skorne and mockage of it. And therefore muſt horrible vengeance hang ouer our heades, according as S.Paul threatneth in the foreſaide place, to al ſuch as abide hard harted and ſtubborne in their vices, when God beareth with them. And nowe let vs looke to our ſelues. For although euery mans ſtate be not ſo wealthie as hee would wiſh: yet are wee handled very gently in reſpect of others. What remaineth but that our Lord ſhould enter into account with vs, if wee on our ſide haue no luſt to ſerue him, and that the eaſe and reſt which hee giueth vs, bee not applyed to ſhewe that wee take him for our father indeede, foraſmuch as hee handleth vs as his children? If wee (ſay I) acknowledge not this: then ſhall not our vnthankefulneſſe eſcape vnpuniſhed.

Alſo by the way let vs not forget howe Moſes exhorteth heere the people of Iſrael to beware that they forget not the Lorde when they were well fedde and growen full. But ſeeing that we bee inclined to ſuch frowardeneſſe as well as they, let vs conſider our owne diſeaſe, that wee may ſeeke remedie for it. For though there were no more but this one point: it were enough to occaſion men to miſlike of themſelues, and to bee aſhamed. For wee bee as monſters againſt kinde: inſomuch that whereas God offereth himſelfe to vs, and reacheth vs his hande, ſo as if wee ſawe him in his owne perſon, wee coulde haue no greater aſſurance of the fatherly loue that hee beareth vs, than that hee is ſo liberall that wee may haue our fill of his benefites: yet notwithſtanding wee forget him euen when hee putteth vs in minde of him, not onely by ſpeaking to vs, but alſo by ſhewing vs by experience that hee knitteth himſelfe to vs, and hath a care of vs in watching ouer vs, not onely for the ſauing of our ſoules, but alſo for the nouriſhing of our bodies, feeding vs like litle babes, and as it were ſtretching out of his wings ouer vs, as a hen doeth ouer her chickens, as
Matt.23.37 compariſon is made in the holy Scripture. Seeing that God giueth vs ſuch proofe of his goodneſſe, and alſo knitteth himſelfe vnto vs, of purpoſe to gather vs together and to take vs vp to himſelfe: were it not a diueliſhe madneſſe to forget him, and to turne our backes vpon him, and to ſhut our eyes againſt him, yea and to conceiue ſo exceſſiue rage as to ſay, wee wil not thinke vpon him that ſeeketh vs, is not this a diueliſhe madneſſe? Yes: and yet is there not any of vs all, that can excuſe himſelfe to bee vnſubiect to ſuch naughtineſſe. So then, this text ought of right to humble vs, and to make vs aſhamed afore GOD, becauſe wee ſee wee bee ſo malicious and ſpitefull as not to regarde God when hee is neere vs, nor to wake and open our eyes that we might ſee his goodneſſe when it is ſhewed vnto vs, yea euen after ſo euident and eaſie a maner. That is the thing which we haue to remember. True it is that wee make common prouerbes of it, but in the meane while no man thinkes vppon it. Wee ſay that nothing marreth men but eaſe: Wee ſay that ouermuch welth maketh men vnweldie: and yet in the meane while the ſame thing befalleth vs, and none of vs findeth fault with himſelfe. And although God preuent vs and blame vs, and doe vs ſuch ſhame as to make vs heare of it: yet will not wee thinke vppon it. Notwithſtanding it is not written in vaine, *When thou haſt thy fil of the benefites of thy God, beware that thou forget him not.* Wherfore let vs marke, that proſperitie of it ſelf ought to prouoke vs to reſort vnto God, bicauſe it is all one as if he ſhould reach out his hands and armes vnto vs. Like as when a father offereth his childe a thing and ſayth to him, Come hither, and holdeth out his armes: ſo likewiſe Gods deſire in beſtowing his benefits vppon vs, is nothing elſe but to ſee vs quiet, as it were in his lap or vnder his winges. Nowe then, if wee haue an eye to the order of nature: proſperitie ſhould drawe vs to God, and make vs well minded to ſerue him: and yet notwithſtanding, wee ſee how wee deſpiſe both GOD and nature and all kindeneſſe, and become woorſe than wilde beaſtes. For whereas GOD allureth vs to him after that gentle manner: wee turne our backes vppon him, and in ſtead of cōming to him, retyre from him: nay (which woorſe is) wee kicke againſte him. For it is not inough for men to deſpiſe Gods goodneſſe, and to ſtop their eyes, and to deuour al ỿ good things which they haue, without knowing who giueth them: but alſo they proceede ſo far as to ruſh againſt him, and to gnaſhing their teeth at him, and to ſpurning at him. If a man ſhould liken vs to ſwine, wee woulde thinke hee did vs greate wrong. And yet are ſwine contented with rooting in the ground, to fill themſelues with the Acornes that are fallen downe, and they be not ſo fearce as to fall to rending downe of the tree, they leape not vp againſt it, they byte not the boughes, they haue their groines hãging alwais downward. As for vs we play indeede the ſwine, bicauſe we haue alwais our groines in the earth: inſomuch that When we cram our ſelues neuer ſo full, there is none of vs whiche lifteth vp his mind on highe to ſaye, it is Gods hande that giueth vs this thing: but either we impute al things to our owne policie, or we thinke that the gaine commeth of our ſelues, or wee imagine that it happeneth vs by ſome chaunce, and to be ſhort wee neuer thinke of God. But beſides this, wee fall to ſpiting of him, we caſte out our furye and rage againſt him, we ſtrike at him with our tusks, wee withſtand him ſtubbornly to the vttermoſte of our power, and we could finde in our hartes that his Iuſtice were vtterly aboliſhed. For wee treade it vnder foote, as much as in vs lyeth. We ſee then that we bee woorſe than ſwine, and woorſe than the vileſt brute beaſtes that are, yea we be euen vnkindly monſters.

But behold, our God calleth vs to him by this exhortation, wherein wee ſee the patientneſſe which hee vſeth towardes vs. If a father had handeled his child as gently as could be, farre aboue the common maner, and the child ſhould thereupon growe proude and deſpiſe his father: woulde not the father beare him ſuch diſpleaſure, as to diſdaine to open his mouth to him, to tell him of any thing bicauſe of his deſpiſing of him after that faſhion? Yes. Then is it moſt certaine that wee bee much leſſe to bee borne with when it falleth out, that wee reſiſt GOD who is more worth than all the fathers in the world, without compariſon. So then, ſhould he not haue iuſt cauſe to let vs alone as wee bee, when he ſeeth that wee haue no minde of him, and that euen his benefites are an occaſion vnto vs to diſpiſe him, ſo as wee turne them the cleane contrarie way frō the lawfull vſe whereunto hee had ordained them? Might hee not iuſtly leaue vs in that ſtate as curſed creatures and vnwoorthy that euer hee ſhoulde open his mouth to ſpeake to vs? Yes: and yet for all that he commeth to ſeeke vs. Beholde (ſaieth he) I knowe yee bee inclined to forget mee, when I haue fed you well and fat, and the more abundance that you haue, the more ye refuſe to come to me, and therefore ye deſerue to be ſhaken off, & that I ſhould neuer remember you any more. Yet notwithſtanding, my deſire is not that you ſhould periſh, but that ye ſhould returne vnto mee. What naughtineſſe or lewdneſſe ſo euer I eſpie in you, I am contented to take you ſtill for my children, I will preuent the vices whereto you bee giuen: therefore take heede ỹ ye forget me not when you be at your eaſe. Seeing that our Lord beareth with vs after that faſhion, ought it not to breake our hearts though they were harder than ſtone?

So then, firſt of all let vs miſtruſt proſperitie. In deede we couet it, & for the loue thereof wee ſhun the things that are hard and comberſome. If we ſuffer hunger and thirſt, it grieueth vs, & we neuer leaue ſtorming vntill God haue prouided for it: but yet for all ỹ it would be more for our profit oftentimes, to indure hunger than to haue abundance. Howſoeuer the caſe ſtandeth, whenſoeuer God beſtoweth his benefites vpon vs, let vs haue proſperitie in ſuſpitiō, as I ſaid afore. Not that it ought of it ſelfe ſo to deceiue vs & blindfold our eyes, as wee ſhould not knowe God: but for that it behoueth vs to perceiue our owne nature to be ſo ſinfull and euill giuen, as we cannot profit our ſelues by any of the benefites which we receiue at Gods hand. Yea and we ſee howe Prou.30.9. euen Salomon was afraide to bee ouerriche, for feare of aduauncing himſelfe againſt God, leaſt he ſhould deſpiſe him and forſake him. See here howe Salomon who was indued with ſo excellent giftes of grace, did neuertheleſſe ſee the frailtie of man to bee ſuch, that when he had all ỹ his heart could wiſh, yet he might forget himſelfe, & be ouerſotted as he ſhould fall to renouncing of God by aduauncing himſelfe againſt Phil.2.12. him. Now then, let vs liue in feare and aw, and if God giue vs not ſuch aboundaunce as we would deſire, but doe cutte our morſels very ſmall: let vs vnderſtande that the ſame is for our benefite, in that wee haue neede to bee dyeted, for feare leaſt fatneſſe ſtoppe our eyes, and ſo make vs ſtarke blinde. If wee thinke well vppon this, it will make vs to beare pouertie the more patiently. When wee want our pleaſures and delyghtes, when wee want our delicate morſelles, and when wee want abundance to fill our ſelues withall: let vs knowe that our Lorde hath a regarde to holde vs in awe by that meane: for we ſhoulde bee in daunger of forgetting him, if we ſhoulde growe too fatte. And therefore when wee haue wealth at will, let vs bethinke vs thus: why was it ſayde to the people of Iſrael, forget not thy GOD when thou haſt thy fill? It was bicauſe men can not brouke their wealth, in ſo much that if they haue all that they haue neede of, yea and more too: they ouerſhoot themſelues, they play the looſe coltes, they arme themſelues againſt GOD, and they haue no more care of him. Is the winde in that doore? Let vs learne to haue God alwayes before our eyes: ſo as if he deale graciouſly with vs and giue vs more than he doeth to other men, wee may haue the skill to conſider, See howe my God commeth to me, and to what intent but that I ſhoulde bee as it were brooded vnder his wings, and liue obediently towardes him, honouring him and referring my whole life to the glorifying of his holy name, ſo as it may bee as a bond whereby to binde mee ſtraytlyer vnto him, than others on whome hee hath not beſtowed the lyke benefites as he hath doone vppon mee? Thus ye ſee that both poore and riche ought to tend to Godward, eche one according to his degree.

Againe, the comparing of the people of Iſrael with our ſelues, ought to quicken vs vp yet better, to ſtand vppon our garde. It is ſaid, when the Lorde thy GOD ſhall haue giuen thee thy fill. And of what goods? Of wyne which thou ſhalt haue gathered of other mens labours, and of all other thinges to lyue by which thou haſte not earned: when thy God ſhall haue fedde thee ſo of his owne free goodneſſe, ſee thou forget him not. If the people of Iſrael myght forget GOD hauing had moſt apparant recordes of the fauour that was ſhewed vnto them: what will become of vs which are helde here vnder the common order of nature? For wee haue no myracles to ſpurre vs foorth to Godwarde: wee haue not a lande of Chanaan as a ſpeciall elected and choſen dwelling place. And therefore wee myght eaſilyer forget GOD than that people coulde, if wee ſhoulde not remember this preſent leſſon earely and late. And for as much as wee ſee our owne coldneſſe, let vs learne to matche the ſpirituall benefites as well which God hath beſtowed vppon vs heeretofore as which we looke for heereafter, with the thinges that pertaine to the maintenaunce of this tranſitorie lyfe. True it is that although wee thought vppon no more than the thinges that are giuen vs for this bodie: yet were wee ſufficiently bounde to God, yea and a hundred folde more than wee coulde diſcharge our ſelues of. Notwithſtanding, beſides all this, our Lorde giueth vs cauſe ynough to ſerue him, in that he graunteth vs ſo many ſpirituall benefites that belong to the ſauing of our ſoules; whereof wee haue a portion alreadie. Eph.3.8. Rom.7. For whereof commeth fayth? whereof commeth it that wee bee graffed into the bodie of our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt by being baptized in his name, and that wee bee taken into Gods houſholde to bee auowed for his children? Eph.1.5.&3 Gal.4.6. Eph.2.14. Whereof come theſe thinges but of his giuing of the ſpirit of adoption vnto vs, to the intent wee ſhould call vppon him as our father; bee aſſured of the heauenly heritage, ſtande in awe of him, and liue according to his woord? And is not this dooing of his a ſpeciall gift? Yes, and yet beſides this, there is a lyfe prepared for vs, whereof wee haue but onely a taſte as yet. For wee haue receiued (as yee would ſay) ſome firſt fruites of it: but wee ſhall not haue the full fruition of it, vntill God haue taken vs quite and cleane away to himſelfe: it is ynough for vs as nowe, that we followe after it aloofe. Now then ſith we ſee that beſides ẏ things which our Lord giueth vs for our bodyes and for this tranſitorie lyfe, he hath alſo giuen vs benefites farre nobler and preciouſer; as which doe leade vs to his euerlaſting kingdome: muſt it not needes be that wee bee too lewd, if wee bee not drawen vnto him? And if wee take occaſion to forget him for al his drawing of vs vnto him after that ſort: what horrible damnation deſerue wee for ſuch vnthankfulneſſe? Yee ſee then in effect, that the thing which wee haue to remember vppon this place, is that euerie of vs muſt bethinke him of the great nomber of benefites which hee hath receyued at Gods hand, and which wee receyue ſtil day by day: and that the ſame muſt ſtirre vs vp to put our ſelues continually forewarde in going towardes him, and teache vs to doe him homage for all thinges and in all reſpectes. For we defyle all his benefites, if the end whereunto we referre them, be not the honoring and glorifying of him.

Againe as touching the goods of this worlde: let vs vnderſtand that our Lord cannot deuiſe to do ſo little for vs, or to giue vs ſo ſlender a portion of them, but we ſhall bee exceedingly much beholden to him though he doe no more: but if we perceiue that he dealeth gently with vs, and that hee beareth with vs: that ought to quicken vs vp and to prouoke vs ſo muche the more to come vnto him. And therewithall let vs beware that our vnthankfulneſſe leade vs not to forget him, ſeeing it is not for nought that hee warneth his people heere by the mouth of Moſes, to beware that they forgat him not whē they came to the inioying of the benefites which hee would beſtowe vppon them. For wee haue examples thereof euen among our ſelues. I pray you hath not GOD wrought after a wonderfull faſhion heere in planting of his Goſpell, and moreouer vttered his bleſſinges in ſuch ſorte, as they that perceiue them not, muſt ſpite of their teeth knowe that hee hath ſhewed his mightye arme? neuertheleſſe I ſhall not neede as nowe to blame mens vnthankefulneſſe, it is too apparant and openly knowen. For haue not many beene aſhamed, yea and are not many aſhamed ſtill, to bethinke themſelues of the miſerable ſtate out of which God hath deliuered them? Wee heare howe Moſes ſayeth heere, *Forget not thy GOD which brought thee out of the lande of bondage or bondmen*. As if hee ſhoulde ſay, when GOD ſhall haue graunted you the grace, to dwell quietly in the lande which he will giue you in poſſeſſion: call to minde the ſtate wherein yee haue beene, that yee maye acknowledge the good which GOD hath done you in deliuering you from it. Heere then are two thinges done you to vnderſtande: The one is, that the preſent benefites muſt prouoke ye to honour him that hath ſhewed himſelfe ſo liberall towardes you: [and the other is,] that the remembering of your former miſeries, muſt alwayes humble you and holde you in awe, ſo as ye mount not vp in pryde to like well of your ſelues and to bee puffed vp, nor the proſperitie that is giuen ye make yee to forget what bondage yee haue beene in.

Now although this was ſpoken to the children of Iſraell, I pray you doeth it not fitly agree vnto vs? Ought not wee to conſider well to whom wee bee beholden for this chaunge, that God hath vouchſafed to giue his children (as ye would ſay) a quiet neſt heere, ſo as they which were oppreſſed and ouerlayd with bondage and tyrannie, are nowe at full libertie, and inioye the thinges which they neuer hoped nor looked for? Seeing then that our Lord ſheweth himſelfe ſo gratious, are we on our ſide to bee excuſed, if wee feare him not? Though all the world might bee acquit, and all men ſcape Gods hande for miſknowing him: yet deſerue we to be condemned in that behalfe. But ought not the remembraunce of all the miſeries whereout wee bee ſcaped, to be ſo printed in our heartes as wee might liue continually in awe of our God? And although we haue proſperitie as nowe, let it not puffe vs vp, nor miniſter occaſion to vs to ſtand too much in our owne conceites. And generally, ought not all Citizens, Burgeſſes, yea and ſtraungers of Geneua to bethinke themſelues thus? It is not long agoe ſince wee were in ſuche bondage and tyrannie in this Citie, as there was no likelyhood that euer wee ſhoulde haue ſcaped them. Nay rather wee ſeemed to haue beene as a people forlorne and paſt hope of recouerie: and yet hath our GOD looked mercifully vppon our miſeries, and prouided remedy for them, and that after ſuche ſorte as men woulde neuer haue thought, and as ſurmounted our deſire. The Citizens and Burgeſſes that haue beene priuie to the calamities and miſeries from the which GOD hath deliuered them, haue they not good cauſe to magnifie ſuche goodneſſe and mercie? And as for the ſtraungers whome God hath conueied hither as it weere into his folde, ought they not to conſider thus with themſelues? Alas, wee were as in the gulfe of hell in the horrible deſolation of the popedome, and God hath pytied vs, inſomuch that hee hath reached vs his hande to take vs thence and to bring vs hither into his Churche, that wee myght worſhip him with one common accorde.

Now then let vs put this text in vre, ſeeing it was not written onely for the people of Iſrael, but alſo ought to ſerue vs now adayes more than euer it did. For ſeeing that the Goſpell is preached vnto vs, ſhould we looke for an Angel from heauen, to giue vs larger certaintie, when wee ſee that God hath ſo ratified his doctrine alreadie for our inſtruction?

Now let vs kneele downe in the preſence of our good God with acknowledgement of our faultes, praying him to mortifie vs in all our affections and wicked luſtes, and to renew vs ſo againe, that being gouerned by his holy Ghoſt, wee may deſire nothing but to ſubmit our ſelues vnto him, and to profite more and more in his doctrine, that wee may bee ſettled in his feare and loue, euen vntill he haue rid vs of all imperfections and vices. And ſo let vs all ſay, Almightie God heauenly father, &c.

On Munday the xxix. of Iuly. 1555.

The xlviij. Sermon, which is the fourth vpon the ſixth Chapter.

13 Thou ſhalt feare, &c.

14 Yee ſhall not walke after other Gods, I meane the Gods of the Nations which are round about you:

15 (For the Lord thy God is a iealous God in the middes of thee:) for feare leaſt the wrath of the Lorde thy God bee kindled againſt thee, and he roote thee out of the Land.

VEe haue ſeene heretofore, that the welſpring of all miſchiefe is the forgetting of our God after he hath once ſhewed him ſelfe to vs, and that wee haue once knowẽ his wil. And this is the warning that Moſes gaue vnto the people, that when they had once their fill of Gods benefites, they ſhoulde not forget him to whom they were ſo greatly bounde. Purſuing ſtill the ſame matter, he addeth, *Feare the Euerlaſting, your God.* Wherein he ſheweth what it is to mynde God aright: namely that it is not a bare muſing or ſpeaking of him onely, but a yeelding of his due honour vnto him. For it is not poſſible that we ſhould think vpon God and not be moued to honour him vnleſſe wee make an idoll of him. For when Gods maieſtie commeth to our remembraunce, muſt it not needes touche vs to humble our ſelues vnder the ſame? Ought wee not to vnderſtande that he hath created vs with condition to bee wholly at this deuotion, and to dedicate our ſelues to his ſeruice? Then let vs marke, that the remembering of God importeth the reuerencing of him. And ſo, To feare GOD, and not to forget him, are two groundes which are ſo knitte togither as they cannot be put aſunder. Againe, vnto *Feare* Moyſes addeth *Seruice*, that is to ſay, the worſhipping of him. For the terme *Seruice* betokeneth a dewtifull ſubmiſſion and reuerence, when men humble themſelues before GOD, and yeeld him the honour that is dew to him to ſerue him withall, as is ſayde of it heere. Feare then goeth formoſt: and from the ſame feare proceedeth the duetifull ſubmiſſion that wee yeeld vnto him. I tould you that it is all one as if wee ſhoulde proteſt, that wee hold our life and all our goods of him, and that hee is worthy to hould vs vnder his ſubiection, and that wee ſhoulde glorify him in all reſpectes, by referring all our workes to the honoring of him. Thirdly hee addeth that *men ſhould ſweare by the name of God*, which is a kinde of confeſſing of our fayth. For wee haue ſeene heretofore, that ſuche as ſweare (I meane as they ought to ſweare) doe take their othe by the name of God, becauſe that only hee is the ſufficient witneſſe of the truth, and will iudge all ſuche as turne his trueth into leazing. And ſo in this text Moſes ſheweth againe, that when wee haue worſhipped GOD, we muſte alſo make a declaration of our fayth, ſo as men may perceiue vs to bee his people, and that he raigneth among vs, that wee bee free from all ſuperſtition and idolatrie, and that wee hold none other religion than that which the lyuing GOD hath giuen vs. That is the ſumme of the thinges conteined heere.

1. Cor. 4. 5. Ierem. 5. 3.

Now, that wee maye fare the better by this doctrine, wee muſte vnderſtande that GOD accepteth not any ſeruice at our handes, except that firſt and formoſt we haue learned to feare him, that is to ſaye, to yeeld him ſuche reuerence, as to bee deſirous to obey him, and to bee ruled by him, and to graunt him all ſuperioritie ouer vs. Then if men take neuer ſo much trauell in doing this and that, and in the meane while haue not the feare of GOD rooted in their hartes: all that euer they do is but vanitie and loſt labour. And therefore let not our only handes and feete bee applyed to weldoing, neither let our indeuour bee ſo imployed vppon outwarde workes, as the ſayde roote ſhoulde not goe before: But let vs conceaue ſuche knowledge of GOD, as our whole ſeeking may bee to ſubmit our ſelues vnto him, ſo as wee may ſaye, Seeing that GOD hath ſhaped vs, is it not reaſon that hee ſhoulde raigne

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euer vs? Seeing we be his creatures, ſhoulde wee not offer our ſelues to him with al humility, that he might inioy vs? Seeing we hold all our goods of him, is it not reaſon that wee ſhoulde doe him homage for them, and that our life ſhoulde bee dedicated vnto him? Seeing he hath done vs the honour to bee our father, ought we not to yeeld him childely obedience? This is the point which we muſt beginne at, if we will keepe Gods Lawe, to pleaſe him well all our life long. Herewithall let vs marke what was ſaide afore: namely that in thinking vpon God, wee muſt not imagine a deade thing, but we muſt ſet his glorious maieſtie before our eyes, that wee may bee touched with the foreſaide feare of him.

Moreouer, when wee feare our God, let vs learne alſo to worſhippe him. For if a man boaſt that hee feareth God, and in the meane while deſpiſe all his commaundementes, ſo as hee regardeth not to doe him honour to whom hee knoweth himſelfe to bee ſubiect: is it not too groſſe hypocriſie? Then let vs marke that the feare of God bringeth with it a deſirouſneſſe to ſerue him, and to direct our whole life according to his commaundementes, and ſpecially to yeelde him the duetiful ſubmiſſion which hee requireth in our worſhipping of him. For the meane whereby hee will be ſeparated from ydoles, is that whereas the heathen and vnbeleeuers worſhippe Gods inuented of their owne braine: wee muſt ſhewe our ſelues to haue none other than the liuing God. And why? For by our yeelding of that honour vnto him, we reiect all the fancies that haue beene deuiſed by men. And therefore with our fearing of the Lorde, let vs learne to ſhewe by our deedes, that our whole deſire is to ſerue him.

Nowe this ſeruice is properly inwarde: that is to ſaye, the chiefe pointes thereof are, that wee put our whole truſt in him, that wee acknowledge all our good thinges to come of him, that wee call vppon him with the ſaide truſt, and that wee yeelde him the praiſe of all things that hee beſtoweth vppon vs. This conſiſteth not in bare Ceremoniouſneſſe, but it lyeth altogether in the heart. And like as wee muſt worſhippe God by acknowledging all our good thinges to come of him, and that it is his onely goodneſſe whereunto wee bee beholden, both for this preſent life and alſo for the hope of our ſaluation: ſo on the other parte, wee muſt make men priuie to this our ſpirituall ſeruice which wee yeelde vnto God, that they may commonly beare recorde thereof and bee edified by our example. And all this reſpecteth the ſwearing that Moſes ſpeaketh of heere, ſaying, *Thou ſhalt ſweare by the name of thy God.*

It ſhoulde ſeeme at the firſt bluſh, that heere is no great reaſon in this caſe: for we bee but too forwarde and readie of our ſelues to ſweare, without any furtherance thereto at Gods hand. Why then doeth Moſes take order that wee ſhoulde ſweare by the name of GOD? By all likelyhoode he ſhoulde rather haue commaunded vs to abſtaine from all othes, and haue ſaide, Thou ſhalt not ſweare in any wiſe at all. But (as I haue touched alreadie) when othes bee made lawefullye and according to Gods Lawe, wee ſhewe that it is hee whome wee worſhippe, and whoſe people wee couet to bee. Nowe let vs conſider the right vſe of othes. The right vſe is, that if neede require that the trueth muſt bee witneſſed and warranted: then God muſt bee brought in as a pledge. As howe? Hee nameth himſelfe the trueth: and therefore in thinges vnknowen to men, wee cannot haue a fitter witneſſe than him. When a man ſweareth faithfullie in a matter that is not knowen, ſauing that men woulde get the confeſſion thereof at his hande: if hee take the name of God [to witneſſe], it is to ſhewe that hee goeth to worke vnfeynedly: like as in a caſe of Iuſtice, if the Iudge beeing deſirous to finde out the certainetie at a witneſſes hande, doe cauſe him to * lifte vp his hande vnto GOD: ſuch ſwearing is as it were a doing of homage to GOD, as though the partie ſhoulde ſay: I knowe that GOD is the trueth, and the iudge of mens heartes, and I proteſt heere that I ſpeake as in his preſence, euen in trueth, knowing well that I ſhall yeelde him an account of my ſaying.

Pſal.31.6.

*That is the maner of taking an oth in ſom other coũtries like as our maner is to lay our hãd vpõ a Booke.

Thus yee ſee that the true vſe of othes and ſwearing, is to warrant and ratifie the trueth when it is not knowen to men, in which kinde of caſe God muſt bee ſet as Iudge, and the deponent muſt proteſt that hee ſpeaketh as before him, to the intent there may bee no counterfetting at all. But yet is it not ment that it is Lawfull for vs to ſweare [in all caſes], though wee ſay the trueth. For it may bee that the matters are not of ſuch weight and importance, that Gods name ſhoulde bee auouched: and then were it an vnhallowing or defiling of it. But if the matter deſerue it and require it: then doeth God lende vs his name, as hath beene declared in the laſt chapter before. He vſeth ſuch courteſie towardes vs, as hee is contented that wee ſhall borrowe his name to the ende that the trueth may bee warranted by his recorde.

Thus wee ſee nowe, after what ſort it is lawfull for vs to ſweare: that is to wit, when there is ſuch a caſe as deſerueth it, and againe when wee cannot otherwiſe ſatisfie men, to ſhewe them that the thing which wee ſay is certaine and true, that they ought to ſtande to it. After that manner doth God giue vs leaue to ſweare by his name.

Nowe ſeeing it is ſo that hee which ſweareth doeth call God to witneſſe, and alſo ſubmit himſelfe to puniſhment if hee ſhall haue abuſed his holy and ſacred name: is it not a doing of homage vnto God? For our ſwearing by him is becauſe he hath ſoueraine Dominion ouer vs, becauſe it belongeth to him to ſearch our hearts, becauſe hee muſt be our iudge, and becauſe wee muſt yeelde account of our whole life before him.

2.Chr.6.30.
Iere.17.10.
1.Cor.4.4.5

Seeing it is ſo that all that euer belongeth to the one onely God, is conteined in an othe: muſt it not needes follow that it is a curſed ſuperſtition, when we ſweare by the name of an ydol? Yes: for the honour that is due to the onely one God, is conueyed away to the creature. All they therefore which ſweare by any other than by the name of God, doe ſhewe themſelues vnworthy to bee his people, yea and that it is not long of them that they bereeue him not of his due homage. Nowe wee ſee howe it was not for nought that Moſes hath tolde vs here, that wee muſt ſweare by the name of God. And indeede when the prophets intende to ſhewe that the Eſa.65.15. right Religion ſhalbe ſet vp euery where, they ſay that all tongues ſhall ſweare by the name of God. The heathen men likewiſe had the ſame opinion, that their ſwearing by their ydols was a token of their ſeruing of them. And that was comprehended vnder the worſhip which they yeelded vnto them. If they had not imagined that there was ſome diuine maieſtie in an ydoll: they woulde neuer haue ſworne by the name of it. True it is that afterwarde they diſguiſed their othes, ſo as they ſware likewiſe by their kinges and princes: but that flatterie was an vnhallowing of Gods name, and they themſelues knewe full well that they were blameworthie in ſo doing. For in going about to flatter men, they vniuſtly ſnatched to their ydols yͤ honour which they pretended to be due to them. Seeing that the Infidels knewe that an oth is a kinde of worſhipping, ſhoulde not they that haue beene rightly taught, haue a much more ſurer rule? Yes: and therefore let vs marke wel, that Moſes in commaunding men to ſweare by none but by the name of God, ſheweth that therein they doe him the honour of acknowledging him for onely 1.Cor.4.5. Iudge, and attribute vnto him the office of ſer- Pſal.31.6. ching mens harts and thoughts, and of bewraying the thinges that are ſecret and hidden, & finally acknowledge him to bee the certaine and vnfallible truth, and therefore that he is able to be ſufficient witneſſe thereof. That is the effect of that which he ment to ſay.

Nowe hereby wee ſee, that ſuch as ſweare by the names of creatures are ydolaters, & rob God of the proteſtations which hee will haue men to make vnto him, inaſmuch as hee will haue none to be ſo honored but himſelfe. It is a common thing among the Papiſts to ſweare by the virgin Mary and by the reſt of the ſaints. True it is, that men haue not thought that to bee ſo great euill: but although there were no more but that, yet there appeareth to bee manifeſt ydolatrie in ſo doing. For why? They that ſweare by the virgin Marie, doe ſet her in Gods ſeate, as though it belonged to her to iudge the worlde: and a man coulde not deuiſe to doe greater wrong to our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt, than to attribute that thing vnto her which is giuen vnto him alone, yea and 2.Chr.6.30. giuen vnto him in reſpect that hee is God manifeſted in the fleſh. Againe, they attribute vnto her the ſearching and knowing of mens ſecret thoughts, which title the holie ſcripture reſerueth peculiarly vnto God. Then is it horrible trecherie to ſweare by the virgin Marie, or by any other creature. And would God this ſuperſtition were vtterly aboliſhed among vs, that it might neuer be had in remembrãce any more. But what? There are a number of wilfull folke, from whom that curſed cuſtome cannot bee taken, and ſay what yee will to them, they continue doted in it, inſomuch that if a man doe ſo point them to it with his finger, that as blinde as they bee they may ſee the meane howe to yeeld God his due honour: yet all is one with them, they will not in any wiſe bee made to beleeue it. And why? Becauſe the diuell hath bewitched them. Howſoeuer the caſe ſtande let vs note that al ſuch as ſweare by any other name than by the name of God, are ydolaters. And why? I tolde yee the reaſon before: namely becauſe we cannot ſweare by the name of God, but wee muſt confeſſe that he is our iudge, and that it is onely hee to whom it belongeth to knowe our ſecret thoughts, and to puniſh vs for falſifying his truth and for turning of it into a lye, wheras we ſhould beare witneſſe vnto it. And let vs marke that one kinde is put for all of that ſort. By reaſon whereof wee bee commaunded, not onely to ſweare by the name of God, but alſo to yeelde ſuch confeſſion of him before men, as we may ſhewe our ſelues to bee his people in deede, and that we woulde faine that hee ſhoulde reigne among vs, and that his name ſhoulde be glorified. And ſo let vs extend this leſſon generally to the honoring of God, ſo that if the caſe concerne religion, wee giue not that thing to creatures, which our Lorde telleth vs is peculiar to himſelfe. And therefore whenſoeuer wee ſpeake of the name of God, let vs yeeld him al that belongeth vnto him, let thoſe thinges bee reſerued vnto him, and let vs not bereaue him of his honour, to giue it away by peeces and colluppes to men and other creatures. This extendeth verie farre. Neuertheleſſe it is ynough for vs to be admoniſhed in faire wordes, that when Moſes ſaith wee muſt ſweare by the name of God, it is as much as if he ſhould ſay, my friends, like as yee worſhip the Lord, ſo muſt ye alſo maintaine his honour before men. Inſomuch that if any man will compell you to transforme or chaunge your religion, you ſhall not ſuffer it in any caſe whatſoeuer: but ſtande ſtil in this vncorruptnes to ſay, we haue the one God who hath called vs to him, and both created and redeemed vs: and Deut.4.20. therefore it is good reaſon that wee ſhoulde bee his heritage, and continue wholly his. Thus yee ſee in effect what Moſes meant to vtter in this text.

But heere wee ſee the frowardneſſe that is in men, which is a thing greatly to be lamented. For an othe (as I ſaide) ought to bee a recorde of yͤ honour which we yeeld vnto God: and wee ſee howe men cleane contrariwiſe will needes ſpite him in vſing of othes. Firſt of all, when men ſweare vnaduiſedly, is it not a manifeſt deſpiſing of Gods name? It muſt bee rapt out when there is neither why nor wherefore. The talke ſhalbe but of mirth and laughter: and yet notwithſtanding Gods name muſt bee mingled with it. And is not that too great and too ſhamefull a ſkorning of him? Nay moreouer, a mannes patience is no ſooner ſtird, ſo as he entreth into a litle choler: but by and by gods name muſt anſwere for it. In ſo much that it is not enough for them to fome out their rage againſt their nighbours, but they muſt alſo ſtep vp againſt God, and ſhew themſelues wode and ſtarke mad. And they be no ſimple othes which they vſe: but othes matched with blaſphemie, whereby ẏ maieſtie of Gods name is as good as trampled vnder foote. Othes are referred to nothing leſſe than to the end that I ſpake of, (that is to wit to the glorifying of God among vs) when they be applied to ſo deuilliſh outrages as the wilfull defying of God, and the ſkorning of his name, by toſſing it too and fro like a tennisball, without yeelding any reuerence vnto it. And therefore let vs learne that it is too too deteſtable a vice when trifling othes are ſo rife among vs, and alſo that in our cholerik paſſions of impatiencie Gods name ſhoulde be ſo rent and torne, and that men are not contented to haue ſworne after ſome ſimple manner, but alſo take vp kindes of othes that are matched with blaſphemie, ſo as it appeareth that their intent is to make warre againſt God, and euen to ſpyte him when they cannot bee reuenged of men. Thus yee ſee what wee haue to marke vpon this text. Therefore to bee ſhort, let vs vnderſtande that it is not ynough for vs, that the ſpirituall ſeruice which wee owe vnto God bee yeelded vncorruptly vnto him: that is to wit, that wee put our truſt in him, that wee call vpon him, and that wee offer him our ſoules and bodies in ſacrifice: but we muſt alſo ſhewe openly before men what religion wee holde of, and wee muſt make it knowen that wee bee ſeparated from all the defilements of the Infidels and vnbeleeuers. The thing which is expreſly required heere, is that when othes are to bee vſed, wee muſt vſe them with ſuch ſobrietie as God may bee glorified, and that whenſoeuer wee ſweare, wee muſt beare in minde that God is to bee reuerenced as our iudge, and offer our ſelues in ſuch wiſe before him, as hee ſuffer not any falſhoode to abide vnpuniſhed, and as wee yeelde vnto him the office of ſerching euen our heartes. If wee deale ſo: then ſhall our othes be holie vnto him, and accepted as a part and portion of the ſeruice that he requireth and alloweth. And by that meanes wee ſhall abhorre and loth not onely the blaſphemies whereby he is ſpyted out of meaſure: but alſo all fonde and trifling othes, that are made without cauſe or reaſon. Thus wee ſee in fewe words what wee haue to note, and howe this text is to bee put in vre.

Nowe Moſes addeth immediately, *Yee ſhall not followe any other Gods, the Gods of the heathen which dwell rounde about you.* When hee ſaieth, yee ſhall not followe any other Gods: hee ſheweth vs that wee cannot mingle the true religion with any abuſes, or with any thing deuiſed by vnbeleeuers, but by and by all is mard, and God diſauoweth it, as ſoone as wee ſwarue one way or other from the plaine trueth, and from the rule that hee hath giuen vs. For it is not ſaide ſimply, you ſhall not renounce your GOD: but they bee forbidden to followe any other Gods. So then let vs marke wel, that if wee intende to ſerue the liuing God, we muſt holde our ſelues to him alone, and worſhippe him with ſuch vncorruptneſſe, as all ydoles bee vtterly caſt downe, and all ſuperſtitions cut off and caſt behinde vs. And if this were well obſerued, wee ſhoulde no more bee put to ſuch paines, neither ſhoulde wee haue ſo manie bickerings as wee haue. For what cauſeth the troubles that are nowadayes in the worlde, and that there is ſuch diuiſion betweene vs and the Papiſtes? For both of vs confeſſe that there is but one God: that grounde is common to vs both, both of vs name him the maker of heauen and earth, and both of vs take Ieſus Chriſt for our redeemer: and yet notwithſtanding we bee at ſo greate oddes, that the Turkes and the Iewes are not more deuided from vs than the Papiſtes are. Whereof commeth this? Not that the Papiſtes doe vtterly renounce GOD: but becauſe they will needes make a mingled and confuſed hotchpotch of all the Religions of the worlde. They haue raked together all abuſes, all Sathans trumperie, and all the ſuperſtitions that euer haue beene: and that terme they the ſeruice of God. It is no part of their meaning to holde themſelues to the pureneſſe of the holy ſcripture, and of the Lawe and the Goſpell: but to the thinges which they haue deuiſed of their owne braine. They will needes haue thoſe thinges mingled with the pure ſeede: and that is ſuch a corruption, as God is vtterly ſhaken of by it. Although men thinke it not, or at leaſtwiſe confeſſe it not with their mouth: yet hath hee no more place where thoſe thinges are. So then (as I ſaide afore), if this ſaying which forbiddeth vs to followe any other Gods were well obſerued: we might eaſily agree nowadayes with the Papiſtes. For the controuerſie heere concerneth not the onely name.

True it is that the Papiſtes call not their Sainctes which they haue forged, their Gods: but yet they ſerue them and worſhippe them as Gods. And therewithall they haue deuiſed ſuch lawes and ordinances as they thinke good: and yet the thing which they terme Gods ſeruice, is but vtter follie of their owne inuention. Nowe it is a flatte following of the Gods of the Paynims; when men vſe ſtraunge faſhions in the ſeruing of God, and in ſteede of praying vnto him alone, doe call vpon the creatures, ſo as they cannot tel whom to chooſe when al comes to all. And therefore let vs beare wel in minde the meaning of Moſes: which is, that to worſhip God aright, we muſt ſticke ſimply to his word: wee muſt ſtop our eares againſt all thinges that are brought vs from elſewhere: and we muſt not admit any thing but ẏ which we haue from God onely. Let vs then ſubmit our ſelues wholly to the obeying of our god, & not receiue any thing which proceedeth not out of his mouth. And if we followe not that rule, but giue eare to all Satans trumperie, and to all manner of ſuperſtitions inuented by man: then haue ſtraunge Gods their full ſcope among vs. Although wee giue them not the name of Gods: yet hath not our God the thing that belongeth vnto him for the ſeruing of him according to his onely will.

And Moſes ſaieth expreſly, *namely the Gods of the nations that dwell rounde about you*. As if hee ſhoulde ſay, it wil not ſerue for excuſe to alledge contrarie examples, that ſuch and ſuch doe ſo: none of all thoſe thinges wil paſſe in account. But if we will needs ſhielde our ſelues with men: our Lorde will diſallowe ſuch ſhifts. That is the cauſe why Moſes ſpeaketh heere expreſly of the nations that were rounde about them. And therefore let vs beare wel in minde, that to haue the true and right religion, wee muſt not inquire what men doe, but wee muſt heare God ſpeake, and agree to whatſoeuer hee ſaieth to vs. And although wee ſee the whole worlde againſt vs: yet muſt wee not be abaſhed. For what are men in compariſon of our God? Dare we make ſuch compariſon, that men ſhoulde rather be heard than God, and that they ſhoulde haue more authoritie than hee? But ſo wee doe when wee bee not contented with Gods pure and ſimple word, but alledge mens doings and deuices to the contrarie. Wherefore let vs beare well in mind, that wee muſt not eſteeme the true religion by the wayes which wee ſee men walke: but although wee be hemmed in rounde about with ydolatrie, and ſee nothing but ſtumblingblockes about vs, and wee meete with ſtore of incounters to tempt vs and to ſeduce vs: yet muſt wee not be moued therefore, but reſt ſtedfaſtly vpon the thinges which our Lorde ſhall haue tolde vs. Haue wee Gods worde? Let that ſuffice vs: But let vs goe on: I ſee that the worlde doeth ſo, I ſee men behaue themſelues after that manner, I ſee great countries vſe that faſhion. Yea, but yet our Lorde doeth well deſerue to be obeyed. Though men drawe all the cleane contrarie way: yet muſt they not beare ſuch ſway with vs as to make vs to checke againſt our God. Marke it for a ſpeciall point, that wee muſt renounce all that euer men can ſay or doe, if wee intende to ſerue our God duely. And hereby wee ſee howe ſore the ignorant wretches are beguiled, which weene themſelues to bee armed with good defence when they can ſay, O, it was not of mine owne deuiſing, it was the faſhion of our auncetters and forefathers, they doe ſo in France and Italy. But what doeth Moſes ſay? Though all the worlde conſpire in ſuperſtition, and thou ſeeſt neuer ſo many trades of life differing one from another: yet muſt thou not fleete, but ſtande faſt neuertheleſſe in the faith which thou holdeſt from Gods worde, and haſt learned of him. Content thy ſelfe with that, and defie all men: paſſe not for the whole worlde, let it beare no ſway at all with thee, when the caſe concerneth Gods trueth. Seeing it is ſo then, let vs aſſure our ſelues it is a miſerable excuſe to alledge the examples of men to ground our ſelues vppon, conſidering that our Lorde will haue vs to receiue his worde in ſuch wiſe, as all the world may not bee able to thruſt vs from it. And therwithall let vs marke alſo, that foraſmuch as the diuell caſteth temptations in our wayes: wee haue neede to bee armed and fenced. It is not without cauſe ſaide heere, Thou ſhalt not followe after the Gods of the Nations that are about thee. For God regardeth the weakeneſſe of his people, and ſeeth that they ſhould ſoone be turned away from the true and pure religion, if they were not reſtreined with this bridle, Take heede to thy ſelfe, for thou ſhalt be tempted, becauſe thou ſhalt bee beſet on all ſides with ſtumblingblocks.

Nowe if this were ſpoken in old time to the Iewes: it pointeth alſo to vs at this day: for wee be not ſtronger than they were. Let vs not beare our ſelues in hande that there is ſuch a ſtrength and ſtoutneſſe in vs, that we be able to hold our owne when wee once knowe Gods truth. For come the deuill once to imbrew vs with the falſe doctrine, and to draw vs to ſuperſtition: we bee caried away out of hand. Seeing then that we be ſo weake: let vs learne to fence our ſelues againſt corruptions, that wee maye beate backe temptations when they aſſayle vs. And we ſee in what plight wee be. For our Lorde holdeth vs heere as it were vnder his hande: whereas in the meane while if wee looke about vs, wee ſhall ſee the wretched world corrupted with all abhominations. We ſee how Gods ſeruice is vtterly defaced, and Idolatrye raigneth euery where. Nowe then if wee depended vpon men, what would become of vs? But ſeeing it is ſo that wee might bee ouerwhelmed by ſuch ſtumblingblockes, let vs looke that wee arme our ſelues with that which is ſaide heere: that is to wit, that we may boldly walke on in the Religion which we hold by Gods woorde, and laugh them all to ſkorne which ſwarue from it. Accordingly alſo as there are ſome which think, alas, ſhal I be wiſer than ſo many nations whom I ſee liue otherwiſe? Behold, the great kinges, behold, the wyſeſt men of the world hold of that religion: and ſhould I not ſtand too much in mine owne conceit, if I ſhoulde not agree to it as well as they? The queſtion is not heere, whether they or wee be the wyſer: but whether God ought to beare al the ſway and to bee acknowledged to bee onely wiſe, ſo as there is nothing but fooliſhneſſe in vs, vntill wee haue learned to ſubmit our ſelues to him. Therefore let vs be fully reſolued of this, that we muſt not turne aſide neither one way nor other, though they that dwell about vs doe hold ſtraunge religions: but we muſt ſtand faſt grounded vppon Gods worde, and holde our ſelues 1.Cor.4.3.4 contented with this, that he alloweth vs though the worlde miſlike vs and condemne vs. For wee knowe that if wee followe Gods worde, wee ſhall 1.Cor.6.2. one day iudge them which do nowe condemne vs: & that it is a diueliſh malapertneſſe for them to behaue themſelues ſo after their owne fancie and liking. Thus much concerning the point where Moſes ſheweth that the people muſt not follow the ſtraunge Gods that were worſhipped in all the countries about them.

But this extendeth yet much further: namely that although the worlde flowe out into all naughtineſſe: yet ſhall not we be excuſed, if we bee corrupted as all the reſt bee. And why ſo? It is not for nought that our Lorde hath ſanctified vs to himſelfe. In theſe dayes wee ſee blaſphemie, wee ſee murther, we ſee enuie, malice, and backbiting, wee ſee whoredome, wantonneſſe & ſuch other things raigne almoſt euery where, and to haue their full ſcope: now if we ſhould alledge this for an excuſe to doe euill, it would not ſerue our turne. For although we were hedged in with thornes rounde about: yet ought wee to walke in ſuch ſorte, as wee might perſiſt in the ſeruing of our God. Yea and euen when wee ſee nothing but naughtineſſe euery where: let vs vnderſtande that our Lord intendeth to hold vs in the ſtreiter awe. And therefore wee muſt alwayes ſet this ſaying before our eyes: Take heede to thy ſelfe, and beware that thou be not corrupted, ſeeing thou canſt not open thine eyes, but thou ſhalt meete with ſome euill thing or other to allure thee vnto naughtineſſe. Thus yee ſee howe wee haue neede to liue ſo much the more warely and carefully in theſe dayes, foraſmuch as the diuell hath obtained to peruert the whole worlde. Therefore let vs marke well this ſaying, that wee muſt not followe the trumperie that is rounde about vs.

Nowe Moſes addeth, *The Lorde that is in the middes of you, is iealous. Beware therefore that his wrath kindle not, or that his countenance wax not angrie* (for the hebrewe worde that he vſeth in this place betokeneth the countenance, and by ſimilitude and tranſlation it betokeneth wrath or anger,) *leaſt thou be rooted out of the lande which the Lorde thy God hath giuen thee.* In this text Moſes ment to proue by particular, that if men abuſe Gods goodneſſe, in the ende they ſhall not be able to ſhunne or eſcape his hande. God (ſaieth hee) is in the middes of you: and hee is iealous: and therfore beware of his wrath. When as he ſaith, God is in the mids of you: it is an vpbraiding of the Iewes with the grace that was giuen them, in that God had communicated himſelfe ſo familiarly vnto them. And it ſerueth to make vs the more blameworthy, if wee ſerue him not in all pureneſſe. Wee knowe that the more benefites wee receiue at Gods hande, the more he bindeth vs vnto him. Now he dwelt in the middes of this people, and kept his reſidence there: it was meete therefore that they ſhould haue cōſidered ỹ more aduiſedly, that ſeing god came ſo neere to them, & had made thē to feele his goodnes: they ſhould not haue turned away from him, nor from the true religion, foraſmuch as if they did ſo, they ſhoulde bee the more to blame. As if it were ſaide, As touching the Paynims and Infidels, it is true that they ſhall at length yeeld account: they may well blindfolde their owne eyes as now by ſoothing themſelues: but yet ſhall they bee driuen to knowe that God hath not ſurrendered nor giuen ouer his right. And whereas they abuſe thēſelues in their falſe religion, and yet thinke not themſelues to be beguiled: [the time wil come that] they ſhal know it to their coſt. But yet ſhall they bee excuſable in compariſon of you. For they bee blinde wretches walking in darknes, our Lord is a ſtraunger vnto them, and he hath not vouchſafed to draw them to him, nor to gather them as it were into his flocke. Yee ſee then that they bee as it were in vtter confuſion. But it is not ſo with you: for a man may iuſtly caſt you in ỹ teeth, that yee haue falſified the faith which yee gaue to your God. Yee ought to bee well acquainted with him becauſe he ſitteth in the mids of you, and he hath choſē you for his people, and you alſo haue perceiued him. For you haue his power which faileth you not: hee heareth you, and hee ſheweth himſelfe fauourable in all your requeſts. Seeing then that your God dwelleth among you: yee ought to vnderſtand that there is not any other thing wherby you ſhould be inſtructed than his law: and ye ought to know after what maner he will haue your liues ordered. Sith it is ſo, aſſure your ſelues that ſo much ỹ horribler vengeance will light vpon you, if yee ſtep aſide. Yee ſhall not paſſe the ſame way that the ignorant wretches and vnbeleeuers doe: but yee ſhalbe puniſhed a hundredfold more grieuouſly for your vnthankfulneſſe, in that yee haue not offended God through ignorance, but through ſpitefull wilfulneſſe, ſo as he could not hold you vnder his yoke nor wield you, though he gathered you into his flocke to be your ſheepherd and gouernour.

Exod.25.8. & 29.45.
Leuit.26.11 12.
Eph.2.12.
Deut.4.6.& 5.32.
Luke.12.47 48.

Although this were ſpoken a good while agoe to the Iewes: yet it concerneth vs likewiſe. For we ſee how our Lord ſitteth in the middes of vs. Firſt we haue this promiſe concerning ỹ church, This is my reſting place, heere wil I dwell for euer. Beſides this, experience teacheth vs, ỹ our Lorde not onely will dwell among vs: but alſo auoweth our ſoules and bodies to be his temple, & that we be members of our Lord Ieſus Chriſt, in whom dwelleth the whole fulneſſe of the godhead. Nowe then ought not euery man to dedicate himſelfe to God, as though hee were his temple? And againe we know howe it is ſaid, that God dwelleth in vs by his holy ſpirite. So then, God is not onely familiar with vs as he was with the people of olde time, whom he ſaid he would holde as it were in his lappe: but alſo he dwelleth in euery of vs. Seeing it is ſo: if we turne away to the ſuperſtitions of the heathen, if wee will needes reſemble the vnbeleeuers in defiling our ſelues with them, and if wee will needes make a hotchpotch or minglemangle (as they terme it): thinke we that ſuch vnthankefulneſſe ſhall ſcape vnpuniſhed, conſidering that our Lorde commeth ſo nigh vnto vs? No: and yet for all that, after we haue ruſhed againſt him, we runne gadding away from him like ſtray beaſtes. Thus ye ſee what we haue to remember vpon this ſaying, where Moſes declareth that God reſteth among the people of Iſrael.

Pſal.131.13 14.
1.Cor.3.16. & 6.15.19.
2.Cor.6.16.
Col.2.9.

And heerewithall hee ſaieth *that God is iealous and therefore we muſt beware that we kindle not his wrath.* Whereby he doth vs to vnderſtande, that Gods dwelling among vs, is not to bee deſpiſed at our hands. True it is that he will bee louing vnto vs, and he telleth vs that hee will

Eſa.42.3. beare with our infirmities,and that he is always pitifull. Although we deſerue to ſinke vnder his hande: yet will he alwayes ſhew mercie towards vs. But doth it followe therefore, that he will be ſcorned at our handes, and that wee may come pranking againſt him to deſpiſe him? No: but contrariwiſe,foraſmuch as he ſheweth himſelfe gratious and louing towards vs,it ought to break & ſoften our harts, to make vs ſubmit our ſelues wholly vnto him, and at leaſtwiſe to applie our ſelues altogether to the ſeruing & honouring of him,when he preuēteth vs through his free goodneſſe.Then let vs mark well,that when our Lord is neere vnto vs, although it bee of purpoſe to make vs glad, and alſo to giue vs contentation and reſt:yet notwithſtanding hee ceaſeth not to be zealous in the maintaining of his glorie, neither will he ſuffer it to be trampled vnder foote, without ſending horrible vengeance for it. Doe we then know that our Lord dwelleth among vs? Let vs on our ſide beware that wee ſanctifie our ſelues wholly vnto him, for feare leaſt his wrath bee kindled, that is ſay, leaſt hee withdraw his goodneſſe which he hath once ſhewed towards vs,and bereaue vs of it as we deſerue,and therewithall powre out his wrath vppon vs, when hee ſeeth that hee cannot winne vs, nor any whit preuaile by ſhewing himſelfe pitifull in bearing with vs with ſuch louingkindnes and gentlenes as he doth. Ye ſee then after what ſort we ought to vſe ẏ goodnes and patientneſſe of our Lorde. That is to wit,knowing that we may boldly ſtay vpon him, not doubting but that he wilbe fauourable vnto vs, wee neuertheleſſe muſt indeuour and inforce our ſelues to the vttermoſt of our power to ſerue and honour him. And foraſmuch as we cannot do it of our ſelues: wee muſt pray him to hold vs in ſuch obedience by his holy ſpirit,as our whole ſeeking may bee to ſhewe ẏ his comming ſo vnto vs is not in vaine, but that we be truly knit vnto him, and that hee hath ſet ſuch a holy and vnuiolable bond betweene him and vs, that as he once gaue himſelfe to vs to be Pſal.16.5. our inheritance,ſo he alſo poſſeſſeth vs,and maketh vs to be throughly contented with him,and to proceede in ſuch wiſe in profiting to his honor & glory,as our whole life may ſhewe that we deſire nothing elſe but to bee reteined vnder his protection.

Nowe let vs kneele downe in the preſence of our good God ẇ acknowledgment of our faults, praying him to humble vs more & more by true repentance, ſo as we may not onely be ſorie for our faults, but alſo amend them and ſubmit our ſelues ductifully vnto him, to the intent we may be more and more rid of all our naughtie luſtes, and bee clothed againe with his righteouſneſſe, that by the ſhining of his image in vs, wee may ſhew our ſelues to be his true children and that our deſire is to be ruled by his holy ſpirit, euen vntill he haue made vs partakers of his heauenly glorie. That it may pleaſe him to grant this grace not onely to vs but alſo to all people, and Nations of the earth,&c.

On Tewſday the xxx. of Iuly. 1555.

The xlix. Sermon which is the fift vpon the ſixth Chapter.

15 For the Lord &c.

16 You ſhall not tempt the Lord your God as you tempted him in Maſſa.

17 Yee ſhall keepe the commaundements of the Lord your God diligently,and his teſtimonies and ordinances which he hath commaunded you.

18 Thou ſhalt doe the thing that is right and good in the ſight of the Lord,that it may goe well with thee, and that thou maiſt go into this good land and poſſeſſe it according as the Lord hath ſworne to thy fathers.

19 And that hee may beate backe thine enemies before thee, as the Lorde hath ſaide.

WE ſawe yeſterday howe Moſes ſhewed the people, that foraſmuch as God vouchſafed to dwell among them, they alſo ought to liue in his feare. And wee likewiſe muſt thinke, that his approching vnto vs after that ſort, is not to be deſpiſed of vs,but rather to the intent that his goodneſſe ſhould prouoke vs to honour him the more. And there was a threatning added immediatly, *For feare leaſt thou be bereft of the land which thy God hath now giuen thee*. Wherein Moſes declared,that when we haue receiued any good alreadie at Gods hand, we muſt not be proude of it, but rather yeelde him due honour for it, that we may inioy it ſtill: for after as he ſheweth himſelfe liberall to vs,ſo doth he binde vs vnto him. And therefore let vs marke,that when wee haue the poſſeſſion of his benefites, it is not to the ende wee ſhoulde fall aſleepe in them, but rather haue the greater care to ſerue and honour him. And herewithal let vs note,that vnder this terme of ẏ *lande of Canaan*, Moſes comprehended generally all that belonged to the peoples election: for that lande was an outwarde teſtimony thereof. Therefore in effect hee ment to ſay, Beholde, God hath choſen thee to bee of his houſhold and Church: wilt thou continue therin? Then muſt thou be carefull to honour him, and walke after his guiding. Nowe to apply the ſame to our vſe, it is all one as if a man ſhold ſay vnto vs, ſeeing that God hath promiſed to be our father and Sauior, let vs feare him, to yͤ intent he may continue alwayes ſo. And this importeth yͤ he wil haue a care of vs, during this mortal life of ours. And although we paſſe through many miſeries, yet will he deliuer vs from them. Howbeit that his defending of vs in this world is not the chiefe benefite, nor the thing that we muſt ſtay vpon, but we muſt mount vp higher to yͤ endleſſe life. And ſo to be ſhort, whenſoeuer we think vpō the benefits that god hath giuen vs, let vs vnderſtande that hee can well bereeue vs of them as ſoone as we abuſe them, and pluck away our fethers yͤ make vs ſo proude. For his beſtowing of his benefits vpon vs, is not to the intent that we ſhould deſpiſe him, & take occaſion to ſtande in our owne conceits, & ſo be negligent and cal no more vpon him: but the bleſſings which we inioy tend to this end wee ſhould dayly and howerly haue yͤ better regard of him, & lift vp our minds on high to yeeld him due thanks, and to glorifie him in our whole life. Now herevnto Moſes addeth, *Thou ſhalt not tempt the Lorde thy God, as you tēpted him in Maſa.* Hereby he meaneth yͤ the people muſt not abuſe gods patience. As it he ſhold ſay, look wel to it my friends: although god deale gently with you, ye muſt not think but your ſins ſhal come to accoūt, if you ſerue him not with all humility. If ye ſay, we be Gods friends, we neede not be afraid yͤ he wilbe angry with vs or work vs any diſpleaſure, for we ſee how well he dealeth wͭ vs: beware how ye daly ſo with him, for ye know what befell to your fathers in Maſa. Therefore do no more ſo, but preuent the chaſtiſements of your God, & before he arme himſelf againſt you, know him to be your iudge, and tary not till hee ſhewe forth the tokens of his wrath and vengeance by his deeds, but in yͤ meane time while he vſeth mieldnes & gentlenes, conſider yͤ hee allureth you to repentāce, Rom.2.4. & ſo let euery man be prouoked to amend his faults, that God may be honored by yͤ mean. For if ye tempt him againe, he wil not bere it. He ſharply puniſhed your fathers in Maſa: but you ſhal feele much greater & horrible puniſhmēt, if you go on ſtil. And let vs mark, that here he toucheth the ſtory which is written Exo.17.1.7. more at length in the ſeuenteenth of Exodus. There it is ſaide that the people being in a drie place of the wilderneſſe, did grudge and repine againſt Moſes, becauſe they had no drinke, crying out that they were betrayed, becauſe there was no more water in the deſert, ſo as it had bin better for them to haue taried ſtill in Egypt, where were graues ynow to haue buried them in. God puniſhed the people with the bytings of Serpents: but yet howſoeuer they fared hee had pity vpon them, and vſed mercie towards them, ſending remedy conuenient for yͤ ſame. And yet notwithſtanding his will is to haue the name therof to continue ſtil, for a memorial to vpbraid the people with their vnthankfulneſſe. It is his pleaſure yͤ it ſhould remaine ſtill, to the intent yͤ the childrē might know yͤ their fathers were rebels: for yͤ word *Maſa* betokeneth as much as *tēptation*. Now for yͤ better vnderſtāding of yͤ things that are ſaide here, we muſt conſider what it is to tempt God: for that is done diuers wayes. But chiefly it is ſaid that we tempt God, when we be too importunate in requiring more than is lawfull for vs, and when we will needs haue further trial of his power and abilitie than pleaſeth him, ſo as we fall to ſpying of him as if we would ſay, Go to we ſhal ſee now whether God be mightie or no: let him do what wee will haue him to doe. When we go to work with ſuch outrage, & haue no modeſtie nor ſtay of our ſelues, ſo as we conſider not what is lawful for vs, but wil needs haue God to pleaſe vs without awe or meaſure: then do we tempt him. And why ſo? This word *Tempt* betokeneth properly to aſſay or trie. See nowe, God is willing to vtter his power, howbeit not at our pleaſure: neither were it reaſon that he ſhold be ſubiect vnto vs. True it is that he vſeth this amiable kind of ſpeech, that he wil doe the will of Pſa.145.19. ſuch as feare him. But this will is ment, not of an inordinate luſt when men take leaue to craue whatſoeuer commeth in their minde: but of the deſire that is ſubiect and conformable to Gods ordinance, ſo far forth as he giueth vs leaue. And by that meanes God is glorified. It is not ment yͤ he will do whatſoeuer commeth in our head: for that would oftentimes turne to our vndoing. As for example, whē he gaue the people fleſh: it had bin much better for them to haue died for hunger, Num.11.33. than to haue crammed & glutted themſelues after that faſhion vnſatiably in deſpite of God. But God performeth our wil, whē we be obediēt vnto him, & haue reſpect vnto goodnes in al our requeſts, according as S. Iohn exhorteth vs to attempt nothing further than pleaſeth him. 1.Ioh.3.22. If wee doe ſo, God will alſo pleaſure vs. But if wee come malapertly with a loftie countenance, to ſay I wil trie whether God can do this or no: [we ſhal come ſhort of our deſires.] What? Is it a conuenient faſhion of dealing, that we ſhold ſtepforth ſo to trie God, & that we wil needs haue him to giue vs proofe of his power by making himſelfe ſubiect to vs? Is it not a diueliſh malapertnes that carieth vs ſo away? Yes So then, we ſe now what is ſignified by this word *Tempt*, namely a trying of God, as though we douted of his power or abilitie, & a repining at him & a charging of him with infirmitie when he doth not whatſoeuer we luſt, ſo as we meaſure him by the things that we perceiue with our eyes. That is the temptation which is forbidden here. And indeede our Lord Ieſus Chriſt is a good & faithfull expounder of this text. For he alledgeth it to beat back Satan, as is written in the fourth of S. Mathew. Matt.4.7. Yea and yͤ diuell himſelf taketh yͤ holy ſcripture to tempt our Lorde withall, facing him with this text, It is written that God hath giuen his Angels charge Pſal.91.11. ouer thee, to beare thee vp in their hands, & not to ſuffer thee to daſh thy foote againſt a ſtone. Wel then, herevpon we may gather, yͤ God hath committed vs to the keeping of his Angels, ſo as we ſhalbe borne vp by them, & preſerued from all euill that may incounter vs. Wee muſt aſſure our ſelues of that. But yet it is ſaid therewithall, that they ſhall keepe vs in all our wayes, that is to ſay, which we haue to go in. Now then, let vs keepe on our wayes, that is to ſay, let vs looke about vs how God hath diſpoſed our life, & let vs not attempt any thing raſhly & vppon our owne head, but let euery of vs cõſider his own calling: & then we may be ſure yͭ Gods hand ſhal always be reached out ouer vs, and yͤ Angels of heauen ſhall trauel after vs: let vs not doubt of it. Neuertheles whatſoeuer come of it, let vs not paſſe the bounds & liſts yͭ he hath ſet vs; nor play the loce colts to ſay, I will go trie this or that: for yͭ were a tempting of God. Why ſo? For whoſoeuer liſteth not to take paines, but ſaieth: is not God able ynough to maintain me? He trieth gods power too far. For why? God hath promiſed that his bleſſing Pſal.128.2. ſhalbe vpon yͤ handes of them that take paines. His will is yͭ the lande ſhould be tilled, and yͭ men ſhould follow husbandrie, & other labors, euerie one according to his calling. And yet notwithſtãding if they wil needs refuſe al this, & diſdain to vſe thoſe ordinary meanes: is it not a tempting of him what hee can doe? It is all one as if I ſhold ſtep vp into yͤ pulpet, without vouchſafing to looke vpon any book, & fondly imagine to ſay thus in my ſelf: tuſh, whẽ I come thither, god will giue me ynough wherof to ſpeak, & in the mean while I holde ſcorne to reade, or to ſtudy aforehand what I ſhal ſpeake, & come hither without minding how to apply yͤ holy ſcripture to yͤ edifiing of yͤ people, by reaſon wherof I ſhould play yͤ preſumptuous foole, & God alſo would put me to ſhame for mine ouerboldneſſe. In like caſe is it with al other things. So then we ſee in effect yͭ to *tempt God*, is to be vnruly, and to omit the meanes which God giueth vs and ſetteth downe vnto vs, & to refuſe to put thẽ to their right vſe, ſo as wee wil needs haue God ſerued after our owne fond liking, and make him as it were ſubiect vnto vs. And foraſmuch as our Lord Ieſus Chriſt alledged this ſame text againſt Satan: we ſee which is the true and naturall ſenſe thereof.

Nowe then, whereas it is ſaide, *Thou ſhalt not tempt thy God*: It is al one as if Moſes had ſaid, my friends, beware ye play not mockholiday. When God is patient, and powreth not out his rigour vpon you at the firſt daſh: thinke not that therefore ye ſhal ſcape ſcotfree, neither take occaſion to fall aſleepe & to flatter your ſelues for it: but liue in feare, and preuent the wrath which God hath not yet powred out vppon you, becauſe hee ſpareth you. To be ſhort, we be ſaid to tempt god, when we abuſe his benefits which we poſſeſſe, & which he hath put into our hands, & in yͤ meane while acknowledge not him to be the founder of them. For why? vnder pretence that God dealeth gently with vs, we beare our ſelues in hande that wee may deſpiſe him. And that is a turning of his goodnes to the cleane contrary end that it ought to be applied. Doth not god apply himſelf to vs, of purpoſe to win vs, and to the end that we ſhould haue his loue ſo printed in our hearts, as we might be wholly knit vnto him and made one with him? But if euery of vs do contrariwiſe run at rouers, & deuour the goods yͭ he hath beſtowed vpon vs: is it not a tempting of him? Yes. And aboue all thinges whereas it hath pleaſed him to impart vnto vs the doctrine of ſaluation: it is to the intent wee ſhould take him for our father, and Ieſus Chriſt for our ſhepherd, and that wee ſhoulde harken to his voice. Againe he hath taken vs as it were into his houſe, to the intent we ſhould be his very houſholdfolke, applying our ſelues more and more vnto him, and bee vtterly ſeparated from yͤ vnbeleeuers, by dedicating our whole life vnto him. But on the contrarie part, if we will needs be vnruly, & yet in the mean while vaunt our ſelues of hauing the Goſpel, inſomuch yͭ we feede our ſelues with this vaine hope to ſay, O ho, ſeeing we haue Gods word, he cannot but loue vs, for it is his power to yͤ ſaluation of al that Rom.1.16. beleeue: I ſay if men dalie after this ſort, & abuſe the name of faith to make a ſhrowding ſheete of it, to the end they may giue themſelues the more boldly to all naughtines: it is a tempting of God. For inaſmuch as hee vttereth not his power at yͤ firſt daſh by thundering downe vpon them: hee ſeemeth to them to be as a little babe & a weakling, & ſo they play with him [at their pleaſure]. Therfore let vs learne to feare God: & although we perceiue not that he hath drawen his ſword, bent his bow, & made readie his arrowes againſt vs: yet let vs not tary till yͤ fire of his vengeance Pſal.7.13. be kindled vpon vs, but conſider that the ſentẽce therof ſhalbe executed vpon all yͤ deſpiſers of his maieſtie, though they feele nothing of it for a time. Thus ye ſee how we be forbidden to tempt the Lord in the time of proſperitie. To be ſhort, let vs learne to feare God while he beareth with vs. For if we ſay with theſe mockers, what I pray you? Doth not God ſhew himſelfe gracious & fauorable towards vs, in that hee doth vs ſo much good? It is all one as if we ſcorned his power and ſhould ſay, yea, it is true yͭ men threaten vs with Gods puniſhments, but where be they? wee perceiue no likelihood of them. When we ſpeake after yͤ maner, it is a defying of him, as though wee would ſay, Let vs tary a while & ſee what he can do. Yea, it is moreouer as good as a bereauing of him of his power, and a making of him to be an ydoll: and is not yͭ (in effect) a denying that he is the iudge of the world? Wherfore to yͤ intent we may not tempt God, let vs learn to liue humbly and warely. Although we bee at our eaſe & reſt, & although there be no ſhew or likelihood yͭ god wil ſend any aduerſitie or affliction vpon vs: let vs not meaſure his power by our perceiuerance, nor after yͭ which we ſee: but euẽ when his ſcourges ſeeme to be very far of from vs, let vs bee as much afraid of them, as if wee felt the ſtripes of them alredy. Thus ye ſee in effect how we ought to put this text in practiſe.

Now whereas Moſes addeth, *As ye tempted him in Maſa*: It is all one as if he had ſaid, ſeeing yee haue eſcaped for one brunt, come no more there. For whereas your God ſhewed himſelfe mercifull at that time: his meaning was that yee ſhoulde vnderſtande, that hee liſted not to be tempted. Wherfore ſeeing he hath withdrawen his hande from you, let it not be an occaſion to deceiue you hereafter, that yee ſhoulde take courage to tempt him any more: for when men prouoke him ſo often, it is not for them to looke for mercy and fauour at his hand.

Now we ſee to what purpoſe Moſes alledged the temptation wherewith the Iewes tempted God in Maſa. And thereby we bee taught, that when wee haue done any fault, wee muſt bethinke vs of it, to the intent wee may doe no more ſo. And in ſtead of taking occaſion to grudge at G O D through impatience: we muſt humble our ſelues the more vnder his awe. When wee haue offended him after that ſort, and obtained forgiuenes: it is to the ende we ſhould take the better heede all our lyfe after, and that the rememberance of our euil doing ſhould abide printed in our hearts, vntill we haue ſhewed that Gods goodnes hath booted vs as well as his ſcourges and corrections. And therefore, to bee ſhort, when God chaſtiſeth vs, let vs beware that we receiue inſtruction by it: and when he forgiueth vs, let vs looke that wee take ſuch taſte of his goodneſſe, as may inflame our heartes and mindes to honour him the more. Whereas the vnbeleeuers doe mocke God when he ſpareth them, and make no reckening of it, but beare themſelues in hand ÿ they be diſcharged, if he puniſh them not out of hand: ye ſee that the faithfull muſt by all meanes ſtirre vp themſelues to feare & honour God ſo much the more carefully and warely. When he chaſtiſeth the vnbeleeuers, they fret and ſtorme and grinde their teeth at him, and their rebellíouſnes increaſeth more and more, euen vntill it come to ſtarke madneſſe. Nowe then, whereas the vnbeleeuers are ſo frowarde, ÿ howſoeuer God deale with them they become ſtill worſe and worſe: let vs thinke well vpon this, euen to returne into the right way, whether it bee that God lift vp his hand to chaſtiſe vs, or that he make delay & pitie our infirmities as not being willing to puniſh them at all: To this purpoſe is Maſa ſpoken of in this place. And ſo, to be ſhort, when we haue cōmitted any grieuous offence I meane publikely, ſo as there is any diſorder among vs and God is offended: let vs bethinke our ſelues thus: Alas, ſeeing that God hath ſhewed himſelfe a father for all our prouoking of him, and yet neuertheleſſe receiued vs to mercie: let vs doe ſo no more. Seeing God hath pitied vs and reached vs his hand, euen when we deſerued to haue beene deſtroyed, which thing he hath not ſuffered to come to paſſe: let vs beware & take heede that wee giue not too much ſcope to our luſtes, ſo as they ſhould make vs to ſlip from him, and to ouerſhoote our ſelues ſo farre, as to run into the way of damnation. After this maner (ſay I) muſt the faithfull quicken vp themſelues, bearing in minde that when they haue once ouerſhot them ſelues, & forſaken the right way: they muſt cal thēſelues home againe to walk aweſully euer after, and betake thēſelues into Gods hand, ÿ he may guide them & not ſuffer thē to be ſo ouerſeene any more. Alſo we muſt doe the like particularly. When any man ſhal haue bin ouerſeen for a time, and not haue dealt ſo warely as hee ought to haue doone, euen after hee knoweth Gods trueth: let him bethinke himſelfe thus: Alas, I haue bene vnthankefull to my God, and for as much as I haue ſtarted away from him, I am worthie to bee vtterly confounded: but yet hath not he ſuffered that to come to paſſe. Now then what is to bee done on my part? It is not meete that I ſhoulde forget the faultes which I haue committed, but that I ſhould thinke vpon them, and beare the bitterneſſe of them ſtill about mee in my heart. After that manner muſt euerie of vs deale, ſay I: not as diſtruſting God, or to prouoke our ſelues to any deſpayre: but to reyne our ſelues the ſhorter, and to holde our ſelues the more in awe. For as ſoone as a man doeth but lift himſelfe vp, by and by he ouerſhooteth himſelfe if God let him alone. That is the thing which wee haue to note in this text, where Moſes ſayeth that they muſt not tempt God, as they tempted him once afore in Maſa. And for the ſame cauſe and to the ſame purpoſe alſo is it ſpoken of in the Pſalme, where it is ſaid, To day if ye heare his voyce harden not your heartes as your fathers did in the wilderneſſe. Pſal.95.7.8 This is ſpoken expreſſely of the temptation that Moſes toucheth here. See how the Prophet warneth the people, yea and that deſirouſly, as if he ſhould ſay, very well, if ye bee ſo teachable as to hearken to your God, ſeeing he doeth now exhort you to come vnto him, refuſe it not: for this benefite ſhal not laſt alwayes to them that make delay and are neuer mooued to obey him, but driue of from day to day when he calleth them. And therefore, if ye heare his voyce (ſayeth he) nowe when God calleth you. He vſeth there a vehemencie as though he could not finde words fit to exhort the people and ſufficiently to prick them forwarde. In that hee ſaieth, Goe to my freindes, bee well aduiſed that you harden not your heartes: he ſheweth what is the cauſe of al miſcheife, and why we profit no better by Gods teaching of vs. Namely that beſides that we bee full of naughtineſſe, and ſo ſinfull by nature, that whereas our heartes ought to be ſuſteined to receaue that which God ſayeth, it may ſeeme that wee intende of ſet purpoſe to harden them againſt him: we doe moreouer fall to ſtomacking againſt him with a certaine ſpitefulneſſe, as if we would ſay, what care I to obey God? Shall I bee brideled of my will like a beaſt? Beware of that ſayeth he: for ye knowe what happened to your Fathers. The Prophet caſteth them in the teeth with the thinges that had beene done by their forefathers in olde time, to the intent they ſhoulde not boaſt of their deſcending from the holy Patriarkes. Beholde ſaieth he, your forefathers were rebels: & how thē haue you continued vnto this day? Is it not through Gods mercie? Yes: for ye ſhoulde haue periſhed vtterly. Againe, ſeeing your God hath pitied you being Abraham his race: thinke not that he will haue ye to runne backe againe, ſo as ye ſhould bee alwayes newe to begin. For when he hath borne with you a while, he muſt bee faine to make you pay your arrerages all at once. Thus ye ſee that the way for vs to put this ſentence in practiſe, is to vnderſtand that when God ſhall haue pardoned our faultes oftentimes, hee ſhall haue iuſt cauſe to puniſh vs the more grieuouſly, if wee ceaſſe not to prouoke him ſtill, but will needes bee the boulder to doe euill, vnder pretence that hee hath not vſed extremity towardes vs. If God ſee that in vs: hee can well call vs to account for all the thinges that hee had pardoned before. For his pardoning of vs is with condition, that we ſhould humble our ſelues, and conſider all our life after, how much we be beholden vnto him. If an offender haue obtained fauour, and thereupon he fall to ſpyting of him to whom he is beholdē for his life, within a day or twaine after: doeth he not deſerue to haue his former lewdneſſe brought to remembrance againe, and to be reckened withall frō point to point, and to haue his vnthankfulnes laid afore him, for his abuſing of the fauour ẏ had bin ſhewed him? Yes: and thinke we that our Lord will haue leſſe right than mortall men? Thinke we then that his ſhewing of fauour vnto vs, is to the intent to make vs bolder to doe euill? No, but rather his dooing of it is to the intent wee ſhoulde all our life after beare our offence in minde and bee ſorie for it: accordingly alſo as wee ſee howe the good king Eſa 38.15. Ezechias ſpeaketh of the bitterneſſe of his heart, when he ſayeth, that he will bee mindefull of the euill and of the offence that he had committed. Not but that he reioyced in Gods goodneſſe, but that yet neuertheleſſe hee would beare it in remembrance, to the intent he might not let himſelfe ſlip any more, nor be any more ſurpriſed by the wylineſſe of Satan.

Now after that Moſes hath ſpoken ſo, he addeth: *Ye ſhall diligently keepe the commaundements, Statutes, and Lawes of your God which I ſet before you this day, that you may enter into the land which he promiſed to your fathers with an othe, and he driue out all your enemies before you.* Here we bee put in minde of the thing that hath beene told vs before: that is to wit, that whereas Moſes vſeth many wordes to expreſſe the Lawe, it is no ſuperfluous ſpeech, but ſerueth to induce folke the better, to profite in the doctrine that is giuē them. As if he ſhould ſay, Giue good eare: for behold, your God taketh paines with you. Like as a ſchoolemaiſter taketh paines to teach the children that are committed to his charge: ſo doth God apply himſelfe to you, giuing you his Law orderly and diſtinctly, to the end ye ſhould not be greatly combered to vnderſtand what he ſaieth concerning his will. Here therfore are his Statutes, Ordinances, & Iudgementes. As if he ſhoulde ſay, the doctrine is ſet foorth vnto you in good order, ſo that if you can finde in your hearts to hearken to your God, and to receiue ẏ which he ſhall ſay, you need not dout but you ſhall be taught faithfully by his word, & haue knowledge of al things ẏ are good and conuenient for you. The firſt thing then which Moſes ment to expreſſe by theſe wordes *Iudgementes ſtatutes, & Ordinances,* is ẏ our Lord taketh paine to teach vs whatſoeuer is good for vs, and ẏ he vſeth ſuch order, as we cannot ſay that his word is too high and confuſed for vs. And therewithall his intent is alſo to hold mē wholly to the pure obedience of the lawe, and to the ſimplicitie therein contained, as if he ſhould ſay: My friends, Gods meaning is, not onely ẏ ye ſhould be attentiue in hearing what he ſaith to you, but alſo ẏ your onely wiſedome ſhould be to obey him, & not to inuent any nouelties, ſo as ye ſhould think to ſerue him after your owne fanſie, according to the cōmon faſhion of mē, who haue alwayes ſome fooliſh deſire to change Gods word. No, ſaieth he. If ye can beare in minde the leſſons of the Law, ye ſhall haue ſtatutes, Iudgements and ordinances, ſo as ye ſhal not want any thing whereby ye may be taught in all perfection. This hath bin expoūded alreadie heretofore: and therefore I ſtande not long vppon it. Neuertheleſſe the repeating of it here againe by the holy Ghoſt, is not without cauſe: and therefore I muſt needes put you briefly in rememberance thereof, as oft as thoſe wordes are ſet downe.

Now Moſes ſaieth expreſſely, *That theſe Commaundements, Ordinances and Lawes muſt be done & kept.* As if he ſhould ſay, that God will not haue his word to fall to the ground. His ſetting foorth of it, is to the end that we on our ſide ſhould bee attentiue to hearken what he ſaith to vs. And ſo let vs marke well that it is not ynough for vs to allowe Gods worde in ſpeeche, by ſaying it is true: but we muſt alſo bee diligent in keeping it all our life long. And for further proofe of that which he had ſaid, he addeth, *Thou ſhalt doe that which is right & good in the ſight of God.* Herein he ſheweth vs, that we muſt not doe whatſoeuer ſeemeth good to our ſelues, nor followe our owne good intentes, as they terme them. And he will ſet out this matter yet better in another place Deut.12.8. which we ſhal ſee hereafter. For there he wil forbid men expreſly to do the things ẏ ſeeme right in their owne eyes: for whatſoeuer ſeemeth excellent vnto vs, ſhalbe condemned for abhominable Luke.16.15. at Gods hand, as is ſaid in S.Luke. Therefore let vs take good heede ẏ we ouerſhoote not our ſelues in our conceites to ſay, How ſo? Why ſhould not God allow this for good, ſeeing we do it to ſuch a purpoſe? ſeeing wee be deſirous to obey him? Yea, but how will he be obeyed? Not ẏ men ſhould be Iudges & Vmpers of the things ẏ they do, to ſay this is good, or ẏ is euill: he reſerueth ẏ authoritie to himſelf alone. Now then, will we order our life aright? Let vs not open our eyes to be wiſe in our owne conceites, for we ſee that ẏ hath coſt vs deare. Wee ſee (I ſay) ẏ our father Adam ſaw too much, when he could not content himſelfe with the meaſure ẏ was giuen him. And therefore let vs not be too ſharpe ſighted to ſay, I finde ẏ this is good, & therfore it muſt be done. Curſed be ſuch wiſdome: for it is a diueliſh pride. Will we then be allowed of our God? Let vs take good heede to that which he ſpeaketh: for whatſoeuer is right in his eyes, muſt needes be allowed in the end: & the things which we ſhall haue imagined to haue bene beſt, ſhall be condemned when wee bring them before him. For why? He ſeeth more clearely than wee doe: he knoweth things which wee knowe not. And therefore he miſliketh all our imaginations, & will haue vs to followe the thinges which he vttereth with his mouth, ſimply without mingling any thing of our owne. For the verie ſacrifice that he requireth at our handes, is that wee ſhould ſerue him obediently, and therewithall learne to diſtruſt al 1.Sam.15.22.23. our owne ſtrength, wit, and reaſon, and not to preſume vppon any thing that wee our ſelues haue inuented: (for all that euer our mindes can conceiue, is but follie, vanitie, and leaſing:) but to bee well aduiſed that we doe the things which are good and right in the eyes of the Lord, that is to ſay, that we frame our whole life according to his commaundements.

But now let vs come to the promiſe. *That thou maiſt goe into the land (ſaith he) which the Lord hath ſworne to thy fathers, to poſſeſſe it.* Here we ſee how God is deſirous to win the heartes of his people by gentleneſſe, in ſetting the poſſeſſion of the land of Chanaan before them, for a reward and inheritance. As if he ſhould ſay, Truth it is that yee bee bounde to ſerue mee: but yet will I not haue yee to ſerue mee for nought: beholde, the recompence that is prepared for you, is that ye ſhall poſſeſſe the land of Chanaan. But yet wee muſt alwayes marke with what condition. It was not ỹ the people ſhould liue there at reſt like ſwine in a ſtie: but ſo as the land might bee as a pledge of the endleſſe lyfe, and that they might conſider thus: God hath adopted vs to bee his heires: and therefore let vs mount vp hygher to the euerlaſting lyfe. See heere how GOD telleth vs, that if wee ſerue him, hee will keepe touche with vs, ſo as wee ſhall poſſeſſe the lande that hee hath promiſed vs. Nowe heere wee ſee firſt the thing that I haue touched already: that is to wit, that God ſtoopeth to mens rudeneſſe and infirmity, in promiſing them recompence though hee bee not bound thereto. Marke that for one poynt. But by the waye wee haue to marke alſo, that God bindeth not himſelfe as though wee could deſerue aught. For he ſaith not, I will giue you the land for the ſeruice you haue doone to mee, as a thing that you haue earned: but, you ſhall goe into the lande which I promiſed to your fathers. Heere are two thinges vttered couertly. The one is that God promiſed the lande of his owne meere goodneſſe, and not as a due debt that had beene deſerued at his hande. For the promiſe thereof had bine made before the people was borne: foure hundred and thyrtie yeeres before their departure out of Egypt, God had ſayd vnto Abraham, this land ſhall be thine and thy ſeedes. Let vs note then that this people had not deſerued aught at Gods hande, and that the reward which is mentioned heere, befell them not in reſpect of their workes. Marke that for a ſpecially poynt. And God telleth vs alſo, that hee termeth the thing by the name of *Hyre*, [*Recompence*, & *Wages*,] which he giueth vs onely of his owne free liberalitie, without being bounde thereto by any kind of meanes, and without any deſert at all at our handes. And why? To the intent that men ſhould bee prouoked to ſerue him, and not that they ſhould become proude, or father any thing vpon themſelues which God ſhoulde accept for payment or admit for any recompence. And this wee ſee euen in Abraham himſelfe. Gen.17.1. For before hee had doone any thing at all God ſayd vnto him, I am thine abundant recompence: Abraham, I haue giuen thee this land: I will bee thy God, and the God of thy ſeede after thee: I will be thy defender. Yee ſee then that all the promiſes which are poſſible to bee wiſhed, were giuen of God vnto Abraham before he had ſhewed any ſigne of faith or of the feare of God. But when he was willing to haue ſacrificed his ſonne Iſaac: our Lorde ſayd I will bleſſe my ſeruaunt Abraham, bicauſe hee hath feared mee, and ſeeing hee hath not ſpared his owne ſonne for the loue of me, I will multiplie my bleſſinges vpon him. And that was ſaide afore. But God giueth ſo much the greater beautie to his goodneſſe, of purpoſe to ſtrengthen Abrahams heart, not that hee intended to exalt Abrahams deſertes that hee might preſume of himſelfe: but to make him know, my God hath of his own mere mercie giuen me the thing ỹ he promiſed me, I had the promiſe of it long agoe, and now he ſheweth that he accepteth my ſeruice, in aſmuch as he performeth the promiſe that he made to me of his owne free goodneſſe. Thus we ſee howe we ought to take the textes of holy ſcripture, where god behighteth vs recompence. We muſt not conclude therevppon that wee deſerue aught, or that our workes are of any valew, or that God is any thing bounde vnto vs: but that he doth it to quicken vs vp & to harten vs the better to ſerue him, in as much as our labours are not loſt before him, but are made account of and redound to our benefit. Nowe then we ſee what is ỹ meaning of theſe wordes where Moſes ſheweth the people that ỹ Lande had bin promiſed to their forefathers by othe, before they whom he ſpeaketh to were borne.

Now for a concluſion let vs come to this ſaying, *That thou maieſt driue out all thine enemies before thee.* Herein Moſes doth the people to wit, that nō let can hinder them from poſſeſſing the land, ſo they ſerue their God. True it is that the land of Chanaan had people in it at that time to keepe poſſeſſion of it, & we perceiue how ỹ ſpies brought word ỹ they were Giantes, and ſuch as would haue ſwallowed vp the people of God. It ſhold ſeeme therfore to haue bin impoſſible for thē to haue ſet foote within ỹ land. But God told them ỹ although his people were barred from al enterance to mans vnderſtanding: yet would he open them the way by his infinite power, ſo they inclined to ſerue him. Now remaineth that wee apply this to our own vſe. Firſt of all let vs mark, that whenſoeuer God calleth vs to his ſeruice, his promiſing of reward vnto vs, (not onely in this tranſitorie lyfe, but alſo in the kingdome of heauen) is not to puffe vs vp with ſelfweening, or to make vs to beleeue that wee haue deſerued aught: but onely to quicken vp our ſlouthfulneſſe: and bicauſe wee bee ſo laſie in ſeruing him, his intent is to ſpurre vs forewarde by that meanes. Therefore let vs take courage: and ſeeing wee looſe not our labour in imploying our ſelues in Gods ſeruice, let vs goe to it diligently and luſtily. And whereas he behighteth vs reward: let vs aſſure our ſelues it is not bicauſe our Rom.3.20. workes deſerue it, but bicauſe that he of his own Eph 2.9. infinite goodneſſe taketh them in good woorth, and giueth that tytle vnto them. Let that ſerue for one poynt.

And let vs marke heerewithall, that whereas God calleth vs to his inheritance, although he doe it freely: yet is it with condition that wee behaue our ſelues as trew children towards him, and conſider that hee calleth vs vnto holyneſſe. Eph.1.4.5.6 & 2,10. And in deede the very ende why hee calleth vs to bee his people and of his flocke, is not that he will haue vs to be intangled and held backe ſtill in this worlde: but to ſanctifie our ſelues vnto him that wee may liue holily vnder his obedience, for as much as he hath waſhed and clenſed vs by the blood of our Lorde Ieſus Chriſte. And Gods calling of vs thereunto, is not for our woorkes ſakes, but for his owne mercie. Now if vnder colour heereof, wee will needes ſtand facing with him: I haue tould you already what will come of it. Therefore let vs haue regard to matche the thinges together which are inſeparable: that is to wit, the free goodneſſe of our God, and the condition thereunto annexed, which is that hee be ſerued and honored at our handes. And beſides this, although wee ſee neuer ſo great lettes, which may ſeeme to barre vs from all entraunce into the kingdome of heauen, and that wee be caſt vp heere for a pray vnto Sathan, and we haue ſo many enemies that our life is as it weere in hazarde euery minute of an houre: yet let vs not ceaſe to hope, Pſal.85,10. and to beleeue that our Lorde will keepe vs ſafe and ſure, if wee walke in his feare. Then let vs not paſſe for all the worlde. Although it ſeeme that all thinges ſhould be turned vpſidowne: yet let not all the troubles and incōberances which we ſee in the world, ſtoppe vs frō going through to the end: but let vs reaſon thus with our ſelues, who is he that hath taken vs into his keeping? Is it not our God? Is it not he which hath promiſed vs the inheritaunce of the kingdome of heauen? Yes. Then is it his office to holde vs by ſtrong hande. True it is that wee on our part are feeble: but yet his onely power will bee ynough to ſtrengthen vs. True it is that we be inuironed with many enemies: but yet our God is a good ſhield, he wilbe an inuincible fortreſſe for vs, ſo 2.Sa.22,31. wee put our truſt in him. We haue his promiſe that hee will neuer fayle vs. Thus yee ſee that God hauing once begun the worke of our ſaluation, Phil.1.6. will goe through with it in ſuche ſorte, as wee may glory that his calling of vs vnto him is not in vaine, nor to diſappoint vs of our hope, wherein hee will haue vs to continue vnto the ende.

Now let vs kneele downe in the preſence of our good God with acknowledgement of our faultes, praying him that whereas heeretofore we haue abuſed his power and might too much, we may henſefoorth be more diligent in practiſing his iudgementes and corrections, and ſo make our commodity of them, as the warninges which hee hath giuen vs may neuer out of our remembraunce: and that as long as it ſhal pleaſe him to maintaine vs in proſperytie and quiet, we may be watchfull and ſtand vpon our garde, ſo as wee turne not from the right way, ne tary till he powre out his vengeance vpon vs, but indeuour to preuent it, as we bee warned to doe: and alſo that in al our lyfe we may continually ſo repent vs of our ſinnes, as we may ſtill trauell the better towardes him, vntill hee haue gathered vs fully to himſelfe, to frame vs to the perfection of the righteouſneſſe whereunto wee tend as nowe. That it may pleaſe him to graunt this grace, not onely to vs, but alſo to all people and nations of the earth, &c.

On Wedneſday the laſt of Iuly. 1555.

The L. Sermon, which is the ſixth vpon the ſixth Chapter.

20 When thy child asketh thee in time to come, ſaying: What are theſe teſtimonies, Ordinaunces, and lawes which the Lorde our God hath commaunded you?

21 Then ſhalt thou ſay to thy chyld, Wee were Pharaoſe bondfolke in Egypt: but the Lord brought vs out of Egypt with a mightie hand.

22 And the Lord wrought ſignes and miracles great and euill, vppon Egypt, and vpon Pharao and all his houſe before our eyes,

23 And brought vs out thence, to bring vs in [hither,] and to giue vs the land which he had ſworne to our fathers.

24 And the Lorde commaunded vs to keepe all theſe ordinaunces, and to feare the Lorde our God, that wee might alwayes proſper and liue as wee doe this day.

25 And it ſhall bee counted vnto vs for righteouſneſſe, if wee keepe and doe all theſe commaundementes before the Lorde our God, as he hath commaunded vs.

HEere wee haue two reaſons to marke why Moſes commaundeth, that ſuch as were to come after that time, ſhould be tolde why God gaue his Lawe to the Iewes, and why he woulde haue them gouerned after that maner. The one is, that it is good reaſon that Gods name ſhould be magnifyed in all ages, and that wee ſhoulde indeuour to the vttermoſt of our power, that it decay not with vs, but continue ſtill vnappayred, and floriſhe and reigne, euen after wee be dead. The other reaſon is, that hee intended to quicken vp the Iewes to ſerue God with the better courage, by putting them in minde of the deliuerance which God had wrought for them: for needes muſt they haue bin too vnthankefull, if that had not prouoked them to ſerue God. Now then the intent of Moſes, is that thoſe to whom he had declared the Lawe, ſhould not onely indeuour themſelues to ſerue GOD during their owne liues: but alſo finde the meanes that their children and ſucceſſors ſhould followe them in the ſame trace. And this leſſon belongeth to vs as well as to them. For wee know that God calleth vs with the ſame condition, not onely that we our ſelues ſhould ſerue and honor him to our liues end: but alſo that we ſhould haue a care to cauſe them that come after vs to doe the lyke. Verily there are very few that diſchardge themſelues in that behalfe: but yet are we bound vnto it, and there will be no excuſe for vs, if wee doe not our indeuour. Therefore let euery man haue an eye to himſelfe, and let vs not thinke it enough to haue ſerued God ſo long as wee our ſelues liue: but [that we muſt alſo find yͤ meanes] that his name may continue for euer, and that his trueth may [alwayes] bee knowen, ſo as although wee bee taken out of the world, yet they that come after vs being taught by our meanes, may linke in with vs into the ſame fayth, and ſo faſhion themſelues thereunto, as God may alwayes be gloryfyed & honored vnto the worldes end. And ſpecially they yͤ haue children ought to thinke that it is they to whom this warning is giuen. True it is that euery one of vs is bound thereto for himſelfe, yea and we muſt teach euẽ the moſt ſtraungers: ſo as the man needeth not to be my ſonne, or my nephew, or my kinſeman, whom I ſhould indeuour to cauſe to ſerue God & to be of the ſame faith and religion that I am of: but yet they which haue children ought to conſider that they ſhall yeelde account for it, if they doe not what they can to hold them in the feare of God, and to ſee them ſo inſtructed and ſtabliſhed in the pure doctrine, as they may continue in it, and as the knowledge of Gods trueth may ſtill be conueied ouer from hand to hand. Thus yee ſee what we haue to remember vppon this place where Moſes ſayth, *If thy childe aske hereafter what theſe commaundementes, ſtatutes, and ordinances meane.*

Now there is alſo a ſecond poynt: which is, that Moſes intended to ſtirre vp the people to honor God and to obey him, becauſe they had bin deliuered by his mighty hand. Therefore it is all one as if hee ſhould ſay, Bethinke your ſelues well of the good which your GOD hath done for you: for he hath ſhewed himſelfe to be your redeemer: hee hath ſmitten the realme of Egypt, a people that did ſet greatly by themſelues, yea and which was rich and wealthie, and where was nothing but all maner of pompe and glory to the worldward: and yet notwithſtanding, your God hath loued you ſo dearely, that he hath not ſpared the Egyptians for your ſakes, but hee hath ſmitten them with plagues, and powred out ſuch vengeance vpon them, as is horrible to thinke of: Hee hath ſtretched out his ſtrong arme to bring you to this land which hee promiſed to your fathers. Seeing then that God hath ſhewed himſelfe ſo gratious and liberall towardes you, and preuented you of purpoſe to be your father: is it not reaſon that you ſhould giue your ſelues to him all your lyfe long, and indeuour to ſerue him, and at leaſtwiſe ſhew that yee haue not forgotten his ſo great and ineſtimable benefites? Yes. And ſo wee ſee that foraſmuch as the Iewes might bee negligent in keeping Gods lawe: Moſes renewed the remembraunce thereof, and ſet their deliuerance before them, that they might bee the better minded, and conſider that they were bound, at leaſtwiſe to ſerue GOD in ſuch wiſe, as they might acknowledge themſelues to bee the ſame people whome hee had once deliuered after a maruellous faſhion, and with wonderful power. Like as at this day, if a man ſhould ſpeake to vs of the Chriſtian religion and ſay, Beholde, our GOD hath vouchſafed to make vs partakers of the redemption which hee wrought in the perſon of his Sonne: and therefore it is good reaſon that wee ſhoulde bee gathered here together vnder his worde, to take him for our father and Sauour, becauſe hee hath choſen vs to bee his people.

And whereas Moſes declareth that the Iewes were deliuered out of Aegypt: hee meaneth to doe vs to witte, that God intended to ſhoule them out from all other nations, ſpecially by aſſigning them the inheritaunce of the Lande which hee had promiſed to their fathers. Yee ſee then how they ſhould haue ſanctifyed themſelues to the ſeruice of God, and haue held thẽſelues in obedience to his law, becauſe he ſuffered them not to be intermingled with yͤ infidels, but made a ſeuerall nation of them alone by thẽſelues. And hereupon we haue to note, yͤ ſuch as ſeeke counſell at Gods law, doe alwayes finde inſtruction, & our Lord procureth them ayde & help to bring thẽ to the knowledge of the truth. It is ſayd, *If thy ſonne aske thee, what meane theſe ſtatutes?* He preſuppoſeth that the children are not ſo brutiſh, as at leaſtwiſe not to be willing & deſirous to knowe why they vſe ſuch maner of ſeruing God. And wee ſee it is Gods ordinance, that the fathers ſhould helpe their children. True it is that the fathers ought not to tary for that, but if they ſee their children to be deſpiſers of God, or vnruly, and careleſſe both of the ſaluation of their owne ſoules and of all Chriſtianitie and fayth: they ought to correct ſuch vices. But the matter which wee treate of as now, is that if children bee willing to learne and to profite, God here aſſigneth them their fathers to be their teachers and ſchoolemaſters, to ſhewe them why the lawe was giuen. Herein then wee ſee, that if wee haue any good will to knowe the trueth, our Lorde will not ſuffer vs to bee diſappoynted, but wil finde the meanes that wee ſhall know whatſoeuer hee thinketh profitable for our ſaluation. And although hee appoynt not mortall creatures to teach vs: yet will hee worke in ſuch wiſe by his owne power, as wee ſhall not bee deſtitute of knowledge. But our owne ſlothfulneſſe is the cauſe that GOD ſhutteth the gate againſt vs, and that wee abide ſtill in darkneſſe lyke blinde wretches. For what is hee that vouchſafeth, to ſeeke after the will of his GOD? Wee bee giuen to worldly thinges to our owne pleaſures, to our owne vanities, and to all manner of worldly buſineſſes: and in the meane while God is let alone, and his lawe is forgotten. And therefore it is not to bee wondered at, that hee hardeneth vs in ſuch brutiſhnes, and that there is ſo groſſe ignorance in the world, as fewe folke haue the true taſte and ſauor of the doctrine of ſaluation, but rather wee ſee that all men deſpiſe it, and are ſo farre off from hauing any affection and zeale to the knowing of it, that they doe rather thruſt it from them when it is offered them, and when GOD ſeeketh them, they runne from him. Sith wee ſee ſuch vnthankefulneſſe euerywhere, is it any maruell that our Lorde reuealeth not his trueth as hee would doe, if men were well minded towardes it? It is true that God taryeth not till wee come vnto him, but rather performeth that

Esa.65.1. which hee ſayth by his prophet Eſay, namely that hee appeareth to them that aske not after him, and that hee is found of them that ſeeke him not, inſomuch that hee ſayth to them that are farre off from him, Lo, here I am. Yet notwithſtanding, men muſt not vnder this color that God reacheth them his hand, and draweth them out of the dungeons of ignorance before they euer thought vppon him, men (I ſay) muſt not flatter and fode themſelues in their careleſneſſe: but rather wee muſt learne according to this text, that whereas wee bee ignorant of the trueth, wee muſt at leaſtwiſe doe our indeuer to get knowledge of it, and reſorte to ſuch as wee thinke that God hath reuealed more vnto, than to our ſelues. If wee doe ſo, and with all humilitie ſeeke to knowe the thinges that are auaileable to our ſaluation: God will ſhewe himſelfe to vs, and giue vs ſuch meanes and helpes as he knoweth to be expedient for vs. And although mortall men faile vs: yet will hee ſo ſupply our want by the power of his holy ſpirite, as wee ſhall not continue ſtill in darkeneſſe, if wee ſeeke ÿ light: for he wil not ſhut ÿ dore againſt vs if we

Matt.7.7 & Luk.11.9.10 knock, & do our indeuer to enter. Thus ye ſee in effect what we haue to remember vppon ÿ text.

Furthermore it behoueth vs to marke, that here God ſheweth not the end of his commandements, what is ment by them and to what vſe he hath appoynted thẽ. He doth not onely ſhew, that the people were iuſtly bound to keepe the lawe that was giuen them, ſeeing that God had bought them ſo dearly. Here are two things. The one is that inaſmuch as God hath giuen vs his worde, hee doth well deſerue that wee ſhould yeelde him obedience. Why ſo? Becauſe we be his creatures, and hee hath voutſafed to gather vs together vnto him, to bee his people and to fight vnder his ſtandard, and hath made vs to bee of his flocke and of his Church. Marke that for one poynt.

The other is, that wee ſhould know to what end hee hath giuen vs his Sacraments, ſo as we haue the preceptes of his whole Lawe, which pertaine to the exerciſing of vs in his feare and in the hope of our ſaluation: and to what end he hath ſet ſuch order among vs as wee now haue. Wee muſt knowe what is meant by all this. Neuertheleſſe, this briefeneſſe will bee darkeſome, if it be not declared better. When wee conſider how God hath created & ſhaped vs, and moreouer made vs after his owne image, and giuen vs witte and reaſon, and therewithall the hope of a better life, and finally hath voutſafed to take vs as his houſhold folke: it ſheweth vs that wee bee bound to ſubmit our ſelues vnto him. For ſeeing hee is our maker: doe wee not owe him all obedience? Nay there is yet more: namely that in the perſon of our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt Act.20.28.
his ſonne, hee hath redeemed vs and made vs partakers of his Goſpell, to the ende that wee Eph.1.9.10
ſhould bee guided by his hand. Now then, the firſt poynt is that when we haue knowledge, it muſt ſtirre vs vp to ſerue God, & to ſticke to the pure religion that is comprehended in his word. Howbeit this is not enough: but whẽ we be asked yet neerer, Wherfore ÿ promiſes of ÿ forgiuenes of ſins are giuen vs: [wee muſt anſwere,] Alas, Ro.3.23.
it is becauſe we be wretched ſinners, & we ſhould be continually in anguiſh and ſorrowe of minde, if we knewe not that God is cõtented to be mercifull vnto vs of his owne meere grace. For hee cannot loue vs except we be righteous: and wee ſhall neuer finde any holyneſſe in our lyfe, or Pſal.11.5.
perfection in our vertues: but it is through Gods mercie, which it pleaſeth him to extend towards vs. And ſo now yee ſee whereunto the promiſes tend.

Againe, if it be demaunded of vs why hee hath appoynted the order of prayer, as wel publique as priuate: it is for that euery of vs ought to inure himſelfe to ſeeke all his ſuccor at his hand. For wee haue not any good thing, wee be deſtitute both of wiſedome, ſtrength, and Rom.3.23.
righteouſneſſe, wee bee woorſe than emptie, vntill our good God doe ſuccor our needes: and the meane thereof, is to flee to him for refuge. To that end hath hee ordeined priuate prayer. And publique or common prayer is ordeined to the intent to aſſure vs the better, that hee will here the common accorde that is among vs, when wee bee come together as it were into one bodie: and therewithall wee make confeſſion of our faith & exerciſe our charitie. By this meanes then we learne, why and to what end our Lorde hath ſet order in his Churche, that is to ſay, what

what he meant to betoken thereby, and to what purpoſe it is to be referred.

If a man aske vs what is meant by Baptiſme, and wherefore it was ordeined: it is to the intent wee ſhould know, that euen from our mothers wombe wee bring nothing but all maner of vncleaneſſe with vs, and that wee be ful of infection and filth before the Lord, ſo as wee muſt be faine to bee waſhed, or elſe hee will not vouchſafe to auowe vs for his. And wherewithall muſt wee be waſhed? With the bloud of our Lord Ieſus Chriſt. That then is the way to make vs cleane. For as long as wee liue in Adam and in our owne nature, wee can doe nothing but euill. Wee bee ſo marred, as there is nothing in vs but vtter rebelliouſneſſe againſt G O D. Therefore wee muſt enter as it were into death, and into the graue, to bee renewed, and our Lord muſt bee faine to giue vs a new vnderſtanding, and a new heart, and he muſt ſo ſhape vs new againe, as we may no more be the ſame we were before, but bee (as yee would ſay) caſt in a newe mould, and bee made new creatures, as the ſcripture vſeth to ſpeake of it. Thus ye ſee how wee may learne what Baptiſme is, what it betokeneth, and to what end it was ordeyned.

Eph.5.26. 27.
1.Iohn 1.7.
Rom.6.4.
Eph.4.23. 24.

As touching the Lordes ſupper: if it bee inquired of vs why wee come together to receiue a bit of bread: and a draught of wine: it is in way of acknowledgement that our ſoules haue neede of foode, no leſſe than our bodies, and that as there is ſuch frailetie in this preſent lyfe, as it cannot continue without the helpes of meate and drinke, ſo muſt our ſoules alſo bee mainteined after lyke ſorte, by reaſon of the infirmitie that is in them. Neuertheleſſe our ſoules are not nouriſhed with the corruptible meates of this world, but it is the ſonne of God that is our foode. Wee then haue Ieſus Chriſt, who is our lyfe, it is hee of whome wee haue ſuſtenance and nouriſhment, foraſmuch as hee was offered in ſacrifice for vs, and the bloud that he did ſhed for our ſaluation is our drinke. Thus ye ſee how we nowadayes may learne whereunto yͤ ordinãces do tẽd which God hath ſtabliſhed in his Church, and to what end they be to be referred.

Iohn 6.53. 54.55.56.
Matt.26.26. 28.
1.Cor.11.24

In lyke caſe was it vnder the lawe. For God ordeyned not the ceremonies without further conſideration of ſome reaſon in them. It is true that hee meant to ſeparate his people from all the heathen and vnbeleeuers of the earth: but yet in the meane while, the waſhinges which they vſed were done, to ſhewe that they were full of naughtineſſe as well as wee, and that it ſtood them in hand to ſeeke the meanes to bee made cleane. The ſacrifices were a witneſſe that they were worthy to bee condemned to euerlaſting death, and that there was none other ſhift for them, but to flee to the ſacrifice wherby they ſhould bee reconciled to God. The Sanctuary betokened that no man but onely Ieſus Chriſt might enter into Gods kingdome, nor come nye it: and that by his meanes all nations haue acceſſe thither, and that all ſuch as are vnworthie in reſpect of their owne perſons, are brought in thither by that mediator. To be ſhorte, all the ceremonies of the Lawe had ſome certeine vſe, and ſerued to trayne the people to put their truſt in the redeemer that was promiſed them. And that was the cauſe why Moſes was commaunded to make all things according to the ſpirituall patterne which hee had ſeene on the mount. For Moſes builded not the Tabernacle, otherwiſe than G O D had giuen him the patterne of it. And all was to ſhewe, that there was a conformable reſemblance betweene the outward thinges, and the trueth which was to bee manifeſted in our Lord Ieſus Chriſt. But in the text Moſes ſpeaketh but of the firſt, and that is the cauſe why I ſayd, that it behoued vs to haue an eye to his meaning. For it was enough for him to ſay, go too my friendes, you which haue ſeene the redemption that G O D hath wrought, you (ſay I) ought to conſider how much you bee bound vnto him. Therefore make account of the doctrine of the Lawe, and frame your whole lyfe therafter, that it may be as an acknowledgement of the deliuerance which you haue receiued at his hand. And when ye ſhall haue walked thereafter all the time of your lyfe: looke well to it that you teach your children alſo, ſo as Gods ſeruice may continue among you, and neuer decay nor bee aboliſhed. That is the playne meaning of Moſes.

Deut.4.8.
Heb.9.10. & 10.3.& 11. 12.
Heb.9.7.& 10.18.
Heb.7.19.
Heb.8.5.

Furthermore let vs vnderſtand that wee muſt conſider, that the Lawe was not inuented at the pleaſure of men, neither was it founded by them: but God was the giuer thereof, who holdeth vs vnder his gouernement, and it is his trueth which we followe, ſo as wee holde not any whit of thinges inuented by men. That is the thing whereon wee muſt reſt, that we may not bee alwayes wauering and doubtfull. And hereby wee knowe how wretched the ſtate of the papiſtes is: for they bee ſtubborne and wilfull in their own imaginations. If a man aske thẽ of whõ they hold their ſuperſtitiõs: they alledge their fathers, they alledge long antiquitie, they alledge yͤ common faſhion of yͤ whole world: but in yͤ meane while they haue no certeintie yͭ their doinges pleaſe God, or yͭ he alloweth thẽ, whereas in very deed the thing yͭ God leadeth vs vnto is yͭ we ſhould be ſure that we haue not ne holde not any thing yͭ is brought vs at aladuenture: but yͭ the doctrine of our faith is yͤ pure truth. Seeing then that God commaundeth vs ſo to doe. let vs aſſure our ſelues yͭ to liue as becommeth vs, wee muſt haue this certeintie yͭ wee be gouerned by Gods word, & that yͤ ſame is yͤ rule of our fayth, & that yͤ religion which wee ſticke vnto is yͤ true religiõ. Now therefore we may profite our ſelues by this text, ſith we ſe yͭ yͤ meaning of Moſes was, yͭ the people ſhould know, yͭ the Law was not deuiſed by men, but that God was the author of it. And euen at this day the Lawe muſt beare this ſway with vs, yͭ wee muſt know to what purpoſe it was giuẽ. Beſides this, although there be nothing ſet down here cõcerning yͤ end wherunto Gods ordinances doe tend: yet muſt we looke thereat. For all things are not ſpoken in one place: wee muſt take things in ſuch order as God hath ſet them downe. In other places hee will teach vs what marke it behoued the people to ſhoote at in keeping the lawe: but here the caſe concerneth the continuall ſeruing of God with reuerence, ſo as the people may knowe themſelues to bee wholly at his deuotion, and that therwithall he reſerueth to himſelfe the authoritie of gouerning his people and of holding them in ſubiection. Thoſe are the thinges which we haue to beare in minde.

Rom.3.20.21.& 4.15.16.& Gal.3.19.22.

Now let vs come to that which hee addeth in the concluſion: that is to wit, *That God hauing deliuered his people, and brought them into the land that hee had giuen them, appointed them all his commaundements*. Hereby wee ſee, that when God ſheweth vs this grace, to gather vs into his Church, hee calleth vs not to bee idle, but at the leaſt to the ende wee ſhoulde glorify him, as the thing whereof the whole Scripture ſpeaketh. And theſe ſayings, Behold, I haue purchaſed a people that ſhall ſing my praiſe, Behold, I haue planted a vine and I wilbe glorified therby, and ſuch other, are ſo often beaten into the peoples heads by the Prophets, as it ought to be a doctrine wellinough knowne among them. Nowe therefore Gods ſpeaking after that maner, is to ſhewe that his intent in choſing that people, was to be honoured at their hands. And this belongeth much more to vs, foraſmuch as God hath vttered a farre greater power in deliuering vs from the dungeons of hell in the perſon of his ſonne. Let vs vnderſtand then, that wee bee baptiſed with this condition, to giue our ſelues wholy to our God: lyke as when Saint Paule treateth thereof, chiefely in the firſt to the Epheſians: he ſayth that God hauing choſen vs before the creation of the world to bee his children, hath alſo made vs partakers of the ſaluation that was purchaſed for vs by our Lord Ieſus Chriſt, to the end that wee ſhoulde glorifie him which hath ſhewed himſelfe ſo bountifull towardes vs, and vſed ſuch mercie. As often then as we remember Gods benefites, and ſpecially his voutſafing to call vs to the knowledge of his trueth: Let vs ad this, namely that it is to the end that our life ſhould bee wholy dedicated to his honor and ſeruice, or elſe we doe what wee can to ouerthrowe Gods adoption, and wee labor to diſanull it vtterly: lyke as on the contrary part it is ſayd that our calling is warranted by our walking in holyneſſe of lyfe: for after that maner doth Saint Peter ſpeake of it.

Eſa.12.5.6. & Pſal.107.14.15.& 80.16.

Col.1.13.14

Eph.1.5,6.12.

2.Pet.1.10.

Finally Moſes addeth, *It ſhall bee imputed to thee for righteouſneſſe afore God, if thou keepe his commaundementes as hee hath appoynted thee*. In theſe wordes hee doth men to wit, that if they bee deſirous to bee allowed of God, and that he ſhould accept their ſeruice: they muſt not bring any of their owne inuentions, but bee contented to doe ſimply whatſoeuer Gods worde afordeth, and whatſoeuer is conteined there. That is the meaning of Moſes. And whereas he ſayth that the keeping of the commandements which God hath ordeyned, ſhall beee imputed to men for righteouſneſſe before God: it is all one as if hee ſhould ſay, my friendes, tell your children that if they ſwarue from Gods word conteined in his Lawe, and turne away after their owne fancies, to doe what ſeemeth good to themſelues: God will reiect it euery whit, and it ſhalbe but as dung before him. For why? Hee alloweth obedience aboue all thinges. He intendeth not to giue mee leaue to deuiſe and inuent newe Lawes: but hee will haue them to be contented with that pure rule [of his Law], in ſuch ſorte as hee hath giuen it. Therefore looke not that God ſhould accept you, or allowe any of all your doinges for righteouſneſſe, vnleſſe it be conformable to his doctrine. For although men would faine haue things to paſſe in account which they themſelues like of: yet wil God croſſe them out euery one. For why? Their traueling is in vaine, vnleſſe they can ſay, Lord we haue folowed the way wherin thou diddeſt ſet vs. For ſo ſayeth he by his Prophet Eſay. Who hath required theſe thinges at your hand, ſaith he? When the Hypocrites make their brags, and thinke themſelues wel diſchardged in being willing to ſerue God after their owne fancie: there needeth no more but this anſwer to diſproue all their doings, who required theſe thinges at your hands? As if he ſhoulde ſay, let him that did ſet you a worke, pay you: for as for me I will none of you, I diſclaime ye, ye haue nothing to doe with me, ſeeing ye haue not ſerued me obediently, which is the principal ſeruice ẏ I require And that is the cauſe alſo why S. Paul ſpeaking of mens inuentions, addeth no more but this, that they be mennes doctrines. True it is, that they ſhall haue ſome faire colour, and ſome likelihoode of religion, yea and there will ſeeme to bee in them a perfection of all holyneſſe: but what for that? Seeing they proceed from men, they be no better than flat mockery.

1.Sam.15.22

Eſa.1.12.

Col.2.12.

And it is purpoſely ſaid, *Thy righteouſneſſe before God*. Why ſo? To the intent that menne ſhould no more beguile themſelues in their owne opinion, as they be wont to do by hardning their harts when other men ſooth them, or by ſtanding in their owne conceites. For then they beare themſelues on hand, that God hath no more authoritie to condemne them, but that the fond opinion which they haue conceiued, ſhalbe as a blocke to caſt in his way. To the intent therefore that men ſhould not yeelde to their owne imaginations and to the thinges which they ſurmiſe to bee good: Moſes ſayth here, my friendes, what ſhall yee winne, by deeming it to bee righteouſneſſe to doe as the heathen doe, and to intangle your ſelues in their ſuperſtitions? For though the world lyke well of you for ſo doing: yet muſt ye come [to an after-reckoning] before the heauenly Iudge: for men bee not competent iudges to giue ſentence of that matter. And therefore (to bee ſhort) yee had neede to looke about you how God will accept your doinges. And hee telleth you that he wil not be ſubiect to mens willes, nor be ſo plyable as to ſay: ſhal this be accounted good? Then muſt I agree to it. No no, hee will continue alwayes lyke himſelfe. Therefore holde yee to that which hee commaundeth: for his worde

Iames 1.17.

Deut.4.6.

muſt bee your whole wiſedome, while the world loadeth it ſelfe with it owne inuentions. Thus yee ſee what is meant by theſe wordes where Moſes ſayth, it ſhall be counted to you for righteouſneſſe before God, if yee keepe the commaundementes which hee hath appoynted.

But yet by the way here might bee made a queſtion. For it ſhould ſeeme that God ſendeth men to their owne deſeruinges to bee iuſtified by them. Rom.3.27. And on the otherſide S. Paul auoucheth that wee bee iuſtified by faith: that is to ſay, that wee bee accepted for righteous before GOD, through his onely free goodneſſe, foraſmuch as hee accepteth vs in our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt. For it is written that Abraham Gen.15.6.& Rom.4.22. beleeued God, and it was reckoned to him for righteouſneſſe. But here Moſes ſayth, that the keeping of the Lawe is imputed for righteouſneſſe. It ſeemeth then that men are able to purchaſe ſaluation by their owne workes, and ſo by that meanes are not indaungered vnto God. But wee haue two thinges to note here. The firſt is that whereas it is ſayd that the keeping of the Lawe is righteouſneſſe before GOD, it is not meant thereby that men can become righteous by their owne workes: for then muſt they fulfill the lawe throughout in all poyntes. But now was there euer any creature found that diſcharged himſelf to Godward? Rom.3.10. No. Yee ſee then that wee be all damned, and ſo bee quite bereft of the righteouſneſſe that was giuen by the Lawe. Wherefore let vs learne that the Lawe could well iuſtify vs before God, if wee could keepe it from poynt to poynt without Leuit.18.5. Ezech.20.11. Rom.10.5. Gal.3.12. any fayling. For it is written, hee that doth theſe thinges ſhall liue in them. If a man (ſay I) coulde ſo order his lyfe, as hee might make his boaſt that hee had fully performed all that GOD hath commaunded him: hee ſhoulde be righteous. And why? For God which cannot lye hath made vs a promiſe, that hee will accept our workes for righteouſneſſe, ſo wee fayle not in the performance of any poynt of his Law. Ro.3.10.19. Gal.3.10. But now is there not any man that diſchargeth himſelfe ſo much as of any one poynt. Therefore are we all tranſgreſſors of the Lawe, and conſequently wee bee all accurſed. And wee muſt not imagine that it deſerueth to bee allowed, when wee haue done but ſome peece of that which GOD commaundeth. No: for hee Iames.2.10. that miſſeth in any one poynt, is guiltie before God, and there remaineth nothing for him but death and curſedneſſe. For it is written, Deut.27.26 that whoſoeuer performeth not all the thinges that are conteined in this booke, ſhall be accurſed. Now then let vs learne, that whereas the keeping of the Lawe might bee imputed to vs for righteouſneſſe, if it could bee found in vs: wee bee vtterly depriued and bereft thereof. And why? For there is not that man which tráſgreſſeth not the Lawe in ſome poynt or other: nay, not onely in ſome one poynt, but in all poyntes throughout, when wee haue caſte vp our account. For wee neuer ſerue GOD with all our heart, with all our ſoule, and with all our ſtrength as hath bin ſayd heeretofore. And euen when wee doe any good woorkes to outward appearance, there is alwayes ſome coldeneſſe, ſome ſlothfulneſſe, or ſome one thing or other mingled with them, to hinder vs. And therefore the worke is ſtill faultie. Thus wee ceaſe not to breake Gods Lawe in all pointes, ſo as wee muſt needes yeelde our ſelues guiltie, cófeſſing that if God liſted to iudge vs rigorouſly, hee ſhoulde needes reiect vs. Now wee ſee that although the Lawe conteine the true rule of righteouſneſſe: yet can it not make vs righteous, becauſe of the weakeneſſe of our fleſhe, as ſayth Saint Paul in the ſeuenth to the Romans. Rom.7.14. It remaineth now to knowe, in what ſenſe that is ſpoken: For it ſeemeth to be to no purpoſe, that God ſhould promiſe to accept thé for righteous which keepe his lawe: and yet notwithſtanding that all of vs ſhoulde bee bereft thereof.

Howbeit wee muſt marke, that there is a refuge Rom.3.24. giuen vs which is to reſort to the forgiueneſſe of our ſinnes, which is graunted vs in our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt. Therefore when we haue acknowledged our ſelues to bee vtterly forlorne and damned in our owne nature, and thereupon repayre to our Lord Ieſus Chriſt, ſewing to bee partakers of his righteouſneſſe, and to bee iuſtifyed by vertue of the obedience which hee yeelded to God his father: then GOD not onely receiueth vs to mercy, and couereth vs with the perfection that is in our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt, as with a cloake, to the intent wee ſhoulde obtaine ſaluation: but alſo taketh our workes in good woorth. And although wee performe not the Lawe, but come loytering aloofe after it, ſo as there is great ſtore of vices in vs, wherewith our workes are blemiſhed: yet notwithſtanding GOD accepteth them, and promiſeth that we ſhall not looſe our labor, inſomuch that our workes ſhall be taken for righteous before him. Albeit that they bee worthie to bee taken for ſtarke filth, becauſe there is alwayes ſomewhat in them that God may condemne: yet this keeping of the Law which we performe (vnperfect as it is) ſhall not faile to bee taken for righteouſneſſe. The reaſon is, becauſe Ieſus Chriſt ſupplyeth our default. Then doth not Iohn 1.16. Eph.1.4. Rom.3.20. Eph.2.9.10. our righteouſneſſe conſiſt in the worthyneſſe of our owne workes: but inaſmuch as they bee ſanctifyed in the name of Gods ſon, & foraſmuch as we be his mébers [both they &] we be admitted for righteous, becauſe of the obediéce which hee yeelded vnto God. And that obedience is communicated vnto vs, as if it were our owne. Thus yee ſee how the promiſes that are made vnto vs, doe aſſure vs that God will accept the thinges for righteouſneſſe, which we doe in indeuouring to ſerue him. For ſuch promiſes are not vaine nor fruteleſſe, ſo our Lord Ieſus Chriſt bee our mediator, and performe that which wanteth on our behalfe. For without that, all the lawe will ſerue vs to none other purpoſe but to condemne vs, as hath bin ſhewed afore.

Moreouer let vs marke for the ſecond point, that although the people had kept the Lawe of GOD: yet euen the very performance thereof was a record vnto them, that it ſtoode them in hand to bee iuſtifyed by mercie and grace, and not by their owne merites. For their ſacrificing was a kind of proteſting that they were worthie of death. Hebr.10.3. There was neuer any beaſt ſlayne vnder the lawe, but the ſame was an autenticall record that men deſerued to bee damned at Gods hand. And thereby it behoued the faithfull to bee put in minde to reſort vnto God, and that with ſuch humilitie, as they ſought their lyfe elſewhere than in themſelues. In lyke caſe was it with their waſhings, and with all the reſt of their ceremonies. The hauing of light in the Temple, was to ſhew that men are ſtarke blind in themſelues: and their hauing of the holy Lampes, and the oyle that God had ordeined for the ſame, and their anointinges, and ſuch other thinges ought to haue made the people to conſider thus with themſelues: there is neyther vnderſtanding, grace, vertue, nor any thing elſe in our wit, but wee muſt bee faine to borrowe all thinges of the redeemer that was promiſed to our fathers, and of Gods ſpirit who is the fountaine and fulneſſe of all good things. Eph.4.7. So then the keeping of the lawe ſent the people backe to the grace of our Lord Ieſus Chriſt, and ſerued for nothing leſſe than to hold them ſtill to thoſe ſhadowes to put their truſt in them. Lykewiſe at this day, ſith wee vnderſtand well which is the right keeping of Gods lawe, wee ſee well enough that it is not for vs to preſume vppon our owne deſeruinges, as theſe mad papiſtes doe, who vphold that they become righteous by keeping of the Lawe. They bee ſo caryed away with that opinion, that they think not any more of Gods grace, neither doe they perceiue that the Lawe was giuen to holde men conuicted, & to driue them to come before their Iudge, as wretched offenders to ſewe for grace. They thinke not of that. Againe, they haue the terme *Merit* or *Deſert*, which they vſe like a drunken man that can diſcerne nothing becauſe he is ouerſotted and hath his eyes bleared: euen ſo play theſe wretched vnbeleeuers. But we for our part knowe that we haue to thanke our God for his infinite goodneſſe, in making vs to vnderſtand that the true keeping of the lawe, is for men to condemne themſelues by it, and to take knowledge that they haue nothing in them but vtter frowardneſſe, and that they muſt be faine to reſorte vnto God, and to betake themſelues wholy to his mercy. And foraſmuch as there is none other meane but Ieſus Chriſt: they muſt get them thither, and know that God will bee neither father nor Sauiour vnto them, but by accepting them in the perſon of him in whome hee auoweth all his delight to bee. Mat.3.17.& 17.5.and Eph.1.6. Thus the thinges which wee haue to remember vpon this text, are, firſt that if we will haue God to allow of our lyfe, wee muſt not doe what wee thinke good of our ſelues, but ſimply follow that which is commaunded vs in his Lawe. Howbeit foraſmuch as it is promiſed vs, that wee ſhall bee taken for righteous before him, if wee keepe his Lawe: and yet notwithſtanding, all of vs are trãſgreſſors of yͤ law, ſo as our whole lyfe condẽneth vs, & there is none of vs but hee may iudge by yͤ Rom.2.15. heartbitings of his owne conſcience, that wee bee full of ſinnes and offences: we muſt flee to yͤ forementioned refuge which is, to beſeech God to iuſtifye vs of his owne free mercie. And beſides this, when wee bee once graffed into the body of our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt, let vs not doubt but hee will make vs partakers of the fruite of his death and paſſion, ſo that although our Ro.6.4.5.6. workes be ſinfull, yet God will admit them: for righteous. But yet, that proceedeth of his free goodneſſe, and not of any deſert of ours. Finally foraſmuch as wee knowe that the beſt workes which wee can doe, are worthie to bee condemned: let vs looke well to it that wee preſume not of our ſelues, nor of our owne vertues: but let vs go and ſubmit our ſelues with all humilitie to our God, praying him to worke 1.Pet.1.2. ſo in vs by his holy ſpirit, as hee make the death and paſſion of his ſonne auaileable, whereby the euerlaſting ſaluation is purchaſed for vs.

And now let vs kneele downe in the preſence of our good God with acknowledgement of our faultes, praying him to voutſafe to print his Law in ſuch wiſe in our heartes, as wee may bee able to keepe it, not of our owne power and motion, but by the guiding of his holy ſpirit: and that therewithall it may pleaſe him to beare with vs in our infirmities, vntill hee haue rid vs quite & cleane of al our ſinnes, & taken vs vp into the euerlaſting kingdome which hee hath promiſed vs. And ſo let vs all ſay, Amighty God &c.

On Thurſday the firſt of Auguſt. 1555.

The Lj Sermon which is the firſt vppon the ſeuenth Chapter.

WHen the Lord thy God ſhal haue brought thee into the Land whither thou goeſt to poſſeſſe it, and ſhall haue caſt out manie Nations before thee, namelie the Hethites, the Gergeſites, the Amorrhytes, the Chananites, the Pherezites, the Heuites, and the Iebuſites, ſeuen Nations moe in number and ſtronger than thy ſelfe:

2 And when the Lord thy God ſhal haue deliuered them before thee: thou ſhalt ſmite them, and roote them out, and thou ſhalt make no couenant with them nor ſhewe them any fauour.

3 Thou ſhalt not alye thy ſelf with them by mariage, thou ſhalt not giue thy daughter

dawghter to their ſonnes,nor take their dawghter for thy ſonne.

4 For ſhee would make thy ſonne to go away from mee, to ſerue other Gods: and the Lordes wrath would kindle againſt you,and deſtroy thee ſuddenly.

IT ſhoulde ſeeme at ỹ firſt ſight, that ỹ commãdement which is giuen here to ỹ Iewes was very ſtrãge. For they be charged to diſpatch all their enemies,and to put thẽm to death euerychone,yea euen the young children and all, without ſparing any of them: and it is God that ſpeaketh it. But wee know that when he intendeth to exhort vs to mildneſſe and mercy, hee alledgeth his own example.Ye ſhal reſẽble your heauenly father Matt.5.45. (ſayth our Lord Ieſus Chriſt,) who cauſeth his dayſunne to riſe both vppon good and bad: and therefore doe good to ſuch as are not worthie of it. Seeing that GOD hath not a better reaſon to perſwade vs to ſhewe mercy, than by ſhewing vs what he himſelfe doth: it ſeemeth not in any wiſe conuenient, that he ſhould prouoke vs vnto crueltie. For when hee ſayth, ye ſhall kill all, yee ſhall leaue nothing, euen the young babes ſhall paſſe vnder the edge of the ſworde: what is to be ſayd to it, but that GOD had no pitie nor kindeheartedneſſe in that behalfe? But although it ſeeme ſo to vs: yet let vs learne to glorify him,knowing that the greateſt rigor which is in him,is rightful & faultleſſe,yea euẽ although the reaſon thereof be not manifeſt vnto vs.And hereby let vs learne to beware,ỹ we be not ſo bold as to iudge of God or of his doings after our own wit &imagination.For as ſoon as a thing ſeemeth good vnto vs,wee take it to bee ſo in deede: and on the contrary part, if wee fall to iudging of Gods ordinances at aduenture, & deeme them to bee euill becauſe wee perceiue not the reaſon of them: where is our obedience? Wherefore let vs learne to humble our ſelues in ſuch wiſe, that if the thinges which God ſayth doe not fitly agree with our vnderſtanding: yet neuertheleſſe wee receiue them with all ſubmiſſion and reuerẽce,acknowledging that as there is nothing but all wiſedome and righteouſneſſe in him, ſo it becommeth vs to yeeld to his good pleaſure,and to confeſſe that whatſoeuer he ordeyneth is the ſouereine righteouſneſſe.

Againe, to the end that the thing which is ſet downe here may not ſeeme ſtraunge: wee muſt marke what maner of people they were of whom mention is made here. It is ſayd, *Thou ſhalt deſtroy the people whom I will deliuer into thy hand*. Now if it be demaunded whereof it came that God would haue none of them reſerued:Let vs haue an eye to that which had bin ſpoken foure hundred yeeres afore:namely, *The wickedneſſe of the Amorrhites is not yet come to his full ripeneſſe*. Gen.15.16. In the time of Abraham theſe people were ſo malicious and ſpitefull in vexing that holy patriarke, as they refuſed euen to let him haue water. Gẽ.21.25.30 Not that hee went about to borrowe any out of their pondes and fountaines: but that they wold not ſuffer him to inioy the welles that hee himſelfe had digged in the deſert places.He did no wrong to any man, and yet they were ſo cruell, that they would not ſuffer him to drinke of the water which hee had gotten by his owne skill and trauell. He was hunted from place to place, and yet hee had not done any man wrõg. Againe all the countrie was ful of the contempt of God, all was full of wickedneſſe, robberie, whoredome, and all maner of vncleaneſſe. To bee ſhort, God ſeemed to bee aſleepe in that hee puniſhed not thoſe nations which were ſo giuen ouer to all vngodlyneſſe and outrage.And if they that grudge at this text had liued in thoſe dayes: they would haue ſayd, how now? God promiſeth to doe iuſtice, and to take vengeance vppon all the deſpiſers of his maieſtie: but there appeareth no ſuch thing. If hee rule the worlde, and that his prouidence bee aboue all: how is it that hee ſuffereth ſo long the wickedneſſe that is in this people? After that maner doe the wicked alwayes take occaſion to repine at GOD, and to complaine of him,and to finde fault with his doinges. For if hee bee patient, they ſay hee is careleſſe to puniſh mens offences and ſinnes. And if hee vſe rigor: they ſay he exceedeth meaſure, and that there is no reaſon in his doinges, and that the ſame haſtineſſe of his, bewrayeth well that there is no mercy nor pitie in him. Lo how the wicked folke doe blaſpheme God euery way. But let vs on our ſide goe to worke with another maner of modeſtie.

And firſt of all wee muſt marke well this ſentence, as I ſayd afore. Beholde, God telleth vs that although the Amorrhytes and their neighboures were giuen to all euill, and were paſt amendement, ſo as there was no more hope to bring them to anie good: yet notwithſtanding hee bare with them and made as though hee ſawe them not. Hee ſawe that they deſpiſed him, and were giuen to all idolatrie, and therewithall made no conſcience to ſteale and rob and to commit all maner of wickedneſſe: and yet for all that, hee ſayd hee would not deſtroy them, [but beare with them yet further.] How long? not for halfe a ſcore yeeres, or for twentie yeres, or for a whole hundred: but euen vntil foure hundred yeres were paſt & run out. Was not ỹ a taryance long enough?Now in the end of the terme, when GOD had ſhewed that not onely hee himſelfe knew, but alſo it appeared openly by experience to the whole world, that thoſe nations were vtterly paſt hope of recouery, and grew woorſe and woorſe vnder pretence that God handled them not according to their deſerts: was it not meete that at length horrible vengeance ſhould light vpon them? They had of all that long time heaped vp the treaſure of Gods wrath vppon their heades by abuſing his patience: and therefore ought the rigor that he vſed againſt them, to ſeeme too exceſſiue? Can wee ſay that hee was moued with ouerſuddeine choler? Nay. Then let vs learne to reſtraine our ſelues in this caſe, and to keep our mouths ſhut, that wee vtter not a worde againſt GOD, but ſo bridle our mindes as we imagine not any thing of him but al Iuſtice and vprightnes, confeſſing that whatſoeuer hee appoynteth to bee done, cannot bee but rightful, and that it becommeth vs to bee contented with his only will.

And let vs marke by the way, that when men take vppon them to repine againſt God, it is alwayes to their owne confuſion. It is true yͭ at the firſt ſight their cauſe may ſeeme very fauorable: for wee can ſo good skill to harpe vppon Gods mercie, that the rigor of his Iuſtice is alwayes odious to vs. But yet for all that, when men haue pleaded their diſcourſe to the full: is not God able to aunſwere them in a word, as I haue declared already? What is yͭ? I wil haue theſe people vtterly rooted out: for they haue skorned mee. I had giuen thē a good & fruitefull land to dwell in, & they haue deuowred my benefites without any acknowledging from whence they came. They haue ſpited me to the vttermoſt. I ſent thē ſome chaſtiſementes to correct them, but haue they amended for al that? I haue ſet lookingglaſſes of my wrath before them: but they ſtopped their eyes, they hardened their heartes more & more, & yet for all that, I haue bin contented to delay the puniſhment of thē to the ende of foure hundred yeeres. Behold, foure ages are come & gone: and ought they not to haue amended in ſo long time? Yes: but they be ſtill at one ſtay. But yet muſt not this land bee alwayes infected with ſuch filthineſſe. I haue dedicated it to mine own ſeruice, I wil haue my name called vppon there, and I intēd to plant my people there, that there may be a pure & holy religion: & ſhould I leaue ſuch rifferaffe among them? If there were none other reaſon but that: ought not Gods ſeruice to be more deare than the liues of all the men in yͤ world? If we ſpare mans bloud, & ſay it is no ſmal thing that a whole nation ſhoulde bee ſo rooted out: I graunt that. But ſhall wee make ſo little account of Gods honor, and of the religion whereby wee liue euerlaſtingly? ſhall we (ſay I) haue it in ſo ſmall eſtimation, as to preferre mens lyues before it? What a dealing were that? Do we not bewray that there is no loue of God in vs? Vnder color of gentleneſſe and mercie, we would pluck God out of his ſeate, and that men ſhould play mockeholyday with him, ſo as there ſhould bee no more reuerence nor humilitie yeelded to his ſeruice: & what a confuſion were that? Therefore the way for vs to put this text in vre, is that when wee ſee that God is patient, and falleth not vpon the wicked at the firſt daſh, nor powreth out his rigor vppon them to confound them: wee muſt not thinke that hee hath forgotten his duetie, and ſitteth ſtill in heauen: but wee muſt rather conſider that hee accompliſheth the ſaying which I alledged out of Geneſis, namely that the wickedneſſe of the parties is not yet come to full ripeneſſe. Truely in our iudgement it were time that hee ſhoulde worke, as ſoone as the wicked doe paſſe their boundes. For wee ſee how impatient wee be, and howe wee breake out into heates when thinges goe amiſſe: in our owne opinion wee would thinke it good that GOD ſhould thunder vppon them out of hand, and to our ſeeming he is ouerſlow. Nay rather let vs looke vppon God, who taryeth patiently as hee hath done at all times, and is loth to execute his rigor, vntill hee haue ſhewed that the wicked are vtterly paſt amendment. True it is that ſometime hee maketh no ſuch tariance, for it is not for him to deale alwayes after one ſort, neither is it for vs to bind him to any certeine Lawe, hee hath libertie to haſten his iudgements when it pleaſeth him. But yet for all that, hee doth commonly delay them and put them off, and for the ſame cauſe is hee ſayd to bee longſuffering.

Num.14.18. & Pſal.103.8.

And wee muſt not thinke that GOD will not call them to account whome hee beareth withall: but after as hee winketh at them, ſo will hee dubble his vengeance vppon them, if they bee not touched with heartie repentance, when hee hath giuen them reſpit. But on the contrary part, when hee hath waited for the wicked a long time, if hee ſhewe greater rigor than wee thought hee would haue done, and puniſhe them with more extremitie becauſe they haue ſo dalyed with him, and deſpiſed his goodneſſe, yea and euen turned it into an occaſion of greater aweleſneſſe: I ſay if he be more wrathfull and ſharpe than we thought he would haue bin: Let vs not thinke him to be too exceſſiue, but let vs aſſure our ſelues hee hath iuſt reaſon ſo to doe, although hee make not vs priuie to it. Therefore when wee ſhall haue marked the examples that are in the holy ſcripture: wee will make this concluſion: That it is not to be wondered at though GOD vſe the greater rigor towardes thoſe whome hee hath ſpared ſo long time together. For his goodneſſe is too precious a iewell, to bee made a ieſtingſtocke ſo of the wicked.

Furthermore let vs marke generally, that God will not be ſubiect to our ſurmiſings, but he will haue vs to receiue his ſayinges and doinges without ſcanning of them, and to take al thinges for good and rightfull which come of him, yea euen though our reaſon gaineſay it. For we bee too fickle headded to iudge, and therewithall we be ſo fooliſh and raſh, that to our owne ſeeming it is lawfull for vs to alledge our opinion, not onely to iudge of mens doinges, but alſo to giue ſentence vpon the determinations of our God, & vpon ſuch execution of thē as he doth ordinarily. But contrariwiſe it is ſhewed vs, both in this place & in all others: yͭ it is not for vs to aduance our ſelues ſo high, as to ſay whatſoeuer cōmeth at our tongues end: but we muſt receiue whatſoeuer cōmeth from God, wͭout any replying. Doth God then ſeeme cruell? Yet neuertheleſſe let vs confeſſe that he is righteous, and that he doeth not any thing but in perfect righteouſneſſe and equitie. Beſides this, let vs learne alſo to obey him in all pointes, by doing the thinges that he commaundeth vs, euen though they goe againſt our ſtomackes. Sometimes men may (to their ſeeming) haue honeſt excuſe, not to do the thing that is commaunded them. But what for that? It will not diſcharge them before God: for GOD will bee wiſe for vs, and good reaſon it is that he ſhould bee ſo. For what a thing were it if men might alledge, Yea Lord, but what will become of ſuch a thing? Such an inconuenience myght followe of it. If wee fall to ſcanning after that faſhion: is it not as much as if wee ſhould ſay that God was miſaduiſed, and foreſawe not all, & that wee haue a deeper and better ſettled forecaſt than his is? And were not that tootoo diueliſh a blaſphemie? Yes. And therefore let vs marke, that to rule our life aright, we muſt not enter into ſo many counterſayings and diſputations: but wee muſt vnderſtand that our wiſedome is to obey God ſimply. When Saul ſpared the king whō he had ouercome, and the Cattel that was fallen into his handes: it ſeemed to him that he had colour good ynough to doe it. For his intent was to haue led the king in triumph, and that had bin as a ſpectacle to ſhewe Gods goodneſſe towards his people. In deede ſo was it to Saules weening. And as for the Cattell, he reſerued them to haue made ſacrifice withall: and that was a goodly thing to make men vnderſtande, that God had giuen ſo noble and wonderfull a victorie to his people. All this went well then. Yea, if a man might haue beleeued Saul in his owne imagination. But yet in the meane while he is reproued at Gods hand, and both he and his mercie bee condemned togither, and the king is faine to be ſlaine by another before his face. For he himſelf was not worthie to be Gods miniſter, he was bereft of that office, and Samuell was put in his roome. And afterward it was tolde him, that the kingdome which he poſſeſſed ſhould not deſcēd to his children and poſteritie, but ſhould be conueyed vnto a ſtraunger. Wee would thinke this geere very ſtraunge, but that it is ſhewed vs that Saul was ouer arrogant in taking vppon him to bee wiſer than he had leaue to bee: and in that as ſoone as a fooliſh toy tooke him in the head, he followed that rather than the commaundement of God. And was not that a taking vppon him to bee wiſer than God? And was not that a curſed pride? Yes: and therefore the condemnation which Samuel pronounced vppon him was iuſt. For it is meete that God ſhould be glorified, and that wee ſhould confeſſe that there is nothing to bee amended in him, but that all mouthes ought to bee opened, and to ſay: Lord, wiſedome, Iuſtice, equitie, and vertue, are not to be ſought for elſewhere than in thee. And therfore let vs practiſe this doctrin in ſuch wiſe, as we be not more mercifull than God will haue vs to bee, or than the rule which he hath giuen vs will beare. For there are that would faine vſe mercy in mingling white and blacke together, and in making a hotchpotch of all things, vnder pretence that wicked perſons ſhould goe quite and skotfree. And what remaineth more, but that the righteous and good men ſhould be condemned, if the wicked ſhoulde bee ſo maintained? And that is the cauſe why Salomon ſayth, that he which quitteth the offender when hee ſees him giltie, is as much to blame before God, as he that oppreſſeth the innocent. For our Lord hath ordeined, not onely that good caſes ſhould bee maintained: but alſo that euill dealinges ſhould be corrected when they be found. And for the ſame purpoſe hath he put his ſword into the handes of princes, Magiſtrates, and all other officers of Iuſtice, to the intent that leaudneſſe ſhould not bee mayntained in the worlde. Then is there no replying againſt this. And yet notwithſtanding yee ſhall haue ſome that will complayne of men as bludſuckers, and as ſoone as any mention is made of the execution of Iuſtice, it is no better [with them] but crueltie. Let ſuch folke get them to God, and goe pleade againſt him, to ſee if they can get the vpper hand. And it is not only the galloweſclappers that ſay ſo, I meane thoſe whoſe faultes and crymes are manifeſt: but theſe Tauernhaunters or Alehouſknightes which counterfeit the preachers. O they haue great skill to alledge gentleneſſe and mercie: and it ſeemeth to them that I doe no more ſpare bloud than they do the wyne, which they guſſel and quaffe vp without meaſure or reaſon. But ſuch blaſphemies or raylinges doe touche God, and not men. For I heare what is ſpoken. Let thoſe maſtife dogs barke and gnarre as much as they liſt: yet is this doctrine which proceded out of Gods mouth, ſufficient to make them aſhamed.

1.Sam.15.21 22.

Prou.17.15

Rom.13.4. & 1.Pet.2.14

And herewithall let vs marke, that the mercy which God commandeth, is to haue pitie of ſuch as are going to deſtruction. Let that ſerue for one point. So as if it lay in vs, wee ſhould bee mindefull how to drawe them out of the ditch. And when wee ſee them vtterly wilfull, ſo as there is no hope nor meane to bring them backe againe: wee muſt be ſory for them, for as much as we ſee they bee wretched damned creatures. Marke that, for another poynt. Againe, let vs beare with ſuch as fall to repentaunce. But when wee ſee folkes hardharted and deſperate, ſo as they haue conſpired to fight againſt God to the vttermoſte: what mercie were it to mayntayne that? Lo heere another blaſphemie, which is when men wil needes be more pitifull than God. He is the welſpring of all goodneſſe, and hee ſayth that we be euil, and that although we haue the greateſt ſhew of goodneſſe that is poſſible to bee had: yet is it but a ſpark of the great and infinite perfection that is in him. But nowe, behold, there are newe Diuines which wil needes haue men to be mercifull. And how? Although a man be wicked, and the world ſeeth that he is full of venim againſt God, and ceaſeth not to do euil, but the more he is borne withall the more he is ſtill inflamed with malice: Yet [ſay they] why ſhould hee not bee borne withall ſtill? Let them aske that of God, and hee will tell them that there is no place for his mercie, but where

Matt.7.11.

Ezec 18.21. there is repentance. True it is, that it is in him
Act 11.18. to giue repentance. But howſoeuer the worlde
2.Tim.2.25 goe, when his will is to vtter his goodneſſe towardes
any man, he toucheth his heart that he
may returne vnto him. Now then, ſhall we looke
vpon ſuch as are fully bent to blaſpheme God to
the vttermoſt, and yet in the meane while talke
to them of mercie ſtill? Ought we not rather to
ſpit in the faces of ſuch villaines, which mocke
God and his word to the ful? Yes: and therfore let
vs beare ſimply in minde, that wee muſt followe
the things which God commaundeth, and that
it is not for vs to alledge any thing at all in that
behalfe.

And on the otherſide let vs marke alſo, that
Deut.32.35. God meant not to reſigne his vengeaunce vnto
Rom.12.19. men, & to giue them leaue to hurt their enemies
Heb.10.30. when they ſhall haue offended them. Then if we
do the worſt we can to mē when they haue grieued
vs or done vs any wrong, vnder colour that
God hath told vs that he would haue the vngodly
rooted out: it is a taking of a falſe couert from
the word of God. Therefore let vs note that wee
muſt not be led with any affection, neither muſt
we paſſe whether any wrong or hinderance haue
bin wrought vs or no: for as long as mens minds
run vppon their priuate griefes, they ſhall neuer
ſerue God: but we muſt haue this conſideration
with vs, of doing that which God commaundeth
vs, without being mooued by any fleſhly moode.
Marke that for a ſpeciall point.

Againe, let vs not deale further than God biddeth
vs, but let vs bee faithfull executers of his
Deut.12.8. 32. words, & not ſtir one finger further than he ſaith,
do thus or thus. To be ſhort, he yͭ giueth his enemy
but a fillup, is giltie of murder before god. But
he that putteth a wicked mā to death, not being
led thereto by any wicked affection, but bicauſe
his office requireth it: is iuſt and allowed of God,
and his executing of ſuch puniſhment is a ſacrifice
vnto him. According as wee ſee that Moſes
ſpeaketh therof, ſpecially when the idolatrie that
the people had committed was to bee puniſhed,
in which caſe he ſaieth, Sanctifie your hands vnto
Exod.32.29 yͤ Lord. And how? What maner of holines was
it wherof Moſes ſpake there? It was yͭ they ſhould
kill all the idolaters that had defiled themſelues,
& put the corrupters of yͤ true religion to death.
And whom commanded he to doe it? Euen yͤ Leuites,
euen thoſe which ought to haue bin yͤ mirrors
of al pitie & louingkindnes. Euen the Prieſts
whō God had dedicated to himſelfe were neuertheleſſe
appointed to be the executers of yͤ rigor.
And vppon whom? Euen vppon their owne kinſfolke,
and they might not beare with them. Seeing
then that we ſee this: let vs learne that ſuch
as do Iuſtice, (condicionally that they intermingle
not their owne affections and reuenges, but
indeuour to ſerue God & to execute the charge
that is committed vnto them,) do ſanctifie their
hands in ſo doing, and the rigour which they vſe
is cōmendable. That is to ſay, if they haue compaſſion
vpon yͤ poore creatures that periſh: then
yͤ rigour of theirs being ſo qualified, is an acceptable
ſacrifice vnto God. And on the contrarie
part, if we doe but ſtirre one finger vpon diſpleaſure
for any wrong that is done vnto vs, yea or be 1.Iohn 3.1
but prouoked to grunt at them yͭ ſhall haue miſvſed
vs: by and by it is murther before God. And
ſo let vs learne, not to ſeeke fond excuſes to reuenge
our ſelues, vnder pretēce yͭ God hath told
vs that the wicked muſt be deſtroyed and rooted
out: but let vs haue a good and well ſtayed zeale,
ſo as we ouerſhoot not our ſelues to ſay that mē
may ſtep forth to do this or yͭ on their own heads,
but yͭ they muſt tarie til God haue giuē ſentence,
and then execute the ſame, as we ſee is ſaid of it
in this text. Thus we ſee in effect what we haue
to remember, cōcerning the rooting out of thoſe
whō God knowing to be paſt amendment, would
not ſuffer to welter any lōger in their own dung,
bicauſe he had borne with them ynough and too
much alreadie.

And it is ſaid expreſly, *God hath deliuered them
into thy hand to put them to death.* This is a watchword
which he giueth to his people, to the intent
they ſhould the willinglier obey this commandement.
As if he ſhould ſay, he that will giue you
the victorie, willeth you to deale ſo. And is it not
reaſon [then that ye ſhould do it?] Yes, for howe
ſhould wee vſe Gods giftes, but according to his
will? So then, Moſes confirmeth the doctrine that
he ſetteth forth to the people: as if he ſhould ſay,
Looke about thee, thou muſt not diſpoſe after
thine owne pleaſure, of them whō thou ſhalt ouercome.
For if thou ſpare them vnder colour yͭ
thou haſt ſubdued them, and that they be in thy
hand, & that yͧ haſt conquered thē: it wil coſt thee
right deare. For commeth the victorie of thy ſelf?
No: but it is thy God which hath deliuered them
into thy hand. And for proofe therof, theſe natiōs
are ſtronger and mightier than thou, yea and mo
in nomber. How then could you diſcomfit them,
if your God ouermaiſtred them not, & were not
your Captain, & fought not for you? If the victorie
were not giuen you from heauen: how could
you obtaine it? Nowe then, come not heere to
make your vauntes, and to ſay, wee may now diſpoſe
of the victorie as wee liſt our ſelues. For it
commeth of God, and therefore he muſt beare
all the ſway, and you muſt vſe ſuch humilitie, as
he may bee obeyed, and honoured for the thing
which you knowe to come of him. Thus we ſee
now the intent of Moſes.

And hereby we be warned, that in all thinges
which GOD putteth into our handes, wee
muſt beware that wee take not too great libertie,
to vſe his benefites at our owne pleaſure.
For it is good reaſon that hee ſhoulde alwayes
haue ſo much credite with vs, as to ſhewe vs the
lawfull vſe of his benefites. As howe? Let vs
take yͤ commoneſt example of eating and drinking.
When God hath giuen a man abundance
of worldly goods, hee muſt not forget him to
whom he is beholdē for them. For if he ſay, this
is mine, I will doe with it as I liſt: it is a defrauding
of God of the right that hee reſerueth to
himſelfe. It is true that wee may well terme the
thinges ours which he hath giuen vs: howbeit,
that is with condition that they muſt alwaies remaine
at his deuotion, and wee vſe them ſoberly
and modeſtly as I haue ſaide afore, ſo as hee

may ſtill be acknowledged to bee the Lord and maiſter of them.

Nowe were this well obſerued, wee woulde not vnhallowe Gods benefites after ſuch ſort as wee ſee moſt men doe. For there is no queſtioning whether GOD haue permitted or forbidden ſuch a thing: but as ſoone as men haue power ouer it, by and by they thinke it is lawfull to doe with it what they liſt. And who ſhall let vs, ſay they? If thou finde none vppon earth to ſet himſelfe againſt thee and to let thee: GOD can well ynough skill to call thee to account for thy ſtatelineſſe, in that thou ſubmitteſt not thy ſelfe vnto him, nor referreſt to him the thinges that he hath giuen thee, to ſay that he ſhall alwayes ouerrule thee. So then let vs mark well this doctrine, namely that for as much as GOD ſheweth himſelfe liberall towardes vs, and beſtoweth his benefites vppon vs: wee bee tyed and bound with ſo much the ſtraiter bond, to doe him homage for the thinges that he hath put into our handes, that is to ſay, to vſe them accordingly as his word will beare. That is another point.

Now Moſes addeth immediatly, *Thou ſhalt not make any Alyance with them. Thou ſhalt not giue them thy Children in mariage. For if thou giue thy ſonne in maryage to a daughter of the enemie, or to any of thyne enimies: ſhee will turne away his hart and drawe him to ſuperſtition and idolatrie: & then will the wrath of thy God be kindled vppon thee, and thou ſhalt bee rooted out.* Heere our Lorde addeth another commaundement, which is that the Amorrhytes ſhould not haue any league or alliance with his people. Hee had ſaide afore, Thou ſhalt deſtroy all. And why? Becauſe hee had tolde them howe it was his will (as I ſaide afore) that that Land ſhould be reſerued to himſelfe. And ſurely we ſee what befell his people, when they became negligent in executing this commaundement. For notwithſtanding any thing that GOD had ſpoken to them, yet they forbore to conquer the Land which hee had promiſed them. This is ynough (quoth they), let vs holde our ſelues quiet, and let vs not ſpend al our life in warre. And ſo by that meanes they left a great number of that people aliue. But what
Ioſua 23,13 came of it? They became as thorns in their ſides, yea and as pricks in their eys. Now then the reward which the Iſralites had for not dooing the thing which God had commaunded them: was, that by leauing thoſe idolatrous people aliue, and by intermingling themſelues with thē, they felt them to bee as thornes to pricke them and to pricke out their eyes. For the enemies of God did bring the wretched Iewes into ſuch captiuitie, that they were ouerloded with the yoke of bondage, and there was no man that ſuccoured them, vntill they had languiſhed long time therein. And it is good reaſon that GOD ſhoulde pay vs in ſuch coyne, when wee will needes bee more louing and friendly than hee. Wee ſee what was ſayde to Achab concerning
1.Kin.20.42 Benhadad King of Syria, that bycauſe he had not puniſhed the partie whome GOD had commaunded to bee puniſhed, hee ſhould receyue the puniſhment vppon his owne head. Thou wouldeſt not puniſh him (ſayth the Prophet,) and therefore muſt thou anſwere for him in his ſtead, and bee his borrowe. And in deede, it is not for nought that men doe commonly vſe this prouerbe, Saue a theefe from the gallowes, and he will helpe to hang thee. This prouerbe ſerueth not onely to condemne the vnthankefulneſſe of ſuch as haue receyued good at mens hands: but alſo to verifie the iuſt puniſhment of GOD: that is to wit, that if a man haue ſaued an offender by ſome wicked practiſes eyther for fauour, or for fond pitie, or for vaine glorie, and ſo hindered Iuſtice: he himſelfe muſt anſwere in his ſtead, and the partie that was ſaued from the gibbit, muſt helpe to leade him thither from whence himſelfe was diſcharged. And when it falleth out ſo: wee muſt vnderſtande that it it of Gods woorking. So then yee ſee howe GOD hath ſhewed by effect, that it was no ſmall offence, that the Lande which hee had dedicated to his owne ſeruice ſhoulde be ſtill defyled with ſuch abhominations, and that Idolaters ſhould bee mingled with the people which ought to haue bin holy.

Howbeit although the doctrine that hath beene ſet downe alreadye, might ſuffice: yet notwithſtanding here GOD ſheweth moreouer, that his commaunding that thoſe Nations ſhoulde not bee reſerued nor ſuffered to liue, was not for naught. Why ſo? For if they liue with you (ſayeth hee) you may acquaint your ſelues with them, and if yee make any allyaunce with them, beholde it is a plague, beholde it is a contageous diſeaſe that will come vppon you and your offſpring, ſo as ye ſhalbe corrupted and growe out of kind: and in the ende that will cauſe you to bee rooted out, and GODS vengeaunce which lay vppon that people will lighte vppon you, bycauſe ye haue not executed his iudgement as hee commaunded you. That in effect is the thing that is conteyned heere. And wee haue a good leſſon to gather vppon this text: that is to wit, not to haue to doe with the wicked ſorte, and with the deſpyſers of God, according to this ſaying of Saynct Paules, 2.Cor.6.14.
that wee muſt not drawe the yoke with the vnbeleeuers. For hee vſeth the ſimilitude of Oxen cuppled together. The yoke holdeth them ſo together, that looke which way the one draweth, the other muſt needes followe. In like caſe is it with men: They that fall into familiaritie with the wicked, Doe cupple themſelues with them, ſo as they bee led out of the way and marred by them, inſomuch that whereas they weere as little Godes beefore, nowe they become ſtarke Diuelles. Therefore let vs beware wee mingle not our ſelues with the deſpyſers of GOD and with the wicked, vnleſſe wee intende to become lyke them. Yet notwithſtanding there are ſome to bee ſeene which are ſo fine headded, that they will make God a lyer.

For they beare mẽ in hand that they may haunt the company of wicked men,& yet keepe themſelues ſound from all corruption. Yea, but it is a token that they doe ill knowe themſelues, when they beare themſelues in hand that they be far other than God hath reported them to bee. Behold,God warneth vs of our frailtie, and telleth vs that if wee keepe companie with the wicked, they ſhall rather drawe vs to euill, than we ſhall bring them backe to good: and therefore it behoueth vs to keepe vs out of their companie.And if we thinke the contrarie: what wil come of it? In the ende wee ſhall finde that all our weening was but fondneſſe and follie: and therefore let vs rather learne to obey God.

But heere it might be demaunded whether it be not lawfull for the faithfull to haue any company with the wicked. I told yee already that we muſt not goe beyond the bondes that God hath ſet. God giueth vs leaue to indeuour as much as is poſſible for vs, to bring them backe againe which are out of ẏ way of ſaluatiõ.For as for the thinges that were ſpoken concerning the Amorrhytes and the people that were their neighbours: they take not place ſo rigorouſly nowedayes,as though God gaue vs the ſworde in our hand, to ſlea all that were againſt vs: but euery of vs muſt haue an eye to his owne ſtate, and to the chardge which God hath committed vnto him. Rom.13.4. & 1.Pet.2.14 Magiſtrates are armed with the ſworde, to puniſh thoſe whom God bringeth to their handes, and to put this doctrine in vre. Let vs looke among vs what the holy Scripture telleth vs: namely that wee ſhould bee fayne to 1.Cor.5.10. get vs out of the world, if wee ſhoulde not in any wiſe bee conuerſant with the wicked. For why? The whole earth is full of them, and therefore we muſt nedes dwell with them. But after what maner? In ſuch ſort as we haue neither acquaintaunce nor familiaritie with them. For thoſe are the yokes that cupple vs togither. When men fall to eating and drinking with the wicked, and creepe into acquaintance with them, and become friendes to them: it is not poſſible but that they muſt be corrupted, and God offended with it. That is a thing which we haue to marke concerning this text. Neuertheleſſe, if we be in companie with the wicked: let it be for neceſſities ſake, and ſo ſoberly as they may not bee able to infect vs with their naughtines,nor by any meanes turne vs aſide from the right way, or frõ the feare of God and honeſt behauiour of lyfe. Lo how farre foorth we may be conuerſant with the wicked.But to intangle our ſelues with them, and to haue familiar acquaintance with them, is a manifeſt tẽpting of God.And if we ſay there is ſuch ſtrength & ſtedfaſtnes in vs as they can not winne vs: wee deceiue our ſelues. Verily as who ſhould ſay that God knoweth vs not better than wee our ſelues doe. Is it not a diueliſh ouerweening when wee goe to worke after that faſhion? And ſpecially when wee fall to contracting of mariages with them, is it not as it were a plundging of our ſelues into naughtineſſe? If a man ſee a diſpiſer of God which hath a daughter like hir father, and hee goes and matcheth himſelfe with hir: is it not as good as an vtter renouncing of God? I goe and giue my daughter: and to whome? To a wicked man, to a naughtipacke that hath not one ſparke of honeſtie in him, whoſe life is wholy out of order. I make the ſilly ſhepe a pray,and caſt it into the wolues throte: and what a crueltie is that? Is it not all one, as if I ſacrificed my daughter vnto Moloch? Yes: for he draweth hir away from obedience to God, to put hir into the hand of the deuill, and to turne hir vnto all naughtineſſe. Againe, if a man match his ſonne with a yong woman that is euill conditioned and an idolatreſſe, in whome hee ſeeth no religion nor vertue: is it not as good as if he ſhould goe poiſon his ſonne? True it is that the wife (to mennes ſeeming) hath not authoritie ouer her husband: But yet it is a deadly plague for a man to be matched with a wicked wife.For ſurely one woman of naughty behauiour,ſhall rather mar ten men, than ten good husbands ſhall win one leawd woman that is ſet vpon wickedneſſe. And that doth experience ſhewe. The wife ſhall ſooner marre hir husband by hir allurementes and temptations I wot not how: than the husband ſhal reclaime his wyfe, and bring hir backe againe to good. And therefore let vs not thinke it ſtraunge, that God ſhould tell the Iewes heere, that if they giue their ſonnes and daughters to the Amorrhytes,Hethites,Chananites,Heuites,Iebuſites, and ſuch like people: they ſhould by and by bee turned away to idolatry.

And heereunto he addeth a threat, *That they ſhalbe rooted out*: and that is according to that which I haue ſayde already. For it doeth them to vnderſtand, that God will be continually among them. In deede it was a woord of ſingular ioy, that God would dwell among them: for Exod.25.8. & 29.45. they might call vppon him at their neede, and when they were diſtreſſed they might feele that he was at hande with them, and therefore that they needed not to feare their enemies. But yet for all that, it behoued them to know, that God being ſo neere vnto them, would not ſuffer himſelfe to be diſpiſed. And therefore let vs beare away this leſſon, that now ſpecially ſeeing God hath vouchſafed to giue vs his word,wherby he aſſureth vs that he wil be neere at hand to Mat.1.23.& 1.Cor.3.16. vs, yea and that he will haue vs to bee his temples to dwell in by his holy ſpirite: let vs learne I ſay, to giue our ſelues in ſuch wiſe vnto him, that whereas there are ſinnes and infirmities in vs,(as in deede there are mo than is requiſite) it may pleaſe him to correct them, and rid vs of them from day to day. And foraſmuch as hee hath taken vs vnder his protection, yea and made his dwelling place among vs: let vs bee ſtirred vp by meanes thereof, to liue in ſo much the greater awe, ſeeing he is become ſo neighbourly and familiar vnto vs.

Now let vs kneele downe in the preſence of our good God with acknowledgement of our faultes, praying him to make vs ſo to feele thẽ, as wee may learne to miſlike of our ſelues for them, and as this curſed ouerweening may no more beare ſway in vs to make vs liue after our owne liking, but that we may forſake our owne fleſhly reaſon and wiſedome, and couet nothing but to pleaſe him in all pointes and all reſpectes: and that ſeeing he hath vouchſafed to ſhoule vs out from the wicked, and to deliuer vs from their corruptions, wee may learne to ſanctifie our ſelues wholly vnto him, and to profite more and more in his feare, to the end that his glorie may ſhine forth in vs, & we be more & more cōfirmed in his free adoption, wherethrough hee hath choſen vs to be his childrē & heires for our Lord Ieſus Chriſts ſake. That it may pleaſe him to grant this grace, not onely to vs but alſo to all people and Nations of the earth, &c.

On Friday the ſecond day of Auguſt. 1555.

The Lij. Sermon which is the ſeconde vpon the ſeuenth Chapter.

5 But thus ſhall yee doe vnto them. You ſhall beate downe their altars, and breake their pillours: yee ſhall heawe downe their groues, and burne their Images with fire.

6 For thou art a holy people to the Lord thy God. The Lord thy God hath choſen thee to be his peculiar people aboue al the nations of the earth.

7 The Lord hath not ſet his loue vppon you, nor choſen you bycauſe ye were moe in number than all other nations, ſeeing you be the leaſt of all nations.

8 But for the loue which the Lord beareth you, to keepe the othe which hee ſware to your fathers, the Lord hath brought you foorth with a ſtrong hand, and deliuered you from the houſe of bondage, euen from the hand of Pharao King of Egypt.

Yeſterday wee ſawe howe God forbad his people to aly themſelues in any wiſe with the Infidels, and ſpecially with ẏ people that dwelt in the lande of Chanaan. Foraſmuch as it was Exod. 25.8. & 29.45. ſaid that God had choſen that lande to the intent that his name ſhould be worſhipped there: it was his will to haue it purged from all the filthineſſe and infections, which had reigned there too long time afore. And after hee hath ſpoken of the folke, he addeth alſo that he will haue all ẏ tokens and markes of ydolatrie that were in the countrie put quite away. For like as it behoued the Iewes to worſhip God purely, without intermedling any of the ſuperſtitions of the heathen: ſo did it alſo behoue them to keepe the order in ſuch wiſe as God had ſet it downe, and to put away al things that were contrarie to the true religion and ſeruice of God, ſo as there might bee no mingling nor corruption. Wee ſee now in effect, that the doctrine which is conteined here, is that foraſmuch as God had giuen his people the land of Chanaan: hee would haue it cleare from all abhominations, and his ſeruice to be ſo ſet vp, as all the ceremonies of the heathen and vnbeleeuers might be taken away, and nothing be mingled with it beſides his owne Lawe. And ẏ is the cauſe why hee ſpeaketh expreſly of *Altars and Groues*. For as wee ſee that men haue no end nor meaſure in deuiſing of faſhions to ſerue God withall: there was not that Groue but they made ſome deuotion in it. And like as men builded Abbeyes, Pryories, and Chappels in the Popedome: ſo went the worlde among the paynims, and the Iewes followed the ſame trade, as we ſee. But that was not for want of warning: for God had prouided ſufficiently for them, that they might not ſet their minds vpon ſuch paltry. But what? Hereby it appeareth howe harde it is to holde men in the pure ſimplicitie of Gods ſeruice. Neuertheleſſe, howſoeuer men fare, it is tolde vs here, that ſuch as will ſerue God vncorruptly, muſt abſtaine from the thinges that are deuiſed and forged by ydolaters, and ſtick to the pure doctrin which God hath ordeined, and not adde any thing to it of their owne, or which they find here & there, or which ẏ world hath foliſhly brought in: All thoſe thinges muſt bee laide down, if we will ſerue God purely. But yet let vs mark ẏ there were two reaſons why God commanded the Iewes to break downe the heathen mens altars, & to deſtroy their ydols. The one was to the ende that his people ſhoulde not bee prouoked and tempted to wickednes & ſuperſtition by looking vpon them: for we bee ſo fraile, ẏ we be caried away as ſoone as we ſpie any mark of ſuperſtition. I ſaid euen now that it is a harde thing to hold men faſt in pure obedience to god as in reſpect of his ſeruice. Why ſo? For their eares doe alwayes itch to heare ſome newe doctrine: & although none be brought them from elſewhere, yet their minds are ſo rouing, ẏ they euer couet ſome newe thing or other. Now then if wee haue any occaſion to tempt vs vnto euill, or to any corruption of Gods ſeruice: wee bee ouertaken by and by. God therefore perceiuing that his people might bee inclined to ydolatrie, and that they would yeelde to it out of hand asſoone as they ſpied any occaſion: willed them to wipe away all ſuch thinges. Beware (ſaieth hee) that yee ſuffer not anye of the markes of the ydolatries that haue reigned hitherto there :for if any of them come in your ſight,ye ſhalbe as it were rauiſhed,and ye will be following of them. So then , ſuffer not any thing that may make you to ſtumble , or that may comber you , ſo as the way ſhoulde not be leuell before you. Haue you none other ſignes than thoſe which I haue appointed you, and let them ſerue to confirme you in my worde . Let the thinges which I haue taught you bee as a burning Lampe to giue you light : and if yee haue neede of helpes , let the Sacraments and Ceremonies conteined in my Lawe ſuffice you : but take heede to your ſelues that yee haue no ſtumblingblocke. For though ye haue nothing to hinder your going on in the right way : yet may yee euen of your owne nature turne aſide from it : and what will yee then doe,if any occaſion of euill be offered you?That is one point.

Another is , That Gods will was to haue that Lande as it were dedicated to himſelfe,and ÿ his people ſhould ſhew how much they abhorred ydols,by ſuffering none of the things to remaine which the heathen men had kept before. God then ment to trie the zeale of the Iewes , when he commaunded them to make cleane riddance of the ydols:and by that meanes he intended to inure them to abhorre ydols, and all things that belonged to them : ſo as they might ſhewe not onely that they purpoſed to worſhip the onely one God,but alſo that they could not abide his glorie to bee any whit abated. Nowe we ſee the two reaſons that God had an eye vnto in this place. And nowe muſt wee apply them to our owne benefite. For although ſome woulde reſtraine this to the Iewes , as though it belonged not to vs in theſe dayes : yet was it not Gods intent to ſpeake for any one time onely . And indeede,(as hath beene declared in the fifth chapter ,) let vs looke into our owne hartes,and euery man examine himſelfe , whether hee finde himſelfe more ſtedfaſt and ſtrong to withſtande ydolatrie , than the Iewes and other Nations were. For ſurely that curſed ſeede is ſo rooted in all men , as there is none of vs all but hee may keepe a ſchoole of ſuperſtition , without hauing any ſchoolemaſter to teach him . Wee be ſo frowarde, that although no bodie ſeduce vs, yet we rather tende ſtill to ſome corruption,than holde our ſelues in the pureneſſe of gods ſeruice.What is to bee done then , ſeeing that ydolatrie is ſo rooted in our nature ? If occaſions be offered to drawe vs away , is it not like as when nettes are ſpred before birds? And wee bee ſo vnconſtant, that we tumble into them immediatly . And therefore as for them that thinke themſelues to haue ſuch conſtancie & ſtrength , that although they haue images,Chappels, and ſuch other thinges,yet they ſhall not hurt them at all: they tempt God , and experience ſhewes it to bee ſo. Therefore there is no better way, than to know our infirmitie, and vpon the knowledge thereof, to vſe the remedie that God hath giuen vs. If a man perceiue himſelfe to haue a weake heade, ſo as he is not able to beare three glaſſes of wine but he ſhall be ouertaken : if hee drinke without diſcretion , is he not as badde as a ſwine? Doeth he not tempt God? Ought he not to thinke vpon the default that is in him,and to preuent it? Yes . Nowe it is certaine that in this behalfe we haue ſo weake braines,that we ſhal by and by be made dronke with ſuperſtition, yea and as good as bewitched with ſuperſtition, ſo as there wilbe no diſcretion in vs, but wee ſhall goe on ſtill to ſeeke further occaſions and meanes of it: and is not that a manifeſt ſpiting of God ? It is a point therefore which ought to bee well marked, that GOD knowing the weakeneſſe which is in vs , is not willing that wee ſhoulde haue images, altars , and ſuch other thinges to ſeduce vs, but that all ſuch thinges ſhoulde bee wyped out from among vs,to the intent there may not bee any thing to hinder vs from giuing our ſelues ſimplie vnto God.

But nowe let vs come to the ſeconde reaſon. It is not ynough for the faithful to refreine from all ydolatrie: but they muſt alſo ſhewe that they abhorre and hate all thinges that are againſt Gods ſeruice : And to the vttermoſt of their power they muſt indeuour to haue them all wyped away,ſo as the rememberance of them may be rooted out , that they may neuer bee ſpoken of any more. For elſe what zeale haue we to the honour of God,when we ſee ydols ſet vp in ſteed of him , and looke vppon thinges that ſerue to corrupt and deface the true and pure religion? If wee doe but laugh at them, and take them as ſmall trifles , or as childrens games : is it not a token that we eſteem the honour of our God no more than a thing of nothing ? For if our deſire to haue God glorified,were as earneſt as it ought to be : ſurely it would wound our hearts to ſee ydols ſo ſet vp in his place , and to ſee men bereaue him of his maieſtie to attribute the ſame to deade creatures,and that ſo precious and holy a thing as religion is,ſhould be ſo marred,corrupted & turned vpſidedown.When theſe marks come before our eyes, ſurely if we haue any one droppe of good zeale, it muſt needes vex vs and greeue vs : and wee muſt to the vttermoſt of our power deface all thoſe ſignes and marks of ydolatrie,and cauſe Gods honour to be maintained vnappayred. And indeede , when hee requireth that wee ſhoulde make confeſſion of our faith vnto him:this alſo is comprehended therein.For as the mouth ought to vtter what is in our hart, Rom.10.10. that is to wit , that wee haue but the onely one God which hath redeemed vs : if wee yeeld him ſuch record with our mouth:our outward doings muſt alſo bee anſwerable thereunto , ſo as both feete and handes tende that way.[If we were at that point,] wee woulde not wittingly and willingly ſuffer any ſuperſtitions, if it lay in vs to aboliſh them. But yet there is a thing in it , which is that Moſes commaundeth the people expreſly,to doe it when they bee come into the Lande which God had appointed thē to inioy for their inheritance. For if we be in a ſtraunge Countrie where wee haue no authoritie : it is not in our power to put downe ydols , neither doeth this commaundement ſtretch thereunto . It is true that in paſſing through places where ydolatrie is vſed,we muſt ſigh and mourne,and thinke our eyes to bee as it were defiled with the ſight of ſuch wickedneſſe contrary to the honour of god, ſo as it muſt greeue vs and vex vs at the heart that we bee driuen to ſee ſuch ſights. And foraſmuch as our hands be tyed, and we haue not any ſoueraintie or authoritie in the place or Countrie where ſuch ſuperſtitions reigne: wee haue no more to doe, but to pray God to put to his mightie hande, and to deſtroye it euerywhit: and in the meane while to holde our ſelues quiet. But if we haue authoritie: then behold, Gods voyce crieth out, vp vp, ſuch abhominations muſt not reigne any longer. When yee bee come to the Countrie which your God giueth you to poſſeſſe: then let all ſuch geere bee put downe.

Nowe then, out of this text wee muſt drawe a rule: which is that according as God giueth abilitie,wee muſt indeuour to haue all ydolatrie and all the tokens therof vtterly aboliſhed both publikely and priuately. As howe? When a Countrie is at libertie,and our Lorde hath planted his word there: ſuch as beare ſway and haue autority,muſt find ẏ meanes that al ſuch things as haue corrupted the true religion,may be aboliſhed & brought to nought. If they doe it not:it is a negligence which God condemneth. And if a man will put downe ydolatrie: it is not ynough to ſaye, no man ſhall worſhippe ydolles anye more: but all thinges which imbaced the pureneſſe of the Religion, muſt bee quite and cleane wyped away. As for example, if men ſhould keepe ſtill the Altars that were in the time of the diueliſh Maſſe: what a thing were it? Wherto ſerued they, but to committe abhominable trecherie againſt God, ſo as there ſhoulde remaine neither faith nor feare towardes him, ſo long as ſuch abhomination indured? The Altars ſerued to ſing their Maſſes on. By meanes whereof the death and paſſion of our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt was vtterly defaced, in ſpyte of the redemption that he had wrought. Inſomuch that if it bee admitted that Ieſus Chriſt was ſacrificed dayly: it is all one as to reiect the benefite that was purchaſed vs by his death and paſſion.

Heb.9.26.

Nowe then if the Altars were ſuffered to ſtande ſtill: were it not a reteyning ſtill of ſome memoriall of the leawdneſſe which ought to miſlike vs? Yes: for otherwiſe what were our zeale? When wee call to rememberance that wee haue hearde Maſſe in times paſt, and had caſt our ſelues into that dungeon: wee ought to bee ſorie and to craue pardon for it, and to bee abaſhed at the blindneſſe whereinto wee were falne, wherethrough wee became ſo beaſtlie, as to goe ſeeke our ſaluation by renouncing the redemption that was purchaſed for vs long agoe by our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt, and to make our ſelues partakers of ſo diueliſh a thing: I ſay wee ought to bee afraide in our ſelues to thinke of it. And if the Altars ſhoulde haue ſtoode ſtil, had it not beene as it were a ſpiting of God to play mockeholyday with him after that faſhion, that whereas wee had ſhrunke away from Chriſtianitie, wee bee neuer a whit ſorie for it, no nor greeued at all to ſee the badges thereof? And in verie deede the Iewes were caſt in the teeth with their reteyning ſtill of thoſe thinges, as who ſhoulde ſay they weltered ſtill in their owne filthineſſe. And if a leawde woman that had giuen her bodie to diſhoneſtie for a time, ſhoulde afterwarde reioyce to ſee ſtill the markes of her whooredome: were it not a ſigne that ſhee repented not at all? Yes: and euen that is the cauſe why this exception is purpoſely added, that when the kinges went about to ſerue God, and had beaten downe the ydolles, yet they helde ſtill ſome relikes of them, and this blemiſh ſticketh expreſly vppon them, that God miſlyked them: as if hee ſhoulde ſaye, they were not worthy to bee allowed without exception, but bee driuen to beare this marke of reproch alwayes in their faces, that they had not throughly clenſed the lande from the former ſuperſtitions, when they left the groues ſtanding ſtill. If a man ſay, why, and was that ſo euill a thing? Are not trees the creatures of God? Yes: but when men ſhall haue miſuſed them and put them to ſuch heatheniſh vncleannes as to ſpyte God with them: then muſt they bee wyped quite and cleane away. Men muſt not take ouermuch libertie in that caſe: for our nature is too much giuen to euill of it ſelfe, (as I ſaide afore) without anye intycing of it thereunto. Thus yee ſee howe wee ought generally to indeuour to aboliſhe all ſuperſtitions, and all things that may ſerue thereto.

1.Kin.15.14 and 22.44. & 2.king.12 3.&14.4.

And likewiſe particularly, let euerie man looke well to his owne houſe, that hee retaine not any thing which may couer any wickedneſſe, or which is not fully agreeable and conformable to the ſimplicitie of Gods worde. For as manie as diſpence with themſelues in that caſe, ſhall feele it turne to their ruine in their ende. Wee ſee howe it befell to Gedeon who was choſen of God, and by whom ſo many noble deedes were done. Onely becauſe he made an Ephod and cauſed a certaine deuotion to be ſet vp: there inſued great deſtruction after his death. And after the ſame manner wee ſee howe a great number doe keepe ſtill their chappels. If they haue any Caſtle or great houſe, there muſt bee a chappell for a memoriall of their aunceters, in remembrance that there was ſuch a thing, and ſuch an antiquitie. They then which will needes haue ſome remnant after that faſhion for vaineglorie, muſt feele at length that they haue couered a fire, which ſhall conſume themſelues and their children, as the deede of Gedeon was the cauſe of the vndoing and deſtruction of his linage, as I ſaide afore. And therefore let vs beare in minde, that whereſoeuer GOD giueth vs power, wee muſte ſo hate all the markes of ſuperſtition, as wee muſt doe what wee can to wype them out ẏ they may no more be had in remembrance. And let vs alwayes bethinke vs of the two reaſons which I alledged before.

Iudg.8.27.

Now for cõfirmation hereof, Moſes addeth *that* *the people of the Iewes are holy, and that they ought to dedicate themſelues wholly vnto God: euen becauſe they had beene choſen* (ſaith he) *to bee a peculiar people in the whole worlde.* Whereas he ſaith that the Iewes are a holy people: hee meaneth that they ought to be ſeparated from the Heathē and Infidels. For if wee take example at thoſe to whom God hath not graunted ſuch grace as hee hath done to vs: is it not as good as a thruſting of the priuiledge vnder foote which hee hath giuen vs? Beholde, God ſheweth vs his will, and hee vouchſafeth to haue his worde preached vnto vs: and is that to no purpoſe? is it for nought? Whereas God commeth downe vnto vs, and communicateth himſelfe ſo familiarly vnto vs: doeth that honour which he doth vs, and that grace which hee vouchſafeth to vſe towards vs, ſerue to no vſe nor profite? Surely it ought at leaſtwiſe to ſanctifie vs vnto him, that is to ſay, to make vs redy to ſay, Alas Lord, we were miſerable creatures, and thou vouchſafeſt to retaine vs to thy ſelfe: therefore behold, we be here, gouerne thou vs, and let vs be thy flocke. But nowe if we fall to defiling of our ſelues with the ſuperſtitions of the heathen: is it not a renouncing of the priuiledge that God had giuen vs? Is it not a forſaking of the couenant whereby hee had knit and vnited himſelfe vnto vs? Yes. That then is the cauſe why Moſes addeth heere, that the Iewes are a holy people. As if hee ſhould ſay, Looke to your ſelues, for God hath ſhouled you out from all Nations, and hee hath called you, euen by ſhewing you that you ſhall bee his heritage, accordingly alſo as he hath giuen himſelfe to you. Nowe then if yee goe and take example at theſe blinde wretches, ſo as ye alledge, Eph.2.12. Our neighbours doe ſo and ſo: what a thing is that? Your neighbours are ſtraungers to God, they be as wilde beaſts, God hath not vouchſafed to behold them with pitie and mercy, to deliuer them from the brutiſh ignorance wherein they be. To be ſhort, yee haue them as mirrors of Gods wrath and rigour. Al they that periſh do ſhewe you what you were, and what you ſhoulde be ſtil, if god had not reached you his hand. Now therefore acknowledge that benefite, and take no more example at thoſe whom God hath forſaken, and to whom he hath not granted the like fauour as he hath done to you. Thus much concerning the Iewes. Now remaineth that we apply this doctrine to our owne vſe.

What is it that maketh vs a holy people to our God? Euen his worde. Iohn 15.3. For it is ſaide, you be cleane becauſe of the worde which I haue preached vnto you. Ye ſee then that the mean wherby God ſanctifieth vs to himſelfe, that is to ſay, draweth vs out of the common perdition of all the children of Adam, and taketh vs to be of his owne houſholde: is his vttering of his will vnto vs. And ſo to bee ſhort, it is (as yee woulde ſaye) a ſolemne conſecration or hallowing of a people by God, when hee vouchſafeth to haue his worde preached vnto them. Wee neede not goe ſeeke the gewgawes of poperie to make a dedication or hallowing: for the meane whereby God dedicateth his temples, is by ſending his miniſters to preach his doctrine faithfully: and it is alſo the meane wherby we be hallowed vnto him. Nowe he hath graunted vs this grace: Wee ſee howe the wretched Papiſtes are gone aſtray, and runne gadding ouer the fields without keeping of any way. They hop, they trippe, they ſtumble, and all to their owne ruine. They haue no light, but are as blinde wretches in the mids of darkeneſſe: and in the meane while, behold, the Lord our God maketh his dayſonne of righteouſnes to ſhine vppon vs, for Ieſus Chriſt Mal.4.2. ſheweth himſelfe to bee our redeemer. Sith it is ſo: what ought we to doe? Ought we not at leaſtwiſe to conſider, to what end and purpoſe Gods worde is preached vnto vs, and euery of vs to gather vnder his hande to ſay, Lord, rule thou vs? Yes: but what? There are verie fewe which thinke vpon that. For we would be more afraide to defile our ſelues with the filthineſſe of papiſtrie than we bee, if this doctrine were well printed in vs, that ſeing God hath ſeparated vs from them, if wee intermedle our ſelues with them newagaine, it is all one as if wee mingled heauen and earth together, of purpoſe to turne the whole order of nature vpſide downe, & to make a hotchpotch of all things, that there might bee a horrible confuſion. For ſurely there ought to bee a greater difference betweene Gods children and the vnbeleeuers, than there is diſtance betweene heauen and earth.

True it is that we muſt be faine to be mingled together one with another as long as we liue in this worlde: but yet is it not ſaide for nought, that Gods children are citizens of heauen and 2.Cor.5.6. pilgrims in the worlde. Although they bee conuerſant here beneath: yet muſt they not be tyed to it, but they muſt goe on ſtill as in a ſtraunge countrie, knowing that their abidingplace is aboue, and that God hath choſen thē with condition that they ſhould goe thither. Therefore when ſuch as haue knowen Gods trueth, doe fall to mingling themſelues with ydolaters, and will not bee ſeparated from them: it is all one as if they went about to peruert the whole order of nature. But this doctrine hath more neede to bee throughly well minded, than to bee preached with long ſpeech. The thing then which Moſes ment by theſe wordes, is this: Yee bee a people that is hallowed to the Lorde: that is to ſay, Although we were of Adams curſed race, although we came of wretched Infidels: yet notwithſtanding our Lorde hath vouchſafed to drawe vs to him, and to chooſe vs to bee of his houſholde: and therefore it is good reaſon that wee ſhoulde be ſeparated from the reſt. Hath hee done ſo, by making vs partakers of the doctrine of his Goſpel? Then his wil is to haue vs dedicated to himſelfe, and that wee ſhoulde bee his temples. So then let vs looke well to it, that wee continue in this ſtate, and that we doe not wilfully diſanull Gods adopting of vs, nor conſent to any thing that may put vs out of his houſe. For when wee forſake Gods Goſpell through falſhood, wee doe what wee can to cut our ſelues off from the bodie of Ieſus Chriſt, and to diſherite our ſelues of the heauenly kingdom, and to baniſhe our ſelues from it, when wee make no conſcience nor remorſe of intermingling our ſelues with ydolaters and with their defilings. Whatſoeuer hee is that giueth himſelfe the bridle to goe to the ſuperſtitions of the Papiſtes, and to communicate with them: it is al one as if he canceled the deede of the inheritance which God hath giuen him. And yͤ deede is not written in paper nor in parchment: but it is ſealed by God in our harts, and it is his will that ſeales and markes therof ſhould alſo bee in our bodies. Then [in ſo doing] we blot out the writing wherby God adopted vs for his children & heires, and (as I ſaid) we baniſh our ſelues out of his kingdom, and cut off our ſelues from the body of our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt. For if we be members of Gods ſon, we muſt not goe & do homage to ydols, nor defile our bodies (which are yͤ temples of the holy ghoſt,) with ſuch filthines & abhomination. But as oft as we com to heare Gods word, we muſt thinke thus with our ſelues: Behold, my God hath made me holy, that is to ſay, he hath ſeparated me from ſuch as are ouerwhelmed in their owne vncleannes: and ſhall I nowe worke him ſpite? What a condemnation wil it be to me, yͭ my God hath ſo hallowed me, and I on the otherſide doe vnhallowe and defile my ſelfe with all leawdnes, reiecting yͤ priuiledge that he hath giuen me? Is it not a making of war againſt him, when I will needs after that ſort diſappoint the good, which hee had offered me of his owne infinite mercy? Yes.

Eph.1.13, & 5.26.

2.Cor.6.16

And Moſes addeth expreſly yet further, *That it was to the intent that this people ſhould be ſeparated from all the reſt of the world.* If God graunted his grace commonly & without exception to al people, to haue his worde preached euerywhere: yet ought we to be ſanctified vnto him, bicauſe he taketh vs out of the corruption of Adam, and from the ruine wherin al of vs are by nature. But when as he choſeth one Nation, and alyeth himſelf to yͤ ſame, and in the meane while letteth all yͤ reſt goe: it ſerueth to giue the greater beauty to his goodnes: like as nowadayes, our hauing of yͤ pure doctrine of yͤ Goſpel, is as a corde whereby God draweth vs to him, and whereby he vouchſafeth to be made one wͭ vs, as I ſaid afore. The worlde ſeeth how he letteth the wretched papiſts run at rouers, ſo as their eys be ſtopped & they ſee not one whit, nay rather they turne quite & cleane away from the way of ſaluation. We ſee it. And what is to be done, but yͭ inaſmuch as god ſetteth ſuch beawty vpon his mercy: ſuch compariſon ſhould make vs the willinger to ſerue him, & to liue the more warely, for feare of turning away from him, ſeeing he hath vochſafed to prefer vs before others, though wee haue not deſerued it? But what? So farre are we vnable to profite our ſelues by ſuch goodnes of God: yͭ we rather make it an occaſion to take leaue & libertie to do euill. For whē we haue yͤ examples of the vnbeleeuers before our eyes: we thinke we may do the ſame things that they do. But that is far of from thinking vpon that which Moſes ſaith here. Your god (ſaith he) hath ſanctified you aboue al other nations of yͤ earth. As if he ſhould ſay, Who be you? For ye be no better than other Nations: and yet neuertheles, your god hath vouchſafed to ſanctifie you. Now therefore, be you the more carefull to bridle your ſelues, & to keepe you vndefiled, and meddle no more with the wretched vnbeleeuers yͭ are wholly giuen ouer to their owne vncleannes, becauſe your God neuer drew them vnto him. Thus yee ſee why Moſes compareth here yͤ Iewes expreſly with yͤ heathen. Likewiſe in theſe days, foraſmuch as God hath preferred vs before yͤ wretched papiſts, we muſt beware yͭ we walke the more circumſpectly vnder his obedience, aſſuring our ſelues yͭ he wil not haue ſuch a benefite deſpiſed, as is his vouchſafing to take vs into his houſe, and to communicate himſelfe ſo familiarly vnto vs as he doth. But yet to expreſſe this grace yͤ better, Moſes addeth *that this people was choſen.* As if he ſhould ſay, indeede it is an ineſtimable dignitie and nobleneſſe for you to bee choſen to be the people of God, ſo as no Nation of the earth can boaſt themſelues to haue beene exalted to ſuch degree of honor: but yet beware that you be not proud of it. For your ſanctifying at Gods hand, came not of your owne purchaſe, but of Gods chooſing of you: it came of him. Therefore let the praiſe thereof be yeelded vnto him: & aſſure your ſelues ye be the more beholden to him, in that he hath ſhewed ſuch mercy towards you. Wee ſee then yͭ the word *Chooſe* which Moſes ſetteth down here, ſerueth to magnifie Gods grace yͭ was ſpoken of before, to yͤ intent yͭ the people ſhould be the more prouoked, & (as it were) rauiſhed to ſerue God. And for the ſame purpoſe he ſetteth down a long diſcourſe. *Wherfore is it* (ſaith he) *that your God hath loued you, & knit himſelfe to you?* For this maner of ſpeeche, (namely yͭ God knitteth himſelf to men) importeth very much. And why doeth he ſo, ſaieth he? What hath moued him therto? Was it for your owne ſakes? Or did you put your ſelues foreward vnto it? Was it bicauſe ye were a greater nation than any other? Was it in reſpect of yͤ, that God was moued to chooſe you rather thā any of the others? Had you deſerued it on your part? No no: but *it was* (ſaieth he) *bicauſe hee loued you.* Nowe this worde *Loue* importeth here, firſt that God reſpected not any thing in men why hee ſhould chooſe them, but that his owne free loue ſufficed him in that behalfe. He loued you, that is to ſay, ſeeke not any cauſe or worthineſſe in your ſelues: bee contented that our Lorde hath choſen you of his owne free goodneſſe before al others, though ye were no better thā they. Now we ſee all Moſeſes meaning.

And although this matter cannot be diſcourſed throughout: yet muſt we note, yͭ Moſes ſpake here of Gods election, to the intent yͭ the people ſhould be yͤ more humbled, and yͭ the ſame humbling of them ſhould ingender an affection and zeale to ſerue God according as he was knowen to thē. Therefore when there is any talke of the grace yͭ God hath ſhewed vs in inlightening vs, & it is told vs that he hath adopted vs to bee his children & of his Church: wee muſt needes match this with it, yͭ our hauing of al theſe things is not by our owne purchaſe, nor for putting of our ſelues foorth by any vertue or good minde yͤ was in vs: but through Gods ſeeking of vs at ſuch time as we turned our backs vpon him. Now by this meanes we be hũbled, & we haue need of it. For as ſoon as men haue any incling of any goodneſſe yͤ is in themſelues: they like wel of it & ſtand gaſing at their ownẽ fethers like Peacockes: but in the meane while they conſider not, that they rob and bereaue God of the praiſe that is due to him. Therfore whenſoeuer there is any ſpeaking of Gods grace, it is requiſite for vs to bee put in mind of this matter, to yͤ end we may not imagin our ſelues to haue deſerued aught on our owne ſide, or that God reſpected any good diſpoſition that was in vs: but aſſure our ſelues that nothing but his free loue moued him to doe it. When we be ſo humbled: then muſt we needs be ſpoyled of our owne reaſon, or elſe become ſtarke beaſts, if wee take not corage to ſerue God and to dedicate our ſelues wholly vnto him, to ſay, How happeneth it that wheras we were curſed and damned creatures, our God hath ſought vs out, yea euen from the dungeons of death, & hath opened vs the gate of the kingdom of heauẽ, calling and drawing vs dayly thither: & yet in the mean while we be ſlothful in ſeruing him? And ſpecialy ſith we ſee yͤ whereas the moſt part of the world goeth to deſtruction, and the wretched Infidels are ſo blinded that they be let alone in the darkneſſe of their ignorance, God in the mean while watcheth early and late ouer vs: what ought we Ier.31,28. to do, when hee vſeth ſuch ſpeciall loue towards vs? Ye ſee then that this humility muſt leade vs to a care and warenes to ſerue God, and to gather our ſelues wholly vnder his wings, acknowledging yͤ the more we be bounde vnto him, the more we muſt ſhew by our deeds that we impute all to his mere goodnes, and are willing to yeeld him the praiſe thereof as he deſerueth. Thus yee ſee wherunto the things are to be referred which Moſes ſpeaketh heere.

And herewithall let vs marke, that whereas it is ſaid, *that the people [of Iſrael] were not the greateſt of other Nations:* vnder one kinde, he comprehended al the reſt. As if he ſhould ſay, there was neither dignitie nor worthineſſe in you, why God ſhoulde chooſe you rather than any other Nation. For it muſt be vtterly rooted out of our hearts, to imagine that God findeth any thing in vs, which may moue him to loue vs. For vntill ſuch time as men bee quite rid of ſelfeweening, they ſhall neuer be able to glorifie God as they ought to do. And although wee blaſe it not with open mouth, that there is ſome deſert or excellencie in vs: yet notwithſtanding we fall aſleepe in ſuch ſelfeſoothing, as we imagine that there is ſtill ſome value in our ſelues. And therfore it behoueth vs to enter purpoſely into our conſciences, and to clenſe them in ſuch wiſe as wee leaue not any one drop of pride & preſumption there: to yͤ intent that whẽ we haue throughly ſerched and ſifted all that is in vs of our nature, wee may know there is not any thing that may purchace vs grace and fauor at Gods hand, nor that can be acceptable vnto him, but that wee be naked and vnpurueyed of all goodnes and glorie, and finally that we haue nothing in vs but vtter filth and vncleanneſſe. Rom.3.22. When examination is made after yͤ maner: then ſhall men bee diſpoſed to receiue Gods grace, and to glorifie him for it when they ſhall haue receiued it. Then let vs learne to vnderſtand wel, that the ſearching of all that euer is in vs to the hard bottome, (ſo as we foſter not any imagination of ſelfworthineſſe, but perceiue that God findeth vs vtterly vnhappy and accurſed, ſo as we might be vtterly forlorne and damned, and wee haue not any thing of our own but ſuch as prouoketh Gods wrath and vengeance againſt vs:) commeth of the grace that god hath graunted vnto vs. When we be come to yͤ point: then muſt we come alſo to the loue that Moſes ſpeakes of here.

And to the intent to ſhewe the better, that the ſaid loue is freely beſtowed: he ſheweth out of what fountaine it ſpringeth. Euen of this (ſaith he), *that it is Gods will to performe the othe which he made to thy fathers.* And hereafter he wil ſay, that their fathers alſo were choſen freely. But let it ſuffice vs that in this place God putteth the people in minde of the couenant that was made with Abraham, before the people, to whom he ſpeaketh, were borne. Hereby he ſheweth that the cauſe of our election, came not of our owne deſeruing. For what is it that wee did before wee were borne? If it bee ſaide that God foreſawe what manner a ones we would be: yet did none of all that moue God to chooſe this people: for they were ſo hardhearted & ſtubborn a people, as hee coulde neuer weald them. What manner of ones did they ſhew themſelues to be at their going out of Egypt? Howe did they acknowledge Gods grace in yͤ deliuerance that he had wrought for them? The ſcripture yeeldeth vs record good ynough of it. And yet notwithſtãding God ceaſed not to take them ſtill for his people. Wherein he ment to ſhew vs, that his vttering of his goodnes towardes vs, is not in any reſpect of our deſeruings. And indeede, the holy ghoſt was not ſo ill minded, as to haue concealed ſuch a thing from vs, but that if our Lord had foreſeene any goodnes in vs, and yͤ the ſame had cauſed him to chooſe vs: hee woulde ſurely haue told vs of it. But what? As for ſuch as bable that God choſe vs according to his foreknowledge, & that he knew we ſhould haue ſome good diſpoſition in vs: they ſhew themſelues to be worſe thã beaſtes, foraſmuch as they conſider not that all men are alike, ſauing that God putteth his grace more into one than into another, and yͤ we muſt not imagine that we haue ſome thing I wote not what of our own. Who is he (ſaith S. Paul) which 1.Cor.4.7. putteth the difference, to make thee excellenter than other men? It commeth not of our ſelues: then muſt we needs haue that making of God. And ſo it is not for nought, that Moſes telleth yͤ people, yͤ the onely cauſe why they were choſen was for yͤ God loued them, which loue made him to vtter yͤ ſame loue, euẽ before ſuch time as they to whõ he ſpak, were born or bred, ſo as he ſware aforehand to their fathers, yͤ he would take them for his people. Seeing it is ſo then, let vs know yͤ when we be beaten downe in our ſelues, we muſt conſider that the welſpring and fountaine of our ſaluation,is the infinite goodneſſe of our God,& that he ment not to regard our deſerts,but to vſe his owne free goodnes as we cal it,that is to ſay, not to ſell any thing vnto vs. Neuertheleſſe it was his will to loue vs. And wherefore? Becauſe it pleaſed him. Nowe let men goe and ſurmiſe I wote not what cauſes in this caſe, for they ſhall confound all by it: but let vs take hold of the onely good wil of God,in yͤ it pleaſed him to chooſe vs and to leaue others.

And now let vs kneele downe in the preſence of our good God with acknowledgement of our faults, praying him to make vs feele them more and more,and to indeuour dayly to know them, that we may be ſory for them and amend them: and that therewithal we may haue an eye to the couenant which he hath made with vs, to yͤ end to anſwere to his call,that we wander not heare and there like ſtraye beaſts, but that ſeeing he is willing to hold vs vnder his obedience, and to gather vs into his flock,wee may be ſatiſfied vnto him by meanes of his word,which benefite it maye pleaſe him to make to preuaile in ſuch wiſe in vs,as it may bee a furtherance to his glory,and wee be brought more & more to forſake the luſts of our fleſh and of the worlde,& to offer our ſelues vnto him in ſacrifice both aliue and dead:Aliue,that the power of his holy ſpirit may vtter it ſelfe in vs [by making vs] to followe his commaundements cheerefully: and deade,that we may be ready to goe out of this world, whenſoeuer it ſhall pleaſe him to call vs hence.That it may pleaſe him to grant this grace, not onely to vs but alſo to all people and Nations of the earth,&c.

On Saturday the third of Auguſt. 1555.

The Liij. Sermon, which is the third vpon the ſeuenth Chapter.

7.& 8. The Lord &c.

9 Knowe yee therefore that the Lord thy God is the God, [*euen*] the faithfull God which keepeth couenant and mercie with a thouſand generations, to ſuch as loue him and keepe his commaundements.

10 And yeeldeth payment vnto ſuch as hate him before his face, to make them periſhe. And hee will not forſlowe to recompence him that hateth him [*euen*] to his face.

WE ſaw yeſterday,that the cauſe why Moſes ſaith here expreſly,that God choſe one certain people,& made not that grace common to all the world: was to humble thoſe to whom god vttered himſelfe, to the ende they ſhould knowe that it befell them not for their deſertes, nor through their owne purchaſe: but through the Pſal.105.6. onely goodneſſe of God. And that is the cauſe alſo why Dauid ſpeaking of this people,ſaith,the ſonne of Abraham Gods welbeloued, the ſeede of Iacob his choſen. Thoſe two wordes are matched together,to ſhew that that people was ſhouled out from all other Nations, not for any worthineſſe that was in them: but by reaſon of free election, and to expreſſe Gods goodneſſe and loue towards vs the better: and therefore doeth he ſend vs wholly thither. Truth it is that in this place he ſpeaketh of the generall election of the whole people, in that God had adopted them. And that is well worth the marking. For in calling Abraham, God extended the promiſe of ſaluation vnto his whole linage. Hee ſaid vnto Abraham, I wilbe the God of thy linage after thee. Heere then is a generall election (as Deut.4.20. they terme it) of the whole people, inaſmuch as God ſeparated them from the reſt of the world, Gen.17.7.10 telling them that hee tooke them for his inheritance and Church. And in very deede, the ſigne of circumciſion was as a ſeale, to warrant al the offſpring of that race, that God was their ſauior: and ſo, that was ſuch a grace as was common to all the children of Abraham. Howbeit, there is another ſecond election or choſing, which is(as ye would ſay)ſtreiter: namely,that out of yͤ ſame linage god chooſeth whom he thinks good. And herein there is no contrariety. For we muſt conſider yͤ degrees which the holy ſcripture ſetteth downe,when it ſpeaketh of all mankind. It ſheweth yͭ they be alienated or eſtranged from God, and conſequently from the hope of ſaluation:by meanes wherof all men euen from yͤ greateſt to the leaſt,are damned. Now God draweth out of them whom he liſteth. And to the intẽt his grace ſhould be yͤ better knowen,he choſe one linage. And whoſe linage? Euen the linage of one man in whom there was no hope of iſſue. For when God ſaid to Abraham, I wilbe yͤ God of thy ſeede after thee: how many children & childrens children had he? Gen.15.3. He had not one, neither ſonne nor daughter. He liued a long time after ere hee begate Iſaac. He was old and drooping,and his wife was barren, ſo as there was no more hope of iſſue. And for yͤ ſame cauſe, whẽ the prophet Eſay intẽded to vpbraid the Iſraelits wͭ their vnthankfulnes, Eſa.51.1.2. & with their pride & luſtines which they were in,by reaſon yͭ they were growen to ſo great a multitude: & contrariwiſe with their vnbeliefe when they were fewe in number: Looke backe (ſaith he)to yͤ ſtone which you were hewen out of,look back to your wel head. What people had Abraham? He was all alone. And was your mother Sara fruitfull? Nay contrariwiſe God was faine to giue her a childe by myracle which ſhee neuer looked for,inſomuch that it ſeemed incredible to her when ſhe was told it. Seeing it is ſo: aſſure your ſelues(ſaith yͤ prophet) yee haue no cauſe to make any bragges, foraſmuch as God hath ſhouled you out after that faſhion.And for the ſame cauſe alſo doth Moſes ſay in this text, If a man compare your ſtate with the ſtate of other Nations, he ſhall finde yͭ the other Nations are multiplyed by yͤ order of nature: but your father Abraham was all alone by himſelf,yea and an old man & drooping, & readie to creepe into his graue.Ye ſee then yͭ god choſe a people which was not,of purpoſe to magnifie his free fauor & to make it the more manifeſt. Verily he accompliſhed Rom.4.17. yͤ thing which S.Paul ſpeakes of in treating of the ſame Abraham: yͭ is to wit,God choſe the thinges which were not,& called them forth to giue them their being. S.Paul telleth vs yͭ wee haue(as ye would ſay)a liuely picture in yͤ perſon of Abraham,to ſhew vs howe it is yͭ God maketh vs any thing,and exalteth vs to honor.For(ſaith he)what was Abraham? A poore creature halfe dead.Was his linage in any ſtate?Did it floriſh at that time? No, but it was more likely that hee ſhould neuer haue had any iſſue at all. Then let vs learn yͭ god guideth the things which are not, and bringeth them forth to giue them being:and ſo yͤ hope of the faithfull concerning their ſaluation,lieth not in themſelues, but they look for it at Gods hand. As touching our ſelues,truely we be nothing: but God vttereth his power to giue vs being.And ſo ye ſee,yͭ through his goodnes we begin to hope for life euerlaſtingly in his kingdome. Thus then yͤ firſt degree of election, is yͭ God choſe the linage of Abraham, notwithſtanding yͭ it was forlorne as wel as all the reſt of the world. And hauing done ſo, he ſtayed not with that grace:but foraſmuch as a great nūber were eſtranged & as it were cut off frō yͤ line of Abraham: he pulled backe alſo whom it pleaſed him. Rom.9.6.7. And that is the cauſe why S.Paul ſaieth, that all they which come of Abraham according to the fleſh,are not reckened for his lawful children, I mean to Godward,in reſpect of yͤ ſpiritual inheritance yͭ was promiſed to the true linage.And for yͤ ſame cauſe S. Paul alledgeth yͤ ſaying yͭ is written Rom.9.12. & Gen.25.22. & Mala.1.2. in the 25. of Geneſis, namely that the elder ſhall ſerue the yonger, accordingly alſo as it is ſaid by yͤ prophet Malachie, Iacob & Eſaw were both of them the children of Abraham: & what is the cauſe why Iacob was receiued, and Eſaw refuſed ſo as god diſherited him, and vouchſafed not to eſtabliſh any Church in his ofſpring, but that as many as came of the line were mingled with the heathen,and belonged not at all to the body of Chriſt? Whereof came this? To whom ſhal a man impute it? It is to be vnderſtood,that (as ſaieth S. Paul) God had giuen ſentence of them before they were borne. For Iacob and Eſaw were twinnes, and their Mother Rebecka bare them both at one burthen: and at that time what could the one deſerue more than the other? God refuſed the elder to whom belonged the honor of firſt borne,yea, by order of nature: but God ſhewed that his grace was aboue nature. So then, Iacob was choſen,and Eſaw refuſed. To whom ſhal a mā impute al this?Brought they any ſtrength and vertue of their owne (as ſaith the prophet Micheas) for the which God eſteemed the one more than the other? Should the Iewes(which came of Iacob)ſet vp their briſtles againſt God, to ſaye that they were nobler than other men? No,but they ought to yeeld the honor to Gods free fauour, acknowledging that to be yͤ onely cauſe of their ſaluation,and yͭ they haue not any thing of their owne wherfore they ſhoulde be preferred before other men. Heerein we ſee that God hauing choſen a people in generall, doeth notwithſtanding reſerue libertie to himſelfe,to chooſe out of that people whomſoeuer he liſteth, & to refuſe yͤ reſt. And ſo as I haue declared alredy,there is one election which god maketh generally:and another[particularly] of thoſe whom he vouchſafeth to take for his children & heires.Nowe then,it is of Gods free election, Eph.i.9. yͭ we haue his word purely preached vnto vs,and yͭ we haue his goſpel & Sacraments. And euen therein we haue cauſe to confeſſe yͭ he hath ſhewed himſelf liberal vnto vs.For by what title is yͤ goſpel giuen to vs,rather thā to ſuch as make greater account of themſelues than we doe, and which are not inferiour to vs as in reſpect of the world? Why doth God leaue great kingdomes & principalities,and nations of renowne:& chooſe a little nooke,& a ſmal number of people, to ſay that his worde ſhalbe preached there? When it raineth ſo vpon vs,and al yͤ reſt of the world abideth ſtill in drought: is it not to bee concluded that God hath liberty to doe good to whom hee liſteth?And is it not his only loue, wherto we be beholden for it?Yes.So then,when the Goſpel is preached in a place, and it hath the warrantes yͭ God giueth men ſaluation: (as when wee haue baptiſme & the Lords holy ſupper miniſtred vncorruptly:)we may ſay it is an election that God maketh.But yet for all yͭ, in the meane time hee reteineth to himſelfe whom he thinketh good,to the end that men ſhold not truſt to the outward ſignes without faith & obedience, knowing that although we haue bin choſen to be of the bodie of the Church, yet if we make not our profite of that election, God can welynough cut vs off againe,& reſerue a ſmal number to himſelfe. And although there bee ſome great multitude of vs which confes al wͭ one mouth yͭ God hath choſē vs:yet can we not therefore ſay yͭ he auoweth vs for his childrē,except we liue in purenes of faith, & haue ratified yͤ couenāt which god hath made with vs. And ſo let vs vnderſtand yͭ Gods liberality ſheweth it ſelf after al ſorts to vs, and yͭ therfore wee haue the iuſter cauſe to loue him more and more, & to yeeld him all praiſe.For haue we Rom.6.4. his word?It is a free gift aforehand, whereby he Col.2.12. hath bound vs vnto him.Haue we his ſacramēts? They be the badges of his fatherly election: we haue not deſerued any of all theſe thinges. But aboue all, when it pleaſeth him to imprint the Eph.1.13.

certainetie of his promiſes in our heartes by his holy ſpirite : then is it a ſpeciall adoption, then doeth hee ſhewe vs that wee bee of the little nomber whome hee hath reſerued to himſelfe. And ſo (as I ſayde afore,) wee ſee that in all reſpectes wee muſt keepe our mouthes ſhut from bragging of any thing : and on the other ſide haue it open to magnifie Gods goodneſſe which he vttereth towardes vs.

Nowe herevpon Moſes addeth, *That God will keepe couenaunt to a thouſande generations of them that loue him:* yea *through his mercie*, ſaieth he. For as much as he treateth of the generall election: therefore he exhorteth the people to bethinke themſelues aduiſedly. Note ye (ſaith he) that for as much as God hath promiſed your father Abraham to be the God of his ſeede after him: he wil not faile you. But yet for all that, looke ẏ ye walk warely, for the couenant is made with condition, that ye muſt be ſound and haue a right meaning heart. Therefore thinke not but that your God can driue you out of his houſe and out of his Church, if he finde you vnworthie of the benefit which he hath offred vnto you. With ẏ meaning doeth Moſes ſpeake, when he putteth here a difference betweene them that loue him and keepe his commaundements, and them that hate him. Now by theſe wordes we be taught, ẏ when God offereth vs his word, it is alreadie an allying of himſelf to vs, & a giuing of vs a record of our ſaluation: but yet doth it not follow ẏ we may therfore be careleſſe. Nay rather we muſt be quickened vp to imbrace ẏ promiſes which he ſendeth vs, ſo as we may reſt wholly vpon them, and bee ſtedfaſtly ſetled in them all our life long. That is a thing wherevpon it behoueth vs to think. True it is that God layeth open his heart vnto vs whẽ his word is preached vnto vs : there we be put in minde of his loue, and alſo haue full aſſurance of our ſaluation. But yet muſt ẏ word enter in vnto our heart, & preuaile with vs : which thing is not done but through faith. And ſo let vs vnderſtãd ẏ Gods electiõ is as it were defeated by vs, vnleſſe we be cõſtant & continue ſtedfaſtly in it to ẏ end.

Rom.10,7.

But yet Moſes noteth here againe, that this Couenant which God maketh with them ẏ beleeue him and obey him, is of his owne *Mercie*, leaſt we ſhould imagine that God reſpecteth our deſeruings, as we ſee that men are commonly giuen to think: in ſo much ẏ if they meete but with a ſyllable which ſeemeth to tell them ẏ they may deſerue I wote not what: they be puffed vp with pride, and beleeue wonders of themſelues. That is the cauſe why Moſes ſaieth expreſly, ẏ God wil performe his couenãt & mercy. And he ſheweth wherein this couenant conſiſteth. It is not ẏ wee on our ſide do bring him any thing why he ſhold loue vs : but ẏ he is mercifull vnto vs, as we ſee is ſaid in the hundred & third Pſalme. True it is ẏ euen there God requireth that wee ſhould feare him, & indeuour to keepe his commandements. But yet howſoeuer the world go, he ſheweth vs alwayes that the thing which wee muſt vnderſtand of him, is that he vſeth pitie in handling vs gently through his grace, and not according to our deſeruing. Therefore let vs beare this ſaying well in minde and weigh it throughly, where Moſes telleth vs that the couenant which God maketh with vs, lieth wholly in his goodnes and no where elſe: and that it is not for vs to puffe vp our ſelues with fooliſh preſumption, as though we were worthie of ſuch a benefite, or as though God did but recompence vs : but that wee muſt alwayes looke vp to his goodneſſe, ſo as when wee come vnto him, wée doe nothing elſe but ſay, Alas Lord, we be ſure that thou receiueſt vs to mercy as wretched creatures, and therefore vouchſafe to haue regard of our miſeries, by ſhedding out thy mercy vpon vs. That is the thing whereof we be put in minde in this text.

Pſal.103.13 14.

Deut.5.10. & 6.5.

Nowe furthermore Moſes ſheweth howe wee may keepe Gods commandements: ẏ is to wit, by hauing ẏ things which haue bin treated of heretofore. And they be maner of ſpeeches which import ſo profitable doctrine, ẏ it is good to renue ẏ remembrance of them, whẽ the text offereth occaſion therof. Moſes therefore ment to do vs to vnderſtand, that to abſtaine frõ doing of euill, & to keepe the things contained in the law to outward ſhow, is not all ẏ we haue to doe. As for example, if a mã haue not blaſphemed the name of God, if he haue not led a diſordered lyfe, if he haue not bin an adulterer, a theefe, a quareller, or a periured perſon, but haue liued honeſtly : all this will not ſuffice him. For why? Such ſeruice may be by conſtraint, ſo as the partie ſhall not obey of his owne free will, nor delight in ſubmitting himſelfe to Gods righteouſneſſe, to frame his life thereafter. That is the cauſe why Moſes beginneth here with loue. As if he ſhould ſay, that ẏ beginning of good obedience to Godward, and of liuing according to his Law: is to determine ẇ our ſelues to delight in nothing more, thã to yeld our ſelues to him with al obedientnes, & to make that our whole pleaſure, accordingly as wee ſee how Dauid proteſteth, that Gods Law was more ſweete and pleaſant vnto him than honnie : and not only that he did ſet more ſtore by it, than by gold & ſiluer: but alſo that he imbraced it ẇ ſuch loue, as he gaue not himſelfe to the pleaſures of the world, nor was caried away with wicked affections to doe euill : but gaue himſelfe wholly to well doing, and to walke according to Gods wil. So then, to offer willing ſacrifices vnto God, let vs remember what is ſaid in this text, and what hath bin treated of alreadie heretofore: namely that before there is any ſpeech of the keeping of Gods commandements, Loue is ſet downe in the firſt place, bicauſe wee haue neede to giue our ſelues firſt vnto GOD, and to haue our hearts (as ye woulde ſay) faſt tyed and knit vnto him, ere we can indeuour to behaue our ſelues according to his lawe and righteouſneſſe.

Pſal.19.11.

But nowe let vs returne to the matter that was touched before. Moſes ſayeth *That GOD will keepe Couenant, yea euen with a thouſand generations of them that loue him.* As if hee ſhoulde ſay, When God hath once planted his wordes hee continueth that grace, not onely till the deceaſe of thoſe to whome he ſpeaketh, but alſo to their children and their offſpring. Nowe then let vs looke about vs, and whereas wee perceiue Gods grace in that he hath vouchſafed to reſerue vnto vs his word which was in maner aboliſhed,and will haue the ſame now preached vnto vs: if wee (I ſay) perceiue his goodneſſe in that behalfe : let vs alſo hope that hee will continue the ſame towardes our children which hee hath begunne towardes vs, if wee ſerue him by dooing the thinges that hee commaundeth vs. Ye ſee then that the goodneſſe which God ſheweth vs in his word,muſt not make vs ſlouthfull and careleſſe : but rather bee as a ſpurre to pricke vs foreward vnto him, that his holy couenant bee not broken on our part and through our default.

Furthermore whereas he ſayeth, *Knowe thou that thy God is God*, yea and *a ſtrong God* : thereby he meant to ſeparate the liuing God from all the idols which the world hath forged in al ages. And it is a text well woorth the noting. For wee ſhall neuer ſerue God with all our heart, neither ſhall wee be able to truſt in him and to reſt vpon him,vnleſſe we be ſure that he is almightie, and that he onely is God. No doubt but the vnbeleeuers may well beare themſelues in hand for a time that their religion is good, and the worlde ſeeth how wilfull they be in that behalfe : but yet all is but ſtubbornneſſe whatſoeuer they make of it. And therefore it behoueth vs to be fully reſolued and perſwaded of this, that wee muſt not haue a flying faith,ſo as our hoping to be ſaued is but at al aduenture. For we muſt alwayes beare 2.Tim,1.12. in minde, how S.Paule ſaieth that we muſt know whom wee beleeue, and that God is a faithfull keeper of that which wee haue committed vnto him. Then if we know not that our God is one, and that he is alone, and that he is the verie true God : we ſhal be alwayes waueringand our faith ſhall haue no ſtedineſſe. That is the cauſe why Moſes ſaieth expreſly, Know thou that thy God is the God.As if he ſhould ſay,Conſider in what ſtate the wretched heathen mē and ſuch as giue ouer themſelues to ſuperſtition are.It is true that they wil talk ynough of God: howbeit,ẏ is but rouingly,they knowe not who he is. But it is not ſo with you. For ſeeing that your God hath taught you,and diſcouered himſelf to you : he hath certified you of his wil,and ſhewed you that ye need not doubt but your religion is ſuch as you ought to ſticke to. Now then, ſwarue neither one way nor other,neither halt ye,but go on right forth, ſeeing you bee ſure of your religion. Marke that for one point.

Howbeit,for as much as we ſee men giuen to follow their own fanſies,which notwithſtanding doe but tend to their owne deſtruction : we muſt remember by this text of Moſes, that vntill ſuch time as we be ſure that the God whō we worſhip is the true God : wee ſhall euer bee intangled in ſome one thing or other. And albeit that we doe our indeuor to ſerue him, at leaſtwiſe to our ſeeming : yet is it nothing,it is but faining, and that hope or truſt is but a beſotting of our ſelues. Wel may we haue ſome opinion: but as for to haue a ſetled faith, ſo as we may glorie that our ſaluation is laide vp in God, and that he will keepe it ſafely bicauſe he hath taken vs to himſelf:it is vnpoſſible that we ſhould haue any ſuch certaintie, vnleſſe wee can ſay with Saint Paule, I knowe whom I haue beleeued, and he will be a faithfull keeper of that which I haue committed vnto him.So then,let vs put ſuch difference betweene the liuing God,and all the idols which men haue forged of their owne braine: as he may be knowē alone aboue all others. And that we may ſo doe, let vs learne to deuiſe nothing of our own head. For as ſoone as wee father any thing vpon God which is not in his owne word : it is all one as if wee did ſet vp an idoll: for by that meane we diſguiſe him. Therefore wee muſt ſo ſticke to the liuing God, to the ende we may bee his people, and hearken quietly to ſo much of his will as he ſheweth vs by his worde : as it may ſuffice vs to haue ſo much knowledge of him as he hath reuealed by his word,without ſeeking any further. For as for thoſe that are ſo bolde as to take leaue to ſay,I weene this is good, and why ſhould not God take this or that in good worth? and in the meane while haue no warrant of the holy ſcripture : I ſay they forſake the liuing GOD, and turne away after idoles. For what elſe are the imaginations of men, but verie idoles to deface the true Maieſtie of the onely God? Thus much concerning this place.

Moreouer Moſes termeth God *Faithfull*, to ſhewe that like as afore, he attributed ſtrength vnto him, (for the Hebrewe worde that he vſeth commeth therof:)ſo muſt we alſo haue his truth before our eyes and in our rememberaunce, to the end to leane vnto him & to referre our ſelues wholly vnto him, knowing that Gods ſtrength ſerueth not to abaſh vs, but that whenſoeuer it is ſpoken of,it is matched immediatly with mercy, to the intent we ſhould be drawen vnto him,and come to him with a cheerefuller courage. Then is it not without cauſe that Moſes hath ſet down Gods trueth heere, of purpoſe to hold the people in obedience to him. And heereby wee bee taught, not to preace into Gods priuities, and to diſpute of thinges that are too high for vs,yea and vtterly vncomprehenſible : but rather that wee muſt reſt vppon his word and trueth,which he hath reuealed vnto vs. True it is that we muſt bee fully perſwaded of this point, that GOD choſe vs in his euerlaſting purpoſe, not bicauſe Eph.1.4.5. wee were woorthie of it, but bicauſe it pleaſed him ſo to doe : and that there is none other cauſe thereof but onely his good pleaſure, as the holy Scripture ſheweth vs. And ſo let vs vnderſtande, that although wee haue Gods worde : yet will God haue pitie on whome hee Exod.33.19 & Rom.9.15 will haue pitie, according to Saint Paules alledging of the ſame text, to ſhewe that albeit the multitude of people to whome the Goſpell is preached bee neuer ſo great,yet God reſerueth whome he liſteth to himſelfe, and it is meete he ſhoulde ſo doe,and yet notwithſtanding we haue cauſe to glorifie him howſoeuer thinges goe, without attempting in any wiſe to grudge at it. But haue we knowē that? Would we be aſſured of our ſaluation? We muſt reſort not only to Gods grace, but alſo chiefely to ẏ promiſes wherby he vttereth his loue towardes vs, as is ſaid alreadie.

Ro.5.10.18.
Eph.1.7.
Eph.2.6.

Yee ſee then that the cauſe why Moſes doth in this place attribute the title of *Faithful* vnto God, is to the end that when folke will be ſure of their ſaluation, they ſhould not enter into fooliſh imaginations, but looke vnto Gods woord which is before their eyes, whereupon they may be bold to reſt. So then let it content vs that our Lorde allureth vs to him, and that the death & paſſion of our Lord Ieſus Chriſt together with his righteouſneſſe is ſet afore vs, ſo as wee know that by that meanes we may bee reconciled vnto God, to the end yͭ our ſins be not imputed vnto vs, but that we may be acceptable vnto him. Seing that this is ſet down vnto vs: let vs take hold of Gods faithfulneſſe which Moſes ſpeaks of here, and let vs not thinke that God offereth vs ſuch a benefite to deceiue vs, but that he doth it to the ende that we ſhould glorifie him in the middes of our miſeries, and that although wee bee ſilie fraile creatures: yet we may ſay that the life of Ieſus Chriſt belongeth vnto vs, and that we be already lifted vp to ſit with him in the kingdome of heauen. Thus ye ſee what we haue to beare in mind concerning the woord *Faithfull*.

Ier.12,3.

Now for a concluſion Moſes addeth a threat, ſaying: *that God alſo will requite like for like to ſuche as hate him, yea euen to their faces, & that he wil not foreſlow*. In this place there is ſome darkſomneſſe in the woordes of Moſes: for hee interchaungeth the number. God (ſaith hee) will yeild recompence to ſuch as hate him to his face, or before his face. Then doth he ſhift the number, & it ſeemeth that whereas he ſayth they hate him to his face, he ment to ſay that wee ſpyte God or hate God to his face when wee fall out into diſorder and are ſo rebellious, as it ſhould ſeeme that we would run againſt him, and defie him to be at open warre with him. But for as much as that woord is repeted twice, and in the end it appeareth that Moſes ſpake of the faces of the tranſgreſſors: no doubt but it is a chaunging of the number, as the holy Scripture is commonly wont to doe. Therefore the very meaning of it, is that God will requite them to their faces, by making the hatred to turne backe vppon themſelues. Otherſome take it as though it were ſpoken of their lifetime, that God will not only puniſh the wicked and the deſpiſers of his Lawe, after this preſent life: but alſo execute his vengeance vppon them aforehande to the ſight of mens eys, ſo as we ſhalbe prouoked to feare him, by yͤ ſight of yͤ puniſhments which he wil ſo execute vppon the diſobedient. Otherſome take it that God will require it to his face, as though it were ſayd yͭ wheras he ſpareth the wicked in this world, it is to the ende to ouerthrowe them and deſtroy them vtterly afterward, according as it is ſayde by the prophet, that God pampereth thoſe whom he puniſheth not out of hand, like as men doe fatte an Ox or a ſwine when they intend to kill him. And the prophet vſeth that ſimilitude, to the intent wee ſhould not enuy the wicked, when we ſee them proſper. For is an Ox or a Swine to bee enuied, which is fatted but to the ſlaughter? and which ſhall haue his throte cut when he is once fatte? Now then, God handleth the wicked and the deſpiſers of his maieſtie after ſuch a ſort, as he may ſeeme to loue them: but it is to haſten them the ſooner to their deſtruction. And truly this is a good and profitable leſſon: but as touching the preſent place, if wee read all the wordes of Moſes throughout, there is no darkeneſſe at all in them. For why? he addeth, *God wil not foreſlowe to requite them that hate him, euery man in his face*. And ſo Moſes ment in effect to ſhewe, that men may be paſt ſhame in rebelling againſt God: but yet in the end they ſhal find that they haue too rough an aduerſarie: and therefore God muſt be faine to pull them by the beardes to make them yͤ more aſhamed. It is true yͭ as now they vtter great brags, and it ſhold ſeeme that they would make God aſhamed, and put him to the foyle: but he can well skill to ouermatch them in ſuch wiſe, as they ſhalbe faine to receiue their payment in their owne perſons, yea and euen in their faces, according as it is ſayd in the fifteeth pſalme, I wil reproue thee to thy face. And in that place God pleadeth expreſly againſt hypocrites. How now, ſayth hee? Becommeth it thee to take my name in thy mouth? Thou boaſteſt thy ſelfe to bee myne: and thou wilt needes play the preacher, and defile my holy law with thy ſtinking mouth. Now when thou doeſt me ſuch iniurie as to take vpon thee to be a prophet, and to ſpeake in my name, and in the meane while doeſt match and accõpany thy ſelfe with whoremongers, quarelers, and raylers: what will come of it in the ende? When I haue borne with thee a while, I will reproue thee to thy teeth, ſaieth he. Hee vſeth there the word *Face* as he doth here in this text: but it is a common ſpeeche in our language, to ſay that it is ſpoken to a mans teeth, face or heade. That then is the naturall ſenſe of Moſes.

Pſal.50.16. 21.

And heere we be warned to humble our ſelues before God, and to ſtoop in ſuch wiſe as we prouoke him not to wrath through our hardneſſe & ſhameleſneſſe, ſo as he ſhould ſhewe himſelfe to be our aduerſarie, to requite vs to our face, that is to ſay in our owne perſons, by being driuen to come before him to bee puniſhed according to our deſertes. Then let vs not harden our hearts againſt our God, but let vs learne to caſt downe our eyes when he ſpeaketh vnto vs. It is true indeed that wee ought to lift vp our heades when wee heare the promiſes of his goodneſſe, ſo as faith muſt make vs to ſtie aboue the cloudes. But yet doth not this let vs that wee ſhould not ſtill bee aſhamed in our ſelues, and haue an eye to our owne wretchedneſſe, and learne to bee ſory for it, and thereupon labour to liue in the feare of God, bowing downe our neckes continually to receiue his yoke, and to beare it patiently. Thus ye ſee what we haue to marke as in reſpect of this word face, where it is ſayd yͭ God wil recompence them all to their faces, which doe hate him.

But heere by the way a man might make a queſtion, concerning this ſaying of Moſes, that God wil not foreſlowe to pay them to their faces, which hate him. For it is commonly ſeene that the wicked doe ſpend all their daies and all their whole life in proſperitie, ſo as it ſhoulde ſeeme that God is willing to pleaſe them in all Pſal.73.12. thinges, in ſo much that it is ſayd of them in the pſalme, that they goe on in continuall proſperitie vnto their death, and pine not away as the children of God doe. Howe then is it ſaide that Num.14.18. God wil not forſlowe, ſeeing hee is long ſuffering? And men may ſee it with their eyes, though it were not toulde them in woordes. Theſe Pſal.103.8. two thinges agree very well. For although God winke at thinges for a tyme, and puniſh not the wicked out of hand: when all is wel reckened, the reſpite that hee giueth them will not bee ſo long, but that it ſhall euer bee true, that ſuddain deſtruction ſhall ouerwhelme them. And for proofe thereof, when the wicked ſay, Peace, 1.Theſſ.5.3. all is ſafe: then ſhall the ſuddeine ſtorme fall Eſa.28.15. vppon their heades. When they thinke themſelues to haue made a compoſition with death: then ſhall they bee ouertaken as a woman that falleth in labour of child ere ſhee bee aware, bicauſe ſhee miſtruſted not that the houre or inſtant of hir trauell had bin ſo neere at hand. Euē after the ſame maner doth God ouerwhelme all ſuch as ſhall haue abuſed his patience, when he hath borne with them for a time. Now then although God ſhew not himſelfe a iudge to them ſo ſoone as we would: yet doeth he not faile to deſtroy them without foreſlowing. Therefore let vs haue an eye to the ſhortneſſe of our life, leaſt we fall aſleepe: and let vs vnderſtand, that although God make not haſt after our opinion: yet notwithſtanding he foreſloweth not, bicauſe he forgetteth not the offences which he winketh at, and which he puniſheth not out of hand. Let that ſerue for one point.

And let vs marke further, that God hath not indented with vs ſo as wee may ſay he ought to let vs alone vnpuniſhed vntill death. For although hee execute not his iudgements all after one rate: yet doth he often puniſh the wicked euen heere, and ſhewe vs examples before our eyes, to teach vs to ſtande in awe of him, as the pro- Eſa.59.19. phet ſpeaketh of it. Seeing then that God will alwayes ſhew himſelfe to be our Iudge, both during this mortal life, & after our death: Let vs not delay our returning vnto him from day to day, but let euery man quicken vp himſelfe, & walke carefully, foraſmuch as if any man fall aſleepe, if he wil be wel wakened againe, he muſt be faine to ſet this ſaying of Moſes before his face, That God will pay them all home which do hate him. Truely ẏ wickedeſt creatures that be will not ſay they hate God: but yet it is ſo in deede. And for proofe therof, all ſuch as are deſirous to haue liberty to liue naughtily, to giue themſelues to all iniquitie, could find in their heartes that there were no God in heauen to iudge them. To bee ſhort, if we loue God, wee take pleaſure in goodneſſe. But we cannot loue him without his Iuſtice: for they be things which cannot goe aſunder. Therefore let vs conclude, that as long as wee doe euill wee hate God. And why? For inaſmuch as we bee loth there ſhould bee any order or gouernment in the world: wee would not that he ſhould be acknowledged with his righteouſnes and goodnes. Now then, when the wicked doe giue themſelues the brydle to deſpiſe God and to tranſgreſſe his commaundementes: they coulde finde in their heartes to haue him plucked out of heauen if it were poſſible. Wherefore let vs marke well, that God doeth not without cauſe auow, that al ſuch as breake his commaundementes are his deadly enemies, inaſmuch as they be againſt his Iuſtice, without the which he cannot be God. And therefore let vs beare in minde the thing that hath beene declared already, namely that if wee purpoſe to obey God, we muſt honour him in ſuch ſorte, as we may like well of his Iuſtice and miſlike of euil dealing: & that although we fall into it through infirmitie, yet we may pray God to lift vs out againe, and ſo to holde vs vp by his power, as our whole ſeeking may be to ſubmit our ſelues vnto him, and to forſake all our owne affections and euill luſtes in ſuch wiſe, as we may bee reformed according to his righteouſnes, and conſequently obey his holy Law.

Now let vs caſt our ſelues downe in ẏ preſence of our good God with acknowledgement of our faults, praying him ſo to beare with vs in thē, as he vſe not ẏ rigor towards vs which we haue deſerued: but ẏ of his infinite goodnes he reache vs his hand, & print his word after ſuch ſort in our hearts, as it may take roote there, and wee neuer ſwarue any way from it, nor he ſuffer ſuch bleſſing to become vnprofitable through our fault & vnthankfulnes: but that we may make it auailable, by receiuing the promiſes of our ſaluation, to continue ſtedfaſtly in them vnto the end, and by ſhewing our ſelues willing to bring to paſſe ẏ God may be honored & ſerued, not only as long as we liue, but alſo after our deceaſe, ſo as they ẏ come after vs may continue in exalting & magnifying his glorie, that he may be worſhipped on all hands with one cōmon accord, vntill he haue rid vs quite and cleane from all the vanities and corruptions of this world, & made vs partakers of the glorious immortalitie which wee poſſeſſe not as yet but by hope. That it may pleaſe him to graunt this grace, not onely to vs but alſo, &c.

On Wedneſday the vij. of Auguſt. 1555.

The Liiij. Sermon which is the fourth vpon the ſeuenth Chapter.

11 Therefore keepe the commandements, and Ordinances, and Lawes which I

command thee this day to doe them.

12 And it will come to paſſe, that becauſe yee haue heard theſe Lawes and kept them and done them, the Lord thy God wil alſo performe the couenant and mercie vnto thee, which he ſware to thy Fathers.

13 And he will loue thee, and bleſſe thee, and multiply thee: & he wil bleſſe the fruite of thy wombe, and the fruite of thy land: thy corne and thy wine, and thine oyle, and the increaſe of thy kine and the flocks of thy ſheepe, in the Lande which he ſware to thy Fathers to giue thee.

14 Thou ſhalt bee bleſſed aboue all nations, and there ſhall not bee either male or female barren among you, or among thy Cattell.

15 The Lord will take from thee all diſeaſes, and all the euill plagues of Egypt which thou haſt knowen. Hee will not lay them vpon thee, but vpon all thoſe that hate thee.

WE ſee here againe the thing that hath bin treated of alredy heretofore: namely that God indeuoreth to drawe vs to him by gentleneſſe. It were enough for him to ſhew vs his will: howbeit foraſmuch as our nature draweth the cleane cōtrary way, he ſetteth his promiſes afore vs to win vs withall, & to prouoke vs to ſerue him the better. Therefore whenſoeuer God promiſeth to bleſſe vs, & to mak vs to proſper ſo we ſerue him: thereby we be put in minde of yͤ ſingular goodneſſe & loue which he beareth towardes vs. For is he bound to doe it? Nay, ought not euery of vs to ſtreine our ſelues, (yea euē aboue our power,) to ſerue him? Are we not bounde thereto by nature? Yes: and therefore let vs marke well, that whereas God voutſafeth to tel vs that if we ſerue him he will be fauorable and mercifull vnto vs: his ſo dooing proceedeth of his own meere freegoodneſſe. And if that moue vs not: the worlde may ſee what our vnthankfulneſſe is. But yet by the way let vs marke well, yͭ his promiſes ſhould ſtand vs in no ſtead, if our Lord ſupplyed not our defaults, I mean euen whē we be beſt minded to ſerue him, for elſe ſhould we come farre ſhort of yͤ perfection yͭ is required of vs. All his promiſes then ſhould nothing boote vs, if he did not beare with vs: and ſo is he faine to vſe dubble grace towardes vs. Howbeit to yͤ intent yͭ things may be the better vnderſtoode: let vs ſee firſt of all how it may agree, yͭ God ſhould bleſſe vs of his owne freegoodneſſe, & make vs to proſper: & yet notwithſtanding match it with this condition, yͭ we ſerue & honor him. For at the firſt ſight there ſeemeth to be ſome diſagreement in it. If God loue vs without reſpect of our deſeruinges: there ought to be no iffes nor conditions in the matter.

But he putteth them to it, as we ſee in this text: yea & all the whole ſcripture is full of the ſame doctrine, namely that God recompenceth euery man as they ſhall haue ſerued him. How can it thē be, that God ſhould both haue reſpect of our life: & alſo loue vs of his owne free mercy? Let vs marke well the wordes that Moſes vſeth here. For he ſayth *that God will performe his couenant and mercy according as he hath promiſed, if he be honored and ſerued*. In ſaying that God will performe his couenant and mercie, he ſheweth vs well that we muſt not begin at our owne ſeruice, as though we would bring any thing vnto God to moue him to loue vs: For whereupon is his couenant grounded? Euen vppon his mercie. Now thē let vs ſee what his mercie is, & whereto it ought to be referred. Firſt of all, it is his choſing of vs. Although wee be vtterly froward, & deſerue to be ſhaken off at his hand: yet doth he take vs into his fauor. Thus is it already a great and ineſtimable mercie, that although God find vs loſt and damned creatures: yet he vouchſafeth to take vs for his people, aduauncing vs to ſuch dignitie as to be of his houſhold and Church. Now when he hath ſo begun, he muſt be faine to hold out ſtill: that is to ſay, he muſt be faine to like well of vs continually by reaſon of the ſame free fauor which he beareth vs, and all for our Lorde Ieſus Chriſtes ſake. So then, God maintaineth his mercy towards vs, bycauſe he pitieth our wretchedneſſe and miſerie. And although we be not wortyie to be receiued: yet doeth he accept vs. And wherefore? Becauſe he loueth vs in the perſon of his only ſon. But there is yet more: that is to wit yͭ he vſeth mercy towards vs, in bearing with our imperfections, and by that meanes accepteth our ſeruice, ſo that although it be faultie and haue always ſome blemiſh in it: yet notwithſtanding he admitteth it of his owne goodneſſe. Now we ſee what the couenant importeth, which Moſes ſpeaketh of here: namely that firſt and foremoſt God receiueth vs to mercye, euen without finding any thing but vtter curſedneſſe in vs. And ſecondly, that he continueth his fauour towards vs for loue of his only ſon, notwithſtanding yͭ he might find iuſt cauſe in vs, to ſhake vs off and to hate vs. And thirdly, that he accepteth our workes & taketh them for good, ſo as although they be (as ye would ſay) but halfe done, and haue alwayes ſome faulte mingled with them: yet notwithſtanding he ceaſeth not to admit them as if they were righteous and ſound, and all by vertue of the ſaid couenaunt, as I ſaide afore. Now then we ſee it is no incōuenience, yͭ God ſhould bleſſe vs and make vs to proſper when wee haue ſerued him: and yet notwithſtanding that his louing of

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Mat.19.29. & Rom.2.6. & Apo.14.13.

Eph.1.6.

vs ſhould bee, not for any woorthineſſe or deſertes of ours: but for his owne free goodneſſe ſake, without any other reaſon that wee can alledge, than that he hath choſen vs and made vs partakers of the righteouſneſſe that is in our Lord Ieſus Chriſt, that thereby all our filthineſſe may be couered and hidden.

But as ſoone as the ignoraunt ſort doe heare of the woord Condition, they beare themſelues in hand that God maketh ſome payment, & that when he ſheweth vs any fauour, he doth it in recompence of our deſertes. And by that meanes the wretched Papiſts doe blind themſelues with vain preſumption, & quite ouerthrow thẽſelues by perking vp after that faſhion againſt God, & therefore they muſt at length be caſt downe in their ouerloftines. For whereunto do they leane? Beholde (ſay they,) God telleth vs that he will bleſſe vs if we ſerue him: therefore it followeth that all the promiſes which he maketh are conditionall. Yea, but they haue ill ſtudied the holy ſcripture, when they cannot diſcerne betweene the promiſes as they be ſet downe in the Lawe, and the thinges that God addeth to thẽ to ſupply our default. For if wee take the promiſes ſo rawely: that is to wit, that God will bleſſe none but them that ſerue him: wee ſhall all of vs bee ſhut out from hope. For which of vs ſerueth God with all his heart and with all his ſoule as God hath expreſſely commaunded vs? Nay contrariwiſe we drag backward, and by nature wee be deadly enemies vnto him, becauſe all ẏ thoughts and affections that are in vs doe fight againſt his will. Then are wee ſo farre of from being able to ſerue him as wee ſhould doe, that wee make war againſt him, and ceaſe not to prouoke his wrath againſt vs. Nay verily, euen when God hath reformed vs by his holy ſpirit, ſo as he hath giuen vs ſome good diſpoſition, wherethrough wee be inclyned to ſerue him, and to be ſhort, wee ſhew that his ſpirit reigneth in vs by ſubduing of our vices and of the wicked luſtes which are in vs by nature: yet come we ſtil far ſhort of the marke which wee ſhould tend vnto. It is true that wee will trauell thitherward, as all the faithfull doe, whoſe chiefe regard and principall deſire is to ſerue God: but yet doe they finde themſelues ſo ſore combered as maketh them to ſhudder at it. When they bee about to ſtirre one finger foreward, the reſt of their body drawes backward. It is much if they can but trayne themſelues: that is to ſay, if they can get forward a little & coldely. And therefore they be driuen to ſigh & grone, and to condemne themſelues, beſeeching God to vouchſafe to hearten them better, and to take away all the lets that are in themſelues. For he that is perfecteſt, condemneth himſelfe moſt: inſomuch that the true perfection that is in mẽ during this mortall lyfe, is to knowe the euill that is in vs and how wretched we be.

Rom.8.7.

On the contrary part, as for thoſe that make themſelues idols, bearing themſelues in hand that they bee come already to the higheſt toppe of perfection: they burſt themſelues with pride, and doe but ſhroude a ſecret filthineſſe within, whereby they bewray that they knowe not yet what it is to loue God and to ſerue him. For otherwiſe they ſhould neuer bee ſo blinded with mad ſelfetruſt, as to beare themſelues in hand that they bee throughly righteous. Seeing then that although we indeuer neuer ſo much to ſerue God, we ſhall go limping and dragge our legges after vs: let vs bee ſure that God ſhall neuer bee in daunger or det to any of vs, but rather wee ſhall be condemned in all our workes. We may well alledge, I was willing, and I did mine indeuer: but that is not all that wee haue to doe. For the will ſhall alwayes be found very weake, ſo as if wee haue one good affection, there ſhall be a doſen euil ones for it. And ſo by that meanes al of vs ſhould be diſappoynted of the hope that God giueth vs by his promiſes, if they ſhould be taken ſo rawely & according to the naked letter where it is ſayd: If yee ſerue mee, I will doe yee good. But nowe let men ſtreine themſelues as much as they liſt: when they come to their audit there will bee ſo many abatements, as wil ſhewe that all Gods promiſes can ſtand them in no ſtead. And therefore they muſt come to ẏ ſecond remedie, which is that God ſupplieth our defaultes: and that although all our workes deſerue naught elſe but condemnation, yet notwithſtanding God accepteth them and taketh them for good, of his owne fatherly goodneſſe: and not of any duetie that hee is bounde vnto. Then let vs not bee ſo blinde as the wretched papiſtes, who when they heare that God addeth any condition to his promiſes, doe by & by ſtep vp with their ergoes, and fall to deſcanting of their owne free will and deſeruinges. But contrariwiſe, let vs aſſure our ſelues that when God ſpeaketh to vs in ſuch order of ſpeach as is ſhewed vs here, although hee come to vs with gentleneſſe: yet doth it nothing auaile vs, vntill he vſe his own meere mercie to ſaue vs throughout, not for any deſert of ours, but becauſe it pleſeth him ſo to doe. Marke ẏ for a ſpecial poynt.

And therewithall let vs marke alſo, that if the good which God doth to men in the thinges that concerne this tranſitory lyfe, doe proceede of his mercie: much more reaſon is it that the immortall heritage cannot bee gotten by our owne ſtrength, but that God muſt be faine to giue it vs of his owne meere liberalitie or free gift. And whereof ſpeaketh Moſes in this place? He ſayth, *God will bleſſe thy Cattell, God will bleſſe thy Corne, Wine, and Oyle.* All theſe are tranſitory thinges: and how is it that God proſpereth vs in them? By his mercie, ſaith he. And he ſheweth expreſly that Gods couenant proceedeth not from any other ſpring, nor hath any other roote than that, no not euen in caſes concerning this ſlightfull lyfe and theſe tranſitorie thinges. Now if in promiſing to proſper vs in our Cattell, in our Landes, & in the bread which we eate, God haue not an eye to any worthineſſe of ours, but onely vouchſafeth to ſhew himſelfe a liberall & kindehearted father towardes vs: what will hee doe in caſes concerning the making of vs partakers of the heauenly glory? I beſeech you, can wee alledge any deſertes in that behalfe? No: for then ſhold Oxen & kine be of more eſtimation ẇ him than mens ſoules. Therefore let vs marke well the thinges that I haue touched: namely that wee may well vnderſtand aforehand howe greatly God loueth vs, by his promiſing of reward & recompence for our workes. For he doth it not of any duetie, but to win vs by gentleneſſe and louingneſſe. Yet notwithſtanding let vs vnderſtand moreouer, yͭ the ſame ſhall neuer boote vs a whit, vnleſſe our Lord proceede yet further in ſhewing himſelfe liberall towards vs: namely yͭ after he hath receiued vs to mercie, euē vs which were vtterly loſt & damned, he doe alſo loue vs for our Lord Ieſus Chriſtes ſake, and thereupon beare with all the imperfections yͭ are in vs without intēding to impute thē to vs, ſo as our workes may pleaſe him, although they deſerue it not. For that is verifyed euen in theſe baſe thinges beneath. When we take our repaſt of the bread wherewith we be ſuſteined: wee muſt acknowledge that the ſame commeth of yͤ meere goodneſſe of our God. And lykewiſe when wee haue done our indeuour to ſerue him, [wee muſt acknowledge] that he is not any whit beholden vnto vs for it, but (which more is) that the good affection which we haue, is giuen vs of him, and yet that all this is nothing, becauſe there is ſome faultineſſe in it. Therefore it muſt needs be, that Gods receiuing of vs into fauor, is not for that he oweth vs any thing, but for that he loueth vs. Now ſeeing that God wil haue his mercy knowē in theſe corruptible thinges: what will hee haue done in the euerlaſting ſaluation of our ſoules?

But here might a queſtion bee moued, that ſeeing God reſpecteth not our merites when he doth vs good: why vſeth he this maner of ſpeach which we reade here in Moſes? There are two reaſons. The one is, that he intendeth to make vs feele his grace yͤ better, by driuing vs to graūt that none of al yͤ things which he behighteth vs could take effect, if our workes ſhould be reſpected, & therefore that he muſt be faine to bury all our ſinnes, & to accept vs of his owne freegoodneſſe. This would be ſomewhat with yͤ darkeſt, if it ſhould not be layd forth more at lēgth. His ſaying (in effect,) is that wheras God telleth vs, that if we ſerue him, he wil bleſſe vs and proſper vs: his intent is that euery of vs ſhould examine himſelfe, and conſider at what point wee be with him. And when we once know yͭ in ſtead of ſeruing him, we doe prouoke him againſt vs & greeue him, as though wee had conſpired to doe ſo of wilful malice: & when we once knowe that we bee ſo greatly in his daunger euen by nature: then will all vaine ſelfetruſt bee beaten downe in vs, & we wil haue none other minde, than to reſort to yͤ mercy that is promiſed vs, and to flee thither for refuge, ſo as we ſhalbe quite & cleane bereft of yͤ fonde opiniō which we had cōceiued of our owne workes, & not thinke thē any more to be meritorious. Thus ye ſee what we haue to note for the firſt reaſon.

The ſecond is yͭ foraſmuch as God hath pitied vs, he beareth with our workes, & intendeth not to ſift them with rigor, but admitteth thē for good & auaileable, though there be many infirmities & vices in thē. But yet for all yͭ, wee muſt vnderſtand yͭ he will not ſo beare wͭ our infirmities, yͭ we ſhould take leaue to abuſe his mercie: for then ſhould we deale too lewdly. And yet neuertheleſſe it appeareth by experiēce, yͭ as ſoone as men heare yͭ God forgiueth thē their ſinnes, & ſaueth them of his owne goodneſſe, they diſpence wͭ themſelues, & take leaue to doe euil: & vnder colour yͭ they bee freed frō yͤ bondage and curſedneſſe wherin they were by nature, they ouerſhoot thēſelues into all diſorder. But God wil not be ſo mocked, he wil not haue the goodneſſe which he vſeth towardes vs, to be made an occaſiō of ſinning. For our Lord Ieſus Chriſt is come to deſtroy yͤ kingdome of Satan, as it is ſhewed vs. So then, although God wil haue vs to impute al yͤ good which he doth vs, vnto his free mercie: yet doth he put this cōditiō to it, yͭ he wil haue vs to ſerue him. Although the inheritāce which is promiſed vs depēd not vpon our owne workes: yet will hee haue vs to be his children for it, ſeeing he ſheweth himſelfe to bee our father. Although it become vs not to looke for any thing in reſpect of all yͤ ſeruice yͭ wee doe him, foraſmuch as we be well aſſured that they be not of ſuch value as we can reſt vpon thē: yet notwithſtanding inaſmuch as God hath called vs to him into yͤ way of ſaluatiō: he wil not haue vs to fal to kicking againſt him. His Church muſt not bee a Hoggeſcote, but a tēple dedicated to his honor. So then, ſeeing God hath adopted vs, wee muſt liue as his childrē, ſo as wee may ſhew yͭ he hath not called & inuited vs to yͤ inheritāce of yͤ heauēly life in vaine. For if we can finde no ſauor in it, are we not worthie to be baniſhed & ſhut out of it? Yes. Again, if we go thitherward, ought we not to deſpiſe theſe tranſitory thinges, and to paſſe through this world as ſtraūgers, & not to be wedded to this earthly traſh? That thē is the ſecond reaſon why our Lord addeth yͤ cōdition that he will be ſerued & honoured at our handes. And therefore let vs learne in fewe wordes, yͭ when we haue done homage to our God for our euerlaſting ſaluatiō, & for al the tēporall & tranſitory goods yͭ he beſtoweth vpon vs in this worlde: it behoueth vs to vnderſtād yͭ his adopting of vs to be his children, is to yͤ intēt to be honored by vs, & his calling of vs into his Church is to the end we ſhould be as his houſholdfolke & not as wild beaſtes, ſeeing we be of his flock. For he wil haue ſuch ſheepe as ſhall hearken to his voyce. And yͭ is the cauſe why it is ſayd expreſly in this text, *Yee ſhall keepe all the ſtatutes, cōmandements & lawes which I ſet before you to doe them.* As if hee ſhould ſay, among the other giftes of God, we haue his word which is an excellēt treaſure. And it is not giuen vs onely to yͤ end we ſhould but heare it & allow it in our wordes: but to the ende we ſhould frame our liues thereafter. Seeing then yͭ God voutſafeth to teach vs, & ſtoopeth ſo lowe as to do yͤ office of a ſcholemaiſter & teacher towards vs: are not we too vnthākful if we hearkē not vnto him? And let vs marke wel, that wee bee none of his diſciples, vnleſſe wee obey his doctrine, and make it auaileable to vs. For otherwiſe it is but as if we heard a ſong yͭ delighted our eares, as is ſayd of it in Ezechiel. And ſurely it is a goodly worſhipping of God, for vs to ſay that he hath ſong well. Nay his will is that wee ſhould

Rom.1.4.& 6.1.2.15.

2.Cor.5.

Eph.1.6.

Iohn 10.27.

Ezec.33.31

vtter another melodie correſpondẽt to his voice which is, that wee ſhoulde ſhewe by our whole lyfe, that hee hath not taken paynes with vs in vaine, nor loſt his time, in declaring his will vnto vs.

And now furthermore Moſes addeth, *keepe them:* yea (ſayth hee,) *and God will bleße you:* and afterward hee addeth againe, *that hee will loue vs.* Surely by theſe wordes it may be deemed at the firſt ſight, yͤ God looketh whether men wil do their duetie or not, ere hee loue them. But I haue tolde yee already how the promiſes of the Lawe doe ſerue firſt of all to bring men to right humilitie, that they may know themſelues to be as they bee, and quite rid and diſcharge themſelues of all ſelfetruſt. When that is done, then know they yͤ Gods calling of them is with condition, that they ſhould ſerue him: and that if they inforce themſelues ſo to doe, they pleaſe him, ſo that although their doinges be vnperfect, yet will hee not faile to accept them, becauſe hee imputeth not the vices vnto them wherewith they bee interlaced. And moreouer wee may gather vpon theſe wordes of Moſes, that the ſeruice whereof hee ſpeaketh here, goeth not before Gods bleſſing and the fauor that hee promiſeth vs: for doe wee loue him before hee loued vs? Wee cannot make the holy Ghoſt a lyar which ſpeaketh by the mouth of Saint Iohn. It is not (ſayth hee) for that wee loued God firſt: but God vouchſafed to receiue vs into his fauor, at ſuch time as wee were his enemies. And all the ſcripture is full of this. Now then, ſeeing it is told vs here that God will loue his people, if they haue a care to keepe his commaundementes: let vs note that it is not meant, that men can preuent God and drawe him to them firſt of all: but that (as is declared vnto vs here) it is all one as if hee ſhould ſay, I haue loued you freely, and I will loue you ſtill, and yee ſhall feele my loue in ſuch wiſe, as yee may inioy it and poſſeſſe it for euer. But yet for all that, let vs beware that wee deceiue not our ſelues, as they doe which confeſſe that God loueth vs of his owne free goodneſſe, but yet we muſt ſecondly bee worthie of it. For wee muſt alwayes come backe againe to that which I haue touched already: namely that vnleſſe God beare with vs, and skowre away al the ſpottes that are in our workes, the thing that is ſpoken of here, ſhall neuer bee accompliſhed in vs: but contrariwiſe it ſhall alwayes turne vs to ſome greater ſhame, to ſhewe vs, Go to, behold, your God hath abaced himſelfe ſo much as to tell you that if yee ſerue him, hee will be fauorable and mercifull to you. For of whom is it long now, that you be vnhappie, that hee curſeth you, that he refuſeth you, and that he perſecuteth you? commeth it not of your owne fault? yes: You your ſelues then, are to be blamed for this, that you be not beloued of your God. It ſhould (ſay I) be layde to our reproche, if God pardoned not the faultes that are in our workes. So then let vs mark that his loue is alwayes free in our workes, howbeit that hee will not bee mocked, nor haue his goodneſſe abuſed, nor abide that men ſhould take libertie to doe euill when they ſee him ſo gentle and freehearted towardes them: but contrariwiſe will haue vs to bee anſwerable againe on our ſide, ſo as we giue not deafe eare to him when hee ſpeaketh to vs: but that when he hath bin ſo gratious to vs as to declare his will vnto vs, we alſo ſhould ſhew that his ſo doing is not in vaine, & yͤ he is not diſappointed of his purpoſe. But what? We ſee how ſtubborne men are for all that: and whatſoeuer God tel them or ſhew thẽ, although they haue their eares beaten dayly wͭ ſuch warninges, yet notwithſtanding they continue ſtil lyke themſelues in their wilfulneſſe. Beholde, God promiſeth to bleſſe vs, ſo wee ſerue him. Now there is no man but hee woulde faine proſper. We could well finde in our heartes that God ſhould ſted all our neceſſities, and that hee ſhould giue vs meate and drinke: we could finde in our heartes to be cloathed at his coſt. But in yͤ meane while, who is he that bethinketh himſelfe thus: this is yͤ meane whereby I muſt inioy Gods bleſſing? Nay we drawe cleane backe, and it ſhould ſeeme that our whole ſeeking is to bereaue our ſelues therof, and to cut off God by yͤ way, or rather ſo to ſtoppe the entries & iſſewes of his grace, as it may neuer come at vs. Behold, God wil haue vs firſt of al to liue vprightly, faithfully & in his feare: & thereupon hee promiſeth to bleſſe vs. On the contrary part, men giue thẽſelues to filching, ſtealing, robbing, & crueltie, ſeeking by all meanes to pick out one anothers eys. There is no mention of the feare of God: to be ſhort, they would yͤ all might goe to hauocke. In ſo doing we renounce Gods bleſſing, ſo farre as in vs lyeth, and it ſeemeth to vs yͤ we cannot take a better way to proſper, than by ſeruing the diuell. Wherin it appeareth in how curſed plight we be. And whence ſpringeth it, but of that we giue no credit to Gods promiſes? For if we beleued God to be ſoothfaſt in good earneſt: ſurely we would be rauiſhed at this ſaying of his, *I will make you to proſper*. But foraſmuch as our vanities doe carry vs headlong the contrary way: it maketh vs to imagin that we win more by doing euill, than by ſeruing God. Neuertheleſſe this vnbeleefe of ours ſhal be right deerely paied for, ſpeacially when it is matched with ſuch blaſphemie, and wee doe our God ſo much wrong as not to beleeue his word: & moreouer, when as in ſtead of acknowledging him to be the Author of all goodneſſe, and comming to drawe of the fulneſſe of his grace, we doe nothing elſe but make our ſelues ſtrangers to him. Seeing then that we fall to prouoking of him ſo by all meanes: what remaineth for vs, but to be bereft of his bleſſings, yea and that he, as though he were our enemy, purſue vs euen to the vttermoſt? But truly a man may ſtill perceiue an ineſtimable goodneſſe, in yͤ he ceaſeth not to doe vs good, when hee is ſo prouoked by vs, & that wee ceaſe not to kindle yͤ fire of his wrath: but yet in the end we ſhall finde that this doctrine was not in vaine. It is true that a man ſhall not alwayes perceiue the thing that Moſes ſayth here: that is to wit, that God proſpereth them that ſerue him. For yee ſhal ſee yͤ ſuch as are deſirous to doe beſt, and imploy thẽſelues in the trueth, are miſerable folkes, afflicted diuers wayes at Gods hand, and haue not halfe their fil wherwith to ſuſteine them. Again, they ſhall be tormēted with diſeaſes, or elſe they ſhall haue many reproches & iniuries wrought them in this world, & (to be ſhort) they ſhall be in continual languiſhing. On the contrarie part, ye ſhall ſee the wicked proſper: ye ſhall ſee them in credit and eſtimation: they ſhall cram themſelues with all exceſſe: and they ſhall haue ſuch abundance, as may make euen their heires to Pſal.17.14. burſt. Theſe things are to be ſeene. Howbeit we muſt note, that when the good are ſo afflicted, it is firſt becauſe they haue not yet ſerued God as they ought to doe. But why doth God ſcourge them, more than the wicked which ruſh out into all naughtineſſe? it is becauſe he intendeth to 1.Cor.5.5. chaſtice thē fatherly. To yͤ end that their ſoules may be ſaued, he chaſtiſeth them in their bodies. Againe, in ſending afflictiōs, Gods intent is not alwayes to puniſh men according to their miſdeedes: but alſo to try their patiēce, and to withdrawe them from the world, to the intent they ſhould not be too much intangled in it: and his will is to humble them, that they may know thēſelues as they be, & be ſory for it. So then foraſmuch as God hath many cauſes to afflict yͤ faithfull: he will not haue vs to make one egall rule of it, & to ſay that he puniſheth them according to their miſdeedes. But whereforeſoeuer he doe it, let vs note that if God ſhould vtterly deſtroy thē he had iuſt cauſe ſo to doe, & hee ſhould doe thē no wrong. Neuertheleſſe we muſt haue an eye to Rom.8.26. that which Saint Paul ſayth in the eight to the Romans, and be contented with it: namely yͭ all thinges turne to the welfare of them that loue God, ſo as they ſerue not to turne them aſide, or to pluck them away from their ſaluation, but rather be as helpes to further it. Marke yͭ for one poynt. And yet notwithſtanding it is euidently ſeene, that Gods grace faileth thē not in the afflictions and miſeries which they indure. True it is that they finde thēſelues in paine, & the things are harde and grieuous for them to beare: but yet there is alwayes ſomewhat to ſweeten them, they haue ſtill ſome cōfort at Gods hand, which ſerueth to make them vnderſtand yͭ hee bleſſeth and proſpereth them. If he ſhould giue them no more but one bit of bread: yet haue they ſuch an inward ioy, as they can better thanke God for it, than yͤ wicked can doe [for great abundance,] who fret themſelues inwardly, inſomuch that although they labor to bring thēſelues a ſleepe that they might not haue any remorſe of conſciēce to trouble them, & ſtriue euen againſt nature, that they might be as it were ſenſeleſſe: Yet doeth not GOD let them ſo reſt, that they can be ſo mery at the heart euen with their abūdance, as the ſilie faithful ones are with their pouertie, who holde themſelues contented from morrowe to morrowe, waiting to be fed at Gods hand, & referring themſelues wholy vnto him, & calling vppon him. And againe, although they haue not all that they would wiſh: yet thinke thy thus wͭ themſelues, well, yet doth not my God ceaſe to watch ouer me, & therfore I betake me to his prouidence, and reſt my ſelfe vppon him. Thus yee ſee howe the faithfull ceaſe not to bee bleſſed of God, though the world ſee not Gods benefites ſo apparantly in them.

But let vs come now to the vnbeleuers. It is true that God ſheddeth out his temporall benefites vpon them, ſo as they be healthie, & haue aboundance of goods, and ſo forth: but yet ſhall all theſe thinges be turned into a curſe to them. If a man demaund whether the hauing of bodily health, & alſo wherewith to finde a mans ſelfe, be not the bleſſinges of God: yes verily be they. But yet muſt wee note that as in reſpecte of the faithleſſe, & of the deſpiſers of God, they turne Tit.1.15. to their harme, becauſe they be foule & vnclean, & doe defile Gods benefites with their handling of them. Needes muſt it bee then that the order of nature is turned vpſide downe in this behalfe. For inaſmuch as the wicked & the vnbeleeuers are full of filth & vncleanneſſe: they can not touch any of Gods benefites, but they muſt needes beray them and marre them. And therefore all muſt needes turne to their condemnation. Againe, we ſee how the world goeth. Haue theeues (I meane ſuch as are giuē to deceite & fleecing) haue they gathered much together? They haue tormented themſelues all the time of their lyfe: & what ioy haue they had of them? God taketh vengeance on them: for they be inflamed wͭ ſuch greedineſſe of them, as they be neuer in quiet: & beſides yͭ, they cannot doe good wͭ their euilgotten goods. But in the end, doe they once dye? Then goes all to hauock againe. For the worlde ſees how the diuell hath libertie to ouerthrowe, euen ſuch as a man would haue thought to haue bin well grounded, & that they ſhold neuer haue decayed to the worldes end. A man would wonder to ſee how they be deſtroyed in yͤ turning of a hand. Yea and moreouer, the goods which they haue raked together for their children, become as halters to hang them withall, ſo as they become miſerable euen in the ſight of the world, & men behold the ſignes of Gods wrath & vengeance in thē, whereby it is well knowen that he neuer leaueth men vnpuniſhed for the contēpt & wrong which they doe to his maieſtie, in ruſhing foorth into all diſorder. inſomuch yͭ if hee puniſh not the fathers themſelues, he layeth the execution of it vpon their children, how long ſoeuer he make delay. So then let vs marke that it is not without cauſe that God telleth vs hee will bleſſe ſuch as ſerue him, yea euen to the worldward. And that is yͤ cauſe why Saint Paul ſaith, that the feare of God hath promiſes, not onely 1.Tim.4.8. of yͤ euerlaſting life, but alſo of this earthly life: ſo as if we liue in the feare of God, wee ſhall not onely be ſure of the inheritance which hee hath prepared for vs aboue: but alſo, yͭ euen as long as we liue in this world he will guide vs and keep vs vnder his protection, & not ſuffer vs to want any thing whereof hee knoweth vs to haue neede. Trueth it is that God wil alwayes be our karuer, becauſe he knoweth we bee too much giuen to theſe earthly thinges, from the which he intendeth to pull vs away, to the ende we ſhould haue the better skill to lift vp our heades to heauen, and to ſeeke after the goods that are prepared for vs there. Therfore whē God reſtreineth his benefites as we ſee he doth, that is to ſay, when he giueth vs them in ſmal & ſlender portion: it is to the intent we ſhould not be hindred to keepe on our way ſtil in going right foorth vnto him. Thus ye ſee what we haue to marke in this text. And therfore if we ſerue our God, let vs not dout but he wil bleſſe vs euen to the worldwarde, and make vs to proſper better than ẏ wicked, yea and although we ſee them puffed vp with pride, although we ſee thē tryumph in pomp & brauery, & although we ſee thē ſwimming in their pleaſures: let vs tary patiently a litle while, & we ſhal find ẏ God dalied not ẇ vs, whē he promiſed his bleſſing to ſuch as ar willing to ſerue & loue him.

And ſpecially let vs marke well howe he telleth vs here expreſly, *that he will bleſſe vs in our iſſue, and in the increaſe of your Cattell.* I pray you, if the fauor which God ſheweth vs do extend euen to the brute beaſtes, ſo as the marke of his fatherly good will towardes vs ſhall bee printed in them: what wil he doe to our ſelues & to our childrē, and to the things ẏ touch vs much neerer? For in deed me muſt make this cōpariſon of our bodies with our ſoules. If God haue a care to feede theſe wretched carkeſſes heere: what will hee doe for vs when we be reſtored into his glorie? If he haue a care of our mortall bodies: what will he haue of our ſoules, which are faſhioned after his owne image? But let vs returne to the preſent matter. If God voutſafe to haue care of our cattell, as of our Oxen, our Aſſes, and our ſheepe for our ſakes: what care will hee haue of our perſons? What care will he haue of our children, which are heires of the promiſed ſaluation, and are adopted to belong to his couenant, ſeeing it pleaſeth him to chooſe and adopt vs to be his people? For hee doth not onely ſay, come vnto me: but alſo I will be the God
Deut. 5. 10. of thy children after thee vnto a thowſand generations. But what? we be worthie to be left deſtitute of al Gods promiſes: and it were much to, if we could by that meane bee brought to right repentance. Let vs ſee if Gods bleſſing be to be found among vs nowadayes as it is promiſed. In deede it is to bee marueled (as I haue declared alreadie) that God is ſo patient towardes vs. For are we woorthie to be maintained here one minute of an houre, conſidering the outrageous offences which we commit dayly againſt him? No: and yet notwithſtanding, although he ſpare vs, although he tarie for vs, and although he ſcourge vs not as we haue deſerued: yet neuertheleſſe, we ſee how we doe partly languiſhe. Some decay and conſume thēſelues by little & little: ſome periſh vtterly out of hand: & otherſome pine away as if they were almoſt dead of cold, as men terme it. And what is ẏ cauſe hereof but our driuing away of Gods grace & bleſſing? Again we need not to go to our Oxen, our horſes and our ſheep to weet whether God ẇdraw his hand & grace frō vs or no: Let vs but looke vpō our children in what plight they be. Gods receiuing of their fathers into his fauor, ought to bee as a lookingglaſſe of his goodneſſe towards thē: but yet ought it to be much better knowē in the children, ſo as it might be ſayd, Lo here a bleſſed ſeede. For Gods voutſafing to take ẏ fathers vnto him, was of purpoſe to vtter his mercie yet more in their childrē. But cōtrariwiſe, let a man looke vpon their children, & he ſhall be driuē to conclude, ẏ we be as good as baniſhed frō Gods bleſſing, & from all ẏ proſperitie which he promiſed to his people. And no maruel though it be ſo. for ẏ world ſeeth wherat ẏ fathers ame. Their intent is not to edify thē in the feare of God: for it ſhould ſeeme that they be loth ẏ their childrē ſhould ſhame them by becomming honeſter mē than they. And to ſay ẏ trueth, they bring thē vp in all lewdneſſe: and is it not meete then ẏ God ſhould ſhew himſelf a iudge? Where are ẏ fathers nowadayes, ẏ make ẏ feare of God their mark to ame at in teaching their children? In deede they be willing enough to haue their childrē aduaunced to ẏ worldward, & to lay for thē ẏ they may want no wealth. but in the meane while, as for to haue an eye vnto God, to ſay, I will dedicate my childrē vnto him, I will haue them ſo brought vp as he may be rightly honored by them: it is the furtheſt end of all their thought. Needes therefore muſt we be bereft of the benefites that are promiſed here, and baniſhed from them.

Furthermore, whenſoeuer it is told vs ẏ our Lord prouoketh vs to returne vnto him: let vs vnderſtād ẏ ſeeing he loued vs freely when wee were yet his enemies: it muſt needes be ẏ he will Rom. 5. 10.
much rather loue vs now ẏ he is reconciled vnto vs. Yea, but yet muſt ẏ be in reſpect of our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt, & for his ſake. We muſt not ſeeke any worthineſſe out of ẏ perſon of him ẏ is called Gods welbeloued ſon: for it is only he ẏ hath ſatiſfied ẏ paimēt of all our dets, which thing it lay Heb. 7. 24. and 8. 1.
not in any creature to do. Yet notwithſtāding; let vs aſſure our ſelues ẏ it behoueth vs to indeuer to doe wel, knowing ẏ God wil not haue vs to abuſe his mercie. For ſeeing he hath adopted vs to be his childrē: let vs yeeld him ẏ honor ẏ is due to our father. And beſides ẏ, although our workes be vnperfect, and wee doe but offer him thinges which are not worth ẏ accepting at his hād: yet doth not he ceaſe to lyke wel of vs in ẏ thinges ẏ we do to ſerue & honor him ẇall, & we ſhall not be diſappointed of ẏ benefits ẏ he hath promiſed vs. But yet muſt we impute all to his mercie, and we muſt liue in ſuch ſort in this world, as we may be out of doubt ẏ he wil haue regard to maintein vs euē in this preſent lyfe, & to giue vs whatſoeuer he knoweth to be meet for vs. Therefore let ẏ ſerue to make vs to finde ſuch taſt in his goodneſſe, as it may tolle vs on ſtil further & further, ſo as we may be able to goe through ẇ a chearefull heart, to the ſpirituall bleſſedneſſe that taryeth 1. Pet. 2. 3, 4.
for vs aboue, whereof we haue but onely a taſte as now by faith and hope.

Nowe let vs kneele downe in the preſence of our good God with acknowledgement of our faults, praying him to make vs ſo to feele them, as we may learne to be ſory for them better than wee haue beene, and to turne wholy vnto him, and to reforme our whole lyfe after ſuch a ſorte, as wee may ſeeke nothing but to giue ouer our ſelues all wholy vnto him, and to frame our ſelues to his holy will as he hath declared it in his worde. And ſo let vs all ſay, Almightie God heauenly father, &c.

On Munday the twelfth of Auguſt. 1555.

The Lv. Sermon, which is the fift vpon the ſeuenth Chapter.

16 Thou ſhalt conſume all the nations which the Lorde thy God giueth thee. Thine eye ſhall not pardon them: neither ſhalt thou ſerue their Gods: for that wilbe thy decay.

17 If thou ſay in thine hart, theſe nations are moe in number than I, how may I driue them out?

18 Be not afraide of them: but remember what the Lorde thy God did to Pharao, and to all the Egyptians.

19 That is to wit, the great tryals which thine eyes haue ſeene, and the ſignes and wonders, and the ſtrong hand and ſtretched out arme, wherewith the Lorde thy God brought thee out. So will the Lord thy God doe to all the nations of whoſe face thou art afraid.

Matt. 5.44. 45. Foraſmuch as we bee exhorted to become lyke God in gentleneſſe & mildneſſe, and that he wil haue his children knowen thereby in this world: it ſhould ſeeme ẏ the thing which Moſes ſayth here, is not agreeable thereunto. For euen the heathen could well skill to ſay, that there is nothing wherein men reſemble God more, thã in gentlenes and louingkindnes, when they giue themſelues to doe good. But in this place heere is nothing but rigor. God will haue them to kill all without ſparing of any thing: it ſeemeth then ẏ there is ſome contrarietie in this matter. No: but (as I haue declared heretofore) although God execute his iudgements, and appoint men to be the doers thereof: Yet is that no let, but that we may in the meane while bee kindehearted in our ſelues, and haue pitie and compaſſion euen vppon them that periſh. Nowe on the one ſide, if God inioyne a thing to be done: it muſt be done without gaineſaying. And yet in the meane while we muſt followe the rule that is giuen vs generally: namely to loue our neighbors though they be not worthie of it, yea euen ſuch as hate vs, and to indeuour to doe them good, & to ouercome them by doing good for euill. But this will be the better vnderſtoode, if wee take the matter by partes.

Deut. 6, 1. 2. First we muſt cal to minde here what hath bin declared vpon the ſixth chapter, that is to wit, that it is not for vs to meaſure Gods iudgemẽts after our fancie, for we muſt needes graunt, that ſometimes they bee as a bottomleſſe pit: but yet for all that, they ceaſe not to bee rightfull ſtill. Then ſhal we not always ſee the reaſon of Gods doinges: but yet muſt we lyke well of them without gainſaying. For it is good reaſon that all creatures ſhould ſtoope to him, and that he ſhould not be bound to yeeld any account. And therefore when the thing that God commaundeth vs ſeemeth ſtraunge: let vs hold our mindes in awe and ſubiection, and yeelde God ſo much honor, as to confeſſe that he is righteous & iuſt though we perceiue it not. Let that ſerue for one point.

Againe when we ſee him vtter ſuch rigor towardes others, as to vs may ſeeme exceſſiue: therein let vs acknowledge his goodneſſe and mercie towardes vs: for hee might doe the lyke to vs. Of what or of whom is it long that wee periſh not, as well as they vpon whome God powreth out the extremitie of his rigor? It is certeine that our ſinnes haue well deſerued that as much ſhould befall vs: but God beareth with vs of his infinite goodneſſe. Therefore let vs ſtand in awe. For though God vſe goodneſſe and patience towardes vs as now: yet hath not he forgotten our faultes, except wee our ſelues doe beare them in minde. And therefore let vs vnderſtand ẏ God might iuſtly deſtroy vs, and thereupon let vs cal our ſelues home to him, and preuent the thing ẏ is to be feared, ẏ is to wit, leaſt he ſhould ſtetch forth his arme to cõfounde vs. So then, the executions of Gods iudgements ought to be as warninges vnto vs, to enter into the knowledge of our ſinnes, ẏ when we haue giuen God thankes for bearing with vs, wee may learne to returne home to him againe.

But yet notwithſtanding, when we haue well conſidered all thinges: [wee ſhall finde that] it was not without cauſe that God cõmanded his people to roote out all the folk that dwelt in the land of Chanaan. For he had already born with them a long time, as hath bin declared. Shall we thinke it ſtrange, ẏ after God had taryed foure hundred yeeres for men ẏ were deſpiſers of his maieſtie, & giuen to all naughtineſſe: he ſhould in the end haue no more pitie vpõ them, but wil them to be vtterly wiped out of the world? But ſuch were all thoſe nations. For although they were malicious and froward already in the time of Abraham, and it was apparant that the land was infected with their filthineſſe: yet did God auow, that their wickedneſſe was not yet come to the full grouth. And therefore hee delayed his wrath, not for the ſpace of halfe a

ſcore yeeres only, but full foure hundred yeeres together. He let them alone in eaſe and reſt: and they waxed ſtil woorſe and worſe, and hardened more and more. It ſeemeth that Gods goodneſſe gaue the more libertie to doe euill. Therefore it was high time for God to put forth his mighty hand then or neuer to deſtroy them, ſeeing hee found them ſo farre paſt grace. And in deed, we can well skil to deſire God to puniſh the wicked, and it greeueth vs that he ſhould beare with thẽ, & if he make delay, we thinke hee is too patient. Againe, if hee vſe rigor after his long tariance: thẽ we cry out that he is too ſeuere, and we aſk if he could not deale otherwiſe thã ſo. To be plain, there is no meaſure in vs. For if God ſatiſfy not our deſires, we fal to cõplayning, one while of his ouergreat gentleneſſe, & anotherwhile of his ouergreat ſeueritie. And if he execute not ſuch vengeance at yͤ firſt daſh as we would wiſhe, we thinke he is a ſleepe, & that hee diſſembleth too much. And dayly we here ſuch murmuringes as theſe: What meanes he by this? Why doth hee forbeare ſo long? Againe on the otherſide, if God come with his power to puniſh men according to their deſeruing: then, alas howe comes it to paſſe yͭ God (who reporteth himſelfe to be ſo patient & pitifull,) doth now ſhewe himſelfe ſo rigorous againſt vs? Yea, but we conſider not that while our ſinnes prouoke his wrath, & while we
Rom.2.5. ſtack vp wood to kindle the fire of it, he allureth vs to repentance by gentleneſſe. For he giueth vs leaſure to return vnto him, to the end we ſhould aske him forgiuenes. And if we doe not ſo, muſt he not then ſhew himſelf to be our iudge? In like taking were the people of whom Moſes maketh mentiõ here. For Gods intent was not to puniſh thẽ wͭout iuſt cauſe: ſentence was giuẽ vppon thẽ aforehand in yͤ time of Abrahã. And now there are foure hundred yeeres runne out ſince: and is not yͭ a terme long enough? did theſe nations amend of all that time? Nay, contrariwiſe they ceſed not to giue thẽſelues ouer to al naughtines, & becauſe they were not corrected, they became the worſe & yͤ more ſtubborne, & their malaperneſſe increaſed more & more. Now thẽ God executeth yͤ ſentence which he had giuen vpon thẽ foure hundered yeere before: for hee knoweth yͭ they be paſt remedie. And therefore let vs learn to glorify him in his iudgements, & whereas we ſee yͤ reaſon of thẽ here, let vs not ceaſe to conclude wͭout diſputing (yea euẽ when we perceiue
Psal.111.7. not yͤ reaſon of thẽ) yͭ he is iuſt & righteous, and yͭ he weieth his workes in ſuch balance, as there is no fault to bee found in them, and that if wee chaunce to checke againſt them, we ſhalbe confounded in our blaſphemie. And ſo ye ſee what we haue to remember.

Againe, whẽ God liſteth to execute his rigor: let not vs allege his mercie to him. True it is yͭ in reſorting vnto him we muſt alwayes beſeech him to voutſafe to receiue vs to mercie, & al our prayers muſt begin & end wͭ this confeſſion, yͭ if God vſed not his goodneſſe wee ſhoulde be vndone, & there would be no more hope of ſaluation for vs: & therefore it ſtandeth vs in hand to flee for refuge to Gods meere mercie. But the thing yͭ I ſpeake of as now, is yͭ we muſt not reply againſt God when he liſteth to deale rigorouſly wͭ vs: for there is none of vs al, but he could finde in his heart to make God to ſtoope to his lure. Let vs beware of ſuch preſumptuouſneſſe, & rather doe him the honor to ſay yͭ his iuſtice is vnblameable in all points & all reſpectes. And foraſmuch as it is ſo: we haue to note, yͭ whenſoeuer God puniſheth yͤ wicked, it is not enough for vs to confeſſe yͭ he doth it iuſtly: but alſo if he commaũd vs to execute his iudgemẽts, wee muſt doe it, & we muſt ſhut our eyes at all thinges. For as for him yͭ will be more pitiful thã God: although he be cõmended of men, & that his doing haue ſome ſhewe of vertue: Yet doth he moſt leawdly blaſpheme him which is yͤ fountaine of all goodneſſe. The man yͭ pretendeth to be more mercifull than God: is worſe than the diuell. For why? What are we? Let vs make compariſon betweene God & vs. Behold, God will haue vs to execute rigor: & we will needes call him back to mercie: now is not that a ſpiting of him, as though wee would ſpit in his face if we could? Yes: for there is nothing more peculiar to him than his goodneſſe. Let vs take away his goodneſſe from him, & he is no longer God. Shal we imagine God to be but ſome dead thing? Nay, when we ſpeake of God, we muſt vnderſtãd yͭ al goodneſſe is in him, & that we haue none at al in vs, but by ſmal peeces, ſuch as it pleaſeth him to beſtowe vppon vs. Now then, if a man wil needes ſay, I wil vſe mercie, when God forbiddeth him: what a preſumptuouſneſſe is yͭ? So then, let vs marke well in this text, that it is not enough for vs to confeſſe that God doth iuſtly puniſh whom he liſteth, but alſo yͭ if he liſt to giue vs the charge & cõmiſſion to execute his iudgements, we muſt goe through wͭ it wͭout ſkanning or gainſaying. And therefore in matters of Iuſtice, men muſt forbeare their own opinions & wils, & not be ſo ouerweening, as to take leaue to do what they think good, or to turn aſide one way or other: but haue a regard to followe the rule that our Lord giueth them, aſſuring themſelues that the authoritie of Iuſtice is tyed to the thing which he ſheweth, and that his putting of them in that commiſſion, is to the intent they ſhould repreſſe & puniſh euil doers, and maintaine & defend good folke. Seeing it is ſo: it is meete yͭ yͤ vſe therof ſhould be thereafter.

Moreouer, as cõcerning theſe nations whom Moſes ſpeaketh of: Let vs marke that beſides the other crimes & enormities which they had cõmitted: there was alſo a contempt of God, which was vtterly intollerable. In deede, wee will make no great reckoning of that: but yet doth GOD make reckoning of it, and hee paſſeth not what we haue imagined: for all our imaginations are corrupted. Whẽ God doth once ſet vp his iudgment ſeate: we may well put forth our opinion, but yͤ thing which God hath ordeyned muſt ſtãd, & not be repealed. Now thẽ let vs note, yͭ whenſoeuer Gods honor is lightly eſtemed, then muſt rigor be vſed rather thã mercie in yͭ behalf. And we muſt call to minde yͤ example yͭ is rehearſed in yͤ firſt booke of kinges: namely of Achab who would needs ſhewe mercy to Benhadad king of 1.Kin.20.33
Syria.

Syria. And there is expreſly this ſaying, that whē Benhadad came to him to ſew for mercie, al that euer he ſaid vnto him was no more but this, that the kings of Iſrael were mercifull and kind hearted. And behold, that goodly vertue of clemencie ouercame his heart: by meanes wherof wheras God commaunded him to execute rigour, he ſhewed mercie. But it happened vnto him as he had deſerued. And why? For the Syrians had cōmitted horrible blaſphemie againſt God & ſcorned him, ſaying: He is ẏ God of ẏ mountains, but if we come into ẏ plain grounds, we ſhal haue victorie, he can do nothing there. Thus were idols ſet vp in Gods place. And therefore it was ſaide to Achab, that the king of Syria ſhould bee vanquiſhed & rooted out. Now it came to paſſe that his aray was put to flight: but yet they founde a ſhift by & by to make peace. And why? For this goodly commendation liked Achabs eares well, when they called him a mercifull Prince. By meanes wherof he was dandled a ſleepe, ſo as he made ſale of the blaſphemie ẏ was committed againſt God, as it is a common matter with vs to bee pitifull in caſes where God is offended. For this cauſe a Prophet was ſent vnto him, bringing his badge with him, that is to wit, that he had bin woūded by the commandement of God: and the firſt man, (who had refuſed to do it,) was deuoured of a Lion out of hand. Yet notwithſtāding the Prophet came to Achab wounded and diſfigured and ſaid vnto him: I tooke a man to keepe, and he that deliuered him to mee bad mee I ſhould not let him goe vpon paine of my life. Neuertheleſſe while I turned mee too & fro, he ſcaped from me. And thou muſt anſwere him vpon thy life, quoth Achab. Then anſwered the Prophet vnto Achab: it is thy ſelfe that this toucheth. This meſſage is ſent to thee of God, to ſhewe thee that for as much as thou haſt ſpared the king of Syria, whom God had put into thy hand to be reuenged of him for the outrage done to his Maieſtie: thou muſt anſwere for him lyfe for life, and thy people with thee. So then we ſee that if Gods honor be impeached, it is not for vs to let things ſlip, but we muſt vnderſtand that if wee make light of ſuch a crime, God will ſurely make the vengeance to light vpon our ſelues. To be ſhort, let vs marke well, that if ſuch as haue commiſſion to puniſh offenders doe it not: there will bee no excuſe for them. For ẏ which is written will not be repealed for mens pleaſures: that is to wit, that he which iuſtifieth or acquitteth ẏ Prou.17.15. guiltie perſon, is as abhominable before God, as he that condemneth the innocent. If a poore innocent bee oppreſſed, men can skill to ſay, there is no reaſon in it, and that the matter muſt come to account before God. And here God addeth the ſecond part, that is to wit, that if an offender be quit, and Iuſtice and equitie ſo turned vpſide downe: it muſt come to account as well as the other. Yee ſee then howe it is a leſſon which all thoſe ought to beare in minde, whom God hath commanded to puniſh mens offences: that they muſt bee well ware to vſe one rule and one egall meaſure. For if a man puniſh one offender and pardon another, and thinke to goe halfe quit for it before GOD: it is cleane contrarie. And for proofe thereof, let vs conſider the example that is ſet downe in Hoſeas concerning king Iehu. Oſee,1.4. God commaunded him to deſtroy all Idolaters: he did it partly but not altogither: for hee deſtroyed thoſe whom he ſtoode in feare of, and he did it for his owne vaine glory and ſuertie. God did him the honour to make him king, & he conſidered it not. But when he came once to ẏ kingdome, O he muſt maintaine himſelfe in it. And what did he? He executed rigor ynough vppon thoſe whom he liſted, and ſpecially vpon ſuch as he wiſt might doe him harme: but when he had ſo begun, he let the reſt go vnpuniſhed, he cared not what came of it, ſo he might reigne peaceably. Now at the firſt ſight a man might well ſay it was a vertue worthie of commendation, that he puniſhed thoſe whom God had commanded him. Verily and ſo was it, if he had held on that trade ſtill. But for as much as he deſtroyed one ſort and ſpared another ſort: it is ſaid that God will puniſh the mās laughter that Iehu had committed. And how may that be? Is it manſlaughter to haue executed the cōmandement of God? Yea, after the maner that he went to worke. He is ſaid to bee a manſlear, bicauſe he had not an eye to the thing that God commanded him. For he ſhould haue gone through as he began. But he ſtayed in the middes of his way. For as for thoſe whom he puniſhed, he puniſhed thē in reſpect of his owne peculiar profit. He had no regard of Gods honour, ſo the Crowne of the kingdome continued with him. Therefore is he iuſtly accoūted for a manſlear and not a iudge. And therefore let vs beware that we take not more libertie than God giueth vs. For he can well skill to moderate his own doings, though we take not vpon vs to be more pitifull than he. And if wee make our hand of his honor, we muſt pay dearely for it when we come to our reckening before him. But if this ſeeme ſtraunge vnto vs: let vs go a litle by degrees, & ſee if nature might not be a ſchoolemyſtreſſe good enough for vs, if we were not blinded by our wicked affectiōs. If a mā haue children, he knoweth well ynough that it is his duetie to teach them, and to chaſtiſe them whē they doe amiſſe. For if he beare with his childrē, and dare not touch them, but cockereth them, and in the meane while they bee of euill nature: may it not bee ſaide that he is worthie that his children ſhould picke out his eyes, and pluck his noſe from his face? And on the contrarie part, if children were teachable & meeke of themſelues: it were not meete that they ſhould bee touched. But when a father perceiues his children to bee curſt and vnruly: if he ſpare them then, men will ſay that he marreth them, and that he ſendeth them to the gallowes, and that he is the cauſe of their vndoing. Now let vs compare a father with a Iudge. Whereas a father ought to chaſtiſe his children with roddes: a iudge hath an office that paſſeth yet further. Therefore he muſt haue an eye thereunto: and if he doe not, he is worthy to haue his eyes put out with the miſchiefe, as Moſes ſpeaketh here of theſe people, ſaying: They ſhall be as thornes to prick thee on all ſides, and Ioſu.23.13.

to put out thine eyes: they ſhall be as waſpes to ſting thee in ſuch ſort as yͧ ſhalt not know which way to turne thee. Lo what reward yͤ Iſraelites had for their retchleſneſſe in that they were not ſtout in putting the ſentence in execution, which God had vttered with his own mouth. But howſoeuer the caſe ſtoode with them: let vs learne ſtill to be pitifull. For the rigour that is ſpoken of here, muſt not make vs to forget how God commandeth Matt.5.44. vs to loue euen our enemies, & them that perſecute vs, and to indeuour to doe them good to the vttermoſt of our power, that we may bring them into the right way of ſaluation. Then muſt we needes haue that. Yea and euen when a Iudge vſeth rigour, his heart muſt mourne and lament, to ſee a creature that is made after the image of God ſo dealt withall: but yet muſt he go on ſtill, and execute the office which GOD hath committed vnto him. Theſe two thinges then are not vnmatchable: that is to wit, that gentleneſſe ſhould bee vſed in the executing of Iuſtice, ſo as our wicked moode ſhould not carie vs away, but that we ſhould alwayes hold vs ſtill to this point, of louing euen thoſe that ſhall haue done vs the worſt they could. Thus ye ſee howe we ought to put this doctrine in vre. Gods intent is not to ſtirre vp his people to crueltie, his meaning is not to bereaue them vtterly of all compaſſion: and yet notwithſtanding he will haue miſdeedes to be puniſhed.

And furthermore as touching the lande of Chanaan which hee had purpoſely appointed to his honour: hee woulde not haue it any longer ſo defyled with ſuch infections. For the Nations that had dwelled therein before, had as it were defiled the land. Nowe Gods intent is to ſtabliſh his kingdome there, he will bee worſhipped vncorruptly there: and therefore all abhominations muſt be rid away. For ſeeing that God will haue his righteouſneſſe put in vre through the whole world: whenſoeuer he is knowen in any place, ſo as his trueth is there preached, and he hath ſet his Church in ſome good order and ſtate: men muſt looke well about them that no offences, or defylinges may raigne there. For wheresoeuer God is worſhipped and ſerued: that place is as a temple dedicated to his Maieſtie, and Gods temple muſt be kept holy as it ought 1.Cor.3. to bee. Then is it the greateſt and intollerableſt treacherie to Godward that can bee, when euill doings and crimes are foſtered in his Churche. Therefore it is not ſaid without cauſe, *Thine eye ſhall not pardon any of all theſe Nations, they muſt bee conſumed vtterly.* And why? firſt the wickedneſſe that was among them was ouergreat, they were deſpiſers of God, and therefore he was faine to be reuenged of them in the end. Againe, he hath an eye to the benefit and welfare of his Church, ſo as he woulde not haue his children intangled with ſuch as might draw them to euill, & conſequently to their ruine and deſtruction. God then wil haue his people rid of all ſtumbling blocks. Marke that for the ſecond point. Moreouer for the third point, it was conuenient yͭ God ſhould ſhewe himſelfe a Iudge, to the intent that by beholding ſuch vengeance, they might take warning to thinke thus with themſelues: ſeeing that God hath done vs the honour to puniſh ſuch as haue offended vs, to giue vs example by them: let vs beware yͭ wee fall not into the ſame offences: for then ſhall we be dubble to blame. Thus ye ſee how Gods committing of his vengeaunce vnto his owne people, to puniſh ſuch as had bin giuen ouer to all naughtineſſe, ought to ſerue all folkes for an example.

After he hath ſaid ſo, he addeth now, *Thou ſhalt not ſerue their Gods, for that would turne to thy decay.* Deut.6.6.14 15. Although this ſaying haue bin ſet downe by Moſes alreadie heretofore: yet is it not without cauſe yͭ he ſetteth it downe here againe. For we ſoone forget what God commandeth vs, if wee bee not quickened vp to put it in execution. We crie out dayly to haue iuſtice executed: but how do men diſcharge themſelues therof? Let their eares be neuer ſo much beaten, it is to no purpoſe, they paſſe not much for it: but they be the more forgetfull from day to day. Therefore doeth Moſes put them in minde of the things that he had told them before, to the intent that the people ſhould in any wiſe refraine from ſeruing the idols of the heathen. And he addeth a threate, *It would turne to thy decay.* In deede the Hebrew word which he vſeth is commonly taken for cordes or lines, but here by a ſimilitude it is taken for ſnares or nets, and for ruine, decay, downfal, or ſtumbling. Then if thou fall into idolatrie: it will be a deadly fall to thee, ſaith he. Keepe thee from that. Thus we ſee that when God puniſheth yͤ wicked, we muſt alwayes learne at their coſt, to liue in his feare. For our condemning of other folkes wil not iuſtifie our ſelues, if we follow them or become like them: but rather they ſhalbe witneſſes againſt vs to bereaue vs of al excuſe. Therfore let vs thinke vpon that which is added here, that when God had commanded his people to deſtroy the idolaters: he addeth, beware ye meddle not wͭ their ſuperſtitions, for then ſhall ye bee ouerthrowen out of hand. Yea & we ſee alſo that God did not beare with the people of Iſrael any long time after they had offended. For the heathen might yet haue ſome excuſe, bicauſe they had not had any teaching: but the Iſraelites ſinned wilfully, & their dooing was a manifeſt rebellion, bicauſe they had bin ſufficiently warned thereof before, ſpecially for as much as God had done them ſo great honor, as to put the ſword into their hand, as if he ſhould ſay, Thou ſhalt puniſh the miſdoings of others. Seeing then yͭ God had ſo honored that people: was it not an increaſing of their euill much more, whē they happened to become like thoſe whom they puniſhed? Yes: for yͤ puniſhment which they had executed vpon others, ſerued to bereaue thē of al colour of ignorance, and to dubble their owne fault. For after as God honoreth men: they ought to take yͤ more heede to liue in all purenes before him. That is the cauſe thē why thoſe two things are matched togither.

And hereupon wee may gather, that all ſuch as haue the executing of Iuſtice, muſt lay away their owne fleſhly paſſions, and looke that they be quite and cleare from all deſire of reuenge, hatred and rancor. And this muſt be regarded of vs, not onely in puniſhing of euill doers, but alſo in the admoniſhments and warninges that wee giue. For if we be too ſharpe, it is an ouerſhooting of our ſelues which proceedeth of our ſinfulneſſe, by reaſon whereof, although the correction which we miniſter be out of Gods word, yet is it already ſteined, and God alloweth it not. Sometimes wee think our ſelues to bee excuſed, if wee tell a man the truth. Yea, but wee would not tell it him, if our oueruehement affection draue vs not to it. For nowadaies vices are foſtred among men, and euery man is content to beare with his neighbour in his euill doeing: but if there happen any variance or quarell, then out flieth that which was cõcealed before. Therefore in rebuking men, it is not enough for vs that wee can alleage that we haue told them the truth: vnleſſe we can alſo therewithall proteſt, that we were not led with deſire of reuenge or otherwiſe. Let vs marke then, that if it be but in warninges by word of mouth, we muſt not be paſſionate nor deſirous of reuenge, but ſimply do it of zeale to Godward. Now then it is much more reaſon that when a iudge holdeth the ſword in his hand, and is to proceede further to the executing of Iuſtice with rigour, hee ſhould then lay aſide all euill affections. That is the cauſe why God hath expreſly ſhewed his people the end of the law which he had giuen them, to the intent they ſhoulde bee the better taught to walke in the pure religion, and not follow the ſuperſtitions which they ſhould puniſh in the Heathen. That is the thing which we haue to note in effect.

Now Moſes addeth immediatly, *If thou ſay in thine heart, Alas theſe Nations are moe in nũber than I, & how is it poſſible that I ſhould diſcomfite them? Remember what thy God did in the land of Egypt, how he handled Pharao & al his people, & what proofe of his power he gaue thee there. For euen ſo will hee doe to all the Nations whom thou art afraid of.* Heere Moſes intendeth to harten the people, to the intent they ſhould not bee daunted with fearefulneſſe. For the thing that doeth commonly hinder men in doing their duetie, is a certaine fearfulneſſe which they conceiue. O (ſay they) this is hard to be done: and againe, if I doe it, I ſhall ſtirre vp many mens diſpleaſure againſt mee, and ſuch a harme may come to me by it. Thus in ſtead of walking as God commaundeth vs, we bowe with euery blaſt, and in the end turn quite away. Wee be but ouer bould and hardie in following our owne paſſions, and wee be ſo blinded with them, that although there bee daunger in them, yet wee think not vppon it: and although it come to our mind, yet doe our affections ſo ouermaiſter vs, that we ceaſſe not to goe on ſtill. We ſee that if a man be in a rage, although death be before his eyes, yet hee goeth through with it like a mad man, or like a beaſt that is caried away with furiouſneſſe. After that maner doe we deale. And that is the cauſe why I ſayd that we be but too bold in executing our owne wicked and exceſſiue moode. But if God commaund vs any thing: we make ſuch nyſeneſſe at it, as is pitifull to ſee. And then come all theſe doubtes in our head: How is it poſſible that I ſhould holde out, if I ſhould followe my vocation faithfully? For beholde, there is ſuch a blocke in my way, I ſhall haue ſuch a man mine enemie, ſuch a thing may befall mee, ſuch a man will bee againſt me. All theſe forecaſtes (ſay I) will come to our mind. And therefore let vs marke, that God doth not without cauſe ſay thus to his people heere, doe theſe thinges, not reſpecting thine owne power, and abilitie, but reſpecting and knowing my ſtrength: for that is inuincible. If thou haue mee on thy ſide, feare not but I will make thee ouercome all thine incomberaunces, and all the euill incounters that thou canſt meete with. Thus ye ſee in effect what wee haue to mark vpon this text.

Howbeit foraſmuch as the vice that is ſpoken of heere, is common among vs, and all of vs are (as yee would ſay) attainted with it: wee haue ſo much the more neede to bee earneſt in putting this leſſon in vre. We ſee that if men be againſt vs, by and by we ouerſhoote our ſelues, and we cannot ſerue God. And how ſo? If I ſhould doe al that God commaundeth me, all the world would hate mee: I ſhalbe pointed at with mens fingers, I ſhal haue as many enemies as I haue neighbours about me. Heereuppon wee ſhrink in our hornes by and by, and we beare ourſelues in hand that wee bee excuſed before God. And this happeneth in maner continually. Yea verily, and foraſmch as the world is frowarde, we haue good cauſe to be afraid when we intend to liue in ſuch vprightneſſe and ſoundneſſe as God commaundeth. Sith we ſee it is ſo, let vs returne to that which is ſaid heere: namely that to obey GOD, wee muſt not paſſe what wee our ſelues are, nor what our owne credite and power is: but we muſt arme our ſelues with this promiſe. It is God that commaundeth me to doe it, and hee ſeeth well ynough what daungers and diſtreſſes are in it, he will ſtand by me and reach me his mighty hand. It behoueth me to reſt vppon that, and to conceiue a ſtedfaſt truſt, to ouercome all thinges that may turne me away from the doing of my duety. That is the thing which we haue to remember vppon this leſſon of Moſes. And in deede how ſhould we doe without that? For wee ſee howe vices haue their full ſcope nowadaies, and he that intendeth to ſerue God purely, may wel ſay he is as a ſheepe among wolues. But what for that? Wee haue a good Shepheard, who hath promiſed to defende vs. Let vs put our truſt in him, and in the meane ſeaſon walke on in the way that he hath ſhewed vs. Elſe, I beſeech ye what would become of the poore Chriſtians that are deteined among the enemies of yͤ fayth? If they ſhould paſſe for the daungers wherein they bee, how durſt they open their mouthes to honour GOD? Should they not needes either giue themſelues ouer to all euill, or elſe at leaſtwiſe be faine to ſtrike ſayle? Yes ſurely. But when they conſider thus, Our God is the keeper of our ſoules, and ſeeing wee bee vnder his protection, let vs wait till hee reache vs his hande at our neede: then at the conceiuing of ſuch thoughtes, they take newe courage & are inabled to ſerue God, or at leaſtwiſe the ſaide fearefulneſſe ouermaiſtreth them not. True it is that wee cannot but bee afraide, and feele our fleſh continually ſhrinking away, when wee bee diſpoſed to walke according to Gods ordinance, and wee ſhall conceiue many croſſebytings: but yet muſt wee not foſter ſuch vice to foade our ſelues in it. I ſay we muſt come to that which Moſes telleth vs here: *Thy God wil worke for thee.*

Aboue all other, they that are in authoritie muſt arme themſelues with this promiſe, or elſe there wilbe neither conſtancie nor ſtoutneſſe in them. For wee ſee what threatninges, and ſpitings are wrought euery where. Inſomuch that when euen the greateſt kinges and princes are minded to doe right: there needeth but ſome Courtier to inuegle them, and hee ſhall ſo alter their minde as (doe what they can) they muſt needes yeeld to all naughtineſſe. No doubt but that euen the greateſt princes, (although they themſelues intend no ſuch thing) doe become ſtarke naught for other mens pleaſures, ſo as they be oftentimes inforced to ſay, I would faine doe the thing that I knowe to be good, but I dare not for diſpleaſing of ſuch as are about mee, bycauſe they may ſtirre mee vp great troubles and vnquietneſſe, and therefore I muſt bee faine to yeeld to them. Againe there are a great number of people that wil ſet themſelues againſt me, if I ſhould doe my dewty. Lo in what taking a prince ſhall diuers times bee. Inſomuch that if hee perceiue ſome officers of his to haue committed outrages, pillinges, pollinges, and extortions, O [ſaieth he] I ſhall loſe all my ſeruantes heartes if I bee too rigorous: therefore muſt I let ſuch thinges ſlippe, and though my people bee oppreſſed by it, yet muſt not I make any countenance yͭ I ſee it. Ye ſee then that the greateſt princes are the cauſe of all miſchiefe by their inclining to the woorſer part, when they thinke they cannot maintaine their ſtate, but by fauoring wicked perſons, and by laying the brydle in their necke. And how then ſhall they doe which haue not the like authoritie? Surely euery little blaſt of winde, and euery leafe that falleth from a tree, muſt needes aſtoniſh them out of hand, ſo as for feare they ſhal alleage thus and thus: Alas, I ſhal get ſuch a mans diſpleaſure, ſuch an inconuenience may befall mee for it: therefore I muſt doe ſuch a thing or ſuch a thing to ſaue my ſelfe: I ſee my life would be in daunger, and I am but one man alone, I ſhould bee made a pray for others. Yee ſee then howe theſe forecaſtes are a cauſe of the ouerthrow of all right & Iuſtice, ſo as men keepe not one continual train, nor hold themſelues at one good ſtay, but that as ſoone as they haue done any one good deede that is worthy of prayſe, by and by they vndoe it againe and marre all. Therefore it ſtandeth vs ſo much the more in hande to beare this doctrine well printed in our mindes, yͭ if we intend to ſerue God, wee muſt not haue an eye to our owne power, but truſt to him that ſetteth vs a worke. For he wil not ſuffer vs to be diſappointed, ſo we doe him the honour to call vpon him, and to flie to him for refuge, not miſtruſting but that his power is able enoughe to maintaine vs: Yea and although we haue none enemies to the worldward, yet muſt that be our foundation, that wee may keepe the right way all our life long. For let euery of vs looke into himſelfe, and hee ſhall ſee that wee haue a common enimie of Sathan, and wee ſee what wiles he hath to ſurpriſe vs: and what ſtrength haue wee to withſtande him? Againe the holy ſcripture telleth vs that wee muſt forſake our ſelues, mortifie all our affections and hold them in priſon, and renounce all worldly thinges, if wee will come vnto God, & moreouer our life muſt ſhew yͤ fruits thereof. Now we know our frailtie, we ſee infinite temptations to inuegle vs, we knowe that the diuell is the prince that raineth in the aire aboue vs: and alas what can wee doe? This might at the firſt make vs abaſhed. But what? Wee muſt not heere haue an eye to our owne freewill as theſe blind wretches doe, which preſume vppon their owne ſtrength, and reſt vpon their own abilities: but wee muſt ſay, O Lorde, performe thou the thinges which thou commaundeſt vs, and then commaund vs what thou wilt. Let vs goe and put our ſelues after that faſhion into the hand of our God, and ſuffer him to rule vs by his holy ſpitite: and then wee neede not doubt but wee ſhal haue the vpperhand of al euils that incounter vs, and that although wee be troubled neuerſomuch, yet in the end hee will giue vs a happie iſſewe, ſo as wee ſhall feele that our truſting in him hath not beene in vaine. To be ſhort, we ſee how profitable this doctrine is for vs. For it were impoſſible for vs to ouercome the leaſt aſſault that wee could be put vnto, vnleſſe God reached out his hand to ſuccour vs at our neede. Therefore let vs call vppon him, and that not for once and away, but foraſmuch as it is right hard for vs to hold out to the end, and to haue a continuall ſtedfaſtneſſe, let vs pray God that when he hath once ſet vs in the good trade, he continue the ſame, and ſuffer not vs to turne head again within two or three dayes after, but that when wee haue walked rightly for a certaine time, we may goe foreward more and more, and ſhewe that we haue walked vnder his guidance, and not beene fooliſh hardie to raunge abroad at aduenture, but that wee haue put our truſt in him, and imbraced his promiſes, whereby he telleth vs that he will neuer faile ſuch as are his, but that like as they ſubmit themſelues to him, ſo he alſo will vtter his power towardes them, to maintain them and defende them againſt all the temptations of Sathan, and againſt all the wronges of the world.

Matt.16.24 & Col.3.5.

Eph.2.2.and 6.12.

Nowe let vs kneele downe in the preſence of our good God with acknowledgement of our faultes, praying him to make vs ſo to feele them as wee may learne to miſlike of them, and giue our ſelues more and more to ſerue him: and that ſeeth we bee ſo ſore tempted with our owne wicked luſtes, and ſo aſſailed by them euery minute of an houre, as we bee not able to ouermaiſter them: wee may take the armor which he giueth vs from heauen, that is to wit, the grace of his holie ſpirite, wherewith to repulſe all Sathans aſſaults, that by that meanes our God may bee glorified in vs, and his Kingdome aduaunced more and more, ſo as his righteouſneſſe, goodneſſe, and wiſedome may ſhine foorth euerywhere, and ſpecially be ſo printed in our hearts, as wee alſo may beare the badges of them in all our members. That it may pleaſe him to graunt this grace, not onely to vs, but alſo to all people and Nations of the earth, &c.

On Tewſday the xiij. of Auguſt. 1555.

The Lvj. Sermon which is the ſixth vpon the ſeuenth Chapter.

19 That is to wit &c.

20 And alſo the Lord thy God will ſend Waſpes among them, vntill he haue deſtroyed the remnant of them, and thoſe that ſhall haue hidden themſelues from thy preſence.

21 Thou ſhalt not be afraid before them. For the Lord thy God is in the mids of thee, a great and terrible God.

22 And the Lord thy God will caſt downe thoſe nations before thee, by little and little. Thou maiſt not rid them away out of hand, for feare leaſt the beaſtes of the feelde doe multiply againſt thee.

23 But the Lorde thy God will giue thee them before thee, and aſtoniſh them with a great aſtoniſhment, vntill they be vtterly deſtroyed.

24 And he will giue thee their kinges into thy handes, and thou ſhalt wype out their name from vnder heauen. And none of them all ſhalbe able to ſtand before thee, vntill thou haue rooted them out.

WE ſawe yeſterday what courage wee ought to haue to doe our duety, and wherupon we ought to grounde our ſelues: namely vppon the promiſe which God maketh vs, that we ſhalbe mainteined by his hand and power. For if we haue an eye to our own power & ability, we ſhal haue no cauſe to conceiue anie truſt: but if wee bee acquainted with Gods power, and haue his promiſe that he will ayde vs: then haue we no cauſe to bee afrayde. Then if wee ſee anie daungers that may make vs afrayde, or aſtoniſh vs: let vs learne to haue recourſe to this leſſon, that when ſoeuer God commandeth vs to do any thing, he wil not faile vs at our neede, but rather wee ſhall feele his preſence in ſuch wiſe as we ought to do him the honour to reſt vppon him. And to the ende this doctrine might be the better knowne, Moſes hath therwithall ſet down the experience therof which God had giuen the people of Iſrael at their going out of Egypt. *Thou haſt ſeene the ſignes and wonders which God wrought: and he wil doe as much in this behalfe.* It ought to ſuffiſe vs ẏ God bindeth himſelfe to vs by his promiſe. Howbeit foraſmuch as he perceiueth our infirmitie: he giueth vs this help more, of making vs to haue experience of ẏ things that we knew before. Nowe if this auaile vs not: we be not onely vnfaithfull, but alſo vnthankful. For when god doth vs good, it is not for an houre or twaine: but hee wil haue it to ſtande vs in ſteede all our life long, and to conclude boldly, that as he hath begun well, ſo will hee alſo continue. Then let vs beware that we be not guiltie of ſo great vnthankfulneſſe, as to haue thruſt Gods benefites vnderfoot, which ought to be ſo well knowen vnto vs. And that is to the end we may goe through with our courſe without ſtoppe. And becauſe wee be as weake as is poſſible, or rather laſie and vnprofitable, when we ſhoulde do any good: let vs take corage as it is giuen vs here euen by hauing recourſe vnto God, praying him to holde out his hand continually to helpe vs: and therewithall let vs doe whatſoeuer he commaundeth vs, and whatſoeuer wee knowe to bee our duetie, not doubting but the end of it wilbe good. Although the diuel practiſe to turne al vpſidedowne, and although men ſtreine themſelues and make neuer ſo greate aſſaultes to further the ſame: yet will God get the vpper hande. And if hee ſuccour vs, let vs not doubt but wee ſhall ouercome all the aſſaultes which wee ſhall bee driuen to indure.

And furthermore Moſes addeth, *that God wil ſende Waſpes to deſtroy the reſt of thoſe Nations, and thoſe that hid themſelues out of the way.* As if he ſhould ſay, that although the children of Iſrael were not able to deſtroy their enemies: yet woulde God prouide for it as one that hath all meanes in his hande. Thou ſhalt not neede (ſaith hee) to haue the ſworde alwayes in thine hande: for God hath other men of warre, hee will arme the Waſpes againſt them. Nowe ſurely this may ſeeme ſtraunge at the firſt ſight. For ſeeing that God intendeth to ſhewe his power againſt the enemies of his people: why doeth he not rather dart his thunder at thē from heauen?

Why maketh hee not the earth to open and to ſwallowe them vp? Why worketh hee not after ſome other faſhion than by ſending of Hornets? Nay, heereby hee ment to ſhewe, firſt that hee hath all creatures in his hande, and can ſerue his turne with them as he liſteth. Rom.8.28.29. And it is a greate aduauntage for vs to knowe, that if God bee on our ſide, there is not any thing, no not euen ſo much as a flie, but it ſhall make with vs and againſt our enemies. Likewiſe on the contrarie parte, if wee haue prouoked Gods wrath and hee bee minded to make vs feele his vengeance: although the whole worlde had linked themſelues together to helpe vs: yet notwithſtanding, all thinges (yea euen to the verie flies) ſhall be armed to execute his wrath againſt vs. This therefore is a thing that ought to make vs afraide when wee liue not as wee ought to doe: and contrariwiſe which ought to giue vs ſingular hope and comfort, ſo wee bee vnder the protection of our God. Marke it then for a ſpeciall point, that whereas God auoweth that hee will ſende Waſpes: his meaning is to ſhewe that hee hath incomprehenſible meanes in his hande, and that hee will cauſe all thinges to imploy themſelues in his ſeruice, to deſtroye his enemies and to helpe his people. But yet hee ſheweth his mightie power much better thereby, than if he vſed myracles: I meane in puniſhing the pride of ſuch as truſt in their owne ſtrength, and ſwell like Toades, and beare themſelues in hande that nothing can hurt them. The deſpiſers of God do make themſelues beleeue, that they can exempt themſelues from all inconueniences, either by their pollicie, or by their power and cunning. Heereuppon (for wee knowe that men are readie to burſt for pride, vntill Gods ſpirite reigne in them:) God, to humble them and to make them meeke, ſubdueth them and ouermaſtereth them as they deſerue.

True it is that God coulde confounde them at the firſt blowe, and make them to feele ſuch a heauenly force, as were able to dant the whole worlde: but hee will not deale ſo with them. Howe then? Hee vndermines them by ſuch meanes as they neuer thought of: and that is to ſcorne their fonde ouerweening the more, which made them worſe than mad, and wherewith they had beene beſotted before. And that is the cauſe why hee ſent flies and other vermin vppon Egypt, rather than raiſed his Angels to deſtroye the Egyptians. It is true that God wrought al manner of wayes to make them feele his power. Hee ſent darkeneſſe, hee turned the waters into bloude, and in the ende an Angel came and ſlewe all the firſt borne of their houſes. This was well done. But yet Gods meaning was to pull downe the pride of Egypt, by ſending vermine to conſume them. Lo what men of warre God chooſeth to wage battell for him, when hee liſteth to laugh mens loftineſſe to ſcorne, and to ſpite them that they may bee aſhamed of it. For by meanes thereof they come to knowe themſelues, whereas erſt they Act.12.23. forgate themſelues, and bare themſelues in hande that their owne power was wonderfull. And indeede when wee reade that Herod was ſo conſumed of wormes: it ought to put vs in minde, that God ſent him a puniſhment fitte for him, becauſe hee had ſuffered men to call him a God. Hee was not contented with the degree of a mortall man: but hee woulde needs imagine that hee coulde transforme himſelfe. Therefore it was meete that hee ſhoulde bee abaced beneath all men, and that the filthines of his bodie ſhoulde make him droppe in peeces, ſo as hee ſhoulde ſeeke to murther himſelfe with his owne hand. Nowe then Gods handling of him after that faſhion, is to humble him the better. And when wee reade this preſent text, let vs looke that wee liue in the feare of our God: and then wee may bee ſure of his helpe, ſo as wee may liue not onely among Waſpes and Hornets and other ſuch vermine, but alſo euen among Dragons and wilde beaſts, according as it is ſaide in the foureſcore and eleuenth Pſalme, that when wee bee in Gods Pſal.91.13. keeping, hee will mainetaine our life in ſuch ſort, as the thinges whereof wee be moſt afraid, ſhall not bee able to annoy vs. But on the contrarie part, if wee become his enemies and deſpiſe his maieſtie: hee needeth not to make any great adoe in arming of himſelfe to confound vs. For flies wil be able ynough to execute his vengeance. Thus ye ſee what we haue to gather vppon this place.

Nowe againe Moſes confirmeth the doctrine which wee haue hearde: namely that the children of Iſrael ſhoulde not bee afraide of their enemies. *For God is among you* (ſaieth hee) yea euen *the ſtronge and terrible God*. Firſt hee ſetteth downe heere, that they ſhoulde not bee afraide of their enemies: and afterwarde hee addeth the reaſon, For God (ſaith hee) is among you. And thirdly hee ſheweth what manner a God the ſame is; to the intent that the people ſhoulde not doubt but hee is mightie ynough, and by comparing him to his creatures, reſolue themſelues that it ought to ſuffiſe them, if they had him on their ſide. This is the ſumme of the thinges that are ſaide heere. Now it ſeemeth at the firſt ſight that heere is ſome contrarietie. For hee had ſaide afore, God will deſtroy all the enemies whom thou feareſt: and heere hee forbiddeth them to bee afraide. Howe hang theſe two together? Whereas hee ſpeaketh of feare, wee haue to note that when any daunger is apparant and threateneth vs, wee feele the griefe thereof, and wee muſt needes be afraide of it, and it cannot be otherwiſe.

Nowe then in ſaying that God will deſtroye all thoſe whom his people were afraide of, Moſes meaneth that although the enemies bee dreadfull of themſelues, yet ſhall not God bee hindered to deſtroy them. And againe, we haue to note alſo, that God hath alwayes borne with the fainthartedneſſe of thoſe that are his. Indeede it was a fault in the people of Iſrael, that they were afraide of their enemes, for ſeeing they knewe themſelues to bee in the tuition of their God, they ſhoulde haue defiled all things that might haue abaſhed them. Yet notwithſtanding, God beareth ſtill with that default. And although the people was vnworthy to bee ſuccoured, becauſe of the fearefulneſſe that proceeded of the ſaide infirmitie: yet did not God ceaſe to holde them ſtill by the hande. Neuertheleſſe if God beare with vs, his meaning is not to feede our vice, or to foade vs in it, when wee haue not ſuch ſtoutneſſe and conſtancie as is requiſite. It is true that God ceaſeth not to haue mercie vpon vs for all that: but howſoeuer the worlde goe, yet is that fearefulneſſe alwayes worthie to be condemned. For let vs ſee from what ſpring it iſſueth. If we had a perfite truſt in our God: it woulde put away all feare, and wee might defie all that euer is againſt vs, accordingly as Saint Paul ſaieth, if God bee on our ſide, who ſhalbe againſt vs? And Dauid ſaieth, If a Million of men of warre had beſeeged mee, yet woulde I not bee afraide. Though I were in the darkneſſe of death, yet if I may ſee God my ſheepeheard, and he ſhew me his ſheepehooke, I will reſt my ſelfe vppon that and bee in quiet.

Rom 8.29.
Pſal.27.3.

Therefore let vs marke well, that our Lorde ſheweth himſelfe pitifull, when it pleaſeth him to ſuccour vs in ſuch infirmitie. For hee needed to doe no more but ſay in one worde, prepare your ſelues to receiue my grace, and by and by thereuppon wee ought to imbrace his promiſes and to reſt vppon them, and to take all our contentation in them. But wee doe not ſo: and yet notwithſtanding hee ceaſeth not to beare with vs therein. Neuertheleſſe, although hee vſe ſuch gentleneſſe and patience towardes vs: yet doth it not followe that therefore there is no fault in our fearefulneſſe, neither ought we to conclude that wee may fall a ſleepe in it: but rather we muſt quicken vp our ſelues to ſay: how nowe wretched creature? Thou diſtruſteſt thy God. Thou haſt beene as greatly afflicted as might bee, and hee hath ſuccoured thee. What meaneſt thou by reiecting his goodneſſe after that manner? Thinkeſt thou that his benefites haue alwayes beene loſt towards thee, that thou diſſeateſt them through thine owne leawdneſſe, in that thou doeſt not acknowledge them? For if wee acknowledged not Gods benefits as they deſerue, ſurely we ſhould be confirmed by thē as I haue ſaid alreadie. Then is it not without cauſe ẏ God addeth here, that his people ſhould not be afraide of their enemies. True it is that he had ſaide, Thou ſhalt bee afraide of them: but there hee ſpake of the infirmitie that he knewe to bee in his people, which was faultie: for he condemneth it as it deſerued. And therevppon hee addeth, Thou ſhalt not bee afraide of them. As if hee ſhoulde ſay, true it is in deede your nature will alwayes bee fearefull: but yet yee muſt not bee afraide, yee muſt withſtande ſuch fearefulneſſe. And when yee ſee the multitude of your enemies, it cannot bee but that yee muſt bee ſomewhat moued: but yet yee muſt haue the buckler of faith to repulſe all ſuch feare, and ye muſt thinke that ſeeing I haue promiſed to ſuccour you: I will not faile you.

True it is that doe what wee can, wee ſhall neuer be ſo well hartened, but that there will be ſome miſdouting as wee haue heretofore ſeene. For wee ought to holde our ſelues vnto Gods promiſes, and to aſſure our ſelues of his ſuccour. Surely if we ſeeme neuer ſo ſtout, and there bee but one ſparke of feare in vs, wee muſt vnderſtande that the ſame is euil. Yet notwithſtanding, ſo wee bee not ouerwhelmed with feare, nor quaile not, but take courage, and after toſſing too and fro, doe holde ſtill our owne, and enter into the battell: our Lorde is contented with vs.

Nowe then, what is to bee done? When wee perceiue any daunger, it cannot bee but wee muſt haue ſome feeling of it: for otherwiſe we ſhould be as blockes, and not to bee afraide of any thing, is no vertue. A drunkarde will runne vppon the ſwordes point, hee will leape out at a windowe, hee wil be afraide of no thing: and why is that? Becauſe he is out of his right wittes. Likewiſe a madde man will throwe himſelfe into the fire or kill himſelfe. Therefore we ſee that it is no vertue to bee without feeling of griefe. Neuertheleſſe when wee feele the daungers, wee muſt reſort to the remedie that God giueth vs.

True it is that our life hangeth as by a threed, and that there needeth not any thing to deſtroy vs. But yet howe weake ſoeuer we be, our Lord hath promiſed to holde vs ſhrowded vnder his wings: and therefore let vs runne vnto him. And ſeeing hee hath a care of our life, let vs truſt thereto, and call vppon him as oft as wee ſee any daunger like to inſue. And foraſmuch as he hath promiſed neuer to ſhrinke away from vs: let vs approch boldly vnto him, and put our truſt in him, and then ſhall wee bee fenced welynough. For the name of God is an inuincible fortreſſe, the righteous will flee thereto for refuge, and hee ſhall neuer periſh. To the intent therefore that wee may haue a ſtedfaſt aſſurance in the middes of daunger, let vs learne to haue recourſe immediatly to our God, by receiuing the promiſes which hee giueth vs: and they wilbe a ſure and ſteadie leaningſtock to reſt vppon: and by that meanes alſo God ſhalbe glorified in vs.

Pſal.20.2.8
and 33.21.

True it is that wee may feele ſome ſuch conceit as ſhall abaſh vs: but yet that feare of ours which wee doe ſo conceiue, ſhalbe but as an exerciſe of our faith, and the ouercomming thereof ſhalbe the more commendable. Howbeit if wee finde any difficultie, ſo as we cannot reſolue our ſelues at the firſt: then let vs aſſure our ſelues there is yet ſtill ſome infirmitie in vs, and wee yeelde not God his due honour, foraſmuch as we bee ſlowe to beleeue his promiſes, and ſticke not to them with a cheerefull courage. And therefore let vs blame our ſelues in that behalfe, yea and euen be ſorie for it. Notwithſtanding, we muſt not quail though there be infirmitie in vs: for God wil bring al to paſſe by his own power as ſhalbe declared yet more plainly hereafter. Thus ye ſee what we haue to remēber vpō this text, where Moſes ſaith ẏ we muſt not in any wiſe feare our enemies.

Now let vs come to the reaſon which hee addeth: Exod,25,8. *Thy God* (ſaith he) *is in the mids of thee.* This is the ſame promiſe that was giuen at the beginning: for we muſt always cal to mind what hath bin treated of heretofore, namely that God telleth vs not of our own ſtrength, when he willeth vs to be well fenced with conſtancie, but calleth vs back to himſelf. The end then which we muſt alwayes begin at, is that we muſt not thinke our ſelues to haue any power, nor be beſotted wͭ any vaine opinion as we ſee men commonly be in eſteeming and flattering themſelues, inſomuch ẏ although they be leſſe thã nothing, yet they always imagin this and ẏ of themſelues. And yet notwithſtãding, that imagination is nothing elſe than an ouerweening. Alſo to incorage vs withal, god vſeth none other mean but only to ſay, haue an eye to me. If it were in our owne ſelues to truſt in him: ſurely god would not reproch vs any whit at al: for he is not loth ẏ there ſhould be any vertue in vs. But when as hee ſaith, Haue an eye to me: it is a token ẏ we be deſtitute of all goodnes, and that if we ſerch & ſift our abilitie throughly what it is, we cannot but be abaſhed at it. True it is that mẽ may welynough flatter themſelues for a time: but yet in the end they ſhal find them ſelues deceiued in their own opinion, And as we ſee here & haue ſeene heretofore, our lord ſheweth vs ẏ we ſhal neuer find firme ground to ſtand vpon, vntill we be come vnto him. And that is ẏ cauſe why it is ſaid, *Thy God is in the mids of thee.* Surely it is an excellent promiſe, that God wilbe 1.Cor.3.16 in the mids of vs. And for ẏ ſame cauſe alſo doth hee call vs his temple: which thing was figured Leui.26.11. in old time by the Sãctuarie. For it was Gods wil Num,2,2.17 to haue it ſeated in the middes of al the people, and hee kept his reſidence in ſuch wiſe in it, as men might perceiue his power to bee there. Not that hee was incloſed in that Arke or in the Tabernacle: but it was his will that the people ſhold haue a viſible warrant, that they might not dout at all of him. For ſuch is our rawneſſe, that alwayes to our ſeeming God turneth his backe to vs, and thinketh not vpon vs, or elſe that hee is too farre of from vs to ſuccour vs with his hand. Therefore it was Gods will that his Sanctuarie ſhould be in the mids of his people, as a warrant of his preſence and power. True it is that as now we haue not that, but wee haue other helpes as conuenient for vs. And firſt of all, the thinges Coloſ,2.17. that were figured by thoſe outwarde ſhadowes, were truly, ſubſtantially, and throughly fulfilled in all pointes, by the comming of our Lord Ieſus Chriſt. For ſeeing that the fulneſſe of the Godheade dwelleth in him, wee muſt not doubt any more but that we haue God with vs. And for the Matt.1,23. ſame cauſe is hee called Emanuel, that is to ſay God with vs. Nowe then if this promiſe were made to the people of olde time, much more ought we to aſſure our ſelues of it at this day, in the perſon of our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt. And the cauſe alſo why hee tooke our fleſhe and nature vppon him, was to the ende it ſhoulde be a holy and indiſſoluble bonde of the vnion wherein it behoueth vs to put the whole truſt of our ſaluation. And herewithall, we haue his promiſes, and Gal.3.27. the ſeales of them in his Sacraments: ſo ẏ when we bethinke vs of our baptiſme, thereby the ſon of God doth witneſſe vnto vs, that we were once clothed with him as ſaieth ſaint Paul. And when wee receiue the ſupper, he ſheweth vs that he is our foode, and that the breade which wee eate, Ioh.6.54.55 doth not nouriſh vs better, than we be nouriſhed by his ſubſtance, in ſomuch that we liue in him and by him. Againe wee heare how he ſaith, that Matt.18,20 whereſoeuer two or three be gathered together in his name, he wilbe in the middes of them. Seing it is ſo: let vs not thinke that this was ſaide alonely to the children of Iſrael: but let vs vnderſtande that the vſe thereof belongeth vnto vs alſo at this day. According whereunto we ſee howe the Church is called Gods reſtingplace, as is ſaide thereof in the Pſalme, and in the Pſal.132.14 eighth Chapiter of Eſay, where it is ſaide that Eſa.8.18. God will dwell in the middes of his holy Citie.

Let vs applie all theſe texts to our vſe, and let vs not doubt but God is with vs nowadayes, yea and that he will not onely dwel among vs [generally] as in his temple: but alſo abide in euery one of vs ſeuerally. And that not onely to make vs feele his power, and to vnderſtande that wee haue our life and mouing in him, as S. Paul ſaith in the Actes: but alſo to make vs perceiue that Act,17,28. preſence of his, which he hath promiſed to all ẏ faithfull. Now then he dwelleth in vs, when wee feele that he yeeldeth vs record of his adoption Gal.4.6. by his holy ſpirit, ſo as we can call vppon him as Ioh.17.21.& our father. And therin doth our lord Ieſus Chriſt 1.Cor 12.27 ſhew that we be members of his bodie, and that & Eph.5.30 he is ſo knit vnto vs, as he keepeth not any thing ſeuerall to himſelfe, ne withholdeth any thing from vs, but communicateth all his graces vnto vs. Now then let vs mark, ẏ no man can cal himſelf a beleeuer, vnles he be throughly perſwaded ẏ God is with him. And al of vs in general ought to imbrace this promiſe, that God is in the mids of vs: ſpecially when wee haue the preaching of his worde, and the order of calling vpon him in common, ſtabliſhed among vs. If wee haue that once: let vs not think that euer we ſhalbe diſappointed of the thing that is conteined here: that is to wit that God will dwell among vs, ſo as wee ſhal neuer neede to make long iourneys to ſeeke him, but we ſhall finde him ſtill ready at hand to ſuccour vs. Mark that for one point. Neuertheles it is true that this preſẽce is not perceiued by our mother wit: for it wil ſeeme oftentimes that God is very far of from vs, or that he hath forgottẽ vs and caſt vs vp: but it is his wil to try our faith & patience by that meane. Howſoeuer the caſe ſtand, if we worſhip him, & haue a care to cal vpon him & to reſort vnto him to reſt vpõ his goodneſſe: it is a ſigne that he is neere at hand to vs. Then if wee haue a deſirouſneſſe to reſort vnto him, and doe learne to mourne in our aduerſities, beſeeching him to haue pitie vpon vs: it is a token that he hath not giuen vs ouer, but that he holdeth vs vp with his mightie hand, ſo as we doe reſt vpon his power. Yee ſee then howe God euen in hiding of himſelfe away, ceaſeth not to ſhewe himſelfe neere at hand vnto vs, and that he dwelleth continually in vs. And nowe wee ſee wherevppon wee ought to ground our ſelues to conceiue aſſured truſt: that is to wit vppon this,that we haue God on our ſide. And that is a good token that we haue not any thing in our ſelues, but that it behoueth vs to be vtterly deſtitute of all truſt and hope,vntill our Lord haue ſhewed himſelfe vnto vs to helpe vs.

Nowe although this promiſe ought to ſuffiſe vs:yet notwithſtanding,Moſes addeth one point more, which is not ſuperfluous: namely that *God is mightie and terrible.* Truely it ſhould ſeeme at the firſt bluſh, that this is not ſpoken to any purpoſe.For the caſe concerneth the ſtrengthening of the faithfull, ſo as they ſhoulde plucke vp a good heart,and not doubt but they ſhal diſcomfite all their foes:now then hereupon to call him a terrible God, ſhould rather ſerue to ſcare them out of their wits. For although God mean not to put them in feare: yet doth his onely maieſty ſo amaſe vs,as we would faine hide vs from his preſence if it were poſſible. Inaſmuch then as he termeth himſelfe terrible, it ſhould ſeeme that inſteede of giuing vs matter of comfort, he intended to driue vs away from him. But wee muſt marke that Gods terming of himſelf mightie and terrible, is to the ende to put vs out of doubt that hee is ſtrong and mightie ynough to diſcomfite all our enemies.For we muſt alwayes come backe to this point, that his ſhewing of himſelfe fauourable, mercifull and patient to- Pſal.103.8. wardes vs, is altogether of his owne proper nature: for we know he is our God& ſauiour.Foraſmuch then as God is called our God:he wil haue vs to ſhewe our ſelues to be his people: that is to ſay,that his receiuing of vs is with condition, to gouerne vs with his goodneſſe, as a ſheepeherd that is carefull for his flocke,ſo as his eſteeming of vs as his children,is becauſe he hath adopted vs of his own freegoodnes,and is willing to ſhew himſelfe alwayes fatherlike towards vs, by bearing with vs in our infirmities. So then,whereas he is termed here a terrible and mightie God, it is not in reſpect of his owne people: but in reſpect of the vnbeleeuers and infidels. And that is the cauſe of the often repeting of this worde, *The euerlaſting,thy God.* Moſes ſpeaketh of it here a fower or fiue times within a little ſpace. Wherfore ſaith he ſo oft, *Thy God*? To the intent that the people ſhould reſort to their couenant. In deede it were not Lawfull to preace vnto him, vnleſſe he called vs: but ſeeing that hee of his own good wil hath couenãted with vs to receiue vs to mercie, and hath tolde vs that he will take vs for his flocke & keep vs vnder his protection: we ought not to be afraide any more. Then let vs learne that wee cannot put any truſt in God, vntill we knowe that he is willing to admit vs to him,and that he hath already choſẽ vs to be his houſholde, and to bee vnder his gouernement. When we haue once this promiſe that he will be our God: then may we well truſt in him. For we haue taken holde of his courteſie, and that is to the intent we ſhould knowe, that he will vſe the ſame towards vs euen to the end. Howbeit when we once knowe the goodnes that God vttereth vnto vs: we muſt alſo on the contrarie part conſider his power againſt al our enemies. For why? we ſee we neede not any thing to ſcarre vs or to make vs afraide. In deed if we heare of the promiſes of Gods goodnes,we feele ſome ſweetenes in them: but yet if the diuell ſtirre vp any trouble againſt vs,by and by we bee diſmayed. As long as it is preached vnto vs that our life is in Gods hand,and that we be ſafe when wee be vnder his protection:all is wel,we receiue that doctrine,and to our owne ſeeming, it hath taken good rooting in our hearts: But as ſoone as the leafe is turned,or any daunger ſhew it ſelf,where are wee then? But had we bin wel ſetled & confirmed in the thing that we heard:we ſhould bee ſafe ynough,and we would keepe on ſtil forward: but wee neuer thinke more vpon that, neither is there any meanes at all to comfort vs. Thus is it a ſigne that if there happen neuer ſo little daunger,we doubt of Gods power, & we doe him not yͤ honor to ſay,he hath promiſed it, therfore will he perform it,for he is able. And for yͤ ſame cauſe S.Paul ſpeaking of Abrahams faith,ſaith that he Rom.4.18. beleeued euen againſt hope, knowing that hee which had made the promiſe, was alſo able to performe it. It ſeemeth to haue bin a ſmal matter to ſay that Abraham beleeued that God was mightie. For who denyeth that? And therefore Abrahams faith is not ſo greatly to be commended in that reſpect: for there is no man but hee confeſſeth it. Yea,yea:but yet for al that,as ſmal a thing as it ſeemeth to bee,it is a very rare and difficult thing: and that doth experience ſhewe. For(as I ſaide) if we meete with any crabbed incumberance, we thinke there is no God in heauen to ſuccour vs any more: and al that euer can be alledged vnto vs, wilbe ſo colde,as wee ſhall find no reliefe in it. Therefore it is not without cauſe that Moſes here magnifieth Gods mightie power,and ſaith that hee is terrible, to the ende that the people might therby aſſure themſelues and ſay,very well,it is true that we be nothing in compariſon of our enemies, but what for that? What maner a one is God? Seeing he ſaith that he wilbe our captain,& that we ſhalbe vnder his protection:what can all the men in the world,or all creatures doe? Is there any thing that can withſtande the power of God? Againe, what is his maieſtie? If he liſt to ſhew it: they that nowadayes are ouerſotted in their owne pride, ſhall out of hand be put to vtter confuſion. For if God make the mountaines and Rocks to melt,and Pſal.97.5. the earth to waſh away at his preſence:what ſhal become of mẽ with their frailtie? Thus ye ſee to what purpoſe and ende we ought to applie this ſaying, That *God is mightie and terrible*. It ſerueth not to diſmay vs: for we know yͭ whenſoeuer we reſort vnto him, we be alwayes receiued to mercie, his throne is not dreadfull to the beleeuers, but it is the throne of grace and goodnes. Wherfore if we ſee that our enemies make vs afraid,& that(to our ſeeming)they be as Wolues to ſwallow vs vp,& we as ſheep in compariſon of them: very wel,let vs reſort to our God. And what maner a one is he? O,wee muſt not onely conceiue this worde God:but wee muſt alſo attribute him his qualities therewithall, namely that hee is mightie and terrible: and then let vs not be afraide. For all the rage that our enemies do caſt and fome out, is but a ſmoke, & God will make it to fade all away, as ſoone as it pleaſeth him to ſhewe his maieſtie: and we be ſure hee will doe it, becauſe he hath promiſed it. Therefore let vs ſo benefite our ſelues by this promiſe, that whenſoeuer we be aſtoniſhed, or in any doubt or griefe of minde, wee alwaies haue recourſe thither and ſay, Our God is mightie. And why? Wherein will he vtter his mightines? Alas, it is true that he might wel vtter it in confounding & deſtroying vs: but he is patient, gentle, & meeke, and hee wil not haue vs to feele his force to our Matt.23.37. harme: but rather he wil haue vs to feele his paſſing fatherly goodnes. All his deſire is to gather vs vnder his wings as a henne that broodeth her litle chickins. And it is a ſingular comfort vnto vs, when we know yͤ he wil be ſo louing & fauourable towards vs, and yet neuertheleſſe will bee knowen to be mightie and terrible in the ouerthrowing of our enemies, and in ouercomming all thinges that are againſt vs. Therefore let vs put our truſt therein. But yet therewithall let vs beware that wee abuſe not his promiſes. For if wee will haue him to ſhewe himſelfe vnto vs: we muſt bee a quiet people to himwarde and abide vnder the couert of his wings, and not play the wilde beaſtes in running away from him. For the hypocrites will brag well ynough that they haue God on their ſide: but yet for al that, they ſhrink away from him, and let him alone. Now then let vs learne to goe in ſuch wiſe to our God, as we may truſt in him and repoſe our ſelues vpon him. And in ſo dooing, let vs beare in minde what he commandeth, and examine our faultes according to his worde: and then ſhall we finde by experience, that he meant not to beguile vs, when he told vs yͤ he would be in the mids of vs mightie and terrible to diſcomfit al our enemies.

Now by the way Moſes addeth an exception, ſaying: *that God will not deſtroy all the enemies of his people out of hande.* And why? *Leaſt the beaſts of the field* (ſaith he) *ſhould ſet themſelues againſt thee: But thou ſhalt weede them out by litle and litle. Thou ſhalt diſpatch euen their kinges: and to bee ſhort, thou ſhalt not leaue any thing at all of thoſe nations.* Here Moſes giueth the people a very neceſſary warning, in telling them after what manner they ſhoulde proceede. For otherwiſe they might haue taken ſome euill conceite at their comming into the lande of Chanaan: and if they had not rooted out their enemies immediatly all at once: they might haue imagined with themſelues, what is become of Gods promiſes? It ſhoulde ſeeme that hee hath mocked vs. Therefore doeth Moſes holde them in awe, ſaying: It is true that your God wil diſcomfit all your enemies, but yet ſhall not that be done ſo ſoone as you woulde wiſhe, howbeit aſſure your ſelues there is good reaſon that hee ſhoulde ſo deale with you, and therefore put no diſtruſt in your God. For hee ſeeth that the lande woulde bee repleniſhed with wilde beaſtes, and they would bee ſo many enemies to make warre vpon you. God then doeth this to your benefite, in that hee will not haue the whole land to bee vtterly ridde of all enemies. For if your enemies ſhould be all deſtroied immediately vpon your comming into the lande: you coulde not repleniſh it againe vpon the ſudden, to defende your ſelues from the wilde beaſtes. Nowe we haue to note here, firſt that God intended to correct the peoples ouergreat haſt, by ſhewing them that they ſhould hold themſelues in peace and quiet, vntill God had put them in ful poſſeſſion of the whole lande. For it is the proper nature of faith to tary Gods leiſure, as the Apoſtle affirmeth in the Epiſtle to the Hebrewes, Hebr.10.37.38. alledging this text of Abacuc, that if God delay Abac.2.3.4. the performance of his promiſes, wee muſt tary his leiſure, and not bee ouerhaſtie: for they ſhall come to paſſe time ynough, that is to ſay, they ſhall bee perfourmed in their due ſeaſon. Then let vs marke that faith cannot bee in vs without patience, that is to witte, without tarying of Gods leyſure, till it pleaſe him to execute the thing that hee hath ſpoken and ſaide, and without aſſigning or ſetting of any terme as men commonly doe, who are ſo bolde as to take vpon them to make God ſubiect to their will. Let vs beware of ſuch ouerſtatelineſſe, and let vs rather learne to bridle our ſelues, til God diſpoſe of things accordingly as hee gaue ſentence of them afore by his owne mouth. And that accordeth with this ſaying of the Prophet Eſay: Our power ſhalbe in ſilence and reſt. Then muſt Eſa.30.15. we be ſtil and quiet, if we intend to do God yͤ honor to truſt in him, and to ſhew yͤ we doe it vnfeynedly. And here our Lorde had a regarde to bridle his people. Foraſmuch (ſaith he) as mẽs affections are ouerhaſtie & headie: let it not grieue you though your enemies bee not deſtroied all out of hand. Let that ſerue for the firſt poynt.

And herewithal let vs marke alſo, that here God ment to ſhew the reaſon why he differreth and delayeth the performaunce of the thinges that he determineth, and bringeth them not to paſſe out of hand. Truely he is not bound to doe it. Should God giue vs an account of his doings? If he worke not after our liking, is hee bounde to tell vs why? Ought not wee rather to ſtoope to him, and to ſay, Yea Lord, we bee ignoraunt, yea and euen ſtarke blinde, and it belongeth to thee onely to be wiſe? Foraſmuch as there is nothing but follie and vanitie in vs: rule thou vs according to thy prouidence. It were meete that we ſhould deale after that faſhion: but we ſee howe God yeeldeth to our rawneſſe. For inaſmuch as wee bee tikliſh, and cannot finde in our heartes to bee contented with his pleaſure, and to reſt wholly vpon it: here he ſheweth vs a reaſon for it. So then let vs mark wel yͤ ineſtimable goodnes of our God, in abaſing himſelf ſo far, as to ſhewe vs the reaſon why he doth things, according as Moſes telleth yͤ people of Iſrael here. For he hath an eie to your benefite, leaſt yͤ wild beaſts ſhould deuour you: for they would multiply, & there be not folke ynow of you to manure yͤ whole lande, but there would be diuers places which ſhould ly vninhabited. Knowe ye therefore that whereas your God deſtroyeth not all your enemies out of hand, it is for your benefite, and it were not expedient for you that it ſhould be otherwiſe. And ſo in effect Moſes telleth the people heere, that Gods delaying to giue them full victorie, was to their benefit and welfare. Therefore let vs mark well, that if God make not ſuch haſt as we would haue him, he hath an eye to our welfare, ſo as he procureth the thing that is beſt for vs, though we perceiue it not at the firſt. True it is that wee weene our ſelues to bee wiſe and well aduiſed: and thereuppon wee take vpon vs to iudge that God is ouer ſlowe, and wee woulde fayne thruſt him foreward ſtraite wayes by the ſhoulders to cauſe him to make more haſte. But (as I ſaid) that is bicauſe wee knowe not what is good for vs, but wee imagine that we bee beguiled euery turning of a hand. God therefore muſt bee wiſe for vs, and ſee more clearely than wee doe, and diſpoſe thinges, not after our liking (for that were ynough to marre all:) but after as hee himſelfe knowes to bee good. And in the meane while we muſt ſhut our eyes, and doe nothing but glorifie him in his prouidence. And if wee perceyue not at the firſt why he worketh after that faſhion: well, let vs tarie patiently till he ſhew vs why he made delay and woulde not ſatiſfie our deſires. This doctrine cannot bee fully declared as nowe, but yet muſt wee make an abridgement of it to conclude withall. Likewiſe now adayes wee may happen to languiſh all our life long. Now if we ſhould haſten God to deliuer vs: what a thing were it? We would faine be in a paradiſe here aforehand: and that were the next way to rocke vs aſleepe in the world. God therefore is fayne to wake vs by keeping vs occupyed with ſtore of troubles and vexations: and that makes vs to long continually for the heauenly lyfe. Wee forget this geere at the firſt: but GOD maketh vs to perceyue howe frayle wee bee, by wayting with all patience and humilitie, to bee gouerned by him as he thinketh good. Finally he ſheweth how greatly it is for our benefite to be beaten with his roddes. And therefore doeth hee make vs to paſſe through many troubles, and to bee greatly vexed and tormented. And if there were none other enemies to withſtand vs than ſuch as are ſpoken of here: wel, wee might hap to doe wel ynough with them, for they be men. But 1.Pet.5.8. wee bee dayly aſſaulted by the diuel and by ſinne: and wee would faine ouercome them at the firſt puſh, and obtaine victorie againſt Satan, and againſt all the temptations of the world. But what a thing were that? Our pride would be intollerable, wee would thinke our ſelues to bee Gods, wee would not paſſe to call any more vpon God, nor to ſigh and mourne for our own weakeneſſe, wee ſhoulde not tell what it were to miſlike of our ſelues, nor to vnderſtand that there is none which hath all power in him but onely God. So then although God haue aſſured vs that we ſhall haue the vpper hand of all our enemies: yet ſhall not ẏ be performed at yͤ firſt brunt. And why? Bicauſe it were not good for vs. True it is that wild beaſtes would not come and deuour vs: but wee haue pride and vaineglorie, and wee bee ſotted with ſelfweening. And that deuiliſh ouerluſtineſſe would carie vs away, ſo as wee ſhould fall aſleepe in our vanities and delightes, and that would bee worſe to vs than all the wilde beaſtes in the worlde. And therefore let vs aſſure our ſelues, that Gods leiſurely working, as it were by degrees and by lyne and by leuell: is to our benefite. For coulde he be letted to accompliſh all his worke in one minute of an houre? No: but he liſteth not to doe it ſo ſoone. And therefore let vs learne to keepe the ſpirituall reſt or Sabboth Deut.5.14. Eſa.58.13. as it is ſpoken of in the fifth Chapter, that is to ſay, to impriſon our wit, reaſon and will, and all that euer wee haue beſides, and to hold them in ſuch awe, as none but onely God may haue the rule of vs, and diſpoſe of all things at his will. And moreouer, let vs go on when he leadeth vs the way. For that is no breaking of the Sabboth. To occupie our ſelues euerie man in the charge that God calleth him vnto, and to doe our duties faithfully euery man in his vocation, according to the meaſure of grace that GOD hath giuen him, are the workes of God, and we muſt vnderſtand that it is God which woorketh them in vs. But yet for all that wee muſt not bee too haſtie, as who ſhoulde ſay that God were at our commaundement, or that wee would haue him doe what wee liſt and when wee liſt: but all our wiſedome muſt bee to ſubmit our ſelues to his will. The thing then which wee haue to remēber vpon this text that we may fare the better by it: is that we muſt learne to bee obedient to our God all the time of this our mortall and tranſitorie life, not doubting but that at length he will vanquiſh Satan and all that is againſt vs, and turne euen thoſe things to our benefite and ſaluation, which we thinke as now to be hurtful and harmfull to vs.

Nowe let vs kneele downe in the preſence of our good God, with acknowledgement of our faultes, praying him to make vs feele them better than wee haue doone, ſo as wee may bee drawen to a right repentaunce, and learne more and more to diſtruſt our ſelues and to ſettle our truſt in him: and that when wee haue imbraced his promiſes, wee may fare the better by them by applying our ſelues to his ſeruice, ſo as wee may not be vnprofitable in the world, but that as ſoone as his ſpirit dwelleth in vs, it may forthwith auaile vs, and ſhewe by effect that he hath not adopted vs in vaine in our Lord Ieſus Chriſt, ſo as wee may grow in the ſame knowledge more and more till he haue throughly accompliſhed it in vs, and that wee haue the full meaſure of it, wherof we haue but a very ſmall portion as now. That it may pleaſe him to graunt this grace not onely to vs but alſo to all people and Nations of the earth, &c.

On VVedneſday the xiiij. of Auguſt. 1555.

The Lvij. Sermon which is the ſeuenth vpon the ſeuenth Chapter.

22.23.24 And the Lord &c.

25 Thou ſhalt burne the images of their Gods with fire. And neither couet ne take thou to thee the golde or ſiluer that is vpon them, for feare leaſt it turne to thy decay. For ſuch things are abhomination to the Lord thy God.

26 Therefore thou ſhalt not bring anie abhomination into thine houſe, leaſt thou thy ſelfe become accurſed as well as it. But thou ſhalt abhorre it and loath it vtterly: for it is a curſed thing.

Yesterday I began to ſhew that we muſt be conſtant vnto the end in truſting vnto God, & in holding of our ſelues to his promiſes, though the thing that he ſpeaketh be not performed out of hande, nor his determination put in execution by and by: for he hath alwayes good reaſon to make delay thereof. True it is that wee perceiue it not, and that is becauſe our eyeſight extendeth not farre. We ſee euen among men, that ſuch as haue liued long time, and haue had moſt experience of thinges, haue moſt ſtay of themſelues, and are not ſo haſtie to doe and attempt things, as younger folkes are, which caſt no perils but runne all on head. A yong man hauing a whot braine, wil needs diſpatch al things out of hand in one day. But he that hath ſome ſtay of himſelfe by reaſon of much experience, will looke about him how to diſpoſe his matters, and to doe his things in good order. Now there is no compariſon betweene God and men. It is not to be ſaide that he is an olde expert artificer (as men terme it): for all thinges are euer preſent vnto him, and euer haue bin ſince the creation of the worlde: and againe, his will is the rule of all wiſedome and right. Sith it is ſo, let vs forbeare to be ouerhaſtie, and if it pleaſe him to let vs linger for a time, let vs beare it patiently. Moreouer wee haue to note the thing that was declared yeſterday in a word or twaine: that is to wit, that if GOD deliuer vs not from all troubles and vexations out of hande: it is thorough our fault. For as ſoone as one miſchiefe is paſt, we procure another to come in the neck of it. This is not to be wited vpon God, nor vppon the ſtate of the life wherein wee bee. But we our ſelues are ſo fruitfull in bringing forth of euill, that although God purge vs of neuer ſomuch, yet will the ſeede of it ſpring vp newe againe, and yeelde manifolde increaſe by and by after. That (ſay I) proceedeth of our ſinfulneſſe. And therefore let vs marke well, that if God ſet vs not in quiet at the firſt daſhe, but ſuffer vs to haue enemies to grieue vs and vexe vs: it is becauſe it is not for our benefite nor for our ſaluation, that hee ſhould maintaine vs in too great eaſe. And for proofe thereof (as I ſaide) wee could well finde in our heartes to amend the euil in other folkes, but we thinke not vpon it in our ſelues: and yet is that yͤ end which we ought to begin at. If we wil be good iudges to condēne other mens faultes: we muſt firſt looke to our owne: & we muſt not only bethinke vs of Pſal.19.13. thoſe which are knowen to vs: but wee muſt alſo paſſe yet further, to craue pardon of God for the faults that are better knowen to him than to our ſelues. And beſides that, let vs bee well aduiſed, that we proceede ſoberly in that behalfe. For it may come to paſſe, that he which ſhal haue ſhewed ſome good zeale in chaſtiſing the faulte of his neighbour, ſhall not onely fall into the like fault himſelfe: but alſo doe much worſe. Seeing then that we be ſo inclined vnto euill, let vs vnderſtand that it is good for vs that God ſhoulde exerciſe vs after the maner that Moſes ſpeakes of here. For the wilde beaſts neede not to come to worke vs diſpleaſure, or to pick out our eyes: wee haue anoyances and deceits ynowe in our ſelues. Why then is it that our Lord ſuffereth vs to be ſo ſore vexed & troubled outwardly by mē: but bicauſe we haue as it were an hoſt within vs, ranged in aray againſt God and his lawe? Therfore is hee faine to ſtoppe vs and to keepe vs occupyed by other men: and that is to our benefite.

Furthermore, God is faine to leaue vs ſtill in our infirmities, becauſe that if he ſhould giue vs the full perfection, there is none of vs all but he would aduaunce himſelfe too much and be too proud. It is certain that we haue victorie already againſt Satan, as it was purchaſed for vs in yͤ Col.2.15. perſon of our Lord Ieſus Chriſt: Heb.2.14. but yet muſt we bee faine to endure many encounters, and many rough aſſaultes, yea and to bee brought to ſo great perplexities, as we ſhal not wote which way to turne vs, but wee ſhall haue ouer much adoe to withſtand our owne vices, and the great number of imperfections that are in vs. And why is that? Euen to humble vs. In deede we haue a promiſe that God will vanquiſhe Satan, and thruſt him downe as it were vnder our feete, as S. Paul ſpeaketh of it in the ſixteenth of the Ro- Rom.16.20 manes: But yet ſhall not that be done at the firſt day: to the intente wee may haue cauſe to praiſe God, in that wee ſee our ſelues ſo fraile, and yet hee giueth vs ſtrength to holde on our way ſtill continually. Yee ſee then that wee muſt keepe ſtil our way in walking through this worlde: for it is a iourney as the Scripture 2.Cor.5.6.

termeth it. Nowe then, let vs fully determine with our ſelues to ſuffer it patiently, if God delay to giue vs full victorie of our enemies, yea euen of our ghoſtly enemies, aſſuring our ſelues that he doeth it not without iuſt cauſe. But yet muſt wee bee fully perſwaded of another point alſo, namely that although we linger a long time, and things be out of order as in reſpect of the world, and God inlighten vs not, but let vs alone in great diſtreſſe: yet he wil giue vs the vpper hand in the ende. Wee muſt be fully reſolued of that: for without ſuch certaintie wee could not haue any courage one minute of an houre, but wee ſhould quaile out of hand, and it would ſeeme to vs that the diuell ſhould ouerwhelme vs. And ſpecially when wee were to fight againſt our own luſtes, howe might wee get the vpper hand of them? And if wee finde our ſelues ſo combered to day: what ſhall wee finde to morrowe? The miſchiefe will increaſe continually: and the great nomber of our owne experiences do ſhew vs that wee neede none other thing to ouerthrowe vs. Then coulde wee not holde out, vnleſſe wee were fully and throughly out of doubt that the promiſe of God ſhould bee wholly accōpliſhed vnto vs, and yͤ in the end our enemies ſhal not be able to ſtand before our faces. Therfore let vs fight boldly againſt Sathan, and againſte all the luſtes of our owne fleſhe: and we ſhall ouercome them, ſo wee haue Ieſus Chriſt for our Captaine. For we muſt be hopeleſſe as in reſpect of our ſelues, and not imagin that our owne ſtrength can ſuffice: but wee muſt learne Pſal.50.15. to call vppon him that is able to helpe vs at our neede. That is the thing which wee haue to beare in mind yea and euen in reſpecte of this preſent life. Let vs not doubt but that although we be faine to paſſe through many miſeries, yet notwithſtanding all ſhall turne to our benefite and welfare in the end. Let vs beare this ſaying well in mind, ſo as wee may fare the better by it, yea euen in ſuch ſorte as wee yeeld not to murmur againſt God, though hee graunt not our deſires at the firſt. And in ſo doing we ſhall haue inuincible conſtancie to keepe on our way ſtill, though it ſeeme neuer ſo hard vnto vs. And although we ſee neuer ſo many perils: yet ſhall we haue ſuch conſtancie, as to hold on ſtill till wee 2.Theſſ.3.3 bee come to our wayes end. For why? Gods promiſing of vs to giue vs full victorie, is not to diſappoint vs: he is faithfull in his ſayings. Neuertheleſſe, if it pleaſe him to make as though he regarded not thinges, wee muſt not take vpon vs to ſet him any terme, but let him diſpoſe matters according to his owne infinite wiſedome.

Yea and Moſes ſayeth that euen *Kings ſhall be deliuered into the people of Iſraels handes.* As if hee ſhould ſay, that there is not any power or ſtrẽgth ſo great that ought to diſmay vs. And this ſaying is not added without cauſe. For euery thing of nothing will daſle our eyes, and make vs to forget the mightineſſe of Gods promiſes. For if we perceiue any greatneſſe in men and that our enemies are of abilitie to trouble vs: wee beare our ſelues on hand that all is mard, and by and by we be halfe ſtraught at it. True it is that our preſumptuouſneſſe blindeth vs ouermuch, ſo as we perceiue not the daungers when we bee once minded to followe our owne fooliſh raſhneſſe. But when wee ſhould obey God, and doe our dewty: the whisking of a flie ouerthwart our faces will turne vs away by and by. For this cauſe doth Moſes ſay expreſly, that wee muſt not bee diſmayed for any greatneſſe of the world. In ſo much that although our enimies ſhine as the Sunne, although they perke vp neuer ſo high, although they ſeeme to haue neuer ſo many meanes wherewith to ouerwhelme vs at the firſt brunt: yet muſt wee not bee diſcouraged for all that. And why? Let vs conſider what Gods hand is, and then will all thinges vaniſh away which we feare as in reſpect of the world, ſo as we ſhall ſee that it is but vanitie. For who is he that can Rom.9.19. withſtand him that made all thinges and vpholdeth all thinges ſtill by his power? Can not our Lord as well bring all thinges to naught, as hee made the world of nothing? Yes: and whenſoeuer he liſteth to doe it, it is enough for him to Pſal.104.28 29. ſpeake the woord, that is to ſay to vtter his will. Now then, ſeeing that the creatures haue not any ſtate or being furtherfoorth than God voutſafeth to maintaine them, can they ſtop the bringing to paſſe of his good purpoſe? No: and therefore let vs learne to yeeld God ſo much honour, as to make none account of all worldly greatneſſe, ſtrength, and power, in compariſon of him, and to knowe that hee can caſt them all downe when hee thinketh good. Loe what wee haue to marke. And thereby we may ſee what a happineſſe it is to be able to reſt vpon God. For whē men ſtay vpon their own ſtrength, although they vaunt themſelues, flatter themſelues, and beſot themſelues neuer ſo much in their owne preſumption: yet is it a wonder to ſee how they be toppled downe in the turning of a hand: and God alſo laugheth their pride to ſcorne. But when we haue the ground of Gods promiſes to reſt vppon, which aſſure vs that wee can neuer quaile: then may we be bould to defie the world and all the creatures therein. And although we bee nothing of our ſelues: yet ſhall wee haue enough whereof to glory, and wee may well tryumph aforehand, forałmuch God is on our ſide. Rom.8.29. But what? Wee ſee that mèn are ſo wedded to themſelues, as they cannot by any meanes be rid of this diueliſh ouerweening wherewith they be as it were bewitched, but that they will euer bee drawing of ſomewhat to themſelues, inſomuch that it is vnpoſſible to plucke them backe vnto God, and to make them to ground and ſettle themſelues vppon him. But yet is not this doctrine written in vaine. And therefore let vs vnderſtand thereby, that if our Lorde doe ſend vs vexations, and wee linger in a number of torments in this world: it is to exerciſe vs withall. And why? To the ende that euery of vs ſhoulde examine himſelfe to amend his faultes, and not ſticke ſo much at other mens faultes [as to forget our own,] but to thinke vpon our ſelues firſt, and conſider that wee haue neede to bee handled roughly, ſo as wee ſhall no ſooner haue eſcaped one trouble, but wee ſhall by and by meete with another, vnleſſe wee turne againe to him that is able to defend vs. Therefore wee muſt ſhape our ſelues to it all our lyfe long, and behaue our ſelues after ſuch a ſorte, as wee haue our eyes continually faſtened vppon our God, aſſuring our ſelues that his executing of his iudgementes in our ſight, is to the ende to holde vs in awe, and to make vs beware that wee intangle not our ſelues in our leawd luſtes to abyde in them: for they bee tootoo daungerous enemyes. Let vs beware wee reſemble not thoſe whome wee ſee that GOD coulde not abyde, and let vs conclude thereuppon, that the ſame matter concerneth vs, that is to wit, that wee muſt profite our ſelues by ſuch inſtruction. Thus ye ſee in effect what wee haue to marke vpon this text of Moſes.

Now he addeth immediatly, *That the Iſraelites muſt burne all the Images of their Gods in the fire, and not ſo much as couet the golde and ſiluer of them: for feare* (ſayeth hee) *leaſt thou beeſt ſnared by it, or that it turne to thy decay*. For the Hebrewe woorde that Moſes vſeth heere, ſignifyeth ſometymes to bee ſnared, and ſometimes to ſtumble by meeting with ſome wicked iob or Deut.7,16. ſtoppe. And he vſed a word deriued of the ſame Verbe heretofore when he ſaid, Keepe thy ſelfe from their idoles, for that will bee thy decay, or that will marre all: the which two ſayings come both to one ende. And therefore yee ſee wee muſt not ſtande vppon termes, it is ynough for vs that wee knowe the true meaning of them. Heere GOD warneth his people, that if they caſt any fanſie or liking to the idoles of the heathen, or to the things that ſerued their ſuperſtitions: it will turne to their ouerthrowe like a nette or ſnare, ſo as they ſhall bee caught and ſnarled in it, and to bee ſhorte, it will bee as a pit for them to fall headlong into. That is the effect of the matter which is tolde vs here. And nōwe againe he addeth a ſeconde threate, *Euerie whit of it* (ſaieth he) *is accurſed or interdyted* (as men commonly terme it,) or forbidden. *Therefore beware: for thy GOD miſliketh it, and hee cannot away with the thinges that haue beene ſo defiled with the ſeruiſe of Idols. Take heede therefore that thou leaue not any whit of it: beware that thou defyle not thy houſe with it. For if any of it come within thy doores, the vengeaunce and wrath of GOD will immediately come in with it.* That is the pith of the thinges which wee haue to marke heere. The matter in queſtion, is that the people ſhoulde not commit idolatrie: but GOD addeth a further commaundement of greater rigour: which is, that they ſhoulde burne all that euer had ſerued about the idols, though there were no ſuperſtition in them. As howe? If the people ſhoulde haue taken to them ſelues the Golde, Siluer, Precious ſtones, or other Iewelles that were about the idoles: it had beene as a filthineſſe that is lothſome in Gods ſight. And if they ſhoulde haue alledged, wee doo it not for any deuotions ſake, for wee knowe it was a heynous matter to haue abuſed Gods creatures after that faſhiō: but wee take them to our owne vſe, yea and euen to ſerue GOD withall: [that allegation woulde not haue gone for payment:] For God on the contrarie part will haue them to bee all burned. And ſo wee ſee howe greatly he is diſpleaſed with idolatrie, in that folke are ſo ſtraitly forbidden heere to apply any of all the thinges to their owne vſe, which ſhall haue bin defyled aforetimes with ſuperſtition. And thereuppon muſt wee alſo note, that the pureneſſe of Gods ſeruice is the thing that he is moſt chare of aboue all other thinges. Will wee then direct our lyfe after ſuch a ſorte as God may allowe of it? Let vs looke that wee honour him, yea and that wee honour him after ſuch manner, as wee ſeeke not to haue ſome faire ſhew of vertue onely to the worldward: but to follow ſimply whatſoeuer God ordeineth. For we may ſeeme to bee as Angels of Paradiſe, & yet in the meane while God ſhall eſteeme vs as diuels. Though we liue neuer ſo honeſtly & vnblamably among mē: yet doth it not folow ẏ therfore we be diſcharged before God. And why? For although I be not a theef in ſtealing away my neighbours gold and ſiluer: to what purpoſe ſhal that ſerue mee, if I rob God of his honour? Though I be no theefe to mē, yet am I a falſe traitor to God. If I ſpeake no euill of any mortall man, & yet fal to blaſpheming of the liuing God: what a dealing is ẏ? Now then let vs mark, ẏ the faultes which are committed againſt Gods Maieſtie, are much grieuouſer and heynouſer than all the offences & wrongs that can be done againſt our neighbors. And it is a leſſon which we ought to marke well: for wee ſee that men make ſmal account of it now adayes. If any wrong bee doone to a man, the partie muſt bee condemned for it. But if Gods glorie be defaced, and himſelfe ſpyted all the wayes that can bee: what for that? Men do but wring their mouthes aſide at it, with who findes any fault with me for it? and in the meane while God hath no man to take his part, but there are ynow ẏ will take part againſt him. If any blaſphemie, any outrage, any lewdnes, or any wickednes be committed, wherin Gods word is openly troden vnder foote: no mā thinkes vpon that. But for the fauour of mē, we wil not ſticke to maintaine euen the euil: and as for the number of the zealous, it is very ſmall. Hardly ſhall a man finde one among a hundred, ẏ wil put forth himſelfe to maintaine Gods quarell: & yet his doing of it ſhal bee but coldly neither. But ẏ wicked ſhal alwaies finde champions ynow, to fight againſt God & his righteouſneſſe. And yet for al ẏ, we conſider not ẏ in ſo doing we iuſtle againſt God, & that is too hard a match for vs, ſo as we ſhalbe driuen to feele ẏ he is ſo hard a ſtone ẏ whoſoeuer iuſtleth or ruſheth againſt him, doth but go about to bruſe & breake himſelf in peeces: & finally if it fall, it will quaſh them all to fitters ẏ ſet themſelues againſt him. Then let vs mark that it is not ynough for vs to haue liued with our neighbors without doing any wrong or harme: for God maketh more account of his honor than he doth of all the things in the world. Therefore the offences that are committed againſt his Maieſtie, are ẏ heynouſeſt of all other.

And why? There is not a more precious & deare thing than his ſeruice. And that doeth he ſhewe vs here, in that we ſee he will haue the pureneſſe of his ſeruice maintained, vndefiled of any ſuperſtition. And he can ſo ill away with idolaters, that he cannot abide ȳ the things which had bin dedicated to idolatrie beforetimes, ſhould bee ſuffered to remaine in the worlde, but will haue them rid away quite and cleane. And hereupon we may gather what vengeance is prepared for ſuch as haue peruerted and corrupted the true ſeruice of God, and the pure Religion. Although they alledge neuer ſo fayre excuſes, and pretend to haue doone it vppon good intent as they terme it: yet will not GOD receyue thoſe things for payment. And why? For he will 1.Sa.15.22. haue obedience aboue all things: & he knoweth which is the true rule of ſeruing him well and duely: he hath ſhewed vs it, & therefore we muſt holde vs to it. Otherwiſe wee may well proteſt that our intent is to ſerue GOD: howbeit our ſeruice is not doone to him but vnto idols, when we inuent what we our ſelues thinke good. As for example, whereas the Papiſtes proteſt, that their meaning is to ſerue GOD with their Maſſe, & with all other their baggage and Ceremonies: it is true that they may well reſt thereuppon confuſedly: but in the meane while God diſclaimeth and diſliketh euery whit of it: for it is the diuel whom they ſerue in deed. Deut.32.17. And why? For there is not any thing there, which 1.Cor.10.20 is not manifeſtly found to be againſt Gods word and his trueth. Therefore it is not ynough to pretend Gods name: (for we ſee that the worlde hath not ceaſſed to abuſe that fayre colour at all times:) But wee muſt holde vs to Gods commaundement: for without that, there is nothing but vtter corruption.

And nowe let vs marke well the reaſon that Moſes addeth: that is to wit that it *ſhall bee as a ſnare to catche the people, or that it ſhall be their ouerthrowe.* Heere we haue to marke, firſt of all what our frailtie is. For although wee minde not to doe euill at the firſt daſhe: yet will it amaze vs to ſee howe the deuill will haue intrapped vs out of hande, by his wiles which wee perceiued not. Moſt commonly, if a man bee tolde of his fault when hee hath doone amiſſe: hee thinketh not (to his owne ſeeming) that his doinges are euill. And why? Bycauſe he perceiueth it not. Surely if we were well aduiſed, we ſhould eſpy Sathans guiles a farre of: and it is a point of wiſedome which Sainct Paule attributeth to the faithfull. 2.Cor.2.11. You (ſayth hee) doe knowe his wiles, ſo as yee can beware of them. Yea, but hee ſpeaketh of ſuch as ſuffer themſelues to be gouerned by Gods ſpirite, which giueth them good diſcretion and aduiſednes: but as for vs, wee ſhet our eyes wilfully, and beare our ſelues on hande that it is enough for vs ſo wee knowe not the euill. But we be not competent Iudges in our owne caſe. And againe our owne affections blinde vs, and are as towels to keepe vs from ſeeing three fingers bredth before our noſes. Yet notwithſtanding we ceaſſe not to bee hampered in Sathans ſnares, ſo as hee holdeth vs as his pray, bycauſe wee bee not watchfull enough in taking good heede to our ſelues, accordingly as Moſes ſheweth vs heere, in telling the people that if they tooke to them the riches of the heathen, and the gold and ſiluer of their idoles: all would turne to their decay. And this is not ſaide without cauſe. For when we meete with the furtherances of idolatrie, for as much as wee bee giuen thereto alreadie by nature: it is a woonder to ſee howe ſoone wee bee ſnarled in it. For the Diuell ſheweth vs not his ſnares at the firſt, vntill wee bee falne into them. But GOD who foreſeeth all thinges, warneth vs of them aforehand, to the ende wee ſhoulde wake and keepe good watch, and not giue Satan any enteraunce to winne vs to him or to intrappe vs. So then let vs marke generally, that to keepe our ſelues from all offence againſt GOD, wee muſt preuent the occaſions of euill. For he that caſteth himſelfe headlong into any hazard, tempteth GOD. Wee bee not ſo ſtrong as to bee able to outſtande euill, when wee fall to iuſtling againſt it. For wee ſee howe wee bee daunted at euerie ſhadowe of it: and what will become of vs when wee ſhall bee put to the pinche? Seeing then that men doo feele ſuch frailtie in themſelues: they ought not to ſeeke occaſions. For if a man fling himſelfe wilfully into the fyre, doeth hee not make open warre againſt God? Yes: and euen ſo doe wee, when we take occaſions to doe euill. If a man yeeld to a thing ȳ ſeemeth not to be any great vice: at the firſt he perceiueth it not, howbeit he proceedeth from the leſſer to the greater, and from euill to woorſe, vntill at laſt he fall into the ditch. Men ſhall not perceiue at the firſt, that dauncing is a bait of whoredome, and a tricke of bawdry to marre all. Men perceiue not at the firſt, that wanton ſongs ſerue to impeach & corrupt good maners, as the ſcripture ſpeaketh of them: and 1.Cor.15.33 therfore they thinke not of it. Men perceiue not ȳ playing and gaming are daungerous, or rather miſchieuous, yea and that they ſerue to deſtroy mens houſes & to make hauocke of all: ȳ they be as a ſeede or roote whence all vngodlineſſe groweth to ſpyte GOD withall: that they breede occaſions of ſtrife, debate, quarels, ſwearing, and all manner of naughtineſſe: that they bee a meane to impoueriſh ſuch as otherwiſe might beare an honeſt porte and countenaunce: and to bee ſhorte, that they bee meanes to make Chriſtians to become bruite beaſtes. Men perceiue not all theſe thinges, neither make they account to keep themſelues from them. But yet for all that, the diuell is the founder of them, who increaſeth the miſchiefe continually, and God alſo doeth giue him the bridle: bicauſe wee vouchſafe not to receiue the warning that hee geueth vs, wee bee worthy to periſhe and to tumble into the pit to breake our neckes. Now then let vs marke, that to eſchew the offences to Godward, that may lead vs to deſtruction, we muſt alſo ſhun the occaſions of them a farre of. Mark that for one point.

And aboue all things, for as much as we haue ſuch a curſed inclination of nature, that idolatrie is as it were rooted in vs, ſo as euery of vs is able to keepe a ſchoole of it, and to bee Doctors of it without any further teaching: therefore doeth it ſtand vs on hande to ſhun all furtherances thereof. Nowe then whereas ſome nowe adayes will needes rowe betweene two ſtreames, and beare folke in hand that men may beare with the time, graunting that men may well cut off the things that are vtterly intollerable and manifeſtly againſt God, but yet [auowching] that the things may well bee borne with, which are eyther indifferent, or not vtterly euil. I ſay that they which ſpeake after that faſhion, doe ſhewe full well that they haue no right meaning in them, nor any deſire that there ſhould be any ſuch reformation as were meete to be had. And yet notwithſtanding, the worlde is full of ſuch diſguiſers, which would faine haue a particoloured faſhion of ſeruing God, & a religion ẏ were neither fiſh nor fleſh (as mē ſay,) but half of one ſute & half of another, as is ſaid in ẏ prouerb. But for our part let vs vnderſtand, ẏ in as much as we be giuē to idolatrie, it ſtandeth vs on hand to flee the further from it, that wee meete not with any of the thinges that may leade vs to it. For if there bee any thing that may drawe vs that way, by and by wee be ſeduced, yea and we bee infected with it inwardly, like a man that hath a ſecrete diſeaſe within him which he perceiueth not, and yet is neuer the leſſe but rather the more in daunger, bicauſe the miſchiefe is vneſpyed. Euen ſo is it with vs: If wee retayne ſtill the furtheraunces and occaſions of idolatry and ſuperſtition, wee ſhalbe ouertaken vnwares by Sathans ſuttlety which we marked not. Thus ye ſee what wee haue to remember, conſidering the ſnares and trappes that draw vs to deſtruction, as Moſes ſpeaketh of them heere.

Nowe let vs come to the ſecond threat which he addeth. Hee ſayeth, *It is an abhomination* [or lothſomeneſſe] *before God: and therefore that euerie man muſt beware of the bringing in of ſuch abhomination for feare of being accurſed.* it ſhould ſeeme heere that Gods rigour was too great, in forbidding the vſe of gold and ſiluer. For are they not Gods good creatures, and ſuch as may bee put to good vſe? And although ſome men haue abuſed the thinges which God did put into their hands: doth it follow that they haue the power to defile his creatures, and to corrupt and marre them? No: For we heare how Sainct Paule ſaith, Tit.1.15. that all thinges are pure and cleane to ſuch as haue cleane conſciences before God: and there is no vncleanneſſe, but that which proceedeth of our ſelues. How is it then that hee forbiddeth folke to couet that gold or ſiluer? Let vs marke that this lawe is a parte of the auncient order whereto God ment to binde the Iewes: and I haue tould you already that the ten verſes haue Matt.5.18. one euerlaſting rule, which God hath giuen to continue to the worldes end. If wee minde to haue a doctrine that ſhall pleaſe and like God, our life muſt be conformable to the law that is conteined in the ten commaundementes: howbeit, this preſent commaundement ſerued but for an order: like as when Chriſten magiſtrates make lawes nowadayes, are they againſt Gods woord? No: but they doe it in way of gouernment and ciuill order, that their people may be held the better in the feare of God and in the right religion. Now then this law whereby God forbad the coueting of golde and ſiluer, ſerued but for a time. For God trained vp that people like little babes. And Sainct Paule alleadgeth the ſame ſimilitude, which may bee as a ſolution to the doubt that might be moued vppon this preſent place. When little children are vnder Tutors and gouernours, Gal.4.2. they bee held in the ſtraiter awe, and they inioy not their goods and lyberty at their own will, inſomuch that their ſtate ſeemeth to bee a bondage, and yet notwithſtanding they be free, yea and heires too, but they be not of age to haue the guiding and gouerning of themſelues. Euen ſo the people of olde time were in ſtraiter ſubiection vnder the lawe, than we bee nowadayes [vnder the Goſpell,] by reaſon whereof it is lawfull for vs to vſe the thinges which we may put to a good vſe. For otherwiſe the Papiſtes might ſtarue vs. They would fall to making of their coniurings vpon Corne and wine: now if we might not be ſo bolde as to eate of the Corne that were ſo charmed, or to drinke of the wine that weere ſo coniured: if we might not touch any thing which they had defiled with their pelting traſh: wee ſhould be faine to ſtarue for hunger. But they haue not any power ouer the creatures of God, in ſo much that they continue pure of themſelues, ſpyte of all their abhominations. Neuertheleſſe it was Gods will to hold the people of old time in awe, after the maner of yong children as I ſaid afore. But he hath giuen vs greater libertie at this day. And what maner of libertie? Not a licentious libertie to do what wee liſt: for S. Paule addeth that exception, Gal.5.13. that although we haue greater libertie nowe adayes than the Iewes had, yet muſt wee not therefore lay the bridle in our neckes: but wee muſt haue a ſpeciall care to behaue our ſelues honeſtly, and to be conſtant in ſeruing GOD purely. For as I ſaid, wee ſhall alwayes be weake, and may eaſily ſwarue aſide to idolatrie: and therefore wee muſt cut off all occaſions thereof. And yet notwithſtanding, wee may vſe ẏ things that are good of themſelues: yea, ſo wee doe it without giuing any cauſe of offence, and beware that wee wipe away all that may induce vs to euill and to the corrupting of Gods ſeruice. That is the thing which wee haue to remember vpon this place. For it behoueth vs to mark well the reſemblance that is betweene vs and the Iewes, and the diuerſitie that is betweene [the libertie of] the Lawe, and the libertie that God giueth vs now a dayes. But yet muſt wee moderate this libertie in ſuch ſort, as it turne not into looſenes to giue ouer our ſelues to euil, knowing that we bee but too much inclined thereunto, and wee ſhould be yet much more prouoked vnto it, if we would needes haue furtherances and ſeeke occaſions thereof. And in this reſpect was Achan ſtoned to death for ſtealing of the baggage that was about the puppets [of the Chananites.] Ioſua 7.25.

nites]. Surely his intent was not to builde any altar with them: but hee was led to it by his couetouſneſſe, [which made him beleeue] that if he could filche and conuey them away cleanly, hee ſhould ſaue ſo much by it. But all the people were faine to be accurſed for it, vntill it was bewrayed. Lottes were caſt: and when Ioſua had made him to hold vp his hand to put him to his othe, ſaying, My ſonne giue glory vnto God: immediatly vpon his confeſſing of the crime wherof he was accuſed, hee was ſtoned to death, onely for ſtealing of certeine of the thinges that had bin forbidden. Yet had hee not robbed any perſon: hee might well haue ſayd, who can complayne of me? But hee had done againſt Gods commaundement. Therefore let vs marke well, that wheras GOD dealeth more freely with vs nowadayes, ſo as we may vſe the thinges yͤ were earſt defiled by yͤ vnbeleuers, & which haue bin applyed aforetimes to ſuperſtition: we neuertheleſſe muſt caſt away all that euer may drawe vs vnto euill. For if wee ſhould keepe ſtil images & ſuch other lyke thinges: it were the next way to pull to vs ſtill ſome euill inconuenience, ſo as mẽ might conceiue ſome hope of returning againe to the ſuperſtitions of the time paſt. And therefore let vs beware of all ſuch thinges.

Now whereas it is ſayd, *Beware thou bring not curſedneſſe into thy houſe:* herby we be put in minde yͤ in ſtead of going foreward and of profiting our ſelues we not onely go backe, but alſo worke our owne ouerthrow, when we vſe vnlawfull meanes & ſuch as diſpleaſe God. And yͤ is a very notable rule. Trueth it is that the matter which Moſes ſpeaketh of here, is idolatrie, & he ſayth yͤ whoſoeuer they be which take to thẽſelues the golde & the ſiluer yͤ hath ſerued to that purpoſe: they ſhal defile their howſes & prouoke Gods wrath, and in ſtead of gathering treaſure to their profit, they ſhall but rake vp a fire to conſume all yͤ they haue in the end. That is Moſeſes meaning. But we both may and ought to gather a generaller doctrine vppon this matter: namely that whereas it is ſayd, that it is a bringing in of curſedneſſe into our howſes: it ſerueth to ſhewe vs yͤ when men imagine to benefite themſelues by it, they doe but prouoke Gods wrath againſt themſelues & throw themſelues headlong into deſtruction. As how? They that heape vp goods by hooke & by crooke, they that pill & poll, they yͤ eate vp & deuoure, they that filch al yͤ comes in their way, they yͤ vſe craft and ſubtiltie to make other mens goods vnto them: doe beare thẽſelues in hand yͤ they worke wonders, & that they ſhall builde them houſes, and make immortall monuments not onely of wood & ſtone, but alſo of euerlaſting renowne, ſo as their children ſhall haue whereof to triumph after their deceaſe. But yet for all their gathering & heaping vp of goods, what do they? they doe but pile vp a ſtacke of wood and coale, whereunder lyeth Gods wrath as a fire hidden within it. In deede it ſhall not kindle at the firſt day: but in the end the flame will burſt out, ſo as all ſhall be conſumed anon after. Now if wee did marke this well, ſurely wee would not bring Gods curſe into our houſes as we doe, and as moſt men doe. What is to be done then?

Firſt and formoſt let vs marke, that all ſuch as defile themſelues with Churchtheft, cannot ſcape the puniſhment which Moſes denounceth in this place. I ſay that all they bee Churchrobbers, which haue taken to them the goods of the Church, of which ſort are the prieſtes, the Monkes, and the reſt of the ſtinking rable of the popiſh cleargie, who haue deuowred and ſtill doe deuowre all that was dedicated vnto God. Now then, if we alſo doe the like: ſhall it not be yͤ next way to bring Gods curſe into our howſes? Yes ſurely. Therefore let not vs offend in the ſame thinges which we haue condemned in thẽ yͤ liued amiſſe: but let vs keepe our ſelues from them. And if we intend to proſper: let vs aſſure our ſelues there is none other meanes thereof than the bleſſing of God. But we know that God Pſal.128.2. hath not promiſed his bleſſing to any other, thã ſuch as trauell faithfully for their liuing, & earne their bread with rightfull labor: which offer no man wrong, but content themſelues with their meane ſtate, ſo as if they be rich, they couet not more and more, or if they be poore, they be contented with their eſtate. To ſuch folke hath God promiſed his bleſſing. Now if I doe otherwiſe, ſo as I beguile my neighbor, ſo as I deale crookedly, ſo as I labor to inrich my ſelfe by violence and robberie: what doe I then? ſhould I looke for the bleſſing that God hath promiſed? Wee muſt not thinke to binde him, when wee fall to ſpiting of him ſo wilfully: nor to haue his bleſſing light vpon vs, when we fall to ſtraying out of the right way, ſhaking off his yoke & bridle frõ our necke: but we muſt cõtrarywiſe looke yͤ he ſhould curſe vs, & that his wrath ſhold light vpõ vs, & not only vpõ our ſelues, but alſo vpon our childrẽ. And ſo we ſee what inſtructiõ we ought to gather vpõ this place. Namely yͤ euery of vs ought to look to himſelf, & yͤ if we purpoſe to haue God to keepe vs through his fauor & goodneſſe: our howſes muſt not be defiled with robberie & deceit, neither muſt our hands be imbrued with ſtealing & filching: but to be ſhort, we muſt be cleane from all ſpottes. Yea & we muſt beware that we keepe yͤ order which our Lord hath commaunded vs: Matt.6.33. which is, yͤ he which is deſirous to bee bleſſed in his owne perſon & in his houſhold, muſt looke wel to it yͤ god be ſerued & honored in his houſe, that there be no filthineſſe lurking any where, yͤ there be no whordom, no ſwearing, nor no other diſorder, yͤ there be not any thing againſt God, nor any euil bolſtered or borne out. If we doe ſo, then ſhall wee proſper better than wee doe: and although things fal not out as we would wiſhe to the worldward: yet will God graunt vs the grace to bee contented with his only bleſſing, which wil ſatiſfy vs more than if we had all yͤ heapes of golde & ſiluer that were poſſible to be imagined. But on yͤ contrary part, if a man haue not a care to keepe his houſe pure and cleane as a tẽple of God: yͤ thing yͤ Moſes ſpeaketh here muſt needs be performed, yͤ is to wit, Gods curſe muſt come into it, accordingly as it is ſayd in yͤ prophet Zacharie, Zach.5.3.4. that this ſame curſe poſſeſſed al yͤ houſes of that time, becauſe iniquitie reigned in thẽ and departed not from them. Will wee then haue God to ſhed out his bleſſing vppon vs? Let vs be ſure that we clenſe both our ſelues & our houſes from all filthineſſe: and then will the curſe depart from thence out of hand. But if wee ceaſe not to prouoke Gods wrath by abuſing his patience too long: hee will kindle a fire that ſhall neuer be quenched: and if wee fall ſtill aſleepe, hee will wake vs to our coſt: and when we think our ſelues to be eſcaped, then ſhall wee be new to begin. And therefore let vs be circumſpect to preuent the miſchiefe, ſpecially ſith wee be warned, yea & warned by our God himſelf. Wherein hee ſheweth vs what a care he hath, both of our worldly welfare, and of our ſaluation.

Now let vs kneele downe in the preſence of our good God w̃ acknowledgement of our faults, praying him to voutſafe to make vs feele thẽ better than wee haue done, ſo as it may make vs to reſort vnto him, & to be ſorie for our ſinnes, and to condemne them, & that we be not ſo froward as to ſpite him, & to harden our ſelues, but that we may haue a meeke & plyable heart, to receiue al his warninges & correctiõs in ſuch wiſe, as we may haue the skill to fare yͤ better by them. And ſo let vs ſay, Almighty God heauenly father, &c

On Thurſday the fifteenth of Auguſt. 1555.

The Lviij Sermon which is the firſt vppon the eight Chapter.

Keepe al the commaundementes which I haue commaunded you this day to do them: that yee may liue and encreaſe, and go in and poſſeſſe the land by right of inheritance, which the Lord ſwore to your fathers.

2 And be mindfull of al the way wherethrough the Lord thy GOD hath made thee to walk theſe fortie yeares in the wilderneſſe: to the intent to afflict and try thee, that hee might knowe what is in thine hart, and ſee whether thou wouldeſt keepe his commaundements or no.

3 Hee afflicted thee, and made thee to endure hunger, and fedde thee with Manna which neither thou, nor thy fathers knew, to make thee to know that man lyueth not onely by bread, but that man lyueth by all that euer commeth out of the mouth of the Lord.

4 Thy rayment hath not worne vpon thee, neyther hath thy foote beene ſwolne all theſe fortie yeares.

Here againe Moſes ſheweth yͤ people, yͤ God gaue not his law in vain, but that his will is to haue it kept and that is the way for vs alſo to fare yͤ better by it. True it is, that whenſoeuer any man ſpeaketh to vs in Gods name, we muſt haue our eares open to heare what is tolde vs: for by that
Rom.10.17. meane doth faith come. But yet muſt we bring our handes and feete with vs alſo, to offer them
Rom.12.1. obediently vnto God, & to imploy all the power that hee hath giuen vs in his ſeruice. Therefore let vs not come hither onely to haue our eares beaten with the thinges that are preached vnto vs: but let vs alſo apply them to our vſe. Instruction muſt be matched with practiſe: or elſe we ſhall neuer knowe what hath bin ſhewed vs and taught vs. And ſo we ſee what we haue to beare in minde. Moreouer let vs marke, that Moſes thinketh it not enough to haue ſayd theſe things at once and away: but he repeteth them againe for a larger confirmation. *Looke* (ſayth he) *that thou keepe the commaundements which I inioyne thee:* not to the end thou maiſt knowe them at thy fingers endes, or bee able to vtter them with thy mouth: that is not enough: *But thou muſt put them in execution.* And to confirme this matter the better, hee addeth a promiſe, ſaying: *That thou mayſt liue, and increaſe, and go into the land which the Lord thy God did ſweare vnto thy Fathers.* This hath beene expounded alreadie heretofore: and there remaineth no more to doe, but onely to renewe the remembrance thereof, according alſo as we ſee that yͭ was the intent of Moſes, or rather of yͤ holy Ghoſt. Now thẽ, our Lord allureth vs to him by promiſes, of purpoſe to giue vs yͤ better corage to ſerue him: & he doth it of his own freegoodneſſe, without being bound thereto. For he needed no more but to ſay the word: he hath authoritie to commaund vs what hee liſteth, and it is our part to obey him. Why then doth he ad his promiſes, but to win vs by louingneſſe lyke a father, who though he haue al ſoueraigntie ouer his childe: doeth neuertheleſſe vſe gentlenes in promiſing, to yͤ intẽt his child ſhold ſerue him with the cherefuller heart? True it is that the child is bound therto aforehand by nature: but yet when hee ſeeth his father ſo vpright

right towardes him, as to offer him more than his duetie: it moueth him the more, if he be not too too vnkind & lewdely diſpoſed. Therefore let vs learne that in this caſe God ſtoopeth to vs, as if he were a mortall man. Yet is not that any derogation to his maieſtie: but rather a recorde of his infinite goodneſſe, in that he vſeth not his right with rigor, but forbeareth it and applyeth himſelfe after that faſhion vnto vs, to doe the thinges which hee knoweth to be meete for our rudeneſſe. And therefore whenſoeuer wee heare that God promiſeth to proſper vs, if wee honor and ſerue him: Let vs vnderſtand yͭ his ſo dooing is of free goodneſſe, to win vs the better, & becauſe he is loth to vſe rigor towardes vs as he might doe. But yet for all this, we muſt not imagin that he is bound to yeelde vs any recompence or reward for our ſeruice. For it is not for vs to enter into account in this behalfe, as though wee could win any thing by it: but wee muſt receiue whatſoeuer hee offereth vs as of his free gift, knowing our ſelues to bee ſo much the more bound vnto him.

Moreouer let vs marke what hath bin tolde vs heretofore: namely that the land which Mo-
Gene.13.14 ſes promiſeth here vnto the people, had bin promiſed already foure hundred yeeres afore, whē none of them all was yet borne: & therfore God had not an eye to anie of their deſeruinges. But now he ſaith that they ſhould inioy the promiſe which God had made them of his owne mere goodneſſe. And ſo we haue to gather in effect, that all yͭ euer we receyue at Gods hand, ſpringeth out of none other fountaine than onely his meere mercie, becauſe he is good, becauſe hee hath pitie vpon vs, becauſe he hath not any reſpect to our worthineſſe but onely to himſelfe, & becauſe it pleaſeth him to be ſo boūtiful towards vs. Marke yͭ for a ſpeciall poynt. But yet for all yͭ, if we will well inioy his benefites, if we will haue them auaileable to our ſaluatiō, & if we wil haue the continual poſſeſſion of them: we on our ſide muſt looke to anſwere to yͤ grace yͭ God ſheweth vs. And how ſhall we anſwere it? Verily not by ſhrinking away frō him, nor by refuſing yͤ things yͭ he offereth vs to drawe vs to him: but by knowing the right & lawful vſe of the benefites which he beſtoweth vpō vs, ſo as we loue him & gloryfy him for them, & euery of vs ſpend himſelfe in his ſeruice. Therefore whēſoeuer our Lord ſhall haue done vs any good: let vs vnderſtand yͭ the ſame cōmeth not for aught on our behalf, but rather yͭ we be ſo much yͤ more beholdē vnto him. And to yͤ end we may poſſeſſe & inioy the ſame benefites, & yͭ they may profite vs to our ſoules health: let vs be well aduiſed therewithall, yͭ wee be yͤ more prouoked thereby to ſerue God, forasmuch as he ſheweth himſelf ſo liberal towards vs. That is the thing in effect, which we haue to gather vpon that text.

Now Moſes addeth, *that the people muſt bethink them of all the iourney whereby the Lord their God led them.* This bethinking of themſelues was very needefull. And if we were wiſe & well aduiſed, we would bethink vs better than we doe, of yͤ things which our Lorde ſheweth vs throughout all our lyfe. For both the aduerſities & alſo the proſperities which he ſendeth vs, are inſtructiōs which we ought to marke well, & this preſent lyfe is as a ſchoole wherein we ought to cal to minde that leſſon both euening & morning. But what? Although God doe the office of a good ſchoolemaiſter, & neuer leaue teaching of vs: yet there is none of vs that taketh heede of it, but yͤ time is loſt, we be lyke children that are hardened or become trueandes, ſo as doe yͤ maiſter what he can, the childe doth but laugh him to ſkorne, he giues not his minde at all to learning, but his wittes are wandering abroad, & either he giueth himſelf to follie & lewdneſſe, or elſe runnes loytering vp & downe the ſtreetes when hee ſhould haue his boke in his hād. At yͤ ſame point are we: For we haue yͤ boke opē before vs, & as lōg as we bee in this world, God teacheth vs by all maner of meanes to loue him & to feare him, and to put our truſt in him and to ſubmit our ſelues to his good will. If he ſend vs bleſſings, it is to this end that wee ſhould learne, to giue our ſelues wholy ouer vnto him. If he afflict vs, it is to waken vs, that we ſhould liue in his feare. If he ſend vs any neede, or hold vs in any diſtreſſe: it is as a quickening of vs vp to call vpon him, & to flee to him for refuge. If he giue vs any taſte of his fauor: it is to the end we ſhould be the better confirmed, not onely that he will helpe vs during this mortall lyfe, but alſo that hee will bring vs to the kingdome of heauen: and thereof muſt wee be fully reſolued. Thus ye ſee how God neuer ceaſeth to rehearſe our leſſon to vs: and yet doth none of vs giue heede to it, but we wander away in our owne imaginations, the pleaſures of this world doe cary vs away, and euery of vs is ſo combered with theſe vanities, that wee haue no leaſure at all to thinke vppon our God, or vpon the thinges that he ſheweth vs.

Yet notwithſtanding, it is not for naught that Moſes ſayth here, *Bethinke thee of the way wherethrough the Lorde thy God hath led thee.* True it is that the people of Iſraell had peculiar inſtructions, ſo as a number of thinges befell them in their trauelling through the wilderneſſe, which belong not vnto vs in theſe dayes: but yet was that a figure of mans lyfe. The wilderneſſe (ſay I) wherein the people were by the ſpace of fortie yeeres, was as a mirrour of this earthly wayfaring of ours, wherethrough wee muſt paſſe vntill GOD take vs hence into his reſt. Lykewiſe the reſting place of the land of Chanaan (accordingly as it is named in the foureſcore and fifteenth pſalme) was as a warrant of Pſal.95.11. the endleſſe lyfe that is prepared for vs, and wherein wee ſhall no more bee toſſed and turmoyled as we be in this world. Now ſeeing it is ſo: Let vs note that as the Iewes were exhorted to remember the iourney wherein God had led them through the wilderneſſe: ſo now the chiefe poynt of our duetie is to cōſider that inaſmuch as God gouerneth vs, we liue through his fatherly care, ſo as he guideth all our ſteppes which we haue to goe or come. And it behoueth vs to bethinke vs well of all the time of our lyfe, & to conſider throwly what we haue had experience of in this world. True it is that we thinke oftentimes both vppon the good and vppon the euill which we haue receiued: but that is cleane contrary to the intent of our God. For our thinking vppon our aduerſities is not to knowe them to be as rods wherewith God beateth vs for our chaſtiſement. No, it is but to frette and chafe againſt him, and to gather matter to grudge at, ſaying, what will become of this? Shall I alwayes be new to begin? It ſhould ſeeme that God intẽdeth to confound me preſently: for my affliction was great enough afore: and was it meete that hee ſhoulde increaſe it yet more? After yͤ maner doe we gather a ſumme of all the miſeries which we haue felt from our childehode to our old age. Howbeit that is but to ſharpẽ our ſelues againſt God, whereas we ſhould rather thinke thus: Goe to, my God hath not ceaſed to chaſtiſe me euen from my childhood vpward: and if I had returned vnto him, ſurely he would haue ſpared me: but he was faine to dubble his ſtripes, & to hold on ſtill, becauſe I haue alwayes waxed harder & harder, & rebelled againſt him: & ought not yͭ to haue ſuffiſed me if I had not bin quite paſte grace? But yet for all this, I hold on ſtill mine accuſtomed trade: neuertheleſſe he ceaſeth not to waken me vp with afflictions. He is loth that I ſhould welter in mine owne dung, and yet doe I continue ſtill in my ſtubbornneſſe: and what will come of it in the end? After this maner (ſay I) muſt we quicken vp our ſelues, & call to rememberaunce the whole time of our lyfe, or elſe we ſhall neuer bethinke vs of the aduerſities that we haue indured, but with murmuring & grudging againſt God. In lyke caſe is it with proſperitie. If God make vs to proſper, & afterward caſt ſome affliction vppon vs: wee be the more greeued at it, inſomuch yͭ in ſtead of ſaying with Iob, wee haue receiued good at the Lordes hand, & why ſhould we not receiue euill alſo? (for when he doth vs good, he is not vnwilling to continue it, & his ceaſing of it, is not for that he is become nigardly, or vnable to doe vs good any more: but becauſe he knoweth it to be expedient for vs to be ſo exerciſed, that he may try our patience: & ſo ought we to thinke:) But what? we on the contrary part ſay thus: it comes to my minde that I was well at mine eaſe, and I had this & that. To be ſhort, wee coulde finde in our heartes to ſerue Satan, ſo wee might haue proſperitie, & we ſeeke to make our ſelues merry, bearing our ſelues on hand in yͤ meane while, that it is but loſt labor to ſerue God. Thus wee ſee how men turne to the cleane contrary, both the proſperitie & the aduerſitie yͭ God ſendeth them. But when we ſhould learne any thing, our rememberaunce is very ſhort: for if God haue afflicted vs for a time, we neuer think of it after. In deede as long as the croſſe indureth, wee can skill to ſigh & to play the hypocrites, & to pretend that if God would voutſafe to abate his rigor, we will become little Angels: but as ſoone as he withdraweth his hand from vs, our nature falles by and by to his olde byaſſe, wee doe but ſhake our eares a little, & we neuer thinke more vpon his corrections to doe our ſelues any good by them. If God ſend vs any proſperitie, we haue forgotten them out of hand. Inſomuch that whẽ we haue once crammed our ſelues full, in ſtead of yeelding him thanks, we fal to kicking againſt him lyke ouerpampered iades, as ſhall be declared in the two & thirtith chapter: ye ſee thẽ that our wittes are very ſhort in remẽbring the way wherethrough God hath led vs. As touching goods, they ſerue vs not to ſtirre vs vp to loue our God, and to put our truſt in him & to call vppon him. As touching aduerſitie, it ſerueth not to humble vs, nor to make vs renounce yͤ world, nor to cauſe vs to bethinke vs of our ſinnes, that wee might be ſory for them and craue forgiueneſſe: but rather to the cleane contrarie. Now then ſeeing we be ſo faultie, wee haue the more neede to marke well this text, & the exhortation that Moſes maketh to vs here, that we may remember the way whereby God leadeth vs. So then, let vs dayly haue an eye to yͤ things wherof we ſhal haue had experience during this tranſitory lyfe. How hath God dealt with mee euer ſince I was borne? I haue waded through ten hundred thowſand miſeries, & he hath deliuered me from them all: & ought not this to make me thinke him to be my father, and to put my ſelfe wholy into his protection? Againe, I haue bin cumbred a number of wayes: and God hath alwayes had an eye to me, & brought me home againe to himſelfe. How oftentimes haue I tempted him, caſting my ſelfe vp to the ſpoyle, and running into the ſnares of Satan? And yet my God would not let me periſh. Nowe ought not I to perceiue his goodneſſe therein? Ought I not to betake my ſelfe to his keeping with the ſurer truſt? Moreouer my God hath viſited mee with a great ſorte of afflictions: and ſhoulde I ſtil rebell againſt him? Shall I not bee tamed for all the ſtripes that I haue receiued at his roddes? Shall God haue loſt his labor in chaſtiſing me? After this maner muſt we bethinke vs, both in our proſperitie and in aduerſitie: and that not for once and away, but with ſuch imprinting of it in our hearts, as we may haue it ſo inregiſtred there yͭ it may neuer be blotted out. That is the thing which wee haue to remember vppon this text of Moſes.

Iob.2.10.

Deut. 32.15.

Now hee ſpeaketh expreſſely of the afflictions which the people had indured in the wilderneſſe: as if hee ſhoulde ſay that theſe afflictions heere are profitable for men, ſo they can vſe them well, and referre them to their right end. It is not without cauſe that Moſes vttereth this thing here: inaſmuch as it ſeemeth at the firſt, that we cãnot thinke vpon our aduerſities without griefe and grudging, ſo as they ſhould prouoke vs to repine againſt God, and conſequently to ſhrinke away from him. For we know there is nothing more againſt our nature, than to bee poore, ſicke, diſeaſed, or afflicted with any miſerie: they bee thinges which wee hate. And therefore when God ſmiteth vs, it ſeemeth to be the next way to withdrawe vs from him. But Moſes telleth vs, that if we were ſo wiſe and wel diſpoſed as wiſely to apply to our vſe the afflictions that God ſendeth vs: thy ſhoulde rather teach vs to returne home to him. *The Lorde thy God* (ſayth he) *hath ſcourged thee*. And to what end? *To knowe what was in thy heart, and whether thou wouldeſt keepe his commaundements or no*. Here 1.Pet.4.12. Moſes ſheweth, firſt that Gods afflicting of vs is as an examination to trye what we bee, and how wee be minded. In deede, proſperitie alſo is a good triall to bewray what is in mens heartes. For if a man be any thing at eaſe, he ouerſhootes himſelfe, and pleaſures corrupt vs yea and vtterly dull vs. If a man bee riche, wheras hee was taken to haue bin lowly and meeke, hee will bewray his pride and crueltie. If a man bee in authoritie, hee becommeth intollerable. And ſo yee ſee that GOD may try what is in vs and take experience of it, euen by making vs to proſper. But yet is pouertie ſet downe here of ſet purpoſe, becauſe it is the meane whereby God tryeth whether wee bee ſubiect to him or no. And why? For patience (as men ſay) is a ſingular vertue: but how may it bee knowen that wee bee patient, but by aduerſitie? Therefore when God ſendeth vs aduerſities that are hard and troubleſome to vs: then doth hee as it were lay open our hartes. For if wee abide quietly vnder his hand, and ſuffer him to deale with vs according to his good will, ſo as wee prayſe his name though he handle vs roughly: it is a token that wee loue him in deed, and that hypocriſie taketh no place at all in vs. And therefore it is not without cauſe, that Moſes intending to ſhewe how God tryeth vs, and prooueth vs, ſpeaketh heere expreſly of afflictions.

Now wee haue to gather vpon this text, that it is no woonder though God afflict vs diuerſe wayes. And why ſo? For it is expedient for vs to bee ſifted and to haue it knowen what is in vs: There is not a more needefull and profitable thing for vs: and that is done by afflictions. Therefore muſt wee ſubmit our ſelues to them, and vnderſtand that they neuer bee ſuperfluous or more than needeth. Mark that for one point. 1.Pet.2.20. 21. & 4.13. Yea and vnto the ſame end muſt wee apply this ſaying of the Apoſtle, that it is the very meane whereby to try our obedience. For hee vſeth the ſame word, and ſetteth downe Ieſus Chriſt for an example. For although hee be the mirror & patterne of all righteouſneſſe, yet was he faine to paſſe vnder Gods ſcourges. And why? Euen to the end that his obedience might be knowen. Ephef.1.23. & 5.30. And that which is ſhewed vs in the perſon of our Lord Ieſus Chriſt: good reaſon would that the ſame ſhould bee accompliſhed in vs that are his members. Now is there any thing more requiſite, than to knowe whether wee bee obedient to God or no? And that is not knowen but by aduerſitie, when thinges fall out contrary to our deſire, and God handleth vs in ſuch ſort as our fleſhe and nature ſtriue againſt it. When we be in that caſe, if we can hold our ſelues in ſubiection to God, to ſay, in deed Lord this is hard for me to beare, it goeth againſt my ſtomacke, it is cleane contrary to my nature, but yet howſoeuer I fare I renounce mine owne will: I would faine haue health, but ſith it pleaſeth thee to haue me ſicke, thy name be bleſſed for it: I could finde in my heart to be rich, and to haue mine owne eaſe and pleaſure, but thou wilt haue me to be poore & needy. I would be in honor & credit, & thou wilt haue me to liue in reproche and ſhame: and good reaſon it is O Lorde that wee ſhould haue the humilitie to ſubmit our ſelues to whatſoeuer it pleaſeth thee to ſende vs, and not that wee ſhould followe our owne ſwindge: when we be come to ſuch a ſacrifice of renouncing all our affections and all our owne wil: then is our obedience rightly knowen. For what matter is it to ſay amen, when God followeth our deſires, and handleth vs according to the lyking of our owne fleſhe? How is there any vertue in vs? And therefore let vs remember wel this text, where Moſes telleth vs that Gods afflicting of vs, is to try what we be. For we might ſet a faire face vpon thinges, and pretend to loue and honor God: and yet notwithſtanding all ſhould be but counterfetting and leaſing. But when wee bee handled roughly, and God ſheweth himſelfe as our enemie, ſo as wee bee prouoked to rebellion, and would faine ſtriue againſt him if it were Lawefull: and yet notwithſtanding wee continue ſtill as Lambes, ſo as wee bowe downe our neckes vnder his yoke, and forſake all our owne affections to obey him: that (ſay I) is a due tryall of vs. And that is the cauſe why the holy ſcripture lykeneth aduerſitie to a furnace. 1.Pet.4.12. Lyke as golde and ſiluer are tryed by fire: ſo muſt God bee faine to try and examine vs by afflictions.

But here it might bee demaunded, whether God doe not knowe what we be without tryall? Let vs marke that it is not to bee ſurmiſed that God is ignorant of any thing: or that he needeth to try vs after the maner of men: but it is the common ſpeach of the holy ſcripture, to attribute the thinges to God which are peculiar to men. For if it ſhould ſpeake to vs of his maieſtie according to the worthineſſe thereof, we ſhould bee vtterly rauiſhed, and yet knowe neuer the more what were ſayd to vs. God therefore to vtter himſelfe, is faine to deſcend from his owne highneſſe and to transfigure himſelfe, to the end wee may knowe ſo much of him as is for our behoofe. To be ſhort, let vs vnderſtand that God knoweth what is in mēs hearts, though he ſhould let them alone as they bee. For it is ſayd in the pſalme, Pſal.33.15. & 94.9. Shal not hee that made the heart knowe it? Yes: but yet for all that, it behoueth vs to bee brought to the touchſtone. Not that God hath any neede of it on his behalfe: but it is done for our owne ſakes. Now then, whereas it is ſayd in this text, that Gods will was to trye the people of Iſrael: let vs mark yͤ the meaning thereof is, that God intended to ſhewe in deed, and to bewray in trueth what that people was of whom it was his will to haue open record and proofe, to the end they might not vſe any odde ſhiftes to keepe their naughtineſſe from diſcouering. Now then, Gods afflicting of vs is not for that hee hath any neede to ſift vs narrowly: but becauſe wee on our ſide haue neede to be ſo tryed. For wee ſee how men beleeue wonderouſly wel of their own ſtrength. So long as God letteth them alone in reſt, they thinke there is nothing but ſubſtantiall ſtoutneſſe in them. But if God doe but pricke them: by and by the venim commeth out, which was hidden within before. Such as made faire wether before, and were very ſkilfull in preaching of Gods goodneſſe, and in teaching men how they ought to reſt thereupon, fall to gnaſhing of their teeth when they themſelues are afflicted, and can no more tell what patientneſſe is, or how to gloryfy God. Therefore is God faine to draw vs forth into the light. For as long as he handleth vs gẽtly, we dwell as it were in couert, and wee lye hidde in darkeneſſe. But as ſoone as aduerſitie commeth, we learne to perceiue what we be. Whereas afore, there ſeemed to be nothing but perfect obedientneſſe in vs: then wee perceiue how our fleſh is ful of ſtubbornneſſe, & we could finde in our heartes to withſtand God. That then is the tryall which Moſes ſpeaketh of.

Therefore to be ſhort, this text muſt be referred to our ſelues, and we muſt take heede to apply it well to our own benefite, and conſider that we be vtterly ignorant, and that the loue of our ſelues doth ſo blinde vs, yea and quite ſtoppe our eyes, that we bee beſotted with fond follie, vntill God haue cleanſed vs of it in deede, and ſhewed vs our own ſhame by open proofe. Again it is a good tryall alſo when God voutſafeth to giue vs power to beare out afflictions patiently. For we haue cauſe to glorify him for his vpholding of vs by his hand: and we muſt alwayes beleeue ẏ wee could not indure any thing, vnleſſe we were ſtrengthened by the holy Ghoſt. Therfore when we haue ouercome any temptation, and paſſed thorowe any aduerſitie meekely: let vs aſſure our ſelues that God ayded vs. And ſo yee ſee it is a good tryall that commeth to vs by afflictions, & that it is the way for vs to gather inſtruction by this text, where it is ſayd that Gods afflicting of his people, was to the end to ſearch what was in their hearts.

And here is expreſſe mention made of the heart. For it is not enough to haue a faire ſhowe to the worldward. Thoſe whom God letteth alone in quiet and pleaſure, may well haue many goodly vertues worthie of commendatiõ: but in the meane while their heart is hidden and wrapped vp within, ſo as it is not knowen what they be vntill God diſcouer them. For proſperitie is as a cloke that hideth much vncleaneſſe. If a man delight in his riches, in his credit, in his quietneſſe, or in his eaſe: men ſee not what hee is but rather doe ſtay vppon the outward appearance, which doth euen dim & dazle their eyes: but in the meane while they looke not vpon that which is within. And like as a faire garment may hide many fowle deformities: ſo doth proſperitie hide a man that he can not be knowen what he is. But if God afflict him, hee layeth him bare by and by, inſomuch that if hee haue any vice in him, then it appeareth both to himſelfe & to others, ſo as we be driuẽ to humble our ſelues, whereas before wee had nothing but vanitie in vs to deceiue our ſelues withall. And whereas wee ſtoode too much in our own conceites: now we ſee there was no cauſe why we ſhould doe ſo. Thus ye ſee what Moſes meant in ſaying ẏ God intended to try what was in his peoples hearts, by afflicting thẽ after ẏ faſhion in the wildernes.

Now hereby we ſee yet better the thing that I haue touched afore: namely that afflictions are more than neceſſarie and profitable for vs. And therefore let vs learne to beare them more patiently than we haue bin wont to doe, ſeeing our Lord hath layd that condition vppon vs, & that they be furtherances of our ſaluation, and there is not any thing woorſe and deadlyer to men, than to be ſo blinded as not to know what is in themſelues. Seeing that man is tranſitorie: wherein can hee glorie but onely in GOD, who is his power and ſtrength? Now then if hee bee ſo proude, as hee not onely deſpiſeth him of whom hee holdeth all thinges, but alſo falleth to puſh with his hornes againſt his maieſtie in deſpite of him: is there any thing more pernicious? No: and yet can not this be amended otherwiſe than by affliction. Ought wee to take ſickneſſe in euill part, ſeeing that God doth thereby make vs to renounce our owne nature, to drawe vs to himſelfe? No: and therefore let vs learne to obey our God: and let vs bethinke vs of this leſſon whenſoeuer we be ſo ſorrowfull in our afflictions: and when wee be tempted to grudge againſt God, let vs thinke thus: yea verily, but yet is this to our benefite. In deede it is hard and troubleſome, but God playeth the phiſition; and purgeth vs of our diſeaſe which elſe would be deadly, and is incurable by any other meanes. That (ſay I) is the thing which we haue to note, that we may fare well by the warning that Moſes giueth vs heere.

Now hee addeth immediately, *that God had ſuffered his people to indure hunger and thirſt, and had fed them with Manna which was a foode that they were not acquainted with, nor yet their fathers: and that his ſo dooing was to the ende that they might knowe, that Man liueth not onely by bread, but by euery worde that commeth out of the mouth of God, doth man liue.* Here Moſes meant to giue a particular leſſon: which is, that GOD teacheth his people to ſeeke their ſuſtenance in him. And it is a very good leſſon. Truely when we ſay that God giueth vs our dayly or ordinary bread, it ſeemeth at the firſt bluſhe to bee but a childiſhe thing. And ſoothly men teach little children to pray vnto GOD, when they would haue their breakefaſtes. Yea and in very deede there are a ſorte of ouerweening fooles, who neuertheleſſe doe take themſelues to bee very wiſe, and are eſteemed to bee great doctors, which haue held opinion that it is not meete for Chriſtians to pray to GOD for bodily ſuſtenaunce, but that they muſt tende to a higher and more exquiſite perfection. Yea, but in the meane while, is it not a tending to great perfection, when wee can pray GOD to bee our foſterfather, and when wee can knowe his goodneſſe towardes vs? Yes: and for proofe thereof, wherein doth the beleefe or vnbeleefe of men ſhewe it ſelfe moſte? Surely euen in the maintenaunce of this tranſitory lyfe. In deede that is not the chiefe poynt of our faith. For we muſt looke vp to the euerlaſting inheritance that is promiſed vs. But yet is the thing true which I ſay now: that is to wit, that our beleefe and alſo our vnbeleefe ſhew thẽſelues more in that behalfe, than in any other. For if a man can truſt in God that he will maintaine him in this mortall lyfe: ſurely he will alſo hope for all the reſt. And on the contrary part, when wee wante foode, or haue not helpes at our own wiſhing: by and by we be out of heart and vexed with vnquietneſſe. And ſo our vnbeleefe bewrayes it ſelfe in the ouercarefulneſſe which we haue for this earthly lyfe. Now therefore, let vs marke well that wee haue greatly profited, not onely for one day but alſo for all our life lõg, whẽ we haue once learned throughly to commit our ſelues to Gods prouidence, to be fed by his hand, and to receiue ſuſtenance by his grace. When we be come to that point, then are wee mounted very high, and thereby wee ſhall learne to truſt in him for the heauenly lyfe, and for all thinges belonging thereunto. And ſo is Moſeſes meaning in this text: namely that the people ſhould be throughly perſwaded, that God will nouriſh them, and that they ſhould not truſt either in bread or wine or in any other foode, but conſider that it is Gods peculiar office to maintaine them by his power. Let that ſerue for one poynt.

And Moſes alledgeth the feeding of the people with Manna in the wilderneſſe. The Lorde (ſaith hee) did let thee indure hunger, and ſent thee Manna from heauen as a warrant to aſſure thee that hee will alwayes bee thy father. And although he make the earth to yeeld thee fruite in bringing forth both corne and wine: and although thou haue both fleſhe, & fiſh, & whitemeate to nouriſh thee withall: yet doth not thy God ceaſe to maintaine thee by his power. Therefore thou muſt looke that way, and not haue thy minde tyed to the dead creatures, as though they gaue thee lyfe, or as though thou receiuedſt thy ſtrength of them. Aſſure thy ſelfe it is thy God that nouriſheth & ſuſteineth thee. And truely the Manna cõtinued not alway with the people of Iſraell. But if God worke a thing for a time: wee muſt profit our ſelues by it euer after, although the thing continue not ſtill. If wee ſhould remember the thinges that GOD ſheweth vs, no longer than wee ſee them with our eyes: wee ſhould bee too brutiſh. Therefore when wee haue once ſeene any inſtruction: we muſt beare it in minde all the dayes of our lyfe. In lyke caſe is it concerning the Manna. God fed his people with it by the ſpace of fortie yeeres. Now muſt wee learne thereby to the worldes end, that wee be fed by the ſame power whereby that people was. In deed the meanes are farre other: (for wee nowadayes doe eate of the bread which the earth yeeldeth, and we haue other kindes of foode to ſuſteine vs withall:) but is that any derogation to the heauenly power? Is it not God that breatheth lyfe into vs, ſo as wee bee ſuſteined by him? Yes: and therefore whenſoeuer wee eate bread, let vs learne not to ſtay vpon that, but to cal to minde that GOD nouriſhed his people without bread, without wine, and without any other vittels. And to what end? Hee wrought not that miracle to haue it buryed. Was it but onely to the end that yͤ people of that time ſhould be taught by it that God was their father? No no: but we muſt apply the ſame ſtorie to our inſtruction in theſe dayes too: that is to wit, that although GOD ſend vs bread and wine, yet he ceaſeth not to feede vs ſtill for all that. So then let vs marke well, that the miracles which God hath wrought, neuertheleſſe muſt ſerue for our inſtruction, although wee behold them not preſently at this day. And ſpecially whereas heere is mention made of the Manna: let it be an euerlaſting preſident to vs, to teach vs that God hath a care of his creatures, and that we haue our ſuſtenaunce and preſeruation at his hand: ſo that although hee make the Sunne to ſhine, yet doth the light come from himſelfe: and although hee giue ſtrength to the earth, ſo as wee take ſuſtenaunce and nouriſhment from out of the bowels of it, yet is it hee himſelfe that worketh after that faſhion. And let vs alwayes hold this for a rule, that our lyfe with all the appurtenances thereof dependeth vpon the onely hand of GOD, and that wee muſt haue our whole recourſe vnto him. That is the meaning of Moſes.

Howbeit to the end we may knowe it yet better, wee haue to marke firſt of all, that whereas hee ſayth *that man is nouriſhed by euery worde that commeth out of the mouth of God*: hee ſpeaketh not but of this preſẽt life. There are which take it to bee ſpoken of the ſpiritual lyfe of our ſoules. In deede it is a good doctrine of it ſelfe, yͭ we liue not only in this life as Oxen and Aſſes, but yͭ we haue alſo a better and excellenter life, inaſmuch as God quickeneth our ſoules by his worde, and knitteth vs to himſelfe ſo as hee vpholdeth vs by the power of his holy ſpirit, which is the fountaine of life. All this is true, and it behoueth vs to acknowledge it ſo to bee, as I ſayd afore. But yet as concerning the vnderſtanding of this text, Moſes goeth no further but to ſhewe vs that we liue by euery word which proceedeth out of the mouth of God, that is to ſay, we liue by the bleſſing which GOD giueth vs. For the doctrine that hee treateth of heere, is not that our ſoules are quickened to ſaluation becauſe wee bee taught by the holy ſcripture: Moſes meant not that thing: but rather hee ſheweth vs that bread hath not any power of it ſelfe, foraſmuch as it is but a dead thing. And can a ſenſeleſſe creature haue power to giue vs mouing? No. Can a dead thing haue power to giue vs life? No ſurely, that can it not. How then can bread and wine which haue no lyfe of themſelues, bee able to giue lyfe vnto men? How can they make vs to liue? It ſeemeth that we gather ſtrength of bread. For whẽ a man is brought low with ouerlong faſting, & pined wͭ hunger: whereas he was as good as half dead before, if he eate meate, by and by he is as it were renewed & ſet vp againe. In deed yͤ bread is yͤ meane to refreſh men, & God ſerueth his owne turn by it: but yet for all that, ſhall wee tye our lyfe to bread and wine? No: but wee muſt conſider that although God haue ſet that order in nature: yet notwithſtanding it ſerueth not to bereaue him of his prayſe, nor to rob him of his right: but rather, his vttering of his power by his creatures, ſerueth to ſhewe that he hath them all in his hand, and can diſpoſe of them after his own good pleaſure. That is the thing which wee haue to remẽber cõcerning theſe wordes, where Moſes ſaith, *that man liueth by euery word which proceedeth out of the mouth of God.* And in deede wee cannot haue a better expounder of this text, than our Lorde Matt.4.4. Ieſus Chriſt: for hee applying this text to himſelfe, ſheweth that hee ſhould bee ſuſteined by truſting in God, although hee wanted bread. In deede I can not diſpatch this matter at this preſent: but yet muſt wee beare ſomewhat of it away, to the end that the reſt may be yͤ better ſet forth to morrowe. See then how our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt expounded the wordes of Moſes. He was tẽpted by Satan to turne ſtones into bread. And with what intent? Verily as though he could not haue liued without bread. But hee ſheweth that although he wanted bread, yet hee ſhould not faile to bee ſuſteined by the power of GOD his father. For why? It is not by bread (ſaith hee) that man doth liue: that is to ſay, God is not bound by any neceſſitie to vſe bread, whẽ he will ſuſteine vs. If an earthly father will ſuſteine his children, hee muſt needes haue bread: and if hee haue none, he will weepe and ſay, alas my children, I can not but bee in great griefe of minde, to ſee you in this neceſſitie: if I coulde feede you with mine owne bloud, I would doe it. So then, a father ſhall not alwayes haue wherewith to mainteine his children: but it is not ſo with God, for he is not bound to any neceſſitie. Now then, doth bread faile through the whole world? Is there ſuch drought as the earth can yeelde no ſubſtance? Yet doth not God faile to bee almightie ſtill, and to haue wherewith to maintaine thoſe that are his. Thus yee ſee how Ieſus Chriſt did beate backe the diuels temptation, by telling him that wee muſt not imagine Gods power to be ſhut vp within his creatures, but that we muſt learne to truſt in him, not douting but that he can finde meanes well enough to maintaine vs, yea euen though all things faile vs. If he giue vs bread: let vs eate of it: for wee muſt not tempt him. But if all meane helps faile, let vs betake our ſelues to him that is almightie, and to his onely power, which ſhall alwayes haue his courſe, though there be no meane help at all. Yee ſee then how Moſes meaning is, that euen in reſpect of this tranſitorie lyfe, wee muſt not be ſo beaſtly as to hang our groynes vppon the bread and meate, as though our life lay hidden there. But when we haue wherewith to feede our ſelues, let vs lift our eyes vpward to acknowledge that it is God which hath ſet that order in nature. And againe, if wee haue little: let vs bee contented with it, and pray God to make it effectuall, as though it were Manna frõ heauen, ſo as one morſel may feede vs and make vs as luſtie, as if we had all the abundance of the world. And if we bee driuen to pouertie, let vs proceede yet further, and pray God to ſupply our want, and let vs put this ſentence in practiſe, *that man liueth not onely by bread*, that is to ſay, he is not ſuſteined alonely by theſe ordinary meanes: but although he were at vtter neceſſitie and wanted all thinges, yet would not God faile to ſuccor him. And therefore let vs reſorte vnto him, and to the ſecrete power whereby we bee ſuſteined, that wee may bee ſo mainteined by the ſame, as we may liue in him, and by him, and al through his onely meere goodneſſe.

Now let vs kneele downe in the preſence of our good God with acknowledgement of our faultes, praying him to vouchſafe to pitie vs: & that ſeeing wee be ſo wretched creatures, that although he haue a care to bring vs back againe to him, yet notwithſtanding wee would faine ſtriue againſt him: it may pleaſe him ſo to purge vs from all ſtubborneſſe, as our whole ſeeking may bee to ſubmit our ſelues to his wil: and that hee ſuffer vs not to bee giuen ſtill to our owne wicked affections, and to the luſtes of our fleſh: but rather that hee correct them, yea and that in ſuch ſorte, as we may ſeeke to mount vpward, and to paſſe in ſuch wiſe through this world, as wee may alwayes remember that it is but a wayfaring, to the intent wee may keepe on ſtill to the marke whereunto our Lord calleth vs. That it may pleaſe him to graunt this grace, not onely to vs, but alſo to all people and nations of the earth, &c.

On Fryday the xvj. of Auguſt. 1555.

The Lix. Sermon which is the ſecond vpon the eight Chapter.

3.4 He afflicted thee &c.

5 Knowe thou therfore in thyne hart, that the Lord thy God nurtured thee as a man nurtureth hys owne child,

6 Therefore keepe thou the commaundementes of the Lord thy God, by walking in his wayes, and by fearing him.

7 For the Lord thy God bringeth thee into a good land, a land wherein are riuers of water, fountaines and ſpringes which come out of the valleys and hilles.

8 A land of wheate, and barely, of Vines, figtrees, and Poungarnets: a lande wherein are Oliuetrees, Oyle, and honnie.

9 A lande wherein thou ſhalt eate bread without ſcarcetie, ſo as thou ſhalt not want any thing in it: a Lande whoſe ſtones are iron, and out of whoſe hils thou ſhalt digge braſſe.

Yeſterday wee ſawe firſt of all, how the myracle that GOD wrought in feeding his people with Manna by the ſpace of fortie yeeres togither in the wilderneſſe, ought to ſerue for euer. And therewithall was ſhewed the ende thereof: that is to wit, that the Iewes ought to haue conſidered, that it is not the bread ẏ maintaineth a man, neither is the power of our lyfe ſhut vp within it: but rather it is God ẏ breatheth liuelineſſe into vs, and which giueth the breade that nature wherby it is able to ſuſtaine vs. And ſo we ſee ẏ the matter here concerneth not the life of our ſoules, but that God ſheweth vs howe this flightfull and tranſitorie life is maintayned by his onely power: ſo that, whether wee haue meate and drinke, or whether we ſuffer hunger, wee muſt alwayes haue recourſe to Gods goodneſſe, aſſuring our ſelues that he is our foſter father, and that our life is in his hand, and that it is his office to preſerue it in good plight. That is the ſumme of the things which wee haue to remember here. And ye haue ſeene alſo howe our Lord Ieſus vſed the ſame text, as was declared in fewe wordes: but yet muſt we lay forth the reſidue of the things a little more at length.

Matt.4.4.

Now then wee haue to marke, that if GOD giue vs abundance, our minds muſt not be wedded to it: for can the bread quicken vs, ſeeing it is a dead thing? Although God vſe it as an inſtrument, it is not to deface his owne commendation, no more than when he giueth vs light by the Sunne. For we knowe that in the creation of the world, light was made before the Sunne was created. And why? To the intent we ſhould not conuey the honour of God vnto creatures. Therefore let vs ſo vſe the light of the Sunne, as wee acknowledge therewithall, that there is but onely one God, to whom the glorie of that benefite ought to bee yeelded. And when wee haue bread to eate, it is not the bread that ſuſtaineth vs, but it is God, who powreth out his goodneſſe continually vpon vs. Although he apply thoſe meanes to our vſe: yet is it he himſelfe that worketh, it is he that is the author of them. And in that reſpect is it that hee ſaith hee will breake the ſtaffe of breade. True it is that hee threatneth to ſhut vp the heauen as if it were iron, and to make the earth to bee of braſſe, ſo that when the earth crieth out to the heauen, the heauen ſhall not heare it. God then when he intendeth to ſend barrenneſſe vppon a land, vſeth ſuch meanes as he thinketh good: by reaſon whereof wee haue not wherewith to ſuſtaine our ſelues: in ſo much that when the grounde hath borne a harueſt good and great ynough, yet wil God wel ynough diminiſh it and make it to moulder away, yea and when the corne is caried to the mill, it ſhall conſume in the grinding: and when it is brought from the mill to the ouen, if it bee meaſured or weied againe, it ſhall not hold full weight and meaſure. Howbeit, we muſt come to this point, that the ſtrength which bread hath, is not of ẏ bread it ſelfe, but of Gods breathing of this woord into it whereof Moſes ſpeaketh here: that is to wit, that when God will haue vs to bee nouriſhed and ſuſteined by the bread, he vttereth his goodneſſe towards vs, by making vs to feele his bleſſing which ſheadeth it ſelfe into it after a ſecret faſhion. Albeit that we behold it not with our eyeſight, yet muſt wee be throughly perſwaded of it by faith. Then let vs marke well, that when wee haue whereof to feede, we muſt not be ſo doultiſh as to think that the power is incloſed in the breade or in any other vittles or drinkes: but that therein God vttereth his goodneſſe towardes vs, and ſheadeth it into vs, as we ſee the raine come from heauen which moiſteneth ẏ earth and giueth it ſtrength: On the other ſide if wee haue want: let vs vnderſtand that God can ſuſtaine vs by turning bread into Manna, that is to ſay: if all ordinarie meanes fayle vs, God will prouide for vs after another faſhion, as wee ſee hee remedied the neceſſitie of his people, when they were in the wildernes. And for ẏ ſame cauſe did our Lord Ieſus Chriſt anſwere Satan, it is written that man liueth not by bread only, but by euery word that commeth out of the mouth of God. For Sathan tempted him to diſtruſt, vnder colour that in the wilderneſſe God ſent him not the thinges that were expedient to liue withall. He had not any foode there, and yet in the meane while he was pinched, with hunger as a mortall man: for he vouchſafed to become ſubiect to our paſſions or ſufferinges. Now heere vpon, Sathan taketh occaſion to enter vppon him, ſaying: Seeing thou art the ſonne of God, ſhouldeſt thou want any thing? Is it not reaſon that all creatures ſhould ſerue thee? yes: for thou art the heire of the world. Thou haſt no bread: and therefore thou muſt be faine to try the power of God, that theſe ſtones may bee turned into bread, or elſe thou ſeeſt how thy God forſaketh thee, for if he had a care of thee, thou ſhouldeſt perceiue his bleſſing and fauour, ſo as thou ſhouldeſt haue heere wherwith to ſuſteine thee. Now thē ſeeing thou wanteſt ſuch helpes, it is a ſigne that God hath no regard of thee. But Ieſus Chriſt aunſwereth hereunto: I ſhalbe ſuſteined well enough though bread faile mee. And why? For the life of man dependeth not vpon theſe meanes. And ſurely God were of very ſmall and weake force, if hee could not helpe a man but by breade: he ſhould be no better than an earthly man. A riche man can doe wel inough, if hee haue wherewith: but if he fall into pouerty, he muſt be faine to begge

Ezec.4.16. & 5.16.
Deut.28.23
Oſe.2.21.22
Leui.26.26.
Matt.4.4.

himſelfe. And ſo ſhould it bee [by your ſaying,] with God. But although there were neuer a whit of bread in the world: yet hath he alwayes his word in his mouth, that is to wit, hee needes no more but to ſay the worde. Like as he created the worlde of nothing, by vttering his will that it pleaſed him to haue it ſo: and all thinges were made and are maintained ſtill at this day in their ſtate, by his onely commaundement: ſo can he maintaine thoſe that are his, as he thinketh good. He needeth no more but to breath foorth his ſecrete power: and all ſhall be as well ſatiſſied, as if they had their fill of meate and drinke. According to this leſſon, if God at any time withdrawe our foode and make vs to feele neceſſitie: let vs learne to waite vpon him, and to reſt vpon his prouidence, praying him to ſupply our want: and wee ſhall finde that this is not written in vaine.

Nowe then wee ſee there is a dubble vſe in this doctrine, and that wee muſt apply it as well to the time of abundance, as to the time of ſcarcitie. When wee haue great ſtore of things, let not that ſtop our eyes to make vs truſt too much to them: aſſuring our ſelues that our eating of the bread can not ſuſtaine vs, except GOD giue it force. For if he once breake the ſtaffe of it: there will bee no more leaning vnto it; it will rather bee but a griefe to vs. For wee muſt alwayes marke this ſimilitude, that as a weake man ſtayeth himſelfe vpon a ſtaffe: ſo GOD ſtrengtheneth our powers agayne by bread and drinke. But if the ſtaffe bee broken: to what purpoſe will it ſerue, but to breake his necke that ſhall truſt vnto it? Then let vs learne to truſt vnto GOD and to leane vnto him in our abundaunce, and to giue him thankes for vouchſafyng to make his creatures to ſerue our turne after that faſhion: and let vs beware that wee conuey not ouer his power and prayſe to any other thing. For that were to make an idoll of the bread. God hath ordayned it to doe vs ſeruice, and hee hath put it in ſubiection to vs: and ſhall wee notwithſtanding goe and worſhippe it? If the bread [of it ſelfe] doe ſuſtayne vs, hath it not the office of God, ſo as GOD muſt ſit ſtill like an idle and dead thing? Let vs beware that wee make not idols of the benefites which God beſtoweth vppon vs: for that were an intollerable vnthankfulneſſe. Thus much concerning abundance. And therefore let not riche men thinke they can forbeare Gods helpe bicauſe they haue their garners well ſtuffed and ſtored: for if God doe but blowe vppon them, all vaniſheth away. When they haue the morſels in their mouthes: they ſhall ſticke faſte in their throtes: and when they haue their bellyes crammed neuer ſo full, yet ſhall they receiue no nouriſhment by it, except God giue it them by his ſecret working. By this meanes ſhal all of vs liue in humilitie, and ſuch as are wel ſtored ſhall not ceaſſe to make this prayer without hypocriſie: Giue vs this day our dayly bread. For otherwiſe, were it not a mocking of God, if a man ſhould thinke himſelfe to be well ynough prouided, bicauſe hee hath great ſtore of corne and wine, or bicauſe he hath money in his purſe and rentes comming in, or bicauſe he perceyueth himſelfe to be throughly furniſhed and ſtored of all things? Howe ſhall he craue his dayly bread at Gods hand, vnleſſe he knowe that the thinges which he hath are nothing, and that GOD muſt bee faine to worke, yea and to continue his ſecrete operation alwayes? If that were not: a man might defye GOD and holde ſcorne of him, as in verie deede he might well ynough forbeare him. But if wee bee fully reſolued of this leſſon in our heartes, that nothing ſuſtayneth vs but onely GOD: it will put vs in minde to praye him, to continue his ſuſtainyng of vs to morrowe as well as he hath fedde vs to day, notwithſtanding that we haue a whole yeeres prouiſion before hand. For wee muſt alwayes conſider, that all that euer we haue without him, is nothing.

Againe, in time of pouertie, it is a great comfort vnto vs that wee may reſorte to our God, and beſeeche him to haue pitie vppon vs, and [bee ſure] that although there were no breade in the worlde, yet he will not fayle to ſuſtaine vs by his power. Seeing then that wee haue this promiſe, it ought to bee an incouragement vnto vs to pray boldly, and to reioyce, and not to torment our ſelues out of meaſure, as they that thinke there is no God at all in heauen, when they ſee not the helpes wherewith they bee acquainted. And why is that? Bicauſe wee tye all Gods power to our eyeſight and outward ſenſes. Therefore let vs beware of ſuch fondneſſe, and let vs put this leſſon in vre. And truely God ſheweth vs the experience thereof euen ſtill at this day. If wee had our eyes open: wee ſhould perceiue that this is not written in vaine. For yee ſee that euen they which are beſt fed receiue no benefite by their meate, whereas in the meane while the children yͭ are neither wel fed nor well clad, are neuertheleſſe both fat & luſtie, & thriue well to ſee to. What eate they? For want of good ſuſtenaunce, they eate thinges that may hurt them: & yet notwithſtanding God maketh them to grow and increaſe, by turning the things into good iuice, which might ingender euill nouriſhment. Wee bee ſure that wee ſee this. So then, let vs marke well that our Lord hath left ſtill in the world ſome remnant of the thing that Moſes witneſſeth heere. And let vs marke moreouer, that the worde which is ſpoken of here, betokeneth yͤ power or operation, like as when the Apoſtle ſayeth in the firſt to the Hebrewes, that Hebr.1.3. Chriſt hath the fulneſſe of the whole Godhead in him, & that he beareth vp the whole world wͭ his word: according wherunto alſo it is ſaid in the Pſalme, yͭ the Heauens were created by yͤ word, Pſal.33.6. and yͭ the ſame word ſhewed it ſelfe there: ſo as God ſhewed by his ſtabliſhing of yͤ order of nature, yͭ it is he in whō al things haue their being. Ye ſee then how he worketh towards vs, & that he needeth not to trauel with great labour and paines taking: it is inough if he do but ſay yͤ word, yͭ is to ſay if he do but vtter his good pleaſure, for yͤ performance will follow by & by therewithall.

But by the way we haue here a reſemblance to gather: That if our bodies be nouriſhed and ſuſtained by Gods woord, that is to wit, by the ſecrete power which he breatheth into bread, wine, and all other vittels: much rather are our ſoules nouriſhed by his doctrine that is dayly preached vnto vs. In deede, that is not the meaning of this text, as is ſhewed afore: but yet for all that, when God hath once taught vs what this temporal lyfe is, and ſhewed vs that it dependeth wholly vppon his power and grace: he will haue the ſame to conuey vs yet higher. For when we know that God ſheweth himſelfe a father to vs in giuing vs meate and drink: we muſt alſo paſſe on to the heauenly heritage. [Wee muſt conſider] that his adopting of vs to be his children, is not to feede vs in this worlde like brute beaſtes: but to drawe vs to the euerlaſting lyfe. And therefore when wee perceyue the operation and power of this ſecret word of God in the nouriſhing of our bodyes: wee muſt mount vp hygher, and conſider that our ſoules are not fed neither with bread nor with wine, but yͭ they haue a priciouser foode, namely that God giueth them life by nouriſhing them to the ſaluation that is prepared for vs. Therefore when we haue ſought our foode at Gods hand, and giuen him thankes for our meate and drink, ſtaying our ſelues altogether vpō the truſt of his goodneſſe, in hope that hee will alwayes be our foſterfather, yea euen in the time of extreame dearth: let vs aſſure our ſelues that he will neuer faile vs any more, ſpecially in reſpecte of our ſoules, for as much as that is the thing aboue all Hebr.12.9. other, whereby hee intendeth to certifie vs that he taketh vs for his children. Thus yee ſee how we ought to put this text in vre.

And heerewithall let vs marke that it was meete that the people of Iſraell ſhould acknowledge the benefite that is ſpoken of in the pſalm Pſal.78.25. where it is ſayd that man was fed with Angels foode. For the prophet, to magnifie Gods grace the more in that hee had fed his people with Manna, ſaieth that when they were a hungred, God ſent thē bread from heauen, ſo as mortal & earthly men did eate yͤ bread of Angels. Not that the Angels are fed with Manna: (for they be ſpirits, which haue no neede of meate & drink:) but yͭ the Prophet ment to ſhew that it was an excellent thing, and yͭ whereas yͤ earth yeeldeth foode vnto vs, the heauens were opened vnto them, & mortall men did after a ſorte communicate with the inhabiters of heauen. This ſo great benefite and prerogatiue ought to be acknowledged of yͤ Iewes: but yet the inſtruction that commeth of the thinges that God ſhewed at that time, ought to indure for euer. And therfore although we neuer ſaw the Manna: yet muſt we giue ſuch credit to the things which God did at that time, as to apply the ſame to our owne inſtruction at this day. And that was the cauſe alſo why God Exod.16.33 willed a Cup to be filled with Manna, and to bee kept in the Tabernacle with the Arke of his Couenant: that although the people [which were to com] ſaw not the wonders that had bin wrought in the wildernes; yet notwithſtādīg they might haue a memoriall thereof, to put them alwayes in mind of it, that they might profit them ſelues by it. Then let vs vnderſtand, that although God ſend vs not Manna from heauen nowadays: yet he wil not haue vs to doubt, but that he hath ſuch a care to ſuſteine vs, as we ſhall perceiue he doth not tell vs for nought in this text; that the woord which proceedeth out of his mouth, is the thing whereby wee liue, and whence wee take all our ſuſtenance.

Nowe Moſes addeth immediately, *That their garmentes were not worne, nor the peoples feete ſwolne in the wilderneſſe by the ſpace of fortie yeeres.* And thereuppon he concludeth thus, *Knowe thou with thine heart,* for ſo is it woord for woord: but the meaning thereof is, Aſſure thy ſelfe in thine heart, that as a man nurtureth his owne child, ſo hath God nurtured thee. Now then like as God did feede that people with heauēly foode, ſo did he cloth them myraculouſly: for otherwiſe their apparell would ſoone haue bin worne out. But God prouided for it, yͭ of al thoſe fortie yeeres togither they were ſhod & clad with the ſame rayment & ſhooes, which they brought with them out of Egypt. And it is a preſident which muſt aſſure vs, yͭ although we be clothed with yͤ wooll of Sheep, & haue linnen to weare: yet notwithſtanding it is God yͭ giueth vs continually wherwith to feed & cloth vs: & ſo long as he liſteth to make yͤ helpes auailable which he giueth vs, he will ſo bleſſe them as one Coate ſhall laſt vs out three coates, yea and a whole dooſen ſhall not do ſo much as one alone when God liſteth to curſe them. Likewiſe when he breatheth his bleſſing & fauor into bread, one ounce of it ſhall do more than a whole pounde otherwiſe: and when hee liſteth to breake the ſtaffe of bread, a pound ſhall not do ſo much ſeruice as halfe an ounce. This is the meaning of Moſes in this text. And therefore let vs marke, that if God liſt to proſper vs, we muſt haue ſuch contentatiō as we be not too eagre and carefull for it as wee commonly be, Matt.6.31. bearing our ſelues on hande that the earth ſhoulde faile vs, if wee made not the better prouiſion to haue all things aforehand. And what a thing is that? It is true that we ought to thinke vpon our needes. But how? Firſt by calling vpon God, ſaying: Alas Lord, wee bee much poorer and wretchedder creatures than any beaſts in the world: for dogges, aſſes and all other beaſtes are coted with their owne skinnes; and they be ynough for them: but if a man be naked, hee ſtarueth out of hand. So Lord, we be the pooreſt and miſerableſt of all other creatures. All beaſtes can find their foode in the fields: but as for vs, if we be not nouriſhed, we decay by and by. God then doth well vouchſafe that we ſhould haue a care to prouide for our neceſſities. Howbeit, that is to the end we ſhold reſort to him referring our ſelues to his fatherly goodneſſe. Againe, we muſt trauell according to the skill yͭ he giueth vs, we muſt not ſpare our ſelues, we muſt folowe yͤ meanes that he appointeth vs, we muſt not be laſie and ſlothfull: for he wil not haue vs to be ydle, nor to be as blocks. But yet muſt this carefulneſſe be bridled, yͭ it vex vs not too much, & we muſt alwayes plucke vp a good heart to call vpon God, and commit our ſelues vnto him, aſſuring our ſelues that he will neuer faile vs. That is the care which God willeth vs to haue. Neuertheleſſe wee muſt alſo put the thing in practiſe that is ſpoken here: that is to wit, that God will giue vs ſufficient to ſerue our turne, ſo as if we want cote or ſhooes, he will either prouide vs of them, or elſe make one paire of ſoles to doe vs more ſeruice than a dooſen, when it pleaſeth him. And we may ſee this with our eyes. For they that are warmeſt clad, fayle not for all that to bee as it were halfe dead thorowe colde: and on the other ſide, whereas it ſeemeth that poore folke ſhould ſtarue and bee froſen with yce a hundred times [ere the yeere goe about:] God warmeth them, yea and they bee ſo preſerued, as though he kept them in a ſtooue, or as though ſome Phiſitiō were alwaies at hand with them, miniſtring good remedies to them to ſaue them from the colde. After that maner doeth God worke. And that is the cauſe why that in the time of the Law, God commanded that all newe things ſhould be bleſſed, to the ende that men ſhould thinke vpon him, & conſider thus with themſelues: Go to, I haue a newe garment, and I muſt looke that I thanke him for it which gaue it mee. For ſeeing it pleaſeth my God to clothe mee thus, and to giue me this apparell to vſe it as mine owne: it becommeth me to acknowledge that it is of his goodneſſe and mercie that I am ſo prouided for. Yee ſee then, that the intent why he cauſed all things to bee dedicated vnto him which men ſhould occupie: was that they ſhould acknowledge the giuer of them, and that if he bleſſed not the helps which he had giuen them, all was nothing and noughtwoorth. And as for now adayes, although wee haue not the like Ceremonie: yet muſt we hold ſtill the truth thereof.

Leui.23.10, 14.19.23. & Num.15.20

Nowe for a concluſion Moſes addeth, *Knowe thou in thy Heart, that as a father nurtureth his owne childe, ſo hath thy God nurtured thee.* In deede the hebrew woord that Moſes vſeth in this place, ſignifieth ſometimes to *Chaſtiſe*: and therefore it might be taken as if he ſayd thus: Know thou that the intent of thy God in all the afflictions which thou haſt indured, hath beene to correct thy faultes: that like as a man intending to reforme his child when he hath doone a miſſe, taketh the rod by and by in his hande: ſo likewiſe thy God hath chaſtiſed thee, not ſuffering thee to become an vnruly and froward child, but holding thee alwaies vnder awe. And this doctrine were very good: but the ſame woord doth by a ſimilitude betoken likewiſe all inſtruction and good gouernment. No doubt but the intent of Moſes in this place, was to make a generall concluſion of the matters that hee had treated of. For hee had ſpoken of Afflictions, and hee had ſpoken likewiſe of Gods benefites, and of his leading of the people, al the time ẏ they were in the wilderneſſe. Now therefore, to all thoſe matters he applieth this finall ſentence, ſaying: know thou that thy God hath nurtured thee after a gentle and louing faſhion, ſo as thou needeſt not to wander farre, or to make long vagaries to know whether thy God hath beene with thee or no: he hath applyed himſelfe to thee as familiarly as may bee. Is not the inſtruction that hee hath giuen thee, ſo familiar as no man can ſhew himſelfe more familiar? That therefore is the meaning of Moſes.

And whereas he ſaieth, *Know thou in thy heart:* It is to the end that men ſhould bee the diligenter in applying ẏ things to their inſtructiō, which God teacheth them. For it is pitie to ſee howe dull wee bee of our ſelues. Although God vtter himſelfe familiarly vnto vs: yet doe not we ſee him a whit. And what is the cauſe thereof? A man that is dulſighted and hath ſore eyes, diſcerneth not things well though they be layd afore him. Nowe, wee bee not onely dimſighted, but alſo ſtarke blinde in Gods workes. True it is that he muſt bee faine to inlighten vs: but yet muſt wee alſo doe our indeuour, and apply our mindes to iudge well of his workes, when it pleaſeth him to ſhewe them to vs. And ſo it is not a needeleſſe ſpeech of Moſes, to ſay know thou in thy heart. As if he ſhould ſay, euerie man muſt enter into himſelfe, and indeuour earneſtly to know the grace and goodneſſe of God. We muſt not ſlumber in that caſe, but euery of vs muſt do his diligence to the vttermoſt. To bee ſhort, theſe ſayinges, Let men inforce themſelues, and let men ſtreine themſelues, are well woorth the noting. For when God teacheth vs, by and by euery of vs muſt enter into his owne heart.

And now againe, whereas hee ſayth *that God taught [or trained] his people, as a man doth his Children*: It is to cut off al occaſion of ſtarting holes, that men might not pretend any ignoraunce. For in as much as thinges are declared here according to our rudeneſſe: wee cannot excuſe our ſelues by ſaying that our wit is too dul, and that we be vnable to mount ſo high: for this doctrine is giuen vs familiarly ynough. To the end therefore that no man might take occaſion of excuſe: Moſes ſayth at a woord, what? hath not thy God taught thee after a commō faſhion and as men doe? When a father intendeth to teach his child, will he do more than thy God hath doone to thee? Nowe ſith it is ſo: theſe thinges were not ſpoken for that time onely: but our Lorde woorketh after the ſame maner yet ſtill at this day, ſo as wee may perceiue the thinges that Moſes telleth them heere. In deede Gods woorkes are likened to a bottomleſſe pit, and it is not lawfull for vs to bee ſo inquiſitiue of his doings, as to ſeeke to know all the reaſons of them: for we be not able to conceiue them: and therefore (as we haue ſeene in Iob,) we muſt be contented to ſee the outleetes of his woorkes. And this ſimilitude importeth much, where it is ſaide that wee ſee but the outleets, that is to ſay the outermoſt partes of Gods woorkes. As for to attaine to the middes of them, or to ſearch al that which lyeth hidden within: that is vtterly vnpoſſible. And let vs beware of ruſhing ſo farre, for God would ſurely puniſh our raſhneſſe. But yet muſt wee looke vppon the outleets and liſtes or bondes of Gods woorkes, and take ſuch taſte of them as wee may learne ſo much of them as

Rom.11.33.

Iob.26.14.

may bee for our welfare and ſaluation. If wee doe ſo: wee ſhall perceiue that God applyeth himſelfe to our rudeneſſe, and that hee dealeth with vs after the maner of men, that teach little children, inſtructing vs in ſuch wiſe as wee cannot ſay to him, yea, but I am not as an Angell of heauen to comprehend Gods doings. For (as I ſaid) God vouchſafeth to ſtoope to vs: & to the intent wee ſhould vnderſtand his workes, he becommeth familiar with vs. Of whom is it long then yͤ we profit not by the inſtructions that he giueth vs? For wee cannot ſay but yͤ he manifeſteth himſelfe to vs ſo many ways, yͤ there is no more excuſe for vs if we knowe him not. Verily euen by the order of nature, wee may knowe him generally, as by the ſeaſons of the yeere, by the growing of fruites vpon the earth, and by the ſhining of the Sunne, the Moone, and yͤ ſtarres. Euen by theſe thinges may we ſee that our Lord hath applied himſelfe wholly vnto vs, and to the feebleneſſe of our vnderſtanding, and that he hath (as it were) transfigured himſelfe, by taking vppon him the perſon of a man, to the end that we might know him. Again, when he ſcourgeth vs, doe wee not ſee that hee handleth vs as a father handleth his owne children? If he ſee a man wax ouerluſtie and malapert: after hee hath borne a while with him, he taketh the rod in his hand. For on the one ſide he warneth vs by his word. And afterward if he ſmite vs with his hand, doth hee not vſe the greater kindneſſe towardes vs, to the intent wee ſhoulde receiue his corrections to our benefite? Againe, when he ſendeth vs of his benefites, it is all one as if a father being deſirous to winne his childe by gentleneſſe, ſhoulde ſay vnto him, My Sonne, what wilt thou dôe? Who ſhall maintaine thee when thou art gone away from mee? Here thou haſt alwayes whereon to liue: thou ſeeſt howe I take paines for thee: get thee to a ſtraunger, and ſee if hee will deale better with thee. Nowe then like as a father will ſpeake after that manner to his childe: ſo doeth our Lorde ſhewe him ſelfe vnto vs, and hee matcheth his worde with his deeds: that is to ſay, whereas he ſendeth vs proſperitie and quietneſſe, he telleth vs alſo that it is to allure vs to him, that his gentlenes might winne vs to him, and make vs to returne familiarly vnto him, and to depart from our ſinnes. Sith it is ſo: let vs learne that there will be no excuſe for vs, if we take not inſtruction by al the order which God keepeth to teach vs withall in this worlde. For why? Hee behaueth himſelfe like a mortal man towards vs, and worketh not after the manner of his owne incomprehenſible maieſtie, becauſe it woulde confounde vs. Wee be too weake to mount ſo high: and therefore hee ſtoopeth vnto vs. Seeing then that hee dealeth ſo friendly on his behalfe: Let not vs be ſo ſlouthfull, as not to enter into our owne harts, and to conſider thinges accordingly, and to inforce our ſelues to beare Gods benefites well in minde, ſo as we take inſtruction by them as wee ought to do. Thus ye ſee what we haue to mark vpon that place.

Nowe Moſes ſheweth to what end he exhorted the people to deeme well of Gods workes: namely to the end they might keepe al his commaundementes, to walke in his wayes, and to feare him. *Keepe the commaundements of the Lorde thy God* (ſaith he) *that thou maiſt walke in his wayes and feare him.* Firſt wee haue to marke here, that Moſes ſendeth the people to the Lawe, as to the perfect and chief doctrine of our whole life. And it is a point well worthie to bee marked. For thereuppon we haue to gather, that when God hath taught vs neuer ſo many wayes, yet ſhall they neuer boote vs, vnleſſe wee haue recourſe vnto his worde. Beholde, the Infidels can well ynough ſearch the ſecrets of nature, they can well not onely alledge reaſons, but alſo ſay, this is done after this faſhion. Yea and they haue deemed God to bee good, righteous, and wiſe, & wee ſee that the heathen Philoſophers knewe Gods workes ſo farre, as they coulde talke of his maieſtie. But what? It was all confuſedly: and in the end they vaniſhed away in their owne imaginations, ſo as they neuer attained to the point whereto they ſhould haue come. Then let vs vnderſtande that all is to no purpoſe, vntill wee haue Gods doctrine for all perfection. True it is that the things which we behold in the worlde, and all the inſtructions which God giueth vs thereby, are good and profitable helpes: but yet for all that, the marke that we muſt ſhoote at is the doctrine [of his worde,] ſo as wee ſet all our wittes vppon that, to the ende wee wander not out of the way. For if a man ſhoote, and haue no marke to ſhoote at: what doth hee elſe but loſe all his ſhotte? Euen ſo is it with vs: we may well ſhoote, that is to ſay, we may take paine to know Gods works: but what ſhall we gaine by it, if we haue not the ſaide marke to ſhoote at? It ſhalbe but loſt labour. And this marke is not to be choſen at our owne deſcretion: but God muſt ſet vs vp our whyte: and that white is the Lawe, the Prophets, and the Goſpel. And ſo ye ſee that that is the cauſe why Moſes hauing ſpoken of yͤ wonders which the people had ſeene, & hauing told them that the ſame ought to ſerue to their inſtruction, and hauing exhorted the faithfull to profite wel in that ſchoole: ſendeth them backe againe to the word. *Keepe the commaundementes of the Lord thy God*, ſaith hee: and afterward he addeth *that thou maiſt walke in his wayes.*

Pſal.1 9,8.

Rom.1.21.

Here wee haue to note, that whenſoeuer wee ſwarue from Gods word, wee ſhal but wander, as hath beene ſhewed heretofore: and we may well goe vp and downe, but wee ſhal be neuer the further forwarde. Let men breake their ſhankes as much as they liſt, & yet ſhal they either go back, or elſe find thẽſelues all in one place ſtill, vnleſſe they know yͤ way which they ought to keepe. For let vs mark wel yͤ our own ways are croked, and yͤ there is nothing but ſtraying and wandering in vaine. And therfore God will haue vs to walk in his ways, which are ſtrait and leuell. In ſaying ſo, Moſes ſetteth down a cõpariſon of things cõtrarie. As if he ſhould ſay, Wretched folk, ye thinke to further your ſelues when ye walk in your own ways, by deuiſing euery man a ſundry way at his owne pleaſure. But what? Yee doe but martyr your

Gen.6.12.
Deut. 32.4.
Pſal.119.158
& 145.17.

your ſelues in vaine: for God will haue men to walke in his wayes, that is to ſay, in the wayes that he ſheweth them, and he will haue them to be followed. Therefore let vs learne to ſubmitte our ſelues to Gods worde, knowing well that our life ſhall neuer be well ordered, except wee obey him. Yea and whereas hee ſaith *the wayes of the Lord* in the plurall number: wee muſt apply it to that which hath beene ſaide heretofore: that is to wit, that God hath giuen vs ſo full a doctrine, as wee cannot alledge that it is not ynough, or that more may bee added to it. Let vs marke that our Lorde will not fayle vs in any thing. Therfore let vs not be wiſe in our own conceit, but let vs aske counſel of him. And if wee doubt that wee goe aſtray, or if we bee afraide of wandering vp and downe: let vs keepe his way, and wee can not goe amiſſe. For why? God hath not made one way onely: but he hath ſhewed vs all his wayes, that is to ſay, all that euer is requiſite to make a man walke aright, ſo as wee can neuer goe amiſſe, if wee followe the direction that he ſetteth afore vs. Nowe hee addeth hereunto, *To the ende that we ſhould feare the Lord.* Herein hee ſheweth to what ende God gaue vs his Lawe. Why will he haue men to keepe it? To doe him homage aboue all thinges. For wee knowe that he receiueth neither harme nor benefite by vs. What can wee doe to him? Our ſeruing of him is not to aduauntage him any whit: for hee hath no neede of any thing. Againe what riches haue we to increaſe him withall? Why then hath hee giuen vs his lawe, but to the ende that wee ſhould dedicate our whole life vnto him, and by keeping his commaundementes ſhewe our ſelues willing to bee ſubiect vnto him, and that hee hath all ſouereine dominion ouer vs? That is the thing which is meant by the feare that Moſes ſpeaketh of heere. And let vs note that he meaneth not a ſlauiſh fearefulneſſe, that is to ſay, that men ſhould ſubmitte themſelues to him as inforced: but that wee ſhould ſtand in reuerend awe of him, not onely as of our maſter but alſo as of our father. The feare which G O D requireth, is matched with heartie loue: ſo as wee bee gladde and faine to ſerue him. And why? Becauſe it is good reaſon that we ſhould be his, and that he ſhoulde haue the gouerning of vs, & that we ſhould frame our liues according to his wil. And ſo yee ſee what is the chiefe point in the keeping of the Lawe.

Iob.35.7 & Pſal.16.2.& 50.10.& Act.17.25. & Rom.8.15 & 2.Tim.1.7

Furthermore let vs mark, that it is not ynough for men to liue vprightly, ſo as they abſteine from all euill and vice, and deale in ſuch ſort as nothing but vertue can bee founde in them: For a man may well bee chaſt, and abſtaine from all wrong, anoyance, deceit, blaſphemie, and lewd talke: and yet ſhall all this be nothing worth, except he referre all to the ſaid end of offering vp of himſelfe in ſacrifice vnto God. Vertues therefore are not of eſtimation in themſelues, ſo as it may bee ſaide, O this is an excellent fellowe in vertue, he hath done this and that, he hath abſteyned from all euill: but wee muſt goe on further to the vertue of all vertues, the fountaine and welſpring of all holineſſe, righteouſneſſe, and vpright dealing: namely that wee tende to our God, ſeeking to honour and glorifie him, and to bee wholly his and vnder his gouernement. When wee bee at that point: then is our life well ordered. But wee may make the faireſt ſhewe in the worlde, and yet if wee haue not reſpect to our God, to ſubmit our ſelues to him that his name may bee exalted and magnified, & that he may haue his due right at our hands: all is but leaſing, be it neuer ſo highly eſteemed. Yee ſee then in effect that the thing which wee haue to remember, is yͭ when God hath ſhewed vs his workes, then doth he call vs to his worde, telling vs that that is the thing whereunto wee muſt holde our ſelues without wandering here and there: and thirdly that if wee will haue our life well ordered, wee muſt alwayes haue our eye vpon the thing that he commandeth. And howe is that? Euen to honour him in ſuch ſort, as wee come to him with a free and cleare hart, to ſerue him, & to dedicate our ſelues to him: & alſo liue among our neighbors without working any deceit or wrong to any man, & without ouerſhooting of our ſelues into any outrage. But yet the chief point is yͭ God haue his due, yͭ is to wit, that he gouerne vs, and be glorified by al our life, becauſe it is good reaſon that he ſhould haue vs at his deuotion, and that we ſhoulde bee ſubiect to him, forſomuch as we bee beholden to him for all good things. And we muſt not only do ſo becauſe he is our maker and hath ſoueraine dominion ouer vs: but we muſt alſo loue him becauſe he is our father. And againe, ſeeing he beſtoweth ſo many benefits vpon vs: we ought at leaſtwiſe to yeelde him his due reuerence.

Malach.1.6.

And that is the cauſe why Moſes addeth in the end, *God will bring thee into the Land which hee hath promiſed thee, a rich and wealthie Lande, a Land that is full of all good thinges, wherein there is plentie of wheate, barly, wyne, honny, and Oyle,* and of all other thinges. And this is ſaide to prouoke the people the more, to the feare that was ſpoken of before. For truely if wee feele nothing but rigour at Gods hande: wee may wel yeeld to him, but it will bee but perforce, it will not bee with a free will, there will bee nothing but hypocriſie in all our life. Indeede wee will not faile to pretend a faire countenāce of ſeruing our God: but our doing of it will bee by conſtreint, like as they which haue done euill may well go on ſtill, howbeit that is but for feare of ſtripes, and in the meane while they haue no liſt nor good will to it. But when wee haue once marked well the good turnes that God doeth vs: then are we the more moued and prouoked to honour him, knowing that wee ought to yeelde him a willing and freehearted reuerence, ſo as our whole ſeeking bee to make an offering of our ſelues vnto him, and to ſacrifice euen our liues to him. To that ende then doeth Moſes alledge the good turnes which God was about to doe vnto his people. And hee not onely ſpeaketh of the former benefites which they ought to haue borne well in minde: but he ſaieth alſo, when thy God ſhall haue brought thee into the Lande: then put forth thy ſelfe to ſerue him with the better courage, accordingly as he goeth through with his benefites towardes thee.

Now let vs kneele down in the preſence of our good God with acknowledgement of our faults, praying him to touch vs in ſuch wiſe, as we may be drawen to true repentance. and ỹ foraſmuch as we be wretched creatures ỹ haue neede to bee ſuſtained by him euery minute of an houre, we may reſort to his bountifulneſſe, aſſuring our ſelues that although wee had all the abundance of the world, yet could we not bee ſuſtained and nouriſhed by it, except his hand were ſtretched out ouer vs to bleſſe vs: and therefore that wee may depend wholly vpon his bleſſing, & vpon his grace, and drawe out of that fountaine of his which can neuer drie vp: and that when we are once filled therewith, we may learne to thanke him for his gracious goodneſſe, ſo as his feeding of vs here beneath, may not tie vs to this tranſitorie life like brute beaſtes, but rather make vs to know that we muſt always trauel towards the heauenly life, whereunto it may pleaſe him to guide vs, & to bring vs euer neerer and neerer vnto it, vntill he haue brought vs fully thither, for the ſake & by the meanes of his welbeloued ſonne our Lord Ieſus Chriſt. That it may pleaſe him to graunt this grace, not onely to vs, but alſo to all people and Nations, &c.

On Wedneſday the xxj. of Auguſt. 1555.

The threeſcore Sermon, which is the third vpon the eight Chapter.

10 Thou ſhalt eate and be filled, and bleſſe the Lorde thy God for the good land which he ſhall haue giuen thee.

11 Take heede that thou forget not the Lord thy God, in not keeping his commaundements, Lawes, and Ordinances, which I commaund thee this day:

12 To the ende that when thou ſhalt haue eaten and beene ſatisfied, and haue builded faire houſes and dwelt in them:

13 And that thine Oxen and ſheepe are multiplyed, and thy ſiluer and golde are increaſed, and all that thou haſt is multiplied:

14 Thy heart do not then ſwel, and thou forget the Lord thy God which hath brought thee out of the land of Egypt from the houſe of bondage.

2.Cor.4.10. & 1.Pet.2.21

IF God commaund vs to be patient in aduerſitie, wee thinke it a hard thing: and yet is it good reaſon that we ſhould paſſe that way, ſeeing wee haue a paterne and image thereof in our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt, vnto whome wee muſt bee like faſhioned, if wee will bee Gods children, not onely in ſuffering quietly the afflictions which hee ſendeth vs in this preſent lyfe, but alſo in being readie and obedient to him euen to the death. Yee ſee then that it is a moſt rightful condition: and yet we on our ſide doe finde it comberſome. And why? Bicauſe we be too nyce, and our ſelfe loue doeth ſo carie vs away, that wee can not abyde to ſuffer any thing. Nowe if we bewraye great vnthankefulneſſe and faulte in this: much more doe wee bewraye the ſame when we cannot ſo conceiue of Gods benefites, as to bee thankefull to him for them. Herein (ſay I) wee ſhewe our ſelues to bee too too lewd. For if GOD deale gently with vs and ſhewe himſelfe fatherlike towards vs: muſt it not needs be ỹ we are worſe than brute beaſts, if we vouchſafe not to lift vp our eyes towards heauē, to yeld him ſome acknowledgmēt of his goodnes. Now although this be a deteſtable vice: yet is it cōmō & too cōmon amōg men. And if euery mā looke into himſelf: in maner al ſhal find thēſelues guiltie of it. If there were no further than ỹ outward Ceremonie of thankſgiuing: yet is it apparant that men make none account of it. Doe all men beare in minde to call vppon Gods name when they ſit downe to the table? Or when they haue taken their repaſt, doe they remember to acknowledge that they bee beholden to him for their life, and for all things elſe that are requiſite for their ſuſtenance? Nay rather, they chop downe to the table like Swyne, and ſtart vp like dogges, ſo as there is no tydings nor remembrance of Gods name among them, but to their ſeeming it is a ſpice of moonkiſh hypocriſie or popeholineſſe to thanke God. Loe howe farre the worlde is out of ſquare. Howbeit when we haue praiſed God both at the beginning and at the ending of our repaſt, yet is not that ynough to diſcharge vs. Therefore if we faile in that: we bee double vnhappie. For what will wee doe in the greater things, if wee cannot performe the leſſer? For this manner of calling vpon God is as good as nothing, I meane in compariſon of the knowledge that lyeth hidden vnder it, and which hath a liuely roote, which ſhall bee treated of more largely anon. For if men cannot finde in their hearts to diſcharge their duetie in the leſſer thinges, as in the lifting vp of their handes, and in yeelding ſome praiſe vnto God by ſome outward ſignes: I pray you howe will they doe that which is commaunded them here, that is to wit, how will they bleſſe God in all their whole life, which is the harder thing to doe? Therefore let vs marke, that this vnthankfulneſſe of forgetting God, and of yeelding no ſigne of acknowledgement of his benefites, is an ordinarie vice. But although it be ſo: yet fayle they not to be blameworthie for it: neither let vs thinke to iuſtifie or excuſe our ſelues by wicked cuſtome as a number do, which would faine make a bucklar of it againſt God, bearing themſelues on hand, that foraſmuch as [the ouerſlipping of thankeſgiuing vnto God] is ſo common a thing among men!, therefore it is lawfull for them to doe ſo alſo: But that will bee no excuſe for vs, as I ſaide afore. For although there be not a commoner thing than this leaudnes of forgetting God which is daily ſeene amõg men: doth it followe that therefore their fault ſhould not be imputed vnto them? No no: but the more ẏ one of them haue hardened another, and al of thẽ are become brutiſh, & haue cõſpired againſt God: ſo much the more horrible muſt their vengeance be.

And therefore let vs marke firſt of al, that the warning which Moſes giueth vs here, (that is to wit, *that when we be full fed we ſhould then thinke vpon God*, that is to ſay, yeeld him his due praiſe,) is no more than needeth. For if wee did it of our owne accord, ſo as euery man gaue his minde to it: we ſhould not neede to be put in minde of it by others. But foraſmuch as we bee negligent: the holy Ghoſt is faine to pricke vs forward, and to quicken vs vp as he doeth in this text. And ſith wee ſee that the thing which God requireth of vs is ſo reaſonable, and ſuch as wee ought to haue learned aforehãd by nature: let vs be dubble aſhamed to continue ſtill vnluſtie, and at leaſtwiſe not to be touched with ſuch warning. It ought to ſhame vs aforehand, that God ſhould bee faine to tell vs of the thing which euen litle children ought to knowe. For ſeeing hee is ſo liberall as to feede vs and to nouriſh vs: let vs at the leaſt call him our father, and ſhewe that wee thinke our ſelues beholden to him for that benefite. Ye ſee then how it is to our great ſhame, that God muſt be faine to ſtirre vs vp to ẏ thing, which euen nature ought to haue taught vs. But if we continue weltring ſtil in that brutiſhneſſe: what excuſe will there remaine for vs?] None at all:] and therefore let vs practiſe this leſſon: that when GOD filleth vs, wee at leaſtewiſe yeelde him thankes, and ſhew that wee haue not forgotten the authour of all welfare.

Here a man might demaund, why God ſaith no more, but that men ſhoulde praiſe him and bleſſe him in the time of proſperitie? For that (as I ſaide) is not all that a Chriſtian man hath to doe. Hee muſt proceede yet further: that is to wit, when it pleaſeth God to ſend vs trouble, anguiſh, pouertie, ſickeneſſe, iniurie, reproche, [and ſuch other things]: wee muſt bee obedient to him, and bowe downe our neckes in all caſes, to receiue his yoke & to beare it without gaineſaying or ſtriuing. Therein (ſay I) lyeth the perfect true vertue [of obedience]: namely when God ſhall rule vs after his good pleaſure, and we like well of all his doings towards vs, and are euer ready to bowe and to ſtoope vnto his hande, whether it be to liue or to die. And ſo al the ſeruice that we can doe vnto God, is nothing without patience. For one of the chiefe ſacrifices that he requireth, is that wee ſhould quietly endure all the aduerſitie that hee ſendeth vs. And why then maketh he no mention of it here? The reaſon is, firſt becauſe his deſire is to deale gently with vs. And if we on our ſide could ſuffer it: ſurely we ſhould be priuiledged from all the aduerſities that trouble vs. For had a man no leaud luſtes in him, were he not wedded to the world, were hee foreward to ſubmitte himſelfe to Gods will in all thinges, had hee no ſeede of vanitie or pride in him, nor were hee not ſotted in his owne delightes. GOD woulde maintaine him here as in an earthly Paradiſe. For his ſcourging of vs is of neceſſitie, becauſe he ſeeth that wee haue neede of ſuch medicines. To bee ſhort, if wee were ſound in our ſoules: God would deale with vs as with ſtrong folke, to whõ men miniſter neither medicines, nor pilles, nor purgations, nor any ſuch other things. But foraſmuch as he ſeeth that wee be diſeaſed: he is faine to cut vs our morſels, and to binde vs to ſuch diet as hee knoweth to bee good for vs. Hee is faine to let vs bloud, and to giue vs bitter drinkes, pilles, and ſuch like thinges. Yea and moreouer he is faine nowe and then to feare vs, when he perceiueth our diſeaſes to be otherwiſe vncurable. Let vs marke therefore that in this place God hath ſpoken according to his owne nature, becauſe hee is inclyned of himſelfe to deale gently with men, and is deſirous to giue vs our fill of his benefites, and to holde vs as it were in his lappe, as a mother doeth her owne childe. After that maner would GOD deale with vs, if wee coulde beare it.

And that is the cauſe why hee ſaith, *When thy God ſhall haue brought thee into the good lande, and there haue filled thee with his benefites: Looke in any wiſe that thou bleſſe his name.* Wherefore let vs marke the order which God keepeth in exhorting vs to ſerue him. The firſt point is that foraſmuch as he is deſirous to ſhewe himſelfe a father towardes vs: his ſhewing of himſelfe to be ſuch a one, ſhould mooue vs and make vs the willinger to honour him, & to loue him ſo much the more: and that ſeeing he handleth vs ſo gẽtly, wee alſo ſhoulde acknowledge it and glorifie him for it al our life long: and that as he is a father towards vs, ſo we ſhould bee as children towardes him. (That ſay I) is the ende that wee muſt begin at. But on the contrarie part, foraſmuch as we be wildeheaded children, of nature froward, vnruly, & leawd: God is faine to ſcourge vs, and to chaſtiſe vs, and tame vs with beating. Sith it is ſo: let vs learne, that if God ſhewe vs an angry looke & frowne vpon vs, or liſt to deale roughly with vs becauſe hee ſeeth vs abuſe his benefites, and that we haue not honored him as wee ought to doe: wee muſt not harden our heartes againſt him, nor take occaſion to withdrawe our ſelues from his obedience: neither muſt wee play theſe vnthriftes that forſake their fathers houſes, and run gadding abrode at randon, as though they liked better of the galowes than of their inheritance. Let vs refraine from misbehauing our ſelues after yͤ faſhion againſt our God, and let vs learne to ſubmit our ſelues mieldly vnder his hand, aſſuring our ſelues that if he afflict vs he hath good reaſon to do it. And although we perceiue not yͤ cauſe why he doth it let vs do him the honour to ſubmit our ſelues to him, and to ſhut our owne eyes, that he may diſpoſe of vs according to his own wiſedom which is vnknowen to vs. After this manner muſt wee come from the acknowledgment of Gods benefites, to the ſubiection which we ought to yeelde vnto him, to humble our ſelues vnder his mightie hand, whenſoeuer he liſteth to chaſtiſe vs or to tame vs for our ſtubborneſſe, and to clenſe vs of our vices and wicked luſtes, and of the infirmities which he knoweth to be in vs.

And now proceeding with that which I haue touched alreadie: let vs marke that it is not ynough for vs to pray vnto God with our mouths onely: but it muſt bee as a helpe to conuey vs further, namely to the dedicating of our whole lyfe vnto him, accordingly as Moſes ſheweth here, adding: *Thou ſhalt not forget the Lord thy God, to deſpiſe his Commandements, ſtatutes, & Lawes, which I inioyne thee this day.* Hereby he ſheweth vs that to yeeld thankes vnto God is a good & holy exerciſe: but yet it is not all yͤ we haue to doe: our life muſt be anſwerable to our tongue, and as we haue proteſted our ſelues to bee beholden vnto God, ſo muſt we ſhew it by our deedes. That is yͤ cauſe why it is expreſly ſaid, beware thou forget not thy God by foreſlowing to keepe al his commandements and Lawes. Now firſt of all Moſes ſheweth here, whence this vnthankfulnes of mé ſpringeth, yͤ they acknowledge not yͤ party which hath done them ſo much good, but forget him vtterly. And may yͤ excuſe vs? Nay it rather maketh our fault the heynouſer, when we think not vpon God, ſeeing he ſetteth his goodnes before our eyes, ſo as wee may beholde him therein, & we haue as faire preſidents of him there as if he were liuely painted before vs in a table, & yet we looke not vpon him. If God withheld himſelf from vs, ſo as we found no fauour at his hand, and he ſuffered vs to linger in all maner of miſerie, without giuing vs any ſuccour when wee called vppon him: yet were that no ſufficient excuſe, that wee ſhoulde not ſeeke him. For it is the meane whereby hee quickeneth vs vp to call vpon him the more earneſtly. Neuertheleſſe, wee might haue ſome colour to ſay, Alas I wote not what to doe, for God ſeemeth to be gone quite and cleane from me, & it is no maruell though I ſet not my minde vppon him, for I haue no meane to allure mee thereto. But nowe contrariwiſe, ſeeing hee offereth himſelfe to vs, and maketh vs to perceyue his goodneſſe, ſo as we might euen feele him by groping though we were blind: muſt it not needs bee that we be worſe than froward, if we thinke not vpon him? Yes, and yet we ſee this naughtineſſe to bee ordinarie among men. For why? When wee bee once full, wee beare our ſelues on hand that wee haue no more neede of Gods helpe. If neceſſitie pinch vs, then we come running to him. But if he ſend vs the worlde at will, wee become as it were drunken in our delights, all our ſeeking is to wade deeper and deeper, and to bee ſhort, wee neuer come to God but by conſtraint. Wherein we ſee that all the prayers which wee make vnto him when hee afflicteth vs, are but fained and vntrue. For then wee will confeſſe well ynough, that wee be miſerable creatures if he pitie vs not. But what? As ſoone as he hath withdrawen his hand, we neuer think vpon him more. Therefore it is a token that all was but hypocriſie in vs before, & that we were not rightly and ſyncerely minded. Now then we ſhall not faile to be yͤ grieuouſlier condemned, if we forget our God when he draweth neere to vs. For the moe good turnes that he doeth vs, the moe ſignes and recordes haue we that he is willing to be our father, and to take vs for his children, and that hee ſheweth himſelfe in ſuch ſort vnto vs, as we cannot but know him. If this will not moue vs, our curſedneſſe is double. And therefore let vs learne that when our God hath made vs wealthie, we muſt not play the beaſtly folke, which deſpiſe God when they haue the world at wil, as who ſhould ſay they had ynough of their owne to content themſelues withall: but wee muſt bethinke vs of two things. Firſt (as I ſaide) that if our Lord be liberall to vs, his comming to vs and his ſhewing of himſelf ſo familiar & friendly towardes vs, is to the end we ſhoulde know him yͤ better. That is for yͤ firſt point. And again for the ſecond, let vs vnderſtand that if we haue abundance to day, we may bee bereft of it in a minute of an houre, ſo as yͤ man that thinks himſelfe well ſtored, ſhall finde himſelfe naked, bare, and poore, in leſſe than the turning of a hande. Why ſo? Becauſe God auengeth himſelfe of the ſaide vnthankfulneſſe. And it is good reaſon alſo that hee ſhoulde not ſuffer men to forget him, when hee hath ſhewed himſelfe after that faſhion vnto them. Wherefore let vs vnderſtande, that when we be in proſperitie wee haue the iuſter cauſe to call vppon God, not onely to ſhewe that wee bee bounde vnto him for the good that he hath done vs alreadie: but alſo to ſhewe that the goods which we poſſeſſe were nothing, if he ſhould not continue them and maintaine vs in them. Theſe are the things which wee muſt beare in minde.

And therefore let vs marke, that the more God powreth out his benefits vpon vs, the more ought we to be quickened vp by them to thinke the better vppon him. But what? Wee bee farre wyde from the hauing of any ſuch diſcretion with vs: and therefore haue wee ſo much the more neede to bethinke vs of this leſſon that is ſhewed vs here, conſidering what hath happened in all ages. As for the vnbeleeuers, they are often enough vpbraided, that when God ſends them the world moſt at will, then do they moſt kicke againſt him, and ſhewe them- Pſal.73.5.9

ſelues moſt ſtubborne and rebellious. But as touching them yͭ call themſelues beleeuers: euē Deut.32.15 in them alſo is the ſame vice blamed by yͤ holy ſcripture. And not without cauſe: for we ſee that euen the children of God haue bin ſubiect to it. What is written of Ezechias? Although he was 2.Kin.20.13 a peereleſſe perle and mirror of all holines: yet Eſa.39.2.& wee ſee that as ſoone as God gaue him eaſe, he 2.kin.18.5. was no more mindfull to thinke vpon him. Yea and at what point was euē Dauid himſelf? See- 2.Sam.11.2. ing then that this miſdealing fell euen vpō them yͭ were as halfe Angels in this world: let vs be the watchfuller, & let euery of vs labour to redreſſe himſelfe both earely & late. And ſeeing there is ſuch ſlowneſſe in vs, let the ſame ſpurre vs foreward to bethinke vs of Gods grace, yͭ his name may be bleſſed and magnified by vs. Yea & Moſes doeth expreſly make a compariſon here, betweene Gods former guiding of his people, and his leading of them through the wildernes with his afflicting of thē there, after he had brought them out of the thraldome of Egypt, to the end yͭ the ſame might prouoke them the more to be thankfull vnto God. For when we haue once felt many miſeries, & God hath deliuered vs from them: if it moue vs not the more to yeeld him his due praiſe, it is the fouler & hainouſer fault. And that is the cauſe why Moſes ſpeaketh of it. But what? We ſee how the people of old time behaued themſelues. After this deliuerāce, God deliuered his people another time from the captiuitie of Babylon, wherein he reached out his arme after ſo noble a faſhion, as the Prophetes could neuer thinke themſelues to haue ſpoken ynough of his power which he ſhewed therein. Neuertheleſſe, they were no ſooner returned home, but euery man was buſie about the buil- Zac.1.16.17, Agge.1.8.9 ding of his owne houſe, & Gods temple was let alone, no man made account of it. It lay open to raine & ſnowe, ſo as the ſacrifices & al the order of the Church lay dead. And what was yͤ cauſe thereof? Euen priuate profit, which poſſeſſed al ſuch as had receiued that benefit at Gods hand. And how fare wee nowe adayes I praye you? For if our Lord giue vs reſt & eaſe, then in ſtead of knowing our ſhepheard like good ſheepe, we play the wild beaſts with him, and fall to kicking at him. And what are we the better by remembring our former miſeries? Without going any further, in what plyght haue they bin, which at this preſent are well at their eaſe and reſt? And yet are they ſo farre off from faring the better by it, that it grieueth them at the heart that any man ſhould tell them of it. They would haue all the things buryed which they haue indured aforetimes, & alſo the benefites which they haue receiued ſince, and in the meane while become brutiſh like ſwine. They could finde in their hearts (ſay I) to aduance thēſelues againſt God, without being aknowen yͭ they bee beholden to him for any thing: They neuer paſſe for the procuring of Gods honor, neither regard they how much they be bound vnto him. But euery man in the meane ſeaſon followes his owne likings. One burnes in couetouſneſſe, and another in vaine glorie, ſeeking to be aduaunced to authoritie and honour, and to bee taken to be I wote not what. Thus ye ſee at what point they bee, which will needes be taken to bee greateſt and zealouſeſt Chriſtians. Now then ſeeing it is not onely among yͤ Iewes yͭ this foule vnthankfulnes hath reigned, but that wee alſo are ſteyned, yea and vnmeaſurablie attainted with it at this day: Let vs be ſure that yͤ holy Ghoſt warneth vs alſo, & yͭ this doctrine of Moſeſes pointeth at vs too. Nowe therefore let vs followe his ſaying: that is to wit, that our life muſt bee anſwerable to our ſpeech, ſo as wee may ſhewe that wee play not the hypocrites in prayſing God. Indeede the mouth muſt doe his office, and euery man muſt inure himſelfe to praiſe God: and if wee doe it not, our leawdneſſe is apparant euen to little children. For they that ſit downe to the table, and when they haue filled their bellies riſe vp againe without ſhewing any ſigne of feare or reuerence to Godward, deſerue to haue litle children to ſpitte in their faces, or elſe to haue dung caſt vpon them, as they that defie nature. For the very Aſſes and Oxen obſerue a naturall order in their feeding. Such folke doe ſpite GOD through their intemperance and exceſſe, and finally would haue his name aboliſhed, as they ſhewe wellynough. Therefore are they verie monſters, whome men ought euen to abhorre. But yet muſt wee not ſtay there. For heere is a rule giuen vs to pray in ſuch ſort vnto God with our mouth, as our life may beare witneſſe therewithall, that our praying to him is done truely and vnfeynedly. For if when wee haue proteſted with our mouth, that God is our father and ſhewed himſelfe liberall to vs, and that wee liue by his grace, and that he giueth vs all things which he knoweth to bee for our welfare: we after wee haue ſaide ſo, doe giue our ſelues to all naughtineſſe, and take leaue to exempt our ſelues from all ſubiection: wherto ſhal our thankſgiuing ſerue which we haue yeelded with our tongues, but to be as a bond to hold our noſes to yͤ grindeſtone, ſo as wee may haue no ſhift to helpe our ſelues? Then let vs learne to ſing vnto God with ſuch melodie as Moſes ſpeaketh of here: yͭ is to wit, as our whole life agree with our mouth, and as god be honored truly and effectually.

Nowe herewithall let vs marke well howe he addeth, *Take good heede, that when thou haſt eaten and drunke thy fill, and builded thee faire houſes, and increaſed thy Cattell: thy heart doe not ſwell, and thou forget the Lord thy God.* Here Moſes bringeth vs to the very welhead of yͤ naughtineſſe that I haue touched already. Men are vnthankeful & forget god though he ſhew him ſelfe friendly vnto thē, and their praying to him wͭ their tongues is but feining. And wherof commeth that? Moſes ſaith yͭ it commeth of yͤ loftines of the heart. But let vs mark wel, yͭ in ſo ſaying he tanteth mens ſelfweening, in chalenging yͤ things to thēſelues which belong alonely vnto God, as he will expreſſe yet better in yͤ end: but all cannot be ſpoken at once. Then if God haue done vs any good, no doubt but it will inforce vs to graunte in wordes that it is ſo indeede: but yet for all that, wee will not fayle to father all thinges either vppon our owne wiſedome, or vppon our good fortune, or vpon one thing or other. And therefore no maruell though we bee ſo beſotted therwithal, that we thinke no more vpon God? For why? Is there any greater or horribler blindnes, than for men to bee ſo proude as to ſet vp their briſtles and to knowe themſelues no more, but contrariwiſe to imagine themſelues to bee that which they be not? Nowe then, when men are caried away with this falſe opinion of ſelfeſtimation: they bee ſo ouerblinded as they haue neither reaſon nor wit, inſomuch that tell them what a man can, they paſſe not for it, but continue ſtill in their wilfulneſſe. Therefore let vs beware of this Highmindedneſſe which Moſes ſpeaketh of here. And that we may be the warer to keepe our ſelues from it: let vs aſſure our ſelues that euery one of vs haue as it were a roote of it in vs, vntill God haue rid vs of it. In deede there are ſome to bee ſeene which are modeſt, ſo as if God aduance them to honour or wealth, yee ſhall not perceiue any pride or chaunge at all in them. If they become great wheras they were litle before: ye ſhall ſee them holde an euen hande, and continue ſtill gentle. But whereſoeuer wee ſee that: let vs note that God hath wrought there, or elſe it were vnpoſſible. For not without cauſe are Lowelineſſe and meekenes fathered vpon his holy ſpirit. When the holy ſcripture ſpeaketh of thoſe vertues, exhorting men to be mielde, & not to grow proud, but rather to liue quietly with their inferiors: it ſaith that they be ſingular gifts of yͤ holy ghoſt. Againe, we ſee they be verie rare gifts. For howe do moſt men behaue themſelues when they bee aduaunced? [Mieldly?] Nay contrariwiſe we ſee they be intollerable, as who ſhoulde ſaye they came out of the cloudes. But let them beware that they tumble not downe: for there is no loftines ſo high, which God cannot caſt downe, if men ſtande in their owne conceites and forget themſelues. Neuertheleſſe, the worlde ſees that this is too too common, and there is a double vnthankfulnes in it. For firſt they conſider not that the wealth which they haue, cõmeth from aboue: but their hearts are hardened in that behalfe. And ſecondly they fall not to conſider with themſelues afterwarde, that they bee not worthy of it, to the end they might hũble themſelues & thank God for it. But contrariwiſe they be ſo malicious, as they could find in their harts that all the grace of God in the world were ſuppreſſed. Wee ſee this apparantly in thoſe which cannot abide to offer God the ſacrifice of praiſe that Moſes ſpeaks of here: that is to wit, to giue ouer themſelues vnto him with all humilitie, & not to challendge any vertue at all to thẽſelues.

Eſa.42.1.2. & Mat.12,18

Now, that we may ſo do: let vs ad that which hath bin touched: that is to wit, yͭ as God chaſtiſed his people in the wildernes, ſo was he alſo their guide and leader. So then, let vs marke well, that after he hath rebuked the pride that is in vs, and told vs that if God reach out his hand to aduaunce vs, our heart muſt not be puffed vp therefore, but we muſt walke on ſtil in mieldneſſe and awfulnes [towards God,] yea and be gentle louing and courteous towards our neighbours: he bringeth vs backe to conſider what we were, when God vouchſafed to aduaunce vs to worſhip, riches, and ſuch other like thinges. Nowe if we could take hold of this: ſurely whereas we ſet vp our briſtles, we would all of vs caſt downe our eyes continually. True it is that when God hath deliuered vs from our miſeries, we muſt put thẽ quite out of our minde, euen of purpoſe to bee no more diſquieted with the griefe that we haue indured, after that God hath once aſſwaged it after that faſhion: but yet is it not ment that we ſhoulde neuer thinke vpon it more. For why? It muſt alwayes bee as a lookingglaſſe for vs to holde vs in awe, that we play not the looſe colts. Then if a man bee rich, and God haue increaſed him, let him bethinke himſelfe from whence comes this to me? Indeede if a man bee rich by inheritance: he is the more bounde vnto God, ſo as hee ought to acknowledge thus, beholde what a number of goods God hath prouided for me euen before I was borne, ſo as I haue wherewith to content me, and although I bee not one pennie increaſed, yet haue I alreadie more than I need. Such acknowledgement ought they to yeld (ſay I), which are welthy by ſucceſſiõ or inheritance. And when a mans goods are of his owne gathering: let him alwayes haue this regard, I was once poore, and howe am I come to the ſtate wherein I ſee my ſelfe as now? It is not meete I ſhould caſt a ſcarfe before mine eyes in this caſe to forget God: but it behoueth mee to acknowledge his liberalitie towardes mee, and that I am beholden to his free mercie for all that euer I haue. After this manner ought hee that is growen rich, to bethinke him of his former pouertie. For it will ſerue to bridle him, that he ſhall not be ſo miſaduiſed as to wax ſtout againſt God, or to deale cruelly with his neighbours, by oppreſſing or reiecting thẽ that ſeeme to bee his inferiours: but rather practiſe this warning of S. Pauls, of applying our ſelues to the meaneſt ſort, that is to ſay, that although there ſeeme to bee ſome cauſe that we ſhoulde exalt our ſelues: yet we muſt yeelde vnto them and ſtoope to our God. Let him that is aduanced in degree think thus: Alas am I worthy of it? Hath God brought me to this for my faire eyes ſakes? No: but foraſmuch as it hath pleaſed him to exalt me, it becommeth me to acknowledge what I was before. For had not God looked mercifully vppon me, I ſhould not onely haue continued in my former ſtate: but alſo gone to decay, yea and vtterly come to nought. Nowe if a man bethinke himſelf after this faſhion: ſurely he wil behaue himſelfe mieldly, and not bee ſo luſtie as to holde ſcorne of others. And wee haue the more neede to marke wel this doctrine, foraſmuch as wee ſee that the haultineſſe of heart which Moſes ſpeakes of here, is not a ſingle or dubble miſchiefe, but ſuch a one as draweth a long tayle of manie inconueniences after it. What is this aduauncing of our ſelues whereas wee ſhoulde humble our ſelues? Is it not (as yee woulde ſay) a defying of God, and a proclayming of open warre againſt him? Yes: but

1.Cor.9.22. & 1.Tim.6.17.

alas hee is too ſtrong an aduerſarie. It is ſaid yͭ God will caſt downe the eyelids of the proud. Beholde, God proclaymeth warre not for a day or for a yeere, but for euer, againſt all ſuch as exalt themſelues: and yet in the meane while wee ceaſe not to waxe proude continually more and more. And what thinke wee to winne by ſo doing? On the other ſide, if vnthankfulneſſe be ſo intollerable towards men: howe much more heynous will it be towardes God? If a poore man haue his dinner ſent him: hee can well ynough tell that hee had it not before. Some man hath had pittie of him, and ſendes him Corne, breade, or wine. Nowe if hee deuour it and cramme himſelfe full, and in the meane while conſider not who did him that good turne: will not men ſay hee is a hoggiſh vilane? hee is not worthie to haue any good done vnto him. And yet this vnthankfulneſſe toucheth but a mortall man. Beholde, God reacheth vs his hand from heauen, and wheras the earth bringeth foorth fruites for vs: it is the hande of God that beſtoweth thoſe benefites vppon vs. Nowe if wee vouchſafe not to lift vp our eyes vnto him when hee commeth ſo vnto vs, but muſſell with our groynes in the earth, or elſe thinke thoſe thinges to be of our owne getting and deſeruing: I pray you is not ſuch vnthankefulneſſe too too deteſtable? Yes: and yet moreouer it is matched with ſcornefulneſſe towards our neighbours. For if wee cannot finde in our heartes to diſcharge our duetie towardes God, what will wee doe towardes our neighbours? So then, pride doeth euer carie crueltie with it: that is to ſäye, they that foade themſelues ſo in their owne naughtineſſe, are alwayes churliſh towards their neighbours, and their churliſhnes is alwais matched with ſpite & enuie. Inſomuch that if wee bee not perſwaded that God giueth vs all thinges of his owne free goodneſſe, & that it belongeth to him to mainetaine vs in the poſſeſſion of our goods: whenſoeuer wee ſee any man in whom Gods gifts ſhine forth, wee ſhall fall to oppreſſing of him, & wee ſhalbe loth that he ſhould be preferred. And that is yet another ouer outrageous leawdnes. Now therefore ſeeing that this ouerloftines of minde carieth ſo many vyces with it, and maketh vs guiltie ſo many wayes before God, yea & that euen the worlde it ſelfe perceiueth yͤ ſhamefulnes therof, and may wel abhor it: Let vs learn to ſubmit our ſelues to yͭ which Moſes ſaith here, yͭ is to wit, let not our harts be puffed vp when our Lord hath increaſed and multiplied vs.

Pſal.18,28.

Hee doeth not ſimply condemne that men ſhoulde growe wealthie: for Gods bleſſing is of ſuch force, that ſuch as are no great wiſhers, do neuertheleſſe attaine to yͤ things which they neuer looked for, and God outgoeth their deſires, ſo that whereas they were contented with their ſlender ſtate, he ſendeth them much more. Wel then, this of it ſelfe is not to be condemned. Notwithſtanding, let vs learne to keepe our heartes from ſwelling, and to be alwayes poore in ſpirit. Although we haue riches, yet let vs be readie to forgo them whenſoeuer it ſhal pleaſe God: let vs not bee wedded to them: let vs not delight to feede our ſelues with them vnmeaſurablie: neither let vs make them an occaſion to troubble and to oppreſſe our neighbors. That is the thing which we haue to remember vpon this text.

Wherefore let vs mark that it is no wonder to ſee ſo ſmall continuance of things in this world, & ſo many alterations from day to day. For why? Thoſe to whom God hath ſhewed himſelf moſt liberall, do giue ouer themſelues to all naughtines, & moſt forget him: and therefore is he faine to withdrawe his fauour & goodnes from them, and to ſend them ſcarcetie as they bee worthy. Wee ſee what cauſed Ieroboam to turne away from the true religion. God had reached him his hande, and aduanced him to the kingdome, yea euen whẽ he neuer thought of it. The Prophet came to him wͭ this meſſage: God wil giue thee eleuen tribes of Iſrael, ſo as there ſhall remaine but one & a halfe in yͤ houſe of Dauid. Now as ſone as he was thus made king beyond his hope: he thought thus with himſelf: Seing I am in poſſeſſion of yͤ kingdome, it ſtandeth me on hand to looke about me how I may maintaine my ſelf in it. And the beſt way is to prouide yͭ the people go no more to the Temple of Ieruſalem to worſhip there. For yͭ would be a meane to turne them away from my obedience, and to make them to fall away from me: which thing they cannot do if they haue temples heere at home, that they may worſhip the God yͭ is within the countrie of mine owne Iuriſdiction. Thus yee ſee how Ieroboam corrupted yͤ whole ſeruice of God, in hope to maintaine his owne kingdom by it. And what was yͤ cauſe thereof? Euen yͭ he remembered no more of whom hee held his royal crowne, and yͭ it came vnto him of Gods meere free goodnes: but blinded himſelf in ſuch ſort, yͭ he thought to maintaine himſelfe euen as it were in deſpite of God. But we ſee it was the cauſe of horrible deſtruction: ſo as yͤ people was vtterly cõſumed, & Gods vengeance neuer departed frõ thẽ. Sith it is ſo, let vs learne yͭ the more our Lorde ſheweth himſelfe to vs, yͤ more muſt we on our ſide liue in ſuch modeſty, as we alwayes do him homage for the good turnes yͭ hee hath done vs, and as yͤ rememberance of yͤ miſeries which we haue felt, & of the ſlender & wretched ſtate wherin we haue bin, may quicken vs vp & prouoke vs the more, to loue our God for ſhewing himſelfe ſo friendly to vs, & to honor him for giuing vs ſuch occaſion thereof by his beſtowing of benefites vppon vs which we neuer looked for. That is the effect of the things which we haue to marke vppon this text. And we ſee nowadayes what need we haue to bethinke our ſelues of the good yͭ God hath done vs. For what a one hath he ſhewed himſelf towardes vs? I meane if it were but euen in reſpect of the goods of this worlde. Let vs not ſpeake of euerie one ſeuerally, but generally of this place where wee bee. Alas, it was in oppreſſion and bondage, and it ſeemed to haue beene a place appointed to vtter ruine, ſo as there was no hope of recouery as in reſpect of yͤ world. And yet hath God not only planted his worde here, but alſo added freedome moreouer,

1.Kin.12.28

and alſo giuen vs quietneſſe, as wee ſee. All other Countries are troubled, vexed and as good as deliuered vp to the ſpoile: and in the meane while God giueth vs reſpit here. And is not that to the end that wee ſhould haue the more leaſure to ſerue and honour him? Yes: and yet contrariwiſe the worlde ſeeth what lewdneſſe and looſeneſſe raigneth nowe more than euer afore: ſo that the more reſt wee haue, the more doe we ſtriue againſt God, and wee haue no minde to bethinke vs howe bountifull hee hath ſhewed himſelfe towardes vs. Therefore let vs ſee that we liue in feare, and whereas we haue beene in ſome miſerie, and God hath had pitie vppon vs to rid vs of it: let vs vnderſtand that his ſo doing, was bicauſe he was loth that wee ſhould periſh. Hee hath reached out his hand and ouercome our malice, he hath fought with his goodneſſe againſt our naughtineſſe: and ought not that patientneſſe of his, to breake our heartes the more [though they were neuer ſo hard?] Ought wee not to thinke vpon thoſe thinges otherwiſe than we doe? Is not neceſſitie ſtill preſent before vs? Yes. Then let vs marke that Moſes ſpake not alonely to the people of olde time: but that this exhortation belongeth to vs alſo at this day.

And generally let vs vnderſtand further, that euery of vs ought to conſider well with himſelfe, in what caſe and in what plight God found him, when he vouchſafed to chooſe vs and to call vs to his Goſpell. Alas in what taking were wee? We were borne the heires of euerlaſting death,
Epheſ.2.3. vnder the tyrannie of Satan: and God adopted vs to bee his children. In what wretchedneſſe are wee borne euen in reſpect of the world? And
Pſal. 22.11. God ſheweth himſelfe a father to vs euen from our mothers wombe, as is ſaide of it in the two and twentith Pſalme. Againe, let euerie of vs bethinke himſelfe howe many perils and daungers he hath paſſed through: and howe GOD hath deliuered vs from them all. Seeing then that wee doe liue in this world, haue wee not good cauſe to minde Gods benefites continually without ceaſſing, yea and to liue meekely therewithall? Yes: for when wee haue caſt vp our account, I pray you what cauſe haue wee to bee proude? I meane euen of thoſe that are of greateſt abilitie, and beare a goodly porte of vertue and wiſedome, and of all things elſe that can bee named. Alas, if all bee well examined, haue wee not good cauſe euerichone of vs to caſt downe our eyes? And ſeeing that GOD doeth vs good euen while wee bee aſleepe, and while wee thinke not vppon it: are wee not dubble bound vnto him? Yes verily. Therefore let vs knowe theſe thinges, and let vs profite our ſelues by the things that Moſes telleth vs heere, ſo as euery of vs in his ſtate and calling, both great and ſmall, may all ſerue God, and for the performing thereof humble our ſelues and not ſtand in our owne conceites, but alwayes haue a care to call vpon him on whom we depend. And let vs knowe alſo, that the way to prayſe God aright, is both to magnifie his name, and alſo to make our life correſpondent thereunto, ſo as we ſhewe by our deedes, that we bee willing to giue ouer our ſelues wholly vnto him.

Now let vs kneele downe in the preſence of our good God with acknowledgement of our faultes, praying him to make vs feele them better than wee haue done, that being caſt downe in our ſelues, wee may ſeeke none other meanes than to reſort vnto him, and to pray him to hold vs vp with his hand, and ſpecially to ſtrengthen vs with the power of his holy ſpirite, ſo as wee may fight in his ſeruice, and ouercome al the aſſaultes of Satan, the worlde, and ſinne, euen vntill he haue gathered vs into his kingdome. And ſo let vs all ſay, Almighty God heauenly, &c.

On Munday the xxvj. of Auguſt. 1555.

The Lxj. Sermon, which is the fourth vpon the eight Chapter.

14 Thy heart doe not then ſwell, and thou forget the Lord thy God which brought thee out of the land of Egypt from the houſe of bondage.

15 And led thee through the great and terrible wilderneſſe, full of Serpentes that ſpouted fire, and of Scorpions, and of dryth without water. But hee brought thee water from out of the hard rocke.

16 And fed thee in the wilderneſſe with Manna, which thy fathers knew not: of purpoſe to afflict thee, and to trye thee, that hee might doe thee good afterward.

17 That thou mighteſt not ſay in thy hart, mine own power, and the ſtrength of mine owne hand haue gotten mee theſe goods:

18 But that thou mighteſt remember the Lorde thy God. For it is hee that gaue thee this power to get theſe goods, to the intent to make good the couenant which he had ſworne to thy fathers, as appeareth this day.

19 But if thou forget the Lord thy God, and walke after ſtraunge Gods,

and ſerue them, and bow down before them: I proteſt vnto you this day that you ſhall ſurely periſhe.

20 As the Lord deſtroyeth the Nations before you: ſo ſhall you periſhe, becauſe yee haue not obeyed the voyce of the Lord your God.

Here wee muſt goe foreward ſtill with the matter which Moſes had touched afore, and which I haue partly expounded already: which is that he telleth the people what fauour had bin ſhewed them in Gods deliuering of them from the bondage of Egypt, and in his leading of them through the wilderneſſe, which thinges were not doone but of Gods wonderfull goodneſſe. For when we haue beene in aduerſitie, and God hath deliuered vs from it, and done vs good: his mercie hath the greater beautie, and becommeth the better knowen to vs, if the aduerſitie bee ſet before vs againe, and that wee bee put in minde of it. That then is the meaning of Moſes. To the intent that the people ſhoulde not fall aſleepe in their pleaſures, he ſayeth vnto them, conſider in what plyght and taking yee were, whẽ God reached you his hand to ſuccour you. Conſider by what means he brought you into this land where he giueth you reſt at this time Bee mindfull of thoſe thinges, and ye ſhall haue cauſe to ſay that ye haue found ſo great mercie, as there is no excuſe for ye if ye forget it. And he ſpeaketh purpoſely of the Manna, not to the ſame ende that he ſpake of it a while ago: but to doe the people to vnderſtand, that they had bin fedde after ſuch a ſtraunge faſhion, as had not bin commonly ſeene. Behold (ſaith he,) ye haue liued this fortie yeeres togither without bread or vittels. God hath fed ye with Manna, which was a thing vnknowen: and he gaue you a new kinde of drinke: for he made freſh water to come out of the drie and hard rocke for you. Thus chaunged he the order of nature, that yee might the better perceiue the preſence of his Maieſtie. True it is (as hath bin declared heretofore) that when the earth bringeth foorth corne, it is through Gods bleſſing of it, & through his breathing of that power into it, howbeit we perceiue it not. For wee deſpiſe the things that are common among vs, and whẽ we ſpeake of the courſe of nature, wee perſwade our ſelues ẏ God ſhould be excluded, and that he ſhould beare no ſway at all. Now bicauſe we bee ſo dull: it was Gods will to alter the things that are ordinarie among mẽ, and to appoint his people to bee fed with Manna, and to drink of the water which he had made to come out of the hard rocke. That then ſerued to ſhewe his people his heauenly power the better, that they might be driuen to thinke, wee bee not nouriſhed after the maner of men. Beholde, God vttereth himſelfe in this behalfe, and withdraweth vs from the world, as though wee were going vnto him, or as though the heauens were ſet open vnto vs, that we might the better behold his goodneſſe and power, and perceiue that it is he that hath deliuered vs, and maintaineth vs.

Finally Moſes declareth *howe it was Gods will to afflict and try his people, to the ende they ſhould not ſay, It is mine owne power and mine owne ſtrength that hath gotten me this abundance.* And here wee haue to note, firſt the order which God keepeth in teaching his people: which is, to begin with afflictions as Moſes expreſſeth here. And ſo muſt it be: or elſe we ſhall neuer bee well taught, except our Lord haue made vs to feele hunger and thirſt, and to indure pouertie and aduerſitie. We knowe what pride is in men by nature: they be wedded to themſelues and ſtand in their own conceits, and vntil God haue ſubdewed them by force, they be beſotted with vaine ſelfeſoothing. Moreouer when they be full fed, they fall to kicking againſt God and acknowledge him not for their mayſter. Therefore to bring vs to lowlineſſe and obedience, God is faine to afflicte vs. Marke that for one point. And God maketh this triall that Moſes ſpeaketh of, not for that he needeth to ſearch vs, as I haue declared heretofore: (for mortall men are faine to make ſome tryall, bycauſe they knowe not what is in folkes hartes: But God hath no neede thereof: all thinges are knowne vnto him:) but he ſpeaketh after the maner of men when he layeth things open, and diſcouereth them whether there be any fayning or hypocriſie in them, or whether their heart bee right, ſo as they walke roundly and ſoundly. Whẽ God diſcouereth & bewrayeth theſe things he is ſaid to ſearch, examine, and try men. Howbeit his ſo doeing is not for himſelfe, but for vs. For we ſee how men ſtand in their own conceits, bearing themſelues on hande that there is nothing in them but perfect vertue and holyneſſe: but if God nip them a little, by and by the byle burſteth, and out comes the poyſon. Thus yee ſee why it is ſayd that God trieth vs.

And here wee haue to beare in mind, that if God afflict vs oftentimes, wee muſt not think it ſtraunge, conſidering the needefulneſſe thereof. For if hee ſhould let vs alone in our delightes, and handle euery of vs according to our owne liking: what a thing were that? Wee would neuer ſubmit our ſelues vnder his yoke, we ſhould not know what it is to feare him, wee ſhould not skill what it is to humble our ſelues vnder his hand, we ſhould not know what it is to call vpon him, and to ſeeke all our welfare in him. Seeing then that afflictions are ſo beneficial: let vs learn to beare them patiently, and to ſubmit our ſelues to them willingly, though they goe againſt our ſtomacks. Here is expreſſe mention made of humilitie and obedience. For firſt of all, if men continue in their loftineſſe: they cannot bowe to obey God & to ſerue him, but they wil needes haue the brydle layd looſe vpon their necke, & be let alone to follow their own wicked affections and luſtes. Yee ſee then what ſtubborneſſe is rooted in vs, vntil God correct it by mainforce. And ſo there is no obedience, vnleſſe men bee

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beatẽ down with maine ſtrokes, neither is there any lowlines in them, til then. And why? Bicauſe they ſooth themſelues, and take maruelouſly vpon them, bearing themſelues on hande that they want nothing, but that they bee very able men, vntill God haue prooued the contrary vpon them. And that is the thing which Moſes expreſſeth in this text when he ſaith, *It was Gods wil ſo to afflict thee*. And to what end? *To the end thou ſhouldeſt not ſay, It is mine owne ſtrength and myne owne power that haue gotten mee this aboundance.* Wee ſee that when GOD ſuffereth the order of nature to proceede, he that is riche thinketh not that his wealth commeth from heauẽ, or that God did ſet any hand to it: but he ſayth that all came to him by inheritaunce, or by ſucceſſion, or that he hath gotten it by his own trauell and policie. Thus doe men euer aduaunce themſelues, vntill our Lord ſhew them that they be nothing, nor nothing can do, and make them to feele it ſpite of their hartes. Therefore were the people of Iſraell fed after a wonderfull faſhion by the ſpace of fortie yeeres together in the wilderneſſe, to the intent that when they were come into the land that had bin promiſed them and did eate meate, they ſhoulde thinke thus: True it is that as nowe God giueth mee meate, but it was not alwayes ſo: the time hath beene that hee fed mee with Manna: therefore muſt I needes conclude that mine own power hath not purchaſed me the things that I poſſeſſe: I cannot ſay that I my ſelfe am yͤ founder of them: I muſt do homage to my God for them, and hold them al of him: I muſt accept them as of his free gifte, that he may let me inioy them ſtill: for I am worthy to bee bereft of them, if I acknowledge not that they come of him. Now albeit that this inſtruction ſerued for the people of olde tyme: yet belonges it alſo vnto vs, to the end that ſuch as poſſeſſe goods may vnderſtande, that they haue none other intereſt in them, than bycauſe God hath bleſſed them, and powred out his fauour & bountie vpon them. True it is that God reſpecteth not the worthines of men in this caſe: for oftentimes he giueth riches to the wicked, to yͤ intent it ſhould turn to their ſorer condemnatiõ Foraſmuch as he hath ſhewed himſelfe ſo liberall towards them: they muſt come to accoũt & be puniſhed dubble, if they benefite not themſelues by the fauour that was ſhewed them. Yet notwithſtanding we muſt take this for a general rule, yͭ men attaine not to riches by their owne power, wiſedome, or trauell, but onely by Gods bleſſing, whereof it hath pleaſed him to giue a continuall preſident, which ſerueth not onely for the Iewes but alſo for vs, ſo as it behoueth vs to vnderſtand, that although ſome ſeeme to be inriched by their greate diligence, yet is it Gods bleſſing, which worketh with them after that faſhion: and that wheras otherſome are riche before they be borne, ſo as their auncetors haue purchaſed them great poſſeſſions, yet doe none of theſe things happen to them by chaunce, but Gods prouidence ouerruleth all. We muſt (ſay I) referre all theſe things to that which is told vs in

Pſal.127. 2. the Pſalme: namely yͭ a man may well riſe earely and go late to bed, drinke water & eate browne bread not half his fill: & yet ſhall he nothing auaile by it, vnleſſe God reache out his hand and goodnes. On yͤ contrarie part, ſometimes he will cauſe goods to light vpõ his children as they lie aſleepe. And yͭ ſheweth vs yͭ men beguile themſelues, if they thinke to inrich thẽſelues by their owne power: and yͭ they be ſtark mad if they become proud, as though their goods came to thẽ by their owne meanes. For in ſo doing they blaſpheme God, & rob him of his peculiar honor: & therefore is it good reaſon yͭ they alſo ſhould be bereft of the things yͭ he hath giuen them. As for example, if a Vaſſall ſhoulde ſtep vp againſt his lord to whõ he hath promiſed fealtie & homage, & refuſe all the dueties yͭ he is bound vnto: his goods ſhould be ſeaſed, & he be turnẽd out of all yͭ euer he hath, & wel worthy. Now behold here, God dealeth his benefits vnto vs as vnto his Vaſſals, reſeruing yͤ royalties ſtill to himſelf, ſo as he wil be knowne to bee chief Lord of yͤ fee: & it is good reaſon yͭ he ſhould be ſo, ſpecially ſeeing he doth it not for his own benefit but for ours. Now if we be ſo malitious and froward as to defraud him, & to ſet him beſides his right: ſhould he not bereaue vs of the goods yͭ he had giuen vs and make vs poore againe, yͭ he may driue vs of force to ſue vnto him? Yes: & ſo ye ſee whence yͤ chaũges come which we beholde in the worlde, that whereas a houſe is riche and wealthy and neuer like to decay: a man ſhall be at his wits endes to ſee it conſume and ebbe away. I ſpeake not onely of houſes of meane Citizens: but alſo of yͤ houſes of great Lordes, which haue ſo many thouſande poundes of yeerely Rent: it is a wonder to ſee howe they waſte away, firſt to the halfe, then to a third part, & finally to nothing. And how may this come to paſſe? It ſhoulde ſeeme that God makes paſtime, and taketh pleaſure in turning of worldly thinges vpſide downe: howbeit, that is bicauſe of our vnthankfulneſſe. For as much as men hold not the things with good conſcience, which he hath put into their hands: it is meete yͭ they ſhould be diſpatched of them. Therefore it ſtandeth vs ſo much the more on hand, to mark well this doctrine yͭ is contained in theſe words, *Thy God afflicted thee, yea euen of purpoſe that thou ſhouldeſt not now ſay, It is mine owne hand that hath gotten me this abundance.* That if loue & good will cannot perſwade vs to come to ſo much reaſon, as to glorifie God by acknowledging our ſelues to holde all thinges of him: at leaſtwiſe his ſcourging of vs may make vs to thinke it, and driue vs by ſome meanes to bee mindefull of his grace, ſo as wee may fare the better by the examples that hee hath giuen vs at all times, and not onely haue an eye to the things that wee haue ſeene in our owne life, but alſo to the thinges which are reported to vs in the holy ſcripture, to haue bin done long ago: I ſay let vs call them to remembrance, bicauſe God will haue them to ſerue for our inſtructiõ. Now if we be vnthankfull to our God in theſe ſmall things: what wil wee bee in the greater things? [much more vnthankefull,] as the worlde ſeeth. And if wee haue neede to bee tamed by afflictions, leaſt wee ſhould bee puffed vp with pride for our meate and drinke: ſurely we ought much more to be taught by ſuch meanes, in ſpirituall matters. For Gods honour is more greeuouſly impeached in theſe caſes: and yet we ſee that men are moſt inclyned ẏ way. Truly it is too great & vntollerable leaudneſſe already, when mortall men ſurmiſe themſelues to be fed and ſuſteined by their owne power and labour: their yeelding of commendation to their owne policie for their meate and drinke, is already too ſhameful a preſumption. But if they not onely imagin themſelues to be ſuſteined by their own paines taking and trauell, but alſo perſwade themſelues, that they get the kingdome of heauen, and become the children of God, and liue in holineſſe, and all through their owne free will: is not God thereby robbed of the praiſe that is due to him alone? Yes: for he is not onely bereft of his right in theſe flightfull and tranſitorie thinges of the world: but alſo the chiefe part of his honour is taken from him, that is to wit, that he correcteth the naughtineſſe which is in vs, that he quickeneth vs through his goodneſſe, that he calleth vs to ſaluation, and that all the goodneſſe which wee haue, ſhould be acknowledged to come of him. And yet notwithſtanding, wee ſee howe Freewill hath beene magnified, and euen at this day one of the greateſt controuerſies which we haue with the papiſtes, is that they cannot bee made to belieue, that men are vtterly corrupted and mard, and that they be not onely weake, but alſo vtterly vnable to doe any good. In deede they will well ynough graunt that there is ſome feebleneſſe and faultie infirmitie in men: but yet to their ſeeming there is ſtill ſome power in them, and that if God doe but helpe vs and ſupply our weakeneſſe, it is ynough. But when men ouerſhoote themſelues ſo farre, and will needes chalenge a diuine power to themſelues: Is it not meete that they ſhould bee beaten backe, and that God ſhoulde ſubdue them by force, and make them to ſtoope, yea and beate downe and break aſunder the diueliſh pride that is in them? Yes. And indeede that is the very cauſe why hee handleth vs in this tranſitory life, as he handled his people in the deſert. For the life that wee lead here beneath, is anſwerable to the iorney which the people of Iſraell made thoſe fortie yeeres in the wilderneſſe. We be fed heere with bread and wine: but yet neuertheleſſe we craue our ordinary foode at Gods hand as if he ſent vs Manna from heauen. And verily we bee in this world, as in a wilderneſſe: we ſee what daungers hem vs in on all ſides: God is faine to guide vs, and to make vs perceiue his preſence ſo many wayes, as we may well think that the wildernes was a true figure of our ſtate ſuch as it is at this day. For as yet God letteth vs alone in our infirmities, we feele our ſelues in pitifull plight, we be ſo weake as we neede not any thing to caſt vs downe, the deuill doth drawe vs into his nettes, we be deſtitute of al grace, we ſee what troubles doe ſtop our eyes, and we wote not what to ſay, neither on which ſide to turne vs. And why doth God handle vs ſo? Why be we not here as in an earthly paradiſe? Bycauſe we haue neede to be nurtured after that faſhion: for otherwiſe what woulde become of our pride? Wee woulde not thinke ourſelues beholden to God for any thing: but euery of vs would make an ydoll of himſelfe, and worſhippe himſelfe in his owne conceite. Therefore is our Lord fayne to afflict vs, and to ſhewe vs what wee bee, to the ende to make vs ſtoope, and thereby to teache vs to glorifie him. Thus ye ſee what we haue to marke vppon this text of Moſeſes: where hee ſayth, *Thy God afflicted thee in the wilderneſſe.*

And ſo let vs know ẏ Gods chaſtiſing of vs all our life long, is not only to ſubdue vs to his will, to the intent wee ſhould bee obedient: but alſo and chiefely to humble vs, that wee might not preſume any thing of our ſelues, but vtterly diſtruſt our owne ſtrength and abilitie, and reſort vnto him: and moreouer that when he giueth vs proſperitie, wee ſhould conſider whence it commeth, for it is not in our owne power to compaſſe it: and finally that wee ſhould not doe as a nomber of hypocrites doe, who wil wel ynough confeſſe themſelues to bee in rufull caſe, and that they bee wretched creatures: but as ſoone as God hath releeued them and deliuered them from their bondage, they fall to ſtouting againſt him, and thinke no more vpon the miſerie that is paſt. Nowe then it is not ynough for vs to condemne our ſelues when we be pinched by Gods hand, and to ſay, In deede it is true that if God ſuccoured mee not I ſhould bee deſtitute of all that might doe mee good: but alſo when God ſhall haue giuen vs all that we can wiſh, and wee feele his bleſſing abundantly, euen then muſt we bee warer than euer wee were that wee forget him not, and we muſt not compare the time preſent, with the time that wee haue ouerpaſt, as thus: what had become of mee, if God had not reached mee his hand? I had beene vndone a hundred thouſand times. And hath not his maner of ſuccouring me beene wonderfull? Should I now chalenge any thing to my ſelfe? Thus ye ſee how that euen in the time of our abundance, that is to ſay, euen when God giueth vs our harts deſire, wee muſt alwayes bee mindefull of our former aduerſitie, and that in ſuch ſorte, as the honour may redound alonely vnto God, as meete is it ſhould. That is the thing which we haue to beare away in effect vpon thoſe wordes of Moſes.

Nowe hee addeth, *Thou ſhalt remember the Lorde thy God, that it is hee which hath giuen thee the abilitie to get all the goods which thou haſt.* Here Moſes intended to preuent all that euer men can aledge on their owne behalfe. For they bee but too much giuen continually to ſeek ſome colour and ſhew that their welth cōmeth of themſelues. When men take paines for their liuing, they haue an eye to their owne policie, whether they be of ſufficient abilitie & ſkill or no: that is ẏ thing which they looke at. It ſeemeth then, that when a man hath traueled for his liuing, he had at leaſtwiſe a good and forewarde wit, hee was vigilant, hee tooke good opportunities, hee ſhunned the things that might doe him diſpleaſure,

ſure: and therfore men ſhould doe him wrong to ſay he did nothing to it, and that it was the free gift of God: for experience is againſt it. But Moſes anſwereth to all this, ſaying that although men take neuer ſo much paynes, and ſtreine themſelues, and haue neuer ſo good forecaſt to ſhift for themſelues, and bee neuer ſo well aduiſed and diſcreete: yet muſt not God be bereft of his honor. For why? who is it that giueth men Iames 1.17. diſcretion, aptneſſe of body, ſtrength to indure paynes, furtherances, and helpes? Is it not God that putteth all thinges into their handes? And yet is not this all. For God muſt alſo bleſſe all the benefites that he giueth vs: or elſe though a man be neuer ſo highly aduaunced, God needeth no 1.Cor.3.7. more but to giue him a tickle with his litle finger, or to blowe vppon him, and by and by all is quite ſwept away: all is but as an herbe that is greene Pſal.37.2. in the morning, which withereth and dryeth away as ſoone as the ſunne ſhineth vpon it, as is ſayd in the Pſalme, Then let vs marke wel, that Moſes added not this ſaying ẇout cauſe, namely ỷ we muſt thinke our ſelues beholden to God for all thinges, and acknowledge that it is hee which giueth vs the power to get goods. And vnder the word *Power* his intent is to comprehend all that euer we can attribute to our ſelues, whether it be of naturall abilitie and handſomneſſe to doe thinges, or of helpes and meanes ỷ wee haue to further vs withall. For vnleſſe God gouerne & guide vs with his hand: ſurely all ỷ we can doe is to no purpoſe, but all ſhall goe cleane contrary to our intent. And in deed we ſee how ỷ ableſt men that are, do deceiue thẽſelues, & men need not teach them any deceites (as they ſay) in reſpect of ỷ world. God laugheth at their fondneſſe in making their diſcourſes, & at their reckoning ẇout their hoſte, & in the end ouerthroweth all. And ſo, by ỷ word *Power* or *Strẽgth*, Moſes meant not onely ỷ health & diſpoſition of body to trauel, & the wit & diſcretion of minde which wee ought to haue: but alſo the hauing of thinges in our handes, and Gods bleſſing of thẽ, that he make our labor come to good paſſe, ſo as it fall out to our benefite. If we beare this leſſon well in minde, it wil doe vs good al our lyfe long, ſo as proſperitie ſhall not blinde vs, neither ſhall we fall aſleepe to forget our God: but wee ſhall vnderſtand ỷ when he giueth vs wealth, we muſt thinke our ſelues beholden to him for it, and by what meanes ſoeuer it came to vs, ỷ glory thereof muſt not therefore redownd vnto vs, but bee Deut.32.8. reſerued vnto him, as to the partie that beſtoweth his benefites vppon vs, diſtributing them as hee himſelfe thinketh good, and giuing to euery Eph.4.7. man ſuch portion of them as hee liſteth, not for any deſert of ours, but to make vs feele his goodneſſe. Be wee once throughly perſwaded of this, we will thereby take warning not to abuſe our abundance, as they doe which ouerſhoote themſelues into al vnrulyneſſe, which mount vp into pride, and which are giuen to pomp and vanitie to make a ſhowe of themſelues. I ſay. we ſhal be reſtrained from all theſe vices. For it is not for any deſert of ours that God giueth vs riches. Wherfore is it then? To draw vs to him, that we might haue him to be our Sauiour, & finde him beneficiall & kinde towardes vs. Therefore wee muſt vſe his benefites ſoberly and meaſurably: & beſides that, we muſt not be giuen to luſtineſſe & brauery in vanting our ſelues to ỷ worldward. Finally we muſt not think to haue a ſtate of perpetuitie in our goods, as though they might not be taken from vs: but we muſt alwayes put them into Gods hand, ſo as if he giue vs abundance to day, we in yeelding him thankes for the ſame, Phil.4.12. ſhould be ready to beare pouertie with patience to morrowe. By that meanes ye ſee ỷ neither riches nor any other like thing ſhal dazle our eyes to make vs ſtand too much in our owne conceit, and to glorie in our ſelues. For wee will alwayes thinke thus: what am I, but ỷ it pleaſeth my God to giue mee more goods than hee doth to my neighbors? He may take thẽ away againe whenſoeuer it pleaſeth him. Then muſt I not imagin that I haue deſerued aught: but I am the more bound to my God, in that he hath voutſafed to make me thus to feele his fauor. And I muſt not be proude of it: for that were a kicking againſt my maiſter that feedeth me. Therefore muſt I abate the fatneſſe which would prouoke mee to pride, and in the ende make mee to forgette God.

Againe, when wee be thus humbled as touching the tranſitorie thinges of this world: let vs repaire to the principall point, which is, that when our Lord ſhall haue ſtrengthened vs with his holy ſpirite, ſo as wee ſhall haue fought manfully againſt all the temptations of the world, and haue ſerued him in ſuch wiſe as it may bee ſayd of vs, that we haue giuẽ good example vnto others: yet we be not caryed away with foliſh vaineglory: but conſider thus ẇ our ſelues, It is my God that hath giuen me this power. Why am not I as bad as the woorſt naughtipacke in ỷ world? why am I not caryed away with blinde & beaſtly luſtes to giue my ſelfe to all leawdneſſe, but becauſe my God preſerueth mee? I haue had incounters that were hard to beare: & how happeneth it ỷ I haue gotten the vpper hand of them? It is my God that gaue it me. They therfore to whom God giueth the power of his holy Ghoſt, muſt acknowledge themſelues ſo much ỷ more bound vnto him, and that they haue not ỷ power by natural inheritance, but by Gods gift, to ỷ end ỷ he onely ſhould be glorifyed ẇ all humilitie, & ỷ we ſhould not play ỷ lying hypocrits, as they doe which confeſſe ẇ their mouthes ỷ it is God which hath graunted them ỷ grace, & yet ceaſe not to perſwade them ſelues ỷ it commeth of their owne freewill. But let vs vtterly emptie & quite rid our ſelues of ſuch ouerweening: & let vs confeſſe truely ỷ we know our ſelues to haue all thinges of God. And if this be to be acknowledged in bread & wine: what ought to be done concerning the heauẽly life, & in ỷ thinges ỷ belong peculiarly to god, & are aboue ỷ rech of mã? It ſhould ſeeme ỷ men are able euen of nature to get thẽſelues meate & drinke: but whẽ it cõmeth to ỷ making of them ſelues Gods childrẽ, & cõpanions of the Angels & that they ſhould leade a holy life: in ỷ caſe they haue nothing of their owne. And therefore when wee thinke vppon the corruption wherein wee bee by the ſin of Adam, and conſider that God hath cleanſed vs frō it: let vs aſſure our ſelues it is Gods free gift, as wel as is his continual maintaining of vs, and his ſtrengthening of vs at our neede.

Rom.3.16.
& 5.15.&
Eph.2.8.9.

After that Moſes hath ſpoken ſo: he addeth, *That if the people turne away from GOD and ſerue ſtraunge Gods: God will bee angry with them, and they ſhall periſh as the people did whom hee was about to caſt downe before them.* You ſhall periſh *after the ſame maner* ſayth hee. Moſeſes adding of this threat, is to waken them vp the better, which cannot thinke vppon God when they bee too full fed with the good that he hath done them. And it happeneth well neere continually to all men, that if God warne them gently, and deale friendly with them, and let them ſit at reſt as it were in his lap: then it is no ſpeaking to them: for they giue him the deafe eare, and abuſe his fauour by tempting his patience, and the more that hee ſpareth them, the leſſe doe they ſeeme to regard his loue and fauour. Therefore doth it behooue men to be wakened and quickened vp with threateninges. It is true, that God indeuoreth as much as is poſſible to win vs by gentleneſſe and not by conſtreint. But when he ſeeth vs ſo hardharted, that if hee ſpeake gently vnto vs, we make but a mocke of his doctrine, and voutſafe not to thinke vppon it: then doth hee adde threatenings. After the ſame maner dealeth Moſes both here & in many other places, and it is the common order of ſpeach of the holy Ghoſt throughout al ẏ holy ſcripture. Then let vs marke well, that God for his parte is loth to ſpeake otherwiſe than gently vnto vs, and would faine ſo waken vs as we ſhould come to him willingly. But our naughtineſſe and lewdneſſe bewrayeth it ſelfe, in that in ſtead of comming to him, we retire from him. Seeing he allureth vs gently, ſpeaking to vs as a father, or rather as a mother to her little children: muſt it not needes be that we be too froward, when we turne our backes vpon him, and deſpiſe him for ſhewing himſelfe ſo louing to vs? Yes: & yet is it an ordinary vice among vs. And therefore let vs not thinke it ſtraunge, though we heare threatninges oftentimes in ẏ holy ſcripture, and that God ſetteth his wrath before vs: & that we be ſo rebuked when we come at Sermons. For why? Let euery man looke into himſelfe: and if God ſhould alwayes ſet his promiſes afore vs & ſay, come my children, come: let vs ſee if that would ſuffice. Nay contrary wiſe we ſee how euery man abuſeth ſuch goodneſſe. And therefore wheneſoeuer there is any ſharpeneſſe or vehemencie in the doctrine that is ſet forth vnto vs in ẏ name of God: let vs vnderſtand that our naughtineſſe requireth it, and that without it we ſhould continue ſtill in our filthineſſe & rotte in our owne doung, ſo as there would be no meanes to pluck vs out of it, becauſe euery man delightes in his owne deſtruction. And if we were not afraid of Gods iudgement, neuer would any of vs all play the iudge towardes himſelfe, but we would think our ſelues to be ſcaped out of Gods hand, and euery of vs would winke at his owne faultes. For although God cite vs to his iudgement ſeate, & indite vs there to make vs aſhamed: yet ceaſe we not to ſleepe ſtill in our ſinnes. And what would we then doe if we were not threatned? So then it is not without cauſe, that the holy Ghoſt hauing vſed gentleneſſe, falleth to roughneſſe. For it is meete that men ſhoulde bee ſo dealt withall, and that God ſhould not onely wring them by ẏ eares, but alſo ſtryke them hard, to the intent to bowe them, ẏ they may yeeld themſelues teachable and be diſpoſed to come vnto him, which thing they would neuer doe with their good will.

And now Moſes ſayth expreſly, *If yee forget the Lord your God, and goe after ſtraunge Gods:* Whereby he doth vs to vnderſtand, ẏ inaſmuch as the Iſraelites had bin trayned in the ſound doctrine, and in the right religion: they coulde not turne away to ſuperſtition and idolatrie, but through vnthankefulneſſe in forgetting God. For why? If God haue once taught vs his truth, and manifeſted himſelfe to vs: it ought to ſuffice vs, becauſe it is ſo greate a light as we cannot go amiſſe, but of wilfulneſſe. If a man that walketh at noonedayes doe run againſt a ſtone or tumble into a ditch, can hee ſay I ſee it not? Hee ſeeth playnely, and beſides that, hee hath the Sunne to guide him: and how can hee then excuſe himſelfe? Euen ſo is it with vs: When God hath inlightned vs by giuing vs his worde, wee can no more walke in darkeneſſe, inſomuch that if wee ruſh againſt any thing, it is through our owne wilfulneſſe: and if wee fall into the ditch, wee our ſelues are too blame for it. That is the thing which Moſes meant in ſaying, *If yee goe after ſtrange Gods, yee forget the Lord your God.* The poore Paynims that were in thoſe dayes, had more to excuſe themſelues withall than the Iewes had, becauſe God ſhewed not himſelfe vnto them. But foraſmuch as the people of Iſraell had receiued Gods lawe, ſo as hee had ſet them in the way of ſaluation: they could not ſay We knowe him not, according to the ſolemne proteſtation which wee ſhall ſee that Moſes maketh in the two and thirtith Chapter. I cal heauē and earth to witneſſe this day (ſayth hee), that I haue ſet you in the way of ſaluation, ſo as yee cannot henceforth alledge that yee haue not heard any thing, or that if yee had bin taught, yee would haue done your indeuour to liue according to Gods will. I haue ſhewed it you ſufficiently, therefore followe it.

Deut.4.7.8.

Deut.32.1.

Now muſt wee benefite our ſelues by this doctrine, and apply it to our vſe nowadayes. For the Papiſtes, Turkes, and Paynims liue in ignorance, and no maruell at all. True it is that yet for all that they ſhal not faile to be condemned before God. But yet are wee much more blameworthie than they, if wee ſticke not to our God. And why? For hee hath ſent vs the pure doctrine of his Goſpell, hee hath voutſafed to giue vs the vnderſtanding of his trueth, ſo as wee may now diſcerne betweene good and euill. Now if wee turne againe to our olde ſuperſtitions, can wee ſay wee were deceiued through ignorance? No: but God will alwayes holde vs

Rom.2.12.

at this day, that we haue forſaken him lyke backſlyders, and broken our faith lyke periured and diſloyall kaytiſes. Yee ſee then that the thing which wee haue to marke vppon this place, is that when God hath manifeſted himſelfe to vs by his worde, ſo as wee knowe the way of ſaluation: it behoueth vs to be the more circumſpect, and to hold our ſelues the faſter to the pureneſſe of his doctrine. For if wee ſwarue from it, it is becauſe wee haue forgotten our God, that is to ſay, wee haue wilfully turned our backe vppon him, and forſaken him after our knowing of him. In deede this is layd to the charge of all men in generall, I meane euen of the ignoranteſt: for God manifeſteth himſelfe to all men, euen by heauen and earth though he doe no more. But heere the caſe concerneth Gods word, which is the familiar maner of ſhewing himſelfe to vs. And had we this leſſon wel printed in our hearts ſo as wee could bethinke vs to benefite our ſelues by the thinges that are ſhewed vs nowadayes in the Goſpell: wee would neuer forget our God, to ſtep aſide after ſuperſtitions.

Rom. 1. 20.
& Deut. 4. 7. 12.
Hebr. 1. 1. 2.

Notwithſtanding, let vs marke by the way, that if other ſinnes bee intollerable before God: hee abhorreth idolatrie and the corruption of his ſeruice aboue all other crimes. In deede if a man that knoweth the Goſpel doe giue himſelfe to deceite and extorſion, or be ful of pride, crueltie, and malice, or caſt himſelf into whoredome and other filthineſſe and infection: God will ſurely puniſh him: for it is too great a prouoking of him, when wee defile our ſelues ſo, after he hath ſanctifyed vs. But if wee decline to idolatrie: that is not a priuate offence, ſpringing onely of infirmitie that caryeth vs away: but it is an vtter renouncing of God, it is a giuing of him ouer, as though wee intended to haue no more to doe with him. And wee muſt marke moreouer, that although an vpright, honeſt, chaſte and ſober conuerſation be a parte of Gods ſeruice: yet the chiefe ſeruing of him, is to put our truſt in him, to honor him, to call vpon him, and to profeſſe him to bee our onely God. But when wee fall to making of idols, and ſet them vp in his place: is it not a robbing of him of his Godhead? Can wee make any more open warre againſt him? Is it not all one as if we would plucke him downe from heauen, and put him from the gouernment of the world? Yes. Seeing then that the corrupting of Gods ſeruice bringeth ſo horrible confuſion: let vs not thinke it ſtrange that Moſes ſhould tel the Iſraelites here, that if they gaue themſelues lewdly to idolatrie, *God would conſume them:* Yea and that not by gentle and fauorable meanes as in way of chaſtiſement: *but by rooting of them out quite and cleane, as the people ſhould be rooted out which had dwelt before them in the land that hee had promiſed them*. The thing was not yet don: but yet Moſes ſpeaketh of it as of a thing that was moſt certeine to them.

Mat 22. 37. 38.

And ſurely Gods promiſe ought to beare great ſway with vs, when hee behighteth vs any good: and ſo ought his threatnings to bee taken to bee as ſure, when he cannot draw vs to him by gentleneſſe. And that is the cauſe why Moſes ſayth, *I proteſt vnto you this day*. Now by this ſaying we bee warned that God taketh as it were a ſolemn recogniſance of vs, when he ſendeth vs his word: and that the faithfull preaching thereof is as an open proclamation to ſummon vs and to cite vs. Lyke as when a man refuſeth to doe his duetie, then to the intent he may anſwere to the Lawe, hee is cited, and his aduerſary commenceth ſute againſt him: euen ſo doth God deale with vs. For (as I ſayd afore) hee deſireth no more but that we ſhould come to him by gentleneſſe and friendly dealing. But yet if wee bee ſlowe and negligent, ſo as hee cannot allure vs to him: thẽ doth he enter his ſute and make proteſtation againſt vs after this maner; wel then, I haue done what I could to win you, and yet notwithſtanding yee haue bin ſtubborne ſtill towardes me, and therefore I proteſt againſt you. He ſendeth his miniſters as his proctors, yea and hee ſendeth them with ſolemne commiſſion, as if ſome Notary were by to make a publike inſtrument, [as if hee ſhould ſay,] I proteſt againſt you that it was not long of mee that yee were not rid out of the deſtruction wherein yee are: if ye periſh, the fault is in your ſelues. Wherefore let vs mark this well, to the end that when wee come to a Sermon, or reade the holy ſcriptures, if we finde any ſowreneſſe or vehemencie that greeueth vs: wee doe not therefore forbeare to receiue the thinges that are told vs in Gods name, aſſuring our ſelues it is the greateſt benefite that can befall vs, to ſuffer our ſelues to bee ſo rebuked by Gods word, foraſmuch as it bringeth vs to him by repentance. And therefore let vs ſee that we bee not bereft of ſuch a benefite by our owne lewdneſſe.

Now let vs kneele downe in the preſence of our good God with acknowledgement of our faultes, praying him to make vs feele them better than we haue done, ſo as we may be brought to true repentance, to mortify all our wicked luſtes, that wee may be wholy ſubiect vnto him, deſiring nothing but to pleaſe him in al reſpects, and to lead our liues according to his holy commaundementes: and that although we be weake, yet wee may not ceaſe to goe foreward ſtill towardes our wayes end through his power, aſſuring our ſelues that hee will haue his hand continually ſtretched out ouer vs to ſtrengthen vs, vntill hee haue giuen vs full victorie ouer all aſſaultes, and finally taken vs vp into the glorie which hee hath promiſed vs in the kingdome of heauen. That it may pleaſe him to graunt this grace, not onely to vs but alſo to all people and Nations of the earth, &c.

On Tewſday the xxvij. of Auguſt. 1555.

The Lxij. Sermon, which is the firſt vpon the ninth Chapter.

HEarken O Iſrael, This day ſhalt thou goe ouer Iordan, to enter poſſeſſion vpon Nations greater and mightier than thy ſelfe, and vpon Cities that are houge and walled vp to heauen,

2 A people greate and tall, euen the children of the Enakims whome thou haſt knowen, and of whom thou haſt heard ſay, who is hee that can ſtand againſt the children of Enacke?

3 Knowe thou therefore this day, that the Lord thy God goeth before thee as a burning fire: he will deſtroy them and ſubdue them before thy face, he will driue them out and rid them away, as the Lord hath ſaid to thee.

4 And when the Lord thy God ſhall haue caſt them out before thy face: ſay not thou in thy heart, The Lord hath brought mee into this lande to poſſeſſe it, for my righteouſneſſe ſake: for the Lorde hath driuen out theſe Nations before thy face for their wickedneſſe.

5 It is not through thine owne righteouſneſſe or for the rightneſſe of thy heart, that thou art come to the poſſeſſion of their Land. But for the wickedneſſe of thoſe nations, hath the Lord thy God driuen them out before thy face: and to performe the word which the Lord thy God ſware to thy fathers Abraham, Iſaak, and Iacob.

6 Knowe thou therefore that it is not for thine owne righteouſneſſe that the Lorde thy God hath giuen thee this good land to poſſeſſe: for thou art a ſtifnecked people.

WE haue two extreme vices in vs. The one is that if God promiſe vs any thing, and we find it hard: we bee vtterly diſmayed, & to our ſeeming there is no way for God to performe the thing that he hath ſpoken: wherein we deface his power, and yeelde him not his due honor. For as ſoone as
Pſal. 33. 9. God hath ſayd the worde: although the thing ſeeme vtterly vnpoſſible: yet ought wee to conclude, that hee will finde meanes wel ynough to
Rom. 9. 19. Eſa. 40. 18, bring it to paſſe. And why? For his power is infinite and ought not to bee meaſured after our imagination. Therefore wee muſt glorify the Lorde, ſaying: Alas my God: in deed I am at my wits end in this caſe: but I leaue yͤ matter in thy hand, thou canſt worke after ſuch a faſhion as I cannot now comprehend. But in ſtead of honoring the Lord after that maner, wee bee full of douting and vnbeleefe, and fal to ſkanning whether God wil be as good as his worde or no. And if any let come in our way, wee thinke wee be diſappointed of our hope.

Alſo there is another extremitie on the contrarie part: which is, ẏ when God hath brought thinges to paſſe, and matters are diſpatched, we father the doing of them vppon our ſelues, as though God were no body, and forgetting the perplexitie wherein wee were before, we beſotte our ſelues with fond ouerweening, to ſet out our owne prayſe. Thus is God robbed of his honor two wayes: and it is our maner of dealing in all caſes.

For as I ſayd, if wee thinke the thing to bee hard: wee perſwade our ſelues that it ſhall neuer come to paſſe: And when it is done, wee deface his working, and indeuour to take the prayſe of it to our ſelues, and we be ſo vnthankfull to him, that wee would haue him plucked out of his ſeate. For this cauſe Moſes maketh ſuch an exhortation here, as wherein hee reproueth both partes. For on the one ſide hee ſayth, Hearken, yee bee now at the point to enter into the lande that was promiſed you. Nowe I am ſure you will bee afraid: for ye muſt fight againſt great and ſtrong Nations, which doe farre ſurmount you euery way. It may bee therefore that yee will be diſmayed and out of hart, and thereupon turne head, ſo as ye ſhall be diſappointed of the heritage that God hath promiſed you. But plucke you vp a good courage in him, and aſſure your ſelues that it is through his power that you muſt conquere ẏ land of Chanaan, your God will be your guide:

and ye muſt vnderſtande that he is a deuouring fire, to conſume all your enimies. Therefore be not afraide for any thing that ye ſhal ſee, but aſſure your ſelues that the power of God paſſeth all capacitie of man. Now then, if you finde your ſelues abaſhed: ſtay, and let God goe through with his worke, and he will ſhewe that he can (without help of man) conſume all thoſe againſt whome he hath armed himſelfe in his wrath. Be mindfull therefore of the power of your God, & truſt thereunto, and be bolde to reſt vpon it. That is the firſt point which Moſes toucheth here, and it ſerueth to correct the ſaid diſtruſt withall, namely, that men looke no further but whether a thing be eaſie or no, & therupon conclude ſo fondly, that they make not ſuch account of God as they ought to do. Beware (ſaith Moſes) that yee imbace not the power of your God, through any imagination of vnbeeliefe.

Gen.15.16.

And afterwarde he commeth to the ſeconde part, and telleth them that when God ſhall haue giuen them the vpper hande of their enimies, they muſt not boaſt themſelues of it, as though it proceeded of their owne worthineſſe, deſert, abilitie, power, or skill. And why? *For God* (ſaith he) *will driue out thoſe nations becauſe of their wickedneſſe.* And to confirme this withall, I haue tolde you alreadie heretofore, that determinate ſentence was concluded & giuen againſt thoſe nations, foure hundred yeares afore, and that God had taryed patiently for them, to ſee if there were any amendment and conuerſion. But when they continued hardharted ſtill, and that the miſchief increaſed more and more: was it not reaſon ẏ God ſhould execute his iudgement? Yes verily. So then the Iewes are warned that they ſhoulde not be puffed vp with any vaine ſelfeweening, as though they had beene worthie to bee placed in the land of Chanaan: but rather conſider that God executed his vengeance vpon thoſe nations for their euil life, & therefore that they which ſhoulde ſucceede them, ought to humble themſelues the more. And moreouer, that if they compared themſelues with their enimies, there was no cauſe why they ſhould thinke themſelues to haue the better caſe, or that they ought to be preferred before them: I ſay, there was no cauſe why they ſhould haue any ſuch conceit. For Moſes telleth them, that the couenant which God had made with their fathers, was concluded long afore any of them were borne: whereupon it followeth, that God had no reſpect to their deſertes. I haue tolde you moreouer that the ſame couenant was freebeſtowed: for it was not grounded vppon any ſeruice of men, but Gods intent therein was to ſet foorth his owne goodneſſe and mercie. Ye ſee then that the Iſraelites are bereft of al power and glorie, and that all worldly loftineſſe is here beaten downe, ſo as onely God muſt bee knowen to be good and righteous, and men are bounde to him in all caſes, inſomuch that they muſt keepe their mouthes ſhut, and not boaſt of their owne power or vertue, as though they were folke of good abilitie. That in effect is the thing that is treated of in the text which I haue rehearſed.

Rom.4.18. 20.21.

And theſe two vices which Moſes rebuketh, reigned not onely at ſome one time: but they reigne ſtill at this day, and we haue them rooted in our nature. Therefore let vs marke well that this doctrine is directed to vs at this day, and that it behoueth vs to benefite our ſelues by it. So then, as touching the firſt point, let vs call to minde the leſſon that is ſhewed vs by the example of our father Abraham, when it is ſaide, that he beleeued beyond hope, giuing glorie to him that had made the promiſe, in beleeuing him to be able to bring the ſame to paſſe. Lo here a generall rule for all the faithfull: which is, that if they purpoſe to leane vnto Gods promiſes, they muſt not deeme of them after their owne witte and imagination: (for what a thing were that?) but they muſt aſſure them ſelues that God hath meanes in his hande, which are vnknowen to them, and which they conceiue not, and that it is enough for them to haue his word, which is the infallible trueth. This reacheth verie farre: but it ſhall ſuffice for this preſent, to gather a ſhort ſumme of it. For when God calleth vs to him, if wee conſider but what wee our ſelues are: ſurely wee ſhalbee vtterly diſmayed. As for example, when God promiſed iſſue vnto Abraham, he was a man alreadie decayed and ſore broken, as well with age as with trauell that he had endured. His wife alſo was paſt the age of childbearing, and moreouer ſhe had beene barren all the time of her life: it might ſeeme then that God had mocked him in promiſing him iſſue. But what? hee had not an eye to his owne bodie which was forworne and broken with age, (as ſayeth Sainct Paul:) neither had hee an eye whether his wife were able to conceiue or no: but ſeeing that God had ſpoken the worde, hee reſted thereupon, aſſuring himſelfe that foraſmuch as God is faithfull, he ſhoulde not be diſappointed in truſting vnto him. And after the ſame maner muſt wee deale, ſeeing wee haue ſo faire a looking glaſſe. For (as I ſaide) if wee haue an eye to our owne frailtie: in reſpect of our bodies wee be but carions and rottenneſſe: and yet doth God promiſe vs the glorie of his euerlaſting kingdome. Doth the thing ſeeme poſſible to vs? yet then we faile of our duetie euery minute of an houre: and yet doth God promiſe vs ſuch ſtrength as ſhall get the vpper hande of the whole worlde. Let Satan do the worſt he can, and let al the powers of hell imbattell themſelues againſt vs: and yet ſhall wee neuer be ouercome. Where nowe ſhall wee finde this ſtrength? So then it may ſeeme that GOD dalyeth with vs, when hee promiſeth vs the things which we cannot conceiue, ne reache vnto by our owne vnderſtanding. But what? Wee muſt mount vp higher, and wee muſt ſubmit our ſelues to him with ſuch humilitie and ſubiection, as to acknowledge that he is able to performe his promiſe towardes vs in all things whatſoeuer he hath ſpoken. And how? We knowe not that: that paſſeth our capacitie: but let vs haue our eye vppon God. For the chiefe honour that he requireth at our hãds, 1.Sa.15.22. and the verie ſacrifice that hee requireth, is that wee ſhoulde acknowledge his worde to bee the verie vndouted trueth, notwithſtanding that our wit and imagination tell vs the cleane contrarie. Abac.2.1. And that is the cauſe why the Prophet Abacucke ſayeth that hee will goe vp into his tower to keepe watche. When the caſe concerneth faith, wee muſt not ſtay here beneath vppon the earth, neither muſt wee looke but before our noſes as they ſaye: but we muſt learne to goe vp into our tower, that is to ſaye, to diſcharge our ſelues of all worldly incumbrances, and to conſider, that if wee haue not pitched Hebr.6.19. our anker in heauen as the Apoſtle ſayeth, wee ſhalbee toſſed with ſuch ſtormes and whirlewindes, as will ſwallowe vs vp. Looke mee vpon them that ſayle on the ſea. If they ſpye a ſtorme, they caſt Anker, for that is their truſt. Though there come neuer ſo great waues, and although their veſſell bee weatherbeaten and driuen to and fro, yet doeth their Anker preſerue them. And hee vſeth this ſimilitude, to ſhewe vs that our ankerholde muſt reache vp into heauen, and that wee muſt conclude boldly, that Gods ſaying of the worde is ynough. For hee is not variable as mortall men are. Againe, hee is not lauiſh in promiſing fondly, without knowing whether hee bee able to perfourme or no. But if hee ſpeake a thing and perfourme it not out of hande: let vs aſſure our ſelues that his meaning is to humble vs thereby, though we conceiue not his dealings. And therefore let vs remember at one worde, that wee muſt take God for our guyde and leader all our life long. If wee be weake, let vs leane vnto his ſtrength. If wee haue ſtrong and mightie enemies: let vs hope that beeing vnder the keeping and protection of our God, wee ſhalbee preſerued from all daunger, and our enemies ſhall not be able to do any thing againſt vs.

And nowe let vs applie this doctrine to our owne vſe two manner of wayes. For wee be aſſailed on all ſides in this worlde, both in body & in ſoule. Wee ſee what the Church of God is nowadayes: wee be but a ſmall handful of folke, and our enemies are a huge multitude: they ſeeme able ynough to eat vs vp at one bit: wee be like ſheepe without any ſtrength, and they bee like rauening wolues full of crueltie, they haue all the might and power of the worlde on their ſide. Thus yee ſee in what plight and taking the faithfull are at this day. Neuertheleſſe ſith wee heare that our Lorde broodeth vs vnder his winges, and wilbe the preſeruer of our life, aſſuring vs ỹ he wilbe both a wal a rampire and a dytche vnto vs: let vs truſt thereunto, and not dout but hee will preſerue vs. Although the worlde practiſe what it can againſt vs, yet ſhall wee bee alwayes ſafe, ſo wee flee for refuge to our God, and grounde our ſelues vppon the Pſal.116.15. promiſe that hee hath made vs, which is, that both our life and our death are precious in his ſight. And that is the cauſe why Moſes vſeth this preface: *Hearken O Iſrael.* It is not a needeleſſe ſpeache: but foraſmuch as wee be tempted to vnbeleefe, and cannot holde our ſelues to God and ſticke to his promiſes, becauſe the combrances of this worlde haue gotten the vpper hand of vs alreadie: therefore doth God exhort vs to harken to his worde, and hee waketh vs vp, to the ende wee ſhoulde not lye ſtill aſleepe, but vnderſtande, that hee is able to ouercome all the daungers wherwith wee be beſotted and aſſayled in this worlde. Now then, as concerning our worldly enemies, which practiſe the deſtruction of our bodyes: let vs not dout but God is able to withſtande them. Againe, there is the diuel, there are infinite temptations, and wee haue warre euery man within him ſelf, ſo as ſinne dwelleth in vs which Rom.7.5. is the worſt and deadlieſt enemie that we haue. But yet let vs not doubt but wee ſhall well ynough wade out, ſeeing it is ſayde that God will be our leader. For although our ſtrength be weake or rather none at all: yet will God reach vs his hande, ſo as wee ſhalbee vnuanquiſhable. And when it ſeemeth that wee ſhoulde bee vtterly ouerthrowen: wee ſhalbee helde vp by the power of our God. Therfore let vs put our truſt in him: let vs reſt vppon his promiſe: and let vs not be afrayde that wee ſhalbee deceiued. On the contrarie parte wee cannot truſt to our ſelues (bee it neuer ſo little): but God will laugh ſuch ouerweening to skorne: inſomuch that if wee put our truſt in creatures, wee muſt Pſal.62.10. needes bee deceiued and beguyled. But if the caſe concerne the yeelding of glory vnto God: let vs not bee afrayde, that our boldneſſe ſhall turne vs to ſhame, as the Scripture ſaieth in a number of places.

And Moſes plainly ſayeth here, *that God will be their leader*, yea, and euen as a conſuming fire to deſtroy all thinges that ſhalbee againſt them. This is not added without cauſe. For when wee be diſpoſed to further our owne fearefulneſſe, wee exalt the power of our enemies aboue meaſure, and of little dwarfes wee make Gyants. And what will wee doe then, when our enemies be tall and ſtrong in deede? Wee wilbe much more aſtoniſhed at them. But yet doeth Moſes tell vs here, that wee muſt not feede ſuch doutes and diſtruſtes. And for the ſame cauſe hee vſeth this ſimilitude, that Gods fighting for vs ſhall not bee after the common faſhion: but that hee wilbee as a fire to deuoure all. Albeit then that wee haue neither ſworde, ſpeare, gunne, nor other artillerie: yet let it ſuffiſe vs to knowe, that God hath meanes ynough to helpe vs withall, which wee knowe not of. And becauſe this cannot bee ſo wel expreſſed as were requiſite: hee ſayeth that if wee ſee a fire, wee knowe it is able to burne vp a foreſt, a citie, or a whole countrie: and therefore wee ought not to dout, but that God is ſtrong ynough for our enemies, ſeeing hee is a conſuming fire. So likewiſe, when Dauid intendeth to comfort himſelfe in the middeſt of his greateſt troubles, ſo as hee ſeemeth to be hemmed in on all ſydes, and readie to be ſwallowed vp into the gulfes of hel, we heare how he oftentimes ſayeth that God is a conſuming fire, & aſſureth himſelfe Pſal.83.15.

that all they which ſet themſelues after that faſhion againſt him,ſhalbe conſumed thereof,and they that conſpire his death ſhalbe deuowred of that fire which conſumeth all things. After this maner muſt we put this ſaying of Moſes in practiſe. And from hence hath Dauid drawen his ſaide doctrine, as from the fountaine that ſerued all the other Prophets to gather right comfort of, wherewith to reſiſt and ouercome all the troubles that coulde befall them: and the ſame alſo is the cauſe why Moſes declareth that God is a conſuming fire to diſpatche all the enimies of his people. Alſo Dauid fleeth therunto for refuge, whenſoeuer hee ſeeth great armies imbattled againſt him, ſo as he is as a man paſt hope [of victorie,]and is as good as baniſhed out of his owne countrie, yea and moreouer there are ſo manie that practiſe his deſtruction, that he is vexed out of all meaſure. Yee ſee then that he is as a wretched man in vtter extremitie, and as a ſilie creature paſt hope of recouerie: and yet for all that, hee ceaſſeth not to make his boaſt, that hee will neuer bee afrayd as long as hee hath God on his ſide. And after the ſame manner doeth Sainct Paul conclude: If God Rom.8. 29. bee on our ſide, who ſhalbe againſt vs? Not that wee ſhall not haue ſtore of enimies: but that they ſhall not bee able to preuayle againſt vs. They ſhall make their triumphes aforehande, but the victorie ſhall goe with vs, if wee haue God for our defence. Nowe wee ſee the reaſon of this ſimilitude. In the fourth Chapter of this booke Moſes vſed the like ſaying, but it was to another purpoſe. For there his meaning was Deut.4.24. to ſtirre vp the people to feare and warineſſe. And in deede wee haue neede to knowe that God is a conſuming fire two wayes. The one is the ſame that wee haue ſeene in the fourth chapiter,which is alſo alleaged by the Apoſtle in the Hebr.12.29 Epiſtle to the Hebrewes, who expoundeth this text faithfully,ſaying: My friendes,it is a dreadfull thing to fall into the handes of the liuing God: let vs beware howe wee dally with ſuch a Lorde,and let vs receiue his worde with all reuerence,or elſe wee ſhall finde therein that God is a fire to conſume vs. In deed when God commeth to vs and calleth vs vnto him, hee allureth vs graciouſly, and hee ſheweth vs all manner of gentleneſſe and fatherly louing kindneſſe. But yet howſoeuer he deale, his meaning is not that men ſhould abuſe his goodneſſe, as we ſee theſe ſcorners do,of whō there is euer too great ſtore. We ſee a nūber of ſcorners in theſe days which ſkoffe at Gods worde, bearing themſelues on hande,that he which reigneth in heauen, hath no authoritie ouer them.They ouerſhoote them ſelues with deſperate malapertneſſe,and bewray themſelues to haue no more religion than dogs, & yet they perſwade themſelues that they may mocke with God after that faſhion in al matters, & yet notwithſtanding that they ſhall ſkape vnpuniſhed. Now foraſmuch as men are ſo thankleſſe,& do ſet vp their helliſh briſtles againſt god to deſpiſe his goodnes,it is ſaide, that they ſhall feele him to be a conſuming fire. Although hee ſhewe himſelfe a father, & auowe vs to be as his children,ſo as he will hold vs & nouriſh vs in his lappe,of purpoſe that we ſhould behaue our ſelues mildly towardes him,& yeld him his due honor and loue: yet if we abuſe his gracious fauour, ſo as we yeeld him no reuerence nor ſubiection: then in ſteed of feeling his fatherly louing kindneſſe, wee ſhall finde him a conſuming fire to deuour vs. Thus yee ſee howe wee muſt firſt of all take holde of that which Moſes ſayeth here, to the intent wee may liue in awe,feare, and humilitie, and alwayes holde our ſelues vnder the yoke and obedience of him that hath adopted vs,and be true children towardes him as he is a father towardes vs.

Howbeit let vs marke herewithall,that he is a conſuming fire to deuour our enemies. When wee ſee our enemies threaten vs, and that they become proude and ſtately againſt vs, ſo as it may ſeeme that they ſhoulde deſtroy vs with their onely lookes: let vs take holde of Gods power to comfort vs in all our afflictions, and let vs conſider that it is ynough for vs that God is a conſuming fire. Thus ye ſee howe we muſt apply this doctrine to double vſe: firſt, that it may bee as a brydle to holde vs in awe and ſubiection vnder our God: and ſecondly that it may bee as a bulwarke to outſtande all temptations. When wee bee ſtriken in feare, becauſe wee heare that our enemies doe practiſe all that euer they can againſt vs: and that it is in their hande to ouerthrowe vs and deſtroy vs: yet let vs come ſtill backe to this point and ſay, Well then, and what ſhall our God doe? Thinke wee that he ſitteth ydle in heauen? In deede it may well bee that for a time hee will ſuffer vs to bee vexed,and to haue our neckes vnder the ſworde, and to bee as ſilly ſheepe led to the ſlaughter: but yet for all that, our life is precious in his ſight, becauſe hee hath choſen vs to bee his heritage. And although hee ſuffer vs to bee troubled for a time: yet in the ende hee will make vs to perceiue that hee was alwayes at hande with vs, ſo as wee ſhall haue continuall cauſe to glorifie him, ſpecially when wee ſhall ſee that hee ſhall haue ouerthrowen all thoſe which now haue their whole ſwindge againſt vs,in compariſon of whom wee be nothing at all. Thus much concerning the ſaying wherein God is called a conſuming fire.

Now Moſes commeth to the ſeconde matter which wee haue touched, which ought to be wel marked: namely,that when God hath helped & ſuccoured vs, and done more for vs than wee looked for,or than our witte could conceiue: we muſt yeeld him his deſerued glorie, ſo as wee be not ſotted with pride and ouerweening, to challengde that to our ſelues which belongeth alonly vnto God: let vs beware of ſuch vnthankfulneſſe. Againe, let vs not imagine that God ſerueth his turne by vs, in reſpect of any worthineſſe of ours: but let vs vnderſtand that his chooſing of vs is onely in reſpect of his owne good will. Wee ſhall not finde any deſeruing at all in our ſelues in this behalfe: but it is of his onely free mercie, which hee will haue vs to magnifie aboue all things.

True it is, that Moſes ſpeaketh here of the lande of Chanaan. But if men cannot deſerue any thing in this worlde in reſpect of tranſitorie things: howe ſhall they deſerue euerlaſting life? If I cannot winne a little peece of grounde: how ſhall I winne a whole realme? So then, let vs marke that of the things that are ſayd here, wee muſt gather a generall doctrine, which is, that if the children of Iſrael were put in poſſeſſion of the lande that had beene promiſed them, not for their owne righteouſneſſe ſake, but through Gods free goodneſſe: it is much more reaſon that when we ſpeake of the heauenly life, and of the inheritance of the heauenly glorie, wee ſhoulde not dreame vppon any power of our owne, but acknowledge that God hath vttered his righteouſneſſe and ſhewed his goodneſſe in his vouchſafing to chooſe vs. And let vs marke well the argumentes and reaſons which Moſes alleageth here, to pull downe all pride withall, that men might not take occaſion to vaunt them ſelues. *God* (ſayeth hee) *hath driuen out theſe people before you*. That is one point. So then, wil wee bee rid of all vaineglorie? Let vs beholde our ſelues aduiſedly in thoſe whome God puniſheth, and againſt whome he vſeth his extreme rigour. Are wee any better than they? In deede a number of vs can well flatter our ſelues: but yet wee recken without our hoſte, wee come all of Adams corrupt raſe, wee be all forlorne and damned by nature. What is to be done then? Surely if wee conſider well what wee bee: it will ſuffice to beate downe all our preſumption. It is ſaide in the prouerbe, that hee which knoweth himſelfe beſt, ſettes leaſt by himſelfe: but it is ill put in vre. And wee muſt not ſaye, hee ſetteth little by himſelfe: but wee muſt paſſe yet farther: namely, that hee which knoweth himſelfe well, may ſet nothing at all by himſelfe, but rather vtterly abaſe himſelfe, and bee vtterly aſhamed of himſelfe. And here yee ſee what the true knowledge of a mans ſelfe is. Humilitie or lowlineſſe is not a counterfaiting to doe little before God, or to vſe ſome niſe ceremonies: but a through examining and ſifting of a mans ſelfe, ſo as hee acknowledge that there is neither wiſedome, power, righteouſneſſe, nor aught elſe in him, whereof hee may boaſt: but Pſal.62. 10. & Luk.16.15 & Ro.8.6.7. rather conſider on the contrarie parte, that wee bee full of vanitie, leaſing, and vnfaithfulneſſe, that wee bee vnruly and rebellious againſt God, that wee bee fraught full of wicked luſtes, that there is a ſea of all naughtineſſe in vs, and that the faireſt ſhewe of vertue which wee haue, is but filth and dung before God. Lo howe the Scripture ſpeaketh of vs: lo howe it blazeth our armes. Nowe therefore, when men haue well conſidered themſelues: they muſt make this compariſon. Alas, I ſee Gods wrath lye vppon ſuch a man or ſuch a woman, yea and vppon ſuch great and excellent nations. Wee ſee a great number nowadayes which are farre off from the light of life, whereas in the meane while the Goſpell is preached vnto vs, and the way into Gods kingdome is ſet open vnto vs. And yet for all this, are wee better worthie of it than they? Wherein? Let vs looke a little vppon our owne deſeruinges, and let vs alledge all that is poſſible to bee deuiſed. Why then doeth God preferre vs before them? Becauſe it pleaſeth him ſo to doe. So then, looke howe many wretched caſtawayes wee ſee ſtraying away from God, and looke how many ſilly ſoules wee ſee puniſhed at Gods hande: let them all bee as lookingglaſſes for vs to behold our ſelues in, and to make vs conclude, that if God liſted to ſhewe himſelfe a iudge in handling vs after our deſertes, wee ſhoulde bee no more ſpared than they bee, and that our ſtanding is through his free goodneſſe, in aſmuch as hee beareth with vs, and vouchſafeth to ſhewe himſelfe fauourable. Lo what light wee ought to take at Gods mercie towardes vs, when wee ſee his vengeance vppon the vnbeleeuers and rebelles, accordingly alſo as Saint Paul telleth vs in the Rom.3.2.& 4.9 29. Epiſtle to the Romanes, that we ſhoulde be vtterly damned with the wicked, if God ſpared vs not of his owne free goodneſſe. And that is ſaide vnto vs to the intent wee ſhoulde not take any fonde conceit in our ſelues, that might puffe vs vp and make vs drunken. For if wee giue not God the glorie, acknowledging his goodneſſe to be the thing that wee reſt vppon: ſurely hee muſt needes make vs feele to our coſt, that wee bee not worthie to finde ſuch mercie and fauour at his hande. Thus yee ſee why Moſes tolde the Iewes, *that the Chananites & their neighbours ſhoulde bee deſtroyed at Gods hande for their ſinnes ſake*. Well then, the Iewes might haue replyed at the firſt bluſh, If God puniſh them becauſe of their ſinnes: his putting of vs in their place, is a token that hee findeth vs to bee better and righteouſer than them. It is not ſo. For Moſes declareth, that Gods chooſing of the Iewes (as ſhalbee ſhewed more fully hereafter) was not for that they were worthier: for they were much more incorrigible than thoſe nations: and yet did God chooſe them. Now then, let vs learne to profite our ſelues by all the chaſticementes which wee ſee, and which God ſheweth vs in this worlde. And foraſmuch as the blowes light not vppon our ſelues, let vs not forbeare to come to his ſchoole and to humble our ſelues vnto him. For wee haue deſerued to bee touched as roughly by God, as they haue done which are damned. But what? As I ſaide afore, he beareth with vs. That is the firſt argument.

The ſeconde is this: *When the Lord ſhall haue driuen out the people before thee.* Here Moſes cutteth off all the fonde bragges wherewith men deceiue themſelues. As howe? If wee had not played the tall fellowes in fighting manfully againſt our enemies, what had become of vs? We had ſtrong enemies, they were mightie and puiſſant, they had huge fortreſſes and munitions, they were tall of ſtature like Gyants, and wee were but dwarfes in compariſon of them: and therefore it ſtoode vs on hande to plucke vp a ſtout courage. Moſes wypeth away all this, ſaying: Ye ſilly ſoules, it is your God that fought for you, it was not your ſelues. So then, let vs learne, that although God vſe our ſeruice, and wee ſeeme to do ſomewhat: yet the work is not ours, it is alwayes his that worketh it by vs, and which breatheth his ſecrete power into vs. Wee haue nothing of our owne, whereof wee may boaſt, but God muſt alwayes be acknowledged to bee the author of his owne. This is the ſeconde reaſon which Moſes alleageth here, to teach the people that they ſhould not be proud, nor beleeue maruelouſly of their owne power, ſo as they ſhoulde ſay, I haue done this or that, I haue brought this or that to paſſe. No (ſayeth he) thy God is he that driueth out nations, and rooteth them out.

Nowe if this were ſaide of temporall enemies: what is to be ſayde of Satan, and of the enemies of our ſoules? Are wee able to ouercome them? Will the bringing of our owne free will, our merites, and our good workes bee able to ouercome the diuel, the worlde, death it ſelfe, and hell? No, but the blinde wretches are well apayd that they may bee deceiued in bearing themſelues in hande that they can do much, & that they be verie able folke. Yet notwithſtanding, they bee diſgraced heere by the holye Ghoſt, and it is tolde vs that nothing wee be, ne nothing can do of our ſelues: but that all ẏ good Phil.2.13. which wee do commeth of God, and it is he that doeth it in vs. For if a man cannot ſtirre one finger towardes the ſauing of this tranſitorie life: can he ſaue his ſoule vnto the kingdome of heauen? If a man cannot doe any thing againſt his aduerſarie which is a mortall and fraile creature as well as himſelfe: howe ſhal he ouercome the worlde, and all the diuels in hell? So then, let vs learne to deceiue our ſelues no more with theſe fonde imaginations, in thinking our ſelues to haue free will to doe this and that: but let vs knowe that if God reache vs his hand, then ſhall wee be able to ſtand through him & not through our ſelues. Saint Paul glorieth ſufficiently: but Phil.4.13. howe is that? I can doe all thinges (ſayeth hee) through Ieſus Chriſt which ſtrengtheneth mee. He ſayeth he can doe all thinges: and by that meane he defyeth the diuell, (which maner of boldneſſe wee ſee he vſeth chiefely in the Epiſtle to the Philippians:) but yet he reſerueth nothing to himſelfe. He ſayeth that he is ſtrengthened by Ieſus Chriſt. Then if wee be ſtrengthened from aboue: wee ſhall get the vpper hande: But yet (as I ſayd) wee muſt alwayes acknowledge how it is God that ſtrengtheneth vs, and that it is in him and by him that wee ſtande out and get the victorie.

The thirde reaſon that Moſes alleageth is this: *that God in ſetting his people in poſſeſsion of the promiſed lande, had an eye to the promiſe which he had made and ſworne to Abraham, Iſaac, & Iacob.* Hereby the Iewes are put in minde, that God choſe them not as more worthie, more noble, & more excellent than other men, as hath beene ſhewed alreadie: but becauſe hee had made promiſe to their forefathers. But nowe let vs ſee what cauſe moued and led God to giue this lande to Abraham and to his ſeede. If he had had an eye to mans worthineſſe: Abraham deſerued much more than any other, to haue beene ſet in poſſeſſion of that lande. And yet contrariwiſe, his dwelling there was but as a ſtranger, he was driuen out of it, and hee was ſo farre off from hauing of it at his commaundement, that he was Heb.11.9. kept euen from water, not onely when he would haue borowed it at other mennes pittes, but alſo when he had digged pittes by his owne labour: both hee and his ſucceſſours were driuen from Gen.21.25. them. Lo how the holy Patriarches were toſſed too and fro, and how men mocked them & did them many outrages & wrongs, and of all that while they had not one foote of grounde more than a burying place. In ſo much that at length, Iacob was driuen to pay for the grounde where Gen.32.18. & 33.19. & 46.1. he lodged and pitched his tents: and finally conſtrayned to goe into the lande of Egypt, by reaſon of dearth which draue him out of the lande of Chanaan. Now ſeeing that the holie fathers were not putte in poſſeſſion of it during their liues: ſhall wee ſay that their poſteritie were worthier than they? No: it followeth then that Gods couenāt was merely of free gift, and that he had no reſpect to any deſertes of mē. And why? Becauſe he loued that people. Wee muſt not aſke whether he founde any vertue in them or no: but it muſt ſuffice vs that hee liſted to magnifie his mercie. As if he ſhould ſay, I ſeek no cauſe in men to doe them good. But I find it in my ſelfe. For of men that are worthie to bee vtterly reiected, I chooſe out ſome and take them to bee my children, to the intent they ſhoulde giue mee all the prayſe thereof. That is the thing which Moſes had an eye vnto, in alleaging the couenant which God had made with their fathers. Nowe wee knowe (as I ſaid afore) that this couenant was made before theſe people were borne. They could not ſay that God regarded what they were, as ſome phantaſticall perſons do, which ſay that God foreſawe what men woulde be. If he doe but foreſee: ſurely he ſhall finde vs all diuels, that is to ſay vnhappie and curſed creatures, full of all wickedneſſe, and ſuch as haue nothing but vtter abhomination in vs. Thoſe are the thinges that God ſhall finde in vs, if he doe but foreſee. Nay, if he wil haue vs good: he him ſelfe muſt frame vs thereto: for wee bee his workemanſhip as ſayeth Saint Paul in the ſeconde to the Epheſians. Eph.2.10. And the ſame is alſo expreſſed plainly in the foureſcore and fifteenth Pſalme, where it is ſayde Pſal.95.6. that it is he that made vs. And Dauid in that place ſpeaketh not of Gods firſt creating of vs, when wee were ſet into the worlde as his creatures: but hee meaneth it of his reforming of vs by his grace. Nowe then, if God did but foreſee things: then ſawe he nothing in vs but vtter rebellion and wickedneſſe. To bee ſhort wee bee damnable in all reſpects, and heires of endleſſe death. And therefore if hee choſe vs before wee had done either good or euill: it was to magnifie his owne grace, as Saint Paul declareth in the nyenth to the Romanes. Rom.9.11. And ſo yee may ſee what Moſes telleth vs here.

But nowe muſt wee come backe againe

to the ſayde compariſon that I touched afore: which is, that if God woulde haue the ſaide couenant which hee made concerning the lande of Chanaan and the temporal ſucceſſion, to bee knowen to be of his free goodneſſe: it is much more reaſon, that when he calleth vs to be heires of his kingdome, and ſheweth him ſelfe to bee our God and Sauiour, his goodneſſe ſhoulde haue the higheſt degree, and all reſpectes of deſeruing be layde awaye, ſo as men ſhoulde not imagine themſelues to haue I wote not what power of their owne to preuent Gods goodneſſe. Then let vs marke well, that Gods calling of vs, and his vouchſafing to inlighten vs in the beliefe of his Goſpell: is becauſe he had choſen vs, not onely from our mothers wombes, but alſo before the worlde was created, yea, and be- Ephes.1.4. cauſe it pleaſed him to haue vs and to take vs for his owne, euen before all eternitie. And ſo wee haue no cauſe to alleage any thing at all in our owne behalfe, but rather to bee aſhamed of our ſelues, that God may onely bee exalted, and haue all praiſe giuen vnto him. Furthermore let vs conſider well, that wee knowe not why God hath preferred vs before others: for it is only he that putteth a difference betwixt vs, as ſayth 1.Cor.4.7. Saint Paul to the Corinthians. Who is he (ſaith Paul) that maketh thee to excell? And in deede God ſheweth vs matter ynough why hee ſhoulde altogether caſt vs downe, in ſo much that when the faithfull haue throughly examined what is in themſelues: they ſee nothing there but vtter wretchedneſſe, and thoſe are they that knowe them ſelues beſt. What is the cauſe that a number become ſo proude? It is for that they keepe aloofe from God, and are ſo full of hypocriſie that they take vice to bee vertue, and (which woorſe is) doe ſooth themſelues in their vices, filth, and wretchedneſſe. But the faithfull beeing well wakened, doe conſider what Gods iuſtice is. After they haue well examined themſelues, they haue an eye to their faultes, and without flattering of themſelues, they take Gods worde to them to diſcouer all the naughtineſſe in them, whereby they knowe howe to condemne themſelues in good earneſt, & they hinder not themſelues through any hypocriſie. Therefore when God commeth to the faithfull, they acknowledge their owne miſdeedes and hate them in their hearts. And when God hath refourmed them, ſo as they feele that hee hath wrought in them by his holye Ghoſte: they father all vppon his free goodneſſe, knowing well that there is no thing in them woorthie to bee made account of.

And let vs marke herewithall, that ſith our Lorde vouchſafed to keepe the couenaunt which hee ſware to the holy Patriarches: wee neede not to dout but that hee will keepe and perfourme the promiſe at this day, whereby he hath willingly bounde himſelfe vnto vs. The worde *Sweare* is ſet downe, becauſe God conſidering mennes frailtie, thinkes it not ynough to make them a ſingle promiſe, as I haue tolde you heretofore: but alſo hath vouchſafed to ſweare, that they might haue the better warrant to reſt vppon him and vppon his ſayinges. In deede God ought to bee heard and obeyed, though hee giue but his bare worde; but yet he condeſcendeth to our infirmitie, and ſo hath hee vouchſafed to doe euen from the beginning, ſo as hee hath not thought it ynough to giue vs his bare worde, but hee hath alſo warranted it with a ſolemne othe. Wherefore, if in theſe dayes there riſe any dout concerning our ſaluation, yea, or but euen concerning this tranſitorie life: if wee dout what ſhall become of vs: let vs haue an eye to his promiſes, aſſuring our ſelues that they bee warranted to the vttermoſt, to the intent wee ſhoulde haue no cauſe to caſt any dout of them at all. Beholde our God ſweareth, and yet wee charge him with vnfaithfulneſſe: yea, and wee accuſe him, not onely of vntrueth, but alſo of trecherie, yea, and euen of periurie: and what a diueliſh blaſphemie is that? So then, let vs learne to ſticke to the promiſes that are ſo well warranted vnto vs, vnleſſe wee will bee blamed for blaſpheming God after that faſhion.

And let vs marke moreouer, that if he haue kept the promiſe which hee made to Abraham, who was but a poore mortall man, and confirmed the ſame to Iſaac and Iacob, who were but weake creatures though they had receiued neuer ſo excellent giftes of grace: wee may much Hebr.8.6. better truſt that hee will not fayle vs in the couenant which hee hath made with vs, by the hande of our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt the king of glorie and head of Angels, which is the fountayne of all righteouſneſſe and holineſſe.

So then, wee ſee howe this doctrine belongeth vnto vs, at leaſtwiſe, if wee ſtop not our eares, and forſake not the thinges that are offered vs through the great bountifulneſſe of our God, as wee ſee the moſte parte of the worlde doeth nowadayes, ſeeking altogither to blinde their owne eyes, that they might not knowe any whit at all of the thinges that are tolde them concerning Gods promiſes. Let a man call them to the Goſpell, let him ſhewe them the way of ſaluation, and they wote not what it meaneth, they take no taſte of it. And why? Becauſe ſome of them bee traytours and hypocrites, ſome be open deſpiſers of Gods maieſtie, and otherſome bee ſo forepoſſeſſed of their owne wicked affections, as they will not giue any eare vnto God, nor ſuffer him to haue any entrance in vnto them. But as for vs, let vs looke that wee ſubmit our ſelues willingly to his ſayings, and receiue his worde with awe and reuerence, and bee readie to fight vnder the Enſigne of our Captaine Ieſus Chriſt, in reſiſting all the temptations of this worlde ſtoutly, and in ridding awaye of all our wicked luſtes.

And in ſo dooing, let vs not dout but that as GOD adopted vs before wee were borne, and choſe vs of his owne mercie, and hath called vs to his Goſpel, and receiueth vs preſently into his protection: ſo in the ende hee will bring vs to his euerlaſting inheritaunce, to enioye the endeleſſe glorie which hee hath promiſed vs.

Nowe lette vs kneele downe in the preſence of our good GOD with acknowledgement of our faultes, praying him to vouchſafe ſo to cleanſe vs of them, as wee may bee ledde to true repentaunce, and learne to miſlike more of our ſelues than we haue done, that wee may hate the ſinnes whereby we prouoke him to diſpleaſure, and hee ſo arme vs with his ſtrength as wee quayle not: and againe that foraſmuch as this life is a continuall battell, we may not be ſlothfull nor fall aſleepe, but euerie man indeuor to make the ſtrength of the holy Ghoſt auayleable vnto him, ſo as it may make vs to get the vpper hande of all our ghoſtly enemies, euen vntill GOD haue taken vs hence into his reſt. That it may pleaſe him to grant this grace not only to vs but alſo to all people and nations of the earth, &c.

On VVedneſday the xxviii of Auguſt. 1555.

The Lxiij. Sermon which is the ſeconde vpon the ninth Chapter.

6 Knowe ye therefore &c.

7 Remember and forget not that thou diddeſt anger the Lord thy God in the wilderneſſe. Euen from the day that yee came out of the land of Egypt, vnto the time that you came vnto this place, you haue rebelled againſt the Lord.

VVE haue ſeene already yeſterday, howe Moſes warned the people that they ſhoulde not boaſt of themſelues when they were come into the Lande of promiſe: and howe hee tolde them that they had not obtained that benefite for their owne deſertes, but through Gods meere grace and goodneſſe. Wee haue ſeene the three reaſons that he alleaged for the ſame. Howbeit for as much as it is harde to bring men to humilitie, ſo as they may knowe themſelues as they be in deede, and bee vtterly aſhamed of themſelues, not attributing any thing to their owne power, but depending altogether vpon Gods free mercie: Moſes addeth a plaine demonſtration and ſayeth: If ye alleadge your owne worthineſſe and deſertes: *Ye be a ſtiffenecked people*, euen ſuch a one as can not bowe vnder the yoke and obedience of your GOD. Whereby it appeareth that you bee not worthie to bee choſen of your GOD, or to haue ſuch an heritage allotted you, or to bee preferred before other nations, foraſmuch as ye haue not beene any better than they. And he rehearſed the thinges that were yet freſh in remembrance and the rebellions which they had committed in the wilderneſſe, concluding thereupon that they were the leſſe to bee excuſed, becauſe they had forgotten the miracles which GOD had wrought in deliuering them from the bondage of Egypt: for that made their ſinne the haynouſer. Remember therefore (ſayeth hee) howe yee prouoked God to wrath, whyle yee were in the wilderneſſe. And he addeth that the people did it not for once onely: but that they went on ſtill from euill to worſe, and neuer ceaſed their hardening of themſelues in their wilfulneſſe: and therefore they deſerued full well to be vtterly cutte off. And ſo wee muſt needes conclude, that GOD vſed exceeding greate mercie, in that he reſerued that people to himſelfe, and brought them into their promiſed heritage, and that he gaue them the inioying and poſſeſſion thereof of his owne meere goodneſſe. That is the effect of the thing that is conteined here.

Nowe wee haue to note firſt of all, that men will neuer come to confeſſe their faultes and to humble themſelues, vntill they bee conuicted, to their faces: I ſay till they be conuicted, as an offender that is arrained at the barre. For as wee ſee that offenders doe ſhameleſſely denie the faultes that they haue committed, as farre as they can: euen ſo doe all men deale when they be cited before GOD: they doe alwayes ſhrinke backe, and vſe fonde excuſes, rather than openly ſtande to the deniall of it. The knitting vp of the matter is, that they neuer ſerue him but by conſtraynte. That is the cauſe why GOD diſcouereth our leaudeneſſe to make vs aſhamed of it. For if hee ſhoulde not vſe vs after that ſorte, he ſhoulde neuer compaſſe vs to make vs to ſtoope. For firſt wee be combered with pride, and ſecondely wee be blinded with hypocriſie. And therefore foraſmuch as men are ſo high minded, that they can not finde in their heartes to bee acknowen of their owne wretchedneſſe: and therewithall ſo beſotted, that they flatter themſelues in their owne ſinnes: it is requiſite that GOD ſhoulde bring them to it after ſuch manner as wee ſee heere, ſo as he ſhoulde arraigne them and lay their faultes afore them. For men doe not onely endeuour to iuſtifie themſelues, but alſo proceede ſo farre, as euen to accuſe God. And that is the cauſe why he ſayeth by his prophete Eſaie, Well then, let vs goe to lawe together, Eſa. 43.26. and let there be ſome vmper betwixt vs, to ſee who ſhall haue the better hande. True it is that God can not be ſubiect to any iudge or vmper, for his maieſtie can not beare it. But hee laugheth mens curſed ſtatelineſſe to ſcorne, in ẏ they repyne ſo againſt him, and would bring him downe (as it were to the barre) againſte them, to weete who had the better caſe. God therefore in reſpect of ſuch preſumptuouſneſſe, ſayeth, I am contented to haue the matter debated and diſcuſſed, I will alleage my reaſons and you ſhall alleadge yours, and men ſhall diſcerne who hath the right and who hath the wrong. Nowe, hee ſpeaketh not after the ſame faſhion heere: but he telleth the people in one worde, that if they pretende any righteouſneſſe of their owne, he can well diſproue them. And for certaintie thereof, knowe yee (ſayeth Moſes) *that yee bee a ſtiffenecked people.*

We ſee that this doctrine is more than needefull nowe adayes. For if euer men were puffed vppe with pride: if euer they were ſetled in hypocriſie: wee ſee it is nowe in theſe dayes. GOD is mocked with open mouth, and yet the wickeddeſt ſorte will needes be highlieſt exalted, and that no man ſhoulde bee ſo bolde as to open his lippes againſt them. So muche the more therefore hath this doctrine neede to bee ſet foorth, that all loftineſſe may bee beaten downe, and no man preſume anie more to exalt him ſelfe: to that poynt muſt wee come.

Wee ſee that euen among the Papiſts, they that holde this opinion moſt, namely that men are iuſtified by their workes, are leaudeſt loſelles in all their conuerſation. Looke me vpon theſe hypocrites, and vppon all the doctors of poperie: when they intende to maintaine their owne merites, and that men are not iuſtified by fayth: they crie out with full throte and open mouth, What? Ought not Chriſtians to be a holy people ſanctified vnto God? And ought not the holie Ghoſte to gouerne vs? Ought we not to leade an Angelicall life? And yet for all this, yee ſhall ſee them to be whooremongers, drunkardes, periurers, traytours, full of vnfaithfulneſſe, guyle, and extortion, ſo as there ſhall not be one ſparke of feare towardes GOD, or of honeſtie towardes man in them. And yet notwithſtanding, they pretende to bee the earneſteſt defenders of merites, and the deuouteſt perſons that can be: inſomuch that to heare them, yee would thinke there were nothing but holineſſe in them, when as in the meane whyle their life is moſt deteſtable, and ſhamefull, as all the worlde may playnely ſee. But yet doe men deceiue themſelues after that faſhion. And for that cauſe hath Moſes ſette downe this text, not onely for his owne time, but alſo as a rule for vs to practiſe to the worldes ende.

Therefore when wee bee tempted with ouer weening, ſo as our fleſhe prouoketh vs to preſume I wotte not howe to magnifie our ſelues: lette vs remember what is ſayde heere, [and let vs thinke thus with our ſelues:] Howe nowe? Conſider what thou arte, and howe thou haſt liued. If thou ſhouldeſt come to account before GOD, couldeſt thou go through with it? Conſidereſt thou not that thou arte one of the miſerableſt kaytifes in the worlde? And when thou goeſt about to aduaunce thyſelfe: is it not a robbing of GOD of his righteouſneſſe, that he might not be knowen to bee as he is in deede? Yes: For Gods righteouſneſſe can not otherwiſe ſhine foorth, vnleſſe we be vtterly confounded, ſo as we be condemned and hee onely iuſtified, and that wee acknowledge the ſame willingly. Hee then that will haue anie righteouſneſſe of his owne, doeth certainely defie GOD, and make warre againſt him. And therefore muſt wee haue an eye to this warning: How nowe? What is thy life? Art thou able to make aunſwere when thou ſhalt be cited to the iudgement ſeate of thy maker? And therewithall lette vs conſider howe it is ſayde, that for euerie poynte which wee bee able to alleadge for our ſelues, GOD is able to alleadge a thouſande againſt vs, ſo as we muſt needes be confounded. Thus yee ſee howe men ſhoulde be ledde to the conſidering of their liues, when they bee puffed vppe with any pryde, and bee deſirous to iuſtifie themſelues, that is to ſay, to chalendge anie deſerte or worthineſſe before GOD. And to make the Iewes vtterly condemned, Moſes telleth them expreſly that they were a ſtiffenecked people. This ſimilitude is taken of beaſtes that ſhoulde beare the yoke. For if they bee ſturdie and will not bowe their neckes to beare the yooke: they can doe a manne no ſeruice, they be vnprofitable: nay rather they do much harme in ſtriking with their hornes, they breake all thinges aſunder, and in ſteede of going forewarde, they drawe backe. In this reſpecte Moſes declareth in one worde, that ſtiffenecked folke can by no meanes bee taken for righteous.

And for the better vnderſtanding hereof, lette vs marke howe it is ſayde, that obedience is better than all the ſacrifices in the worlde. 1.Sa.15.22. Then lette vs beare in minde, that if men will needes chalendge righteouſneſſe to themſelues, they muſt examine well whether they bowe downe their neckes to ſubmit themſelues wholely vnto God. For if they haue not that: all the reſt is nothing. They may well vaunt themſelues before men: but yet all their vertues are no better than dunge, vntill they bee come ſo farre as to beare Gods yoke, that is to ſay, to behaue themſelues according to his will, and t offer their life vnto him that hee may haue the ouer ruling of them, as hee lyſteth, ſo as they bee contented to obey him ſimplye and without exception. Thus yee ſee that our trewe righteouſneſſe is obedience:

dience: yea and ſuch an obedience, as ſeeketh not to pleaſe mortall men, but the liuing God. And it is a point which we ought to marke well: for hereby the doctrine that I declared afore, is the better confirmed. Men doe alwayes ſurmiſe ſome meriting or deſeruing in themſelues at their owne pleaſure. When they will bee taken for holy and righteous, they haue their priuate deuotions, but in the meane while they make none account of beeing diſobedient to GOD. Contrariwiſe it is tolde vs heere, that God requireth nothing more than obedience. For all that euer we can bring him of our owne, is nothing: but he tryeth whether we loue him and honour him or no, by telling vs his will, and by laying as it were a bridle or a yooke vpon our neckes, as if he ſhoulde ſay: Bee plyable vnder mee, come not perking vp with your heades againſt mee, ſette not vppe your creſtes, ne playe not the wylde coltes: but diſpoſe your ſelues to order your liues according to my Lawes & commandements. That is the thing Iob.35.6.7. & Pſal.16.2 whereto GOD hath an eye. Not that he reapeth anie commoditie by vs, neither that wee can doe him anie harme: but becauſe it is a true proofe that wee bee willing to honour him, when wee ſuffer him to gouerne vs, and runne not euerie man vpon his owne heade, but leaue to him his dewe ſouerainetie and dominion, ſaying: Lorde we be thy poore cattell, directe thou vs according to thine owne will. For we haue neither witte nor reaſon in vs, our luſtes are vtterly frowarde. Nowe therefore reigne thou ouer vs O Lorde, and let thy lawe bee as a yooke and a bridle to vs. And it is the ſame thing alſo which hee meaneth by the ſentence that I alleadged out of the firſt of Samuel, namely that obedience is better than al the Sacrifices in the worlde. Alſo the ſame thing is confirmed Ier.7.21. by Ieremie, ſaying: When thy fathers cam out of Egypt, did I require ſacrifices or ſuch other thinges at their handes? In deede God commaunded ſacrifices: but yet the chiefe thing that hee required, was that they ſhoulde obey his voyce. The thing that God aimed at, the thing wherein all our righteouſneſſe conſiſteth, is to herken to his ſpeeche, that his authoritie may weye with vs, ſo as wee fall not to replying to bee wiſe of our ſelues, nor to doe what wee thinke good: but that hee onely may haue the maiſtrie, and wee no more but open our eares and be heedeful to receiue his doctrin, yea and to receiue it in ſuch wiſe as it may be as a yoke or bridle as I ſayde afore, and ouer rule vs without any gaineſaying. And heereby it appeareth, that if men bee not milde in ſubmitting themſelues wholely to Gods will: farewell all their honeſtie, their life is but leaude. For why? Whereas is nothing but diſobedience, there is not any righteouſnes, becauſe the foundation of all righteouſneſſe and of all good behauiour, is to bee reformed according to the good will of GOD. We muſt not bring our owne meeteyeard nor our owne meaſure in this behalfe: but onely GOD himſelfe muſt ſpeake and be the iudge to diſcerne betwene good and bad: for it is hee to whome it belongeth to acquit or condemne. And hee alloweth or diſalloweth what he himſelfe thinkes good: and there remayneth nothing for vs but to ſay Amen, by allowing whatſoeuer hee thinketh good, and by condemning whatſoeuer he miſliketh.

And Moſes thinkes it not enough to haue ſayde in one worde, *Thou art a ſtiffenecked people*: but he addeth therewithall, *Remember and forgette not that thou diddeſt anger the Lorde thy God in the wilderneſſe, and howe many times ye haue diſobeyed him, from the day that hee brought yee out of the lande of Egypt, euen vnto this preſent time of his bringing of you vnto this place*. Nowe whereas he ſayeth, *Remember and forgette not*: it ſerueth to quicken them vppe the better, becauſe men doe ſtill couer their miſſedeedes, and as ſoone as they finde neuer ſo little a ſhadowe, or peece of colour to ouerlay their offences withall: they doe but wring their mouthes awrye, and by and by they thinke themſelues verie righteous. Gen.3.7. Wee ſee howe it happened to our father Adam: it was no long time ere hee went to ſeeke figge leaues to couer himſelfe withal. But as ſoone as he hadde offended, and GOD rebuked him, and that hee felt his owne rebellion and diſobedience: what did hee? Whereas he ſhoulde haue come vnto GOD, and confeſſed his fault, that hee might haue obteined mercie and forgiueneſſe: he runnes among the leaues and beares himſelfe in hande that hee was wel couered, and that GOD ſhoulde ſee him no more, ſo he had ſome litle ſhadowe to hide himſelfe withall. We put the ſame ſtill in vre dayly: wee haue no ſooner committed anie faulte, but by and by we fall to ſhifting, and wee beate our braynes and wittes to finde out ſome lurkinghoole that GOD might not eſpye vs. To bee ſhorte, there is none of vs but hee makes a denne of theeues of his owne heart, vntill our Lorde doe touch him to the quicke, to bring vs to the ſimplicitie of acknowledgeing our faults. Nowe if we be ſo much inclined to diſguiſe our ſelues [out of hande,] by ſeeking ſhiftes and couertes to withſtande Gods vengeance: what will we doe in length of time? Will wee not vtterly forgoe the remembraunce of our ſinnes altogether? Yes: and that is the cauſe why Moſes ſayde, *Remember thy ſelfe and forgette not*. It hadde beene ynough for him to haue ſayde, *Remember thy ſelfe*. But foraſmuch as men doe what they can to rocke themſelues aſleepe, and ſeeke meanes to ſooth themſelues: Moſes doeth as it were twitch them by the eare heere, ſaying: Goe to ſirs, it is not for you to fall a ſleepe in this matter: although your nature be inclined thereto, yet muſt you not burie your ſinnes, but yee muſt beare them ſtill in minde, and ſette them before your eyes, and then ſhall yee haue cauſe ynough to humble yourſelues. Thus are we warned here, to bethinke vs oftentimes of the faultes that wee haue committed, and to beware that wee ſeeke not vaine colours, ne thinke not that wee haue ſpedde well, when wee haue founde ſome trifling ſhifte to iuſtifie our ſelues with all: but to learne to caſt our ſelues vtterly downe, and to miſlike of ourſelues, and to bee as men condemned, ſo as there remayne none other ſhift for vs, than to flee for refuge to the infinite mercie of our GOD. That is the greateſt benefite that wee can deuiſe to worke to our ſelues, all our life long. But howe ſhall wee be brought to it? By the knowing of our faultes. Now then, in ſteede of ſhunning it as a matter of greefe, and whereas wee be loth to thinke vpon the offences that haue prouoked Gods wrath: let euerie of vs bethinke himſelfe of them early and late, and let vs enter into the examination of our ſelues, to ſay, Alas, howe haue I liued in this worlde? Againe, lette vs not thinke vppon other folkes faultes, to make a buckler of them as wee bee wont to doe: but let vs call all our owne life to minde, nowe one ſinne, and nowe an other, and let vs caſt foorth our ſighes and ſobbes before GOD as witneſſes that wee be not willing to beſot our ſelues, nor to burie our ſelues in our owne dunge by weltring in it: but rather that wee woulde faine attaine to his righteouſneſſe, as whoſe indeuour is to hate and abhorre our ſinnes, and to magnifie Gods grace towardes vs. Which thing can not bee doone, vnleſſe our ſinnes miſlike vs, and wee thinke thus with our ſelues: Well then, needes muſt GOD haue vſed greate goodneſſe towardes mee, ſeeing he hath called me at ſuch time as I was forlorne. Againe, ſince his calling of mee, howe oft haue I deſerued to bee ſhaken off, and to be quite cutte off from his Church? And yet for all that, hee beareth with mee vnto this houre, and continueth his goodneſſe towardes mee ſtill. Thus ye ſee howe wee muſt bethinke vs of our ſinnes, to the ende that Gods goodneſſe may be knowen, and that wee may not onelie taſte of it, but alſo be fully ſatisfied with it.

And furthermore, according to Saint Paules exhortation, which is, that euery man ſhoulde quicken and ſpurre vppe himſelfe, when he ſeeth his fleſhe willing to drawe him to forgetfulneſſe: Let vs not thinke it ſtraunge, though it be ſome greefe to vs at the firſt to thinke vppon our ſinnes. For why? wee be inclined to the ſayde hypocriſie: but yet muſt we fight againſt it, and beware that wee feede it not. And ſo lette vs practiſe the thing that Moſes telleth vs here: which is, *not to forget*. As howe? not that we can alwayes minde it, as reaſon woulde wee ſhoulde: but that the deceiuer foade vs not in our owne vaine flatteries, ſo that although hee ſtoppe our eyes for a time, yet God doe take away the towell, and make vs to ſee our owne diſhoneſtie in open light, ſo as wee be aſhamed of it. And therefore, when wee bethinke vs of our ſinnes and offences, let vs looke into our
1.Cor.11.31 ſelues, and quickē our ſelues vp: for we muſt play the iudges towards our ſelues, if we will obtaine mercie before GOD. Yea and if we will yeelde
Ioſua 7.19. him the dewe prayſe of his grace: wee muſt come to the acknowledgement of our ſinnes. And that muſt not be done for once onely, but euerie of vs muſt giue himſelfe to examination both euening and morning, and vpon the knowledge of one faulte, wee muſt goe to the ſifting out of an other. Trewe it is that in this caſe there is no meaſure, neither can we be too circumſpect. But yet muſt men miſlike of themſelues ſo farre, as to learne to glorifie GOD accordingly: that is to ſay, to reſerue no prayſe, at all to themſelues, no not one graines waight, but to yeelde all goodneſſe vnto him alone, and to acknowledge that there is nothing but euill in themſelues. Thus yee ſee whereunto the knowledge of our ſinnes ought to leade vs. And we muſt neuer ceaſe, vntil we be come thither: and when we be come thither, we muſt continue in it ſtill. For at euerie turne we ſhall ſtumble into this blindeneſſe againe, ſo as wee ſhall be prouder than we were afore, according as wee ſee that ſuch as haue liued in humilitie, doe in the ende become greateſt truſters to their owne witte, when they haue once forgotten themſelues. So then lette vs alwayes beare this leſſon in minde vnto our liues ende, for humilitie is ſo perfecte a vertue, as wee ſhall neuer finde it ſo ſubſtantially in vs as we woulde wiſhe. And therefore muſt we continue in the ſayde endeuour, vntill wee be quite ridde of all the preſumptuouſneſſe of our fleſhe. For pryde is the ſinne that will bee laſt corrected, and it is the roote of all other offences. Thus yee ſee what wee haue to remember vpon this text where Moſes ſayth, Rremember thy ſelfe, and forgette not the faultes which thou haſt committed.

Nowe he addeth, *Howe thou diddeſt anger thy God in the wilderneſſe*. I haue tolde yee breefly alreadie, that the people were ſo muche the leſſe to be excuſed, for that they hauing knowen the wonders which GOD had wrought at their comming out of Ægypt, ceaſſed not to bee ſo malitious and frowarde, as to ſpitte out their poyſon againſt GOD. If they hadde done it afore, truely yet they hadde beene worthie of blame: but yet had their ſinne beene more tollerable. But nowe hadde God vttered his mightie arme in deliuering thoſe wretches out of the cruell bondage wherein they were: and yet notwithſtanding, euen after Gods working in that wiſe, and after they had ſeene the apparaunt ſignes of his maieſtie, they ceaſe not to ſtriue againſt him ſtill: and muſt it not needes be that the deuill poſſeſſeth them, and that they bee as good as bewitched with their owne malice? So then it is not without cauſe that Moſes noteth here the place of the wilderneſſe, to the ende that the people might bee the more humbled, and feele the greateneſſe and hougeneſſe of the offences which they had committed, foraſmuch as they were al at one poynt as if GOD had not vttered himſelfe vnto them at all. For it may fall out that ſillie ſoules which neuer taſted of Gods trueth nor of his workes, ſhall ouerſhoote themſelues and be caried away. But ſeeing that GOD came ſo neere vnto the Iewes and tolde them, I am your Sauiour, I take you into my protection, I will make you to feele my power as though I came downe from heauen in mine owne perſon, and dwelt viſibly among you: I ſay when God ſpeaketh after that faſhion, and bindeth himſelfe by his deedes, and yet for all that there is nothing in them but rebellion: muſt it not needes bee a deſperate frowardeneſſe? Yes verily.. And it is as a warning to make vs look to our ſelues. For ſeeing that GOD ſheweth himſelfe familiarly to vs for our welfare: hee bindeth vs ſo much the more vnto him, as hath beene declared heretofore. Therefore lette vs looke that we prouoke him not when hee hath made vs to feele his goodneſſe: but let vs bee the more obedient vnto him, knowing that his intent in vouchſafing to ſuccour vs, is that wee ſhoulde be moued thereby to honour him and ſerue him the better. And on the other ſide we ſhall be the more blameworthie, when GOD ſhall haue viſited vs by his grace. As for example when he giueth vs his worde, he ſheweth thereby that he hath a care of our ſaluation: ſo that if we benefite not our ſelues thereby in ſeruing him, ſurely wee deſerue the greeuouſer vengeance

And Moſes alleageth not heere the ſinnes of one day: but hee telleth the people that they wente on ſtill from euill to worſe, euen ſince their comming out of Egypt, knowe ye (ſayeth he) that ye haue euer beene diſobedient to your God, euen vnto this day. There had paſſed at that time the ſpace of fourtie yeares, and Pſal.95.10. that was a triall long ynough, as is ſayde in the fourſcorce and fifteenth Pſalme. For there GOD ſheweth his ineſtimable patientneſſe, which he vſed in bearing with the wilfull and intollerable malitiouſneſſe of that people, by the ſpace of fourtie yeares together. But Moſes reckeneth not the yeares heere: for that was a thing well ynough knowen to thoſe whome he ſpake vnto. It was ynough for him to ſay, recken you howe long it is agoe ſince your GOD brought you out of the bondage of Egypt: hee hath ledde you through the wilderneſſe, hee hath ſhewed himſelfe alwayes preſent with you: & yet haue you not knowen him of al the while. Had yee miſſed but once onely, yet hadde ye well deſerued to be chaſtiſed. But what? Seeing yee haue had ſo many warninges, ſo manie threatninges, ſo manie rebukes, and ſo many puniſhmentes, yea and ſo manie benefites alſo at Gods hande: and yet notwithſtanding yee holde on ſtill, and growe worſe and worſe in ſteede of amending: muſt it not needes bee ſayde that ye be vtterly paſt recouerie? Yes: for our Lorde hath not lefte anie thing vndoone, that might bring yee backe into the right way: and yet for all that, yee haue continued ſtubbourne ſtill, and withſtoode him to the vttermoſt. Nowe therefore lette vs marke well this text where our Lorde vpbrayeth men, not with ſome one faulte, but with a continuall ſtubbornneſſe againſt him, in holding on ſtill in their wilfulneſſe, inſomuch that though hee correct them both by deedes and wordes, yet are they ſtill imbrewed with their ſinnes, and delight and welter themſelues in them. For wee ſee what is in vs. Trueth it is that wee woulde at the firſt ſight condemne the thinges that are reported here of the Iewes: but we muſt alſo apply all thoſe thinges to our inſtruction, according as it is ſayde that that people muſt ſerue vs as a lookingglaſſe to beholde our ſelues in. Therefore lette vs beare in minde the thinges that Moſes noteth heere. For whereas hee ſayeth, *euer ſince the day*: hee comprehendeth all their rebellions that are rehearſed as well in the booke of Exodus, as in the booke of Numbers. Exod.14.11 There it is ſhewed, that as ſoone as the people were paſſed the wilderneſſe, by and by they fell to murmuring. Howe nowe, ſayde they? was there not roome ynough to burie vs in Egypt? So that whereas they ſhoulde haue ſayde, Alas Lorde, in deede thou haſte beene ſingularly gratious vnto vs in deliuering vs from ſo painefull and miſerable a life as wee were in: for we were taken but as wretched beaſtes, we were vtterly oppreſſed vnder the crueltie of the wicked and of thine enemies: and ſoothly Lorde this goodneſſe of thine deſerueth well to bee magnified: but yet thou beſtoweſt thy ſelfe vppon vs after an other faſhion: for in the wilderneſſe, we were deſtitute of all foode, ſo as wee ſhoulde haue beene fayne to dye for hunger, if thou haddeſt not pitied vs: and not onely ſo, but thou haſt helde on ſtill in ſuccouring vs as we reſorted to thee: therefore lette it pleaſe thee to beare with our weakeneſſe, and to feede vs as if wee were ſillie birdes: for it is thou that feedeſt the Rauens and other foules, Pſal.104.27 & 147.9. and wee be creatures formed after thine owne image: nay moreouer we be the people whome thou haſt choſen: nowe therefore ſeeing thou haſte vouchſafed to adopt vs for thy children, ſhewe vs at leaſtwiſe as much fauour as thou doeſt to other nations that are not ſo neere thee as wee are: whereas the people ſhoulde haue come with all lowelineſſe to acknowledge the former good turnes that GOD had doone them, and thereby haue aſſured themſelues with certainetie of fayth, that he woulde holde on ſtill for the time to come: in ſteede of doing ſo, they ſayde: Was there not roome enough in Egypt to burie vs in? Exod.14.11 & 16.3. They did quite and cleane forgette the fauour which they had receiued at Gods hande. And againe, when they were in neceſſitie, they came not to him with intreataunce, but with murmuring, rayling and accuſing. Likewiſe when Manna had beene giuen them from heauen, and they had Exod.17.2. Numb.20.2. eaten of it: yet they demaunded drinke after an other faſhion. They aske their almes with the ſworde in their fiſt. Like as the theefe that woulde cutte the throte of a traueiler: ſo theſe leaude loſelles fel to ſpyting of GOD the ſeconde time, ſaying: Yea in deede wee haue Manna to feed on, but we muſt haue drinke too. Yea and when GOD had giuen them drinke, and made a ſtreame to guſhe out of the rocke: ỹ would not ſuffice them neither. For the Manna was too vnſauorie a food for them, they would needs haue varietie. They had ſtil Mãna & Manna, & they were glutted with it: & yet notwithſtanding it was a good & ſauorly nouriſhment. Numb.11.4 31.

Beſides this, they were not driuen to till the grounde, they were not faine to trouble themſelues much with the earning of their liuing: for God gaue them both meate and drinke: and yet notwithſtanding they cryed out vpon him ſtill, Giue, giue: Their luſts were ſo inordinate, that they prouoked Gods vengeance againſt themſelues, by murmuring againſt him for wante of fleſhe. Loe heare a maruellous thankeleſneſſe. Well then, they had fleſh: but that was to choke them euen with their delicate morſelles, inſomuch that while the meate was yet in their throtes, Gods wrath was ſo kindled vpon them, that they payed very deere for their ſhotte, becauſe they were not contented with the ineſtimable good that God had done them. For the Manna was a heauenly foode, yea and a Pſal.78.25. foode of Angelles as it is ſayde in the Pſalme. But although they felt Gods puniſhmentes, and both ſawe and felt the vengeance that ouerwhelmed them: yet notwithſtãding they ceaſed not to prouoke him to anger newe againe, after other faſhions, ſomtimes by committing whordome, ſometimes by banding againſt Moſes and Aaron, ſometime by murmuring, and ſometime by tayling. To be ſhort, there was neither ende nor meaſure of their doinges. And therefore not without cauſe doeth Moſes ſay vnto them heere, *Bethinke yee of the great number of faultes which yee haue committed euer ſince the day that yee came out of the lande of Egypt, euen vnto this preſent time that God hath brought you into this Lande.*

Whereas he ſayeth, *God hath brought you*: it ſerueth to quicken them vppe the better. As if hee ſhoulde ſay, Who hath beene your leader? Leaude folke as ye be, your GOD hath well mainteyned, guided, and ledde you: hee hath vphelde you and helped you in all your neceſſities: and yet will you needes come and ſette vp your briſtles thus againſt him? Nowe ſith wee heare this of the Iewes: lette it not make vs to blame them: but lette it make vs behoulde our ſelues in their perſons, and conſider howe neere this example toucheth vs, that euerie of vs may looke into himſelfe, and all of vs acknowledge generally that wee bee no better than they. And for proofe thereof, we be not in a wilderneſſe, neither is there a time of fortie yeares ſette a forehande vnto vs: but lette euerie of vs take his whole life, euen from the time that GOD did put vs into this worlde, vnto our buryingday. Howe liue wee? God for his part powreth out ſo many benefites vpon vs, as wee haue good cauſe to ſerue and honour him, yea though there were no more than that which he hath done alreadie. But ſeeing hee continueth in doing vs good ſtill: is it not ynough to ſoften our heartes, though they were of yron or ſteele? Yes verily: and yet wee ceaſe not to ſpite him by going on ſtill from euil to worſe. Nowe then like as Moſes vpbrayded the Iewes with their continuaunce in euill dooing: ſo lette euerie of vs conſider, that our prouoking of our GOD hath not beene for once onelie: but that whereas wee ſhould haue beene drawen vnto him, wee haue ſhrunke away from him and rebelled againſt him. And whereas wee ſhoulde haue offered our ſelues readily to beare his yooke: wee haue beene ſo ſtubborne as hee coulde not wealde vs: and one naughtineſſe hath ſo drawen on an other, that our ſinnes are come to a horrible confuſed heape. Thus then muſt we compare our ſelues with thoſe to whome Moſes ſpeaketh here.

Here it might be demaunded, howe Moſes can ſay that they which liued at that time, had rebelled againſt GOD euer ſince the time that they came out of Ægypt. For at that time the moſt parte of them were babes, or at leaſtwiſe not of full yeares of diſcretion. For we haue ſeene expreſſely in the firſt Chapter, Deut.1.35. that GOD was minded to haue deſtroyed all that companie, euen young children and all. For they that were come to mans eſtate, had made themſelues vnworthie to enioye the inheritaunce that was promiſed them, and they were baniſhed and ſhutte out from it. Howe then doeth Moſes vpbrayde them that they had not ceaſed to prouoke Gods wrath continually? For they might haue replyed: Howe ſo? Though our fathers miſſebehaued themſelues, ſo as they were vnthankefull, diſobedient, rebellious, and full of murmuring and wicked luſtes: ſhoulde thoſe thinges bee layde vppon vs? No: for wee coulde not doe withall. But let vs marke that heere the whole bodie of the people is ſo blamed, that the children are rightly condemned in the perſons of their fathers. For it was ſtill one bodie: and whereas the fathers behaued themſelues naughtily and wickedly: the children amended not, but continued in the ſame euill, as is to bee ſeene. And therefore foraſmuch as the children linked in with their fathers: it is meete that they ſhould be knit vp as it were all in one bundle, and that GOD ſhould condemne them all in generall. And after the ſame manner are they ſpoken of in the foureſcore & ninth, and alſo in the threeſcore and eighteenth Pſalmes. For there our Pſal.89.31.32.33.&78 9.10.11. Lorde ſayth, Remember your ſelues howe yee were diſobedient to me in the wilderneſſe. And afterwarde the prophete rehearſeth their faulte againe, howe oftentimes they had misbehaued themſelues: and thereupon concludeth, yͭ they had alwaies perſiſted in euill, euen frõ their firſt entering into the lande of Chanaan. Inſomuch that if the fathers liued naughtily in the wilderneſſe, their children followed the ſame trade, yea and became much worſe. For when they were once in poſſeſſion of the heritage which was Gods reſting place: they ſhould haue giuen themſelues to the ſeruing and honoring of him to the vttermoſt of their power. But all their indeuour was to defile the lande which God had hallowed to himſelfe, by filling it full of ſuperſtition and ydolatrie. God gaue them the inheritaunce freely, as if he ſhould haue ſayde, I aske no more of you but that ye ſerue me, acknowledging that I haue beene a good louing father to you, and that I haue alwayes mainteyned and kept you. But in ſteede of doing homage to

God for theſe things, the people fel to ſetting vp of idols, borowing all the corruptions of the heathen, and bringing in falſe and counterfet Religions. Ye ſee then that they deſerued well to be eſtraunged and quite cut of from God. Alſo wee ſee that the prophetes did continually vpbraide the children of Iſraell with their vnthankfulnes, yea euen generally, according alſo as euery man was giltie thereof. And S. Steuen hath declared Act.7.51. my ſayd reaſon yet better. For he ſayth, ye haue euer reſiſted the holy Ghoſt, like as your fathers did afore you. If the Iewes of that time had quietly ſubmitted themſelues to the Goſpell, and receaued Ieſus Chriſt as their ſauiour, ſo as they had honored and imbraced him with fayth and repentance: S. Steuen would not haue gone about to rip vp the ſhame of their forefathers. For that was hidden. But for as much as they turned all thinges vpſide downe, and beleeued not the Goſpell, but forſooke the grace of God, and trampled it vnder their feete, aduauncing themſelues with diueliſh pride and furie, to aboliſh the name of our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt, and to deface the goodneſſe that GOD had ſhewed them: it was requiſite that the ſinnes of their fathers ſhould be put into their account, and that God ſhould ſet himſelfe againſt them, to condemne the malicious wilfulneſſe of that people, and the faultes that had beene committed by the ſpace of two or three thouſand yeeres afore. And therefore let vs learne, that although God pardon the offences of our fathers that haue doone amiſſe: yet ſhall they not fayle to remayne ſtill of record in his regiſters, if we hold on and continue like vnto them. Will we then haue the ſinnes of our forefathers buried, and ẏ God ſhould forget thē and not call vs to account for them? Let vs looke that we be the carefuller to keepe our ſelues from being like to them. And ſo ye ſee how it is expedient for vs to thinke vpon the ſinnes that haue bin cõmitted before we were borne. Let vs conſider thus: Alas I was yet vnborne at that time: but howe ſhall I do, if my forefathers haue done amiſſe, and that I for my part bee put in among them? For it is ſaide that God gathereth together the ſins of the fathers vnto the third & fourth generation, to let them fall vpon their children. Then doe we deſerue to be deſtroyed and to periſh, if God liſted to vſe rigour towardes vs. For the ſaide threat of the law is rightful, and might iuſtly be executed vpon our heads: and if he ſpare vs, it is of his owne mere goodneſſe. For to what purpoſe ſhould we put ouer the fault to our fathers, of prouoking Gods wrath both againſt themſelues and vs: when we our ſelues continue in their wickednes? Ought not the vengeance to be dubble, when we on our part haue cleaued to their ſinnes as well as they? Thus ye ſee what we haue to remember vppon this place, where Moſes doeth not onely blame them that liued in his time for the things then preſently committed: but alſo moreouer charge them with all the tranſgreſſions that their fathers had committed, from their comming out of Egypt, vnto that day. Nowe then the thing that we haue to marke heere in effect, is that men doe not onely marre themſelues, by bearing themſelues on hande that they bee righteous, for want of conſidering their ſinnes throughly: but alſo that they puffe vp themſelues with pride, ſo as they will needes make God beleeue that blacke is white. And therfore let it prouoke vs to condemn our ſelues willingly according to this doctrine of Moſes. So then, let vs acknowledge our ſinnes truly and vnfeynedly, ẏ we may ſo miſlike of thē, as there may not one drop of fond preſumptuouſneſſe remain in vs, but that we may be vtterly caſt downe, and acknoweledge that there is nothing but vtter wretchedneſſe in vs, and that we be beholden to God for all goodneſſe, ſo as we haue it of his free gift, and not as in recompence of any reward for any merit or deſert of ours, but onely of his own free mercy which he hath vſed towardes vs. So farre then muſt we come of neceſſitie. And for performance hereof, let vs euening & morning inforce and indeuour our ſelues to call to minde the faults that we haue committed. And that we may enter into this triall and examination of our ſelues: let vs bethinke vs both of our owne ſinnes and of the ſinnes of our forefathers, and let vs aſſure our ſelues that if God woulde play the Iudge with vs, wee ſhoulde not onely bee vtterly rooted out, for our owne faultes which are yet freſhe in our rememberance, but alſo all the euill that hath beene committed before we were borne, might iuſtly be called backe againe vpon our heades, ſeeing wee be wrapped in the ſame offences that our auncetors were. Therefore let vs thinke well vpon theſe things: that wee may magnifie the goodneſſe of our God in bearing with vs. And to the intent wee play not the hypocrites: let vs marke well how it is ſayde, that it is ynough to haue prouoked GOD alreadie. For when they haue fought againſt God and his worde, and haue behaued themſelues lewdly all the time of their lyfe: yet at their death they make no conſcience to ſay, I thought I did as wel in fighting againſt God, as if I had fought againſt the Pope and the Maſſe. [What a thing is it] to vſe ſuch ſpeech? Is it not apparant that ſuch folke are vtterly paſt recouerie, as haue their conſciences ſo dulled, and that the diuell carieth them away, ſo as they can no more be ſorie for their ſinnes, (which, as ſayeth S. Paule, is the full meaſure of all confuſion:) when ſuch graceleſſe creatures will needes iuſti- 1.Tim.4.2. fie themſelues after that ſort with ſo vaine couertures? Let vs marke well then, that wee muſt not alleage, I thought ſo: but it is ynough that we haue prouoked our God. And if moreouer our owne conſcience accuſe vs thereof: what will become of vs? Will God in the meane while become as a dead idoll which ſeeth not our offences at all? A man thinketh his owne wayes to bee good, ſayeth Salomon: but our Lorde Prou.16,9. holdeth the balance in his hand and weyeth our woorkes. And Saint Iohn telleth vs, that if wee feele any heartbyting in our conſcience: the 1.Iohn 3.20 ſame iudgeth vs alreadie: and what will become of vs then, when wee come before God? Doeth not he ſee clearer than our owne conſciences?

Yes: and therefore let vs marke wel that we ſhal win nothing by flattering of our ſelues: but God muſt be faine to woorke ſo in vs, as we may bee ouermaiſtred and vtterly caſt downe to ſay, Alas if GOD ſhould not ſpare vs wee were vndoone. And moreouer let vs knowe, that our true righteouſneſſe, (I meane not to glory of it, but to ſeeke it to our benefite): is to beare Gods yoke, ſo as wee liue not after our owne luſtes and lykinges, but that if it pleaſe GOD to exerciſe vs with afflictions, wee ſhewe by all maner of patience, that wee haue a necke plyable vnder him. Finally for as much as his lawe ought to ſerue vs for a brydle: let vs ſuffer our ſelues to bee ruled and gouerned by his hand, ſo as we be not giuen to our owne fooliſhe deuotions, ne come replying to him with this and that, but be contented to let our GOD try our obedience, ſeeing hee hath giuen vs his lawe. Then let vs ſee that our life bee framed according to his will, which is the onely rule of well dooing: and let vs ſubmit our ſelues wholy thereunto, as we ſee we be warned heere by Moſes.

Nowe let vs kneele downe before the maieſtie of our good GOD with acknowledgement of our faultes, praying him to vouchſafe to touche vs with them to the quicke, and to take from vs all blynde foldinges of hypocriſie, that nothing may keepe vs from being aſhamed and caſt downe in our ſelues, vntill wee bee rayſed agayne by fayth and hope of his goodneſſe and mercie: praying him alſo that when hee hath once made vs to feele our diſeaſes, it may pleaſe him to fill vs with the grace of his holy ſpirite, ſo as wee may liue according to his good will. And ſo let vs all ſay, Almighty God heauenly father, &c.

On Thurſday the xxix. of Auguſt. 1555.

The Lxiiij Sermon which is the third vppon the ninth Chapter.

8 Alſo ye prouoked the Lord to anger in Horeb: for the which, the Lord was wroth with you to deſtroy you.

9 When I went vp into the Mount to fetch the two tables of ſtone, euen the tables of the Couenant which the Lord had made with you, and had taryed in the Mount fortie dayes and fortie nightes, without eating of bread or drinking of water:

10 Then the Lord gaue mee the two tables of ſtone, written with the finger of God, wherein were contentes according to all the woordes which the Lorde had ſpoken to you on the Mountaine, from the middes of the fire, in the day of your aſſembling togither.

11 And it came to paſſe that in the ende of fortie dayes and fortie nightes, the Lord gaue mee the two tables of ſtone, euen the tables of the Couenant.

12 Then ſaid the Lord vnto mee, vp and get thee downe quickly from hence: for thy people whome thou broughteſt out of Egypt haue marred all. They bee ſuddainly turned aſide from the way that I commaunded them, and haue made them a molten image.

WE ſawe yeſterday howe Moſes did caſt the people in the teeth with their malicious ſtubbornneſſe, in that they had not ceaſſed from dooing of euill, euen ſince GOD had deliuered them from the thraldome of Egypt. And ſurely it was an ill acknowledging of ſuch a benefite, to ſpyte him ſo wilfully, which had beene their Redeemer and Father. But nowe he alleageth a greater faulte of theirs, and farre more outrageous: that the rememberaunce thereof myght leade them yet further, namely to bethinke themſelues of all their former offences, and to confeſſe that they had beene a fro-a frowarde and in maner deſperate people in all reſpectes. And hee putteth them in minde, *that euen while Gods lawe was a giuing to them in Mount Horeb or Sinay, they prouoked Gods vengeaunce by making of a molten image:* This is not ſet downe without cauſe. For if euer God ſhewed himſelfe to holde men in his obedience: it was then. For the lawe was not giuen after an ordinarie maner: but Gods maieſtie appeared ſo viſiblie in the doing thereof, that the people was ſore abaſhed at it. Beholde, the Mountayne was full of fire, lightninges, and ſmoke: the ayre was heard to rore: the Trumpets ſounded: and to be ſhort, there were ſuch a number of tokens of Gods preſence, that the people was conſtrained to ſay, Let not the Lord ſpeake vnto vs, for then are we but dead. After this, Moſes was on the Mount as one ſeparated from the companie of men, and as an Angel of God, exempted from mortall ſtate, ſo as hee needed neither meate nor drink, which was ſuch a myracle as ought well to haue rauiſhed yͤ people to the ſeruing of God. And yet for all this, they reiected all that had bin taught them, and not tarying ſo much as the end of one yeere, but euen before fortie dayes were expired, they ſaid they wiſt not what was become of Moſes, terming him ſcornfully the fellow that had brought them out of Egypt. What can wee tell what is become of this fellowe, ſayde they? And therefore let vs haue ſome God to goe before vs. Yet had they beene taught familiarly ynough: For God ſhewed himſelfe to them both euening and morning, he led them a nightes by a ſigne of fire, and a days he ſtretched out a cloud ouer them: and yet woulde they needes haue a God that ſhold be preſent with thẽ. And what maner of God? forſooth a puppet. Beholde, God had ſhewed the people his wonderfull power, he had made them to feele it, they knewe themſelues to bee ſafe ynough vnder his protection, and yet all this was nothing with them: they will needes haue a calfe, a dead thing, a corruptible thing, to make it their God. Was it not a helliſhe furiouſneſſe when they became ſo brutiſhe? Seeing they had ſo lately euen with in freſhe rememberaunce hearde the lawe vttered vnto them, and that Moſes was but gone aſide: it was as if God had ſeparated them all from this earthly life in the perſon of that one man. Hee ment to communicate himſelfe familiarly vnto them, as it were by taking them vp into heauen: and in the meane while they become ſo vnthankefull and rebellious, that when hee manifeſted himſelfe to them, they ſtopped their eyes and would not ſee, but defaced his maieſtie and infinite power. Whereby? Euen by a dead thing which was an ydoll. Surely ſuch contempt, ſuch vnthankfulneſſe, ſuch beaſtlyneſſe ſhould haue made the Iewes aſhamed. And that is the cauſe why Moſes ſpeaketh expreſly of that horrible crime which they had committed, in that they would needes haue an ydoll to go before them, that is to ſay, ſome viſible ſigne whereby it might be ſaid that God was among them. Thus ſee wee now the meaning of this text.

Exod.32.1.

But wee muſt marke diligently all the circumſtances which are ſet downe here. *Remember* (ſayeth he) *howe ye prouoked Gods wrath in Mount Horeb.* That mountaine ought to haue bin ſanctified, bicauſe God had choſen it to giue his Lawe there, in reſpect whereof it is a place that is innobled to the worlds end. For ſith it pleaſed God to vtter his will there, which is the rule of al righteouſneſſe, and there to make his couenant with the children of Abraham: ought not that place to haue beene acknowledged as holy? Not vppon any ſuperſtition: but by putting the people the better in minde to honour their God as ofte as they ſpeake of Mount Sinay. It is a mountaine in the wildernes, which aforetimes bare no renowne: & now it became as an earthly Paradiſe, ſo as God ſhewed his Maieſtie there. Seeing that God had ſaide vnto Moſes, The place where thou ſtandeſt is holy, put off thy ſhooes: ſo as he required a ſpeciall reuerence bicauſe he was minded to ſhewe himſelfe there: and ought not the ſelfe ſame reaſon to preuaile in reſpect of Mount Sinay? But ſo farre off were the people from being allured to honour God a hundred or a thouſande yeeres after, by acknowledging the ſingular benefite which hee had beſtowed vpon them there: that they ſtarted away from him and fell to ſpyting of him, euen while the lawe was a giuing, & whyle Moſes was yet vpon the Mount. So then Moſes ment here to make their ſinne more heauie by ſhewing them that it was like as if a mã ſhould come and as it were diſpitefully ruſhe into a Church, where folke were aſſembled togither to pray vnto God and to heare his word and to receiue his ſacraments: and there commit ſome villanie or leaudneſſe that might breede offence. And were not ſuch a ſinne ſo much the heinouſer? Yes: and ſo was it with them. Therefore when we reade it, the very haire ought to ſtand vp vppon our heades. Neuertheleſſe we muſt vnderſtand, that this is ſet downe as a lookingglaſſe for vs, to ſee that we ſhould be no better than they if wee were not withheld by the holy Ghoſt. Let vs conſider what men are. Theſe were a people whome God had choſen from among all others: he had giuen them his doctrine: he had ſhewed them his lawe: and yet for all that, they giue ouer themſelues to ſo curſed a thing. Although then that God come vnto vs, yet is it certayne that we may ſtart way, if hee hold vs not backe, not onely by his teaching of vs, but alſo by the power of his holy ſpirite. Now the law had bin publiſhed to this people, ſo as they ſinned not through ignoraunce, neither could they ſay, We wote not how to ſerue God, we are to bee borne withall though wee deuiſe wayes on our owne head: for beholde, GOD had vttered his will plainely vnto them, and therefore they ſhoulde haue ſtayed thereuppon, and obeyed it ſimply without adding any thing vnto it. But notwithſtanding all this teaching, they caſt away his whole doctrine, and ceaſſe not to ouerſhoote themſelues, as much as if they had neuer knowen any thing. Seeing it is ſo: let vs learne that men may well preach vnto vs: but when we haue had

Exod.3.5.

our eares neuer ſo much beatē with Gods truth, yet ſhall we not faile to turn the clean contrarie way, except he print the things in our heartes, which men ſhall haue vttered vnto vs with their mouthes: I ſay, imprinted them in our hearts, & made vs to vnderſtand ẏ that is the thing which wee muſt ſticke vnto. That is the thing which we haue to remember vppon that text.

And whereas Moſes rehearſeth *howe hee was vppon the Mount by the ſpace of fortie dayes and fortie nightes together without eating or drinking:* let vs note that that was doone for the better authoriſing of the lawe, that it might be receiued with the greater reuerence, and that men might knowe it was not a worldely thing. And hereby we ſee that the communicating of Gods word vnto vs is a matter of great importance, ſo as we neede not to doubt but it commeth of him, and that we ought to ſubmit our ſelues vnto it. If we haue not that: there will bee no religion among vs. Indeede wee may well ynough ſurmiſe our ſelues to haue it: but the cheefe groundworke of religion, that is to ſay of faith and of the ſeruice of God, is to be ſure of our doctrine. For if wee go but by weening: as ẏ paynims, Turks, & al Idolaters doe: and as the Papiſts doe in dreaming vppon their good intentes: it is but a toye, it is but a building in the aire and vpon imagination. Therefore let vs marke well, that the firſt enterance to ſerue God, and to be allowed of him, is to bee throughly ſure of our rule, ſo as we ſay not I thought this had beene good, it ſeemed ſo to me, it was tolde me ſo: but that wee haue Gods woord for our guide, and then let vs go on hardly, wee cannot go amiſſe as long as we followe that way: for our leader will neuer deceaue vs, wee ſhall not be beguiled in obeying him. That then is the thing which wee haue to beare in minde, for as much as we ſee that God hath ſo auowed and authoriſed his woord, as he ſheweth plainly that men ought no more to call it in queſtion or to doubt of it. But although we ſee that this is verye needefull for vs: yet doe wee ſee that the worlde makes none account of it. Whereof comes it that the Papiſtes are ſo wilfull at this day: but bycauſe they ſhut their eyes at the thinges that I haue nowe touched? For if a man examine throughly all that euer they haue, ſurely hee ſhall fynde that they can alledge none other reaſon than their owne imagination. They can not mayntaine the thinges which they terme Gods ſeruice and the articles of their faith, otherwiſe thā by their owne reaſon, onely bicauſe other men haue ſaide it, and they beleeue it without further inquirie. Therfore are they alwayes in a mamering, without any ſtay or ſtedines: And yet ye ſee they be ſo wilfull, ẏ they raile againſt God & his word, & worke it all the ſpite they can, & if a mā go about to ſhew them their faults & ouerſights, they be ſo ſtubborne as he can nothing preuaile with them. Wherefore let vs be ẏ circumſpecter in marking the things ẏ are ſet heere before our eyes: which is, ẏ we knowe not what Religion or Chriſtianitie is, or whether our faith be ſubſtātiall or no: vnleſſe we be ſure ẏ we haue the rule of Gods ſeruice from God himſelf, & that our religion is grounded vpon the ſame. Marke that for one point.

But wo worth vs if we deſpiſe the law and make no account of it, ſeeing it hath bin publiſhed with ſuch warrantiſe as Moſes reporteth in this text. Behold, the law is auowed by God himſelfe: and what ſurer warrant ſhoulde men require than ẏ? Could God deuiſe to warrant his law more than he hath done? no: and yet notwithſtanding, after the hearing of ẏ doctrine & contents therof, we do but nod our heads at it, or rather we be not moued nor touched at al wͭ it: nay we ſee there is nothing but coldneſſe in vs, & a great number of vs do euen ſpite it and gnaſh our teeth at it. Now then if wee rebell againſt God after hee hath ſo warranted the truth of his lawe: what excuſe ſhall wee haue? Is it not a fighting againſt the maieſtie of GOD? Yes verily. And therefore all the deſpiſers of GOD, may well pretende what excuſe they liſt: but yet are they conuicted of open warre making againſt GOD, and againſt his eternall maieſtie, and againſt his diuine and heauenly power. Why ſo? For God in publiſhing his law, came as neere men as he could, and as neere as they could away with. In deede God ſhewed not himſelfe as hee is: for wee bee not of capacitie to receiue ſuch knowledge of him: but it is certaine that he ſhewed himſelfe according to the ſmall abilitie and ſlenderneſſe of men, ſpecially at the publiſhing of his lawe. And I meane not onely the Lawe, but alſo the prophets, which were added as an appurtenance thereunto, bicauſe they be the expounders thereof. Againe what proofe is there of the Goſpell? God did not only ſhake the earth at that tyme: but alſo (as ſaith the prophet Aggeus, and as is alleaged by the Apoſtle in the Epiſtle to the Hebrewes) hee did ſhake both heauen and earth, ſo as there was a greater maieſty vttered at the preaching of the Goſpell, than at the publiſhing of the lawe. Nowe then, ſith it is ſo (ſayth the Apoſtle) ẏ the Lawe which bringeth nothing but terror vnto men, was ſo magnified: what ought the Goſpell to bee? For the law was but a ſhadow & figure of the things which we haue nowe ſhewed vs perfectly in the Goſpell. In the Goſpell God ſheweth himſelfe face to face, to ẏ intent ẏ we ſhould be transformed to his glory. Sith it is ſo, what a curſe pul we vpon our heads, in ẏ we do not hearkē vnto God with all reuerence, & ſhew that it is he whom we worſhip, & to whom we be willing to dedicate al our ſenſes, all our affections, & all our thoughts? If we be not brought ſo lowe as to heare and receiue the doctrine of the lawe and the Goſpell with all humilitie and reuerence: we fight openly againſt the whole power and glory of God.

Agge.2.7.& Heb.12.26.
Col.2.17.
2.Cor.3.18.

And herewithall we haue to marke alſo, after what maner it is that God warranteth his lawe, to the intent it may bee of authoritie among men, and that they may ſubmit themſelues to it. It is by fathering of it vppon himſelfe: and that is one point more, well worth the marking. For God ſheweth vs thereby, ẏ he will not haue vs to leane vnto men, but to looke ſingly vnto him,

1.Cor.2.5.

that wee may haue a true and aſſured faith. So long then as our mindes runne vppon creatures: wee ſhall alwayes bee in a mamering. Albeit that wee may conceiue ſome wilfull opinion in our head : yet ſhall it vaniſh quite away at length, vntill wee bee come to this poynt, that wee bee ſure it is GOD that hath taught vs it, and that it is hee of whome wee holde all that wee haue. When wee bee ſo aſſured : then haue wee a right faith : but wee ſee howe the world forgetteth that. For is there any queſtion of the hearing of GOD in the Popedome? Nay verily, they woorke all the abhominations that are againſt Gods woorde, and their dooyng thereof is matched with foule ſhameleſſeneſſe, as it were euen in vtter deſpyte of God. For they will needes haue the Goſpell ſet aſide, and that men ſhould bee the ſticklers in that behalfe, to intermingle whatſoeuer they themſelues thinke good. Wee ſee then that this hath beene ill put in vre. And therefore let vs for our part remember, that when God meant to magnifie his Lawe, he ſaide not, Here is a wiſe man that ſhall tell you good things : but he tooke vp Moſes to him, and he gaue tokens from heauen as if he ſhould haue proteſted thus: It is I my ſelf, I will haue ye to take all things that ſhal be vttered by Moſes, as things that come from me. For I am not hidden in this caſe. Although I ſpeake to you by the mouth of a mortal man: yet ye ſee he hath all of mee, and he hath not deuiſed any thing of himſelfe or of his owne braine. And to what ende was Moſes ſo exempted from the ſtate of all other men? It is not poſſible ẏ a man which is accuſtomed to eate & drink, ſhould faſt by the ſpace of fortie dayes and fortie nights togither. Then muſt it needes bee concluded, that God intended to ſhew in effect, how he himſelfe was the author of the Law, and the giuer thereof by Moſes. And although Moſes was ſo excellent a perſon : yet was hee but a ſeruant, he was not the maiſter of the houſe, neyther did he challendge any thing to himſelfe, but deliuered the thinges faithfully from hand to hande, which he had receiued.

Nowe ſeeing that GOD reſerued to himſelfe the gouerning of his Church, and the giuing of the rule whereunto he woulde haue all men to holde themſelues, ſo as euen Moſes ſhould not paſſe the boundes thereof: what ſhal other men doe nowe adayes? Wee ſhall ſee at length that God neuer raiſed vp a greater Prophet, no nor the like among his people. Deut.34.10. There was neuer any [that matched him or went beyond him,] but onely Ieſus Chriſt the head of all Prophets. Phil.2.9.10. Col.1.16.17 And good reaſon it is ẏ he ſhould bee aboue Moſes, which hath the ſoueraintie of all, conſidering that he is aboue the Angels, and euen the euerlaſting GOD manifeſted in the fleſh, 1.Tim.3.16 and our Mediatour, exalted to the right hand of God his father, to ſit as his Lieuetenant, of purpoſe that all knees ſhoulde bow before him. So then, wee ſee how ſhameleſſe the Pope and all his rable haue beene, in vſurping ſuch libertie to forge articles of fayth, to make lawes for mens ſoules, and to bring the Churche in ſuch bondage, as to burie all pure doctrine, that their owne dreames and dotages which they had deuiſed contrarie to Gods woorde, myght bee followed. And therefore let vs beare well in minde, that when wee ſtudye to honour men, wee robbe God of his honour: and when wee adde any thing at all to his woorde, wee become backſlyders. That is a poynt which wee muſt bee fully reſolued of, or elſe wee ſhall haue no certaintie in our Religion and fayth. In deede the Papiſtes haue ſome ſhowe of humilitie, Colos.2.23. in that they ſay, and why ſhoulde not men obſerue the commaundementes of our holy mother the Church? For although it bee more than needeth, yet notwithſtanding, will not GOD accept it? There is nothing more commendable than humilitie : but yet for all their humbling of themſelues before men, they ruſh with their hornes againſt God. But if they ment to doe GOD his due honour: they ſhoulde not giue men the thing, which belongeth alonely vnto him. For if they fall to mingling of the leauen and corruption of their own imaginations, with the puerneſſe of Gods woord: it is more than if they medled heauen and earth together. For it is eaſie to diſcerne Gods creatures one from another: and although there bee neuer ſo much oddes betwixt them, yet is there more agreement betweene them, than there is betweene mennes inuentions and Gods woorde. And therefore when they fall to mingling of their owne fanſies with it, and take leaue to make Lawes at their owne pleaſure: all is out of faſhion, all is out of order, there is not any more pureneſſe. Now then, whereas the Papiſtes alleage their humbleneſſe in obſeruing the commaundementes of their Church, or rather helliſh ſynagogue: it is but a diueliſh ouerweening, where through they aduaunce themſelues openly againſt GOD, in commending their own follie and beaſtlineſſe as highly, as though their owne inuentions were farre greater and exquiſiter perfection, than the wiſedome of God. Thus yee ſee what we haue to remember concerning this point, where Moſes reporteth ẏ he neither ate bread nor dranke water, of all the while that he was vpon the mount.

Wee ſee heere to what end he forbare meate and drink. It was not to ſet vp ſome faſt, neither indeede was there any euer ordeined, he did it not to make a rule of it: but rather it was Gods intent to woorke ſuch a miracle as might not be drawen to a common example, of purpoſe to authoriſe his Lawe, as hath beene ſayde afore. And herein it appeareth what a fondneſſe it was to make the lenton faſt, and to binde men to faſt fortie dayes after the example of Ieſus Chriſte, Matt.4.2. vnder colour that hee had forborne meate and drinke ſo long together. Surely the faſting of our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt, was to ſhewe that the Goſpell ought not to bee leſſe eſteemed than the Lawe: and wee ſee that the lyke befell to Helias, who was beetweene them both. 1.King.19.8. Matt.17.3. Wherefore did Moſes and Helias appeare at the transfiguring of Ieſus Chriſt vppon the Mount, but to ſhew the agreement that was betweene the Lawe and the Goſpell? And wee ſee hereby, that Helias was as it were betweene both, that is to ſay, betweene Moſes and Chriſt. For hee reſtored the Lawe and the pure Religion that had beene corrupted afore. And ſo ye ſee that Moſes and Helias agree in ſuch ſorte with Ieſus Chriſt, that they not onely come to humble themſelues to him, but alſo declare that he onely is the ende and perfection of the Lawe, and that hee is the partie to whome all muſt bee referred. Againe, when our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt faſted, that is to ſay, when he abſtained from meate and drinke by the ſpace of fortie dayes together: he did it not yerely, but onely once in all his lyfe, at ſuch tyme as hee was to enter vppon the execution of his office, which was committed vnto him by GOD his father: yea and hee did it by way of myracle. Nowe then is it not a turning of all thinges topſiteruie, when men will drawe it to an ordinarie, and make a common rule of it? Is it not an open mocking of Ieſus Chriſt? Is it not a defacing of Gods myracle, as though they woulde ſpitte at his power? Yes ſurely. Wee ſee then what a blindneſſe it was. And although this ſuperſtition be very auncient, in ſo much yͭ Satan had brought in yͤ diueliſh errour, euen before there was any Pope: yet ought wee to miſlike it and abhorre it. For it is not a ſimple abuſe, it is not a fond deuotion, ſuch as men are woont to haue: but it is a blaſphemie againſt Ieſus Chriſte, it is a policie of Satan to deface the honour of the Goſpell, and to make vs forget the thing yͭ the holy ghoſt amed at, which is that we might know how the lawe & the Goſpel are no earthly doctrines, nor of mans inuention, but altogether heauenly and of God, to the end that we ſhould ſtoope vnto them.

Yet for all this, it is not meant that faſting is not good and holy. For though wee make no Lentfaſt, yet are there other faſtes which are commaunded vs in the holy Scripture: that is to wit, firſt of all ſtayedneſſe and ſobrietie all our life long, ſo as wee glut not our ſelues one day to forbeare another for it, but vſe the benefites meaſurably which God hath beſtowed vppon vs: that they which haue abundance abuſe it not in ſuperfluitie. And our faſting muſt bee to reſtraine and brydle our ſelues willingly aſwell from meate and drinke, as from all other thinges wherein wee may commit exceſſe or diſorder, ſo as wee forbeare them willingly, as I ſayde afore. As for theſe that haue not verie well wherewith to finde themſelues, let them be contented with their pouertie, and take it patiently with thankeſgiuing vnto God. Againe if our Lorde afflict vs, or yͭ we bee in any diſtreſſe: let vs reſort to faſting, of purpoſe to diſpoſe our ſelues to prayer and ſupplication, and to lifte vppe our heartes the better vnto GOD, humbling our ſelues and acknowledging our faults vnto him. Let our faſtings be as ſpurres to driue vs to god, to preſent ourſelues before him as wretched offenders, to craue mercie and forgiuenes at his hand. Theſe are the faſtings which yͤ holy ſcripture alloweth, notwithſtanding the ſaid ſuperſtition inuēted by yͤ diuell to deface Gods word, & the diuine power yͭ was ſhewed in Moſes, but more fully in our Lord Ieſus Chriſt. For he faſted not as compelled by others: but of his owne free will, to ſhewe that although he was like vs in all things ſauing only ſinne: yet could he well haue beene exempted from faſting, as in deede hee was not a hungred nor a thirſt of all the whyle he faſted. And why? For hee had laide aſide the ſtate that he tooke vppon him. Although hee was vnder the ſhape of a ſeruaunt: yet notwithſtanding, that ſeruauntſhip bare no ſway in him by the ſpace of thoſe fortie dayes. Now let vs proceede further.

Phil. 2.7.

Moſes addeth that *at the ſame tyme hee receiued two tables, euen two tables of ſtone, the two tables that were written with the finger of GOD, the tables of the couenant which God had made with vs* ſayth hee. This ſerued to make the Iewes the more aſhamed, of their exceeding great vnfaithfulneſſe towardes GOD. For if I and another were to make a bargayne, and in the meane tyme while the partie were cauſing the couenaunte and conueyaunce to bee ingroſed, I on the other ſide ſhould practiſe ſome deuiſe to betray him while hee truſted mee: what a villanie were that? Shoulde I not bee a double falſe catife? Yes: for if a man conclude a bargayne, and afterward breake it or teare the writinges in peeces, hee ſhalbe puniſhed. But if the one partie goe through with good and faithfull meaning, and the other partie marre all with crafte and treacherie, vnder pretence of quietneſſe and friendly dealing: what is to bee ſayd of that? Euen after the ſame maner dealt the Iewes. For God taketh Moſes aſide. And to what purpoſe, but to woorke the welfare of his people, and to aſſure them that their religion was a true warrant of their ſaluation, and that they walked not at all aduenture as all other nations of the earth did? Thereuppon he maketh an autenticall inſtrument of the lawe that he had giuen them, that the remembraunce thereof might continue for euer, and not bee ſuch a doctrine as ſhould bee forgotten. Now while God was thus working the welfare of his people: they recompenſed him ſo euill, that they fell to vtter defying of him, and would needes haue a newe God. Wee ſee then howe Moſes ment to inhaunce their euill dealing, that they might bee the more aſhamed, by knowing the horribleneſſe of the crime which they had committed. And the ſame belongeth to vs alſo at this day. For we ſee that God ceaſſeth not to renewe the remembraunce of his couenaunt. True it is that hee publiſhed his lawe once for all, and likewiſe his Goſpell. But yet for all that, wee haue both his lawe and his Goſpell in wryting alſo, and moreouer it is dayly preached vnto vs. Now then, if wee prouoke Gods wrath and anger, by falſifying our faith which we gaue and promiſed in baptiſme: doeth it not make vs the more vnexcuſable? Yes ſurely.

And therefore to holde our ſelues the better in awe & feare of God: let vs vnderſtand that gods ordeyning of the miniſters of his worde, and his gracious dealing with vs in cauſing the ſame to be preached and expounded vnto vs afterward, is to put vs in minde of his couenant, that wee ſhoulde put it in practiſe: [and therefore] let vs pray him that nothing may turne vs from it. Let vs vnderſtande that: and then ſhall we haue the more conſtancie and ſtedfaſtneſſe to obey him. Thus ye ſee what we haue to remember vppon that text.

Furthermore, let vs marke that God thought it not ynough to proclaime his Lawe, but he did alſo put it in writing. And why? becauſe men are ſhorte witted in bearing away the trueth. Therefore is our Lorde faine to prouide for it, & to warne vs to looke well to all thinges, becauſe we be ſo feeble. Had the Iewes done their duetie, Gods ſpeaking to them had beene ynough: for he had giuen his lawe in ſo ſmall roome, as euerie man might count it vpon his fingers ends, Theſe are the ten commaundementes, in theſe hath God comprehended his whole wil, which is the rule of good life, All this doctrine (ſay I) is comprehended in ten verſes. Ye ſee then that the people had beene taught familiarly ynough. Now if they that heard Gods voyce vpon the mount had done their duetie: they ſhould haue taught their children, ſo as the doctrine might haue beene kept in mind from the father to the childe. Deut.6.8. For God had taught them familiarly ynough, as I ſaide afore. Inſomuch that he had willed them to make their ornaments of yͤ ſentences of the lawe, ſo as in ſteed of bracelets and other pretie toyes, which foolkes do weare to make themſelues gay: all the deckings of his people ſhoulde be to haue the ſentences of the lawe written & ingraued about them, that which way ſoeuer they turned their eyes, they might ſtill haue ſome marke to put them in minde of Gods lawe. Howbeit, to the ende they ſhoulde haue a more certaine remembrance therof: like as men haue bin wont to ingraue their leages in ſome tables of braſſe or ſtone: ſo God took ſtone to write and ingraue his lawe in. It was not his pleaſure to vſe paper or parchment: but to haue his law written in ſtone, [and that was done] not by handicraft, (for hee borowed no workemanſhip of man in that behalfe,) but with his owne finger. Not that God hath anie handes: but that the holy ſcripture ſpeaketh ſo by a reſemblance as if it were ſaide, the lawe was not written or ingrauen by mans hand: but God approoued and ratified it by way of myracle. Now then ſith it is ſo: let vs learne that God hath prouided well for the aſſuring of our faith, to the intente we ſhould not be put to any great paine or hardneſſe to knowe what wee ought to follow. True it is that the worlde will runne into al lewdenes, as we ſee it doeth, and the examples thereof are too rife. It is pitie to ſee howe oft the Iewes ſwarued aſide vnto idolatrie: it ſemed that gods name ſhould haue beene aboliſhed among thē: all was out of order: they had ſo groſſe ſuperſtitions, as a man coulde not diſcerne betweene them and the heathen: they had ſo imbaced thēſelues, as there remained not any more certaintie among them. But yet for al that ſuch as were diſpoſed to ſerue God helde alwayes this point ſtill, that they ſticked to the certaine doctrine. And why? For Gods will was ſet downe in writing. When ſuperſtitions were to bee corrected: the meane to doe it was not harde. For why? The lawe was written. That is the thing which wee muſt ſticke vnto if wee will obey our God: and if wee forſake that doctrine, God will alſo forſake vs. VVe ſee then that God hath prouided ſufficiently for the ſuretie of his people, that their faith might not be doutfull, but firme and conſtant. As for vs nowe adayes, wee haue more than the fathers had in the time of the lawe. For wee haue both the lawe and the prophetes, and alſo the goſpell. What is to bee done then? They that alleadge in theſe dayes, I wote not which way to turne mee, I ſee diſputinges, debates, and contrarietie of opinions, & therefore I will let all alone in ſuſpence: [muſt conſider alſo with themſelues,] Yea? hath God loſt his labour in ſetting downe his lawe in writing, and in adding the expoſition thereof by his prophetes, to the ende that wee might the better knowe that the goſpel is the true and full accompliſhment thereof? Shall wee accuſe God as though hee had left vs at randome, ſo as wee ſhoulde not knowe what wee haue to doe, when he hath giuen vs his infallible trueth, and tolde vs that we can neuer be deceiued in obeying the things that proceede out of his mouth? So then let vs vnderſtande, that whereas the worlde goes aſtray, and is ill inſtructed: the onely cauſe therof is mens own vnthankfulnes. For why? there is inough prouided to make vs walk in the broade daylight, ſo as wee may defile the ſuperſtitions of the faithles, and not ſuffer things to hang any longer in ſuſpence, if we haue God reigning ouer vs. Whereby wee ſee that Gods ſpeaking was not for one day onely: but of purpoſe that the ſame ſhoulde continue ſtill euen to the worldes ende. Therefore let vs go on boldly, ſeeing we haue the doctrine of the holy ſcripture: and let vs aſſure our ſelues that that is the thing which wee muſt holde vs to, ſo as we muſt not any more ſay, whither ſhoulde we go? That is the way, let vs walke therein, as Moſes proteſteth hereafter. Deut.13.5.& Eſa.30.21. Trueth it is that in thoſe two tables are not conteyned all the things that are written in Exodus, Leuiticus, and the booke which we doe nowe expounde: thoſe tables are but an abridgement of them, and they conteyne but ten verſes. Neuertheleſſe, our Lord meant to ſhewe by thoſe two tables, that all the things which Moſes left in writing, were of him.

So then, here are two thinges: That is to wit, that Gods will was there ſhoulde bee ſcripture, like as when couenants are ſet downe in writing, or leages are ingrauen in tables of braſſe, & euen ſo was it his will that there ſhoulde be a perpetuall memoriall of his lawe, that men might take no occaſion to turne away from it. And he made thoſe two tables, not to ſhewe any cunning of man therin: but to ingraue his law in thē without mans hande, that it might bee knowen that the ſame came of him. As touching Gods writting twice in the two ſtones: we wil treate thereof hereafter: For it is meete that things ſhoulde be ſet downe in order, and therefore I will not medle with them nowe.

Nowe remayneth howe Moſes addeth, that after the tearme of fortie dayes, God ſaide vnto him, *Vp and get thee downe apace: for this people haue ſoone marred themſelues, by forgetting mee,* and the fauour that I haue ſhewed them. Here Moſes goeth on ſtill with his matter, ſhewing the people that their reuolting and ſtarting away ſo ſoone from GOD was too too ſhamefull and deteſtable. True it is that although they had helde out foure hundred yea or a thouſande yeares, yet had they not beene to be excuſed. But now when as they fell to making of an idol, and did ſet vp a Puppet within fortie dayes ſpace, euen whyle God was about the furtherance of their benefite and welfare, (as I ſaide afore) when Moſes was taken vp as it were into the companie of Angels, by reaſon whereof they ſhoulde rather haue thought thus, Goe too, in the perſon of that one man wee bee after a ſorte ſeparated from the reſt of mankinde, and God ſanctifieth vs to himſelfe, and therewithall bringeth vs into his kingdome, to the intent wee ſhould not haue any earthlineſſe in our religion: What a lewde dealing was that? For this cauſe Moſes ſaith, that God commanded him to get him downe in haſt, becauſe the people were marred out of hande, ſo as they were falne to making of a newe God, euen while the lawe was a writing, and whyle God was confirming of his couenaunt with them. And it is plainely ſaide that they were marred: *Beholde* (ſaith God) *they haue marred.* For the worde which hee vſeth, betokeneth no more, but *they haue marred,* without other addition. And indeed it was a right marring of them, that is to ſay of the Iewes, who became lewde backeſliders and periured kaytifes, vtterly turning away from the trueth and rule of God, and finally from all order both heauenly and earthly. For wherein conſiſteth our pureneſſe, but in obeying GOD? 2.Cor.11.2. According to this ſimilitude of Saint Paules, that like as a woman is a lawfull and faithfull wife as long as ſhee keepeth herſelfe chaſt to her husbande: ſo all the chaſtitie which God requireth of vs, is that wee ſhoulde ſticke alonely to his worde. Then if wee fall to making of idols: it is a vilanous marring of our ſelues, wee become like common harlotes that giue ouer their bodies to all commers, leauing their owne husbandes, and yeelding themſelues to euerie whoremaiſter and ruffian. Euen ſo is it with vs. And after the ſame maner was this people marred out of hande. Yea and wee marre the maieſtie of God alſo, as much as in vs lieth, when wee followe our owne fooliſhe inuentions. True it is that wee cannot touch his maieſtie to doe it any harme: but yet are wee guiltie thereof (as ſayth Saint Paul,) becauſe we turne the trueth into a lie, and make all thinges falſe: Rom.1.25. and moreouer turne the order of nature vpſide downe, by forſaking Gods pure doctrine, ſo as wee bereaue him of his ſoueraigne right that hee can not reigne ouer vs, when wee fall to ſetting vp of idols and deade thinges in his roome, and doe the thinges which we our ſelues haue inuented. So then it is not for nought that our Lord ſaith not in plaine wordes, This people haue made them an Idoll: but hee ſaith, This people haue marred, that is to ſay, they haue turned all vpſide downe.

Wherefore let vs marke well, that whenſoeuer we ſteppe aſide from the pureneſſe of Gods worde, wee make a ſhamefull marring, we practiſe our owne deſtruction, wee leaue nothing whole and ſounde, and to bee ſhort, we bee guiltie of mingling heauen and earth together, and of the vtter defacing of Gods maieſtie. So much the more therefore doeth it ſtande vs on hande to ſubmitte our ſelues to Gods pure worde, and to ſee that wee inuent nothing of our owne heads, nor bring vp anie new religion: but hold our ſelues to the thinges which our Lorde hath tolde vs, foraſmuch as hee alloweth not anie 1.Sam.15.22. thing but that. Afterwards hee addeth the reſidue, which I cannot expound as nowe: but it ſhall ſuffice (as I haue ſaide alreadie) that wee haue this bonde of our God, that wee ſtray not ſo farre as to reiect his trueth: but that wee abide in obedience to his worde, as hee hath giuen it vs in writing, and as it is his will to haue it dayly preached vnto vs.

Nowe let vs kneele downe in the preſence of our good God with acknowledgement of our faultes, praying him to make vs feele them better than we haue doone, that we may be drawen to ſuch repentance, as our whole deſire may be to be quite rid of our fleſhly affections and luſts, to giue our ſelues vnto him, and to holde vs ſo vnder his awe, as wee may bring nothing of our owne deuiſing, but that when our owne conſcience findeth fault with vs, wee may ſo much the more yeelde our ſelues guiltie, and not turne away from his obedience: and that foraſmuch as wee can not fullie ſatisfie and performe his Lawe in this worlde, it may pleaſe him of his infinite goodneſſe to beare with vs, vntill hee haue throughly corrected the euill which hee knoweth to bee yet ſtill remayning in vs. That it may pleaſe him to graunt this grace not onely to vs, but alſo to all people & nations of the earth, &c.

On Friday the xxx. of Auguſt. 1555.

The Lxv. Sermon, which is the fourth vpon the ninth Chapter.

13 Wherefore the Lord ſpake vnto mee, ſaying: I haue ſeene this people, and beholde, it is a ſtiffenecked people.

14 Let mee alone, I will deſtroy them, and put out the name of them from vnder heauen, and I will make thee to growe into a mightier and greater Nation than they bee.

I Began to ſhewe you yeſterday, howe foule and curſed the faulte was which Moſes vpbraideth the people withal in this place: and that the cauſe why hee did ſet it before thẽ, was to the end they ſhould be yͤ better humbled therby. And here he addeth a recorde of the greatneſſe of that fault, in that it prouoked Gods wrath ſo ſore, that hee would haue deſtroyed and rooted out that people, and put out the remembrance of them for euer. Nowe if God doe meaſure his anger, and can skill to puniſhe mens offences according to the greatneſſe of them: it muſt needes bee concluded that this offence was verie horrible, ſeeing that God hauing deliuered his people, and hauing wrought ſo many miracles for them, woulde neuertheleſſe ſo wipe them out as they ſhoulde neuer bee ſpoken of more. That then was the meaning of Moſes: verily as if hee ſhoulde ſaye, yee wretched foolke, conſider what yee bee and what yee haue beene. For whereas yee were redeemed by the hande of G O D, you by reuolting from him after yee hadde receiued ſuch fauour, deſerued to haue beene ſo rooted out, as no remembraunce of you might haue remayned in the worlde, and ſentence thereof was giuen alſo. Hadde not I intreated for you, G O D hadde determined to haue deſtroyed you. Nowe goe make your bragges, imagine I wote not what of your ſelues, impute your obteyning of this lande to your owne righteouſneſſe, to your owne power, or to ſome other thing elſe. Nay contrariwiſe, yee ſee what yee haue done: yee haue (to the vttermoſt of your power) vndoone the deliueraunce of your ſelues whiche G O D hadde wrought, yee haue forſaken the ſaluation that was promiſed you, and the inheritaunce that was prepared for you: and to be ſhort it was meet that God ſhould haue powred out his horrible vengeaunce vppon you. Therefore learne to magnifie his mercie, conſidering that yee haue prouoked him ſo ſore. Thus yee ſee in effect whereto this ſaying of Moſes is to be referred.

But by the way wee muſt marke the words that hee vſeth. *I haue ſeene this people* (ſaith he) *and it is a ſtiffenecked people.* Heere G O D ſheweth that he hath iuſt cauſe to make cleane riddance of this people, foraſmuchas they were paſt amendement. True it is that G O D might well thunder downe vppon all menne, without ſhewing them why or wherefore, and all mouthes ought to bee ſhutte. For wee winne nothing by replying againſt him, and in murmuring at his chaſtiſementes. For hee ſhall euer bee founde to bee righteous as is ſayde in the one and fiftith Pſalme, and whoſoeuer blaſphemeth him ſhall bee put to ſhame. Pſal. 51. 6. Yet notwithſtanding, heere God ſheweth why hee had determined to puniſhe the Iewes ſo roughly, to the intent that Moſes ſhoulde bee the better contented. I haue ſeene (ſayth hee) that this people is a ſtiffenecked people. Heereby hee doeth vs to vnderſtande, that when wee once fall to malicious wilfulneſſe, it is all one as if wee were rotten in our ſinnes; and that there is none other remedie, but that G O D muſt put to his hande to deſtroy vs vtterly.

In deede the leaſt faulte that wee committe doeth well deſerue that G O D ſhoulde vſe extreeme rigour: but yet doeth hee moderate himſelfe, according to this ſaying of the holy Scripture, that hee is ſlowe to wrath and longſuffering. G O D then ſpareth vs, and vſeth not rigour againſt vs at the firſte daſhe. Pſal. 103. 8. But when hee ſeeth vs ſo harde hearted that hee canne not winne vs by patience, and that wee bee ſo ſtubborne as hee can not amende vs, nor make vs ſtoope vnder his hande: then is hee fayne to worke after another faſhion, and to ſtriue no lõger with thẽ, according to this ſaying

Gen.6.3. in the ſixth Chapter of Geneſis,Why ſhould my ſpirit ſtriue any longer with men?For I ſee there is nothing but corruption in them: and therefore I will no more goe to law with them:I muſt be faine to condemne them and to execute my iudgement vppon them: for it is to no purpoſe to indite them any more, they be too much cōuicted alreadie. Sith it is ſo, let vs be well ware, that although wee bee fraile, yet at leaſtwiſe we bee not wilfull in perſiſting in our ſinnes, to delight in them, and to feede them: but let vs returne againe vnto God out of hande, beeing ſorie that we haue offended him. And if he threaten vs, or ſhewe vs any ſigne of his wrath: let vs by and by ſtoope and not ſuffer anie ſtubbornes to take place in vs.For if we deale ſtubbornly & wilfully with him,we ſhal be driuen to abide the condemnation that is ſette downe here, ſpyte of our teethe: [namely] I haue ſeene this people, it is a ſtiffenecked people,and therfore I muſt needes roote them out. Marke this for one poynt, that here men are warned to examine themſelues, and vppon acknowledgement of their faults ,to humble them ſelues before God, and to lay downe all pride and ſturdineſſe, ſo as God may not finde them ſtiffenecked,but pliable. 1.Pet.5.6. And that is it which Saint Peter meaneth where hee ſaieth , Humble your ſelues vnder the mightie hande of your God, that yee bee not handled roughly in the day of your viſitation. In ſpeaking of the mightie hande of G O D, hee ſheweth vs that if wee fight againſt it, wee ſhall finde it too harde for vs. True it is that at the firſte men thinke they winne much by chafing vppon the bit, and by ſtanding ſtubbornely againſt God: but in the ende they ſhall finde that Saint Peter did not without cauſe tearme his hand a mightie hand, to confounde all ſuch as ſet themſelues againſt it. Then is there none other ſhift, but to ſtoope vnder it, and to receiue the ſtrokes obediently, when it ſtriketh vs, aſſuring vs that it ſtriketh vs iuſtly. And if it touch vs not, let vs not tarie till God ſhewe himſelfe our enemie, but rather let vs preuent his wrath: Thus ye ſee what we haue to remember vpon this text.

Alſo there is one other poynt. *I haue ſeene this people* (ſaith God,) *and it is a ſtiffenecked people.* Hereby hee meaneth that hee knewe well enough by experience, that the leawdeneſſe of that people was vtterly vnrecouerable. True it is that God needeth not to make long inquiſition after the manner of men: for all thinges are preſent vnto him, and length of time can tel him no more than hee knoweth alreadie. But the ſcripture vſeth ſuch ſpeech, to doe vs to vnderſtand that God goeth not to worke at aladuenture as men commonly doe, who fall to puniſhing oftentimes before they knowe the trueth or haue inquired of it. God then ſheweth here, that hee neuer lifteth vp his hande to chaſtice vs, but vpon good deliberation, knowing what is in vs, and hauing well conſidered whether there bee any meane to reclaime vs or no. Seeing hee taketh ſo great paine, needes muſt wee come to our laſt condemnation, if we bee wilful ſtubborne. Thus yee ſee what Moſes meant by theſe wordes, *See* and *Beholde.* And it is all one as if God woulde prooue his ſaying by ſuch experience thereof as were throughly knowen,and ſhewe as it were with his finger, that that people was not to bee delte withall , and that the verie creatures might well iudge of their naughtineſſe, that it was vtterly vnexcuſable. In deede wee doe not alwayes perceyue that God hath made inquiſition of our ſinnes: but yet ſhall wee finde it ſo in the end. And for the ſame cauſe, when hee minded to deſtroye Sodome and Gomorre, he ſaid expreſſely, that hee came downe to weete howe thinges went: Gen.18.20. and that although the crie came vp to his eares into heauen, and that their ſinne was ſo great, that euen the verie heauens roong of it: yet vouchſafed hee to examine their doinges neerlier: not that hee needed ſo to doe, as in reſpect of himſelfe: but to ſhewe vs that his iuſtice was rightfull and blameleſſe. As oft therefore as God puniſheth vs, let vs learne to knowe that wee haue lyen too long aſleepe, and that he in the meane while watched, and that wee muſte nowe pay yͤ arrearages becauſe we amended not in due time. And if G O D ſeeme ouerhaſtie in puniſhing vs: let vs conſider that wee tooke not the time when it was offered vs, and when hee gaue vs ſpace of repentance to turne vnto him, but rather were blinded with our owne hypocriſie, and that is the cauſe why God layeth his hand ſo roughly vpon vs.

Nowe let vs come to that which Moſes addeth. Hee ſaith that God beeing in minde to deſtroy the peeple, ſaide vnto him: *Let mee alone that I may deſtroy this people,& that their name may bee put out from vnder heauen, ſo as it may neuer be ſpoken of more.* It ſhoulde ſeeme that God was letted here by Moſes,when hee ſaith: *Let mee alone.* Nowe it were vnbeſeeming his power that hee coulde not execute the thing that hee had determined with himſelfe, but that a man ſhoulde withſtande him and reſtraine his libertie in doeing the thing that hee had purpoſed. Howe may this bee vnderſtoode?True it is that Moſes was not of authoritie to reſtraine Gods iudgement: but here wee ſee the infinite goodneſſe of him, who though he owe not any thing to men,vouchſafeth notwithſtanding to doe it for their ſakes. And let vs marke eſpeciallie, that God doeth ſo binde himſelfe to our prayers and ſupplications , that they bee as it were reſtraintes of his wrath: ſo that whereas diuerſe times hee woulde deſtroye all. hee is as it were chaunged, if wee come and humble our ſelues before him. Not that hee altereth his purpoſe: wee muſt not ſurmiſe any repentaunce in God, that hee ſhoulde turne backe agayne and bee better aduiſed,or bethinke himſelfe better what hee had to doe, as wee doe, who bee ſubiect to diuerſe paſſions, and alſo to alteration: there is no ſuch thing in God, there is no altering of the thing which hee hath once determined. But this is taken after the manner of men,inſomuch that to make vs vnderſtande what is for our profite, God is faine to bowe downe from his high maieſtie wherevnto wee bee not able to attaine, and to vſe ſimilitudes meete for our rawneſſe and infirmitie. Therefore hee ſayeth that when we pray, it is all one as if wee did caſt a barre in his way, to ſtoppe his wrath that it ſhoulde not vtterly conſume vs. And why? Becauſe that hee of his owne accorde hath wilingly and without conſtraint made couenaunt with vs, that whenſoeuer wee pray vnto him, hee will performe all our requeſtes, ſo as wee ſhall not bee diſappointed in calling vppon him, but ſhall alwayes perceiue that hee was willing to graunt our will and deſire, according as it is ſaid in the hundred and fiue and fortith pſalme, Pſal.145.19 The Lorde performeth the willes of them that feare him. Surely it is a worde that ought to pearce our heartes, when it is ſaide that GOD doeth the will of men. Nowe who is hee? and what are wee? Wee be wretched creatures, ſuch as ought to bee aſhamed to ſhewe themſelues before GOD. And as for to bring either will or deſire of our owne thither: it ought to diſmay vs, and to make vs ſay, Alas Lorde, doe what pleaſeth thee, for it is not meete for vs to put foorth anie deſire or affection of ours: for what are wee but wretched creatures? But ſurelie Gods will is that wee ſhoulde craue of him ſo it bee obediently, for according to Saint 1.Ioh.3.22. & 5.14. Iohns ſaying in his Canonicall Epiſtle, we muſt not pray to him at aladuenture, nor alleadge our owne fancies to reſtrayne GOD to our deſires, wee muſte not vſe ſuch boldeneſſe: but when we haue ſubmitted our heartes obedientlie to our God: then if wee pray to him for any thing that is to our welfare, hee liketh well of it, and hee will pleaſure vs in graunting it, as though there were ſuch a couenaunt and league betweene him and vs, as might not bee broken. Seeing that God ſtoopeth ſo lowe as to graunt vs our requeſtes: what woulde wee more? But he doeth it, and that doeth he well ſhewe in this text. *Let mee alone* ſayth hee to Moſes. Hee ſeemeth here to ſpeake as it were to ſome companion or fellow of his. And why doeth hee not deſtroy Moſes too, as hee might well doe if hee liſted. Is Moſes then able to ſtay him, or to abridge him of his libertie? No: but as I ſaide afore, GOD doth ſo binde himſelfe, that the prayers which are made vnto him, doe ſtay the execution of his vengeaunce. And that is the cauſe why that in the rehearſing of this ſtorie in the Pſalme, it is Pſal.106.23 ſayde there expreſſelie, that if Moſes had not ſet himſelfe in the breache, all hadde beene mard. There the Prophete vſeth a ſimilitude: like as when a Towne is battered with the Cannon, there is ſuch a breach made as the enemies may enter, to ſack the towne and to put al to the ſworde. Euen ſo is it in this caſe: when Gods wrath was once kindled againſt his people, hee had battered them by & by with his ſaid threate, and had made a breach vppon them ſo as there remayned no more but to enter. But beholde, Moſes ſetteth himſelfe in the breach, that is to ſay he ſtandeth vp againſt God and maketh interceſſiõ to him for the people, ſo as he ſtoppeth the breach againe, and ſtayeth Gods wrath frũ going anie further. And this is not reported for Moſes onely: But our Lorde declareth thereby what ſtrength our prayers & ſupplicatiõs haue, when they be well ordered, ſo as wee come to him with ſuch zeale as becommeth vs, and with ſuch faith and humilitie as hee requireth. And we muſt remember what Saint Iames ſaith of Iames 5.17. Helias: namelie that he made it to raine, and alſo did ſhut vp the heauens and cauſed drought, alonely by his prayers. Loe here an incredible thing, ẏ when the Prophet openeth his mouth to pray vnto God, he hath power to ſhut vp the heauens, and to bring a generall famine euerywhere, to puniſhe the Idolatrous king & al thoſe that tooke part with him in his wickedneſſe: and that afterwarde when he came to God againe, & deſired raine, he opened the heauens againe and all the ſtreames thereof, ſo as the earth was then plentifully watered. Neuertheleſſe the intent of S. Iames is not, that our knowing hereof ſhould be to magnifie the power of Helias, or to ſay that hee had that graunted vnto him as a ſpeciall priuiledge, but to giue vs a rule whereby to perceiue howe auailable the prayer of a righteous man is, and ſo to incourage vs to pray vnto God. For ſeeing that the Prophet Helias could both ſhut the heauens and open them againe by his prayers: let vs not doubte but that wee ſhall be hearde, when wee call vppon the name of God: And that when the bottomleſſe gulfes are opened, we ſhall ſhutte them againe: inſomuch that euen when the wicked ſhall ſeme to haue the worlde at will, then wil GOD roote them out at our requeſt. Therefore let vs pray boldely, vppon truſt of the promiſes that God hath giuen vs, and our prayers ſhall bee of ſuch force, that they ſhall euen chaunge the order of nature if neede bee. As for example we ſee that at the ſaying of Ioſua, the ſunne ſtayed, and ſtood ſtill a day and a night together, without any night betwixte the one day and the other. Ioſua.10.12 13.

Sith wee ſee theſe thinges: let vs not ſay: That was but for once, or ſuch a holy man or Sainct had ſuch power: but let vs vnderſtande that it was our Lordes intent to ſhewe vs that although heauen and earth were mingled together, and all thinges as confuſed as might bee: yet if we reſort to him, putting our whole truſte in him, hee can well remedie the thinges that ſeeme to vs to be furtheſt out of order, and then ſhall we ſee the fruit which our prayers yeeld vs. Thus ye ſee what we haue to marke vppon this text where GOD willeth Moſes to let him alone.

Yet notwithſtanding wee muſt marke herewithall that it is a thing to bee wiſhed, to haue ſuch foolke among vs as maye make interceſſion and ſupplications to GOD: For wee ſee what coldneſſe is in moſt of vs. Sometimes in a whole nation and in euery great multitude of people, ye ſhall not find twentie or ten perſõs that haue a right zeale to pray vnto God and are diſpoſed thereto as is requiſite. And how ſhoulde we do if they ſtoode not in the breach?

Surely wee ſhoulde be left bare, accordingly alſo as the ſame ſimilitude is alleadged in Exodus, Exod.32.25 that the people had made themſelues bare of his protection, by making the golden calfe. For they had no more any God to maintaine them. And euen ſo would it befall vs alſo that we ſhold make our ſelues bare euery day, by putting our ſelues out of the protection of our God: were it not that ſome do ſet themſelues in the breach. And therefore let vs learne that oftentimes God ſpareth vs, becauſe there are ſome ẏ make interceſſion for vs, euen whome wee knowe not of. And let vs thinke vppon it the more, for aſmuch as euerie of vs feeleth himſelfe colde in praying, and that wee goe not to it with ſuch corage and earneſtneſſe as God commaundeth. [Let euery of vs bethinke our ſelues thus:] Alas, if I were alone, and all the worlde were like mee: what woulde become of it? We might periſhe for wee are not worthie that GOD ſhoulde regarde vs. But wee muſt vnderſtande, that it is not our Lordes will that wee ſhoulde periſhe, when hee ordeyneth men to come before him after that maner. And therefore howſoeuer wee fare, after wee haue rebuked our ſelues, let vs proceede to this zeale of praying both for our ſelues and for other men, and let vs not doubt but God will haue pitie vppon vs, yea and euen forgiue our neighbours alſo at our requeſt. Trueth it is that in this caſe wee muſt not bring any ouerweening with vs, to auaunce our ſelues as though we coulde further the ſaluation of other men: but we muſt take it as God ſheweth it. Beholde I am not worthie that God ſhould heare me my ſelfe: and yet notwithſtanding hee vouchſafeth to heare mee, not onely for my ſelfe, or for three or foure moe: but alſo for a whole nation. Let euerie of vs doe this, and let vs conſider howe mercifull our God is to vs, ſeeing hee not onely vouchſafeth to regarde vs our ſelues, vs wretched ſinners, vs that haue turned our backes vpon him, vs that haue not ceaſed to prouoke his wrath againſt vs: but alſo vouchſafeth for our ſakes, to accepte our prayers and ſupplications not onely for our priuate friendes, but alſo for his whole Church. For it behoueth vs to pray generally for all the faithful, yea and for them whõ we know not, yea and moreouer euen for the vnbeleeuers if there 1.Tim.2.1. bee anie meane to conuert them. Seeing that God heareth vs after that faſhion, euen for the furtheſt ſtraungers in the worlde, for thoſe that are vnknowen to vs, yea and euen for ſuch as are not yet of his houſe, nor of his flocke, but are as ſtray ſheepe: is it not a meane to make vs to truſt in him, and to pray vnto him with ſuch certeintie, as wee come not to him like waue- Iam.1.6. ring reedes, (as ſaith Saint Iames) but with aſſuredneſſe that hee wil heare vs, and that our prayers ſhall not bee vnauailable, becauſe wee reſort vnto him and haue recourſe vnto him vpon truſt of his promiſe?

And hereby wee ſee howe greatly the wretched worlde hath beene abuſed by making interceſſion to Saincts. When men read that Moſes was hearde, and likewiſe Helias: they concluded thereupon, O then muſt we reſort to the Heeſaincts and ſheeſaincts, and they muſt be our aduocates and Patrons to God. Yea but the meaning of the holy ſcripture is cleane contrarie, as I haue declared alreadie, according to the ſaying of Saint Iames. For when God ſayth ſo: it is not to make vs to runne vnto Moſes: but it is to the ende that by his example we ſhoulde not doubt to pray alſo: for the promiſes belong to vs as well as to him. Like as Moſes truſted not in his owne goodneſſe, ne preaſed before God as more worthie than the reſt of the people: but only as knowing that God called & allured him thereunto: ſo alſo let vs nowe grounde our ſelues vppon the promiſes whereby God incourageth vs to come vnto him, yea and to come without doubting that hee will reach vs his hande, euen without regarding whether there bee any worthineſſe in vs or no. For wee ſhall finde none in vs: but it is enough for vs that our Lorde biddeth vs come, and our obeying of him liketh him better than all the vertues that wee coulde bring with vs, if there were any in vs. Therefore it is too groſſe an ouerſight, that whereas God incourageth vs to come vnto him with prayer and ſupplication after the example of the holy Prophetes: wee thereupon ſhoulde contrariwiſe make them our Patrons and Aduocates to ſhift our ſelues from repayring vnto him. Againe on the otherſide, although Moſes prayed for the people while he was in this worlde: Doeth it followe that the ſame charge is committed to him nowe ſtill in heauen? Doeth the ſcripture tell vs that Moſes maketh interceſſion for vs ſtill? So then, it is as it were a dragging of the holy ſcripture by the haire of the heade, (as men ſaye,) and a racking of it to falſehoode, when the thinges that are ſpoken of men aliue, are wreſted to them dead. Therefore let vs holde vs contented with this common doctrine, that is to wit that euerie of vs muſt take heart to pray vnto God, becauſe his promiſes are made to all men without exception. For our petitions are not grounded vpon our owne worthineſſe: but vppon Gods goodneſſe, in that he ſheweth him ſelfe ſo free hearted as to reach out his hande to receyue vs. Heerewithall let vs pray one for another, and let vs not doubt but wee ſhall bee hearde. And although wee bee colde, and ſlouthfull: yet let vs vnderſtande that GOD heareth his Church, ſo that although we come not to him ſo freely, and with ſo earneſt and wel diſpoſed minde as we ſhould doe: yet doth he pitie vs, becauſe hee not onely hath an eye to our ſeuerall requeſtes: but alſo accepteth the generall prayers that are made by the whole Church, in our behalfe and fauour: and therefore let vs occupie our ſelues therein as long as wee liue. As for thoſe whome God hath taken out of this worlde, for aſmuch as the holie ſcripture telleth vs not anie thing of them: let not vs fall to thruſting in of our owne imaginations and dotages in that behalfe: for eyther wee muſte pray in faith, or elſe wee ſhall neuer bee hearde. And what is meant by faith? That wee ſhoulde bee taught by Gods worde. Saint Paul ſettes it downe for an vnchaungeable order, that wee canne not call vppon God, vnleſſe wee knowe his trueth, and that the Goſpell haue beene preached vnto vs, as is ſaide in the tenth to the Romanes. And let vs aſſure our ſelues, that as manie as ſteppe aſide from this rule, are as ſtray beaſtes, and their prayers ſhall neuer boote them, for they doe but vnhallow the name of GOD, becauſe they haue not the warrantes of his promiſes in their heartes.

Rom.10 14. 17.

Now let vs paſſe further: It is ſaid, *I will make of thee a mightier and greater people than this*. Here GOD ſheweth Moſes, that there is no cauſe why hee ſhoulde bee afraide, that the good will which hee hadde ſhewed towardes that people ſhoulde bee loſt, or that hee was raiſed vppe in vaine to be a worker of their redemption, and of the welfare that was promiſed them. I *will make of thee another people*, ſaith he. But Moſes is not contented with that: for hee maketh interceſſion ſtill vnto GOD. And this is not added without cauſe: but rather to make vs to knowe that Moſes regarded not himſelfe, but that forgetting himſelfe hee ſought the welfare of thoſe that were cōmitted to his charge. That is the thing in effecte which wee haue to beare in minde vppon this place.

Neuertheleſſe it might bee demaunded heere, whether it were enough for GOD to raiſe vppe a newe people or no, ſeeing the promiſe was made to Abraham and his offſpring. Howe then? Coulde hee deſtroye this people, without vnſaying his owne worde, and without calling backe of his owne promiſe? No, but hereby we be done to vnderſtand, that we muſt not bee ouerinquiſitiue of Gods iudgementes, but deale ſoberly, and modeſtlie with them. For if wee enter into too deepe ranſaking of them, wee ſhall finde them ſuch a bottomleſſe pitte, as wee ſhall neuer gette out of them. Therefore let it ſuffice vs that if GOD had liſted to haue diſpatched that people, hee coulde haue founde meanes to haue performed his promiſe, ſo as it ſhoulde not haue beene in vaine. For (as it is ſaide) had hee not beene able to haue rayſed vppe children to Abraham euen out of ſtones? Then muſt not wee binde GOD to our meanes, nor to the common order of nature, ſeeing hee is to vs incomprehenſible: but wee muſt conſider that hee is able to worke after ſuch a ſorte, as will vtterly abaſhe vs, and wee ſhall not knowe which way hee went to worke.

Matt.3.9.

Thus ye ſee that the thing which wee haue to marke in this text, is that when Gods iudgementes paſſe our capacitie, we muſt not fall to ranſaking of them by peecemeale out of meaſure: for (as ſaith Salomon in the fiue and twentith Chapter of the Prouerbes) it is his glorie to keepe thinges hidden, ſo that although he ſhewe vs not why hee doeth this or that, yet is not his glorie thereby diminiſhed, but rather increaſed. For it ſheweth men their own weakeneſſe, to the ende they ſhoulde learne to liue in lowlineſſe, and not thinke too well of their owne wiſedome. Marke that for a ſpeciall point.

Prou.25.2.

But here are yet other thinges which deſerue to be looked vnto more neerely. And firſt of all, whereas it is ſaide that Moſes ceaſed not to make interceſſion: that may ſeeme ſtrange. For I haue tolde you alreadie that our prayers are faultie, if they be not directed by faith: & faith importeth that wee bée ſure of Gods will, according to Saint Iohns exhortation, where hee ſaith that if wee intende to pray aright, we muſt followe Gods ordinaunce, and not our owne likinges. Sith it is ſo: howe durſt Moſes in this text ſue vnto God contrarie to his expreſſe forbidding, ſo as although GOD ſay, Let mee alone, I will not heare thee ſpeake of it anie more, this people muſt needes periſhe: yet doth Moſes make intreatance ſtill? Wherein he may peraduenture ſeeme vnportunate, yea and that hee is minded euen to ſpite him, or at leaſt wiſe to ſhewe ſome kinde of diſobedience? Nay we muſt note, that Moſes neuer ſhewed himſelfe more obedient than in this, foraſmuch as yͤ truſt of the promiſe that God had made could not be wreſted from him by ſo forcible a temptation, needes muſt it bee that hee was throughly ſetled in faith, when God ſpeaketh to him after ſuch a ſorte, and telleth him, I am determined to deſtroy this people: and yet Moſes maketh interceſſion ſtil, as though he woulde let him of his purpoſe. And why? Is it for that hee diſcrediteth God, or for that hee beleeueth not his threatning as the vnbeleeuers doe, who commonly make but a mocke of it when God ſpeaketh to them of his wrath? No: Moſes dealeth not ſo: but this is his leaningſtocke: behold, God hath made his couenaunt with Abraham, and that couenaunt muſt needes bee vnchaungeable. For it dependeth not vppon the deſertes of men, but is grounded vppon Gods owne free goodneſſe. Moſes knewe this: and therefore when hee hearde GOD ſpeake of the deſtroying of that people: he fell as it were to ſetting of himſelfe againſt it, vppon aſſuraunce of the promiſe that had beene made. True it is that he ſaith nothing of it: but yet was it a thing throughly knowen to the people, that at the ende of foure hundreth yeares, they ſhoulde be put in poſſeſſion of the inheritaunce which God had promiſed them. Moſes then helde himſelfe to Gods couenaunt, which was vnchaungeable and to ſtande in force for euer. Though men bee neuer ſo wicked: yet will God of his goodneſſe ſurmount all their ſinnes, ſo as his worde muſt needes come to effect. But nowe had GOD raunſomed his people, and the tearme was fully come wherein they ſhoulde inioye his promiſe: therefore was it of neceſſitie that all theſe thinges ſhoulde bee doone, and Moſes doeth God the honour, to keepe him to that which hee had ſayde. Nowe that hee is aſſaulted with greeuous temptation, euen as though it were cannon ſhot, hee perſiſteth neuertheleſſe in the ſame faith, and it is not a faith that flickereth as a ſhaddowe, but a faith con-

1.Iohn 3.22 & 5.14.

2.Tim.2.13

conceyued of the worde and couenaunt of God, a faith that ſhoulde ſtande faſt ſetled and vnmouable. We ſee howe that Moſes neuer obeyed GOD better, than when hee withſtoode the threatening which God made. But yet doeth not this reſolue the whole queſtion. For a man might replie: Howe ſo? Beholde, God ſpeaketh continually: why then doeth Moſes beleeue one of his ſayinges more than other? Againe there is an other doubte. Seeing that God is vnuariable and hath but one ſingle will: why ſpeaketh he otherwiſe than hee had determined in himſelfe? For in ſo doing hee ſhoulde deale double, which thing wee knowe can in no wiſe agree with his nature. As touching the firſt queſtion, let vs marke that foraſmuch as Moſes was gouerned by the holy Ghoſt, and was fullie perſwaded that it behooued him to ſticke to the promiſe which was made to Abraham, and therefore gaue credite to the ſame: hee conſidered alſo therewithall, that Gods threatening was iuſt, and that he might iuſtly execute it: for elſe his praying had beene but a mockerie. Hee ſawe the daunger that hung ouer the people, and was readie to fall vppon them. But foraſmuch as he thought there was a remedy, though GOD had ſaide, Let me alone: hee falleth to intreataunce againe. And that ſerueth to ſhew the heynouſneſſe of the offence, and of the fault that had beene committed. For ſuch an enormitie as that was, deſerued well ẏ vtter deſtruction of the people. Moſes then is ſo gouerned by the holy Ghoſte, that although his will ſeeme contrarie to Gods will: yet neuertheleſſe hee knoweth what wee ought to followe. But it ſeemeth that Abraham did the cleane Gen.22.2. contrarie. For God had promiſed him to bleſſe Iſaac, and to raiſe vp a people of his ſeed, whom he woulde take to himſelfe. And yet notwithſtanding he commaundeth Abraham to ſlea Iſaac with his owne handes. Nowe it ſeemeth that after the example which is ſet vs downe here, he ſhoulde rather haue ſaide, Lorde thou haſt promiſed mee that my ſonne Iſaac ſhall beget a ſeede whereby ſaluation ſhall be ſent vnto the worlde: therefore he muſt needes liue. But Abraham is gouerned by the holy Ghoſte, and knoweth that hee ought to obey GOD ſimplie without gaynesaying: for hee coulde well haue ſtirred vp ſeede from out of the aſhes of Iſaac when he had beene deade. So then let vs marke that when ſuch temptations as theſe doe incounter the faithfull, ſo as God ſeemeth to bee contrarie to himſelfe: he fayleth not to gouerne them by his holy ſpirite, and to giue them ſuch wiſedome and diſcretion, as they holde themſelues alwayes to the thing that is good and belonging to their duetie, and neuer doubt at al of Gods worde. And therefore let vs beſeech God to teach vs his will, and let vs doe our indeuour in ſeeking his worde: and ſurely hee will neuer ſuffer vs to goe aſtray, nor to doe amiſſe, but foraſmuch as he knoweth vs to be vnſkilfull and eaſie to be led away to and fro, he will hold vs backe by his holie ſpirit, and giue vs diſcretion to diſcerne what hee commaundeth. For like as he fayled neither Moſes, nor Abraham, no more alſo will he faile vs.

As touching the ſeconde queſtion, where it was demaunded howe it may be that GOD ſhoulde ſay one thing and meane an other: (for that is contrarie to his nature, in ſomuch as hee nameth himſelfe the trueth, and therefore muſt needes ſhewe himſelfe to bee ſo indeede:) we muſt marke that in ſaying ſo, hee ſpeaketh not peremptorilie, but with condition, though the condition be not expreſſed. Therefore we muſt haue an eye to the ende whereunto theſe wordes are referred: and then ſhall wee finde that there is no contrarietie in them. God had ſaide to Abraham, thy ſeede ſhall bee helde in bondage: but about a foure hundred yeres hence I will performe the promiſe that I haue made thee.

Needes nowe muſte this free promiſe of God be performed: for it dependeth not vppon men: it is not ſaide, conditionally that thine offſpring behaue themſelues well: but Gods intent is to bee vnchaungeable in his determination. And therefore whereas he ſaith here to Moſes, Let me alone, I will make cleane riddaunce of this people: it is as if he ſhoulde ſay, This people hath deſerued to be vtterly deſtroyed: for ſeeing they be paſt amendement, what ſhall I doe more? I haue tried them a number of wayes, I haue experience of them, I haue borne gentlie with them, I haue chaſtiſed them, and yet will they not bee reclaimed, neither by faire meanes nor by foule. Seeing then that they be paſt recouerie, they muſt needs be vtterly rooted out and periſh. Yea, but yet is there this, *Let mee alone*. His vſing of that ſpeech includeth a condition: as if he ſhoulde ſay, Here am I readie to doe the office of a iudge: what remaineth nowe to doe, but to thunder downe vppon this people, and to make cleane diſpatche of them? Onely make thou no interceſſion for them.

Nowe wee ſee yet better the thing which I touched afore: that is to wit, that God was ſo farre off from cutting off of Moſes, or from ſhutting him out that he ſhoulde not pray: that hee did rather ſharpen him thereunto. As if hee ſhoulde ſay: But for thee this people ſhoulde be deſtroyed. For if I ſhoulde handle them according to their deſertes: I ſhoulde confounde them. And foraſmuch as they be ſo wilfull that they be paſt amendement. It is time nowe or neuer to execute my ſentence. It is too much: I will make no moe wordes: But I will graunt thus much at thy requeſt, that if thou make interceſſion to me, I will be reſtrayned by it. Now then wee ſee theſe two queſtions well reſolued: and the profite that redoundeth of this texte. Namely firſte that the force of our prayers is ſhewed vs here, when we pray vnto God faithfullie.

And ſecondly we ſee that daungers ought to prouoke vs the more. The more that Gods wrath is vttered vnto vs, the more ought we to be moued to pray vnto God: becauſe it is as if he draue vs thereto by force. And wee muſt not pray alonly for our ſelues, nor haue a care of our ſaluation onely, nor onely feare the daungers that hang ouer our heades: but wee muſt alſo take care for our neighbors, and when we heare Gods threateninges, they muſt waken vs, and make vs to come before him, ſaying, Alas Lord, heere is a ſorte of wretched creatures which muſt needes periſh, if thou be ſo diſpoſed. Therfore let vs bee prouoked to feare, the more for Gods ſhewing of his wrath vnto vs, and for the hearing of his threates: For hee vttereth his iudgementes vnto vs to the ende that we ſhould preuent them. For when GOD giueth ſentence vppon our ſinnes, it is alwayes with this condition, that hee doeth it not with out giuing of vs ſome reſpit to remedie the miſcheefe, ſo wee ſeeke the remedie by ſuch meanes as he commaundeth in his worde. And ſo yee ſee what we haue to remember vppon the example of Moſes.

To bee ſhorte, wee ſee that it is not lawfull for men to put forth themſelues to make prayer and ſupplication: except they haue the promiſe and be ſure that it is Gods good will that they ſhoulde doe ſo. But GOD will giue them ſuch a zeale, as the temptations which ſhall croſſe them ſhall not ſtay them from going on forwarde, though it ſeeme to themſelues that GOD is not minded to heare them, but rather to put them backe and to ſhake them quite off. Therefore let vs not ceaſe to reſorte vnto him as it were importunately. For the importunateneſſe whereof our Lorde Ieſus Chriſte ſpeaketh, in reporting the ſimilitude concerning a widow ÿ had to do with a wicked iudge: made ÿ iudge aſhamed though he were a naughtie and frowarde man. But ſurely when wee come to GOD, we neede not to bee importunate: for Ieſus Chriſt telleth vs, that if wee finde mercie in men that are lewde and ill minded towardes vs: we ſhall much more obtayne fauour at Gods hande, who tarieth not till we come vnto him, but calleth and allureth vs to him. Seeing then that he is ſo friendlie, let vs not be afraide that we ſhall not obteyne our requeſtes. But yet for all that, let vs not giue ouer with once praying vnto him as it were for faſhions ſake: but let vs holde out to the ende, yea and euen be importunate vppon him. Although he ſeeme vnwilling to heare vs, and let vs alone in our diſtreſſes, yea and that to our ſeeming our miſerie doeth ſtill increaſe: yet notwithſtanding let not vs fayle to holde on ſtill, reſting vppon his promiſe which he hath giuen vs, which is certayne and vnfallible: that is to wit, that hee will neuer faile thoſe which come vnto him and call vpon him in trueth.

Luke.18. 2.

Nowe let vs kneele downe in the preſence of our good GOD with acknowledgement of our faultes, praying him to make vs feele them better than wee haue done heretofore, and that foraſmuch as wee knowe what neede wee haue to pray, (inſomuch that euerie minute of an houre wee runne in daunger of endleſſe death and are like to periſhe both bodie and ſoule:) it may pleaſe him to inflame vs ſo by his holie ſpirite, as we may call vppon him vnfaynedlie, and be more carefull to doe it and to exerciſe our ſelues in it at all times, as prouoked thereto by the great neede which wee haue thereof, conſidering the miſeries where through wee ſhoulde periſhe, if wee were not ſuccoured by him and by his grace: and that in the meane whyle it may pleaſe him to beare with vs in our infirmities, and not ſuffer vs to be rent off from ÿ bodie of his Church, but make vs to perceiue by experience, that the prayers which are made through the whole worlde are auailable to his choſen, and ÿ their prayers alſo do auaile vs, ſo as the ſame may ſtabliſhe vs continuallie more & more, in the holie vnion which he hath made with vs in the name of our Lord Ieſus Chriſt. That it may pleaſe him to graunt this grace not onely to vs but alſo to all people and Nations of the earth, reducing all poore ignoraunt people, into the right way of ſaluation, out of the bondage of errour and darkeneſſe: and that for this purpoſe it woulde pleaſe him, to rayſe vp true and faithfull miniſters of his worde, which may not ſeeke their owne profite and ambition, but the glorifying of his holy name, and the ſaluation of his poore flocke. On the other ſide, &c.

On Saturday the xxxi. of Auguſt. 1555.

The Lxvj Sermon which is the fifth vppon the ninth Chapter.

15 Then turned I mee, and went downe the Hill, and the hill burned with fire, and I had the two tables of the Couenant in my two hands.

16 Then looked I, and behold yee had ſinned againſt the Lord your God: and

had made a molten Calfe, and were turned out of hand from the way which the Lord your God had commaunded you.

17 Then tooke I the two tables and caſt them out of my two handes, and brake them before your eies:

18 And I fell downe flat before the Lorde fortie dayes and fortie nightes as afore, without eating breade or drinking water, for all your ſinnes which you had committed in dooing euill in the ſight of the Lord, by prouoking him to wrath.

19 For I was afrayde of the anger and wrath wherewith the Lord was diſpleaſed againſt you to deſtroy you. And the Lorde hearde mee that time alſo.

20 Likewiſe the Lord was ſore angrie with Aaron to deſtroy him: but I prayed alſo for Aaron the ſame time.

21 Then tooke I your ſinne which you had made, that is to wit the Calfe, and burnt it with fire, and ſtomped it and grounde it throughlie euen vntill it was ſmall as duſt, and caſt the duſt thereof in the brooke that came downe from the hill.

Here Moſes declareth the great good zeale that hee had, at ſuche time as he ſawe God ſo ſore offended with the Iewes for making the golden calfe, and for their forſaking of their Redeemer to giue thẽſelues ouer to a deade thing, rather than to him of whoſe power they had had experience ſo manie wayes. Nowe he ſaith that *hee had the two tables in his hande, and that when hee ſawe the people ſo falne away to Idolatrie, hee brake them in peeces.* Heere it might bee asked, whether Moſes were not caried with ouerhaſtie moode. For we haue ſeene that thoſe two tables were written with Gods owne hande, ſo as there was not anie workemanſhippe of man in them, but that the ingrauing of the tenne commaundementes in them, was of Gods owne doing. Nowe then, that Moſes threwe downe Gods handie worke after that faſhion, notwithſtanding that the people had ſinned: it ſeemeth not to proceede of any modeſtie, but rather of too vnaduiſed zeale and oueruiolent headineſſe. We muſt not preſume to iudge of ſuch odde things: for wee ſee that God gouerneth his ſeruauntes by his holie ſpirit, and we knowe that ſometimes hee ſtirreth vp his faithfull ones to doe his pleaſure by extraordinarie meanes. And although wee may not make a certain rule of it: yet is not the deed Numb.25.6. it ſelfe to bee blamed. Wee ſee what happened vnto Phinees. For although he was not ordeined to be a iudge, but onely to bee a prieſt: yet did he execute Iuſtice vpon the adulterer, & the adultreſſe which had defiled the Sanctuarie. God allowed his doing, and there is re- Pſal.106.30.31. corde of it in the holie ſcripture, and yet notwithſtanding it was a peculiar deede which wee may not follow, without a ſpecial mouing of the holy Ghoſt. As much is to be ſaide of the thing which wee reade of in this texte, where Moſes brake the two tables, which thing hee did not through haſtie moode, but as ledde thereto by a zeale to Godwarde, and G O D ſhewed himſelfe therein, of purpoſe to doe the people to vnderſtande, how heynous their tranſgreſſion was. It is ſaide that Moſes was ſent of God to bring downe his couenaunt, and to bee as in his ſteede, whom hee ſerued. And therefore his deede was as it were a declaring to the people, that his couenant was broken and torne in peeces. Beholde (ſaith God) It is true I haue choſen you, I haue couenaunted with you, I haue ſhewed my ſelfe to be your God, and the couenantes were ingrauen in two ſtones, that they might remaine in perpetuall remembraunce. But now haue you broken your faith to me, and therefore muſt I for my part forſake you, and diſanull the couenant that was made betwixt vs. Thus we ſee that Moſes did not anie thing at aladuenture, nor was driuen by fleſhly affection: but that God ſheweth the people by him, that he gaue them ouer and tooke them not for his, but vtterly diſclaimed them. For the verie bonde of the vnion, was the obedience of the people in ſubmitting themſelues vnto his lawe, and their acknowledging of him to be their god, and their worſhipping of him, notwithſtanding that there were infirmities in them. But they make them a calfe of golde, and vtterly forſake the religion that was appointed them. And foraſmuch as they did ſo: it was good reaſon that God ſhould ſhake them off, and make as it were an vtter diuorce between himſelfe & them for euer. Marke that for one point.

But nowe by the way, this ſeemeth to diſagree with that which Moſes addeth: that is to wit, that he ſhoulde breake the two tables with his owne handes, as it were of purpoſe to ſeparate God and the people aſunder: & yet notwithſtanding make interceſſion for them, yea & ẏ after ſuch a ſort (as it is ſaid in Exodus) as he was not cõtented to intreate God only ẇ praier Exod.32.32. & ſupplications: but alſo was inflamed with ſuch

zeale, as

as hee beſought God (if it were poſſible) to take him out of this life , yea and euen to wipe him out of the booke of life, ſo as hee might bee accurſed, conditionallie that the people might eſcape. Here are two thinges which ſeeme verie diſagreeable at the firſt ſight : namely, that hee ſhoulde bee ſo angrie, and that hee ſhoulde on Gods behalfe breake and diſanul the couenant, as who ſhoulde ſay he meant to baniſh the people from the kingdome of heauen , and from all hope of ſaluation, yea and euen from the inheritaunce that was promiſed them : and that yet notwithſtanding, he ſhould go and offer him ſelfe to G O D, to bee puniſhed for the peoples ſakes, and to beare their curſe both in his bodie and in his ſoule . But herein we ſee, that Gods ſeruauntes may well haue a burning zeale to execute their charge: and yet for all that, not ceaſe to haue pitie & compaſſion on ſuch as periſhe , and whome they be inforced to hate, and againſt whome they bee driuen to bee ſharpe and rough. And Moſeſes zeale ſhewed it ſelfe, not onely in breaking both the Tables, but alſo in his doing of the execution that we reade of
Exod.32.27 29. in Exodus. For he did not onely rebuke the people ſharpely: but alſo commaunded the Leuites to halowe their handes. And howe ? By killing all that euer they mette with. Dedicate your ſelues this day vnto the Lorde ſayth hee. So was that tribe choſen to doe that execution. And although they were ordeyned to the ſeruice of the ſanctuarie : yet is it tolde them that they muſt conſecrate their handes vnto G O D. And after what manner ? By ſleaing their brethren , ſo as they ſpared not any man for kinreds ſake. Indeede yee bee all of Abrahams houſe (ſaith he): but yet muſt you execute vengeaunce this day , for the offence that hath beene commmitted againſt G O D, in making the calfe. Loe here another token, that Moſes was ſo out of patience with the people, as he had no kindeneſſe in him, ne meant to forgiue the tranſgreſſion that had beene cōmitted againſt G O D : and yet for all this, he is contented to yeelde his owne perſon to aunſwere for them, not onely by ſuſteyning ſome bodilie puniſhment : but alſo by beeing euen damned for them , if it were poſſible. But wee muſt alwayes come backe to that which I haue touched alreadie : that is to wit, that Gods ſeruauntes haue alwayes ſuch a care of the welfare of them that are cōmitted to their charge: that they had leauer to periſh themſelues, than to ſee thoſe goe to deſtruction , of whoſe ſaluation there was ſome hope. And yet notwithſtanding they ceaſe not for all that, to be ſharpe and rough when God commaundeth them to doe their duetie, not vppon crueltie, that they haue not compaſſion ſtill vppon the wretched ſinners: but becauſe it is not in their owne libertie and choyce to ſhewe mercie, but they muſt haue reſpecte to their office , and vnto Gods will, that they followe the ſame . Both theſe thinges are ſhewed vs here in Moſes: and we ſee that all the Prophetes haue vſed the like manner of dealing. It may well ſeeme that they haue no regarde to ſpare the people. For they threaten Gods wrathe, they curſe, they condemne , and to bee ſhorte , they ſeeme to bring nothing with them but thunder clappes: and yet notwithſtanding wee ſee they were led with ſuch pitie and carefulneſſe , that they beſought God to ſhewe fauour to ſuch as were vnworthie of it. Who will giue teares vnto mine eyes, ſaith the Prophete Ieremie : I could well Ier.9,1.
finde in mine hearte to melt into water , to bewaile the ſinnes of my countriefolke. And yet in the meane ſeaſon howe ſpeaketh hee ? Vſeth he mild tearmes to rebuke the people with gentleneſſe ? Nay , hee cryeth out againſt them as though hee had forgotten all naturall affection. So then we ſee ẏ theſe two things agree verie well : that is to wit , that thoſe whome G O D chooſeth to ſet foorth his worde , may well regarde the welfare and benefite of the wretched ſinners that are committed to their charge, and bee euen ſorie and exceedingly greeued at the heart to ſee them goe to deſtruction: and yet for all that , not forbeare to ſhewe ſignes of rigour, ſo farre foorth as their office requireth , and as they needes muſt for the ſeruing of God.

Furthermore as touching the requeſt of Moſes: it is a ſtraunge caſe that hee ſhoulde deſire to be wiped out of the booke that God had written : for he knewe well it was vnpoſſible. He Exod.32.32
was not ſo ignoraunt but that hee knewe Gods determination to bee vnchaungeable, and that his chooſing of thoſe that are his can not by anie meanes be altered. And therefore this requeſt ſeemeth to be vnordinate, yea and vtterly diſagreeing to faith . But we muſt marke that in this zeale Moſes reſpected not preciſely what was poſſible to bee doone : but onely meant to pray God that he being but one man might periſhe rather than the whole people ſhoulde periſhe, ſo as hee himſelfe might aunſwere for all the euill that had beene doone if it were poſſible. And beſides that, wee haue to marke here, that Moſes matched Gods glorie with the welfare of the people to whome the promiſes were giuen. For he perſwadeth himſelfe that it was not poſſible that that people ſhoulde bee vtterly rooted out, but that Gods trueth muſt bee aboliſhed therewithall, becauſe God had bound himſelfe to the offſpring of Abraham : and therfore that if that people had beene cut off, God ſhoulde haue ſeemed to be variable. He coulde well haue found out ſome meane incomprehenſible to man: but Moſes coulde iudge no further than he was able to conceiue. Now then foraſmuch as he was at his wittes ende in this caſe, and God was to be found faithfull and ſoothfaſt by performing of his couenant : therefore doth he forget himſelfe, and is caried away rather to offer himſelfe as it were in a ſacrifice of curſing, than that Gods name ſhould be blaſphemed, or that it might be ſaid that hee had not kept promiſe, or that he had changed his purpoſe. Hereby we ſee that Moſes might pray faithfully : and yet notwithſtanding not looke ſimplie & alonely to the right of the caſe. How might ẏ be done? He was moued thereto by a paſſion , howe beeit

not by a cholerike and fleſhlie paſſion, but by ſuch a zealous paſſion to Godward, as caried him aboue all ſtate of man. Neuerthelater (as I haue ſaide afore), theſe things muſt not bee drawen to a generall rule, (for we haue not the ſpirite of Moſes): but yet muſt we goe ſo farre with him, as we had leauer that the whole world ſhoulde goe to deſtruction, than Gods glorie ſhouldbe defaced, or ẏ he ſhould not be worſhipped, or that the honour of his iuſtice, wiſedome, goodneſſe, and power ſhoulde not bee reſerued vnto him. To be ſhort, we ought to prefer Gods glorie, not onely before all bodilie goods, but alſo euen before the ſaluation of our ſoules. And although that that bee harde for vs to doe: yet muſt wee inforce our ſelues vnto it. We ſee how Rom.9.3. Saint Paul did the like for the Iewes, and he was lead by the ſame reaſon which led Moſes. I could finde in my heart (ſaith he) to bee accurſed for my kinſefolkes ſake. It was not humane pitie that mooued him thereunto: but his eye was alwayes vppon the promiſe that had beene made to the ofspring of Abraham, in reſpect whereof it behoued God to keepe ſtill ſome remnant of that peoples ſeede, or elſe the infidels and vnbeleeuers would haue reported him to haue bin a lyer, and they would haue skorned the law & al the promiſes. Wherefore to the ende that Gods name ſhoulde not come to ſuch reproch: Saint Paul offereth himſelf to be accurſed, if need be, and yet was hee well aſſured, that God woulde neuer ſuffer him to ſcape out of the hande of his Leader, who had taken him into his keeping. But it is not for vs to enter into ſuch diſputatiõs. For as I ſaide, Moſes is contented to be rauiſhed with ſuch zeale, as hee had leauer that both himſelfe and all the worlde beſide ſhoulde periſhe, than to ſee Gods name skorned, or that the vnbeleeuers ſhould haue their mouthes opened to blaſpheme him. That is the thing which wee haue to marke vppon the prayer of Moſes.

But yet therewithall let vs come backe againe to that which is rehearſed here, *concerning his breaking of the two tables*. Herein we ſee that how pitifull ſoeuer Gods ſeruantes are towardes the wretched creatures which periſh, yet muſt they not vſe anie ſuch mercie as may nouriſhe the euill, but be careful to doe the thing that God cõmaundeth them, without ſwaruing one way or other. Sometimes men are ſo moued with fooliſhe pitie, that they offende God: and vpon opinion to doe good to thoſe whome they beare with, they increaſe the euil ſtill in them, and are a cauſe of their greater decay. To be ſhort, men ſtand ſo much in their owne conceits, that they wil needes exceede and go beyond God in mercie. And this is ſeene in all caſes. Howbeit, if a man examine their affections narrowly: he ſhall find that their ſo doing procedeth not of louing kindnes: for one while they be ſharpe & rough, and there is nothing with them but deſtroying: and anon after in ẏ turning of a hand, ye ſhal ſee them in another moode, ſo as they wil needs be verie pitiful. But after what maner? In going beyond their dutie, without regard what God hath ordeined: and (which worſe is) they will needs be alwais ſhewing of mercy where there is no repentance, whereby they caſt wood into the fire, to make gods wrath burn ẏ whotter againſt thẽ. And therefore when they whome God hath put in office do ſee offences committed: they muſt not in any wiſe leaue them vnpuniſhed. For why? If they ſuffer the miſcheefe to ſettle & to feſter: it will grow worſe and worſe till it become vncurable. For ye ſee howe diſeaſes become vncurable, when the parties be not purged in due time and place. We muſt remember how the Apoſtle Hebr.12.15. ſaith, ẏ we muſt beware we ſuffer not euill weeds to grow, but we muſt pluck them vp betimes, for if we doe not, they will ſo ouergrow vs as we ſhall not be able to deſtroy them when we would, but they will ſtoppe our eyes, and ſo keepe downe ẏ good ſeede, as it can neuer thriue. After that manner will God puniſh our negligence, when we be not diligent in doing our duetie to rid away euill from among vs. Thus ye ſee what we haue to marke. But let vs alſo applie this leſſon to our inſtruction.

Let ſuch as haue the charge of teaching, loke neerely to themſelues and thinke well vppon it, and beare in minde what God commandeth thẽ that they may diſcharge themſelues thereof: or elſe they may well make couerings, but God will ask them an account of ẏ things that he had inioyned them. Againe on the otherſide, when we heare our vices and ſinnes ſharpely rebuked by Gods worde, and rough threateninges againſt vs, ſo as it may ſeeme that our teachers intend to deliuer vs into Gods hande to bee puniſhed by him according to our deſertes: let vs not thinke it ſtraunge, as a number do, who would haue vs but onely to greaſe and annoynt their ſcabs, in ſteed of handling them as they ſhould be, & cannot abide to be rebuked roughlie. But what? They would be flattered to the end they might periſhe without feeling of it. Contrariwiſe we ſee ẏ to be taught aright, we muſt be rebuked and threatened, yea and that with ſuch ſharpeneſſe and vehemencie, as wee may bee driuen to bethinke vs of our offences, and to humble our ſelues before God as becommeth vs. That is the thing which wee haue to remember in that wee ſee that Moſes was ſo chafed at the peoples tranſgreſſion, that hee brake the two Tables immediately, and afterwarde drewe out the ſwoorde, to puniſhe ſuch as had ſo violated Gods ſeruice, and incouraged his tribe to doe the like. Let vs not thinke but that Moſes was wounded to the quicke with greefe and compaſſion, when hee was faine to doe execution with his owne hands. For wee knowe he was a meeke and kinde hearted man, and inclined to good and holie pitie aboue all others. But yet doth it behooue him to diſcharge his duetie, or elſe hee had beene vnfaithfull towards God.

Moreouer whereas he ſaith, *I looked, & behold you had offended your God, by making your ſelues a calfe of mettall, and yee were turned out of the way which he had appointed you*: this looking of his was becauſe God had certified him thereof: but yet be-

behoued it him to beare witneſſe of their deede [with his owne eyes]. And whereas Ioſua ſayde it ſeemed to bee ſome battell: Moſes aunſwered Exod.32.17.18. that it was not ſo, for as much as ſome of them made not ſignes of mirth, and otherſome ſignes of feare and ſorrowe: but all the whole multitude was merrie and ioyfull: and therefore (quoth hee) there muſt needes bee ſome other matter in it. At his comming downe hee ſawe them dauncing as it were vppon fond deuotion, according to the maner of Idolaters, who think themſelues to ſerue their Gods very well by ſuch fooliſh and wanton toyes. And ſo ẏ Iſraelites tooke this dancing of theirs to be a peece of Gods ſeruice: wherfore Moſes executed the puniſhment afore mentioned. But as touching this text, the onely thing that we haue to marke, is the thing which we ſpake of euen now, and which we haue ſpoken of afore: namely that hee vpbraydeth the Iewes with their ſuddeine ſtarting aſide from the way which GOD had ſhewed them. For the welſpring of the miſcheefe was, that they held not themſelues to the rule that is conteyned in the Lawe. Wee ſee then that the cauſe of all ruine and deſtruction, is our fickleneſſe in turning away from Gods woorde. For as ſoone as wee paſſe thoſe boundes and ſwarue neuer ſo little aſide: by and by wee runne aſtray into vtter deſtruction. And therefore it ſtandeth vs ſo much the more on hande to holde our ſelues warily in obedience to our GOD, ſpecially when hee hath beene ſo gracious vnto vs, as to ſet vs in the righte way. For hee vouchſafeth not ſo to guide all men. Trueth it is that all men, yea euen thoſe which neuer hearde one woorde of teaching, haue inough Rom.1.20. to make them vnexcuſable. But as for vs, wee ought to make ſingular account of this priuiledge, that GOD calleth vs to him, that hee taketh vs into his gouernment, and that hee ſheweth vs the way of ſaluation. Sith wee haue that, wee cannot goe aſtray, ſo wee hearken to the doctrine that is ſet foorth to vs in Gods name. But if wee deſpiſe ſuch a benefite: then are we worthy of too too much blame. And therefore let vs learne to ſubmit our ſelues ſimply to Gods word, or elſe wee ſhall open the gate to all wickedneſſe, accordingly as it is ſayd that men marre all and turne all vpſide downe, Deut.9.12. when they ſtart aſide from the ſaid way. Then is there but one way to walke well and rightly in: which is to obey our GOD, and not to giue any credite to our owne wit and imagination, nor to giue heade to our owne inuentions: but to abide as it were faſt linked to the thinges that GOD commaundeth and appoynteth vs. Thoſe are the thinges which wee muſt ſticke by: and if wee doe not, wee bee vnhappie and forlorne creatures. For we ſhall go on from euill to euil, and there will bee no ende nor meaſure of our diſorderednes, as we ſee it befell to this people, who hauing once let go Gods woorde, fell into ſo groſſe and beaſtly ſuperſtition, as to woorſhip a Calfe of their owne Exod.32.2. making: and they became ſo madde that they ſpared not any thing ſo fouly to defile themſelues in offending GOD after that faſhion. For when Aaron willed them to bring him al their ornaments and Iewels: it was to the ende to haue made them loth to haue had an Idoll of that price. But there was neither man nor woman which brought not their ornamentes and all the coſtly Iewelles which they had. Thoſe graceleſſe wretches were ſo caryed away, and the diuell poſſeſſed them with ſuch furie, that they paſſed not to ſpoile themſelues of all their ſubſtance, nor cared what coſt they were at, ſo they might haue an ydoll. And by this example are wee warned to raine our ſelues ſhort and not to let our ſelues looſe, leaſt we happen to ſtart neuer ſo little aſide from Gods pure doctrine, & from the Religion which he ſheweth vs in his woord.

There is yet another thing to bee noted in ẏ breaking of theſe Tables: which is, that GOD intended to ſhewe by way of a figure, that his once writing of his Lawe was not ynough for vs, but that it behoued vs to haue it double ingroſed. Trueth it is that Moſeſes rehearſing of it in this text, is to another end: but yet is there no inconuenience in this alſo. Likewyſe when Moſes tooke a veyle or ſcarfe to put before his face, bycauſe the people coulde not abyde the glorie and great Exod.34.30.33. brightneſſe that ſhone therein, it was to magnifye the Lawe, according as Saint Paule declareth: 2.Cor.3.7. and the verie ſtorie it ſelfe ſheweth ſufficiently, that it behoued Moſes to be knowen thereby to bee as an Angell, and not to bee taken any more to be within the common ſtate of a mortall man, in ſomuch that his countenaunce ſhone as bright as the ſunne, which the people could not abide, & that was to put them in minde of their owne weakeneſſe and frayltie. That was the cheefe cauſe why Moſes wore a veile to hide his face withall. But yet herewithall Saint Paule ſticketh not to ſay, that God ſhewed euen then aforehand by way of figure, that there ſhould befall ſuch a dimneſſe and blindneſſe vppon the Iewes, that whenſoeuer they red the Lawe or heard it preached, they ſhould haue as it were a veile before their eyes, ſo as they ſhould not ſee a whitte. And Saint Paule ſayth that this thing was accompliſhed euen in 2.Cor.3.13.14.15. his time among the Iewes. For they red Moſes continually in their Synagogues: and yet they continued as ſtarke beaſtes as the heathen, ſo as they became brutiſh through their owne fooliſh fancies, and could not perceiue Gods trueth at all. For Saint Paule telleth them, that all the Lawe is nothing without Ieſus Chriſt: it is but as a dead thing, bycauſe Ieſus Chriſt is as the ſoule and perfection thereof. Col.2.17. So then, as touching the breaking of the Tables: it was the foreſayd cauſe that moued Moſes to doe it: that is to wit, to ſhewe the people that God diſclaimed them, as if hee had ſayd, your God giueth you ouer, and hath diuorced himſelfe from you. For in as much as your wickedneſſe hath ſeparated you from him: it is good reaſon that hee alſo ſhould ſtand diſcharged of his promiſe, and be no more bound to ſo malicious & froward a people as you be, who haue vſed ſuch vnfaithfulnes towards him. That then is the firſt reaſon.

But there is alſo another cauſe: which is, that wee haue as it were a figure or image, that Gods once writing of his Lawe is not ynough for vs: but that wee haue neede of a ſecond wryting of it, to the intent it may auaile vs, and the doctrine thereof benefite vs by ſhewing it ſelfe to bee liuely and of effectuall force and power. And that is the thing which the Prophetes Ier.31.32, 33. meane in ſaying, that GOD will make a new Couenaunt with his faythfull ones, not as hee did with their fathers in Egypt, but by wryting his Lawe in their heartes, and by ingrauing it in their bowels. And therefore let vs marke well that GOD meant to doe vs to vnderſtand, that his wryting of his Lawe in the two tables of ſtone, was by and by voyd and of none effect. And why? Bycauſe that, if God doe but write his Lawe, or cauſe it to bee preached to vs onely by woorde of mouth: there will neuer bee any holde or tacke in it: and hee ſheweth that the blame thereof is in our ſelues, bycauſe wee bee not ſtedfaſt in keeping the promiſe that wee haue made vnto GOD, but become variable, and ſtarte aſide out of hand. God for his part, doth well performe whatſoeuer hee promiſeth vs: but wee breake off all acquaintance and vnion with him, ſo as we be cut off and baniſhed from him, and wee bereaue our ſelues of all the promiſes that he offered vs: and therefore after he hath once written his law, he muſt be faine to turne againe and write it the ſecond tyme. As how? For figures doe not alwaies repreſent the full truth, but there is oftentimes ſome difference. Then let vs marke that the figure varieth from the truth which God ſheweth vs and maketh vs to perceiue For hee writeth not his Law the ſecond time in ſtones: but rather whereas our hartes were hard before, he chaungeth them and maketh them ſoft: and in ſtead of Ezec.11.19. & 36.26. ſtony heartes (as ſayeth Ezechiell,) he giueth vs hearts of fleſh: that is to ſay, hee ſofteneth our heartes and maketh them pliable, to the intent wee ſhoulde receaue his Lawe, and haue it ingrauen in vs, and be able to doe and to follow whatſoeuer he commaundeth vs. Therefore let vs beare this figure well in mynde, for as much as it is for our benefite. In deede as concerning the firſt reaſon, it behoueth vs to bethinke our ſelues well when GOD hath called vs. For if we corrupt his ſeruice, or alter religion at our owne pleaſure: although there be no Moſes to breake the tables of ſtone: yet hath God ſhewed once for all, that he is alyenated from vs, and that hee will haue vs to bee as ſtraungers to his houſe. Trueth it is that his election is without repentaunce: yet notwith- Exod 33.19. ſtanding (as it is ſayd in Exodus,) hee will ſaue whom hee liſteth. Howbeit, if wee ſticke not purely to his woorde: it is all one as if wee fell out with him, and playd the fugitiue and vnruly children: and hee will not ſuffer vs to deſpiſe his couenaunt after that maner, without auenging of himſelfe of ſuch vnthankfulneſſe. And hee hath ſhewed vs at that tyme in the perſon of Moſes, that hee giueth ouer and forſaketh all thoſe, which turne away from the trueth and holde not themſelues to it, ſo that for his part hee will haue no more to doe with them, nor any more acquaintance with them. Wherfore let vs beware that this horrible ſentence bee not caſt vppon vs, and whenſoeuer our Lorde ſhall haue called vs, let it ſerue to hold vs in awe and feare. But yet let vs know alſo, that it is not ynough for vs to haue our eares beaten with Gods commaundementes, and to haue them ſet before vs, and to be incouraged to keepe them: for God muſt bee fayne to worke within our hartes, or elſe all the teaching in the world wil ſtand vs in no ſtead: it wil be but a ſound ringing in the ayre, whereof no profite will redownd. Nowe then, come wee to heare Gods woorde? In deede wee ought to make account of the fauour that hee ſheweth vs in cauſing it to bee preached vnto vs: but yet let vs aſſure our ſelues that that would but turne to our greater condemnation, if he ingraued it not in our heartes. What is to bee done then? We muſt diſcharge our ſelues of all ſelftruſt, aſſuring our ſelues that wee ſhall be but euill ſchollers, vntill GOD haue taught vs by his holy ſpirite. Notwithſtanding that hee ſhall haue vſed men as his inſtrumentes, to bring vs to the knowledge of his trueth: yet muſt hee himſelf bore our eares, that we may hearken to him, Pſal.40.7. and hee muſt touch our hearts and ſoften them, that we may receiue yͤ doctrine which is vttered vnto vs. Wherefore let vs learne to miſlike our ſelues, by acknowledging our owne ſinne and wretchedneſſe: and therewithall let vs pray him to woorke in ſuch ſort, as the things which we ſhall haue heard and vnderſtoode, bee not a witneſſe againſt vs of our rebelliouſneſſe, and that wee haue beene foolke paſt amendment. And ſo, as ofte as wee come to any ſermon, or read the holy Scripture: let vs pray God to touche vs inwardly, and to make the doctrine auaylable which wee ſhall haue heard, ſo as it may not bee ſpoken to the ſtones, but to ſuch as haue beene foretaught by his holy ſpirite. Thus ye ſee what wee haue to marke vppon that place.

Now for the attainement of this ſecond writing, wee muſt not goe to Moſes, but to our Lord Ieſus Chriſt. For it is he that hath brought vs the holy Ghoſt, and the renewment whereby Ioh.16.17. Rom.8.9. our heartes are refourmed to the obeying of GOD, and whereby they bee circumciſed that they may be dedicated to his ſeruice. Then Col.2.11. if Moſes be compared to our Lord Ieſus Chriſt, 2.Cor.3.7.8 hee is but a miniſter of the letter. And why? Bycauſe hee coulde goe no further than he had commiſſion, which was, to ſet foorth Gods doctrine. But it belonged to Ieſus Chriſt to giue light to that which Moſes had vttered, and to giue ſtrength thereunto. And how was that? By his holy ſpirit. True it is that Saint Paule termeth himſelfe a miniſter of the ſpirite. 2.Cor.3.6. Howbeit, that is not to deface his Maiſter: it is not to drawe to himſelfe the thing that belongeth to the ſonne of GOD: but it is to ſhewe that our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt vttereth his grace now adayes by the preaching of his Goſpell. As howe? Let vs marke firſt of all, that the renewing of vs and the writing of Gods Lawe in our heartes, thereby to faſhion vs according to the righteouſnes contayned in ẏ ſame: is reſerued alonely to the ſonne of God, and that it is he which giueth vs the will to followe God his Father and to obey him. For he hath the ſpirit Eſa,11.2. of the feare of God, hee hath the ſpirite of all righteouſneſſe, hee hath the ſpirite of trueth, as is ſayde in the eleuenth Chapter of the Prophet Eſay. So then let vs marke, that wee muſt reſort to our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt when wee bee put in minde of our duetie. When it is tolde vs what GOD requireth of vs, wee muſt thinke thus: Alas Lorde Ieſus, it is true in deede that heere wee haue knowledge of the thing that is good and ryghtfull: but what? Wee haue another Lawe cleane contrarie to Rom,7.23. it in our ſelues: which is, that wee doe but chafe and fret at GOD when wee bee taught: and when his Lawe is alleaged vnto vs, wee doo the cleane contrarie to that which is contayned there: and therefore thou muſt bee fayne to chaunge vs, and to make vs new creatures: for to that ende is the ſpirite giuen vs, which thou communicateſt vnto vs, by bearing vs recorde that wee bee members of thy body. And againe, hath Ieſus Chriſt once Phil.2,13. giuen vs this will? Hee giueth vs alſo abilitie to perfourme the ſame deſire, and ſtrengtheneth vs ſo againſt all temptations, as wee ſhall neuer bee ouercome by them. Yee ſee then that wee muſt hye vs to our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt, aſſuring our ſelues that that prerogatiue and honour belongeth to none but onely him. Yet notwithſtanding this ſaying of 2.Cor.3.6. S. Paules is true alſo, that all ſuch as preach the Goſpell are ſpirituall miniſters, [that is to ſay] they ſet not foorth a dead letter and vnprofitable doctrine, but withall they bring Gods ſpirit. And howe is that? Is it by their owne breathing? No: For our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt did well Iohn 20.22. ſhewe by his breathing vppon his diſciples, that the holy Ghoſt proceedeth from none but himſelfe alone. But Saint Paules meaning is, that Ieſus Chriſt woorketh continually, to the ende wee ſhoulde beleeue in him. True it is that we ſhall not ſee him heere perſonally preſent: how then ſhall wee bee ſure, that hee wryteth Gods Lawe in our heartes? Let vs not alleage any of thoſe thinges. For ſeeing that Ieſus Chriſt is Rom.10.4. Col.2.17. the ende and perfection of the lawe, yea and the very life of it (as I ſayde afore:) let vs not thinke but that hee printeth Gods Lawe in our heartes by the preaching of the Goſpell. So then let vs not doubt but GOD will performe that grace in vs. And although the partie that preacheth vnto vs bee but a mortall man, and the wordes which hee vttereth vnto vs with his mouth, doe vaniſh anon after away in the ayre: yet let not vs doubt but Ieſus Chriſt will Rom.10.13. for all that doe his dewtie, as Sainte Paule 2.Cor.3.3. declareth in the ſame place. And in deede, the faithfull haue experience thereof. For wee ſhoulde neuer haue ſo much as any thought Eph.4.7. at all of comming vnto GOD, or of dooing any good: vnleſſe wee were fully reſolued of this grounde, namely that it behoueth vs to bee throughly ſetled and conſtant: all the which proceedeth of our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt. Therefore whenſoeuer wee feele that GOD draweth vs vnto him, let vs vnderſtande that hee ſheweth vs howe wee bee members of the body of his ſonne, bycauſe wee haue the holy Ghoſt, by whome wee bee altered and reformed, and by whome alſo Rom.8.9. 1.Cor,6.15. 19. his Lawe is written newe againe in our heartes. Thus yee ſee what wee haue to beare in minde.

Moreouer, let vs marke that whereas Moſes telleth the people *that God heard him for that time*: it is to the ende they ſhoulde not abuſe Gods goodneſſe, but vnderſtand their offence to haue beene ſo horrible, that if they did ſo any more and tempted GOD agayne afterwarde: they ſhoulde finde no mercye. The intent then of Moſes in this place, was to holde the people in awe. Truely wee ought to bee fully perſwaded of this, that if GOD finde vs repentaunt for our ſinnes, hee will euer bee ready to forgiue all that wee haue committed. Let vs but onely make towardes him, and hee will reache vs his hande. Yet is it not ment that we ſhould take leaue to doe euill vnder colour that GOD is ſo mercifull to wretched ſinners, that as ſoone as they returne vnto him, hee preuenteth them and is ready to receaue them and imbrace them aforehand. This (ſay I) muſt not make vs the more inclined to doe euill: but wee muſt vnderſtand that when God hath forgiuen vs once, we muſt no more fall backe againe. For then do we tempt him and abuſe his patience, which is the next way to ſhitte vs out of the gate of ſaluation, and to diſappoint our ſelues vtterly of all the mercy which hee was minded to haue vſed towardes vs. True it is that although we ſhall haue offended twentie or thirtie times, yet doth God tell vs that he will haue pittie vpon vs. But I ſpeake as nowe of thoſe that take libertie to offend, and ſay, ſeeing I haue found God ſo gentle and pittifull, I ſhall ſurely bee receiued of him at all tymes. Surely when men ſtande ſo vppon Gods mercie, and vnder pretence thereof, doe eyther become negligent, or elſe giue ouer themſelues to all naughtineſſe: it is all one as if they renounced all the promiſes of their ſaluation. Therefore let vs marke well the ſaying that is ſet downe heere. God (ſayth Moſes) heard mee. And howe? for that tyme: to the ende that the people ſhoulde thinke thus with themſelues, Alas, it is a wonder that euer we obteined pardon, and it muſt needes aſtoniſh vs ſtill, that God woulde rid vs out of ſuch danger as wee were fallen into, conſidering howe deadly and ouer deadly the fall was. Now then ſeeing that God hath ſhewed himſelf ſo friendly towardes vs: let vs beware that wee prouoke not his wrath any more. For if wee fall backe agayne,

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wee cannot tell what may befall vs. After that maner muſt wretched ſinners, (when they bee tempted to doe amiſſe,) brydle and reſtraine themſelues by ſetting Gods promiſes before their eyes, howbeit in ſuch ſorte as they become not the boulder to doe euill, but as they may haue recourſe to Gods mercy when they haue doone amiſſe, and liue in the greater awe euer after. Thus ye ſee whereof wee be put in mind in this text.

Nowe let vs fall downe in the preſence of our good God with acknowledgment of our faultes, praying him to make vs ſo to feele them, as wee may learne to ſigh and grone for them all our life time, and finde mercie at his hand when we ſeeke it with faith: and to refourme vs in ſuch wiſe, as we may not peruert his woorde and the pureneſſe of his ſeruice: but that ſeeing hee hath ſhewed vs the way of ſaluation, it may pleaſe him to grant vs the grace to perſeuere therein all the tyme of our life, ſo as wee forſaking all our wicked luſtes and affections, may walke on in his obedience: and moreouer to beare with vs in all our infirmities, vntill hee haue ridde vs quite and cleane of them all, and clothed vs againe with his owne righteouſneſſe, that wee may bee partakers of his glory, which he hath promiſed vs for our Lord Ieſus Chriſtes ſake. That it may pleaſe him to graunt this grace, not onely to vs but alſo to all people and nations of the earth, &c.

On Wednesday the iiij. of September. 1555.

The Lxvii. Sermon, which is the ſixth vpon the ninth Chapter.

20 Likewiſe the Lorde was ſore angry with Aaron, to haue deſtroyed him: but at the ſame tyme I prayed alſo for Aaron.

21 Then tooke I the ſinne which you had made, that is to wit the Calfe and burnt it in the fire, and brake it and brayed it throughly, vntill it was as ſmall as duſt: and I caſt the duſt thereof in the brooke that came downe from the hill.

22 Alſo yee prouoked him to wrath in Thaberah, and in Maſa, and in Cibroth-hathauah.

23 When the Lorde ſent you from Cades barne, ſaying, go vp and poſſeſſe the Lande which I haue giuen you: Then rebelled you againſt the commaundement of the Lorde your GOD, and beleeued him not, neither obeyed you his voyce.

24 Yee haue beene diſobedient to the Lorde, euer ſince the tyme that I haue knowne you.

AFter that Moſes had ſpoken of the faulte which the people had committed in making the golden Calfe to worſhip it: now hee ſheweth that Aaron was to bee blamed for that cryme, for as much as hee being then the gouernour of the people, had not indeuored to withſtand them with ſuch ſtoutneſſe as he ought to haue doone. For ſuch as bee magiſtrates ſhall haue a harder account to make, than ſuch as are priuate perſons. Nowe then, Aaron ought to haue taught the people, and to haue withſtoode their euill dealinges euen to the death. True it is that when Aaron ſawe that the people would needes haue an Idoll to worſhip, hee told them ẏ it was wickedneſſe ſo to doe: and when he could by no meanes wey with them, he deuiſed another ſhift, and laboured to driue them from their deſire, by requiring their Iewelles and ornaments and the things which they did ſet moſt ſtore by. For hee thought that by that meanes, that fancie would bee put out of their head. Yee ſee then that Aaron conſented not to their euil, but would faine haue letted it, howbeit, that was not with ſuch ſtouteneſſe as hee ought to haue doone. For hee ſhoulde rather haue hazarded his life, than to haue conſented to Idolatrie, whereby GODS honour and true ſeruice was corrupted, by conueying of it ouer ſo leaudly to a puppit that was but a dead and ſenſleſſe thing. Ought not Aaron to haue beene ſo zealous, as rather to haue hazarded his owne perſon for it? ſpecially ſeeing that GOD had put him in ſo honorable a charge? For hee was the highe prieſt. And although he was not yet conſecrated into his office: yet knewe hee well ynough whereunto he was ordeined. And therefore there was no excuſe at all for him.

Nowe vppon this text wee haue to gather, that thoſe to whome GOD hath giuen charge to gouerne his people, are not diſcharged by not conſenting vnto euill, or by not beeing the authors thereof: but they muſt withſtand it to the vttermoſt, and bee of ſuch inuincible ſtoutneſſe, as not to ſwarue aſide for any importunateneſſe. Although they ſee great trubbles and hurlyburlies, yet muſt not their courages be abated therfore, but they muſt ſtil ſtand in the mayntenaunce of that which is good. And although they ſee themſelues in daunger, ſo as there is none other remedie but onely by praying GOD to take them into his protection: yet muſt they not ſwarue a ſide from theire office to eſchewe the daunger. And therfore had not Aaron eſcaped vnpuniſhed at Gods hande, if his brother Moſes had not intreated for him. Let not vs thinke nowadayes that God hath altered his mind: but let vs mark, that as many as haue not withſtoode euill to the vttermoſte, ſhalbe wrapped all in one condemnation with the offenders, and Gods vengeance muſt conſume them all together. For hee that letteth euill ſlip, or preuenteth it not if he can, doth giue libertie to doe euill. It is a ſaying euen of the heathen, who to rebuke the negligence and coldneſſe of magiſtrates and officers of Iuſtice, haue alledged this prouerbe, That if hee which ought to hinder euill doe wink at it, it is all one as if hee proclamed leaue and liberty to doe euill by the ſounde of a trumpet, and hee ſhall beare the blame of it before God. And in deede that prouerbe was commonly vſed, to do vs to vnderſtand that God will not hold them excuſed, which haue beene ſo colde in executing their office. Now if the worlde condemne them: what will become of them, when they come before the heauenly Iudge? So then, Magiſtrates are heere warned of their duety, namely that when they ſee any euill, they muſt withſtand it. Although they bee not armed with worldly force: yet muſt they rather forgoe their liues, than yeelde in ſuch ſorte as the miſchiefe may get the mayſterie and the vpper hande through their cowardlyneſſe. Let Lordes of eſtate looke well to themſelues: for although men acquite them: yet ſhall they not bee quitte before GOD if they playe the blinkardes, and let naughtineſſe ſlippe when they ſee God offended. If they ſee the right peruerted, and doe not manfully withſtand it: they muſt yeelde account for it. And moreouer, God will bring them to ſhame before the world, that they may feele the condemnation aforehand, which is prepared for them before him: and therefore let euery man looke neerely to himſelfe.

And let vs marke generally, that as many as withdrawe not themſelues from the companie of the wicked, are taken as acceſſaries before God, though they confederate not themſelues with them, if they make no countenance to withſtand them when they ſee them go about any euill. Wee heare howe S. Paule ſayeth to all
Eph.5.11. the faithfull both great and ſmall, Haue no felowſhip with wicked workes, but rebuke them. Then doeth it ſtande vs on hande to beware that wee bee not partakers in euill, and to proteſt openly that wee like not of it. But yet is not that ynough: for wee muſt ſhewe our ſelues to bee enemyes of the wicked, and take parte againſt them. And they that doe not ſo, are too cowardly: and that diſſimulation of theirs ſhalbe eſteemed as treaſon before God. But what? Men ſee howe the world goeth. For nowadayes there can no friendſhip bee mainteyned, except men bolſter their neighboures in their euill dooinges. Folke doe mocke GOD openly to his face, and yet are they readie to bee at open defyaunce, if men reache them not their handes to take parte with them in all offences agaynſt GOD. But yet ſhall not this rule bee chaunged for all that: wee may well inharden our ſelues in our wicked cuſtomes: but yet will not GOD fayle to iudge vs, yea euen according to this rule. And therefore let vs not thinke that he ſhould transforme himſelfe, when wee take inordinate leaue to doe euill. And when wee bee come into poſſeſſion, and haue taken couert vnder pretence that others did ſo as well as wee: let vs not thinke that wee ſhall ſcape for all that, but let vs forbeare that wee bee not wrapped in the vengeaunce which God pronounceth againſt ſinners, for want of withſtanding them to the vttermoſt of our power. All men without exception ought to doe ſo, as I ſayde afore: but yet they that are in authoritie ought to take good heede that they ſhewe the way vnto others.

After that Moſes hath ſpoken of this offence: hee addeth yet other examples, to ſhewe that the people coulde not boaſt of any righteouſneſſe of their owne, nor alleage that GOD had choſen them for their vertues ſakes, or for any worthineſſe or deſerte that was in them. Therefore hee ſayeth, *Remember what yee did in Thaberah*, that is to ſay, in the *Bur-* Numb.11.3.
ning. It was a place ſo named, bicauſe that there, GOD ſent downe fyre from heauen to conſume a part of the Campe. And afterwarde in *Maſa*, which ſignifieth tempta- Exod.17.7.
tion, and was another place, ſo named bycauſe the people tempted GOD there. And againe in *Meriba*, that is to ſay *Stryfe* or *Contention*. Remember alſo what yee did at *Ciberoth Thauah*, that is to ſay, at the graues of luſt. For GOD ſent as it were a plague vp- Num.11.34.
pon all the people, ſo as a great multitude of them dyed for their wicked luſt in that they longed for fleſhe, and woulde not bee contented with the Manna. This foode is too lothſome (quoth they,) wee can not away with it, it goeth againſt our ſtomackes, for wee ſee nothing elſe but alwayes Manna Manna, wee will haue ſome fleſhmeate. Ye ſee then yͤ the wicked luſt of yͤ people was yͤ cauſe of their ruine & deſtruction. Finally Moſes rehearſeth here yͤ thing that he had ſaid afore, concerning the rebellion which the people committed when they ſhould haue entred into yͤ land. For they diſtruſted gods promiſe, & would needs ſend ſpies to learne how things went. They truſted more to their own policie & eyeſight, than to Gods worde. By reaſon whereof Gods wrath was ſo kindled againſt thē,

that he gaue flatte ſentence that none of them ſhoulde enter into the promiſed heritage, ſaue onely Ioſua, and Caleb the ſonne of Iephuneh, bicauſe thoſe two had behaued thẽſelues faithfully. But as for the people, they ſhould be led about by the ſpace of fortie yeeres, vntill their carkeſſes were rooted in the wilderneſſe, according to the threat which God had vttered with his owne mouth. That is the content of this part of the text.

Now let vs marke firſt of all, that to make the Iewes vnderſtand the meaning of Moſes, or rather of the holy ghoſt: it behoued them to bee warned to ſet their former faultes before their eyes, that they might not bee ſo fond as to preſume any thing at all vppon their owne worthyneſſe, or vppon their owne power: but to abaſe themſelues vtterly, acknowledging that GOD found not any thing in them why hee ſhoulde choſe them, but that all came of his owne free goodneſſe. Now if Moſes were faine to vſe ſuch exhortation to the Iewes: let vs vnderſtand that we alſo haue as much neede of it nowadayes as they. The end therefore which we muſt begin at, is this: that wee muſt caſt downe ourſelues, and not be lifted vp with any preſumption, nor vaunt our ſelues through any fooliſh ouerweening: but acknowledge our ſelues to be voyd of all deſeruing, and that there is not any grace or righteouſneſſe in vs, for the which we might obtaine loue at Gods hand. And therefore muſt he needes preuent vs with his free goodneſſe. Marke that for a ſpeciall poynt. But howe may men abaſe themſelues after that faſhion? Wee will neuer doe it of our owne accord. In deede if euery of vs looke well vppon himſelfe, it muſt needes bee that wee bee as it were bewitched, if wee bee not induced to miſlike of our ſelues, and to be aſhamed and vtterly at our wits end. For what is man? Let him ſearch throughly what is in him, both in bodie and in ſoule: and ſurely wee ſhall finde euen from the moſt to the leaſt of vs, that there is nothing in vs but vtter ſhame and confuſion, as I ſayd afore. Neuertheles, euery of vs abuſeth himſelfe through this follie, ſo as we beare our ſelues on hand that our vices are vertues. And although our life be as leaude as may be, and our ſinnes moſt outrageous and horrible: Yet to our owne ſeeming there is nothing in vs but perfect righteouſneſſe and ſoundeneſſe. Yee ſee then that men beguile themſelues. And therefore it is requiſite that we ſhoulde bee held ſhorte, and haue our faultes layde afore vs, not onely ſome one or two faultes, but alſo all the faultes of our whole life: ſo as we may know that we haue offended our GOD ſo grieuouſly, that it behoueth vs to bee ouerwhelmed with ſhame and reproche: and that if wee ſhoulde goe about to lift vp our heades, it were meete that wee ſhould bee thruſt backe, and that GOD ſhould knock vs harde vpon the pates with a cudgell, to ſhew vs that our pride is diueliſhe againſt him. Then let vs marke that Moſes ſpake not onely to the Iewes: but that the ſame leſſon is toulde vnto vs at this day: in ſo much that if wee will yeeld glory vnto GOD, we muſt be bereft of all prayſe, and not preſume any whit at all of our owne vertues, but aſſure our ſelues that there is not aught in vs but vtter vanitie.

Furthermore for as much as wee come not to ſuch myldeneſſe of our one accorde: let vs haue an eye to our ſinnes, and not tary till God open his bookes of account as he will doe at the laſt day, for then it wil be too late for vs to yeeld our ſelues giltie. But let vs bethinke vs of our ſinnes now while he ſummoneth vs by his word, and whyle hee warneth vs aforehande. Let euery of vs ſubmit himſelfe as a wretched offender before his Iudge, and let vs acknowledge our ſelues to bee iuſtly accuſed, yea euen of infinite faults, before God. And when we haue bethought vs of one offence, let the ſame miniſter occaſion to vs to bethinke vs of another. And to bee ſhort, let vs both generally and particularly practiſe this leſſon of conſidering what wee bee, yea euen without flattering of our ſelues, that all the good which wee receyue at Gods hand may bee fathered vpon him, and the honour which he reſerueth to himſelfe remaine whole and vnminiſhed vnto him. Let vs not couet to inriche our ſelues with the thinges which wee haue borrowed of him: let vs not ſeeke to attyre and decke our ſelues with his feathers: but let vs acknowledge that it is of his owne free goodneſſe that hee vouchſafeth to ſhew himſelf ſo liberal, though he be not bound thereto. And for our partes, ſeeing we cannot bring any deſert vnto him, but we be guiltie in all caſes and all reſpectes: he of his ineſtimable mercy muſt be faine to beare with vs, or elſe wee would be deadly enimies to him ſtil, & he ſhould be driuen to thunder down vpon vs. Thus yee ſee what wee haue to marke generally vpon this text.

Numb.11.3.

But nowe let vs come to the ſtories which Moſes toucheth heere. Hee ſpeaketh firſt of *Thaberah*, which betokeneth *Burning*, as I ſayde afore. For there the people were chaſtiſed with burning, bycauſe they murmured at their trauelling through the wilderneſſe. O (quoth they,) ſhall wee neuer come to an ende? Wee doo but runne vp and downe heere, wee bee fayne to remooue our tentes from place to place, wee bee driuen to carie our ſtuffe vppon our ſhoulders, and why bee wee not rather in ſome place of reſt, diſcharged of ſuch trauell? But alas, thoſe wretches conſidered not that GODS diſpleaſure was to bee accompliſhed, according to his othe, which was that none of them ſhould enter into the promiſed lande. They ſhoulde haue thought, Alas, wee deſerue to bee drowned in the bottome of hell, and GOD is contented to ſend vs a temporall correction. Although he bee not minded to bring vs into his earthly reſting place: yet notwithſtanding hee giueth vs reſpit to bethinke vs of our ſinnes, and to ſue to him for pardon. For albeit that he make vs to feele ſome rigour, and it behoueth vs to beare the markes of his diſpleaſure all our life long by being depriued of the

inheritance which he had promiſed vs: yet notwithſtanding we ought therewithall to acknowledge his goodneſſe, in that he will not haue vs to periſhe euerlaſtingly as we wel deſerue. But they conſidered none of all this, neither conſidered they that they were in as happy plight as they could wiſh. They had the Manna downe from heauen, they tooke no paine to make prouiſion for themſelues, they needed no more but to gather it vp & to take euery man his meaſure of it, they were all fed, yea and that with a good & ſauorly foode. Yet conſidered they none of all this, but grudged at their ouerlong iourney. And what cauſe had they ſo to doe? Firſt they were priuiledged from the curſe that was layd vppon all mankinde. We be ſet in this world to leade a painefull lyfe: & man was ordeyned to labor euen before he had ſinned: for it is vnkindly that we ſhould be idle & vnprofitable. Moreouer the trauell that God inioyneth vs now, ſerueth not onely to keepe vs occupyed, but alſo to lode vs, ſo as we may be inforced to ſhrink vnder our burthē, & to grone for our ſins ſake. Now thē this people had good cauſe to ſubmit themſelues quietly, when God led them ſo through the wilderneſſe. And therefore it is no maruell though fyre came from heauen to burne vp part of their tents, and though Gods wrath appeared after that faſhion to make thē abaſhed. Yet notwithſtanding, ſo little did this amend them, that they fell to murmuring by and by again, becauſe they had none other foode but Manna. God had warned thē enough that they ſhoulde no more prouoke him, & they ſhould at leaſtwiſe haue learned it by experience, ſeeing they felt the blowes. But they hardened themſelues againe againſt God: and although he had made them to feele
Numb. 11. 6. 33. his hand ſo roughly: yet ſay they, what ſhall become of vs? our ſoule withereth, and wee pine away to the death. For here is nothing for vs but Manna, we would faine haue ſome fleſhmeate. Well: They haue their deſire: but that is to their coſte. For while the meate was yet in their mouthes, Gods wrath fell vppon them, ſo as they were driuen at length to know ỷ they ought to haue bin contented with ſo good and happie a ſtate as God had giuē them. In remembrance whereof the ſame place was named *the Graues of*
Exo. 17. 4. 7. *Luſte*. Alſo there was another murmuring for water, inſomuch that whereas they ſhould haue craued water of God, they fell to ſtorming againſt Moſes, & would haue ſtoned him. For theſe cauſes it was Gods will that the markes of their diſobedience ſhould be printed vpon them that they might remēber their naughtineſſe as long as they liued vppon the earth, & therefore hee named thoſe two places, the one *Maſa*, and the other *Meriba*. As if he ſhould ſay, yee haue ſtriued with me, and are entered into contention againſt me, as though yee would bid me battell. Ye haue tempted me becauſe ye knowe not yet my power, which hath ſhewed it ſelfe ſo many wayes vnto you. Thus much concerning the ſtories which Moſes rehearſeth here. In deede they derſerue to bee layd forth more at length. Howbeit foraſmuch as we haue here but a rehearſall of them as it were at a glaunce: we muſt deale ſo as we may profite by them, and take ſo much of them as may ſerue for our inſtruction.

Now then, ſeeing that God was ſo ſore greeued with the murmuring of that people, in that they abode not the trauell patiently which hee had layde vppon them: let vs note that there will be neuer the more excuſe for vs nowadayes if we bow not downe our ſhoulders to beare the burthen meekely, without ſtriuing againſt God. Firſt there is this earthly wayfaring, whereunto God hath made vs ſubiect in this worlde. Although God gaue many men reſt, ſo as they neuer goe frō home nor (as ye woulde ſay) out of their neſts: yet are we miſaduiſed if we paſſe not through this world as birdes vpon a bough, & be not as ſtraungers in it. For elſe God diſclaymeth vs & giueth vs ouer. Sith it is ſo: they that ſetle themſelues in this world as though they ſhould neuer goe out of it, doe baniſh themſelues from Gods kingdome: and ſhewe ỷ the kingdome of heauen belongeth not vnto them. And let them not beguile thēſelues by proteſting that their intent is not ſo: for God hath auowed it to bee ſo, and the Apoſtle ſayth expreſly, ỷ foraſmuch as ỷ Hebr. 11. 16.
fathers were as poore ſtraungers here beneath: therefore did God alſo voutſafe to call them his children. Now then as for them that are aſhamed to be called ſtraungers in this world: they muſt goe ſeeke their inheritance with the diuell: for they haue neither part nor portiō with God. And now muſt we apply ỷ thinges to our benefit which it pleaſeth God to ſend vs. Wee ſee what miſeries doe cōmonly hem vs in, inſomuch that euen ỷ tendereſt ſort & ſuch as ſeeme to haue ỷ world at will, are moſt feeble & weake, and are troubled wͭ a nūber of griefes & vexations. Howbeit let euery man looke vpon himſelfe, and according as God dealeth with vs, ſo let vs patiētly receiue ỷ afflictions ỷ he ſendeth vs. If our ſtate be hard and comberſom, let vs not thinke ỷ if we murmure at it, our murmuring ſhall vaniſh away into the aire, but ỷ we muſt come to a reckoning for it before God. For if God ſend not down fyre from heauen after the ſame maner ỷ he did viſibly puniſhe the Iewes for their murmuring: it is ſo much the woorſe for vs. For if he winke at it, & puniſh vs not out of hand: his vengeance muſt needes be ỷ ſorer & more terrible. And therefore let vs learne to liue vnder obediēce to our God. Although wee be not handled as we would be in this earthly and flightful lyfe, but are faine to be trotting vp and downe: ſo as when wee woulde liue in reſt, God driueth vs from place to place, and when we would faine be diſcharged of care, then are we moſt vexed: let vs receiue all that euer God ſendeth vs, and let vs make our reckoning to paſſe through this worlde, after the ſame maner that this people were conueied through the wildernes. And let vs learne to practiſe this ſaying of our Lord Ieſus Chriſt, that we Matt. 10. 38. & 16. 24.
muſt beare our croſſe after him. Lyke as when a man goeth into the countrie, hee takes vp his truſſe vpon his necke, and caryeth ſuch thinges with him as he ſhall haue neede of: ſo muſt we bee loden with ſuch fardell as God liſteth to lay

vppon vs. And let vs not looke one at another: for God intendeth not to handle vs all alike. Let ſuch as haue moſt vexation of al, vnderſtand that God doth it not without cauſe. And let ſuch as haue leſſe, thanke God for his bearing with their frailtie. But yet for all that, howeſoeuer we fare, let vs beware that wee ſtand not in contention with God, by grudging that hee letteth vs not alone in ſuch quietneſſe as our fleſhe woulde wiſhe and deſire: for we wote not what is for our owne profite. Marke that for a ſpeciall point.

But on the contrarie part, we ſee how men are giuen, not onely to their eaſe and commoditie: but alſo to ſuperfluitie and wantonneſſe, ſo as it ſhould ſeeme that they wil needes be merie & driue away all care, whether God will or no. Whereas by the aduerſities which God ſendeth vs, he putteth vs in minde of our ſinnes, and laboreth to withdraw vs from this world, as though he ſpurred vs forward to make the more haſt vnto him: we not only cãnot abide it, but alſo ſeeke meanes to ruſh forth into all inordinate pleaſure, euen with open rebellion againſt him. If God ſpare vs: thẽ are we the more vnruly, whereas we ſhould call our ſelues home vnto goodnes, and liue in the greater awe. And therefore let vs be aduiſed to benefite our ſelues by the example that is contained here.

As concerning the *Temptation* or *Strife*: let vs vnderſtand that if neceſſitie pinch vs, ſo as we be driuen to any ſtreite and know not where to become: we muſt reſorte to our God with all lowlineſſe, beſeeching him to prouide a remedie for our neede: but yet in the meane while wee muſt be contented with his good will. If it pleaſe him to haue vs to languiſhe: let vs hold downe our neckes, and let vs not haue the ſtifneckedneſſe which Moſes cõdemned heretofore in the people of old time. Alſo let vs vnderſtand that it is Gods owne working, when he voutſafeth to vphold vs in ſuch ſort as wee doe not vtterly quaile. For although wee doe hardly drag our limbes after vs, & we ſeeme euen to be at the laſt caſt: yet doe we ſtill feele ſome taſte of the goodneſſe of our God. Howſoeuer the world go with vs, let vs learne that wee muſt not tempt him, that is to ſay, wee muſt not giue our ſelues the bridle to aske this or that, but referre our ſelues wholy to his good will, and be ſo gouerned by him, as we may alwayes yeelde him his due obedience, and not raunge after our owne luſtes lyke wilde beaſtes, as though wee would puſh at him with our hornes, but that if wee wiſhe the thing which ſeemeth expedient for vs, we doe it alwayes with this condition that God ſhall haue the maiſterie of vs, and ouerrule all our paſſions and deſires. If our minde moue vs to wiſhe or to ſay, I would faine haue this or that: Let vs looke that God haue the ouerruling of vs, and that we ſubmit our ſelues ſo vnto him, as al our thoughts affections and lykinges be framed vnto his will, though it ſeeme neuer ſo hard vnto vs. Thus ye ſee what wee haue to note concerning the temptation that Moſes ſpeaketh of here, and concerning the ſtrife at ſuch time as the people were in a chafe and murmured againſt GOD.

And let vs knowe moreouer that wee bee no competent Iudges in our owne caſe, leaſt wee ſeeke fond excuſes as wee be wont to doe. We will not be acknowen that we accuſe God, though it bee ſo in deede: We will ſay wee intend not to aduance our ſelues againſt him to defy him: but yet is it ſo in deede. Yea and whereas the people were driuen to name the places of *Meriba & Maſa*: they did it not of their owne good will, but it was Gods will that thoſe names ſhould remaine as preſidentes of their rebelliousneſſe. Therefore let vs learne, that if wee bee not wholy obedient vnto God, ſo as we doe not any thing but by his good wil and leaue: our tempting of him is a prouoking of his wrath, as though we made a kinde of defiance to him. Afterwarde followed the offence which the people committed in requiring fleſh to eat. They held not thẽſelues contented with Manna, but they would needes haue ſuch vittels as they themſelues lyked: and they were not contented ſimply with fleſh neither, but they would needes haue ſauce, yea and daintie ſauce to it. For they longed for the Garlike and Onyons and other lyke thinges which they had had in Egypt, and they would needes haue GOD to feede them with the ſame geere in the wilderneſſe. But it was a diueliſh longing, which made them to refuſe the ſuſtenãce that God had giuen thẽ. Beſides, what more? They had Manna daily from heauen, to feed vpõ as much as they would: ſo as they might wel perceiue that God maintayned them by his power, but that ſeemed vnſauery to them. And why? Becauſe it came of God. They would needes haue whatſoeuer they themſelues lyked, as it were in ſpite of him: inſomuch that they fretted and chafed at his bringing of them out of Egypt, as who ſhoulde ſay they held skorne of the deliueraunce which hee had wrought for them. Sith wee ſee this, let vs looke to our ſelues, and let vs knowe that this fault is ſet forth vnto vs, to make vs beware that wee bee not guiltie of the lyke.

Exod.14.11. Num.14.2.4.

For wee muſt vnderſtand that GOD maketh vs Iudges of the people of old time, to the ende that euery of vs ſhoulde condemne our ſelues in our owne caſes. For why? If wee bee Iudges of ſuche as haue done amiſſe: thinke wee that GOD ſeeth not much clearelyer than wee? Now he is ſo gratious as to put ouer his office vnto vs, to the ende that euery of vs ſhoulde haue an eye to himſelfe, and hauing pleaded guiltie, bee caſt downe and humbled before him. Therefore let vs marke that the rehearſall of this ſtorie, ought to leade vs to the condemning of our owne wicked affections, and make vs to conſider what our luſtes are, wherethrough wee ceaſe not to prouoke the wrath of our God. And let vs marke firſt of all, that looke how many luſtes are

Rom.8.7.

are in our fleſh: ſo many armed folkes haue we, which aduaunce themſelues againſt God. And for the ſame cauſe doth Saint Paul ſay, that all the imaginations, conceites, and affections of our nature, ſerue to prouoke vs to fight againſt the righteouſneſſe of our God. And therefore whenſoeuer we chance to luſt after any thing, let not our fleſhe ouermaiſter vs. And why? For all our ſenſes are ſo corrupted: that although (to our ſeeming) the end of our wiſhes be good: yet notwithſtanding, ſome exceſſe will euer be mingled with them, and God ſhall haue ſomewhat in them whereat to finde fault. And how faire and beautifull ſoeuer our deſires are to the outward ſhowe, there is alwayes ſome vice in them: and what ſhall wee then ſay of the ſinfull luſtes, which wee be driuen to condemne euen by our owne naturall iudgement? When a man deſireth to haue wherewith to find his houſhold, and trauelleth to get it: truely that deſire is good of it ſelfe. But yet the ſame is matched with impatience, or with vnſtayedneſſe, or with ouergreat care, or with vnbeliefe: and to be ſhort God ſhall alwayes finde ſomewhat amiſſe in our deſires, which of their owne nature are not euil. Howbeit, if a man ruſh out into pilling, and polling, and ſcratching, to beguile and deceiue his neighbor: is it not much worſe than to haue a deſire that might ſeeme good of it ſelfe? Though a man purpoſe to liue neuer ſo quietly with his wife, yet ſhall it alwayes be mingled with ſome worldly affections, ſo as our corruptiō wil needes bewray it ſelfe ſtill, euen in the beſt thinges: and what will become of vs then, if wee giue our ſelues the bridle to whoredome? As much is to be ſayd of all other thinges. And therefore let vs beare in minde, that although our deſires appeare not to bee euill: yet are they euer matched with ſome vice & vnrighteouſneſſe before God. But [beſides this,] wee haue alſo our fleſhly luſts which make vs to ſhake off Gods yoke, ſo as wee caſt our ſelues at aladuenture, ſome into blaſphemie, ſome into gluttonie, ſome into vnrulineſſe, ſome into wantonneſſe, ſome into lecherie, ſome into extortion, ſome into crueltie, ſome into robberie, and otherſome into al maner of wickedneſſe. Now then, deſerue not our luſtes that God ſhould riſe vp to deſtroy vs for them, when wee be come to that poynt? Yes: for if the people of Iſraell had graues of luſte: what ſhall become of vs? And therefore let vs learne that when we read theſe ſtories, God giueth vs warning to enter into ẏ examination of our faults, that vppon the knowing of them, wee ſhoulde craue forgiueneſſe of them, and fall to ſuch repentance, as may wholy tame vs and make vs flee vnto him, and not be giuen any more to our vices. But that is vnpoſſible for vs to doe, vntill wee haue ſo ouermaſtered our ſelues, as to miſlyke our owne affections with full purpoſe to renounce them. Vntill a man bee ſubdued after that faſhion, it is vnpoſſible for him to yeeld obedience vnto God, how faire apparance of vertue ſoeuer he haue. But what? So farre off are wee from minding theſe thinges, that by all lykelyhoode wee doe nothing elſe but blindfolde our eyes, that wee might not ſee our ſinnes to ſeeke conuenient remedie for them. See here how the Iewes were condemned for requiring of water, and yet were they ready to dy for thirſt. Yea, but the cauſe why they were not to bee excuſed, was for that they required it with murmuring. Whereas they ſhould haue ſayd, Lord thou knoweſt what is expedient for vs better thā wee our ſelues doe, and therefore wee referre our ſelues to thee, prouide thou for vs: in ſteade of vſing ſuch humilitie, they fall to repining and ſtorming. Now wee muſt not doe ſo: but wee muſt patiently tary Gods leaſure, when hee giueth vs not thinges ſo ſoone as wee aske them: for hee can well skill to prouide for all our needes. In deed if it pleaſed him, hee could well content vs and giue vs all our wiſhes: but his will is not to maintaine vs here in ſuch abundance, as wee might take occaſion to holde ſkorne of the good that hee doth vs, and to deſpiſe it by treading it vnder our feete. Hee will haue vs to be meeke and lowly, that wee may learne to reſorte vnto him. When a man is in poore eſtate, he beareth himſelfe on hand that if God would giue him wherewith to maintaine himſelfe plenteouſly, he would be wholy giuen to be thankefull towardes him for his pitying of him. But let him once come to wealth, and let God deale bountifully with him: and what will he doe? He wil lift vp himſelfe againſt God, and forget him in ſuch ſorte, as if hee were not the ſame man that he was before. And this vice is tootoo common: inſomuch that the more our Lord increaſeth his benefites towardes vs, the more doe we ſeeme wilfull in deſpiſing him, and his ſo doing ſharpneth our vnthankfulneſſe and malice. And therefore let vs conſider, that the thinges which are tolde vs concerning ẏ Iewes, belōg vnto vs, foraſmuch as we haue the lyke or greater vices in vs, than were in them: & we muſt vnderſtand that Gods intent is to teach vs by them.

Numb.14.4.

And ſpecially whereas mention is made of their wilfull ſtubbornneſſe at *Cades Barne*, where they refuſed to goe foreward to enter into the inheritance that was promiſed them: let vs vnderſtand that we be no leſſe worthie of blame at this day before God, for that he cannot hold vs in, to make vs goe through with our courſe. To what purpoſe hath GOD called vs into his Church? It is (as I ſayd afore) to the end that in paſſing through this world, wee ſhoulde not be wedded to it, but vſe it altogether as a wayfaring, and as a ſtraunge countrie, trauelling ſtill through it towardes heauen. For beholde, our Lord cryeth to vs both early and late, that wee ſhould goe on ſtill to come vnto him. But we on the contrary part, voutſafe not to remoue one foote to goe to him: but in ſtead of ſetting forward we retire back, or elſe ſit ſnugging ſtill in our owne ſlothfulneſſe. We ſee it is ſo. Now then, foraſmuch as our Lord findeth vs ſo lazie and ſtubborne, that in ſtead of plucking vp a chearefull courage to goe foreward, and to hold on our courſe vntill wee bee come to the ende of it, wee reſiſt him and are loth to paſſe any further:

ther: Let vs vnderſtand yͤ this ſtory is told vs, to caſt vs vtterly down in our ſelues, ſo as we ſhould not ſeeke any worthineſſe in our owne perſons, (as in deede there is none in vs:) But yelde God the whole prayſe of his benefites, knowing that he is not bound at all on his ſide, but that hee doth all thinges of his own meere free goodnes and infinite mercie: and therefore that wee on our ſide ought to ſigh, beſeeching him to correct vs and reforme vs according to his will. And for the better perceiuing hereof, I pray you after what ſort goe we forward when God calleth vs? Wee partly limp, and partely make many a falſe ſtep. Let euery man examine himſelfe, and ſee how foreward hee hath bin ſince the time that God hath reached him his hand. True Rom.1.20. it is that euen before wee knew the Goſpell, wee were already without excuſe of our rebelling againſt our God: but now ſeeing hee hath inlightened vs by his word, and ſhewed vs the way of ſaluation, and ſetteth his will before vs, ſaying, come, and reacheth vs his hand to guide vs: if of all this while wee haue not voutſafed to come vnto him, how ſhall wee excuſe our ſelues? Let euery of vs conſider how hee diſchargeth himſelfe: and afterward let vs haue an eye to the common ſtate. Wee can well ſpeake of Goſpellyke reformation, and it is a maruell to heare how wee will talke: but yet for all that, our filthineſſe is ſo ſtinking, as is lothſome to beholde: and GOD needeth not to goe vp into his iudgement ſeate to giue ſentence of it, for the very infidels and ignoraunt ſorte can bee our Iudges. And of a trueth they may bee a great ſhame to vs, ſeeing our lyfe is ſo leawde and wicked, that euen the ſilie blinde ſorte of Papiſtes may laugh vs to skorne. And ſurely if vtter confuſion ſhoulde fall vppon our heades: wee haue well deſerued it. For by our meanes Gods name is blaſphemed: and yet notwithſtanding wee regarde it not. Howbeit, the more that wee beſotte our ſelues after that faſhion in our vaine ſelfeflatterie: the more will GOD make vs feele in the end, that hee will not ſuffer his chaſtiſements to bee loſt.

To bee ſhorte, let vs remember how Moſes ſayth heere, *Euer ſince the time that I haue knowen you, you haue alwayes bin rebellious againſt God.* And this *Rebelliouſneſſe* whereof he ſpeaketh is expreſſed lykewiſe in this ſaying *that they reſiſted the mouth of God diſtruſting him and in countring his will.* Now then, if we wil know what it is to be rebellious: let vs firſt of all looke what God hath ſpoken. For the thing wherein hee intendeth to trye vs, is whether wee be willing to ſubmit our ſelues ſimply in all reſpectes to his worde, after hee hath beene ſo gratious vnto vs as to teach vs. What elſe is the holy ſcripture, but an vttering or declaring of Gods will? And therefore all that euer is conteined there, is as though GOD opened his holy mouth, to tell vs what he requireth at our hand. Then if our lyfe bee not fully correſpondent to Gods worde, whereof wee make profeſſion: beholde, God complayneth of vs, and accuſeth vs of rebelling againſt his mouth. And there are two partes of this rebelliouſneſſe. The one is when we diſtruſt Gods promiſes, and the other is when wee diſobey his commandement: & thoſe two be the ſumme of all that is to bee learned in Gods word. When wee haue toſſed and turned ouer the leaues of all the holy ſcripture neuer ſo much, there are but theſe two pointes contained in it: that is to wit, yͤ for as much as God being deſirous to bee our father and Sauiour, openeth vs the infinite treaſures of his mercie, calling vs to him, and ſetting his free goodneſſe and free loue before vs: wee ſhould beleeue his promiſes and reſt wholly vppon them, ſaying, Lorde ſeeing thou art ſo freehearted as to offer thy ſelfe thus vnto vs: behold, wee caſt all our care vpon thee, and hope for all welfare through thy bountifulneſſe. The firſt thing then which we haue to doe, is to ſettle our ſelues vppon Gods promiſes, when he offereth them vnto vs. Secondly there is the obedience which God requireth, as if he ſhoulde ſay vnto vs: Go to, I will haue ye to liue in ſuch wiſe, as ye obey me and yeeld me ſuch ſeruice, as your cōming to me be of your own accord. And here Moſes ſaith yͤ the people were alwayes rebellious againſt Gods mouth, foraſmuch as they obeyed not his commandements, nor truſted to his promiſes. Nowe let vs looke into our ſelues: where is the faith yͤ we boaſt of? In deede we cā wel ynough ſay yͤ we beleeue the Goſpel: but if gods promiſes touched vs effectually, there wold be another maner of ſtedfaſtneſſe in vs, and wee would not bow with euery winde like wauering reedes, as we do. Our vnbeliefe bewrayes it ſelf, & we be too much conuicted of it: inſomuch yͭ we cannot truſt God euen in worldly things. And if we cannot truſt to him for ſmall things, howe is it poſſible that we ſhould truſt to him, for the euerlaſting life? We haue dayly experience of his ſuccour and helpe: & yet do we doubt thereof ſtill. And how ſhall we then truſt in him whē the caſe concerneth inuiſible things, as the lyfe Col.3.3.4 which is hidden from vs till God diſcouer it vnto vs? Againe, doeth not this rebelliouſneſſe of ours in reſiſting him, ſhew it ſelf in al our whole life? In deede wee will make ſignes of willingneſſe to ſerue God: but yet is all but counterfetting. For let vs ſee if any of vs doo liue ſo faithfully and vprightly as wee ought to doo? Where is the louing kindneſſe and charitie that ought to bee among the faithfull, and among Gods children? Nay, we bee rather like Cattes and dogges. And when the caſe requireth that wee ſhould agree togither in well dooing, the worlde ſees howe wee goe to woorke. It may ſeeme that wee haue conſpyred to goe the cleane contrarie way to that which God willeth and ordaineth. And this is not to be greatly wondered at. For if in things that are ſmall and light, we ſhewe our ſelues to haue no great Chriſtianitie in vs: we wil ſhew no leſſe lewdneſſe, when wee come to the thinges that are greater and more excellent. I cal them ſmal things in compariſon of the feare of God and the loue of his worde, which men may ſay they ſee not in vs. For as concerning thoſe ſmall thinges, if we intend to make any countenance of deuotion to Godward: we can well abide that men ſhould condemne both extortion, deceit, cruelty, periurie, and ſuch other vices. When we come to Sermons, we can welinough pretend ỹ there is ſome agreement among vs, and ſpecially when we receiue the Lords ſupper: & yet notwithſtanding euẽ in that behalf there appeareth ſuch contempt of God, as we ought to be aſhamed of it. For I know that vpon the laſt Lordes day while we were miniſtring of the cõmunion, and while we ſhould haue aſſembled altogither, to make a general proteſtatiõ of our faith, and to offer vp our praiers vnto God: about two hũdred people were occupied in gaming. In their going by before the Sermon began, a man would haue thought they had bin prepared to the Communion: but their mindes are ſo vppon their playing, that they ſpend euery Sabboth day in ſuch vnthriftineſſe. And it is meete that this ſhould bee tolde them openly, ſeeing it is apparant, & that euen little children perceiue the ſhamefulneſſe of it. Now then, let vs marke in feawe wordes, that Moſes ſpake not for his owne time onely, but for vs alſo in theſe dayes, who bee warned in the perſon of the Iewes to be aſhamed of our ſelues, and therewithall to ſeeke ỹ meanes that our God may receaue vs to pitie and mercie: which is, that after we haue acknowledged how guiltie wee bee before God: euerie of vs may learne, not onely to condemne our ſelues, but alſo to bow downe our neckes to craue forgiueneſſe of our former faultes at Gods hand, to the ende that being acquit by him, wee may alſo be guided and gouerned by his holy ſpirit: & that whereas wee haue bin ſtubborne againſt him heretofore, ſo as he could by no meanes weeld vs, wee may learne to yeeld our ſelues ſo obediently to him, that in ſtead of being as woode beaſtes, we may become meeke and mylde vnto him as ſheepe and lambes, and giue eare vnto his voyce, giuing it ſuch ſuperioritie ouer vs, as we may vtterly forſake all things that may hinder our honoring and ſeruing of him.

Now let vs kneele downe in the preſence of our good God with acknowledgement of our faultes, praying him to make vs feele them better than wee haue done, ſo as wee may yeelde our ſelues to him with true repentance, & continue therein not for one day onely, but all our life long: and ỹ therewithal it may pleaſe him to beare with vs in all our infirmities, euen vntill he haue rid vs quite and cleane of them. And ſo let vs all ſay, Almightie GOD heauenly Father, &c.

On Munday the ix. of September. 1555.

The Lxviij. Sermon which is the ſeuenth vpon the ninth Chapter.

25 Then humbled I my ſelfe before the Lord fortie dayes and fortie nightes, for I humbled my ſelfe becauſe the Lord had ſaid that he would deſtroy you.

26 And I prayed to the Lord & ſaid: Lord God, deſtroy not thy people and thine heritage, which thou haſt gotten by thy mightie power, and whom thou haſt brought out of Egypt by ſtrong hand.

27 Bethinke thee of thy ſeruants Abraham, Iſaac, and Iacob. Haue not an eye to the ſtubbornneſſe of this people, nor to their misbeleefe, nor to their ſinne:

28 Leaſt the inhabiters of the land from whence thou haſt brought vs, do ſay: bycauſe the Lorde could not bring them into the land wherof he had ſpoken to them, or becauſe he hated them: therefore hath he brought them forth to kill them in the wilderneſſe.

29 Moreouer, they be thy people, and thine heritage, whom thou haſt brought out with thy great power, and with thine arme ſtretched out.

MOſes goeth foreward here with the matter that he had begunne afore: which was, to make the people vnderſtand howe great the faulte was which they had committed. For wheras he boaſteth of Gods hearing of him, he doeth not to the intent the people ſhould thinke themſelues ſo much the more beholden to him therefore: that is not the thing which he looketh at: but that the people ſhould thenceforth liue in awe and humilitie, and beare in minde the faulte that they had committed, and conſider howe they had well deſerued to haue beene vtterly rooted out if God had not ſhewed them mercie. And he ſayth *that after he had lyen vpon the ground fortie dayes and fortie nightes*, he was heard: and this is to the end that by ſuch circumſtance, the people may the better learne, that if GOD had not hearkened to that vehement and earneſt prayer of his, they had beene vtterly vndone. It is an extraordinarie thing, that a man ſhould continue ſighing and weeping before God, fortie dayes and fortie nightes together: and no doubt but this power was giuen to Moſes by miracle, lyke as was his faſting of fortie dayes and fortie nightes before. And to what purpoſe? To the end that the Lawe might bee the better authorized thereby. For it might well ſeeme that the couenant which God had made with the people, was quite broken and vtterly diſanulled: and therefore it was expedient that Moſes ſhould once againe be ſeparated from the company of men fortie dayes and fortie nightes, that by that meanes, new authoritie might be purchaſed. But yet for all that, we muſt marke well, that whereas Moſes forbare meate and drinke fortie dayes and fortie nights together, it was not done by humaine power, neither was it (to ſpeake properly) a faſt of ſobrietie: (for hee was exempted from hunger and thirſt:) but it was done to the end that the Lawe ſhould be receiued with the greater reuerence, foraſmuch as it came not of men, but Moſes came downe from the mountaine as if an Angel had come downe from heauen. And his praying was for the ſinnes of the people, that God would not looke vppon the idolatrie that had bin committed, but hold on ſtill in his owne purpoſe. For although Moſes had broken the tables, and that he had done it through the impulſion of Gods ſpirit: yet notwithſtāding, (as hath bin ſaid already,) he ceaſed not to haue compaſſion vppon the people which was worthie to haue bin rooted out. That is the effect of the matter which wee muſt looke vnto here.

And thereby we be put in minde, that if God forgiue vs any fall or offence, wee muſt not ſo forget it, but we muſt bethinke our ſelues to liue in the greater awe, and conſider all our lyfe long how greatly we be bound vnto God for vttering ſo great goodneſſe vnto vs. There are a number to bee ſeene, which doe but wring their mouthes when they woulde haue their faultes forgiuen them, and they neuer paſſe to thinke any more vppon them, to yeelde God his deſerued prayſe. Contrariwiſe it is ſhewed vs here by the example of the Iewes, that although God bee mercifull to vs, and liſt not to call our faultes to account: yet muſt not wee therefore thruſt them vnder foote, but rather cal them to minde euery day, that it may firſt of all prouoke vs to repentance, aſſuring our ſelues that wee may fall eftſoone, if God preſerue vs not: and ſecondly [make vs to conſider] that we ſtand not but through his free mercie: and finally incourage vs to magnify his name for drawing vs out of ẏ dungeon whereinto we were fallen. Seeing then that we be ſo much bound vnto him, let vs bee the willinger to ſerue and honor him. Thus yee ſee in effect what wee haue to remember vppon this place.

Beſides this, let vs marke well by the example of Moſes, that it is not enough to pray vnto God in two or three wordes and as it were in poſte: but that wee muſt continue in praying without being weary. And that is a poynt right neceſſarie to bee marked. For whereas there are many faults in vs, this is one of the greateſt, that we cannot ſettle our ſelues vnto prayer, but wee bee flecting, ſo as our mouthes are no ſooner opened, but our wittes are by and by wandering elſewhere. And beſides that, if we haue prayed vnto God once, wee thinke it enough and too much. Contrariwiſe we ſee that Moſes was fortie dayes together, in continuall mourning for the offence of the people. Therfore in our praying vnto God, let vs learne to haue the perſeueraunce whereunto our Lorde Ieſus exhorteth vs, ſaying that we muſt be importunate, Luk.18.1.2. and that it is not enough for vs to haue vttered our griefe vnto GOD lightly and once for all: but that we muſt reſorte to him ſtil, vntill he haue heard our requeſtes. Now then, here is a ſecond leſſon which we haue to gather vppon this place: which is, that in praying vnto God, we muſt haue a ſetledneſſe of holding out to the end.

Alſo this praying of Moſeſes, ſheweth vs what their duetie is, which haue the charge of other folke: namely, to pray to God to pitie ſuch as ſhall haue offended. For it is not enough for ſuch as haue publique charge to diſcharge their duetie to the worldewarde: but they muſt alſo turne vnto God. Wee ſee how the Apoſtles ſay that they muſt not onely preach the Goſpell, but alſo giue themſelues to prayer Act.6.8. and ſupplication. Now, this belongeth to all the faithfull. For to pray vnto God is the chiefe duetie of our faith. And foraſmuch as the Apoſtles had the chiefe charge of the Church: it behoued this calling vpon God, to belong chiefly vnto them. And that is the cauſe why Saint 2.Cor.2.4. Paul ſayth, that hee humbleth himſelfe for the Corinthians: as who ſhould ſay hee ought to beare the chaſtiſement of their ſins in his owne perſon. For inaſmuch as God had ſet him ouer that Church, it behooued him to beare the chiefe burden vppon his ſhoulders. Therefore ſuch as haue the charge of preaching Gods word and of teaching in the Church, muſt not onely imploy themſelues that way, but alſo to prayer. And chiefly when they ſee things go amiſſe, and diſorders among the people: then ought they moſt ſpecially to reſorte vnto GOD, that he may prouide a remedie for it. This is the thing that is ſhewed vs by the example of Moſes, in that it is ſayd that hee taryed not till the people reſorted to God for mercie, but ſhewed them the way, as he whom God had appointed to beare the burthen of the people, and to procure their welfare.

Now let vs come to the forme of the prayer that Moſes maketh. *Lord God* (ſaith he) *deſtroy not the people of thine heritage whō thou haſt redeemed by thy mightie power & ſtrong hand, out of the land*

land of Egypt. Bethinke thy ſelfe of thy ſeruauntes Abraham, Iſaac, and Iacob: and haue not an eye to the ſtubbornneſſe of this people, nor to their wickedneſſe, nor to their offence. Here we ſee what it is that Moſes alledgeth vnto God: namely, his gracious fauour wherethrough he had choſen the ofspring of Abraham. And ſo we ſee here a good rule for vs to keepe in praying vnto God: which is, that if we intende to obtain our requeſts at his hand, we muſt not preſume vppon any thing that is in our ſelues, but rather alledge his own goodneſſe which hee hath made vs to feele. As if wee ſhould ſay, Lord, go forward with thy work, thou haſt begunne to call vs to thee, wee bee as much beholden to thy goodneſſe as is poſſible: therefore holde thou on ſtil, finiſh the thing that thou haſt begun, and let not thy worke ſtay vnperfected, Pſal.138.8. as it is ſaide in the hundreth and eight and thirtith Pſalme. And it is ſuch a doctrine as wee may gather, vppon all the prayers that are conteined in the holy ſcripture.

Nowe wheras Moſes ſaith *thy people, and thine inheritance*: he meaneth not that the people had purchaſed that dignitie themſelues. It was a great honour that any one people of all mankinde ſhoulde be called Gods inheritance. Deſerued they to bee in that eſtimation? Moſes addeth immediatly, that *there was nothing but ſtubbornneſſe, wickedneſſe, and ſinne in them.* It followeth then that all is to be referred to the free adoption, wherethrough God had choſen that people, as if hee ſhoulde ſay, I will haue the houſe of Abraham to reigne ouer it, there will I dwell, that Pſal.132.14. ſhalbe my Church, there wil I reſt. God in ſo ſaying, had not reſpect whether the people were worthy of it or no: and it appeared by the effect, that they were a ſpitefull people: but whatſoeuer they were, God had made the ſaid promiſe, which was not grounded vppon any deſerts of man. The thing then that Moſes ſetteth vs downe here, is this: Lorde haue mercy vpon thy people, and vpon thine heritage. And ſo, when wee reſort to God to craue forgiueneſſe of our ſinnes, let vs learne to make none other enterance to finde fauour and to be hearde, than by alledging the benefites that we haue erſt receiued at his hande. That (ſay I) is the gate that we muſt enter at in praying vnto God. Albeit we haue offended him and be neuer ſo wretched ſinners: yet notwithſtanding inaſmuch as hee hath choſen vs for his flocke, and vouchſafed to vtter himſelfe to vs, and to giue vs aſſurance that hee is our father and ſauiour: wee may preſſe familiarly vnto him, hauing ſo ſure a pledge of his goodneſſe. But yet let vs beware of preſumption, that wee ſeeke not any thing in our ſelues wherewith to binde God vnto vs, for we bee vtterly voide of any ſuch thing: but let vs be contẽted to offer vnto him ỹ things which we hold of him: and in doing him homage for his benefites, let vs take corage to call vpon him, aſſuring our ſelues that he will continue thẽ ſtill, & that as he hath ſhewed himſelf liberall towards vs heretofore, ſo he wil giue vs aſſurance ỹ he wil not faile vs hereafter. This in effect is the thing which we haue to remember in this ſaying of Moſes, where he calleth the Iewes Gods people and heritage.

Now he addeth, *that God had brought them out of the land of Egypt by his mightie power and with a ſtrong hand,* euẽ to make it knowen that they were his inheritance, by a vyſible token, and by the apparant effect of it. True it is that the people ſhould haue grounded themſelues vpon the promiſe: and Moſes hath followed the ſame order here. For he ſaith not firſt, Lorde ỹ haſt brought vs out of Egypt, and afterward vpheld vs by thy power when thou madeſt vs to paſſe through ỹ wilderneſſe: but he ſaith expreſly, we be thy people and thine inheritance. And wherupon reſted he? Vpon the promiſe, becauſe God had ſpoken the word, ſaying, I will bee the Sauiour of thy lynage. Gen.17.7. But yet therewithall hee letteth not to alledge the ſaide deliuerance alſo, to proue that God counted that people for his heritage. For when God deliuered the Iewes out of Egypt, & reached them his hand to bring them out: wherof came it? It was as a ſealing of the couenant that had beene made by worde of mouth. God (ſay I) did ſhewe as then, that the former promiſing vnto Abraham, that he would be the God of his linage, was not in vaine. And for the ſame cauſe doth Moſes ſet down both twaine of them here. He beginneth with the promiſe, and afterward addeth what inſued thereof: that is to wit the deliuerance, which was a ſure warrant that he ment not to beguile his ſeruaunt Abraham, when he tolde him as I haue tolde you before. Wherfore let vs briefly beare in mind that if we intend to haue acceſſe vnto god to reſt vpon his goodnes, we muſt beginne at his worde: and afterward we muſt alſo acknowledge the benefites that wee haue felt at his hande. And if we haue founde that hee hath not beguiled vs by his promiſes, it is as a former warrant whereby hee intendeth to confirme and aſſure vs the better. Loe heere a goodly matching, namely that wee yeelde ſuch honour vnto Gods worde, as to truſt aſſuredly thereunto: and therewithall, that we be not thankleſſe for the goodneſſe which he hath ſhewed vs indeede, but make the ſame to ſerue vs as a preſident to ratifie our faith, to the ende that his worde haue the greater ſhewe and power in vs, and wee bee the more prouoked to call vppon him, not doubting at all but that wee ſhall finde him the ſame that hee hath ſhewed himſelfe to be, euen to the ende. Thus yee ſee howe it behoueth vs to put the order in vre which Moſes keepeth here, firſt in ſetting down Gods promiſe whereby he had adopted ỹ people of Iſrael, & afterward in adding ỹ he had deliuered them out of the lande of Egypt, thereby ratifying the thing that he had ſpoken to his ſeruaunt Abraham.

Now he addeth *that God ſhould not haue an eye to the peoples ſtubbornneſſe, wickedneſſe, or offence.* This is not added without cauſe. For when we come to pray God to performe his promiſe, and to bring the grace of his adoption to his ende: in the meane whyle our owne conſciences vpbraid vs, ſo as wee ſee well that we be guilty before him: it is ynough to forecloſe ỹ way to our prayers. For when wee offende God, wee breake his couenant as much as in vs lyes, and we ſtop him from performing of his promiſe. To be ſhort, we deſerue to be giuen ouer of the Lord, when wee keepe not faith and troth towardes him. For this cauſe doth Moſes ſay here, *Lorde haue not an eye to the ſtubbornneſſe of this people.* So then, it is not ynough for vs to pray God to goe through with the thing that he ſhall haue begun in vs, and to bring his grace to perfection: but wee muſt expreſly pray him, that although hee finde faultes and offences in vs, (as indeede the number of them is infinite): yet that he forbeare not to take vs ſtill for his people: and that although we deſerue to be forſaken of him for our ſinnes inaſmuch as wee haue broken his couenant, yet notwithſtanding he ceaſe not to keepe promiſe with vs ſtill, and to make vs feele yͤ fruit thereof, and to forgiue our ſinnes in ſuch wiſe, as we may neuer ceaſe to continue in his adoption: & that although our ſtraying away was ynough to bereaue vs of the inheriting of our ſaluation, yet notwithſtanding hee ceaſe not to take vs for his children ſtill. To bee ſhort, whenſoeuer wee reſort vnto God, wee muſt acknowledge our ſins with all humilitie. For it will be to no purpoſe for vs to ſay, Lorde thou haſt promiſed vs, thou haſt tolde vs that thou of thy goodneſſe wilt bee merciful to vs, thou haſt declared that thou wilt bee our father, wee haue thy promiſe: it will not boote vs to ſay all theſe thinges: for all ſhall bee ouerthrowen with one worde, becauſe wee haue done amiſſe, and haue not kept the courſe wherunto God called vs, but haue drawen cleane backe. Therfore we be warned, that whenſoeuer we pray vnto God, wee muſt acknowledge our faultes, and confeſſe them freely, that God may not ceaſe to haue pitie vppon vs, ſpecially when wee ſhall haue committed any groſſe fault, as this people had done in committing abhominable ydolatrie. The greater then that our ſinnes bee, the more let vs caſt downe and humble our ſelues, to craue pardon of our God by confeſſing wherin we haue offended him. After that maner muſt we deale. And it is certaine, that if euerie of vs conſider well his owne life without flatterie, he ſhall finde himſelf exceedingly indaungered vnto God, and we ſhall always haue good cauſe to be aſhamed of our ſelues. And therefore when we pray, let vs beare theſe two things in rememberance: namely, that although we be neuer ſo wretched, yet notwithſtanding foraſmuch as God hath choſen vs for his people, wee muſt come to him familiarly and without doubting, for he guideth vs thither and openeth vs yͤ gate by his promiſe, & that muſt be our grounde to ſtande vpon. Againe, we muſt bethinke vs of our ſinnes, ſo as we may feele them & be deadly wounded by them, to the ende we may bee ſorie for them before God, & beſeech him (notwithſtanding our vnworthines) to applie his promiſes to our ſaluation, when it ſhall haue pleaſed him to bury our ſinnes & to receiue vs to mercy. Yea & let vs mark well yͤ wordes yͭ are ſet downe here, *the ſtubbornnes of the people, their wickednes, and their ſin.* For Moſes here maketh not a ceremonious confeſſion as theſe ſhameleſſe ſort doe: that is to ſay, in manner the greater part, when they haue done amiſſe, do beare themſelues in hand, that it is ynough to haue ſaide in one worde, I grant it is a fault: but ye muſt cōſider I am a mā, I am not as a timberlog. It is ynough for them (ſay I) that they excuſe not thēſelues altogether. But we muſt come after another faſhion, as wee ſee by example here. For firſt of all Moſes ſetteth downe *Stubbornnes*: ſhewing thereby that there was a horrible rebelliouſnes in that people. Next he addeth *wickednes*: wherin he betokeneth yͭ the people were ſtarke naught: for yͤ word that he vſeth, importeth ſuch a leawdnes, that they which are ſo termed are diſordered in their whole life. And laſtly he addeth *Sinne*, that is to ſay yͤ particular fault which they had committed, namely their offence in making themſelues an ydol. And ſo we ſee that he acknowledgeth the peoples offences in good earneſt, to condemne them.

Nowe like as Moſes ſpeaketh here of the people: ſo do we ſee that Daniel ſpeaketh of himſelf, for in his report howe he confeſſed his own ſins and the ſinnes of the people, he ſaieth, Lord we haue ſinned, wee haue offended thee, wee haue done wickedly, we bee tranſgreſſors, our ſinnes are outragious, and our iniquities are exceeding great. Daniel goeth not to worke by halues, in confeſſing that himſelfe and the reſt of the people had done amiſſe and deſerued to bee chaſtiſed at Gods hande: but he ſaith flatly, we be wicked and we haue behaued our ſelues leawdly, we haue beene diſobedient and vntrue to our God, we haue prouoked his wrath too much, and wee be curſed and damned, vnleſſe God powre out yͤ infinite treaſures of his mercy vppon vs. Yee ſee then how the true confeſſion which God requireth at our handes, is not to come to him and to ſay in one worde, I haue done amiſſe: but to be ſo abaſhed as to acknowledge our ſelues blameworthy in all reſpects, and to be diſmayed at the rememberance of our offences, like wretched offenders not looking to haue our inditements red vnto vs, not to haue articles alledged againſt vs, but accuſing our ſelues aforehand in ſuch ſort, as God may accept our ſubmiſſion when we ſhal haue examined our faults throughly, not onely in generall but alſo in particular. And in verie deede, after that Moſes had ſpoken of *Stubbornneſſe* and wickednes: he addeth the *Offence* that yͤ people had committed. Whereby hee meaneth that it is not ynough to ſay, we were conceiued in ſinne, it is horrible to ſee howe all thinges are out of order in our whole life: but when we haue offended God any maner of way, we muſt vtter it, as we ſee how Dauid cōfeſſeth generally yͭ ther was nothing in him but vtter corruptiō, and yͭ he brought nothing wͭ him from his mothers womb but yͤ inheriting of death, & therwͭall faileth not to confeſſe yͤ ſin particularlie which he had committed, not wrapping it vp amōg yͤ other to make as though he wiſt not of it: but ſetting down both twaine of thē, as we ſee yͭ Moſes doth in this text. Wherefore when we ſhall haue committed any offence, let vs learne to feele it, & to confeſſe it freely before God. And let the ſame lead vs yet

Dan.9.5.

Pſal.51.6.7

further: that is to wit, to haue an eye to the offences of our whole life, and to acknowledge our ſelues altogether indangered vnto God, except hee receiue vs to mercie. And aboue all thinges, let vs acknowledge the hardneſſe of our heartes, in that wee cannot ſubmit our ſelues to God becauſe wee be ſtubborne againſt him, and Rom.8.7. all the affections of our fleſh are at enmitie with him. After that manner (ſay I) muſt we confeſſe our faults, if we minde to obtaine forgiueneſſe of them. For as for them yͤ come to God ceremoniouſly, cōfeſſing thēſelues to haue done amiſſe, and not being touched to the quicke with their leawdneſſe, nor minding to acknowledge it in their hearts: they doe but play mockeholyday, and they ſhall feele with whom they haue to do, and that God is not an earthly iudge that can be deceiued when men craue pardon feynedly. And therefore when we pray vnto God, let euerie of vs quicken vp himſelfe in acknowledging our faults better than we haue bin wont to do: & let the ſame ſo pull vs downe, as wee may not wote what to ſay, but thus, Alas Lord what ſhould become of vs if it were not for thine ineſtimable mercie? For beholde, wee be euen as it were vtterly ouerwhelmed: and though we knewe but the hundreth part of the offences that wee haue committed, ſurely it were ynough to ſinke vs downe to the bottomleſſe pit, vnleſſe thou remedy it. And as for thee that iudgeſt after a farre other faſhion: howe ſhoulde we be able to ſtand in thy preſence, if thou wouldeſt vſe thy rigour towards vs? Loe here the right lowlineſſe which God commaundeth: which is, that when wee be ſo aſhamed of our ſinnes as we wote not what to ſay, wee flee for refuge to Gods mercy hoping yͤ howſoeuer the caſe ſtand, he of his great goodneſſe wil not refuſe to take vs to mercie.

Nowe to the ende that Moſes may obtaine his requeſt, hee beſeecheth God expreſly *to bee mindfull of his ſeruaunts Abraham, Iſaac, and Iacob*: Gen.17.7. and that was by reaſon of the couenant that he had made with them, for in the ſame couenant there was this article, I will be thy God and the God of thy ſeede after thee. Yee ſee here howe God took the children of Abraham before they were borne, adopting them to bee his Church, and to be inheriters not onely of the Lande of Chanaan, but alſo of the kingdome of heauen. But how doe the children of Abraham behaue themſelues? Leawdly. They falſifie their faith vnto God and become backeſliders, ſo as they deſerue to be cut off from his houſe. Lorde (ſaith Moſes) haue not an eye to their faultes and offences, but bee mindfull of thy couenant which thou madeſt with thy ſeruaunts Abraham Iſaac, and Iacob. Nowe wee ſee to what purpoſe Moſes alledgeth here the holy Patriarks. It is not to make them Aduocates and Patrons before God as the Papiſtes doe, who alledge theſe textes to proue their owne forgeries of hauing the ſaints to bee their interceſſors. What, ſay they? Is it not written that God ſhould bee mindfull of Abraham, Iſaac, and Iacob, and yet they were deade long afore? Seeing that the fathers vſed ſuch ſpeech, why ſhoulde not the ſaincts alreadie deceaſed bee made patrons and aduocates, to make interceſſion for them that are aliue? Surely this commeth of too groſſe beaſtlineſſe. For they conſider not in what manner Moſes alledgeth theſe perſons. I haue tolde you it afore: for God had promiſed them that hee woulde bee the ſauiour of their linage, and had giuen them his promiſe as a pledge, not only on their owne behalfe, but alſo for all their ſucceſſours. And that is yͤ cauſe why Iacob at his death or a little before, ſaid, let my name be called vpō ouer Ephraim and Manaſſes, for his meaning was to make two tribes of them, notwithſtanding that they had both but one heade, that is to wit Ioſeph firſt of al, & he intended that he ſhold haue a double portion. Why ſo? Iacob was in Egypt, not onely as a poore ſtraunger like to haue ſtarued for hunger if he had not come thither: but alſo as a man ſhaken off in ſcorne & diſdain. It is manifeſt that the Egyptians ſhunned the Iewes, and accounted them as vncleane people. Neuertheleſſe although Iacob had not any houſe of his owne, but was there as a ſlaue & baniſhed thither as into an odde nooke of yͤ realm: yet notwithſtanding hee aſſigneth a double portion to Ephraim and Manaſſes. But [in ſo doing] hee had an eye to the promiſe that God had made to him. That is the cauſe why hee ſaieth, Let my name bee called vppon ouer them, and let them bee taken and eſteemed as two of mine owne children. According hereunto it is ſaide, that God ſhoulde remember Abraham, Iſaac, and Iacob, as we ſee in Exodus, Exo.3.15.16 where God intending to acquaint himſelfe with his people, alledgeth the ſame for a preface: as if he ſhould ſay, I haue bounde my ſelfe in the hande of Abraham. And therby he ſendeth them back to the promiſe as it was made and ſet downe in Geneſis, Gen.15.13.16. where God ſaide, that in the ende of fourehundred yeares, after they had beene oppreſſed with grieuous tyranny, he woulde deliuer them. Nowe then, it is not to be doubted, but that Moſeſes alledging of Abraham, Iſaac, and Iacob, is to yͤ end that God ſhould performe his couenant in deede, and not ceaſe to be conſtant in his purpoſe and in diſcharging of his promiſe, notwithſtanding the wickednes of mē. And ſo we ſee how the Papiſtes haue falſly abuſed the holy ſcripture, yea & ſhewed themſelues ſo ſhameleſſe and fond, that euen little children may perceiue their beaſtlineſſe. Wherefore we ought ſo little to be moued with theſe texts: that they do rather make wholly againſt them. And ſo ye ſee why Moſes alledgeth Abraham, Iſaac, & Iacob. He groundeth himſelfe vpon Gods word.

Likewiſe when wee pray, before wee open our mouth wee muſt be taught of God, hee muſt direct vs by his worde, for wee cannot call vpon him rightly, except hee haue firſt preuented Rom.10.14. vs and called vs to him, ſo as wee bee ſure that hee will heare vs. For as for the man that doubteth and floteth like the waues of the ſea Iam.1.6.7. (ſaieth Sainct Iames), let him not looke to obtaine any thing. So then our prayers boote vs not at all, without certaintie of faith. Now let vs ſee whence wee may gette ſuch certaintie of faith Surely euen by Gods worde, and that is it that Moſes hath followed. Hee knewe the promiſe that had proceeded out of Gods mouth, wherupon he reſteth, & therupon maketh mention of Abraham Iſaac & Iacob. And why? For it was they yͤ had receiued the promiſe, as well in their owne behalfe, as in the behalf of their ſucceſſors. But now do we ſee that we haue a Mediator to ratifie the new couenant that God hath made with vs. Before Ieſus Chriſt came into the worlde, Abraham, Iſaac, and Iacob were as mediators after a ſort, becauſe they receiued yͤ promiſe in the name of yͤ whole Church. But nowe God ſendeth vs backe to his only ſonne, in whoſe perſon it is his will to ratifie all that euer he had promiſed. How then ſhall we haue any certainty, except we repaire to our Lord Ieſus Chriſt, and pray to God his father to remember him, & not to looke at vs, as in verie deede the auncient fathers haue ſhewed vs the good way alreadie in the time of the ſhadows, although they had not the trueth ſo fully as wee haue it in the Goſpel? For ſince the time that the kingdome was ſetled in the houſe of Dauid, and this promiſe made, He ſhalbe my ſon: we ſee that yͤ fathers prayed after this manner: Lord looke vpon the countenance of thy Chriſt or thine anointed. But they ſpake of Dauids ſucceſſors. It is true: Howbeit foraſmuch as that temporall kingdome was a figure of the kingdome that is prepared for vs in the perſon of our Lord Ieſus Chriſt: yͤ auncient fathers looked thereat as it were to behold Ieſus Chriſt in a glaſſe. Now then ſeeing yͤ the ſonne of God is come, & hath tolde vs yͤ it is hee to whom we muſt repayre: what excuſe wil there be for vs, if we roue heere and there, and ſeeke other mediators to reſort vnto? Is it not a bereauing of Gods ſonne of his office? yes; for hee is not as was Abraham, or as was Dauid and al his linage: but hee is the true high prieſt which hath appeaſed Gods wrath towardes vs. And hee hath not onely receiued the couenaunt, ſo as he may ſay that God hath tolde him that hee will accept all ſuch as ſubmit themſelues vnto him: but he hath alſo ratified the ſame couenant with his owne bloud; that is the ſeale which he hath ſet vnto it. Then if men will not bee contented with ſuch confirmation of Gods promiſes as is made in the perſon of his ſonne: is it not a treading of his bloude vnder foote to the vttermoſt of their power, and a ſtriuing to make it of none effect? Yes: and ſo we ſee that this text is ſo little able to arme the Papiſts, that it doth rather condemne them of vnthankfulneſſe before God, in that they haue (to the vttermoſt of their power) diſabled the grace that was brought them by the ſonne of God, and not conſidered that Gods adopting of vs was in his hand and by his means, who hath accompliſhed Gods promiſes in ſuch wiſe by his bloude as we may aſſure our ſelues of them without any doubting. Therefore let vs mark wel that whenſoeuer we ſeeke any patrons and aduocats, it is an aboliſhing of the death & paſſion of our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt, and therwithall an vtter diſanulling of all Gods promiſes, which ought to bee ſprinkled with his bloud, according as wee ſee howe it was commaunded in the Lawe, that the booke ſhould be beſprinkled with the bloude of the ſolemne ſacrifice that was to be offered. When a ſacrifice was to be offred, the bloud of it was to be reſerued, & ſprinkled vppon the tabernacle, vppon the altar, and vpon the booke of the Law: to doe vs to wit, that there is none other meane to aſſure vs of Gods promiſes, than by the beſprinkling of them with the bloude of our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt. For as for ſuch as runne gadding after their owne imaginations, ſaying wee muſt haue ſuch a patrone and ſuch an aduocate: they (as much as in them lyeth) ſo drayne and drie vp the bloude of Gods ſonne, as it may giue no more force to the promiſes to aſſure vs of our ſaluation.

Pſal. 2.7.& 84.10.& 132.10.

Heb 9.11.12 14.

Exod. 24.7. 8.

Hebr. 9. 19. 20.

Furthermore let vs marke that the Papiſtes haue in all reſpects defaced yͤ office of our Lord Ieſus Chriſt. For by their making of the ſaintes to be their patrons & aduocates, they haue alſo made thē as good as mediators, ſo as we ſhould obtaine fauour at Gods hand by their meanes. They ſay not onely Lorde heare the prayer of ſuch a one or ſuch a one: but alſo, for his prayers ſake or for his deſerts ſake. But both theſe things belong peculiarly to our Lord Ieſus Chriſt. For to ſeeke to the merits or deſertes of men, is to ſtay vpon a craſed or broken reede, and that is the next way to make vs tumble downe, yea and it is as the ſhiuers of a reede that will alſo wound vs beſides our falling. Wherefore let vs vnderſtand, that in ſo doing wee forſake the ſonne of God and bereaue him of his office.

1.Ioh.2.1.&

Againe, as touching prayer and ſupplication, it is true that we ought to pray one for another as long as wee liue vppon the earth: and we haue ſeene the example thereof in Moſes: yea and wee haue ſeene it in ſuch wiſe, as ſufficeth to ſhewe vs that our prayers are not vaine nor vnprofitable, but that God maketh them auailable and heareth them, when wee pray one for another: Howbeit, that is but while we bee aliue. Moreouer, if wee fall to ſeeking of patrones and aduocates vppon our owne heades, without any warrant of holy ſcripture: it is too great a deſpiſing of God. For wee followe not the manner of praying which God hath ordeyned, and therefore it is a diueliſh malapertneſſe for men to preſume to enter into the kingdome of heauen, there to appoint officers, as though God had made them Lord great maſters there. Nowe then let vs learne that wee muſt let our Lord Ieſus Chriſt alone with the office of aduocate, that hee may be our ſpokeſman for vs, & giue vs acceſſe & means to be accepted at Gods hand. Moreouer, we muſt not imagine any meriting or deſeruing in any mortall creature, no not euen in the Angels of heauē, but we receiue yͤ meriting of Ieſus Chriſt, which thing was not in yͤ holy Patriarks, nor in Dauid, nor in any of his ſucceſſors, for God adopted them frely. But it was his will that in Ieſus Chriſt our ſinnes ſhould bee wyped out, and our debts diſcharged, and yͤ by his obedience righteouſneſſe ſhoulde bee purchaſed vnto vs. That therefore is the thing that wee muſt reſorte vnto.

Iam. 5.16.

Rom. 5.19.

Wherefore let vs learne, that if the fathers of olde time, when they minded to obtaine fauour at Gods hand, alledged Abraham, Iſaac, and Iacob, and conſequently Dauid in his order, becauſe he was ordeined to be a figure of our Lord Ieſus Chriſt: if this were vſed in the time that things were yet darke: wee ought to take good heede that wee ſwarue not to the right hand nor to the left, now that God hath reuealed himſelfe fully vnto vs: but that we direct our faith to Ieſus Chriſt, aſſuring our ſelues that for his ſake God his father hath adopted vs, and liketh well of vs by his meanes, and graunteth vs our requeſtes. Beſides this, foraſmuch as yͤ ſcripture ſaith that he is giuẽ vs to be our aduocate, that he maketh interceſſion for vs, and that for his ſake we may reſt vpon Gods mercie: Let vs not doubt but he will ſhewe himſelfe fauourable vnto vs. Seeing that the ſcripture fathereth theſe thinges vppon Ieſus Chriſt, let vs beware that wee rob him not of them, and that we play not the Papiſtes, who by their praying to their Heſaincts & Sheſaints, doe well ſhewe that Ieſus Chriſt ſufficeth them not, and that becauſe they pretende the name of God, they prouoke his vengeance more and more againſt them. We ſee alſo howe God hath blinded them & giuen them vp to a helliſh rage, ſo as they thinke it not ynough to ſay, Theſe are our patrons and aduocates: but alſo they make no difference betweene God, and a ſainct that they haue forged of their owne braine. For they ſay, Our father which art in heauen, as wel kneeling before a puppet, as if they ſpake to GOD himſelfe. But yet howe make they their prayers? I ſhall not neede to ſpeake heere, neither of the Apoſtles nor of the Prophetes: for they haue ſaincts which neuer were in the world. And although they take the prophets and Apoſtles, yet they pray to them as to God, and with the ſame ſpeech and ſtile. We ſee then that they are vtterly brutiſh, and that God hath giuen them vp to a reprobate ſenſe. And it is good reaſon, becauſe they haue robbed Chriſt of his dignitie wherein God his father had ſet him, and are not contented with him as with their only aduocate and interceſſor, but are run aſtray here & there. Therfore it is meete that God ſhould withdraw himſelfe from them and forſake them, that they might fall into ſuch extremitie as wee ſee they be falne into. Wherefore let vs for our part beware that wee hold faſt the ſimplicitie which the ſcripture ſheweth vs: that is to wit, that in calling vpon God, we haue our eye vpon our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt: and againe that in aſmuch as God hath ſtabliſhed his couenãt for euer in his name, we doubt not but that we be heard as oft as wee come vnto God by him, and that he is mercifull vnto vs.

1.Iohn 2,1.

Now let vs kneele downe in the preſence of our good God with acknowledgement of our ſins, praying him to make vs feele them yͤ better, that we may acknowledge them rightly both with heart & mouth, and bee brought to true amendment, & be ſo humbled, yͭ by glorifying him as he is worthy, and by acknowledging what goodnes he vſeth towards vs, we may be prouoked to ſerue him with the better corage: and he beare with vs in our infirmities as long as we be in this worlde, vntill we be come to him into his heauẽly kingdom, & he haue made vs partakers of his endleſſe glorie. That it may pleaſe him to grant this grace, not only to vs, &c.

On Tewſday the x. of September. 1555.

The Lxix. Sermon, which is the firſt vpon the tenth Chapter.

THe ſame time the Lorde ſaide, cut thee two tables of ſtone like the firſt, and come vp to mee into the mountaine, and make thee an Arke of wood.

2 And I will write in thoſe Tables, the wordes that were written in the former tables, which thou haſt broken: and thou ſhalt put them in the Arke.

3 So I made an Arke of Setimwood, and hewed two tables like the firſt, and went vp into the mountaine, hauing the two tables in my hande:

4 Then wrate he in the Tables as he had written afore, euen the tenne ſayings which the Lorde had ſpoken vpon the mountaine, from the middes of the fire in the day of your comming together. And afterwarde the Lorde gaue them to me.

5 And I turned me, and went downe from the hill, and put them into the Ark which I had made: and they were there as the Lord had commaunded me.

6 And the children of Iſrael departed from Beroth of the children of Iaacan towards Moſera, where Aaron died, and was buried there. And Eleazar his ſonne executed the office of high prieſt in his ſtead.

7 From thence they went towarde Gadgad, and from Gadgad towards Getebatha, in the Countrie where running riuers are.

8 The ſame time the Lord ſorted out the tribe of Leuie, to beare the Arke of the Lords couenant, and to ſtande in the Lords preſence, to miniſter vnto him, and to bleſſe in his name, euen to this day.

WE haue ſeen alredie here tofore the thing ẏ Moſes rehearſeth here, ẏ is to wit, ẏ God wrate new againe ẏ ten comnādements of his law in two Tables of ſtone: & that was done to the end ẏ the people ſhould the better conſider, that the couenant which God had made with them, was of his own onely mercy. For we ſee how God had giuen ouer ẏ people and it was all one as if he had thruſt them into the commō aray of other men, which are vtterly accurſed and eſtraunged from God. Eph.2.3. Truely Gods former chooſing of ẏ people, was of his owne free goodnes. For (as we haue ſeen) none of them was yet borne, when he made his promiſe with his ſeruant Abraham: & therefore needes muſt they acknowledge ẏ his chooſing of them, was not in reſpect of any deſert of their owne. Howbeit foraſmuch as men labour al that they can, to darken Gods free fauor, & ſeeke pretie fond deuiſes to chalenge to themſelues ſome peece of their own ſaluation: it was expedient to haue it fully ſhewed, ẏ God receiued ẏ people to mercy againe the ſecond time, without any reſpect whether they were worthie of it or no, but onely of his owne mere goodneſſe. Men are of opinion, ẏ when God choſe them, he foreſawe what maner of ones they ſhould be, accordingly as we ſee how this diueliſh errour hath alwayes raigned, and ẏ there are yet ſtill ſome fantaſtical perſons, which wil needes haue Gods election to be grounded vpon his foreknowledge, ẏ is to ſay, Eph.1.4. when God choſe whom he liſted before the making of ẏ world, they fall to gloſing thereupon, ẏ he foreknew who ſhould be worthy of it, & therfore marked them out for the ſame purpoſe, and in the ſame reſpect preferred them before thoſe whom he knew would become wicked. But ẏ is cleane contrarie to ẏ teaching of the holy ſcripture. For ẏ teacheth vs, ẏ the cauſe of Gods chooſing of vs is taken from out of himſelf, ẏ is to ſay, of his owne only free goodnes: for he ſhal neuer finde any thing in vs, why he ſhould be inclined to loue vs. Howbeit to the end ẏ this may be the Rom.3.22. better perceiued in the things which God hath ſhewed vs in the people of Iſrael: he choſe ẏ offſpring of Abraham. And wherefore? Abrahā was a ſillie ſoule, he had neither nobilitie nor worſhip in him, he was not of any great reputation to the worldward: & yet notwithſtanding God marked him out, & choſe him alone & his houſhold frō all others. And what maner of houſhold was it? Was there yet any likelyhood in it? Nay. Abraham was yet childleſſe, hee was barrain, hee was vtterly paſt hope of euer hauing any iſſue. Now then Gods chooſing of Abrahā, was when he was as a blocke alreadie dead aforehand: and therefore S.Paule ſaith, ẏ in the perſon of Abraham, Rom.4.17. God ſhewed ẏ he choſe the thinges which are not, of purpoſe to giue them being. And for ẏ ſame cauſe it is ſaid in the firſt Chapter of ẏ firſt 1.Cor.1.28, 30. Epiſtle to the Corinthians, ẏ we be of God, that is to ſay, ẏ he giueth vs being vnto ſaluation, bicauſe he hath vouchſafed to chooſe vs: for we be nothing at all in our ſelues. Yet notwithſtanding, this people made great account of themſelues, & bare themſelues in hand that they were better than al ẏ world. For the which cauſe, the couenant & adoption ẏ god had made with that linage was broken off: & ſo ye ſee that the people of Iſrael were reiected at God hands. Yea & wel worthy were they to bee abhorred, inſomuch ẏ this ſentence of condemnation was alredy giuen vpon them, that they ſhould bee rooted out of ẏ world, & the rememberance of them be vtterly deſtroyed. So little cauſe then had the children of Iſrael to make any boaſt of thēſelues, or to take vpon them aboue the heathē: ẏ they were thruſt beneath them, and vtterly diſclaimed and condemned at Gods hand, as whom hee ſhewed to haue nothing elſe but curſedneſſe in them. Now therefore it behoueth them to knowe: ẏ whereas God giueth them his Law, & teacheth them, & performeth his promiſe towards them: all this is done of ſo high & infinite fauor, as ought in maner to make them aſtoniſhed. For what a thing was it, ẏ God after ẏ breaking of ẏ tables of his couenant, did yet ſtill vouchſafe to haue pity vpon ẏ wretched people? Beholde, the two tables were not writtē by mans hand, but by gods hād, ẏ is to ſay by his power: & ẏ was a myracle. And what ſhal a man ſay to it, ẏ Gods own workmanſhip ſhould be defaced? Was it not meete that ẏ people which were the cauſe therof, ſhould haue periſhed vtterly? If we make cōpariſon betwene Gods word, & mens ſaluation: ſurely Gods word is far ẏ preciouſer. But behold, ẏ word of God ẏ is written, I meane ẏ writing ẏ was ſet down in ẏ two tables of ſtone, came as it were from heauē, & was not ẏ workmanſhip of man: God himſelfe wrought it of his own power. What puniſhment then ought they to receiue, which committed ſo great and heinous a fault, as ẏ the thing which God had ingrauen with his own hand, was faine to be broken & brought to nought for it? We ſee then ẏ God magnified his ineſtimable goodnes towards this people, in ẏ he vouchſafed ẏ the two tables ſhould be made new againe, and that his lawe law ſhould be regiſtred in them new againe, as a perpetuall monument that he was the protector of Abrahams linage, & intended to keepe them to himſelf for his own flock. Therefore it is not without cauſe, that Moſes maketh mention here of his making of the two tables new againe, & of his offering of them vnto God, & of the writing of the ten cōmandements in them. Surely, it was a thing worthie of remembrance, & wherein mē ought to exerciſe thēſelues day & night, to know ỹ God hauing entred freely in league with ỹ one houſe, was not contented with that alone, but although their ſucceſſours became a frowarde and crabbed nation, vtterly rebellious & as full of ſhameful churliſhnes as might be: yet he ceaſſed not to continue his couenant, yea, & moreouer to renew it againe with them, & to ſet it in the former ſtate.

And herein we ſee ỹ he had not an eye to mē, nor to their worthines, but wil haue thē to think themſelues beholden to him for al things: inſomuch that he ouercommeth al yͤ lewdnes & frowardnes of men by his goodnes, adopting euen thoſe to be of his houſe & to be his heirs, which ſhew themſelues vnworthie of the good that he had done for them. That is the thing which wee haue to beare in mind. And we muſt marke that Moſes ſpake not for his own time onely; but that the ſame doctrine toucheth vs as much or more at this day, than euer it did them: ſpecially if wee can conſider the likenes ỹ is betweene vs & the people of old time. In deede we haue not nowadayes the law written in tables of ſtone; but wee haue Gods grace much largelier towardes vs, & which deſerueth to be much more highly eſteemed, becauſe we be ſure that he taketh vs for his church, & wil haue vs to be ruled by him. Now let vs ſee whence this proceedeth, & what is yͤ cauſe thereof. True it is ỹ if we haue an eye to yͤ things ỹ were giuen vs in our father Adam, we be creatures ſhaped after the image of God. But we (to yͤ vttermoſt of our power) haue defaced Gods Eph.2.3. image in vs, & wee be ſo marred & corrupted by original ſin, that God diſclaimeth vs, & we be not worthie to be counted his creatures: & yet for all that, he vouchſafeth to gather vs to himſelf. For Rom.6.3. in baptiſme we haue gods couenant ingrauen as Gal.3.27. it were in our bodies; whereby he doth vs to vnderſtand, ỹ he vouchſafeth to take vs for his people & inheritance. Now haue we any worthines wherby to attaine to ſo great a benefit? Alas, no: for we be giltie aforehand of yͤ defacing of gods image. True it is ỹ that commeth of yͤ roote of yͤ firſt man: but yet are not we our ſelues faultles. Againe, how haue we withdrawen our ſelues frō God, euen after baptiſme? for we haue not onely cōmitted ſmall faults, as befalleth to yͤ faithfull to do: but alſo in the time of our idolatrie & ſuperſtitiō, we haue brought to nothing al yͤ grace that was promiſed vs in baptiſme, wee haue renounced the ſaluation that was purchaced vs by our Lord Ieſus Chriſt, we haue forſaken our god, & we haue broken the ſpirituall wedlocke which hee had contracted with vs, ſo as there hath bin nothing in vs but corruption, by gadding away ſo after our own ſuperſtitions: & yet for al this, he hath not failed to returne vnto vs, & to bring vs back againe into the way of ſaluation. Sith we ſee this, ought it not to be a ſufficient proofe of Gods infinit goodnes towards vs, to make vs lay away al fond imagination of deſeruing, & to acknowledge our ſelues beholden to God for all things? Yes: & it is the ſame thing ỹ I alleaged euē now out of S. Pauls ſayings, where God ſheweth 1.Cor.1.30. vs, ỹ we be of him, not in reſpect that we be men, but in reſpect ỹ we be his workmāſhip, according as it is ſhewed in the ſecond to the Epheſians, ỹ Eph.2.10. he hath ſhaped vs: for otherwiſe there is nothing but wickednes in vs, becauſe our nature will alwayes be found to be vtterly frowarde & accurſed. Thus ye ſee yͤ compariſon which we ought to make betweene our ſelues & the people of olde time, to bring our ſelues low & to make our ſelues perceiue ỹ wee be the more bound vnto God for ỹ free mercie which he hath beſtowed vppon vs, in vouchſafing to take vs to be of his Church, in which reſpect we be (ſay I) more bound vnto him than were the Iewes.

Now it is true ỹ gods writing of his law in two tables of ſtone (as I haue declared already heretofore ſpecially in the firſt place) was to yͤ intent ỹ his doctrine ſhould abide ſure. For he had an eye to yͤ cōmon trade among men, who vpon the making of leags & alliances, are wont to haue thē ingrauen in ſtone or braſſe. After yͤ ſame maner it was Gods wil ỹ his law ſhould, for yͤ better continuance therof, be grauen in two ſtones. Ye ſee then how God doth as it were paſſe a ſolemn couenant. Neuertheleſſe wee muſt therwithall alſo come to the figure: namely, ỹ the writing of the law after ỹ faſhion in a cupple of ſtones, ſerued to ſhew ỹ it was not ynough for folke to haue yͤ law giuen thē, & to vnderſtand it: vnleſſe it were ingrauen in their hearts. For we muſt come to yͤ ſimilitude ỹ is made by yͤ prophets. For although God ſhewed his law to be ſufficiently authoriſed by vouchſafing to ingraue it ſo in theſe ſtones: yet did he giue an incling ỹ that would nothing boote, verily becauſe ỹ true tables wherein it behoueth vs to write the doctrine of God, are our harts; howbeit not as they be by nature. For what maner of ones are they? Euē of ſtone as it is ſaid of them in Ezechiel. So then, let vs marke that yͤ letter of yͤ law is nothing worth, vntil god worke Ezec.11.19. & 36.26. in vs by his holy ſpirit. And that is the cauſe why he hath promiſed to make a newe couenant, not after the maner ỹ hee made it with the fathers: Ier.31.32. 33. for, that continued not, ſaith he. And why? Hee ſheweth ỹ the blame & fault therof is in men, becauſe they turne away & runne at rouers as ſoon as God hath called them, & neuer follow him at all. Although they pretend to make great account of his grace: yet is there no ſtedineſſe in them, but rather vtter lightneſſe; for by and by they fling away after their own wicked affectiōs. The couenant of God then, yea though it were written in ſtones, could not hold them in. And why ſo? Not for that God abode not faithful on his part, or that hee perſiſted not to ſhewe that his chooſing of Abrahās linage was not in vaine: but for that they were bereft & diſappointed of that great benefite, & diſpoſſeſſed of Gods freebeſtowed bleſſing, through their owne vnfaithfulneſſe. And therefore it is requiſite that God ſhould ſpeake to vs after another faſhion: that is to wit, that he ſhould not only write his law with his owne hand in ſtones, but alſo write it in our hearts, by correcting the hardneſſe that is in thē of nature, and alſo by making them fleſhie harts, ſo as they may bee ſoft & ſupple to receiue yͤ ingrauing which he ſhal put into them. Ye ſee then that the thing which we haue to beare in mind, if we intend to fare the better by this preſent ſtorie, is that like as Moſes acknowledged himſelfe exceedingly bound vnto his God for the fauour which he had ſhewed to his people: ſo ought we alſo to bethink vs, how abundantly God hath vttered the treaſures of his goodnes towardes vs. For not only we be accurſed by nature: but alſo we haue forſaken him after his adopting of vs, & wee haue not made account of him as of our father. And yet for all this, he hath reached vs his hand, & ſet vs in our former ſtate againe; & he hath not only taken vs into his fauour againe, & giuen vs his worde to teache vs thereby, nor only deliuered vs his law written in yͤ two ſtones: 2.Cor.3.3. but he hath alſo reformed & ſoftened our harts, ſo that whereas erſt there was nothing but hardneſſe in them, he hath now drawen them to obedience, to receiue quietly yͤ things that are told vs in his name, at leaſtwiſe if wee be his. For all they to whome the Goſpell is preached, are not of yͤ nomber. But let euery of vs examin himſelf, & we ſhal perceiue yͤ God in ſending his Goſpell to be preached vnto vs, is ready & forwarde to giue vs his grace, if we our ſelues bee not the let. True it is yͤ his Election doth always beare ſway: but yet do not men faile to be in the fault, if the Goſpel profit thē not, accordingly as S. Paul de-2.Cor.4.3.4 clareth, yͤ the diuel muſt needs haue blinded our eyes, if we ſee not yͤ light that ſhineth there, ſeing yͤ the image of God ſheweth it ſelfe there ſo euidently. Wherfore let vs marke, yͤ if Moſes vpbraided the Iewes, (& that iuſtly) with the vnthankfulnes whereof they were giltie: much more ought we now to caſt down our eyes, & to ſtand in awe, & to be vtterly abaſhed before God. And in yͤ ſame reſpect, we haue more cauſe to magnifie the grace of our God, than had the auncient fathers, which were in the time that the law was written but only in two tables of ſtone.

Furthermore we haue to marke the figure yͤ is comprehended vnder theſe words, *Make thee two tables ſmooth & bring them to mee.* For therby god ſheweth the order & right maner of proceeding to be wel taught at his hand: namely yͤ wee muſt bring yͤ tables poliſhed or made ſmooth for him to write his law in, & yͤ afterward he muſt write in them. True it is, that we cannot do this of our own ſelfmouing, but he muſt direct vs thereto by his holy ſpirite. Notwithſtanding, it is to bee noted, that God beſtoweth two diſtinct graces vpon vs. The one is in preuenting vs, to the intent wee ſhoulde be readie and forwarde to yeelde him obedience: and the other is in inlightening vs, and in giuing vs a preſent affection to ſerue him as ſoone as wee knowe his will. This woulde be darke, if it were not opened more at large: but I hope that anon it ſhalbe verie eaſie to vs.

Before men are brought to the faith, and before they be acquainted with the doctrine of the Goſpel to be ridde of all ignorance: they may haue ſome good preparatiue aforehande to ſay, Alas I woulde faine giue eare to my God, let him but onely ſhewe mee his good pleaſure, and lo I am readie to embrace it, ſo as hee ſhal leade mee whither he will. Let him but laye the bridle on my necke, or raine mee one way or other, & I will followe him and ſubmit my ſelfe to him with all obedience. Such diſpoſition is to bee ſeene in ſilie ignorant ſoules, before God haue throughly inſtructed them. They haue not faith, but an entrance vnto faith, in aſmuch as they are prepared to ſubmit themſelues to whatſoeuer God ſhall commaund them. Nowe commeth this inmouing, of men, or of their own nature? No, it is of Gods working in their heartes, who maketh yͤ preparation there by the grace of his holy ſpirit. For by nature we can no skill but to go clean contrarie to Gods wil And although men haue ſome deuotion, & make pretēce thereof: yet is all but hypocriſie, there is no truth nor ſoundnes in them. Therfore whēſoeuer we feele any good forwardnes to ſerue God: it is of his own working in vs, & it is he that giueth vs that grace. In deede it is ſaid here, *Bring mee the two tables & let them bee hewen ſmooth with thy hande.* This charge was giuen to Moſes. And what then? Can he do it of himſelfe? No, but becauſe God hath taught him aforehande, and prepared him to the doing thereof. Ye ſee then that that is one grace which God beſtoweth: and yet neuertheleſſe, God ſheweth vs that it is our duetie to do it, though wee cannot do it of our owne abilitie, that is to ſaye, though wee bee not giuen to do it of our owne ſelfemouing, or power. For looke what is our duetie to doe, it is good right that God ſhoulde require it. Therefore let vs learne, that to profite well in Gods doctrine, wee muſt bring ſmoothe or plaine tables. For why? Wee ſee that moſte men haue rough and rugged myndes, ſo as nothing can bee written vppon them.

True it is, that they will reſort to Sermons. But what for that? They be forepoſſeſſed with their owne lewde luſtes: they bee ſo bemyred in them, as is horrible to ſee: and againe, they bee full of thornes, there is nothing but vice and vncleanneſſe in them: all is ſo out of order, that a man cannot tell howe to write one letter in them. Yee ſhall ſee otherſome which haue had their eares ſufficiently beaten, and the Goſpel hath beene preached to them all their life long: and yet are they nothing the better for it, becauſe they bring not ſmooth tables with them, that is to ſay, they bee not diſpoſed to receiue Gods worde. Thus yee ſee what wee haue to gather, vpon Gods commaunding of Moſes to make the two tables ſmooth.

Now if we intend to profite well in Gods doctrine, wee muſt not haue our hartes like roughhewen ſtones, where no writing can bee diſcerned, but all ſhalbe blurred doe yͤ writer what hee can: but we muſt haue our harts ſmoothed, that is to ſay, quite & cleane rid from al impediments that may hinder our obedience towardes God. And for as much as we haue not that of nature: we muſt pray God to be ſo gracious vnto vs, as to make vs able to ſmooth our hearts ſo well, as we may rid them of all vices & corruptions, and meeken the ſturdines that is in vs, when wee ſee our ſelues drag cleane backe from the wil of our God; ſo as we may haue a deſire to ouercome & ſubdue the ſame. The hammers & chiſils which we muſt vſe to pooliſh our harts withal, are theſe: namely, to miſlike of our ſinnes & to be grieued at them, & thereupon to condemne our ſelues, & to exerciſe our ſelues in ſo doing: for euery of vs muſt inforce & compel himſelfe by violence to ſtoop vnto God, & we muſt hold on in ſo doing, what hardnes & gaineſtriuing ſoeuer wee meete withal, ſo as al ẏ loftineſſe of our heartes muſt be pulled down, ẏ nothing may hinder gods ingrauing of his doctrin in them afterward. And when our Lord hath once begon after ẏ maner, he will go through with it, ſo as he will teach vs his wil, & we ſhal profit in it daily more & more. And ſo we ſee ẏ the beginning of our faith, is the ſaid obedientnes wherethrough men offer and yeld vp themſelues in ſacrifice, as if they ſhould ſay, Alas Lord, it is true that I am a ſilly ignorant ſoule, yea & a verie beaſt, for I knowe no reaſon nor wiſdom, but I flee vnto thee, that thou maiſt direct & gouerne mee by thy holy ſpirit. Lo here (ſay I) the ſigne ẏ we be wel diſpoſed aforehand, & this diſpoſednes is as a white vnwritten paper. For if a man bring a black & foule ſullyed paper, or which is bedawbed & beſloubered with myre; & ſay, I would faine be taught, I pray you write me a ſample vpon this paper: it is a flat mockery: for the paper is berayed, & a man cannot write any thing vpon it ẏ can be diſcerned. But if a mã bring cleane paper, & ſay, I ſubmit my ſelfe to you, I beſeech you ſhew me what I haue to do: ẏ is a good forwardneſſe. Or rather to come nerer the ſimilitude which we haue nowe preſently in hande, (that is to wit, the couenant which God hath made with vs) if a man intending to bargaine with another man, ſhould ſay, Go to, to the intent ye may vnderſtand ẏ I am willing to yeld to all reaſon; lo, here is a blanke, write what you will & I agree to it. If a man ſay ſo & ſpeake truly, he ſheweth ẏ his intent is to deale dutifully ẇ the partie with whome he hath to do. But if another bring a peece of paper imbrewed with mire & ſay, write what you liſt, I admit it for good: doth he not giue to vnderſtande that he intendeth to breake the whole bargaine, & ẏ he is vnworthie to once open his lippes, as one that purpoſeth not to ſtand to any reaſon at all? So then let vs bring white paper to God, that is to ſay, obedientnes to ſubmit our ſelues vnto him. Although we vnderſtand not his will: yet is that ẏ entrance of our faith. For then doth God traine vs forward to write his worde in our hearts, ſo as we be throughly inſtructed afterward. Ye ſee thẽ that God vouchſafeth a double grace vpon vs: firſt, in that he prepareth our hearts to come vnto him to receiue his doctrin: & ſecondly in that he teacheth & enlighteneth our heartes by his holy ſpirite, framing our heartes & affections aright, to the end we ſhould be faſhioned like vnto his glorie, & ẏ his ſpeaking ſhoulde not bee to our eares only, but much rather to our hearts. So haue we thereupon to conclude, (as I haue ſaide alreadie) ẏ we ſhal neuer attaine to faith, except we haue the ſaid obedientneſſe aforehand. And ẏ is the cauſe why ſo fewe beleeue nowadayes, for they be full of pride, they thruſt God away from them, ſo as he can by no meanes come at them: they take pritch againſt his worde, & reſiſt his trueth, holding ſcorne of their owne profite & welfare. Therefore we muſt vnderſtande, that to be true ſcholers vnto God, the end that wee muſt begin at, muſt be teachablenes. And when we be once in that mind, wee muſt ſuffer him to teache vs, ſo as he may ingraue his learning in our hearts.

2.Cor.3.18.

By the way wee haue to marke alſo, that it is not for vs to make or frame lawes to ſerue God withall, but that we muſt ſimply bring our tables & let him write in them what he thinkes good. Moſes was a great & excellent Prophet: and yet did not God giue him leaue or libertie to write any thing in his tables, or to put any thing vnto them, but reſtrained him altogither to ẏ thinges that were written there. And ẏ appeared well in this, in ẏ both the tables were written, not on the one ſide only, but on both, euen to the full, to the intent that no man liuing ſhould ad any thing to them. Seeing then ẏ God wrote his commandements in thoſe two tables himſelfe, & committed not that charge vnto Moſes: is it lawfull for any mortall creature to ad any inuention of his owne to Gods law? Ye ſee then ẏ the way for vs to put this doctrine in vre, is to beare in minde that if Moſes being ſo excellent a man, and as an Angel of God, might not write or ad any thing to Gods law: much leſſe may we. Wherefore to ſerue God aright, let vs learne ẏ we muſt not take vpon vs to inuent any thing at all, nor to preſume vpon our own deuotions, as we term them: for all ſuch geere wilbe miſliked, but that we muſt bring our tables, that is to ſay, our owne ſelues in ſacrifice, ſo as there bee not any thing written in vs, vntil God ſpeak, & that we receiue ſimply without any gainſaying, whatſoeuer proceedeth out of his mouth.

Deut.12.32.

Exod.32.15.

But now that we haue ſo much, let vs marke that which is added: namely howe God cõmanded Moſes & told him, *How his will was that the cofer or cheſt which he had made*, (that is to ſay, the Arke, cõmonly called the Arke of the couenant) *ſhould be borne or caried by the children of Leuy*. And that is the cauſe why he told the people, that the childrẽ of Iſrael ſhould fleet from place to place, *vntill they came to Beroth where Aaron died, and that then God would ſhole out the Leuites by themſelues.* Surely at the firſt bluſh the ſtorie ſeemeth diſordered. for he ſaith, the children of Iſrael departed from Beroth belonging to the children of Iacan in Moſera, that is to ſay in ẏ place of mount Hor where Aaron dyed. And it ſeemeth here ẏ Moſes ment to ſay, that Aaron dyed byandby after ẏ God had cauſed the two tables to be made new againe: But there were fourtie yeares betweene the one and the other. For Aaron dyed at ſuch time as the people had outworne their terme of fourtie yeares, during which time god had forfended them the lande of promiſe. Now in the ende of that terme, Aaron was depriued of the dignitie of the prieſthood, and Eleazer his ſon was made highprieſt in his ſtead. But here Moſes comprehendeth all that had bin done by the ſpace of fourtie yeares, from the publiſhing of the lawe, vnto the verie ſame day that he exhorted the people to put themſelues in better readineſſe to enter into their inheritance, than they had beene in at the beginning. He telleth them that although there had happened many changes in the meane time, yet had God in effect prouided, that his lawe was to bee had alwayes in eſtimation, & to be honored, and that the world might perceiue that his maieſtie was therein, & that all men ought to ſubmit thẽſelues thereunto. And for that cauſe doth Moſes ſay, that hee had choſen the children of Leuye, notwithſtanding that Aaron had ſinned. For to what ende doeth Moſes ſpeake here of his brothers death? Euen to make it knowen, that God had ſhewed fauour towardes the trybe of Leuye, as well as towards all the reſt of the people. The trybe of Leuye was choſen to offer ſacrifice: it was a prerogatiue which God had giuen them. And were they worthie of it? Could they boaſt themſelues to haue beene more worthie than their brethren? It is true that they executed vẽgeance vpon the ydolaters, but yet was Moſes faine to call them to him, and to command them Exod.32.29 to ſanctifie their handes. Yee muſt hallowe your hands to the Lord, ſayth he: & howe? In ſlaying thoſe that haue ſo grieuouſly offended, and been an occaſion of turning all thinges vpſide downe. This day therfore it behoueth you to vtter what zeale ye haue towards the maintenance of gods honour, and to ſanctifie his name without ſparing of your own brethrẽ, or your neereſt neighbours, foraſmuch as they haue ſo defaced Gods glorie to the vttermoſt of their power, & therefore they muſt be vtterly rooted out. The Leuites did well execute the thing that Moſes cõ- Exo.32.2.4. maunded them: but yet did the high prieſt Aaron make the golden calfe. True it is that hee withſtoode it, or at leaſtwiſe conſented not to it: but yet did he ſwarue at length by graunting the peoples importunate requeſt, and therefore was he faine to beare the puniſhment which GOD tolde him of, ſaying, thou ſhalt not come within the land which I will giue vnto my people. Albeit that he repreſented the perſon of our Lorde Hebr.5.1.2. Ieſus Chriſt, and was a figure of him: although he was a mediatour betweene God and men, ſo as he made interceſſion for the ſinnes of the people, & offered ſacrifices for the redonciling of them to the maieſty of God: yet was he baniſhed out of that lande to his ſhame, hee dyed, hee was ſtripped out of his robes before his death, hee was as a man diſgraded, and God left him as a diſhonoured perſon, and as a man defaced with perpetuall reproche. Now if God extended ſuch puniſhment vppon the perſon of Aaron: what had they deſerued which were inferiors to him? So then, Moſes telleth them, that Gods chooſing of the trybe of Leuye to carrie the Arke, and to be occupyed about his ſeruice, was not for that they were worthie of it, but becauſe hee was Deut.7.7.8. minded to ſhewe the ſame thing to the ſucceſſours of Leuye, which he had ſpoken of the reſt of the whole bodie of Abrahams offſpring; namely that they had all things of his only free goodneſſe. That is the cauſe why the death of Aaron is rehearſed here.

But by the way, we ſee that Moſes ſpared not his own brother. For here he repeteth the ſentence yͭ God had giuen & alſo executed againſt him, & yͭ was not for yͤ honor of his own houſe. But what? His meaning was yͭ God ſhould be glorified, & men condemned. Yea & we ſee that his intent was not to conceale his owne fault, but to ſhew that God had puniſhed him for it, though there were great cauſe of excuſe in him, & al the blame was to haue bin layd vpon the people, becauſe his ouerſhooting of himſelfe, was but in yͤ one caſe, & that not through malice, but onely through griefe of mind. Yet notwithſtanding he accuſeth himſelfe thereof, he acknowledgeth it openly, & maketh a chronicle of it to continue of record to the worldes end. Sith wee ſee this, let vs learne, not to be aſhamed to confeſſe our ſinnes, & to ſhew that God is righteous in puniſhing of vs. Let vs not go about to burie yͤ chaſticements that God ſhall haue ſent vppon vs, as wee ſee a number doe, who when God ſendeth neuer ſo notable puniſhmentes, coulde finde in their heartes that they ſhoulde neuer be ſpoken of. And why? Forſooth becauſe it is not for their honour, worſhip, or honeſtie. Verily, as who ſhould ſay, yee will needes be honorable in ſpyte of God and his righteouſneſſe. Is it meeter that you ſhoulde be regarded than the glorye of his name? Nowe then, let vs vnderſtand that if wee haue committed any fault, and God haue reached out his hande to puniſhe vs: the ſame muſt be rehearſed among vs, and we muſt think vppon it, and wee muſt alwayes confeſſe that God is righteous, and that wee haue well deſerued that hee ſhould vſe correction towardes vs, ſith wee ſee that Moſes beareth not with his owne brother. That is the thing which wee haue to beare in mynd.

Howbeit on the other ſide, let vs vnderſtand, that if Aaron was faine to paſſe through Gods hande, becauſe he did but conſent vnto euill, & was puniſhed although he claue not to it: (for to ſpeake properly, his conſenting was no conſent at all: for he ſaid vnto them, what meane Exod.32.4. you ye wretched people? and in ſcorne of their idolatrie: Lo here thy Gods O Iſrael (quod hee) which brought thee out of the lande of Egypt: as if hee ſhoulde ſay, is a calfe become thy redeemer? Aaron then did after a ſort withſtande them, and yet notwithſtanding I call it a conſenting, inaſmuch as hee ſwarued and ſuffered himſelfe to be caryed away with their importunateneſſe:) Nowe if God (ſay I) did puniſh his high prieſt Aaron after he had aduanced him to ſo great & ſo high dignitie: what wil he do to vs?

Therefore let vs learne to withold our ſelues frõ euil,& by no meanes to conſent thereto: vnleſſe wee intend to wrap our ſelues in condemnation with the wicked,as wee ſee did partly befall vnto Aaron. I ſay but partly , for God vſed mercie towards him , becauſe the puniſhment was but temporall, becauſe it was vpon his body onely; and concerned onely this preſent life.And ſurely God is exceeding gracious & fauourable to vs when he puniſheth vs in our bodies, at ſuch time as we deſerue to be vtterly rooted out,and when he vouchſafeth to be contented with ſome chaſticemẽt of this tranſitorie life, he ſheweth therin that he is minded to vſe great gentleneſſe towardes vs . And yet for all that though wee deſerue to periſh with the wicked, when wee reſiſt them not, ne forſake their companies and confederacies:yet it pleaſeth God to ſpare vs,and to ſhewe himſelfe mercifull towardes vs, though at the leſt,wee doe in our owne bodies ſuffer ſomewhat in reſpect of this preſent life.

Nowe remaineth the reaſon that I haue touched afore: namely, that here is expreſſe mention made of *the Tribe of Leuy,which was ſorted out to carie the Arke of the Couenant.* And Moſes plainly rehearſeth that point, to do vs to vnderſtande, that God authoriſed his law by that meanes,in ẏ it was his wil to haue it caryed after that faſhiõ, that it might bee as a ſtandard for the people to reſort vnto. We haue ſeene in the fourth Chapter Deut.4.15.16. how God ſayde, thou ſhalt not make to thy ſelf any likeneſſe or reſemblance:for thou heardeſt the voice of thy God in Horeb,but thou ſaweſt not any ſhape of man,or of beaſt, or of any other creature.The only image of thy God, are ẏ things that he hath writtẽ ẇ his own hand, ẏ is to ſay ẏ ten cõmandements.Thoſe(ſay I)are the liuely image wherin he wilbe ſeene. And therefore I ſaid it was a ſtandard carried aloft for the people to reſort vnto, as ſoldiers reſort to a ſtandard in a field, to fight the better.So then, it behoued the people to haue their eyes vppon the Arke of the Couenant. And ſpecially foraſmuch as men are not verie forward of themſelues to obey God: it was meete that ẏ Arke of the couenant ſhould be handled with reuerence, & for ẏ ſame purpoſe had God ordeined the prieſtes & Leuites. For al of them were prieſtes: Howbeit, they ẏ caried the Arke were of inferior degree in the dignitie of prieſthod.Neuertheleſſe god had appointed the Leuites to beare ẏ Ark, to ẏ intent it might thereby the better be knowen,ẏ it was a matter of excellent prerogatiue, & that it was no dalying in the caſe: For we ſee ẏ God woulde not ſuffer the Arke to be ſo much as touched, by any other than by the Leuyts: inſomuch ẏ when 1.Sa.6.6.7. Dauid remoued the arke,the partie that did but touch it of good zeale, dyed out of hande for ſo doing. When he ſawe the Arke at the point to tumble down, he did but put forth his hand euẽ of good wil to ſtay it vp from falling, & yet notwithſtanding he was puniſhed grieuouſly for his labor.This may ſeeme to haue bin ouerrigorous. But it ſerueth to ſhew,ẏ it is not in any wiſe lawful to breake the order that God hath ſet. The end is ẏ thing which he hath an eye at.For if we looke no further than to the thing it ſelfe; why might not the Ark haue been handled & caryed of al ẏ people ? They were al ſanctified to God, they were all circumciſed, they did all carye about them the marke of the couenant. And why then ſhould ẏ one man dye out of hand for only touching the Arke vpon good will? Verily God had an eye to the ende of the lawe: which was ẏ men ſhoulde wholly obey his worde . For if his word be deſpiſed: there wilbe nothing but rebelliouſnes againſt him. In deede men will pretend a willingneſſe to honor & ſerue him, but yet is it but counterfeting for all that. Will we then doe true ſeruice vnto God, & ſuch as he accepteth? Al of vs both gret & ſmal muſt ſubmit our ſelues to his worde,& followe the ſinglenes thereof,& therewithall beare in mynd that it is ſo precious a thing, as men muſt not mingle aught of their owne with it: for that were nothing elſe but a corrupting of it. Now foraſmuch as men are not eaſie to be taught this: it was Gods will to ſhewe by a viſible ſigne, howe highly he eſteemeth his own word. That is the cauſe why he ſorted out that trybe from the reſt, to beare the Ark of the couenant. It was Gods will ẏ the Prieſtes which were ſpecially appointed to offer ſacrifice, & to make attonement betwene God & men, & to repreſent the perſon of our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt, Hebr.5.1. ſhould beare abroad his word,& that they ſhold preaſe vnto him to bee as mediators betweene him & men.Ye ſee then how it was Gods will,to teache his people humilitie by viſible ſignes and outward ceremonies,to the ende that his worde ſhould be embraced with all reuerence, & continue euermore in good ſtate. But as for vs,wee haue not nowadayes the ceremonie any more, but we haue the trueth,which ought to continue to the worlds end. Therfore whenſoeuer Gods word is preached vnto vs,let vs learne to ſtoope Col.2.17. to it,& to know ẏ it is a heauenly doctrine,wherunto it becommeth vs to encline,& that it is not for vs to bring our own fond imaginations in ẏ caſe,for then wo be vnto vs. Neuertheleſſe God granteth vs a ſpecial fauor,in that he inableth vs to beare abroad his word,& maketh it to dwel in vs, whereby he ſheweth that he hath performed Eſa.66.21. the thing which he promiſed by his Prophets, ẏ is to wit,that he hath choſen vs for his Leuytes, as ſhalbe declared more at length to morrowe.

Now let vs fall downe in the preſence of our good God with acknowledgement of our faults, praying him to make vs feele them better,yea, euen in ſuch wiſe as it may lead vs to ſuch repentance,that we may be ſorie for them all our life long,& be aſhamed that we haue bin ſo wretched ſinners: And that therwithall wee may be quickened vp to glorifie him the more for the great goodnes which he hath ſhewed vpon vs,& proceede continually more & more in obeying him,to the intent that his law may be the better ingraued in vs by his writing of it in our hartes, & we become the readier to follow the things ẏ he ſhal haue ſhewed vs,ſo as we may be forward to obey him all our life long,& our life be wholy dedicated vnto him. That it may pleaſe him to graunt this grace,&c.

On Wedneſday the xi. of September. 1555.

The Lxx. Sermon which is the ſeconde vpon the tenth Chapter.

8 The ſame time the Lord &c.

9 Therefore Leuie had no portion nor inheritaunce with his brethren: but the Lord is his inheritaunce, as the Lord thy God ſayd vnto him.

10 And I taried on the mountaine as I had doone afore, fortie dayes and fortie nightes. And the Lord heard mee that time alſo, ſo as the Lord would not deſtroy thee.

11 But the Lord ſayde vnto mee, vp, get thee hence, and goe before the people, that they may goe and poſſeſſe the Land which I ſware to their fathers to giue them.

WE ſawe yeſterday, how Moſes in this text did magnifie Gods mercie, as well towardes the Leuites, as towardes the whole people. For in ſheweing that Aaron was puniſhed for his fault, it appeareth plainly that all his whole linage deſerued to haue ben diſgraded. Yet notwithſtanding, God of his goodnes vouchſafed yͭ there ſhould bee a certaine number of men appointed to his ſeruice: and them he choſe, not for any worthines that was in them, but only for his owne mercies ſake. For if wee be not worthie of ſo much, as that God ſhould crowde vs into a litle corner of his houſe: how ſhould he aduaunce vs to farre higher degree? That then is the meaning of Moſes. Neuertheleſſe wee muſt marke herewithall the three charges which he ſetteth downe here, & which he reporteth to haue been aſſigned to the Leuites. The firſt is, *To beare the Arke of Gods couenant, & the veſſels of the ſanctuary:* The ſeconde is, *To be at hand to ſerue God:* & the third is, *To bleſſe in the name of God.* Theſe are the three things that were incident to the prieſthod of old time. For as concerning the Sanctuarie with al the appurtenances therof, it was but a figure, which we muſt referre to the ſpiritual temple, that is to wit to Gods church, & to the ſacri- Hebr.8.5. fices which are offered vnto him by the faithful, Rom.12.1. when they dedicate themſelues to him both in bodie & ſoule, by yelding vp their ownſelues, yͭ he may be glorified in them. Marke that for one point. The ſecond is the ſeruice wherof he ſpeaketh: which conſiſteth likewiſe in figure: but the trueth therof is performed toward vs, when ſuch as nowadayes are called to the gouerning of Gods church, do their dutie in offering vp mens Rom.15.6. ſoules in ſacrifice vnto God, by preaching yͤ goſpell, & in maintaining the order & ſtate of the church, in ſuch wiſe as God be glorified, and the church be cleanſed from all ſtumbling blockes. The third is to bleſſe in Gods name: & that is to yeeld a teſtimonie of Gods goodnes and grace to his people.

Now muſt we applie theſe things to yͤ trueth of them, yͭ we may be edified by them. Let vs (ſay I) haue a regarde to apply theſe three things to their trueth & ſubſtance, which our Lorde Ieſus Col.2.17. Chriſt hath brought vs by his comming. It is ſaid here, *that the Leuites muſt beare the veſſels of God.* And this belongeth, not only to the miniſters of the worde, or to ſuch as beare publike office in the church: but alſo to all the faithful in general. And that is the cauſe why it is ſaid by yͤ prophet Mal.3.3. Malachie, yͭ the Leuits were made prieſts, which thing I ſay was accompliſhed at the comming of our Lord Ieſus Chriſt, at which time the church was aduanced to greater perfection than it was vnder yͤ law. Likewiſe Eſay telleth vs that all men ſhalbe Leuites vnto yͤ Lord. Al the children of Iſ- Eſa.66.21. rael (ſaith he) ſhal execute the office of prieſthod vnto God. And in the ſame reſpect doth S. Peter ſay, yͭ we be a royal prieſthod. S. Peter ſpeaks not 1.Pet.2.9. there of any peculiar ſort of people after yͤ maner of yͤ Pope, who hath villanouſly corrupted yͤ ſaid ſentence of his, in attributing it to his owne clergie as he termeth them, yͭ is to wit to yͤ ſtinking rable of his powlſhorn greaſlings: but he attributeth yͤ honorable title to all the faithfull, & to as many as are of the church of God. Moſes could wel ſay euen in his time, Yee be a prieſtly Exod.19.6. kingdome, yͭ is to ſay a nation holy aboue all others. But S. Peter turning the ſame words, ſaith, yͭ now we be become a royal prieſthod, inaſmuch as our Lord Ieſus Chriſt hauing ſhewed himſelf to the world, is ordeined prieſt after the order of Melchizedech, to communicate the ſame grace Hebr.5.6. to yͤ whole church. Therfore let vs marke wel, yͭ this gift of becōming Prieſtes & Leuites, is not a priuilege or prerogatiue grāted to three or four: but inaſmuch as al yͤ things which our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt hath receiued of God his father, ar cōmon to vs all, & we be made partakers of thē by his meanes: we be of yͤ order & number of yͤ Leuites, that is to ſay, of them that are dedicated vnto god. Not as yͤ people [of Iſrael] were, which held themſelues aloofe in yͤ body of the temple, & worſhipped God afarre of: but we haue a mean Hebr.9.24. & 10.19. to preaſe neere him, wee haue familiar acceſſe, we haue his own ſonne entred afore vs into the Sanctuarie which is not made with mans hand, to bring vs in thither, in whoſe name al the faithfull haue libertie to come thither. Thus ye ſee that the thing which wee haue to marke in the firſt place, is that God ſhooled out one tribe of the children of Iſraell to ſerue him in the Sanctuarie: but nowe adayes he hath ſhedde out the ſame grace vpon all beleeuers, and there is no exception, but wee be all made holie to offer ſacrifice to God, and not onely to beare the veſſelles of the temple, but alſo to be the verie 1.Cor.6.19. veſſelles themſelues. For although our bodies bee but wretched carcaſſes: yet ſayle they not to be the temples of the holy Ghoſt, and Gods will is to be worſhipped in them. Hadde there beene ſayde no more, but that our ſoules are the temples of God: it had beene a verie excellent honour. But ſeeing it is ſayde of our earthly and corruptible bodies, we ſee what goodnes God vttereth towardes vs. And therefore let vs learne that this doctrine belonges to vs, and that this figure which was vnder the lawe concerneth vs at this day, to the end that we ſhould aduauntage our ſelues thereby. And after what manner?

The firſt is that we ſhould magnifie the goodneſſe of our God, in that hee hath ſhewed himſelfe ſo gratious vnto vs, as to choſe vs to be his ſeruauntes, not onely to beare the veſſelles of his temple, but alſo to be the verie temples thẽſelues and the altars whereat hee will be worſhipped, both in our bodies and our ſoules, to the intent we ſhould yeelde him, not onely the bodily ſeruice which conſiſteth in ſhadowes and figures, but alſo the true ſpirituall ſeruice by dedicating our ſelues all wholly vnto him. Yee ſee then howe the ende whereat we muſt beginne, 2.Cor.6.17 is to knowe how greatly we by bounde vnto God for vſing ſuch gratious goodnes towardes vs. Moreouer according (as Saint Paul ſheweth vs in the ſecond to the Corinthians,) we muſt take warning to ſeparate our ſelues from all vncleaneſſe, as the prophet cryeth out vnto vs, ſaying: Eſa.52.11. Separate your ſelues from all vncleanneſſe, you that carrie the Lordes veſſels. And Saint Paul alleadging the ſame text of Eſay, ſayth that according to the ſame promiſe, it is good reaſon that wee ſhoulde giue our ſelues to cleanneſſe both of bodie and ſoule. For in very deede, the prophet Eſaie, in ſaying: Be ye cleane you that beare the Lordes veſſelles, hath not an eye to the time of the figures: but extendeth his doctrine to the kingdome of our Lord Ieſus Chriſt. Nowe then this text muſt needes be performed in vs. But there are not nowe adayes any moe materiall veſſelles as there were in the time of the Lawe: and therefore it followeth that the doctrine thereof muſt bee performed in higher matters: that is to ſay, that inaſmuch as God hath called vs to be members of his ſonne, and by that meane to come ſo neere him as he may dwell in vs & we be his temples: the ſame ſhould prouoke vs to giue our ſelues to all cleanneſſe, which thing wee can not doe but by ſeparating of our ſelues from the corruptions of the world. For wee dwell here among ſuch filthineſſe, as it is not poſſible for vs to ſcape vninfected, vnleſſe we labour to withdrawe our ſelues from it. Yea and there needes no euill to come vpon vs from elſewhere, for euerie of vs ſhall finde ynough in himſelfe. Wherefore lette vs beware that wee turne away from all wicked luſtes, and that we cut off whatſoeuer is defiled in vs, and generally all that euer is of the world, ſo as we may preaſe vnto our God, and hauing giuen ouer the world we may be ſo vnited vnto him, as he may auowe vs to be his prieſtes. For if we doe otherwiſe, we ſhalbe dubble accurſed, and we ſhall not be able to excuſe our ſelues but that God hath aduaunced vs high ynough. But what excuſe will there be for vs nowe when our Lorde hath brought vs ſo neere vnto him, and vouchſafed to make vs prieſtes to offer vppe our owne ſelues vnto him, and to make vs his temples, ſo as we ſhould haue a ſpirituall altar erected vnto him in our ſelues? Seeing that God hath brought vs to that point, is it not a horrible treacherie (ſay I) if wee fall to vnhallowe his temple? Nowe then, lette vs vnderſtande, that whenſoeuer this worlde turneth vs away vnto euill, wee offer God greate wrong, in making his temple a ſwynes ſtie, and in vnhallowing the thing that he had hallowed, by cauſing all the corruptions of Sathan and of this worlde to come into his temple. Surely it ought to holde vs in awe and to make vs walke in all ſoundeneſſe, ſo as we giue not ouer our bodies and ſoules to anie diſhoneſtie, ſeeing that God hath ſanctified them to himſelfe. This is the thing which we haue to beare away vpon the firſt part of this text.

Neuertheleſſe lette vs marke that although God haue extended the ſayde grace of making vs all Leuites or Prieſtes, to all the members of his Church: yet hath hee not vtterly aboliſhed the order of his Church, but his will is to haue ſome certaine men appointed to the preaching of his worde. And that is the thing which is ment here in the ſeconde place, where he ſaith, *that they ſhall ſtande before the Lorde to ſerue him, and finally that they ſhall bleſſe in the Lordes name.* The ſame muſt bee put in vre at this day by the miniſters of the worde. For although God haue called vs all in common, to bee ſerued and honoured at our handes: yet doeth he require a ſpeciall ſeruice at their handes whom he ſetteth ouer his Church to be the ſhepheardes thereof, that is to witte, that they ſhould ſhewe the way, and alwayes be in a readineſſe to ſerue God. And this ſeruice importeth that the Leuites ſhoulde maintaine the religion pure and vncorrupted among the people, and ſhewe the Iewes that they ought not to deale with the ſuperſtitions of the heathẽ, and what God it was which had deliuered them, and to be ſhort, that they ſhoulde alwayes holde the people in obedience to the true faith. And for the ſame cauſe GOD allotted them not any one certaine countrie or ſhire to dwell in, but diſperſed thẽ throughout the whole lande. We knowe there was not anie one tribe which had not Leuites among them. And why was that? For God could well ynough haue gathered thẽ together, ſo as they might haue bin all together in Ieruſalem where the temple was, and in the places neere aboutes, and haue had ſome portion aſſigned them as well as the reſt of the tribes had. But hee did not ſo: but his will was that in euerie countrie, citie, ſhire, and region, there ſhould alwaies be ſome Leuites, that the people might euerie where bee taught, and the ſeede of faith be euerie where ſpred abroad. For had there beene anie certain countrie aſſigned to the Leuites: it had beene ynough to haue aboliſhed the remembrance of God, and to haue layde all teaching vnder foote. But foraſmuch as God had appointed ẏ tribe of Leuie to preach his worde, and to beare abroade the meſſage of ſaluation: he gaue them no certaine portion to dwell in, but his will was to haue them diſperſed abroade euerywhere. And for proofe thereof, Mal.2.4.5. we knowe howe the prophete ſayth that GOD made his couenant with the tribe of Leuie. And what manner of one was it? Euen the couenant of peace, inſomuch as he ſayde that the prieſtes are Gods Angels & meſſengers: men ſhall ſeeke the vnderſtanding of the lawe at their mouth, & they ſhal teach them knowledge. We ſee then ẏ the ſeruice that is ſpoken of heere, comprehendeth inſtruction: inſomuch that they whome God had ſo choſen, had charge to preache the Lawe, and to expound it to the people, that religion might continue vnappaired. And the ſame is to be obſerued nowe adayes among vs. For although all of vs from the moſt to the leaſt bee prieſtes: yet notwithſtanding it is the duetie of the miniſters of the worde, to teach and to ſhew men the way to GOD, and to bring backe the wretched ſoules that were in the way to deſtruction. And that is the cauſe why Saint Paul ſayeth that he is a prieſt, not after the auncient maner that had beene vnder the Lawe, but to ſlea men with the ſworde of the Goſpell, as ſacrifices ought to be ſlayne: after the which maner Saint Rom.15.16. Paul ſayeth alſo, that he had the ſpirituall ſword wherewith to offer vp mens ſoules vnto GOD. Thus ye ſee what we haue to remember. And therefore let ſuch as are called to the charge of the preaching of Gods worde, vnderſtande that they muſt ſtreine themſelues to the vttermoſte, that God may be ſerued and honoured. And the manner is ſhewed vs in the text which I alleadged out of the fifteenth to the Romanes: namely that wee muſt indeuour to ſanctifie all that euer is corrupted in this worlde, and that men muſt become teachable and meeke, that God may renewe them & accept them for his children. And if we doe ſo, then is Gods ſeruice accompliſhed in vs, after the ſame manner as it was commaunded to the Leuites in olde time.

Nowe let vs come to the thirde point that is ſet downe here. It is ſayde, *That the Leuites muſt bleſſe the people in the name of God*. True it is that in the Hebrewe tongue, the worde *Bleſſe* betokeneth to prayſe and magnifie God. Howbeit foraſmuch as the matter here, concerneth thoſe whom God did ſpecially ordaine to bleſſe in his name: we muſt fetch the meaning of this text, out of the ſixth Chapter of the booke of Numbers, notwithſtanding that this maner of ſpeech Numb.6.24 be verie riſe in Moſes. But in that place there is more expreſſed: and for that cauſe haue I coted the text. It is ſayde there, that the prieſtes of the houſe of Leuie ſhall bleſſe in the name of God and ſay: The Lorde bleſſe you and keepe you: the Lorde make his countenaunce to ſhine vpon you, and graunt you his mercie. The Lord turne his fauourable face towardes you, & bleſſe you. Nowe hereby wee perceiue, that it behoued the Leuites not onely to prayſe GOD, as their duetie was to doe: but alſo to bleſſe the people in his name: For they were two diuerſe thinges. So that *To bleſſe the name of God*, is as it were a doing of homage vnto him for all the benefites which hee beſtoweth vpon vs, by proteſting our ſelues to holde all thinges of his onely meere goodneſſe, and that hee is the author of them, ſo as without him wee be miſerable, and haue not one drop of goodneſſe in vs, furtherforth than he alone maketh vs partakers of it. And ſo ye ſee that to bleſſe God and to magnifie his name, is to acknowledge him to be the fountaine of all goodneſſe, and that all that euer wee haue commeth of him, and of his onely meere free goodneſſe. Nowe this belonged to the Leuites, as wee ſee it was their office to ſing, and 1.Chro.25.1 although that all the people were preſent there & the prayſe of God ought to ſounde in al their mouthes: yet notwithſtanding the Leuites were to beginne the quire, and to leade the melodie. Neuertheleſſe, they *did alſo bleſſe in the name of God*. And how was that? They witneſſed Gods grace vnto the people: and the ſame thing taketh place ſtill at this day, in ſuch as are ordeyned miniſters of the worde. For to what ende ſerueth our dayly preaching of the Goſpell, but to bleſſe the thinges in Gods name, which were accurſed before? For by nature we are all of vs Ephes.2.3. accurſed and reprobate. And therefore it ſtandeth vs in hande to be deliuered out of the wretchedneſſe wherein we be: which to doe, there is none other meane but onely that God ſhewe himſelfe louing and fauorable towardes vs, and that is the bleſſing which is ſpoken of here. For when the ſcripture ſayth that God bleſſeth men, it is aſmuch to ſay, as that hee ſheweth them by effect that he loueth them, and maketh them to feele the fruite & operation of his grace and fatherly adoption. Now therefore when we come to heare the Goſpel, let vs conſider to what ende it is: that is to wit, to certifie vs that God looketh vpon vs with pittie, euen vpon vs wretched creatures, and that hee ſetteth vs free from the curſedneſſe that is in vs, inſomuch that although we deſerue to be caſt off at his hand, yet neuertheleſſe hee ſheweth himſelfe gratious vnto vs, and that whereas he might with good right bee our enemie, he ſheweth himſelfe as a father towards vs. Let vs (ſay I) be well aduiſed that we make our profit of this doctrine, when it is preached vnto vs. For whereas we be aſſured by the Col.1.20. ſcriptures, that God ſheweth himſelfe fauorable to vs, in laying aſide all enmitie that was betwixt him and vs by reaſon of our ſinnes: if the ſame were well printed in our heartes, we would haue an other manner of deſire than wee haue, to ſet forth his prayſe. What a treaſure is it, that

our Lord ſheweth himſelfe ſo to vs, as though we
ſawe him in his owne perſon? & that he openeth
the heauens to aſſure vs that he loueth vs, euen
vs which make warre againſt him, inſomuch that
wheras he ſhould vtterly miſlike of vs, he vouchſafeth
neuertheleſſe to take vs into his fauor, &
maketh vs to feele it in very dede. But what? We
welter in our own dung euen till we do as it were
ſtinke in it, without any care or regard at all. And
that is the cauſe of ſuch contẽpt of the goſpel, &
of ſuch vnthankefulnes as is ſeene almoſt euery
where. Yet notwithſtanding, it behoueth yͤ faithfull
2.Cor.5.20. to conſider of how great value it is, yͭ God receiueth
them to mercy, & ſheweth himſelfe to be
a father to them, & that ſuch as are appointed to
preach his word, are as witneſſes to certifie vs yͭ
God beareth vs ſuch fatherly loue. Trueth it is
yͭ this was accõpliſhed by our Lord Ieſus Chriſt,
for he was the only prieſt: and yͭ that which wee
Hebr.5.6. do, is not to take his office vpon vs, but onely to
approue & ratifie the thing yͭ he did. And therefore
let vs marke well, that it belongeth onely to
our Lord Ieſus Chriſt to aſſure vs of the loue of
God his father: but yet doth he alſo witnes it vnto
vs, by yͤ mouthes of ſuch as preach the Goſpel
in his name. It hath bin told vs herewithall, that
Col.2.17. the things which were figured vnder yͤ Law, haue
bin performed in his perſon. For the high prieſts
(when they bleſſed the people) had a ſolemn ceremony
of lifting vp of their handes, as though
they made an offering vp of all the people vnto
God. Likewiſe whẽ Ieſus Chriſt wẽt vp into heauen,
he vſed yͤ ſame faſhiõ, by lifting vp his hands
Luke.24.50.51. to bleſſe his diſciples, in whoſe perſons hee pronounced
a general bleſſing vpon yͤ whole body of
his Church. We ſee then yͭ the figures of yͤ Lawe
belõg to vs at this day, howbeit, not as touching
the outward vſe of them, but as in reſpect of the
ſubſtance & truth of thẽ. Wherby we be warned
to get vs to our Lord Ieſus Chriſt, who bringeth
vs yͤ full accompliſhment of all thinges. And we
muſt vnderſtand, yͭ although he be not now conuerſant
in yͤ world to bleſſe vs: yet will he haue vs
to bee made partakers of the ſame bleſſing by
meanes of yͤ goſpel, when it is preached among
vs. This is the effect of the thinges which we
haue to gather vpon that place.

Now Moſes addeth, *That God hath giuen the Leuites
no portion among their brethren, but that he himſelfe
would be their portion and heritage.* Yea, but yet
for all that, he appointed them yͤ tenthes & firſtfruits,
Num.18.21. as is ſhewed in the fourth booke of Moſes.
Now then, Gods aſſigning of a portion vnto thẽ
was in ſuch ſort as they poſſeſſed not any Lande
or inheritance, more thã their townes & ſuburbs
for their cattell. But yet tooke they the tenthes,
firſtfruits, & all other ſuch things of all yͤ people.
Herein God had a cõſideration, yͭ ſuch as he mẽt
to dedicate to yͤ ſeruing of himſelfe, ſhould be wͭdrawen
frõ all worldly affaires, yͭ they might intend
to yͤ ſeruing of God. Gods intent then was,
yͭ the Leuits & their children ſhold not giue thẽſelues
to husbãdry & ſuch other things. And why
For they had ynough to do to diſcharg thẽſelues
of their dutie otherwiſe: yͭ is to wit, in calling vpõ
the people to folow Gods cõmandementes, & to
keepe his couenãt, ſo as religion might continue
vnapaired, & faith might haue his full force,
& ſo conſequently yͭ God might be honored. Alſo
they had the Sacrifices, which ſerued them in
ſteed of Sacraments, & at yͭ time they were many
in nũber, becauſe the people could not otherwiſe
be held in order: they would eaſily haue bin
mard, if they had not bin reſtreined wͭ many bridles.
That therfore was ynough to keep yͤ Leuits
occupied. And for the ſame cauſe God gaue thẽ
a portion beſide the tithes that they might haue
wherwith to finde & mainteine thẽſelues, while
they were a doing of their duties.

But this hath bin corrupted & falſified by the
papiſtes. For they haue borne men in hand, that
tithes belong to thẽ by Gods Law. And why? becauſe
(as they ſay) they belonged to yͤ Leuits. But
they conſider not, yͭ the Leuites were inheriters
of the land of Chanaan, as well as thoſe yͭ were of
the tribes of Iuda, Beniamin, Ephraim, Manaſſes
and all yͤ reſidue. In reſpect whereof it was meete
they ſhold haue had their portiõ with their brethren,
& they ought not to haue bin excluded or
baniſhed frõ it: for yͤ inheritance of the land was
cõmon to them all: therfore was it meete yͭ they
ſhould haue had their part of it. Yea, but God recompenſed
them after an other faſhion. It were
meete then yͭ the Pope & al his rable, ſhold ſhew
how yͤ inheritances of all landes belong to thẽ, &
then might they therepon demand their tithes.
Thus ye ſee how this text hath bin miſwreſted.
But yet for all this, let vs beare in minde howe S.
Paul ſaith, yͭ euen at this day it is Gods wil yͭ they 1.Cor.9.13.
which preach yͤ goſpel ſhould be nouriſhed and
mainteined, as well as the Prieſtes had their liuinges
appointed thẽ in old time. S. Paul demãdeth 2.Cor.3.6.
in way of cõpariſon, whether yͤ ſpiritual ſeruice
yͭ is yelded to God nowadaies, ought not at
the leaſt to be aſmuch eſteemed, as the ſeruice yͭ
was vnder the figures of yͤ law? Now it was Gods
will, yͭ ſuch as ſerued at the altar, ſhould be mainteined
by the altar, therefore it is good reaſon, yͭ
ſuch as at this day doe ſerue Gods Church in
bringing thẽ his word, ſhould alſo be nouriſhed
and mainteined. Thus ye ſee yͭ the way to vnderſtãd
this text a right, is to take S. Paul for our expounder
thereof. But to conclude peremptorily
yͭ tithes belong to the preachers of yͤ goſpel, is to
groſſe an abuſe & fondnes. Neuertheles we muſt
mark alſo, yͭ it is not our Lords meaning, yͭ ydols
or idle bellies, & much leſſe yͭ ſuch as peruert al
order & turne vs away from yͤ ſeruing & obeying
of God, ſhould be nouriſhed in his Church. Now
then if the Shepherdes will needes claime to be
found at yͤ common charges of the Church: they
muſt looke that they occupie themſelues in the
ſeruice of God. As how? It is no title of idlenes, it
is no fantaſticall dignitie, to be called the Shepherde
of a Church: but it is a kinde of bondage,
howbeit yͭ it be honorable. And therfore yͤ party
yͭ is appointed to be a ſhepherd or miniſter muſt
looke yͭ he obey God and ſerue his people. For
we can not ſerue him yͭ hath put vs in office, but
by ſeruing of his Church. Yee ſee then how the
Pope & al his hangers on, are diſappointed of the
things which they pretend to pertain to them of
right. And if they deuour yͤ goods yͭ were apoĩted
to ſuch as ſerue Gods Church: they muſt be fain

to yeelde an account of them in the ende. For the world ſees they be but idle bellies and idols, and not onely that, but alſo deadly enemies to Gods honor, laboring to ouerthrow it to the vttermoſt of their power. Now then, all this geere muſt be cut off: for ẏ nouriſhing & mainteining of thē, is all one as if men were minded to marre all the good ſeede that is in Gods Church. True it is that where they vſurpe ſuch tyrannie, men may well hope that they ſhall yeeld a reckening for it before God, and ſuch as are held down in ẏ bondage may well ſigh & grone: And although they knowe it to be an intollerable trecherie and extortion, ẏ ſuch exactions ſhould be layde vpon them: yet neuertheleſſe they muſt bee faine to beare with thē. But whenſoeuer ẏ Church ſhall happen to bee well reformed and well ordered, doutleſſe thoſe Cormorantes ſhall no longer deuour the ſubſtance of Gods people after that faſhion, but the things ẏ haue bin miſuſed, ſhalbe brought home to their good & holy vſe again, ſo as they ſhall ſerue to the nouriſhing & mainteining of ſuch as haue ẏ charge of the preaching of Gods word, & alſo to the releiuing and mainteining of the poore, after ẏ maner of the prieſtes in the old law, who (as we know) were bound ther vnto, inſomuch that their hauing of ſuch portiō as I haue told you of before, was for ẏ releeuing of the poore, & of ſuch as were in penury. And ſo ye ſee how we may profit ourſelues by this text.

But by the way, let vs come backe againe to ẏ things ẏ I haue alledged as wel out of ẏ prophet Eſay, as out of Zachary, ẏ is to wit, ẏ we in theſe daies are ſucceeded in the roome of the Leuites. And ſith it is ſo, let vs marke ẏ although wee poſſeſſe inheritances of lands, medowes, and vineyardes in this world, yet we muſt make light account of thē, without being tied to them, & muſt put the thing in vre which Saint Paul ſpeaketh of in the ſeuenth Chapter of the firſt epiſtle to the Corinthians, ẏ is to wit, that he which is rich be as if he poſſeſſed nothing. And why? For if wee haue not God for our heritage & portion, wo be to vs. And how may ẏ be, but onely by being diſcharged of all earthly affections and cares? Although God giue a man riches, yet muſt he be as a ſheepe, meeke & lowely to offer himſelfe vnto God, ſo as nothing may let or hinder him from following his vocation, or from going on ſtill towardes the heauenly life whereunto he is called. Ye ſee then ẏ the thing which we haue to conſider generally in our knowing ẏ God will haue ẏ miniſters of his word and the ſhepherdes of his Church to be nouriſhed and mainteined: is ẏ we muſt likewiſe know, ẏ all of vs are a royall prieſthood, in reſpect whereof he wil not haue vs to be ſo intangled with ẏ goods of this world, that wee ſhould not look vp to him, but ẏ we ſhould run apace through the world, aſſuring our ſelues ẏ wee cannot be children of the kingdome of heauen, vnleſſe we be ſtrangers here beneath.

1.Cor.7.30

2.Cor.5.6.& Hebr.11.16.

Now after ẏ Moſes hath told the ſayd things, he addeth yet one word more, which is *Euē vnto this day*. Wherby he meaneth ẏ Gods will was to haue thoſe things obſerued. True it is that theſe things had not at ẏ time indured aboue fourtie yeares: but yet doth Moſes put ẏ people in mind of thē, telling them ẏ that order muſt not be broken, but continued ſtill euen till the cōming of ẏ redeemer. In deede the prieſtes thēſelues were greatly out of order & had marred all, ſo as they had well deſerued ẏ God ſhould vndoe his couenant with thē, & bereaue them of ẏ prerogatiue that he had giuen vnto their father Leuie, according to this text of the prophet Malachie, which ſaith ẏ God made his couenant with Leuie, but yet foraſmuch as the Leuits had ſhrunk away, & not regarded the promiſe ẏ they had made vnto God, they deſerued to be cut off, and God would curſe all their bleſſings, as if he ſhould ſay, whē ye thinke ye haue made a great hand, thē will God but blow vpon you, & by & by it wil appeare ẏ all was but ſhame. Yet notwithſtanding ẏ prieſthod was to cōtinue ſtill, euen to the comming of our Lord Ieſus Chriſt, & ſo it did. Likwiſe let vs mark well nowadaies, ẏ when things be out of frame in the Church, ſo as all goes to hauocke, ẏ miſchief is in deed to be corrected, but yet muſt not gods ordināce be therfore diſanulled, ſo as we ſhould let it alone, & not put it in execution, vpō miſliking of the vices & offences that haue ſet all in a broile: but we muſt alwaies reſort backe to Gods pure rule. We ſee there haue bin no ſuch deuils incarnate, as thoſe ẏ haue boſted thēſelues to be Prelats, Biſhops, & ſhepherdes. Now if vpon miſliking of ſuch corruptions, a mā would aboliſh all order in ẏ Church, ſo as there ſhould be no miniſters, nor any mo folke appointed to teach ẏ people: what elſe were it thā a horrible cōfuſion, and a ſetting open of hell, ẏ all things in the worlde might goe to hauocke? But let vs keepe ſtill this principle, ẏ mens vices muſt bee corrected, and gods cōmandemēt therwithal obſerued. Thus ye ſee what Moſes ment, in ſaying ẏ Gods chooſing of ẏ Leuits was not for a day or twain, but to cōtinue ſtill, that by that meane the Church might be mainteined.

Mal.2.4.5.

On the otherſide, we know ẏ the death of our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt ſhoulde not come vnto vs in theſe daies, without ẏ preaching of the Goſpell. Therfore if we intend to feele ẏ redemption and ſoul health ẏ hath bin purchaſed for vs, the ſame order muſt be mainteined ſtill. And howe great ſtore of vices ſoeuer ther be, let Gods Church be clenſed of thē, let all ſtūblingblocks be remoued out of it, & let not men for all that, ceaſe to haue preachers of Gods worde, & miniſters of his ſacraments ſtil: for otherwiſe it were the next way to cut ẏ Churches throte, & to bring all to vtter deſolation. For we know how S. Paul ſayth ẏ Ieſus Chriſt was giuen to be our peace, and ẏ at his comming he preached it to them ẏ were neere hande, and to them that were farre off. Saint Paul ſheweth there, how our Lord Ieſus maketh the vertue of his death & paſſiō auailable: namely by cōmanding the Goſpel to be preached vnto vs, wherby we be don to vnderſtand, ẏ God hauing once offered himſelfe vnto vs in the perſon of his ſon, will continually ſtill hold on to take and accept vs for his children, and confirme the adoption which he hath made of vs, euen vntil we come to the preſent inioying of the heri-

Eph.2.14.17

tage which he hath promiſed vs.

Moſes hauing ſpoken ſo, addeth for a finall concluſion, *that God had heard him, and ſayde vnto him, Goe thy way and leade this people into the Lande that I promiſed to their fathers, yea euen with an othe: let them goe into it and take poſſeſſion of it.* Here againe Moſes ſheweth the people that when they be come into the Lande of promiſe, they muſt vnderſtande yͭ that befalleth not to thẽ for their owne deſeruings, but through Gods great mercy, yea and ſuch mercy as ought to rauiſhe their wittes to wonder at it: for they had refuſed all yͤ promiſes that had beene made vnto them. So then it ſtoode this people in hand, to be new reared & ſet vp againe in their former ſtate, through a ſingular grace. That is the intent of Moſes, whereof I haue treated more fully already, and therfore it is ynough as now to touch it. But yet let vs not forget to apply it to our vſe, which is, yͭ it behoueth vs to vnderſtande, yͭ although God haue called vs to the beleefe of his Goſpell, yet ſo yͭ in reſpect of this preſent life, we ceaſe not to ſhrink away frõ him, wherby we were worthy to haue yͤ dore ſhut againſt vs, & to be taken as folk vtterly reiected, vnleſſe he receiue vs to mercie, and yͭ not for once only, but alſo in that he muſt double & treble his mercy vpon vs, in ſo many ſins as we cõmit againſt him. Now thẽ, before we can come to the inheritance of the kingdom of heauen, God muſt bee faine to ſhewe vs many a time and often, that we haue it not for any worthineſſe of our owne, nor for any purchaſe that we can make of it by our ſeruice, to ſay that wee haue earned it: but yͭ his making of vs to be his heires, is of his own meere and freebeſtowed liberalitie, for none other cauſe, but that he hath vouchſafed to chooſe vs, and to beare with vs, and to pardon the infinite offences, whereby we ceaſe not to prouoke him in ſuchwiſe, as he ſhold needes roote vs out, if hee ment to vſe rigor towards vs. Thus ye ſee how we ſhould apply this leſſon of Moſes to our behoofe.

Moreouer it ought alſo to ſerue vs for a comfort, that we be not diſcoraged when we haue offended our God, euen after we haue knowen him and are fallen in traine of walking according to his worde. For though we ſtep a ſide for a time: yet muſt not our ſo dooing make vs to deſpaire, but wee muſt come backe againe, aſſuring ourſelues that if God herd Moſes in the time of the figures of the Lawe, he wil certainely heare him that maketh interceſſion for vs nowe, that is to wit, his owne onely ſonne. For our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt was a prieſt, not only to die once to purchaſe ſaluation for vs, but alſo to inioy the ſame Heb.9.24. office euerlaſtingly, as in reſpect of appearing in the ſight of God his father, to obtaine forgiueneſſe for the ſinnes which we commit daily. Let vs marke (I ſay) that if this grace was granted to the fathers vnder the Lawe, ſurely wee ſhall not be diſappointed of it as now. Yet notwithſtanding it is not ment hereby, yͭ that ſhould make vs the readier or bolder to offend: but we muſt vnderſtande, that when we come before God, wee muſt acknowledge the faultes yͭ we haue cõmitted, we muſt be ſorie for our miſdeeds, & we muſt beſeeche God to bring vs home againe to him. For as for thoſe that hate not their ſins, they be ſo far of from obteining of fauour at Gods hand, yͭ they do the more prouoke his wrath. Contrariwiſe, when we hate our ſins, God looketh no more vpon them, but burieth them out of ſight. And this warneth vs, yͭ when God cõtinueth his mercie towardes vs, & reneweth the ſame daily, and taketh vs into fauour againe after wee haue offended him: his ſo doing is not to make vs the bolder to do euil, as who wold ſay we haue made a good market at his hand: let vs beware of ſuch blaſphemy: but it muſt be applied wholly to the faultes yͭ are paſt. Therefore when there is ſpeaking of Gods mercy & of yͤ forgiuenes of our ſins in the holy ſcripture, we muſt vnderſtand yͭ God ſendeth vs backe to the ſinnes yͭ are paſt: & therwithall putteth vs in minde to beware afterward of the danger that we were in afore: warning vs to pray him to gouerne vs with his holy ſpirit, ſo as he ſuffer vs not to be led out of the way, nor to fal to wilfull breaking of yͤ couenãt, which ought to be kept vnuiolated, as well on our part by our faithful obedience, as it is on his part, yea & that with ſuch conſtancie, yͭ although we offend him daily, yet he ceaſeth not to continue ſtedfaſt ſtill in his purpoſe. And to be yͤ better aſſured of this doctrine, let vs alwais haue recourſe to this ſaying, yͭ the Lande of Chanaan was as an earneſt Heb.11.13. 14.16. 1.Cor.10.11 penny of the euerlaſting inheritance to the fathers yͭ liued vnder the Law. And ſo the thinges that are ſet downe in the holy ſcripture, muſt be to vs as a lookingglaſſe or picture, wherein to beholde the maner of Gods guiding of vs, til we be come to the euerlaſting life. The people of Iſraell was choſẽ before they were born, God ſhewed his fauour to them by the law, & moreouer he chaſtiſed them, inſomuch yͭ he liſted not to put thẽ in poſſeſſion of their promiſed heritage out of hande, as in deede they were not wortie of it, but yet for all yͭ they came into it at the laſt. And ſo we perceiue, that our Lord hath not delayed his receiuing of vs till we come vnto him: but yͭ he hath preuented vs, with his infinite goodnes, inſomuch yͭ he hath choſen vs before yͤ making of the world, & hath offered vs his grace & confirmed it by the preaching of the Goſpel, as well Eph.1.4. as the Law was publiſhed by the hand of Moſes. For our Lord Ieſus Chriſt hath vouchſafed to be a faithful witnes of God his father, & of the loue yͭ he bringeth vs. And becauſe he is not abiding any more here below with vs in his own perſon, he hath appointed his miniſters to whõ he hath Luke.10.16 & 24.27. giuen authoritie to preach in his name, & therewithall hath giuen commaundement to all people to receiue them, ſaying, he that heareth you, heareth me. And he hath giuen them expreſſe charge to preach the forgiuenes of ſins, as if they ſhould drawe the wretched captiue ſoules out of the bondage of hell. Ye ſee then how our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt hath vttered the grace that was vnknowen vnto vs before: but wee take ſmall profite by it. For although wee were baptiſed from our infancie, yet when wee come to yeares of diſcretion, whereby begin we to ſhew our ſelues to haue ſome witte, but by chooſing the euill, as though wee ment to ſpite God wittingly? And againe beſide this, when our Lord teacheth vs, and reformeth vs by his worde, ſo as he ceaſeth not to ſhewe vs our faultes, to the intent to tame vs and to daunt vs, and to drawe vs to repentaunce: howe dull are we vppon the ſpurre? After whatfaſhion deale we? Are wee not ſo ſpytefull and ſtubborne, as a man can not by any meanes win vs? yes, and therefore he is faine to ſende vs many chaſtiſements & to make this preſent life to be as a wildernes to vs to wander vp and downe in, with yͤ feeling of his wrath. For all the miſeries wherewith wee be hemmed in, are remembrancers to make vs hang downe our heades, and to make vs perceiue that we be wretched ſinners, & that we be worthy, not onely of temporall correction, but alſo to be ſunke downe into hell. Yet notwithſtanding, this ſerueth not to driue vs to diſpaire, for we may well aſſure our ſelues yͭ God will receiue vs to mercy ſo we flee to our Lord Ieſus Chriſt. For if Moſes were heard who was a wretched ſinner: what ſhall he be, who hath all righteouſneſſe perfectly in him? and to whõ authoritie is giuen to make full attonement betweene God and man? Nowe thẽ ſeeing that our Lord Ieſus Chriſt is appointed to be our mediator: let vs not doubt but that although God holde vs in this worlde as poore baniſhed wretches, and withdrawe himſelfe from vs, and ſhrinke aſide to outwarde appearaunce: yet we be not bereft of the inheritaunce which he hath promiſed vs, and purchaſed for vs by our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt. But howſoeuer wee fare, let vs not tempt him, nor abuſe his patiẽce: but let vs wey wel this ſpeech, where Moſes ſaith *that he was hearde for that time alſo*. For it ſerueth to holde vs in awe, that wee flatter not our ſelues when God beareth with vs, but that we ſhoulde looke about vs to amende our faults, and to bridle our wicked luſtes, that we giue not ourſelues ouer vnto euill, but hate it and abhorre it, ſo as God may goe on with the thing that hee hath begunne in vs, vntill he haue ridde vs quite and cleane of all worldly lettes, and put vs in poſſeſſion of the euerlaſting life. If wee doe ſo, wee may boldely proteſt that we haue prayſed God and that we haue giuen him ſuch glorie as hee deſerueth, and wee haue cauſe to reioyce in that we were able to ouercome all the temptations and diſtruſtes that coulde happen vnto vs: and therefore wee ſhall not neede to doubt, but that our good God is and will be mercifull to vs, though we be not worthy of it.

Rom.5.17.& Col.1.20.

Nowe let vs kneele downe in the preſence of our good God with acknowledgement of our faultes, praying him to vouchſafe to make vs ſo to feele them, as it may ſerue to mortifie vs daily more & more, that when we perceiue his diſpleaſure, we may flee to his goodneſſe and mercy, to obtaine fauour at his hande, that beeing rid quite and cleane of our vices and ſpottes, we may bee ſo gouerned by the power of his holy ſpirite, as we may become true ſacrifices vnto him, by dedicating our ſelues wholly to his glory through newneſſe of life. And ſo let vs all ſay, Almightie God heauenly father, &c.

On Thurſday the xij of September. 1555.

The Lxxj. Sermon, which is the third vpon the tenth Chapter.

12 And nowe O Iſraell, what doth the Lord thy GOD require of thee, but that thou ſhouldeſt feare the Lord thy GOD, and walke in all his wayes, and that thou ſhouldeſt loue him, and ſerue the Lord thy God with all thy heart and all thy ſoule:

13 And that thou ſhouldeſt keepe the commaundementes of the Lorde, and his ordinaunces, which I commaunde thee this day, to the ende it may goe well with thee?

14 Beholde, the heauens, and the heauens of heauens are the Lord thy Gods, and likewiſe the earth and all that is therein.

HEre Moſes proceedeth with the matter that we haue hard theſe dayes paſt, that is to witte, that God had vſed marueilous fauor towards his people, in forgiuing them ſo many and ſo greeuous offences. It was verie much that they were receiued to mercy, ſo as they were not diſpoſſeſſed of yͤ heritage that God had promiſed them. Now Moſes addeth here an other reſpect, which ſerueth to make Gods great and infinite goodnes yet better knowen, & to giue it the greater beauty: which is, that he not onely forgaue the people the faults that they had done, but alſo receiued them againe with ſo gentle and friendly cõditions, as might ſet al mẽ in a wonder to thinke vpon it. If a Citie or a countrie haue rebelled againſt their prince, ſo as they haue broken their allegeance, although he liſt not to vſe extreeme rigor by putting all to fire and ſworde, but be cõtented to graunt them their liues: yet will he bereaue them of all their priuileges, he wil lay fines and exactions vpon them, & he will perchance depriue them of their ancient liberties, ſo as the wretched ſoules ſhall grone vnder the burden, & haue cauſe to remember their offencea hundred

yeares

yeres after. But Móſes ſheweth here, that God dealt not ſo with the Iewes. For when he had once pardoned their offence, he delt with them as if they had neuer done amiſſe, & their ſtate was as pleaſant & amiable, as if they had obeied him in all points as became them. And ſo ye ſee the intent of Moſes in this place.

He had reported heretofore, how he had bin heard: & nowe he addeth here, *What is it that the Lord requireth of thee?* He chargeth thee not with any amerciaments, he layeth no puniſhment vppon thee, he layeth no burden vpõ thee to beare thee down wͭ: his only deſire is, yͭ thou ſhouldeſt loue him, that thou ſhouldeſt honor him, yͭ thou ſhouldeſt keepe his commandements. And is this any profit to himſelfe? No. Euery whit of it redoundeth to thine own benefite. Was it not ynough to make this peoples heart to melt, though they had bin the wickeddeſt in yͤ world, when they might ſay, wheras we had forſaken yͤ Lord, & broken the couenant that he had made with vs, & choſẽ an ydol in ſtead of him; he hath not only forgiuen yͤ ſo hainous cryme, & bin cõtented to take vs ſtil for his children, & to leaue vs the inheritance yͭ he had promiſed vs: but alſo he gouerneth vs after ſuch a faſhion, as it might ſeeme we had deſerued al yͤ benefites in yͤ world. Could he deale more kindly with vs, if wee had honored him & giuen our ſelues wholy to him? Such conſideratiõ then ought wel to haue meekened the harts of that people; & although they were hard & ſtubborne, yet ought they to haue bowed, ſeeing they knewe that God ſought nothing but their benefite & welfare. Thus we ſee now the intent of Moſes, & to what circumſtances his ſayings are to be referred. Which is, that the people ſhould knowe that God had not only pardoned their fault aforepaſt, but alſo was minded to forget it vtterly for euer after: & that in the mean while they ſhould think thus deutifully with thẽſelues, our God behaueth himſelfe towards vs, as if we had neuer offended him, our ſtate is not a whit appaired, he vſeth nothing but gentlenes towardes vs. Marke that for one point.

But now haue we a general ſentence to gather vpon the thing yͭ Moſes tolde vnto yͤ people. For the doctrine yͭ is contained in yͤ Lawe, belongeth as well to vs, as to thẽ. Now then o Iſraell, what requireth thy God of thee? After yͤ ſame maner doth God ſpeake vnto vs at this day: he ſheweth vs his will as a rule to direct our liues by. And what meaneth he in ſo doing? Let vs marke what he cõmandeth, & ſee what profit cã redound vnto himſelfe by it. Certaine it is yͭ God requireth no more at our handes, but that wee ſhould loue him; & is not that a condition which we ſhoulde rather choſe, than all yͤ kingdoms of the worlde? Yes; for if our God ſhould make vs princes; ſurely the greateſt honour yͭ hee ſhould do vs therin, were but that he ſhould make vs his ſeruants. We ſee that ſuch as liue at eaſe, yea euen men of worſhippe & of good reuenue, had leuer to trot to the Court, & to be in ſeruice with the prince, and to take much toyle, yea and to ſpende their goods to get eſtimation; than to play yͤ ſnudges at home in their own houſes, & to liue at reſt vpon their owne reuenewes. Behold our God entertaineth vs & keepeth vs in his houſe, & yͭ not in degree of ſlauerie, but as his children; inſomuch yͭ he calleth vs his inheritance. In deede, were there no further than this, that hee accepteth yͤ ſeruice of vs, of vs I ſay which are altogether vnprofitable, & haue nothing but al maner of corruption in vs: wheras notwithſtanding hee vouchſafeth to imploy vs to good purpoſe, & to make vs veſſels of honor, ſo as we ſhine like perles in his church, whenas of our ſelues we be but dũg & myre: ſeeing our God dealeth ſo gently wͭ vs, what an vnthankfulnes is it, yͭ wee come not to yeeld our ſelues to him with al obedience? And I pray you what profit ſhal he reape by vs, when we ſhal haue ſerued him neuer ſo wel? Shal he be yͤ better at eaſe? Hath he need of our help in any thing? No, but al redoundeth to our welfare, & he intendeth nothing but to our profit. Wo worth vs therefore, yea & dubble wo worth vs, if ſuch goodnes ouercome vs not, & yͭ our harts be not inflamed wͭ a right affection of giuing our ſelues wholy to our God, to be gouerned by him, ſo as we ſuffer him to ouerrule vs, & yͭ we be preſt and readie to yeeld to his hand, & to turn euery way as he wil haue vs. That is yͤ thing which we haue to mark vpõ this text. So then, whenſoeuer the law ſeemeth ouer rough & ſharpe vnto vs, & our wicked luſts tickle vs to ſpurne againſt God, ſo as it is hard for vs to do as he cõmandeth vs: let vs bethink our ſelues thus: Thou wretched wight, is yͤ law of thy god burdenſom & grieuous to thee? what demandeth he of thee? wherat ſhoteth he? His demand is yͭ thou ſhouldeſt loue him, honor him, & ſerue him: & wilt thou in this caſe becom an vnnatural monſter? Shal yͤ life which thy god hath giuen thee, ſerue to make thee kick againſt him? wilt thou grieue thy maker who hath created thee & ſhaped thee, & doeth alſo maintaine thee? Were it not better yͭ heauen & earth were mingled togither, & yͭ al things were cõfounded; than yͭ it might be ſaid that thou makeſt no reckening of thy god? nay rather, yͭ thou ſpiteſt him of ſet purpoſe, inſomuch yͭ there is neither lawe nor ſcripture yͭ can bring thee to ſuch obediẽce, as to make thee yeeld glory to thy God? Is it not reaſon yͭ we ſhould ſerue God, when he vttereth ſuch goodnes towards vs, as to tel vs yͭ he wilbe our father, ſpecially by planting yͤ beleefe of his Goſpell in vs? Now then, as the earth when it is luſtie & in good plight doth alwayes bring forth ſome thing or other, to ſhewe that it hath heart in it, ſo, ſeeing yͭ God hath giuen vs vnderſtanding & reaſon aboue the brute beaſts, it becommeth vs to conſider yͭ his doing thereof is to the ende that we ſhould knowe him that made vs, of purpoſe that we ſhould ſerue & honour him, and ſtoop to him with al humility, aſſuring ourſelues that he ought to haue ſoueraigne dominiõ ouer all creatures. Therfore let vs marke wel, yͭ whenſoeuer we be tempted to ſtriue againſt God, and his lawe ſeemeth ouer heauie to vs, and our affections fight againſt it, or go the cleane contrary way from it; then to ouermaiſter ſuch frowardneſſe of our nature, we muſt bethinke vs as it is told vs here, What is it that thy God requireth of thee? And then is it certain that we ſhalbe too too much aſhamed of our ſelues. For what ſhal we anſwere before the Angels of heauen, when this ſaying ſhalbe laide afore vs? For it ſhalbee well layd to the charge of all ſuch as haue made none account of obeying God, & of all ſuch as haue deſpiſed him and his worde. Yea and although the Angels were not to iudge of it, verily euen the Oxen, the Aſſes, the dogges & the very ſtones & trees might be our iudges: for all thoſe creatures retaine a naturall inclination of obeying God. Therfore how ſhal we do, when we ſhal be vpbraided with this ſaying vttered by Gods own holy mouth, What haue I required at your hands? no more but that you ſhould loue mee & honor me. That is the very ſumme, & effect of al ẏ my law conteineth. I haue loued you, & my deſire hath beene to be loued of you. Were you worthie to be receiued & loued of me, when yee drew cleane contrarie to my wil? Lo here wherwith to hold vs in awe, as oft as we cannot finde in our harts to yeld to the obeying of our God, & ẏ his commandements ſeeme hard & ſharp vnto vs. What? Surely our God could not vſe greater curteſie towardes vs, than to allure vs to him by louing of vs, to the intent ẏ wee ſhoulde loue him againe. His meaning is ẏ we ſhould followe him the ſame way that he hath led vs afore. But now it is certaine, ẏ although God require nothing of vs but to haue the reuerence ẏ hee deſerueth: yet can we not ſerue him & honour him, vntil he haue reformed our harts. And therby it appeareth what frowardneſſe there is in all men by originall ſinne. Behold, God commandeth vs but to loue him & to yeeld him honor: that is al ẏ is conteined in his lawe. And yet we come all of vs ſo farre ſhort of the perfect performãce of the thing ẏ is commanded, that we cannot ſo much as thinke a good thought, but we indeuer by all meanes poſſible to withſtande whatſoeuer God commandeth. Therefore let vs learne to be abaſhed & aſhamed of the crabbednes of our nature, ſeeing we be ſo wayward as to ſtriue againſt our God & his righteouſnes, yea euen though ẏ things that he requireth be more than rightfull. And ſo ye ſee what we haue to marke, when wee feele ſuch a law in our ſelues, contrary to ẏ lawe ẏ God hath giuen vs. Rom.7.23.

And hereby wee be warned that it is in vaine for men to make proteſtation, as a number doe, which go about to excuſe themſelues ẏ they can not giue themſelues to God, becauſe of ẏ weaknes & ſinfulnes of their nature. Verily, as who would ſay, that the euil which is in vs ſhold ſerue vs for our defence. Were not that a mocking of God? Shal a man be acquit at his iudges hand, by confeſſing himſelf to be giltie? But here it is ſhewed vs, that al ẏ hardnes that we haue in vs to obey God, yea euen though it be impoſſible for vs to moue forward to the performance of the leaſt commandement of the lawe: will not ſerue to iuſtifie vs. Why ſo? Let a man looke well to it, & he ſhal find that the fault is not in the lawe: for it requireth no more but that wee ſhoulde ſerue our God, & therewithal loue him by yelding him his dew reuerence: and what is it to do that? let vs knowe therfore, that the whole fault is in our ſelues ẏ we obey not our God; & that although we haue no power at all to performe our duetie, yet doth not that diſcharge vs, ſeeing that God demãdeth nothing but ẏ which is right & reaſõ.

By the way, we muſt call to minde what hath beene declared heretofore: namely that as concerning this text, where Moſes ſheweth ẏ meane how to fulfill the law aright: it is not meant that we muſt but onely haue our eyes, hands & feete well ruled; but that wee muſt begin at the reformation of our harts. Deut.6.5. Thou ſhalt loue thy God (ſayeth he) & ſerue him. And howe? With all thy ſoule, & with all thy heart. Then let vs learne, ẏ if we do the things by compulſion which are cõmanded vs; it is nothing woorth: wee may not thinke that it ſhall paſſe in account. And in deed there are diuers that beare countenance faire ynough afore men, ſo as they cannot be accuſed of theft, murther, or whoredome: but in ẏ meane while they be full of wicked luſtes, ſo as they bee readie to burſt with them, & it is a corſie to them to obey God, neither finde they any taſte in his commandements. And therfore al is but hypocriſie, all is but a faire pretence & ſhewe to the worldward, & (to be ſhort) all is but vanitie and leazing till the heart be wonne vnto God, & vntill we be fully minded & bent to do as God cõmandeth vs. That (ſay I) is the ende that wee muſt beginne at, if we will accompliſh the lawe throughly. Wherefore let vs not beguile our ſelues any more as the hypocrites do, with deſire that men only ſhould be contented. Let vs vnderſtand ẏ we haue to do wͭ the heauẽly Iudge who admitteth no eyeſeruice, but looketh to the trueth of ẏ heart. Ier.5.3. Therfore let vs giue our ſelues to God with hartie affection, & not content our ſelues ſo with ẏ outward workes, ẏ the intent of doing wel ſhold not alſo be groũded in our harts.

Beſides this, Moſes telleth vs ẏ God will not only be *ſerued & honored, but alſo loued.* And here are three words; the one is *Loue*, the other is *Reuerence*, & the third is *Seruice*. Now as touching Reuerence or *Feare*, (for he vſeth the ſame term of feare;) it is not a ſlauiſh fearefulnes, but it is ẏ ſeruiceablenes & honor which we yeld vnto god in ſubmitting our ſelues vnto him, becauſe we be throughly perſuaded that foraſmuch as he hath all ſoueraintie ouer vs, it is good reaſon that we ſhould be ſubiect vnto him. Firſt & formoſt therfore let vs conſider, that although God had not ſpoken to vs to perſuade vs to this reuerence; ſurely euen nature ſheweth it vs ſufficiently, and it is welynough proued vnto vs in our ſelues. For although it were neuer told vs that the lewdnes of men is ſuch, as they ſeeke nothing elſe but to turne away from God, & to become beaſtlike by al meanes they can deuiſe, yea euen wittingly & wilfully: yet our heads & harts are ſtuffed ſo full of that leſſon, as we cãnot be ignorant of it. And therfore it ſtandeth vs greatly in hand to beare in mind what this word reuerẽce or feare importeth, that is to wit, that God ought to be honored of all his creatures, & that ſeeing we be his, wee ought to offer our ſelues to be ſubiect to him.

Alſo it importeth, that when we thinke vpon

God, wee ſhould hallowe his name, that is to ſay, not imagine any thing of him to the derogation of his glorie, but yeeld honor to his righteouſnes, wiſdome & power. This is the firſt point which Moſes ſetteth downe here, cõcerning obedience and the right obſeruing of the Lawe.

Now this reuerence requireth alſo loue. For God wilbee honored with harty affection. If we reuerence his maieſtie, & yet ſtand in feare of it, ſo as it is a terror to vs: then would wee wiſh that there were no God at all, and wee coulde fynd in our heartes to plucke him out of his ſeate, if it were poſſible. As many as woorſhip God vppon no further grounde, but for that they are ſure they cannot ſcape his hãd, & becauſe they know him tobe their maker; thoſe (ſay I) being not touched with any free loue, wil ſhunne God; and when they heare any ſpeaking of him, it grieueth them; inſomuch that if it were in their choyce & power, they woulde plucke him out of his ſeat if they could, as I ſaid afore So then, it is not poſſible for vs to feare God, (I meane to yeelde him right reuerence, ſo as we beare a hartie god will to him, & haue a feeling of his goodnes towards vs, & yͤ he is the place where we muſt ſeeke al our welfare) vnleſſe we loue him. Therefore if wee haue not this loue, there wilbe no reuerence at all. Wherfore let vs learne, yͤ God requireth freewill offerings, that is to ſay, that our offering of our ſelues vnto him ſhould not be of force or cõſtraint, but with ſuch deuotion as wee ſhould bee deſirous to ſerue him, & as we might proteſt with Dauid, not onely that wee ſet more ſtore by his law than by gold & ſiluer; but alſo that it is more ſweete & pleaſant to vs, than honie. Thus ye ſee what the ſecond worde *Loue* importeth.

Pſal,19.11.

The third worde is *Seruice*. For if wee make pretence to worſhip God with ceremonies and gewgawes as they ſay, & in yͤ mean while do him no true ſeruice in deede: is it not a mocking of him? If men beare folkes in hande yͤ their intent is to honor God, & that they loue him, & ſubmit themſelues to him; & in the meane ſeaſon make but a flimflam of it when God ſetteth forth his commandements vnto them: what a preſumptuouſnes were that? And [likewiſe what a matter were it,] if they ſhould ſhewe no proofe wherby a man might perceiue, yͤ his loue which he ſpeaketh of here is rooted in their heart? Then let vs learne, yͤ we muſt ſhewe by our deedes that wee loue & feare God. And what are the doings that muſt beare witneſſe therof? Euen our ſeruing of him, yͭ is to wit, when we play not the looſe colts by taking leaue to do euery man after his owne luſt & liking; but ſuffer God to ouerrule vs, ſo as our whole deſire be that he ſhould hold yͤ raines of the bridle, & we yeld euery way vnder his hãd to turne to & fro according to his good wil. And ſo we ſee yͭ the way whereby wee muſt ſhewe our ſelues to loue God, is by our ſeruing of him.

Howbeit, foraſmuch as men are giuen to deuiſe ſeruices of their own brain, & do make boaſt that they glorifie God when they haue followed their owne fooliſh inuentions: Moſes rebuketh this ouerboldneſſe of men, and this curioſitie of theirs, telling them that the ſeruice of God cõſiſteth *in keeping the commandements & ordinances which he deliuereth to them in the name of God*. Now then we ſee here, that our Lorde hath cut off all our fond inuentions, yͭ we ſhould not imagine to ſerue him any more after our owne fancie. For why? He will haue obedience, & hee eſteemeth more of that than of al the ſacrifices in yͤ world. Had this point beene wel obſerued, there would not be ſuch diſputing as is ſeene nowadayes, among ſuch as beare the name of Chriſtians. For the Papiſts may good cheape ſay, that a mã may fulfil the law of God. And why? Becauſe they neuer wiſt what end or what mark God aymed at. They think it ynough for a man to be able to diſcharge himſelf to yͤ worldward; & ſo they make God like a litle babe, by reaſon wherof they ſay it is a blaſphemie to ſaye that wee cannot perfourme the law. For they neuer came to the trial of it. The deſpiſers of God ſtepforth here & ſay, that the lawe is eaſie, when as notwithſtanding they neuer put ſo much as their little finger towards the doing of it. But when we haue well weyed the things that are conteyned here; wee ſhal finde that it is not ſo eaſie a matter. Againe if we compare the law with our own frowardnes, we ſhal find that the law were eaſie ynough of it ſelf, if we were as wel diſpoſed as we ought to be. But we come farre ſhort of being Angels; & wee had neede of an angelical nature to the obeying of Gods law. For it draweth vs from the world, and leadeth vs vp to heauen: and we go yͤ cleane contrarie way. Againe, when the ſeruing of god commeth in queſtion, it wil not ſuffice vs to play the hypocrites & to ſay, wel, this or that is to be done, & in the meane while to ouerhip yͤ chiefe point: but when it is ſaid that wee muſt loue our GOD with all our hearte; wee come to the wel head, and to the verie roote, which is that GOD requireth ſuch a ſoundeneſſe, as not onely wee ſhould doe whatſoeuer hee cõmandeth vs, but alſo haue a pleaſure in it, ſo as our chiefe delight ſhould be therin, and when we ſee an agreeablenes betwene God & our affections, we ſhould be gladder therof than if wee had obtained all our fleſhly deſires & likings. Againe, men ſhould not be doutfull of the meanes howe to ſerue God as wee ſee the worlde hath alwayes beene, by ſwaruing from the rule that is contained in Gods worde. What is it that is termed Gods ſeruice in the Popedome nowadayes, but fanſies that men haue deuiſed without any reaſon? And no maruel. For (to their ſeeming) Gods law was of no great importance, neither did they buſie their heads greatly about it. And therefore needs muſt they inuent a great number of other ſmall trifles. But they that giue them ſelues to Gods lawe, doe ſee, there is cauſe for them to ſaye thus; Alas, although I take neuer ſo much paine, yet can I not compaſſe it, but alwayes I come ſhort of my wayes ende. Nay (which more is) all my inforcing of my ſelfe is in vaine: in ſo much that if my God were not mercifull to mee, to giue me power & ſtrength, I ſhoulde goe cleane backewarde, and contrarie to his will.

1.Sa,15.22.

As for the Papiſts, they had no regard of this, but inuented a ſorte of gewgawes to ſerue God withall; as ſetting vp of candles before puppets, gadding on pilgrimage , hearing of maſſes, taking of holy water, and all the reſt of their pelting traſh. But ſuch as knowe what it is to keepe the lawe, do neuer ſet their myndes vppon ſuch childiſh bawbles. But when men knowe not howe to ſerue God aright, then they rome wandring here and there. Therefore let vs beare in mynde, that here our Lord hath declared which is the true ſeruice that hee liketh and alloweth of; namely the following of his commaundementes , ſo as men deale not after their owne fanſie and liking, but holde themſelues to his worde; and as it were bridling and keeping them ſelues captiue, do attẽpt nothing but that which they knowe to bee the pleaſure of their God. Thus you ſee in effect what wee haue to gather vppon this text.

Nowe for a concluſion, heere Moſes *ſetteth foorth commaundements for the welfare of the people.* Whereas hee ſayeth *that he ſetteth them foorth*, it is to take away all excuſes of ignorance, and to quayle mennes fooliſh curioſitie, that woulde ſtye aboue the cloudes to knowe Gods will. Yee ſee then howe GOD maketh vs vnexcuſable, when hee ſendeth vs his worde, and commaundeth it to be preached vnto vs. Could he make him ſelfe more familiar vnto vs, than by ſending mortall men as his meſſengers vnto vs, to ſpeake vnto vs in his name, and to giue vs vnderſtanding of his will by their meanes ? Then if wee ſaye that wee knowe not Gods will, you ſee here is wherewith to diſprooue vs; for God hath giuen vs his worde in writing , ſo as wee neede not to ſeeke for it: and therefore it ought to be ſufficiently knowen vnto vs . Nowe then let vs alſo learne to receiue it with reuerence & humilitie: and when we heare mortal men ſpeaking vnto vs, let vs aſſure our ſelues, that wee muſt not meaſure the maieſtie of Gods worde by their perſons. But wee muſt haue an eye to him from whome it commeth, and which is the author of it, that wee may ſubmit our ſelues wholly vnto it. Therefore let vs not haue theſe diueliſh fanſies with vs, as ſome dreamers haue, which ſay, O that God woulde ſpeake to mee from heauen, I woulde faine haue ſome reuelation. Let it content vs that God cõmeth down vnto vs, to make vs priuie to his will: for that is it which Moſes ment, in ſaying that hee did ſet foorth Gods commaundements: as if hee had ſaide, that men neede not to goe farre to ſeeke him. And in the ende hee ſheweth, that all this tendeth to the welfare of the people, ſo as God ſeeketh not any benefite to himſelfe, for he needeth not to borowe aught of vs, neither can wee do him any pleaſure: wee can doe him neither good nor harme, all thinges are his: according to the eyght Pſalme, and alſo the fiftith Pſalme, where it is ſaide, that all the beaſtes in the feelde are in his poſſeſſion, and that if hee be hungrie or want any thing he needeth not to ſeeke it at our handes. Why then requireth he to be ſerued of vs? It is for our benefit, for that there can not be a greater good turne vnto men, than to be the ſeruants of their maker. Then let vs vnderſtand, that whereas our Lord layeth not the bridle looſe vpon our necke, but gouerneth vs himſelfe, and holdeth vs vnder his obedience, therby to moue vs to ſerue him the more willingly: hee doeth it to our benefite and reſpecteth nothing but our welfare. Yet notwithſtanding it is true that the lawe will finde vs all giltie, & that when God hath ſhewed vs all that is good and right: that doctrine doeth ſo litle benefite vs, that it rather bringeth vs death , and wee bee curſed by it. For it is a looking glaſſe wherein to ſee that wee bee Gods enemies: and it is a keye to open the gates of hell. And how then commeth it to paſſe that God ſhoulde procure our welfare, and yet notwithſtanding wee ſhoulde receiue nothing but harme by it? That is not of it ſelfe; but it falleth out by another meane, that is to ſaye by our owne fault. Then let vs vnderſtande, that Gods lawe (if wee conſider it in it ſelfe) is vnto vs a doctrine of welfare , whereby God commeth neere vnto vs to bee our father and to make vs finde life in him, that by his ruling of our life, wee might ſticke vnto him, and thereby bee made partakers of his benefites, & in the ende attayne to the heritage of the heauenly life. But herewithal we be ſo froward and ful of corruption, that the law can ſerue vs to no other purpoſe, but to curſe vs, & to make vs perceiue how lothſome we be vnto God, in as much as we be his deadly enemies, & ſo we haue double cauſe to be abaſhed & afraid, & aſhamed of our ſelues, when we ſee yͤ the good is ſo turned to our harm: & it is more than if yͤ nature of yͤ ſunne were changed by our infection. Woulde it not make vs to loth our ſelues, if we ſhould find ſuch foule & vyle ſmokes in vs, as ſhoulde darken and quench the light of the ſunne? yes verily. Nowe we ſee that Gods law is the light of our life: and yet we not only dim it, but alſo turn it into yͤ darknes of death; & it is vnpoſſible yͤ it ſhould ſtande vs in any other ſteed, vntil our Lord Ieſus Chriſt haue wrought in vs, & reformed vs by his holy ſpirit, & by writing his lawe newe againe in our hearts. For aſmuch then as we ſee yͤ men turne life into death, light into darknes, & benefit into bane: alas, ought we not to be exceedingly abaſhed? yes, but yet muſt not yͤ put vs out of conceit of yͤ doctrin of yͤ law, ſo as we ſhuld not loue it, howbeit yͤ we cãnot performe it, vntil god haue chãged our harts to cauſe vs to ſubmit our ſelues vnto him, and haue made vs newe creatures in our lord Ieſus chriſt. True it is yͤ the ſetting forth of yͤ law vnto vs, is not for nought: but yet muſt we needes perceiue by experience, yͤ vntill God hath brought vs home again vnto him, yͤ doctrin of his law wil ſerue for nothing but to cõdemne vs. But when he hath once wrought in vs by his holy ſpirit: then ſhal wee perceiue that in ſetting forth his law vnto vs, he procureth our benefite & welfare, according as is ſaide of it here by Moſes. And ſo you heare what we haue to gather vpõ this text. But Moſes doth yet better confirme the matter that wee haue ſeene; which is, that God helde not his people downe like ſlaues, nor handled them roughly to be reuenged of thẽ, & to make

Iob 35.7. & Pſal.16.2.

Pſal.8.7.& 50.10.

2.Cor.3.11.12.

2.Cor.3.3.

to make them feele the offence they had committed; but that he handled them after a gentle and louing faſhion. Now then (ſaith he) hath the euerlaſting thy God any neede of thee? Behold (ſaith he) *the heauens yea, and the heauens of heauens are Gods.* As if he ſhould ſay, you think that God would fain haue a people, as though he could not forbeare to be without them. Hath not hee the ſkyes at commandement? hath not he his heauenly hoſt? hath he not whole millions of Angels? hath hee not peaceable dominion in heauen? Yes, and therefore ye muſt not imagine any more, that his chooſing of you was to better his owne eſtate by you. If hee ſhoulde deſtroy you, and make quite riddance of you, ſhould his raigne ceaſſe? No, no, and for proofe therof, he hath no neede of men. Againe, beſides that, is not the earth and all thinges in it, in his poſſeſſion? Yes: What is the cauſe then that hee hath not taken and choſen other nations to him as wel as you? Is it for that you are nobler, or mightier, or worthier in any reſpect, than the reſt, as Deut.7.7. it is mentioned in the ſeuenth Chapter? No. It is certaine that the Iewes were not better than the Gentiles: inſomuch that if they ſhould haue beene compared with them, they ſhoulde haue found themſelues to haue bin neither nobler of linage, nor richer in ſubſtance, nor vertuouſer in life, nor to haue excelled them in any thing. What is the cauſe then (ſaith Moſes) that God hath vouchſafed to take you for his people, and that he hath let all others alone, & reached you his hand to gouern you? Sought he his own profite or aduantage? No. Seing then that you be ſo gretly boũd vnto him; ſerue him wͭ the better wil.

Here we ſee in effect two things. The one is Moſes his confirming of the Iſraelites ſtill in the doctrine yͭ we haue heard; which is, yͭ all of them ſhoulde learne to glorifie God for their welfare, acknowledging themſelues beholden to him for all good things, ſo as they haue not any worthines or deſeruinges to vaunt themſelues of, but muſt exalt their God & vtterly abaſe thẽſelues. Marke yͭ for the one point. And out of this proceedeth the other point; which is, that ſuch as haue had ſuch experience of Gods goodnes towards thẽſelues, & are taught aforehand to glorifie god, muſt take courage to ſerue him yͤ more frankly, & offer themſelues to God with a more zelous will, to be quietly gouerned & ouerruled by him. Thus ye ſee yͤ two pointes that are to be gathered vpon that text. Yea & let vs mark well, how it is not without cauſe yͭ Moſes ſtandeth ſo much vpon yͤ doctrine. For wee ſee how the vnthankfulnes of men is ſo great, yͭ they labor continually to deface Gods goodnes, by reaſon of yͤ curſed roote of pride & loftines which cannot be quite & cleane taken from vs. Men then do alwayes beare themſelues in hand, yͭ they be ſomwhat worth, & therupon they ſtand in their own conceits, yea euen as it were in deſpite of God. Although God lay on ſore loade vpon our heads with beetles; yet ceaſſe wee not to ſet vp our briſtles ſtil, & to grunt at him, & to think there is yet ſome vertue or power in vs. For this cauſe Moſes thinks it not ynough to haue ſaid once or twice, you muſt father all your welfare vpon the onely fauour of God: but he returneth eftſoone to the confirming of the ſame doctrine, to the intent that mens cackling might be yͤ better ſtilled, and that ſuch as deceiue themſelues through their vaine imaginations, might learne to conclude in the end, yͭ it is not for vs to looke for any valour or worthines in our ſelues, but that we muſt yeld God that which belongeth peculiarly vnto him, namely, that his calling of vs, his chooſing of vs, & his maintaining of vs; & likewiſe our hauing of his word, & our reteining of ſome order in the Church, come altogither of him, ſo as we cannot ſay we haue gotten them by our owne skil, cunning or ſtrength. Thus much concerning yͤ firſt point.

Nowe for our better confirmation herein, let vs compare our ſelues with the Angels & with al the world beſides, & let vs think thus: what are we? Truely, if we go no further than to our owne ſelues, we may haue our eies dazeled, & we know yͭ naturaly men do ſo beſot themſelues, yͭ they be as good as bewitched with the fond imaginatiõ of their own worthines. Therefore if we ſhould looke no further than to our ſelues; it would ſeem to vs yͭ we be ſomething worth: but if wee looke further of, & fall to conſidering with our ſelues, What are other men? Do they not ſet as much or more by thẽſelues than we do? yes: & if there were a third partie to play yͤ iudge, would he not make more account of them than of vs? Yes. For to outward ſhowe there is much more greatnes, riches, worthines, & honor; there is much more diſcretion & wiſedom in thẽ than in vs. What is the cauſe then yͭ God hath choſen vs, & let the others go? Haue we any thing wherof we may be proud? Alas, no, if we be not ouerfarre beſotted in our own fond imaginations. But if we cannot yet be brought to this reaſon by cõparing ourſelues with all the worlde beſide: let vs mount vp a litle higher & come to yͤ Angels of heauen. Could not God haue contented himſelfe with his Angels, wͭout cõming vnto vs? We be but poore wormes, there is nothing but rottenneſſe in vs, & yet god vouchſafeth to ſeeke vs. His wil is to haue vs to be his children, not only to enioy his gifts & benefits here beneath, but alſo to aduance vs vp to his heauenly kingdom. And for what deſerts of ours? [None at al.] Wherefore ſeeing we cannot be ſo beaten down at one blow, as to come humble our ſelues vnto God; let vs wey well theſe words of Moſes, & bethink vs of the thing that is told vs here; namely *that the heauẽs of heauens are the lords.* For Moſes thinkes it not ynough to ſay ſimply *the heauẽs*: but he inlargeth his ſpeech yet further, & ſaith, *the heauens of heauens.* It had been ynough to haue ſaide *the heauens*; for ſeeing that yͤ earth (how wide and houge ſo euer it be) is nothing in compariſon of the vnmeaſurable greatnes of the ſkyes: yͤ only word *heauens* ought wel to haue ſufficed. But Moſes intẽded to expreſſe it yet more in ſaying *the heauens*, yea euẽ *the heauẽs of heauẽs.* In reſpect wherof he repeteth thoſe words three times: as if he ſhould ſay, God can find a kingdõ large & gret ynough, & of ſuch widnes as he ſhal not need to com borow ſome litle corner in the world to lodge in: he needeth not to ſeeke in darke caues for any thing wherewith to ſet foorth his glorye. Men are but wormes; they be but like frogges in a puddle of myre; and ſhal God come downe here belowe, to make his glorie ſhine there? Hath he not his heauenly power, to ſhewe there aboue that he hath ſoueraine dominion ouer all creatures? Muſt he be faine to ſtande to our courteſie for the dooing of any thing? So then, we ſee that men muſt not onely become drunken & beaſtlike, but alſo ſtarke diuels through pride, if this declaration of Moſes make them not to ſtoope, & to acknowledge it to be good reaſō that God ſhould be glorified euery where, and that they ought not to reſerue to themſelues any whit of the praiſe of their owne ſaluation or welfare.

Now furthermore Moſes addeth, that Gods *affection towards that people, & his louing of them to chooſe their ſeede, proceeded onely of his own good wil.* Your God (ſaith he) hath dominion ouer heauen & earth; And yet notw̄ſtanding he hath vouchſafed to be your Lord. What is the cauſe therof? Moſes hath ſhewed it alreadie. But yet hee addeth (for greater confirmation) that God did caſt an erneſt free good wil towards this people. The firſt word which he vſeth, ſignifieth ſometime to cleaue vnto, & ſometime to take pleaſure. But here the proper & natural meaning of it is, that God tooke pleaſure in that people, ſo that he acquainted himſelf with them through a free loue: for he addeth the worde Loue thereunto. Ye ſee then, that willing pleaſure went afore, & afterward loue enſued of it, and it ſerueth to ſhewe, that it is a fondneſſe for men to imagine ẏ there is any cauſe why God ſhould loue one more thā another, ſaue onely that it is his pleaſure ſo to do. Moſes could not haue expreſſed this more plainly, than by ſaying that it was Gods good pleaſure. That is the verie fountaine; and out of that fountaine ſpringeth afterward the loue. Let vs learne then, that God muſt firſt loue vs, and that we muſt feele the ſame by effect in vs; and yet notwithſtanding we muſt not ſtay ſtil at that loue. But to the ende wee may the better feele ẏ it is a free loue, we muſt proceede to Gods pleaſure or will; that is to ſay, wee muſt knowe, that he reſpected neither one thing nor other, wherby to be perſuaded and moued to that loue, but that he ſought the cauſe of it in him ſelf; and becauſe it liked him, therefore he liſted it. That is the thing that Moſes hath declared in this text. Howbeit for as much as we cannot as nowe proceede any farther, let vs beare away but this leſſon, that as oft as there is any ſpeaking of our ſaluation, wee muſt not ſeeke ẏ cauſe of it any where elſe, than in God; & that being vtterly naked of all goodnes, we muſt confeſſe our ſelues to be vtterly accurſed, but that God pitying vs, and mynding to ſhewe vs mercie, draweth vs out of the curſednes wherein we were, in which reſpect, for as much as he calleth & allureth vs to the ſaluation which he hath purchaſed ſo dearly for vs, we muſt not dout but ẏ he wil bring vs thither, at leaſtwiſe if we abide ſtedfaſt in his couenant, & yet neuertheleſſe, that becauſe wee cannot haue ſuch ſtedfaſtnes of our ſelues, hee will hold vs vp & ſtrengthen vs by his holy ſpirit; to the end that feeling his power in vs, wee may be the more incouraged to ſerue him, and not bee vnthankfull for ſo great goodneſſe as hee hath ſhewed vs.

Nowe let vs kneele downe in the preſence of our good God with acknowledgement of our faults, praying him to make vs ſo to feele them, as we may continually miſlike them more and more, and in ſo doing returne vnto him, as to ẏ onely partie that can remedie our diſeaſes, and ſet vs vp againe by pardoning our offences: ſo as we may feele the ſweetenes that is in him, and the bitterneſſe of our afflictions may not make vs to miſlike of his ſeruice, but rather ẏ wee may be the more affectioned vnto it, ſo as by ẏ means we may be framed vnto his righteouſnes, & vnto ẏ obeying of him, vntil we be gathered into the company of his Angels. That it may pleaſe him to grant this grace, not onely to vs, but alſo to all people & nations of the earth, &c.

On Fryday the xiij. of September. 1555.

The Lxxii. Sermon which is the fourth vpon the tenth Chapter.

15 Yet notwithſtanding the Lorde hath through loue acquainted himſelfe with thy fathers, and loued them, and choſen their ſeede after them, that is to wit, euen you aboue all people, as appeareth this day.

16 Therefore cutte away the foreskin of your heartes, and harden not your neckes from henceforth.

17 For the Lord your God is God of Gods, and Lord of Lords, a great, mightie and terrible God, which regardeth not anie mans perſon, nor taketh anie giftes.

WEe haue to lay foorth more at large, the ſentēce that was begun yeſterday, which is, that here Moſes declareth vnto the Iewes, that all the goodneſſe which they had, proceeded of Gods loue, yea euen of free loue. For his louing of them aboue all other people was not for that they were worthier, but becauſe it ſo pleaſed him. Moreouer, he addeth that God tooke not Abraham onely, but alſo all his ofſpring into his fauour, ſo as his chooſing of the people, proceeded thereof. Wherof commeth it then, that the Iewes were ſo preferred before all the reſt of the worlde? If we ſay it was becauſe they were better than the reſt, ẏ is a manifeſt gainſaying of God, who will haue vs to acknowledge his only fauour & goodnes in that behalfe. Then let vs conclude, ẏ God ſought not the cauſe thereof els where than in himſelfe: But ẏ his will was to lay forth the infinite treaſures of his mercy, to ſhew that he was not indetted to any creature, but that his bearing of good will towardes them, is for ẏ he himſelfe is good, and therfore all things are to be referred to his praiſe according as the Ephes.1.6. ſcripture ſheweth that his choſing of his church in all ages hath beene to that end. Nowe we ſee in effect what this doctrine meaneth.

Yeſterday it was declared what was the vſe of it, namely that men ſhould be humbled in them ſelues, to exalt Gods goodnes, & thereupon take the better courage to ſerue him. For how greatly are we bound vnto him, ſeeing he hath vouchſafed to take vs for his heritage, & to adopt vs to be his children, whereas in the meane ſeaſon he hath reiected others that were like vnto vs? For if it be demanded wherein we differ from other men: there wil no difference be found in reſpect of our ſelues. And therfore, ſeeing that God hath eſteemed vs ſo highly, we are bound to ſerue him and to giue our ſelues wholly vnto him. But by the way let vs marke, that there is a generall election belonging to all this people, which election deſerueth well to be had in eſtimation. But yet ſhould not al auaile, except euery man were made partaker of it particularly in himſelfe. This would be darkeſum, if it were not declared more at large. But it wil become eaſie ynough, if we cal to minde, firſt what Moſes teacheth here, and which wee haue ſeene already heretofore: namely that God choſe Abrahams ofſpring out of the whole worlde. And why? becauſe it pleaſed him. All the world was his (as hath beene declared already) and al nations were alike neere vnto him, and in equall degree as that ofſpring was that was to come of Abrahā. Nay: (which more is) he choſe a people ẏ had no being, and of whō there was no hope. For Abraham was like a drie Rom.4.19. timberlogge, and therefore was there no hope that euer he could haue any ofſpring. Sara his wife was barrē & both of them drooped for age, and their bodies were withered, ſo as God choſe the thing which was not, and his promiſe ſeemed as it were to hang in the ayre, without foundation to reſt vpon. And yet notwithſtāding, by vertue of the promiſe wherein God ſayde that hee would bleſſe Abrahās lynage, there muſt needes Gen.17.6.7. come a people, as ſhall be ſhewed in the next lecture. See here I pray you the election of God, wherby he putteth ſuch difference betwene the lynage of Abraham and all the reſt of the world, that he made the ſame linage his Church of purpoſe that the ſignes of his fauour and of his couenant ſhould remaine there, and that his name ſhould be called vpon there, ſo as he offered the promiſes of ſaluation to them that deſcended of the ſame race and linage, & the redeemer ẏ was to be ſent into the worlde, was ſet forth vnto thē that they might be gathered together vnder him. Loe here (I ſay) a general election that belonged to al the children of Abraham, and yet was that grace to be confirmed by faith but in a parte of them, & in ſome of them. For we ſee that many of them were cut off, not for that they were not Abrahams children, in reſpect of the fleſhe and the worlde: But for that they were not his children in ſpirite and before God, which was the chiefe point, as S. Paul declareth. As for thoſe Rom.2.28. & 9.7.8. which were vnbeleeuers and vnthriftes, and imbraced not the promiſe that was made vnto Abraham with true faith, thoſe were ſet beſide the inheritance. In deede they were accounted for his children: howbeit, that was but as Iſmael was who was not lawfully begotten. Now then Gods generall election which extended to the whole people, was not ſufficient: But it behoued euerie man to be partaker of it in his own peculiar behalfe. And how was ẏ to be done? by faith. But let vs ſee from whence faith proceedeth, but only of Gods wil, in that he vouchſafeth to confirm his fauor towardes whō he thought good. Therfore choſe he whom he liſted out of this people, and ſealed his promiſe in their hearts by his holy Eph.1.13.14. ſpirite, ſo as they were made partakers of his trueth, & it tooke full and perfect effect in them. Lo here the double election of God. The one extendeth to the whole people, becauſe circumciſion was giuen indifferently to all, both ſmal and great, and the promiſes likewiſe were common. But yet for all that, God was faine to adde a ſeconde grace, by touching the hearts of his choſen, namely of ſuch as he liſted to reſerue to him ſelfe, and thoſe came vnto him, & he made them to receiue the benefit that was offered them. And in deede, we ſee that the greateſt number of that people haue bin caſt off, and as it were baniſhed from Gods fauour, ſo as there remained but a ſmall remnant of them, not onely at ſome one time, but alſo euen after the captiuity of Babilon, according to this foreſaying of the prophet Eſay: Eſa.10.22. Although thou wart neuer ſo many in nūber, ſo as thy folke were as the ſande of the ſea, yet ſhall the remnant of you be very ſmall ẏ God wil ſaue. For the hypocrites abuſed Gods promiſe falſly. And becauſe it was ſayd ẏ the people ſhold be in multitude as the ſande of the ſea, they bragged at the ſight of a great number, and in the meane while diſpiſed God. But he telleth them that he coulde aſwell diminiſh them, as he had multiplied them: ſo as there ſhould remaine but a ſmall portion of them. And ſo it came to paſſe, inſomuch as the prophet ſayth, ẏ if God had not reſerued Eſa.1.9.

ſerued ſome ſeede, the countrie of Iuda had bin as Sodom & Gomorre, & God had vtterly rooted them out as they had well deſerued.

Now is this very profitable for vs. For nowadayes, when it is tolde vs ẏ we haue the pure doctrine of ẏ Goſpell preached vnto vs, & we haue the ſacrament of baptiſm for the warrant of our ſaluation, ẏ is one choice that God maketh of vs. We be no better than other men, ẏ are drowned in ydolatrie & abhominations, on whō God hath not vouchſafed to looke w̄ ſuch pity, as to make yͤ truth of his goſpel to ſhine vpon thē: but hath let thē alone as deſtitute of all things, ſo as there is nothing but horrible cōfuſion amongeſt them; & yet in the meane ſeaſon, he taketh vs between his armes, and into his boſome, vouchſafing to cauſe his word to be preached vnto vs, whereby we ſee Ieſus Chriſt who inlightneth vs as yͤ dayſun of righteouſnes, & we haue the ſacramentes whereof we knowe the vſe. Lo here one choiſe ẏ God maketh of vs, which is well worthy to be eſteemed, wherin it behoueth vs to cōſider Gods only infinite goodnes, for ẏ he eſpieth nothing in vs, for yͤ which he ſhould preferre vs, before ſuch as are nobler thā we, & haue much more thā we to outward appearance. But yet is it not ynough for vs to be ſo choſē of God as ẏ he taketh vs into his houſe, admitteth vs to bee of his flocke, & dwelleth among vs; euery of vs muſt haue an eie to himſelf, ſo as yͤ goſpel be not preached in vain nor we beare the bare name of Chriſtians, without ſhewing ẏ effect of it in our deedes. For vntil our adoptiō be ſealed by ẏ holy Ghoſt, let vs not thinke ẏ it auaileth vs any whit to haue herd the word of God: but it ſhal turne to our double condemnation, becauſe ẏ when God had choſen vs, we offended him; whē he had entered into a couenant with vs, wee brake our faithfull promiſe which wee had made & plighted vnto him; and therfore me muſt be puniſhed yͤ more greuouſly. But whē we haue once a warrant in our hearts, ẏ his promiſes belong vnto vs, & are behighted vnto vs, by reaſon ẏ we receiue them w̄ true obedience, & ſticke to our Lord Ieſus Chriſt, ſuffring 1.Pet.1.10. him to gouerne vs: ẏ is a ſure ſeale of Gods choſing of vs, ſo as we not onely haue the outwarde apparance of it before men, but alſo the truth of it before our God. And like as Abrahā was made Rom.4.11. the father of all ẏ faithfull before God: ſo are we made his children in ſpirit & truth, and not only as in reſpect of adoption to ẏ world. Thus we ſee what we haue to gather vpō this text, & vpō this declaration ẏ Moſes maketh here to the Iewes.

And for the ſame cauſe he addeth the exhortation which we haue read, in that he willeth *the Iewes to circumciſe their heartes, and to beware that they harden not their neckes any more.* Good reaſon it is that men ſhould ſubmit themſelues to God after ẏ maner by forſaking thēſelues, ſeeing that his ſeeking to win vs to him is not for any cōmoditie to himſelfe, (as was ſhewed yeſterday,) but becauſe hee is deſirous of our welfare, ſo as hee putteth vs not to the doing of any thing which redoundeth not to our own benefit & profit. Seeing then ẏ God reſpecteth nothing but vs in his alluring of vs to come vnto him: ſhould we dragge backe in that caſe? Or ſhould wee haue proude and loftie heartes to aduaunce ourſelues againſt him? Nowe for the better vnderſtanding of this doctrine, let vs note that Moſes had an ey to the outward ſigne that was giuen at that time to the Iewes, after the ſame maner that wee haue baptiſme at this day. For circumciſion ſerued to two endes. Firſt, God thereby condemned all mankinde and all that is of mans owne nature: ſhewing them thereby, that all of it is euill. And ſecondely he gaue hope of ſaluation in yͤ ſeede of Abraham, accordingly as he had promiſed. To this purpoſe (ſay I) ſerued yͤ figure of circumciſion, namely to put the Iewes in minde, ẏ frō their mothers wombe, they brought nothing with thē but condemnation, & that all ẏ euer was of man was curſed before God, becauſe it had nothing in it but ſinne & corruption. Secondarily againe they were comforted, foraſmuch as they ſawe that God promiſed them ſaluation, by the ſeede Eph.2.3. of man, and ẏ he receiued them into fauour, and iuſtified thē of purpoſe to haue them ſeparated Gen.18.18. frō all ẏ reſt of the worlde. Seeing the Iewes had this prerogatiue, ſurely if they had not ment to deface Gods power as much as in thē lay, they ſhould haue made their circumciſion auailable, by cutting off al yͤ euer was of their owne nature, aſſuring themſelues ẏ men can not pleaſe God, Rom.8.8. vntill they haue giuen ouer the thinges yͤ were their owne. Hereunto had Moſes an eye when he ſayd, *Circumciſe your heartes this day.* For their obſeruing of yͤ figure was nothing, except they cōſidered to what end God ment to lead them by it. They beguiled themſelues with ẏ viſible ſignes, and ẏ was ynough to thē: for Satan hath alwaies this policie with him, to make men buſie their wits about the thinges ẏ they ſee with their eyes as whereunto he ſeeth them inclined. For all our ſeeking is to content God with faire couers; and though we neuer come nie him in verie deede; yet would we fain pay him with a ſort of pelting trifles. The Iewes then eſteemed their circumciſion ynough & too much, but yet in ſo dooing they abuſed it, becauſe they regarded not ẏ thing ẏ God ment to ſhew thē therby, but were tied altogether to ẏ viſible ſigne. Therfore doth Moſes rebuke them, ſaying: thinke not ẏ the hauing of circumciſion in your bodies, is all ẏ you haue to doe: for Gods giuing of ẏ ſigne vnto you, was to help your infirmity, of purpoſe to leade you further therby, namely to bring you to true repentāce. For when ye once perceiue ẏ al ẏ euer is of your own nature bringeth nothing but curſing: you ſhall ſee that all of it is to be done quite and cleane away. Therefore bethinke ye to mortifie your ſelues: as if he ſhould ſay, Circumciſion conſiſteth not in the outwarde paring away of the fleſhe, but the trueth thereof is within: it is your heartes that muſt bee circumciſed. Moſes his meaning hereby, is not to condemne the outwarde ſigne: but to ſhewe the true vſe of it, which folke had corrupted through ſuperſtition and hypocriſie. Accordingly whereunto Ioell ſayth, Rend your heartes, & not your garments. Ioel.2.13. Wherin his meaning is, not that men ſhould no more ſhew any token of repētance by humbling themſelues before God,but to ſhew that all that euer men do by outwarde ſignes, (as by rending of the hayre from their heades and beardes, by much weeping, by knocking vpon their breſts, and by al other maner of geſtures that may ſhew them to be abaſhed, & in maner out of comfort before God)is nothing,except yͤ hart be broken afore.Euen ſo, circumciſion is vtterly vnprofitable,vnles yͤ hart be circumciſed as wel as yͤ body.

Now we ſee the meaning of Moſes, but it will become the plainer & eaſier vnto vs, if we come to our baptiſme. I haue already touched the likeneſſe that is betweene theſe two ſacraments:and it is all one, as if a man ſhould ſay vnto vs nowe adayes, if you would yͭ God ſhould take you for his people and heritage, yee muſt be baptiſed in your ſoules. What? baptiſed in our ſoules? Yea for ſouth. For the water that is caſt vpon our bodies is nothing, if wee haue not the trueth of it, namely that we be ſo plunged vnder the water, Rom.6.4. Col.2.12. as if we were in a graue;that is to ſay,yͭ it maketh vs to die in our ſelues,ſo as our owne affections, our owne thoughtes, our owne witte, our owne reaſon, and our owne wiſedome beare not any more ſway in vs; but yͭ we ſuffer our ſelues, to be gouerned by God, ſo as all our fleſhly luſtes bee ſubdued and held in captiuitie vnder him, and vnder his yoke. Therefore if a man would ſhew vs the true meaning of our baptiſme, he ſhoulde ſay, looke that yee be baptiſed within. And for the ſame cauſe alſo doeth Saint Paule in the ſeconde Rom.2.28. to the Romans, ſette downe a difference betweene the circumciſion of the letter, and the circumciſion of the ſpirite: And he ſayeth that the one is inwarde, and the other outward. Whereas he termeth it the Circumciſion of the letter, it is by a ſimilitude, for he hath an eye to the worde. To what purpoſe ſerueth the reading of Gods Law, and of the Goſpel, if it touch vs not inwardly? Verily if euery of vs haue his Bible in print, and yet let it alone, what doe we elſe but make it vnholy by our not applying of ſo great a treaſure to our vſe,& by our not imploying of the ſame to our profite according to the intent of our God? Euen ſo ſtandeth the caſe with the ſacramentes ſayeth Saint Paule. For they be but as a dead letter, ſo long as wee haue no more but the viſible ſignes, it is but a gay appearance and ſhew before men: But the whole matter conſiſteth in hauing the trueth before God. Wil we haue the true Circumciſion? then muſt it be inwardly, that is to ſay, in the Spirite. That is to ſay, God muſt worke there. So we ſee nowe that the meaning of Moſes was, that folke ſhoulde not boaſt vainely of the bare name of God, nor of the wearing of his badge, without the trueth of it,ſo as they could ſhewe the power thereof: but that they ſhould fare the better by the ſigne that is giuen them to warrant their adoption,to the entent it might appeare that God hath not without cauſe ſeparated them from the heathen, which were as good as baniſhed out of his church,& had no acquaintāce at al with him.

Againe we ſee that this doctrin toucheth and concerneth vs nowadayes,becauſe we haue baptiſme which ſerueth to the ſame vſe yͭ circumciſion did,namely to lead vs to repentance.Therfore muſt we apply it to our vſe. And foraſmuch as God hath vouchſafed to giue vs a ſeale of the fatherly loue which hee beareth vs, and that it pleaſed him to gather vs into his Church,and to ſhew yͭ he hath taken vs vnto himſelf to be heirs of his kingdome:Let not vs diſappoint our ſelues of ſuch a benefite through our owne lewdeneſſe and vnthankefulneſſe; but lette vs endeuour to fare the better by it, by beeing waſhed in our ſoules, that is to ſay, by mortifying our owne imaginations, reaſons, and luſtes, and by offering vp of our ſelues in ſacrifice vnto god,to the ende that he may renewe vs, and that nothing elſe but his ſpirite may reigne in vs, ſo as hee may beare the whole ſwaye. This exhortation is made vnto the Iewes, becauſe it was their dutie to apply their ſacramentes vnto ſuch ende. Neuertheleſſe let vs marke, that it is not in our power to performe the thing yͭ is required here. For although the Iewes ought to haue bin circumciſed in their heartes; yet was it verie neceſſary that God ſhould worke in yͭ behalfe. Likewiſe it ſtandeth vs in hande nowadayes,to mortifie our ſelues,& we be cōmanded ſo to do; but yet muſt wee be faine to reſort vnto God, who reſerueth to himſelfe yͤ office of renewing our ſoules. And that is the cauſe why it is ſayd yͭ our Lorde Ieſus Iohn 1.33. Chriſt is only he which baptiſeth with fire & the holy Ghoſt. For if a man yͭ miniſtreth baptiſme, had power to regenerate,then had he in himſelf the power, maieſtie,& glory, which is giuen to yͤ ſonne of God. But our baptiſing is only with water, yͭ is to ſay, we haue but the ſigne of baptiſme cōmitted vnto vs, yet notwithſtanding, our doing is not in vaine: for we muſt needes be faithfull witneſſes of God. And foraſmuch as we doe it in his name, we muſt not thinke yͭ the thing is voide & vnprofitable. But yet for all that, it behoueth vs to reſort to our Lord Ieſus Chriſt, and to conſider yͭ our miniſtring of baptiſme in his Church, is by his authoritie, & therefore that it belongeth vnto him to make it auaileable & that it is only his ſpirit wherby we be regenerate. For if euerie man could waſh his own ſoule: it might be ſayde that the miniſter baptiſeth with water, and yͭ euerie man baptiſeth himſelfe with truth; but it can not be ſayd ſo: for that were as much as to robbe Gods ſonne of the thing that is peculiar vnto him. He hath reſerued that honour to himſelfe, & neuer giuen it to any creature, no not vnto yͤ Angels of heauen. Therefore let vs vnderſtand, that nowadayes when it is tolde vs, that we muſt make the outwarde ſigne auailable vnto vs, by being baptiſed in our ſoules: we muſt therewithall immediately ſubmit our ſelues vnto God, praying him to performe the thing by the power of his holy ſpirit, which he repreſenteth to vs outwardly by the figure thereof; and to mortifie and renewe vs in ſuch wiſe, as we may haue the trueth of baptiſme ſealed vppe and ingrauen in our ſoules. In like caſe was it with the people of olde time.

True it is that here Moſes exhorteth yͤ Iewes to Circumciſe their heartes: but yet we ſhall ſee hereafter, howe he will ſay, the Lorde our God Deut.30.6.

will circumciſe your heartes, it may well ſeeme at the firſt ſight, ẏ theſe two thinges ſtande not wel together, but that there is ſome contrarietie in them: and yet they agree both together very well. For (as I haue touched afore) it is our dutie to be circumciſed; that is to ſay, to cut off all that is of our owne nature, and to ridde it quite away, ẏ God may reigne in vs. But doe wee diſcharge our ſelues thereof? No: but God muſt be faine to ſupply our want: And therefore it is he that Circumciſeth vs. Why then doeth he commaunde vs to doe it, ſeeing wee haue neither power nor abilitie to doe it? It is to the ende that we ſhould be ſorie at the ſight of our owne wretchednes, and ẏ ſeeing wee faile, and are ſo blame worthy, we ſhould on the other ſide reſort vnto our God, condemning our ſelues, & on ẏ other ſide be ẽcoraged to deſire him to do ẏ which wee our ſelues can not. There is yet one other reaſon, ẏ whereas God doth all in vs, yet he calleth his doing ours, and will haue euerie of vs to endeuour ourſelues, though he be the worker of it. Thus it is he ẏ doth all, notwithſtanding that we be not as blockes; For he hath giuen vs a will by nature. Neuertheleſſe that will is wicked, but he correcteth it and maketh it good; & his working is after ſuch a ſort, as he will haue vs to indeuour our ſelues luſtily like good men of warre, in ſo much ẏ although we do nothing, & that that which we do cõmeth of him; yet will he haue vs to haue ſuch feeling of his power, as to ouercom all tẽptations, & be circumciſed in our hearts, by renewing of our minds, & by forſaking al our own affections, to fight againſt Satan, vntil wee haue gotten the vpper hande.

But yet by the way we muſt vnderſtand, that this ſerueth not to magnifie our owne free wil as the Papiſts haue imagined. We haue ſhewed already, ẏ we be ſo litle able by nature to come vnto God, that we drawe cleane backe frõ him. Neuertheleſſe to the intent to ſhew vs plainly what our duetie is, he ſayeth vnto vs, do it: & although we be not able to ſet hand to the worke, no, nor to put forth a finger towardes it: yet doth he cõmand vs to do our duty, notwithſtanding ẏ we be vtterly vnable by any meanes to perform it. And that is to the end ẏ we ſeeing our defaulte, ſhould be the more aſhamed of it, & humble our ſelues before God, and againe ẏ we ſhould be prouoked to pray him to worke in vs, ſeeing it is he ẏ doth all in vs, notwithſtanding ẏ it be his will, that we ſhould be ẏ inſtrumentes of the power of his holy ſpirit. For as he is ſo gracious vnto vs, as to impute his owne doings vnto vs & to make vs partakers of thẽ: ſo alſo it is his will, ẏ we ſhould acknowledge and take them for our owne.

And now to go forward with the matter that I haue touched already, let vs beare wel in mind, that if our heartes be not circumciſed, we ſhalbe condemned of falſhood, for breaking of the promiſe, ẏ we haue made to our God, as this people were, who therefore were oftentimes vpbrayded with the vncircumciſednes of their heartes. The Ier.4.4.&9.26. Prophetes cried out oftentimes to the Iewes, come on your waies with your circumciſion. You beare your ſelues in hand that God is greatly beholden vnto you, becauſe you beare his marke. But you deale too leaudly wͭ him, & ye abuſe his name with too wicked trecherie. That marke was giuen you to make you holy, & yet notwithſtanding ye be defiled, inſomuch ẏ ye ly weltring in your owne dung, & (which worſe is) ye make your circumciſion a cloke of hypocriſie to couer your wickednes withall: So that if ye were ſtripped naked, ye would be aſhamed to ſee your own filthineſſe. But now becauſe ye haue Circumciſion, yee imagine ẏ that ſhould hide all your vncleanneſſe; and thereupon yee fall to ſpyting of God, by your corrupting & falſifying of ẏ thing which he had ordeined for your welfare & profit. Away therefore ye vncircumciſed, worſe thã Ezec.16.3.4. the verie heathen themſelues. Away ye people of Chanaan, your father was an Amorrhite and your mother an Hethit: that is to ſay, ye be worſe than the verieſtes naughtipackes in the worlde. Hence ye Harlottes birdes, come yee hither to boaſt that Abraham was your father? Go ſeeke your anceters ſomwhere elſe; for ye be baſtards and vnworthie, to be counted Abrahams childrẽ or ſeede. We ſee howe the prophetes did cutte the combes of the prating Iewes, to the intent they ſhould not brag any more of their circumciſion, yea and euen Saint Steuen vſeth the ſame maner of ſpeech in the ſeuenth of the Actes. Act.7.51. Go to ye vncircumciſed of heart & ſtiffenecked people (ſayeth he) ye be like your fathers, who hath always rebelled againſt God, & you follow their footeſteppes, or rather ye goe on from euill to worſe. And think we that ſuch vpbraidings concerne not vs nowadayes? Yes: For if we be once baptiſed, wee ſhall pay deere for our defiling of the water which God had dedicated to ſo holy & ſacred an vſe. In deede the water of it ſelfe is nothing; but when it is once ioyned to the word, there is as it were an authenticall ſeale which God hath ingrauen in it. Nowe hee that counterfaiteth ẏ ſeale of a Prince, ſhal hee not be puniſhed? Beholde, this is the ſeale of God, which ſerueth not to ſeale conueiances of earthly poſſeſſions; as Landes, Medowes, Vineyardes, and Lordeſhippes: but to aſſure vs that we be called to the heauenly life; it is ſuch a ſeale as bringeth warrant with it, that we be waſhed cleane from our ſinnes by the bloud of our Lord Ieſus Chriſt, and regenerated againe by his holy ſpirite; and ſhal we breake all this, & ſcape vnpuniſhed? Thẽ let vs looke well about vs and conſider, that our Baptiſme will coſt vs very deare if we make it not auailable, ſo as it may take effect in vs by being truely baptiſed in our ſoules.

And he addeth immediatly, *Harden not your neckſ any more.* We haue expounded the like ſimilitude heretofore: but yet muſt I tell ye briefly in this text, ẏ by this figuratiue ſpeech which I am about to expound, Moſes ment to expreſſe that the Iewes circumciſing of their hearts, was their ſubmitting of themſelues vnto God by receiuing his yoke, ſo as they kicked no more againſt him like wilde colts. Ye ſee then ẏ the thing which God requireth at our hands in that he will haue vs to be renewed, is that we ſhould be obedient vnto him. And hereby wee be warned, that as long as men abide in their owne nature, they be rebelles againſt God, and doe nothing elſe but ſpite him by drawing the contrary way from his righteouſnes,ſo as(to be ſhort) they be enemies to all goodneſſe. And for proofe thereof, God requireth no more but that we ſhould bow down our neckes vnto him,and beare his yoke meekely. That is the whole perfection of our life; and the greateſt holineſſe that God commandeth, is that men ſhoulde mortifie all their wicked affections,according to the former ſaying,that they ſhould bee circumciſed to pleaſe God, that is to ſay,they muſt die to liue well, that is to wit,God muſt ridde them of all that is their owne,if he intend to haue any good of them. Then let vs beare in minde that there will bee nothing but ſtubborneſſe in vs,to make vs to lift vp ourſelues againſt God; and to play the wilde beaſtes, ſo long as we abide in our own nature. To be ſhort as long as a man foloweth his owne inclination; hee muſt needes be at warre with God, and all goodnes:for there is not that veine in him,which tendeth not altogether to euill. Nowe let vs go bragge of our owne freewill, and ſay that men may well binde God to thē by their good works and deſertes, as the papiſtes haue imagined. For when the Papiſts heare that God commandeth vs to doe any thing; they conclude thereupon by and by, that then it is in our power to doe it. Yea, but(as I ſayde before)God reſpecteth not our abilitie or power, but our ductie. Neither paſſeth he for the gay appearance or outwarde ſhowe, to accept the thinges that carrie a faire countenance to the worldwarde. But the thing that liketh me(ſayth he)is yͭ ye receiue my yoke which I lay vpon you,not by tyranny or cruelty, but[of fauour & good will,]ſo as it ſhal be ſweete and amiable to you, if you can inure yourſelues to it with humilitie. Thinke not yͭ I come to bee pleaſed with your faire coūtenances. In deed ye can well ynough pretende outwardly, to be as lowly & meeke as ſheepe in hearing the voice of your ſhepheard: but inwardly ye be as ſtallfedde buls,ready to ſtrike at him wͭ your hornes; ye be wolues & foxes;there is nothing in you but pride & crueltie;there is nothing but hypocriſie,guile, & ſpitefulnes; ye be of ſo ſturdy nature,yͭ it is vnpoſſible to tame ye: & therfore it behoueth you to be quite & clean changed,or elſe ye can neuer away wͭ my yoke, but ye wil be like wilde beaſts, ſo as I ſhal not be neuer able to cōpaſſe you.Such then are we by nature, & ſuch do we cōtinue ſtill vntil god haue reformed vs by his grace,&we ſee the proof of it here before our eyes. And yet notwithſtanding we wil nedes ſtil magnifie our own reaſon & ſay we haue ſome ſeedes of goodnes in vs,ſo as we be inclined vnto goodnes,& can help to further Gods grace,ſo he aid vs,& ſo we make a hotchpotch of halfe figs & half reyſons as they ſay. True it is yͭ God ſtirreth vs vp & putteth vs foreward(ſay they;)but we go on of our own ſelf mouing: & afterward as he increaſeth his grace, ſo do we put to our collup;and finally our atteyning to yͤ accōpliſhment of our enterpriſes,commeth of our owne wiſedom,ſtrength & forwardnes. But Moſes giueth no place to ſuch follies: but contrariwiſe, he ſheweth, that(ſpite of out teeth)this ſentence of cōdemnation muſt nedes ſtande,namely that if we intende to be obedient vnto God,we muſt firſt & foremoſt be circumciſed,ſo as all yͭ is of the world muſt be killed in vs. Let that ſerue for one point.

Mat.11,30.

The ſpeeche of Papiſts & Pelagians.

And herewithall we haue to marke, that (as hath bin tolde vs oftentimes)God maketh more account of obedience, than of all the precious things yͭ men imagine thēſelues to haue. For in all ages men haue inuented fond deuotions,and they haue borne thēſelues in hand yͭ they ſhould pleaſe God well ynough, with deuiſing of apes toyes of their own brain. But cōtrariwiſe,yͤ thing yͭ God requireth of vs, is yͭ we ſhould ſubmit our ſelues to him & ſay;Lord reigne thou ouer vs, & be thou our only maſter,ſo as al our righteouſnes & holines may be to frame our ſelues according to thy worde,& not to make long vagaries to inuent this or that; but to holde ourſelues contented with thy ſingle will, to yeeld to yͭ which thou cōmandeſt, & to beare thy yoke quietly;yea and to learn to ſtoop & to bow down our necks vnto it, though it ſeeme painefull to vs. That is yͤ ſubiectiō which God requireth at our hands. Wheras Moſes ſaith: *Harden not your neckes any more*;he rebuketh the Iewes for their former life, as if he ſhould ſay, It is enough & too much yͭ ye haue hitherto bin ſtubborn againſt your God:according to this former ſaying of his heretofore,Frō yͤ firſt day yͭ I was acquainted with you, vnto this hour, I haue ſeene nothing but naughtines & frowardnes in you. He rehearſeth yͤ ſame here,as a thing yͭ ſhould make them aſhamed. For we like not to haue our former faults laid in our diſh. As ſoone as a man doth but touch them,becauſe our eares are nice, it is a corſie vnto vs, & we thinke yͭ all ſuch thinges ſhould be buried in forgetfulnes,ſo as they ſhould neuer be remēbred any more. In deed if we our ſelues did beare thē well in mind, it ſhould not neede to tell vs of them any more; but we ſee how euery of vs falleth aſleepe in thē; & it greeueth vs to come to any backereckening of the offences that we haue committed againſt God. We caſt them a great way behinde vs, it is a matter of heauineſſe to vs: and yet ought wee to bethinke our ſelues diligently both euen and morne of our former faultes. Howbeit not to be rechleſſe of them, or to fall into deſpaire for thē; but to be ſorie in ſuch wiſe for them, as we may walke more warely than wee haue done, and be thankefull to God for his goodnes in yͭ hee hath vouchſafed to correct vs, as I haue declared often heretofore. Ye ſee then how men ought to haue good remembrance of their faults, though they were neuer warned thereof by others. But what doe we? Wee forget them, and can not abide that any man ſhould tell vs of them: and that is a doubling of the fault. Therefore let vs aſſure ourſelues, that it is needefull for vs to be tolde of our ſins oftentimes,and to be put in remembraunce of them. And that is the cauſe why Moſes ſayth againe; Harden not your harts any more. He doth not alonely warne the Iewes but alſo therewithall accuſe them, telling them that euen vnto that time they hadde behaued

1.Sam.15.22

Deut.9.7.

themſelues ſo ill; as it was verie requiſite for thē to be done to vnderſtand, that it was but a fondneſſe for them to boaſt themſelues to be Gods people.

Nowe to the intent we may learne to put this doctrine in practiſe as it ought to be; Let vs vnderſtande, that ſuch as will needes harden themſelues in naughtineſſe, ſhalbe deſtroyed by God who will make them to feele ẏ force of his power according to this ſaying of his, If ye fall to ſtub- Leuit.26.23 24. bornes with me, I will deale ſtubbornly with you againe. And it is all one with this ſaying of the Pſal.18.27. xviij. Pſalme, With the frowarde I wilbe froward, and I wil deale roughly with ſuch as harden thēſelues againſt me. Then let vs learne that Gods intent is to lay a yoke vppon our neckes by his worde, of purpoſe to bring vs in ſubiection to his righteouſneſſe: And all is for our benefite. Inſomuch that although it bee ſo vnpoſſible for vs to fulfill the Lawe, that wee can not ſo much as put foorth one of our litle fingers to the furtheraunce of it, no nor once thinke a good thought: yet is that yoke gentle & amiable of it ſelfe, and all the harme of it commeth of our ſelues. For if wee will not bowe downe our neckes, but ſtrout them out as hard as if they were ſteele or braſſe; ſo as in ſteede of being as Oxen to labour, or as ſheep to heare the voyce of our ſhepherd, we become ſturdy buls and fall to ſtriking with rage & furie to ſhake off the yoke, ſo as we not only followe not the worde, but alſo ſhake off all ſubiection, and inharden ourſelues againſt God: what excuſe will there be for vs, ſeeing wee yeelde not ourſelues vnto him willingly to be taught at his hande? Yet for all that, we ſee how the world goeth. God therefore muſt be faine to ouermaſter vs, & to tame vs by maine hande. And in verie deede, looke what afflictions ſoeuer light vpon vs, we ought to take thē as ſtrokes of Gods hād, to make vs bowe our neckes vnder him, and to become tractable and obedient. But when we go awke and cleane contrary after that faſhion, thē doth he threaten vs thus by Moſes, I will deale ſtubbornely as well as you. He vſeth that terme of purpoſe, to the intent ẏ men ſhould not dally with him. For at the firſt bluſh the ſaying might Pſal.18.27. ſeeme ſtraunge which I alledged out of the xviij Pſalme; namely, that hee will deale frowardely with ſuch as are froward. For howe can that be? Can God be frowarde? No: But it is all one as if he ſhoulde ſay: yee ſhall finde in me a greater hardneſſe than yours is: Let vs incounter together, and ſee which of vs is ſtouteſt and beſt able to holde out. I tell you, it is you that are like to be confounded and go to wrecke. And therfore let vs leaue our naughtineſſe, and repaire vnto God while he calleth vs; and when we be come to him, let vs ſuffer ourſelues to be gouerned by his holy ſpirite, which is, the ſpirit of meekneſſe, that we may ſubmit our ſelues obediently vnto him. And for perfourmaunce thereof, lette vs marke the leſſon that Moſes addeth immediatly.

The euerlaſting thy God (ſayeth he) *is the God of Gods, a great, a mightie, & a ſtrong God: yea but let vs marke alſo, that he doth not accept* (that is to ſay, regard) *mens perſons*; but iudgeth according to the truth. Beware therefore ẏ ye truſt not any more in your circūciſion nor in ſuch like thinges, but beare in mind that God wil haue your ſeruice to be ſuch, as your hearts may be wholly dedicated vnto him: and that he wold haue you to ſubmit your ſelues vnto him, ſo as he may haue you in his poſſeſſion, and you enioy the inheritance which hee promiſed to your fathers, and which belongeth vnto you. Gods greatneſſe which Moſes ſpeaketh of in this place, is the firſt foundation which wee muſt lay whereby to take courage to ſerue him. For if there be no certainetie in our religion, wee ſhall alwayes make but a colde worke of it, and if it bee macched with any wilfulneſſe, it will make vs to ſtande in our owne conceites, yea and ſtarke fooles; ſo as there ſhall be no trueth nor right in our dooinges. Howe ſo euer the caſe ſtande, I ſay if men bee not ſure who the GOD is whome they worſhippe; they ſhall but runne a ſtraye and at randonne, without anye zeale to ſerue him. For although the Papiſtes bee ſo greatly giuen to their idolatrie, that to their owne ſeeming they haue ſure houlde of the thinges that they haue imagined: yet it is but a doubtfull opinion and ſurmiſe, which deceiueth them. In deede they doe their ſeruice with many ceremonies; but if a man come to the ſearching of their heartes, hee ſhall finde them alwayes doubting, and ſo ſnarled in their ſuperſtitions, that they knowe not where they be. And truely whenſoeuer they be pinched with aduerſitie, then doeth the venime breake out, ſo as they ſhewe that they wote not whether there is a GOD or no, but by blaſpheming of him, by gnaſhing their teeth againſt him, by finding fault with him, and by accuſing him of crueltie, for puniſhing them (as they ſuppoſe) without their deſeruing. Loe in what taking all they be, which followe their owne fancies in caſes of religion. True it is that the Idolaters become ſo beaſtly in their ſuperſtitions, that they followe them with a burning affection, as the prophetes ſay; who vpbrayde the Iewes that they Ier.5.8. were like ſtoned horſes neying after mares, that is to witte, they were ſo diueliſhly minded, that their doinges were not counted as an ordinarie kinde of whooredome, but as a villanie euen againſt nature. Likewiſe in the Popedome is it not ſeene that ſuch as are taken to bee the earneſteſt mainteiners of their religion, are rather carried away with rage, than moued with any true zeale to Godwarde? Yes certainely: and thereby they doe the more bewraye their owne leawdeneſſe and ſhame. In deede they be bolde ynough to ſkorne vs, as though wee were turned away from the right religion: but lette it ſuffice vs, that wee may alwayes vpbrayde them that they knowe not what GOD they worſhippe, whereas wee on our ſide haue good warrant of the doctrine ẏ we follow, and are ſure that God accepteth the ſeruice which we yeelde vnto [illegible]ccording thereunto, and that in ſo doing [illegible]ay boldly offer our ſelues vnto him.

Ye

Yee ſee then that vnleſſe we bee ſure of our religion, we ſhall neuer haue any right ordred zele, nor hearts diſpoſed to ſerue God. And that is the cauſe why Moſes ſayeth heere, Go too, ye be not as the heathen that go at al aduenture, weening that they doe well in ſeruing their Idolles, howbeit that it be but a weening, ſo as they know not what the Gods be whom they ſerue, for it is but a fancie of their owne deuiſing. But your God is the God that made heauen and earth, it is he that hath reueiled himſelfe vnto you. Now then, if yee followe them that haue not the like aſſurance, and fall to diſguiſing of Gods ſeruice: what excuſe will there bee for you? Were it not meete that ye ſhould rather giue ouer both your bodyes and ſoules to him, ſo as hee might bee honoured at your handes all your life long? And ſo we ſee here the intent of Moſes as concerning this text.

Rom. 12. 1. & 1. Cor. 6, 20.

Now let vs learne heereby, that wee can neuer rule our liues to Gods lyking, vnleſſe we firſt knowe him. For what a thing is it if wee thinke we liue vprightly, and in the meane while know not the God whom we ought to ſerue? For when is our life to bee counted good and holy? When it is ſpent in the honouring of God: that is the finall ende of it. For if wee knowe not what God it is, nor what his will is, well may we toyle our ſelues all our life long, and yet ſhall all of it bee but confuſion. It is as if a man ſhould runne gadding ouer the feeldes, he might well breake his ſhinnes, and tyre his whole body, and yet be neuer the further forewarde, but rather the ſwiftlyer hee runneth, the further is he off from his iourneyes ende. Wee ſee then that all thinges are out of order in the Popedome, bycauſe they bee blinde and ignoraunt, and wote not what God they ſerue, nor what Saint they ſhould make their vowes vnto, as ſayth their owne prouerbe. Inſomuch that when they haue tyred themſelues with trotting vp and downe, they wote not where they bee, but are newe to ſeeke in their imaginations, whereas to knowe God as hee hath ſhewed himſelfe to vs in his woord, that they might yeeld him the reuerence which is dewe vnto him: they can no skill of it, neither is there any tydings of it among them. But as for vs, if wee intende to knowe the true ſeruice of GOD, and to obey him throughly, the firſt poynt that wee muſt come vnto, muſt be to knowe him. Indeede this leſſon cannot be diſpatched at this preſent, and therefore it ſhall ſuffice vs to knowe in one worde for a concluſion, that it is an ineſtimable treaſure to vs, when it pleaſeth GOD to ſhew himſelfe vnto vs, ſo as wee bee ſure that our religion is good, and that he alloweth it, and that we goe not by opinion or by weening, as theſe wretched beaſtes doe, which ſuffer themſelues to bee lead by the noſe, as not hauing any certaine rule whereby to guide and to gouerne themſelues. Marke that for one poynt.

And for the ſecond poynt let vs marke alſo, that for as much as our God is great and terrible, it behoueth vs to be humbled vnder his mightie hand, and to learne to walke in ſuch wiſe in his feare, as wee not onely be abaſhed at his Maieſtie, but alſo beſides our honoring of him with feare and reuerence, wee repaire and reſort vnto him without any doubting that he is our father.

Nowe let vs fall downe in the preſence of our good God with acknowledgment of our ſinnes, praying him to touche vs ſtill more and more, ſo as wee may bee made to knowe that wee haue nothing but ſtubbornneſſe and naughtineſſe in vs, and therefore may ſeeke to him for the ſpirit of meekeneſſe, lowelineſſe, and feare, that being reformed by his grace, wee may ſeeke to amend our whole liues according to his righteouſneſſe, and fight continually againſt our wicked luſtes, vntill we bee diſcharged of this mortall body, and be gathered vp into his kingdome: Beſeeching him further to graunt vs ſuch grace as wee may neuer ceaſſe to followe him whither ſoeuer hee calleth vs, and in the meane while to beare with our infirmities, till he haue rid vs quite and cleane of them: and that for as much as we haue now our Lord Ieſus Chriſt, who is the end of the law, and the ſubſtance and truth of the Sacramentes that hee hath giuen vs, it may pleaſe him to graunt vs the grace to be ſo waſhed in our hartes through the power of the holy Ghoſt, as all our filthineſſe may be purged and cleanſed, ſo as in the end we may be wholy transformed into his glory. That it may pleaſe him to graunt this grace, not onely to vs but alſo to all people and nations of the earth, &c.

On Saturday the xiiij. of September. 1555.

The Lxx. Sermon, which is the fifth vpon the tenth Chapter.

17 For the Lord &c.

18 Who doth right to the fatherleſſe and widowe, and loueth the ſtraunger to giue him foode and rayment.

19 Therefore loue the ſtraunger: for you your ſelues haue beene ſtraungers in the land of Egypt.

20 Thou ſhalt feare the Lorde thy God, and ſerue him, and ſticke to him, and ſweare by his name.

21 Hee is thy praiſe, hee is thy God, who hath doone thoſe great and terrible thinges for thee, which thine eyes haue ſeene.

WE ſawe yeſterday, that to haue a right zele and affection in ſeruing GOD, wee muſt bee ſure that the religion which wee holde of, is good and allowed of him. For ſo long as we ſtand in doubt, it is vnpoſſible for vs to goe on with a free courage: we ſhall alwayes goe limping and as conſtrained: and if there bee any earneſt minde in vs, the ſame proceedeth of an inſenſibleneſſe, and not for that wee bee giuen in good earneſt to ſerue the GOD whom wee knowe not. And therefore wee muſt bee well and dewly inſtructed, eare wee can bee diſpoſed to doe well. And that is the cauſe why Moſes ſaith expreſly heere, that the GOD which vttered himſelfe by the Law, and ſhewed himſelfe afore to the Patriarkes, is the God of Gods, and that there is not any other to bee ſought: inſomuch that although wee were very well diſpoſed, and that wee were neuer ſo full of deuotion (as they ſay:) yet ſhould all that euer wee Rom.14,23. were able to doe bee nothing woorth, without faith. Therefore wee muſt bee ſure and knowe, that wee doe not any thing in vaine, nor at aladuenture: but that we followe Gods will, and that he liketh well of our dooinges.

Now Moſes hauing tould the people, that this Lawe was the Lawe of the liuing God; addeth now further, *that hee is great, ſtrong, and terrible.* For wee ſee how men take leaue to deſpiſe God, and ouerſotte themſelues ſo much in their pride and preſumption, as they cannot bee brought to any ſubiection. To the ende therefore that men ſhould not dally with ſuch a Lord, he ſayth expreſly that the God which willed his Lawe to bee publſhed vnto them at that tyme, is great, mighty, & dreadfull. His terming of him *Great,* is to ſhew what honour is dew to him. His terming of him *ſtrong* or *mightie,* is to withhold men from ſtanding againſt him. And his terming of him *terrible* or *dreadfull,* is to make vs knowe that if he doe but touch vs with his hand, wee muſt needes be vndone. Therefore let vs beware we deſpiſe him not: and when he calleth vs before his Maieſtie, let vs tremble and quake for feare, that we may come with right humilitie. Thus do we now ſee Moſeſes meaning. And therefore let vs marke, that if we wil direct our liues aright, wee muſt haue pure doctrine, that our religion may be grounded vppon Gods truth, ſo as wee may be ſure that the doctrine which we profeſſe, is infallible, & therewithall we muſt beware that when we know God, we ſet not light by him, but ẏ our knowing of him doe bring a lowelines with it, ſo as we ſubmit our ſelues wholly to the honoring of him ẏ is ſo high and incomprehenſible, Iob.41,16. before whom the very Angels themſelues doe tremble. Ye ſee then how the thing which wee haue to mark, is ẏ men ſhal neuer know God, vntill they haue gotten ſuch feeling of the infinite glory that is in him, as maketh them to ſtoope, yea & to make none account at al of themſelues, that they may giue ouer themſelues wholly to the honoring & ſeruing of him. But this is very yll put in vre. For euen they that make greateſt boaſt of their profiting in the Goſpell, can skill to babble well ynough, & they beare themſelues in hand ẏ they be iolly fellowes, when they can prattle at pleaſure, though it be without any reuerence at all. And we ſee how the holy ſcripture is ſhamefully abuſed nowe adayes by a nomber of mens diſcourſing of it as it were but of a fable, or to ſhew the fineneſſe of their wit, by raunging into curious and vnprofitable queſtions. Thus ye ſee how Gods word is abuſed now adayes at mens pleaſures, without any feare or reuerence, for want of cōſidering that which Moſes telleth here, that is to wit, ẏ when we reſort vnto God, wee muſt bethinke vs of the dreadfull Maieſtie that is in him, that it may bridle vs and holde vs in ſubiection to him, and make vs to yeeld him ſuch honour, as to be abaſhed at his ſpeaking to vs, vntill we haue conceiued what he ſaith to vs: & vpon the knowledge thereof, to be ready and foreward in obeying the ſame, without any gainſaiyng. And ſo ye ſee what we haue to gather vpō this text, where he ſaith ẏ the God which hath vttered himſelfe by the Law, is great & terrible.

Certaine it is that GOD intendeth not to to driue vs away from him, but rather to win vs to him by gentlenes. But yet muſt we bee fayne to bee tamed, bicauſe of the pride that is in vs, leaſt wee growe bold to offend him, and cannot finde in our hearts to be inured to his yoke, than the which there is not any thing more harde for vs to doe. Wee muſt (I ſay) bee firſt ſubdued by the feare or terrour that Moſes ſpeaketh of here, before wee can conceiue Gods goodneſſe. But yet muſt it be ſo tempered, as we ſhunne not his good inſtruction, ne bee ſo diſmaied as to refuſe Gods word out of hand; but as it may be as a preparatiue, to make vs good ſcholers, and to drawe our wittes to ſuch a teachableneſſe, as all that euer we haue of nature may be done away, and nothing may hinder vs to receiue his doctrine without gainſaying, but ẏ his word (beſides that wee loue it) may alſo bee reuerenced at our handes, and we follow it by ſubmitting our ſelues to it alwayes and in all caſes.

Now after that Moſes hath ſaid ſo, he addeth *that God hath no reſpect of perſons, nor receiueth any rewards.* Whereas he ſaieth ẏ he hath no reſpect of perſons, his meaning is that there is no fauor to be had at his hand for the things that men are willingly mooued with. For this word *Perſon* betokeneth the outward appearance. It is not takē here nor in any other places of the ſcripture, for ẏ which we meane by the word perſon when we ſay, Lo here is one perſon, Lo here are two perſons: but it is taken for riches, pouertie, birth, nobilitie, or honour. All things therefore ẏ carie an outward ſhowe before men, to moue vs to fauor them or to hate them, to honour them or deſpyſe them, all thoſe things (I ſay) are comprehended vnder the word Perſon, for they be but as vizors. And after that maner is it ſayd that God accepteth no mans perſon. To what purpoſe now doeth Moſes ſpeake thereof? It is bicauſe that the great ones perceiuing themſelues to bee borne out by the world, thinke they may doe as much before God, & thereupon become proude. If a man haue once won credit, ſo as mẽ dare not open their mouthes againſt his misbehauiour, but he daſheth thẽ out of countenance as many as ſtand againſt him: he beares himſelfe in hand yͤ he may beare as great ſway with God, & thereupon playes yͤ prince among them. That is the cauſe why a nũber ouerſhoote themſelues, & caſt away all feare of God. For when they ſee men feare them & ſtand in awe of them, or whẽ they ſee men commend them and fauour them: Then they thinke they haue won the gole, then they fal to triumphing, & they beare themſelues in hand yͤ they ſhould no more bee called to account. Now bicauſe men ouerſhoote themſelues Col.3.25. after yͤ faſhion: Moſes ſummoneth them to gods iudgement, which is done according to trueth, after which maner S.Paul ſpeaketh of it where he expoundeth this ſame ſaying, yͤ God hath no reſpect of perſons. He iudgeth truly (ſaith he) according to the deede & according to righteouſneſſe, ſo as men muſt not thinke they ſhall fare euer the better for their alleaging this or that.

Furthermore he ſignifieth therewithall, yͤ God is not contented with eyſeruice, but hath reſpect to the trueneſſe of the heart, & not to yͤ outward ſeeming of things, as is ſaid in the firſt booke of 1.Sam.16.7. Samuel. And ſo we haue to marke, yͤ although a man be great to the worldward, yet he muſt not lift vp his head or his necke againſt God. For they ſhal gaine nothing by it, bicauſe all yͤ greatnes of the world, is but as ſmoke before him. And on the otherſide they yͤ are vnderlings, muſt not thinke that God will beare with them the more for yͤ, as they now and then moue mortall men to compaſſion thereby. Therefore away with all theſe things that muſter afore our eyes, & wherby we be moued to loue or hatred: for all this is neither heere nor there before God: When we come before him, the firſt thing yͤ he will loke vpon, is our harts: and although they be now wrapped vp, and (to our owne ſeeming) we haue lurking holes to hide vs in: yet ſhall all be laid open. Therefore let vs not beguile our ſelues in yͤ behalfe. Again, let vs conſider, that God will iudge according to yͤ truth of the deede. We may well face out matters for a while, as we do bicauſe we be naturaly giuen to hipocriſie: but al yͤ paintings and all yͤ gay colours yͤ we pretend as now, ſhalbe wiped quite & cleane away when we come once before God. Therefore let vs walke vprightly & with a pure hart, & in eſpecially let vs rule all our workes by his law, knowing yͤ he hath no reſpect of perſons, & let yͤ bridle vs all. Let ſuch as are in authority & of power to grieue yͤ inferior & weaker ſorte, forbeare to do ſo. And on the otherſide let the weaker beare in minde, that God will not faile to iudge them for all that, bicauſe he is not an accepter of perſons: & therefore let vs bring nothing with vs but righteouſneſſe & ſoundneſſe of conſcience before him, for nothing will paſſe for payment but onely that.

It is not without cauſe, that Moſes addeth yet further, *that God taketh no rewards.* If a man aske vs whether God be like mortal iudges that wil be corrupted with bribes & money: truely there is none of vs all but wil ſay no: yea and it is ſuch a blaſphemie to ſay otherwiſe, yͤ euen the wickedſt perſons yͤ are would abhorre it. For they woulde ſay, what hath God to do with gold and ſiluer? Is God corruptible? But yet for all that, wee ceaſſe not to deeme that thing of him which we know to be falſe. And how ſo? Bicauſe yͤ as we ſee that worldly iudges are corrupted, inſomuch that if a mã greaſe them in yͤ hand, they wil ſuffer themſelues to be caried away, and whereas they had done him wrong afore, they will nowe doe him right, & they be to be bound & chaunged euery way: we beare our ſelues in hand yͤ God will bee dealt with after yͤ ſame maner. We will not ſpeak it with open mouth: but ſurely men would neuer be ſo bold to doe euill, if they did not tranſfigure God, & beare themſelues in hand yͤ he is plyable, & ſuch a one as wil be won by rewards. But let vs come to the ordinarie cuſtome of al ages. What is the meanes wherewith men thinke to pacifie God in yͤ Popedome, but by ſetting vp of tapers, by burning of perfumes, & by doing ſuch other pretie trifles? It ſeemeth to them yͤ he ſhold hold himſelfe contented with ſuch payments, as if a man brought a bribe to an earthly Iudge to corrupt him & to win him wͭall. But this had not his firſt beginning in Poperie. The Iewes were deceiued therwith. Alſo yͤ heathen men had yͤ ſame ſuperſtitiõ, notwithſtanding yͤ ſome of them miſliked it, I meane ſome of thẽ whoſe bookes wee haue, inſomuch yͤ they haue cried out againſt it, ſaying: what intend ye to do ye wretched folke? Perſius Satyra 2. When ye haue giuen your ſelues to deceit, theft, open wrong, crueltie, extortion, & all maner of wickedneſſe, ye come by & by to reconcile your ſelues vnto God. And howe? By bringing him ſome part of yͤ bootie. But foraſmuch as yͤ guiſe of yͤ Popedome is beſt knowne vnto vs, let vs ſee what is done there. Whẽ a mã hath pilled & polled his fill, if he giue ſome Cope to yͤ Church, if he build ſome chappel, if he found ſome Maſſes, if he cauſe ſome puppets to be made, or if he doe ſome other ſuch gewgawe: thats a fellow alone, God is well recompenced at his hand, he needes not to doubt of yͤ forgiuenes of all his ſinnes before God: If he doe but offer him a peece of the bootie, he is wel ynough contented, his mouth is ſo ſtopt yͤ he cã demand no more. In deede men wil not ſay thus, but yet is it ſo neuertheleſſe. For whereof comes it yͤ the wicked ſurmiſe all their wicked deeds to be couered, but of yͤ they imagin themſelues to haue compoũded wͭ God, ſo as he knowes not what to ſay any more, when they haue once as it were bribed him after that ſort with ſome preſent? Now then bicauſe the world doth daly ſo with God, & beareth it ſelf in hand that it can agree with him for rewards: Moſes ſaith on the contrarie, that God is not like mortall men, nor will yeeld a whitte for all that: and therfore he wold not haue men to beguile themſelues. For if we deſire to be reconciled vnto him when we haue offended him;there is none other way for vs, but to caſt our ſelues downe, and to come to him with a ſory heart for it. For as it is Pſal.51.19. ſaid in the pſalme,that is the ſacrifice which hee accepteth aboue all: And when he receiueth vs into his fauor, let vs aſſure our ſelues that it is for yͤ paimentes ſake,which was made in the perſon of our lord Ieſus Chriſt.Wherfore let vs not preſume to bring him any thing of our own, but let vs borrow elſewhere, that which we haue not in our ſelues. Yet for all this,it behoueth vs to hate ſin, if we meane yͭ God ſhould admit vs into his 1.Cor.11.31. fauour. Yea and we muſt condemne the euill yͭ we know to be in our ſelues,if we intend to be acquite of it. And therfore let vs not come any more with our owne vaine fancies,vpon hope to pacifie God with ſuch pelting traſh, or by likening him to a corrupted Iudge,that will haue his eyes blinded with rewardes: let vs not imagin any ſuch thing in him,but let vs walke ſoundly.

Nowe then wee ſee howe Moſeſes intent was to bridle vs, by ſhewing vs what the nature of God is: and he exhorteth vs to feare him bicauſe he is terrible. And again,for as much as he regardeth no mans perſon, let vs put away all pride & preſumption. Let the great ones know yͭ they ſhall gain nothing by their ſtoutnes,but yͭ al creatures muſt ſtoope to him. Finally let vs not think that when we haue offended God,we ſhal pleaſe him again with this fond ſhift of offering him ſome amends for it. For he doth ſo greatly abhorre & loath ſin, as he can by no meanes away with it, neither is there any payment in the world yͭ can make ſatiſfactiõ for it. What is to be done then, but to reſort ſimply & plainely to our God, ſubmitting our ſelues vnto him, & ſeeking nothing elſe at his hand but to be reformed by him,ſo as al yͭ euer he miſliketh may be corrected & caſt downe in vs? Furthermore when as it is ſaide yͭ God taketh no rewards, we bee done to vnderſtand,yͭ(as much as in vs lieth)we defile yͤ blood of our Lord Ieſus Chriſt, which is the only payment & ſatiſfaction for our ſinnes,when we be yͤ bolder to ſin vnder pretence of reconciling our ſelues vnto God.They(I ſay)yͭ take ſuch libertie to doe euill, defile the blood of our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt,as if they trampled it vnder foote. For to ſay yͭ when we haue done a fault, we may be diſcharged of it by bringing ſome raunſome or recompence for it,were a plaine declaration yͭ we loue not our gold & ſiluer at all.If a man ſhoulde breake all lawe bicauſe he is ſure he hath to doe with corrupt iudges, whoſe fauour he ſhal win w̄ his purſe,and yet notwithſtanding for all his offending after yͤ ſort,had no care howe he waſted & conſumed his money, men would ſay he were witles.But we haue not any other means wherby to be reconciled vnto God,than yͤ only blood of our Lord Ieſus Chriſt. Now then if we fall to laſhing of it out after yͤ faſhion w̄out diſcretion,is it not a token of too villanous contempt? Yes.And therfore let vs learne to hold our ſelues to yͤ ineſtimable price yͭ was paide for our raunſome: let vs learn(I ſay)to hold our ſelues in the feare of God, ſo as we giue not our ſelues ouer vnto euil. And therew̄all let vs learne alſo, to behaue our ſelues in ſuch wiſe towardes our neighbors, as yͤ mightie greeue not the weeke and feeble. For although we may ſcape in this world, yet when we come before the heauenly iudge,we ſhall be puniſhed double for our abuſing of our power & credite after yͤ faſhion. According whereunto S. Eph.6.9. Paule warneth maiſters yͭ they ſhould not miſintreat their ſeruants:for God(ſaith he)iudgeth w̄out reſpect of perſons. Wherby he ſheweth,that ſuch as are ſet in high eſtate & authoritie, ought to abſtaine vtterly from al crueltie & pride. For why?They may well be ſerued of the ſame ſauce thẽſelues.And it is not for thẽ to think thẽſelues to haue yͤ better hand bicauſe that as now they haue yͤ vauntage & are in better degree:for all yͤ geere ſhalbe daſht,when it cõmeth before God. Thus ye ſee what we haue to beare in minde.

Now for a further declaration he addeth, *that God doeth right to the fatherleſſe, the widowe and the ſtraunger: & that God hath a care of the ſtraunger to giue him clothing & foode.* Yea & he telleth yͤ Iewes that they had bin ſtraungers in yͤ land of Egypt, & therefore they ought to be mindefull ſtill of yͭ ſtate of theirs,that they might vſe all maner of gentleneſſe towards ſtraungers.This ſerueth for the proofe of yͤ doctrine which I touched euen now;yͭ is to wit,yͭ god hath no reſpect of perſons. And in yͭ reſpect doth Moſes ſay, yͭ the widowes, fatherleſſe, and ſtraungers ſhal be vexed in this world, they ſhall haue none to beare them out, men ſhall ſuffer the widowes to be troubled, the fatherleſſe ſhalbe made a pray,ſtraungers ſhalbe laid open to all iniuries,& no mã ſhall withſtand it.And why? For in as much as they beare no coũtenance in this world,nor haue any kinsfolke or friends to maintaine them: it ſeemeth yͭ they may be put to yͤ bearing of al things: yͭ is the cuſtome of yͤ world.But contrariwiſe it is ſaid here, yͭ God is a defender of the fatherleſſe,a maintainer of the widowes,& a protector of ſtraungers. This is vtterly againſt yͤ cõmon cuſtome of men. For (as I haue ſaid alreadie) men are giuen to yͤ pleaſuring of ſuch as may ſtãd them in ſome ſted again:Kinsfolk & friends will help one another: & in the meane while poore people are forſakẽ. But ſee here how God dealeth yͤ cleane contrarie way. When he ſees men truſt in their owne ſtaies,and in their own ſtrength, he letteth them alone, as if he ſhould ſay to them, Very wel, try what ye can doe of your ſelues. For commonly when means are profered vs in this world wherby to helpe vs, we deſpiſe God, & we beare our ſelues in hand, that wee may well ynough forbeare him. Not that wee will ſo ſay; but for as much as fewe folke doe call vppon God when the world fauoureth them: therefore doth God alſo make no account of them. Beholde,it is the widowe,the ſtraunger,and the fatherleſſe, that are conſtrained to make their mone vnto him; and when they haue looked about them, they finde no fauour nor helpe among men. They ſhalbe dalyed withall, and although ſome fayre promiſes be made them, all is but holywater of the court as they terme it: in ſo much that the poore ſoules wote not where to become. This kinde of intreatance driueth them to God, & he hearkeneth to their ſighes & complaints. And ſo we ſee, that by ſuch examples, Moſes hath well confirmed the leſſon which he had ſet downe; namely that God reſpecteth no perſons. For the things that are deſpiſed in the world, are precious in his ſight: and whom men hold ſcorne to beſtowe a looke vpon; them doth he giue good eare vnto.

Sith it is ſo, let vs mark for the firſt point, that if wee vexe ſuch as are without defence in the world, God will ſet himſelfe as an aduerſarie againſt vs. And ſurely, were wee well perſwaded therof, we wold be more afraid to offend a poore fatherleſſe child, a widow, or a ſtraunger, than to offend thoſe that are beſt friended, and are able to reuenge themſelues to the worldwarde. But what? Our vnbeliefe bewrayes it ſelfe in that behalf: in ſo much that if there be a man that is riche, mightie and well propped vp, we dare not withſtand him. And although he haue doone vs ſome wrong, yet we put it vp meekly, & dare not complaine of it, & much leſſe dare we lift vp our hand againſt him. But as for a poore man, we will not tarie till hee haue doone vs ſome wrong or outrage, we wil be at hoſte with him aforehand. For why? Wee feare not that he will be euen wͭ vs; he may not bee ſo bolde as once to murmur againſt vs. And if he doe, wee can put a barre in his way, with who are you ſir? He ſhall obtayne no right in Law. And if he doe, yet ſhall he haue the worſe end of yͤ ſtaffe. Thus ſtand we in feare of men if they be armed with any power, but in yͤ meane while we feare not God, who declareth himſelfe to be the defender of all poore folkes yͭ are deſtitute of help. If we beleeued yͤ holy ſcripture, ſurely this only one ſaying of Moſes would more abaſh vs, than all the worldly conſideratiõs that could befall vs. On the contrary part, when we be ſo bold in troubling poore folks; it is a tokẽ that we belieue not any whit of al that is conteined in the holy ſcripture, and that we bee worſe than heathen folke: And yet for all that, it is the cõmon faſhion of yͤ world. But herby it appereth, yͭ nowadays vnbeleef ouerfloweth yͤ whole earth, like a water flud. In deede it is a horrible thing: but yet is it ſo, & it cannot be denied. What is to be done then? Let vs loke into our ſelues. If the Armes of a common weale or of a prince bee ſet vpon a houſe, or vpon a peece of land, no man dareth preſume into it, for it were a breaking of his aleagance and not a priuate offence. Behold, God ſetteth his armes or badge vpon yͤ widowe, the fatherles, and the ſtraunger, & he telleth vs that hee hath taken them into his protection. Now if a man fal to troubling of them, & deale outragiouſly with them: is it not an open deſpiſing of God, and a defying of him, as it were to bid him battaile? In deede we wil not take it ſo, but God wil not referre himſelfe to our vaine opinion and fancie. Whatſoeuer come of it, let vs marke well, that although the widowes bee ſhaken off as to the worldward, though fatherles children bee put to the ſpoyle, though poore ſtraungers be skorned and troden vnder foote: yet doth God ſet neuertheles ſtore by them, but hath his eyes continually vpon them, and will ſurely maintayne them. And therefore vnles we purpoſe to haue God our aduerſary, and that he ſhould ſhew himſelfe to bee our deadly enemy; let vs abſtaine from all wrong dealing, extorſion outrage, deceite, and malice, towards thoſe that are friendleſſe in reſpect of the world, and vtterly deſtitute of all ſhiftes, and after a ſorte ſet open to the ſpoyle, as I ſaid afore. Let vs not oppreſſe them, leaſt God ſet himſelfe againſt vs, & ſhew himſelfe to be their continuall ſhield. Mark well this firſt fruite which wee haue to gather of the ſaid leſſon that was giuen to the Iewes in old tyme, to the end that if we feare not the puniſhment of men, we may yet be afraid of the determinate ſentence that God ſetteth downe: which is, that hee will not ouerſlip the wrongfull trubling of poore folke, without ſhewing of himſelfe to be on their ſide, and that he hath taken their quarell in hand, according to this ſaying, *that he will doe them right.*

He ſaies not, only that he loueth them, or that he pitieth them; but that he will doe them right. Now then, if we ſee that the Iudges on earth do but mocke poore folks when they come to them for ſuccour, and yͭ in ſtead of helping them they do but skorne them, let vs vnderſtand that thoſe Iudges muſt come before the heauenly Iudge, who will ſurely puniſh both thoſe whome he had put in commiſſion to defend poore folke, and alſo thoſe that haue abuſed the liberty which they had in this world, by dooing the more euill bycauſe they ſaw they might ſcape vnpunyſhed. God therefore looketh vpon them, and yet maketh as though he ſaw them not, for a time; ſo as if men miſintreat poore folkes, be they widowes, fatherleſſe, or ſtraungers, in deede he ſetteth not himſelfe againſt their dooings at the firſt, but when hee hath let them take their pleaſure a while, then layes he his hand vppon all ſuch as haue paſſed their boundes in doing outrage to the feeble and little ones; and ſpecially vppon ſuch as haue not doone their office when they were in authoritie to doe Iuſtice, nor haue ſuccoured poore ſoules when they were oppreſſed. For God muſt needes redreſſe ſuch enormities, and ſhew ſuch perſons their negligence, by ſetting himſelfe againſt them, as againſt the corrupters of the lawe when it was put into their hand. And ſo ye ſee what Moſes ment, in ſaying yͭ God doth right to ſuch as are wrongfully trodẽ vnder foote, and are not regarded in the world.

By the way, wee haue alſo great comforte to receiue of this text: ſo that if wee be deſtitute of worldly helpes, our God here taketh vs into his tuition; yea and he taryeth not till we come vnto him, but telleth vs that he is our defence, and yͭ he will be our maintainer. Now then although poore folk be wronged, and haue neuer ſo much violence offered them, ſo as they be in maner troden vnder foote: haue they not wherewith to content thẽſelues, ſith they know yͭ God looketh vpon them with pittie, and will in yͤ end ſtretch foorth his mighty hand to ſuccour them? True it is yͭ they muſt bee excerciſed with patience ſo lõg as pleaſeth God: but yet if they be not too vnthankfull, they haue well wherwith to contentẽ themſelues,in that they be ſure ẏ God neuer forgetteth them,but ſuccoureth them, & keepeth a regiſter of all ẏ wrongs ẏ are done vnto them, to bring thẽ to account in time conuenient. Howbeit to the intent wee may inioy this comfort, let vs note alſo, ẏ it is not ynough for men to be fatherleſſe or ſtraungers,or for womẽ to be husbandleſſe;but wee muſt alſo be truely diſtreſſed before God, ſo as we humble our ſelues & reſort to him for reſcue whẽ men afflict vs wrongfully. For if a ſtrãger be prouder than he ẏ is at home in his owne countrey and among his friendes: it is in vaine for him to truſt ẏ God wil be ẏ defender of his welfare.When a ſtraunger is ſo lordly, ẏ he will take more vpon him than ẏ partie that hath wherewith to helpe himſelfe : he may goe ſeeke his maintenaunce elſwhere than at Gods hand;for he ſhal not finde it there.But if a ſtrãger perceiuing himſelfe deſtitute of all worldly helpe,& yet ẏ God is on his ſide,do call vpõ him & put himſelf wholly into his hands; ſurely then ſhal he finde at length, ẏ Gods promiſing to doe right to ẏ ſtrãger,is not in vaine.If a widow play the ſhee diuell,in troubling and vexing of other folks,and ẏ there is more to do with her than ẇ a doſen men : let her not thinke ẏ God will trouble himſelfe for her. But if a widow be helpleſſe, & behaue her ſelfe meekely, & ſeeke no further than to liue peaceably with al men : ſuch a one wil the heauenly Iudge receiue into his protection. In like caſe ſtandeth it with the fatherleſſe. If they giue themſelues to naughtines, ſhaking off all yoke, & become vnthrifts in ſpite of God & the world; they beguile themſelues if they think that God fauoreth them, vnder pretence of this doctrine. And therefore let vs marke well,ẏ this is ſet downe expreſſely for ſuch as ſuffer afflictions patiently,& auenge not themſelues, but put their caſe into Gods hands. Although then that ſuch folke be ſcorned of the world,and poynted at with the finger, and triumphed at by ſuch as treade them vnder foote : yet doeth God take their caſe in hand, and will ſurely ſhewe it how long ſo euer he delay. Wherefore let vs learne hereby, to comfort our ſelues in our afflictions: which is,by being tamed and made to ſtoope, ſo as we ſeeke to be pitied at Gods hand, & referre our whole caſe vnto him,caſting all our cares & ſorowes into his lap.And again, let vs be wel aduiſed,ẏ although the world giue vs leaue to doe euil,ſo as we may vex & trouble men at our pleaſure;yet ſhal we not ſcape Gods wrath: wel may we wrangle with him,but it ſhall not boote vs at all. Thus ye ſee what we haue to remember vpon that text.

To be ſhort,let vs marke,that here Moſes intended to commend equitie and vprightnes vnto vs. I ſay he ſheweth vs how our Lord will bee ſerued at our handes : namely by behauing our ſelues plainely with our neighbors,ſo as we offer no violence or wrong to any body, & ſpecially to the weaker ſort, and to ſuch as haue no maintenance at mãs hand.God then will not haue vs to ſerue him with Ceremonies, but wee muſt deale iuſtly and vprightly, ſo as we yeelde euery man his right. That is the true ſeruing of God, as is ſhewed vs oftentimes in the holy ſcripture. And frõ thence alſo is it,ẏ the Prophets haue drawen theſe ſayings,That God requireth mercie & not ſacrifice;That God wil haue vs to liue amõg our neighbours without doing harme to any body; That he wil haue al violence to ceaſſe;& that he wil haue al crueltie & deceite to be farre frõ vs. The Prophets haue good ſtore of ſuch exhortations:& the foũtaine whereout of they haue fetched them,is this doctrine of Moſeſes,ẏ God wil not be ſerued with I wote not what ſuperſtitions as men are wont to do, who vſe much pompe & glorious̃nes in ſeruing God with faire temples, goodly pictures,gay imagerie, ſweete perfumes, ringing of bels,ſetting vp of tapers, & ſuch other pelting traſh. They beare themſelues in hand ẏ God delighteth in ſuch things,& that when they play vpõ their Organs,they make him to daũce as if he were a little babe.But let not vs buſie our heads about ſuch ſmall trifles,for God wil be ſerued ẇ truth,righteouſnes, & ſoundnes of heart. Againe he will haue vs to indeuour to ſerue our neighbors : for we haue nothing elſe ẏ is worth the bringing vnto him: but he wil haue vs to cõmunicate togither,ſo as euery of vs according to his abilitie,do ſtraine his wits to ſuccour them ẏ haue need of help, & in any wiſe to beware that we take not libertie to doe any hurt or harme to any body.Now then let vs marke wel the meane of ſeruing our God according to his wil, that we trãſforme him not by our vaine folly,by bearing our ſelues in hand,ẏ he is wel honored when we bring in our own pelting traſh,as it were to daſle his eyes withall, which thing is vnpoſſible.

Oſee.6.6.

Now after that Moſes hath ſhewed that God is terrible,and that it is not for vs to daly with ſo great a Lorde, who can well ynough hamper vs if we rebel againſt him; and therefore that it behoueth vs to liue vprightly,& to pitie ẏ poore, & to ſuccor them ẏ are oppreſſed, ſo as we offer no crueltie nor tyrannie to ẏ weaker ſort, & to ſuch as are deſtitute of friends to ſupport thẽ:now after all this he addeth , *that God is the praiſe of his people.* And it is to ẏ end to win their heartes by gentlenes & friendly dealing.And herein we ſee ẏ God omitteth not any thing whereby to draw vs to him, but ẏ after he hath vſed threatenings & put vs in feare,to make vs to ſtoope & to ſtand in awe of him,he commeth like a father ẏ ſhould flatter his childe , & vſeth myld & gentle words, rather than his fatherly authoritie. Thus ye ſee how our Lord laboreth by al meanes to win vs; & therfore ſo much ẏ more to blame are we,and ẏ leſſe to be excuſed,if we cannot be bowed neither by faire meanes nor by foule , ſeeing ẏ our Lord trieth al ẏ waies to the wood, to draw vs to him.Therefore doeth Moſes purpoſely ſay,*That God is the praiſe of his people,& that he had done great & terrible things for their ſakes.* For this cauſe he ſaith,firſt of all that God is their praiſe. And by that ſpeech hee meaneth , that when wee once know God,and he hath ſhewed himſelf to vs by his word;his will is that wee ſhould glorifie him. Marke that for one point.

Secondly he putteth ẏ people in remembrãce *of the great miracles that had bin done for thẽ in their* *going out of the land of Egypt.* For they were as marks or tokens of Gods goodnes,ſo as ẏ people could not but be conuicted of vnthankfulneſſe, foraſmuch as God had vttered himſelfe as familiarly as was poſſible, to ſhewe himſelfe fauorable to Abrahams poſteritie. To be ſhort, we ſee how God not onely vſeth his dominion & right of ſoueraintie, which hee hath ouer vs to make vs ſubiect to his lawe and commaundementes: but alſo commeth to vs as a father, and vttereth as mield and gracious louingneſſe towardes vs, as can be; and all to the end to breake the hardneſſe of our harts. Inſomuch that if wee bee not moued at his maieſtie, or if we yeelde him not ſuch reuerence as we ought to doe in reſpect of his ſouereintie ouer vs: at leaſt wiſe yet ought we to be meekened, ſeeing he ſtoopeth to vs,& cōmeth downe frō his ſeate vnto vs, as if he ſhould ſay, Wel ſirs, aſſure yourſelues I am your father, and therefore I pray you conſider well the good that I haue done you, and whereby I haue witneſſed my fauour towardes you, and let it moue you at leſtwiſe to loue and ſerue me. That is the very principall meaning of Moſes.

But yet by the way, let vs marke alſo that God is neuer duely honored at our hands, vnles we lay all our glorie vpon him. For wheras he is termed our prayſe, by ẏ word he bereaueth vs of al glorie, & ſheweth vs ẏ there is not any thing in vs, whereof we ought to be proude. Therefore let a man ſet as much ſtore by himſelfe as he liſteth, yet in the end he ſhal come to ſhame, ſo as he ſhall perceiue there is not one drop of goodneſſe in himſelfe. What is to be done then? Let vs reſort right forth to our God, to ſeeke al goodnes in him, & let vs glorifie him for ſhewing himſelfe ſo liberall towards vs, ẏ wee may alſo make our boaſt thereof, according as it is ſaide by Ieremie, Ier.9.23. that the rich man muſt forget his riches, and the ſtrong man his ſtrength, & the wiſe man his wiſdome, and all that euer is of man muſt be beaten downe, that wee may fetch our glory at Gods hand, knowing that it is he that executeth righteouſnes, iudgement, and mercie. Thus yee ſee what wee haue to remember in this worde, where Moſes ſaith that God is the praiſe of his people. And if we be not moued by that which is tolde vs in the holy ſcripture, at leaſt wiſe yet let vs open our eyes, and let the often experience of Gods benefits frame vs to ſuch humility as wee may not preſume to commend ourſelues any more, but onely haue our mouthes open to praiſe and magnifie the thinges that wee ſhall haue receiued at Gods hand. For ſith he ſheweth vs ſo many waies, that all our welfare conſiſteth in him, and that it commeth only of him, if we wil ſhut our eyes at it like a ſort of blockeheads, and vouchſafe not ne liſt not to hold our ſelues to the thing that is throughly knowen and apparāt; ſurely we ſhalbe conuicted of bereauing God of his praiſe, & of bringing him to nothing as much as in vs lieth, for his benefits are infinit towards vs. And therfore let vs learn by this leſſō, to acknowledge the benefits throughly which God hath beſtowed vpon vs: for they be a ſufficient buſines to keepe vs occupied. If we gather our wits about vs to conſider Gods goodnes towards vs, we ſhal find that we ought to ſeeke our whole praiſe no where els than only in him. And for that cauſe doth Moſes adde, *It is he that hath done the great and terrible things which your eyes haue ſeene.* As if he ſhold ſay, God needeth not to ſeek here & there for record, or for iudges to arreigne you: for (ſpite of your teeth) it ſhalbe proued to your faces, that your God is great, mightie, and terrible. For you were ẏ miſerableſt creatures in the world, you were in bondage like bruit beaſts; and your God loued you ſo deerely, that he hath ſtretched out his arme againſt the Realme of Egypt, that ſtately & excellent Realme, ẏ realme ſo renoumed, wherein all the wiſedome of the world was incloſed, inſomuch ẏ hee hath made more account of your welfare, than of ẏ Realme. Sith it is ſo, know ye that it is not for you to glory any more of your ſelues, but to glorie onely of him. Aſſure your ſelues ẏ looke howe manie benefits you haue receiued at his hand, ſo many records haue you to bewray your lewdnes and vnthankfulnes, if ye acknowledge them not vnto him. And ſo by the example that is ſet vs downe here, let vs learne to acknowledge gods gratious goodnes, & to lay it vp in minde, and to make a good memorial thereof, & to call it often to remembrance, that wee may be prouoked thereby to yeld al glory vnto God, & to confeſſe that for our parts we be ſillie and wretched creatures, in whom there is nothing but condemnation, and therefore there belongeth nothing to vs but wrath, & it is only God to whom all the glory & praiſe of our welfare perteyneth. Wherefore let it ſuffice vs that he is ours, and that hauing giuen himſelf vnto vs, he vouchſafeth alſo to make his benefits common vnto vs. Rom.8.30.

Nowe let vs fall downe in the preſence of our good God, with acknowledgement of our faults, praying him to make vs to perceiue them throughly, and that therwithal we may ſo know the greatnes of his maieſtie, as it may moue vs to ſubmit our ſelues to the obeying of him, and draw vs to ſuch ſubiection, as we may frame our ſelues to his wil, and bee no more intangled and wrapped in worldly things; but that we may bee ſo rid of them, as all our ſeeking may be to dedicate our ſelues wholy vnto him, ẏ he may acknowledge & accept vs for his people, & haue his hād alwayes ſtretched out to ſuccor vs at our neede. And that in the meane while we may patiently beare al the aduerſities that he ſhall ſende vs for the tryal of our obedience, & ſo apply our ſelues thereunto, as wee may not fayle to take comfort in his goodnes, and to reſt vppon the ſame, til he haue made vs to feele ẏ things perfectly, whereof hee hath giuen vs a taſt alreadie in this tranſitorie life. That it may pleaſe him to grant this grace, not onely to vs, but alſo to al people & nations of the earth. &c.

On Wedneſday the xviij of September. 1555.

The Lxxiiii. Sermon, in which the laſt verſe of the tenth Chapter is expounded, and this is the firſt Sermon vpon the eleuenth Chapter.

22 Thy fathers went downe into Egypt,in number threeſcore and ten ſoules: and now the Lord thy God hath made thee in multitude as the ſtars of the skie.

The eleuenth Chapter.

LOue the Lorde thy God therefore, and keepe his appointmentes, Ordinances, Lawes, and Commaundementes for euer.

2 And conſider you this day (for I ſpeake not to your children which haue neither knowen nor ſeene[them])the inſtruction of the Lord your God,his greatneſſe,his mightie hande,and his ſtretched out arme,

3 And his wonders and workes which hee did in the middes of Egypt, vnto Pharao king of Egypt and all his Land:

4 And what he did to the hoſt of the Egyptians,vnto their horſes & Chariots, when the Lord brought the waters of the read ſea vpon their faces when they purſued you,and how the Lord deſtroyed them vnto this day.

I Haue alreadie ſhewed ẏ meaning of Moſes, how that by rehearſinge ẏ wonders ẏ GOD had wrought for the deliuering of his people out of captiuity he ſhewed the Iewes that they ought to haue bin the more conformable to him, in reſpect of the fauor and loue which he had ſhewed to them at al times. For he had alwayes ſhewed by his doings, that his promiſing to take Abraham & all his ofspring into his protection,was not in vain. Ye ſee then an euident proofe ẏ God hauing receiued Abrahams ofspring into his free fauour, hath alſo confirmed it by deedes & experience. And thereupon it is to be concluded,that if that people had not beene altogether froward, they ought of reaſon to haue ſerued God.And that is the point that Moſes ſhot at. Conſider with your ſelues(ſaith he)if ye be not bounde to giue your ſelues wholy to the obeying of your God,For *he hath multiplied you as the ſtars of the skie.* Through his gratious goodnes you are become ſo great a nũber,ẏ euen you your ſelues may be aſtoniſhed at it. To be ſhort,if ye look vpõ your body,ẏ is to ſay your ſtate;you cãnot but ſee ſuch a wõderful fauor of your God,as you could neuer haue once looked for or hoped.Sith it is ſo, there is now no excuſe for you if you cannot find in your hartes to glorifie his name,ſeeing he hath ſhewed him ſelfe ſo good & merciful towards you. That is ẏ ſũme of ẏ matter ẏ Moſes intended to ſet down.

Gen.15.5. And he ſpeaketh expreſly of the ſtars of the skie,becauſe of the promiſe.For God ſpeaking to his ſeruãt Abrahã,ſhewed him in a viſion ẏ multitude of the ſtars,which is infinite.Euenas they be paſt reckening(ſaith god)ſo alſo ſhal thy ſeed be. Now then the meaning of Moſes in this text is,ẏ Gods ſaying ſo was not in vain,& that Abraham was not diſappointed of his hope in reſting altogether vpon ẏ promiſe: for we ſee the thing performed before our eies.And this is wel worth the noting. For if God haue done vs any good, we wil indeed for maners ſake ſay it was he ẏ did it:but to be throughly perſuaded of it in our hart, that is a very hard thing. Therefore is it requiſit in reſpect of ſuch rudenes,ẏ we ſhould be cõdemned by Gods word,to the end we may ẏ better conſider of his hand & power. As for example: if we had neuer read any whit of holy ſcripture,& yet notwithſtanding god ſhould haue deliuered vs frõ ſome aduerſitie: to ſay ẏ truth,our own naturall wit would put vs in mind, to think our ſelues indetted to God for ẏ ſame:But when we be exerciſed in the holy ſcriptures, and haue ſeene there ẏ God reſerueth to himſelf the iſſues of death,& that it is in him to ſuccor vs,yea euẽ after a ſtrange faſhion when al ſeemeth to be vtterly forlorne; ſo as if we call vpon him, he will heare our ſighes: the performance therfore maketh it the eaſier for vs to conceiue his goodnes, bicauſe we be taught aforehand,the ſame things which we come to find by experience.For why? The word ẏ went afore, is as a lampe to giue vs light.Of our owne nature we be as it were blind. True it is that God inlighteneth vs by his holy ſpirit:but yet are we ſtill in darknes & cannot ſee two fingers bredth afore vs. But whẽ God teacheth vs by his word;ẏ is as a lampe to guide vs & ſhew vs our way. Therfore let vs marke well ẏ to profit our ſelues by the benefits ẏ God beſtoweth vpõ vs,it is good,yea & nedful for vs to be put in mind of his promiſes,& to compare thẽ together God had promiſed it; & now he hath performed it:here we ſee a teſtimony ẏ he is alwaies faithful in his ſayings,& ẏ a man may ſafely reſt vpõ his truth. That is ẏ thing which Moſes ſheweth vs in

this text,

text, in that he ſpeaketh not ſimply of the great multitude whereinto the people had bin increaſed, but alſo ſaith ẏ God had multiplied them as the ſtars of the skie, to the intent that euery mã ſhould think vpon ẏ promiſe which was vniuerſally knowen among them, & thereby confirme themſelues, inaſmuch as God had ſo kept touch with his ſeruãt Abrahã: & euery man conſider thus in himſelf, Indeed we ought to receiue gods ſimple & ſingle word, although the effecte of it were not ſeene. But now that Gods hande & his mouth go iointly together, ſo as he hath ſhewed a true proofe of his preſẽce before our eyes, and that he meant not to diſappoint the hope of his ſeruants; we know ẏ our God hath a care of vs, & forgat vs not at ſuch time as we were in the land of Egypt. For ẏ time of the peoples abode there was as a kinde of buriall in their graues, ſo as it might haue ſeemed ẏ all Gods promiſes had bin quite daſhed. Whẽ he drew Abraham out of the land ẏ he was borne in, he ſaid vnto him, I giue Gen.12.7. thee al this land frõ one ſide to another, to thee & to thine ofspring for euer. And yet for al this, yee ſee howe Abraham did but ſoiourne there as a ſtrãger: he was hunted & faine to fleet frõ place to place, & he trotted vp and downe like a poore Hebr.11.9. man that had not a corner to hide him in. The like befel to his ſonne Iſaac, Iacob was baniſhed thence during al the flower of his youth, & when he returned thither againe, hee was faine to remoue oftentimes in his old age, and in the ende God conueied him away into Egypt. Thus was ẏ houſe as it were broken vp & cleane baniſhed out of the countrie. And where is the lande of Chanaan which was the heritage ẏ God had promiſed thẽ? They were bereft of it. Indeed Iacob cauſed his body to bee conueied thither againe when he was dead: but yet did the people abide ſtill in Egypt, & god ſeemed to haue mocked thẽ in ſaying, ye ſhal inherit this land. But when god brought them again out of the captiuitie & cruell tyranny wherein they were, it was as a riſing again frõ the dead, & as a taking of them againe out of their graues. So then, ẏ people are exhorted in this text, to vnderſtand that they ought to impute this redemption of theirs to the promiſe that had beene made long time before.

And we on our ſide haue generally a very profitable leſſon: which is this. As oft as we fal aſleep and minde not Gods benefits ſo ſufficiently as might make vs to perceiue his working & power: we muſt reſort to his promiſes, ẏ they may be as a light vnto vs to ſhew vs the good way. Let that ſerue for one point. And now by the way, we ſee how God vttered his power in multiplying the people after ẏ faſhion. For who would haue looked that of threeſcore & ten perſõs there ſhould haue iſſued ſeuenhundred thouſand & aboue? It is incredible (if wee looke no further than to the courſe of nature) ẏ in three hũdred yeres, threeſcore & ten perſons ſhold increaſe & multiply to ſo great a number. Had there come of them ten thouſand or twentie thouſand, it might wel haue bin imputed to the courſe of nature. But when it came to a hundred thouſande, or a two or three hundred thouſand, yea & to ſo huge a number as ſeuen hundred thouſand; al men muſt needes be abaſhed at it, & it was not to be thought ẏ euer it could haue bin poſſible. But we muſt not meſure Gods power by our wit: for it was his wil to work after that ſtrange & vnaccuſtomed faſhion, that men might be driuen to think it to be his worke. For if God worke after an ordinary maner ŵ vs, we be ſo vnthankful, ẏ we take the thing to happen by chance, or by our own policie, or by ſome mans fauor, or other meane which we haue foũd in ẏ world: & we bereaue God continually of his honour. In deed we wil not ſay ẏ we purpoſe any ſuch thing; nay, we proteſt the cleane contrarie: but yet for al ẏ, men are ſo wickedly giuen, ẏ they alwaies deface Gods power & goodneſſe to the vttermoſt ẏ they can. God therfeore is faine to bring vs perforce to the acknowledging of his works, ſo as we muſt be compelled to confeſſe ẏ it is he which helpeth & ſuccoureth vs. Let vs mark wel then, ẏ when he multiplied his people after ẏ ſort, he meant to work a myracle that had neuer bin looked for, to the intent ẏ men ſhould no more doubt that it was he that ſpake vnto Abraham, & that he had not in vain promiſed him to become ẏ defẽder of him & of al his ofspring. Nowadais there ar a ſort of ſkoffers, who to make al things doubtful, wil cauil after this maner; Is it poſſible ẏ in ſo ſhort a ſpace of time, threeſcore & ten perſons ſhould grow to ſo huge a number as ſeauen hundred thouſand? Is it poſſible? Yea, & if that people had bin increaſed but after an ordinarie maner, what would they ſay then? Came not this of other men? & ſhould we then ſay that god gouerneth vs? Why? ẏ order of nature affordeth as much. After ẏ maner would the mockers prate. And therby we ſee the lewdnes ẏ is in mẽ. For if God goe not beyond the ordinarie courſe of nature, they haue no ſight at al to diſcerne his hand, but (to their ſeeming) it is fortune or their own wiſdom, or ſome inferior meane of ẏ world. And on the other ſide, if God lift vp his mighty hand, & do a thing beyond mans capacitie, and ſuch as men would haue thought coulde neuer haue bin done: then wil they ſay, how coms this to paſſe? And they could find in their harts euen to deface gods power quite & clean, vnder color ẏ it ſurmounteth their reaſon & capacity. But for our part, let vs learne to do god ſo much honor, (for ſo hee well deſerueth) as not to iudge of his workes after our own fancy ſpecially when they be miraculous.

And here wee haue as it were a looking glaſſe, wherein to ſee how God raiſeth vp his Church, according alſo to this his ſpeaking of it by his prophet Eſay, Loke backe to the quarrie of ſtone Eſa.51.1,2. (ſaith he) whereout of ye were hewen, haue an eye to the womb of your mother Sara. Loke vpõ Abraham your father: was not he alone? yes, & yet haue I now made you manie in number, as ẏ thing it ſelfe declareth. In that place God likeneth Saraes womb to a quarrie of ſtone. See here (ſaith he) from whence ye be come. Howe is it poſſible that ſuch a multitude of people as you be nowe growen vnto, ſhoulde be drawen out of one quarrie of ſtone? And yet notwithſtanding, from thence haue I fetched you, all of you are come from out of that ſpring. For as for your father Abraham, what was hee? A ſillie olde man forworne and broken with yeares. Who would haue looked for ſuch a people from out of him? Nowe then, learne to knowe that it is I which haue ſo multiplied you, and that you bee beholden to me, for al that euer you haue. Thus ye ſee ẏ the thing which we haue to gather, is that whē God calleth his Church & giueth it a being, his working is after ſuch a ſort in that behalfe, that (as ſaith Saint Paul in the firſt chapter of the firſt 1.Cor.1.28. & 8.6. Epiſtle to the Corinthians) it may well be ſaide that it is he of whom wee haue our being. And his meaning is not that wee were but created of him as mortall men onely: but that he hath gathered vs together to bee his people, and that he was inclined to the doing thereof, without anie likelihoode giuen on our behalfe. Therefore let vs firſt and foremoſt beare well in minde, to be as it were aſtoniſhed at the power that God hath ſhewed, ſo as wee may reuerence the thing that paſſeth our ſmall capacitie. And therewithal let vs vnderſtand, that the maner of Gods raiſing vp of his Church, is, that where nothing was afore, but men reckened that all ſhoulde haue gone to wracke: there men are at their wits end to ſee howe thinges fall out cleane contrarie, as we finde by often experience. True it is that the people which receiue the doctrine of the Goſpell, are but a handefull in compariſon of them that refuſe it: but yet was it not thought, that thinges ſhoulde euer haue ſpred ſo farre abroad as they haue doone. For when God ſtirred vp the poore Frier, yea euen out of a Cloyſter or Cel: who woulde haue thought, that from thence the Goſpell ſhoulde haue beene ſpredde farre and wide, and that ſo manie folke woulde haue ſubmitted themſelues vnto it? Againe we ſee that although the whole worlde haue conſpired to oppreſſe this doctrine, and that the power of the enemies thereof bee ſuch, as they be like enough to ſwallow it vp quite and clean: yet doth not God ceaſe to augment his Church ſtil continually. It is ſeene what crueltie is executed againſt al her children: & yet notwithſtāding ſhe holdeth on ſtil. Seeing then that in our time God hath gone beyonde all hope and all imagination of man: let vs vnderſtand that hee hath renewed the remembrance of that which is ſpoken here by Moſes: namely that out of nothing, it hath pleaſed him to raiſe vp a kingdom to himſelfe in this worlde, inſomuch that at this day there is as great a nūber of his, as euer there was at anie time. If a man compare the children of Abraham, with ſuch as haue ſome knowledge of the Goſpell nowadayes, it is certaine that the number of the preſent ſort is farre the greater. And therefore let vs learne to magnifie ẏ goodnes & power of our God. And to the end ẏ Gods glory may be the greater, let vs vnderſtand that we come vp of nothing, & let it be conſidered ẏ it is he which hath ſtretched out his hand, ſo as al muſt be fathered vpō him, and he muſt be acknowledged to be the author of all. Thus ye ſee what we haue to marke vpon that place.

Furthermore the people are warned, not to glorie of their owne greatnes, as if it were ſaide, whatſoeuer you poſſeſſe, you haue obteined it at Gods hand, and therefore doe him homage for it with al humilitie. Therefore whenſoeuer our Lord increaſeth vs, ſo as we haue greater proſperitie than we looked for: let it not blinde vs, nor ſhut vp our eyes, but let vs alwayes remember to haue our eyes vppon Gods hand, who had promiſed to haue pitie vpon vs, & hath alſo ſhewed vs it by experience. And ſo ye ſee in effect what we haue to marke, where Moſes ſpeaketh of the increaſe of ẏ church. For like as God raiſeth vp a people where none was to be ſeene afore: ſo alſo is it his will to repaire his church again with his owne hande. And to be ſhort, the holy ſcripture ſheweth vs, ẏ foraſmuch as the Church is ẏ ſpiritual kingdom of our Lord Ieſus Chriſt: he wil alſo worke after a maruellous faſhion, when ẏ caſe concerneth ẏ preſeruation thereof. Therfore let vs truſt in him by all meanes. Let vs not doubte but ẏ he which multiplyed ẏ offſpring of Abrahā as the ſtars of the skie, is as wel able to do ẏ like with vs ſtil at this day: & therfore let vs not be afraid but that God can wel skil how to ſet vp his Church again, when it ſeemeth at ẏ point to be vtterly ouerthrowen. And this is accompliſhed cheefly in our Lord Ieſus Chriſt, as the ſcripture ſheweth vs. For al ẏ euer was before his cōming was but a ſhadow of ẏ things ẏ are nowadayes in their perfection. Therfore when ẏ whole world Col.2.17. ſeemeth vnto vs to be vtterly voide of beleeuers & that al is forlorne & as a waſt wildernes, let vs loke vp to ẏ ſtars of heauen, & both conſider and hope ẏ our Lord which did once raiſe vp ſo huge a multitude out of threeſcore & ten perſons, can likewiſe do aſmuch for his church at this day. And when he hath done it, let it not be vnto vs as a dreame, but let vs be amaſed & aſtoniſhed at it, foraſmuch as it ſhal haue ſurmoūted our natural wit and reaſon. But let vs come now to ẏ concluſion ẏ Moſes maketh. *Therefore loue the Lorde your God, keepe his Lawes, his ſtatutes, his cōmandementes, his rights, & his ordinances, euē for euer.* Hereby we be done to vnderſtand, ẏ when wee once knowe Gods grace, we muſt bee the more inflamed to giue our ſelues wholy to the ſeruing of him, accordingly as S. Paul found not a more vehement Rom.12.1. & effectual perſwaſiō, than ẏ ſame where he ſaith, Brethren I beſech ye & adiure ye by the pitie & mercie which God hath ſhewed towardes you. Becauſe S. Paul ſaw men ſlow & negligent, yea & ẏ euen the faithfull, (for it is they to whō he directeth his doctrine) haue need to be quickened vp & pricked forward: therfore to giue the more liuelines to his exhortatiō, he taketh this for his ground, & ſaith: brethren, I beſech ye by ẏ mercifulnes of God. As if hee ſhould ſay how harde harted ſoeuer you be, yet muſt ẏ great number of ẏ gratious good turnes which God hath done for you, haue ſome power to mone you, & to ſet your harts on fire. Were your harts as cold as ice, yet muſt you needs be moued, & you cannot but feele how gratious and liberall your God hath ſhewed himſelfe towards you. Nowe therefore whenſoeuer we finde not our ſelues ſufficiently diſpoſed to ſerue God, but ẏ we be held back and hindred by the vanities of this world,and by our own fleſhly luſts, let vs put this ſaying of S.Pauls in vre:& when we be intangled in our delightes, let vs come backe again & ſay : what ? Shal God haue loſt his labor in ſhewing himſelf ſo good towards vs?& ſhal we become vnprofitable people towards him? We be his Vineyarde,and he hath dreſſed vs,& we bring him forth no fruit but wild ſower & bitter fruit, ſuch as were able to choke one:& ſhal we by our naughtines defeat yͤ grace that God hath ſhewed towardes vs ? After ſuch manner ought euery of vs to rebuke himſelfe, when we liue not as we ought to do. But when in ſteed of going forward,we go back,or els lie weltring in our own idlenes:let vs bethink vs of gods benefits,& keepe a regiſter or booke of remembrance of them: & therupon fal to concluding yͭ there remaineth no excuſe for vs,if we make not ſome acknowledgement vnto God,of yͤ mercie yͭ he hath ſhewed towards vs. That was the thing yͭ Moſes amed at. Therfore loue yͤ lord your god (ſaith he)ſeeing you know him to be ſuch a one.

And further beſides yͤ thing that we haue ſene alreadie;which is yͭ the true performance of the law beginneth at the louing of God:here Moſes telleth vs,yͭ Gods intent is not to be feared like a prince yͭ deſires no more but to haue his ſubiects to ſtand in awe of him,& therfore will not ſuffer any man ſo much as once to quetch againſt him, but wil haue thē to do al yͭ he cōmādeth thē:but yͭ God cōmeth to vs after a more louing maner. Truly if we conſider wel what the princes of the earth are,they be but ſmoke or verie wormes of yͤ earth:but yet are they to be honored,bicauſe god hath printed his marke vpon thē. Albeit yͭ they be nothing of thēſelues:yet are they ſo ful of pride, yͭ their ſubiects muſt be faine to put it vp quietly at their hands,though they would ſet their feete vpō the throtes of them. And they be ſo far of frō conſidering themſelues to be ſhepherds or herdmen,or to owe any duetie or good demeanor towards their people yͭ to their owne ſeeming, the world was created alonly for themſelues. They paſſe not for meeke & quiet reuerence: but they wil needs haue an inforced & conſtreined bondage. But behold, Our God whoſe maieſtie is ſo Iob.41.16. great,yͭ euen the Angels of heauen are faine to ſinke vnder it,euen he I ſay ſtoopeth downe vnto vs,& ſaith,loue me. He could haue ſaid, ſtand in feare of me,& trēble at my ſpeech,or elſe ye ſhal feele that there is ſuch a glory in mee,as ye muſt needes be ouerwhelmed by it. Nay, he vſeth no ſuch ſpech,but ſaith:true it is yͭ I am to be feared, for I haue ſoueraine dominion ouer heauen and earth,& therefore it is not for any man to dalie with me as with his fellow, for if he be ſo malapert with me,he cannot but go away with confuſion. Now then,my deſire is yͭ men ſhould reuerence me:but yet would I alſo yͭ you ſhould come familiarly vnto me,& yͭ ye ſhould come boldly as to your father. And yͭ is the cauſe why I require loue at your hands as the cheefeſt thing yͭ I like beſt of. Loue me therefore,& ſhew your ſelues to beare me hartie good wil. For my mind is not to draw you to me by conſtraint of feare,my mind is not to rule ye like Oxen & aſſes. My intent is to hold ye as my children, without exerciſing anie tyrannical lordlines ouer you. I would haue but a fatherly authority ouer you, & yͭ you likewiſe ſhould ſerue me with a childly loue, & giue your ſelues wholy & obediently vnto me. Thus ſee ye yͤ two points which we haue to note in Moſeſes concluding,yͭ the people ſhold loue yͤ euerlaſting their God. For if we will performe gods law well, we muſt firſt & formoſt loue him before al things Wel may we be buſie with our feet & hands,ſo as we ſhalbe blameles before men:& yet ſhal all be nothing,except God poſſeſſe our affections, and yͭ we ſerue him with a good wil,& with a free and vnfeined hart. That is the one point. The other is,yͭ we muſt vnderſtand how God applieth him ſelf to vs,& faſhioneth himſelf to our capacitie, in that his wil is not yͭ we ſhould ſtand in feare & terror of him, but yͭ we ſhould take him for our father , according to his calling of vs, which is ſo gentle and ſo full of allurement,as though he would ſet vs in his lap,becauſe he hath adopted vs to bee his children. That is the effect of the things which we haue to remember here.

Now as touching that Moſes addeth, *that men ſhould keepe gods obſeruācer,his ſtatutes,his iudgemēts, his rights,his ordinances,his cōmandements,& his decrees*:I haue declared already heretofore why he ſetteth downe ſo many words. For it had been enough for him to haue ſaid ſhortly,Keep the cōmandemēts of your god;you haue his law,which is the certain rule,hold your ſelues to yͭ. But Moſes thinking it not inough to haue ſpokē ſimply after yͭ maner,to the intent to expreſſe the contents of the law,& what doctrine we haue to gather therof,ſetteth downe *Statutes,cōmandements, rights,ordinances,& obſeruances*. And why is that? To doe vs to vnderſtand,that there we haue the ful perfection of al holines. We know yͭ in al ages men haue bin ticklecheaded: & that their failing to ſerue god ſimply & purely,hath ſprong of this that euery man would needs be caſting of ſome peece or collup of his own making,to the things that God had commanded. And thereof come al the ſuperſtitions that are at this day in yͤ worlde. The very ground (ſay I)from whence al the diueliſh ſuperſtitions wherewith gods ſeruice hath beene corrupted, is that men haue not thought it enough to haue obſerued the things that God commanded, vnles euery man added ſomewhat more of his owne deuiſing. But now God to hold his people in awe,ſaith thus : In my law ye haue *rights,ordinances,ſtatutes,&c.* And to be ſhort,whē ye haue throughly examined the rule yͭ I haue giuen you,ye ſhal find it perfect & without want of any thing. Therefore play not the looſe colts: but be contēted to ſerue me ſimply,according to my will: & ad not any thing of your own braine. Ye ſee then yͭ as wel in this text as in other without nūber,(for ye ſhal find at yͤ leſt two hundred of the like) Moſes indeuoreth to magnifie Gods law, to the intent yͭ men ſhould not eſteeme it to be of vnſufficiēt authority,or but as able to teach vs by halfes:but yͭ they ſhould know it to be their duty to hold thēſelues wholy to it,ſo ſubmitting thēſelues to yͤ ſame, as they may giue ouer their own wit,& not take vpō them to be wiſe in their opinion, but onely aunſwere : Let G O D bee obeyed, 1.Chro.16.36. according to the praiers which he hath cōmanded folke to make with this ſolemne proteſtation Amen,ſo as there may not be any replying at all to ẏ which God hath once vttered with his mouth.And that is the verie cauſe why the word *Keepe*,is ſet downe here. For men wil needs haue manie things to keep,and they beare thēſelues in hand, that they haue kept the law very well, after what faſhion ſo euer it be.But our Lord telleth vs that we haue things enough to keep and to obſerue, in following his lawe, ſo as we neede not to adde any thing to it.

Furthermore to the intent ẏ the people may be the more moued,Moſes confirming here the matter ẏ we heard euen now,ſaith thus: *Bethinke you therfore:for it is not ſpoken to your children which haue neither ſeen nor heard of it,but to you your ſelues which are witneſſes of the great myracles, mightfull workes,and tokens which God ſhewed in bringing you out of the land of Egypt,and ſpecially in your paſsing of the read ſea,where he wrought with a wōderful power.* For what a thing was it ẏ the ſea ſhronk aſide to make you way to paſſe through it ? And that afterward it ſwallowed vp al your enemies,that folowed you with ſo great puiſſance,ẏ you thought your ſelues vtterly vndone?You haue ſeen thoſe thinges with your eyes ſaith he. What a thing were it then,if ye ſhould forget ſuch wonderfull workes of God,and ſuffer them to vaniſh away? Might it be imputed to any ignorance ? No, but to vnthankefulnes,& it were malicious ſpitefulnes for you to tread the thinges ſo vnder foote, which God hath ſhewed vnto you.

And wheras he ſaith. *It is not ſpokē to your childrē which haue neither ſeen nor heard of it*:He meaneth ẏ he ſpeaketh not of thē as ſhal be ſpoken afterward. True it is that at this day when we reade the ſtorie of the deliuerance that was wrought at that time,we ought to be moued at it.For it is an euerlaſting euidence of the care which God hath had of his Church. And in ẏ ſame we haue a liuely picture to ſhew vs how God draweth vs as it were out of the dungeon and gulf of death, by choſing vs to be of his houſe,and therefore it behoueth vs to make our profit of the thinges that were done then,although we ſaw them not. But here Moſes reaſoneth thus by compariſon. If I ſpeake to your children(ſaith he) yet were it their dutie to make their profit of ẏ things which they were taught: and although they haue not ſeene the things with their eyes,yet ought this recording of them,to do them good. But as for you,ye ought to be better aduiſed in taking heed to the things ẏ God hath ſhewed you. For your thankleſneſſe is dubble, & much ſorer ſhal your condemnation be,if you profit not by thē.What can ye alledge for your ſelues,if ye giue not your ſelues whollie to the magnifying of ſuch grace, that is to ſay if ye honor not God,ſeing he hath bought you ſo dearly,and ſhewed that he ſetteth ſo great ſtore by your welfare? Seeing that God hath ſhewed himſelfe to be ſuch a one towardes you, what is your dutie? Here we be put in mind that when our Lord hath made vs to find fauour by experience,if we profit not by it to ſerue him with the better courage and earneſter zeale, it muſt of neceſſitie come to account, & wee muſt looke for more horrible damnation in reward of ſuch vnthākfulnes.But now let vs ſee what we become the better by gods benefits.Hath it not bin ſufficiently ſeene & perceiued in our time, how he hath helped vs at our neede,& howe he hath ſtretched out his mightie hande ? If euery man would acknowledge for his own part,how many waies god hath ſhewed himſelf boūtiful towards him,ſurely we ſhould be at our wits end.Againe, let vs loke vpō the ſtate of ẏ Church in generall. Hath not god wrought after ſuch a ſort on al ſides in our daies,as if we be not very monſters, or at leaſtwiſe worſe than bruit beaſts, we muſt needs perceiue by his miracles,ẏ he ment to ſhew here how he reigneth in heauē?But now let vs ſe how euery of vs is ſtirred vp therby,to ſerue him.Nay it ſhould ſeeme we ſeeke nothing elſe but towels to hid our eyes withal, and ẏ we beleeue not the thinges which are & ought to be moſt apparant to vs.Yet was not this doctrine vttred to no end. For if God haue ſhewed vs by his deeds, that he dwelleth amōg vs,& haue reached out his hand frō heauen,to proue ẏ all power belongeth vnto him,and ẏ he wilbe ẏ ſauior of his church, & yet we beleeue it not,but play ẏ blind buſſards, and turne our backs vpon him,ſhutting our eyes wilfully when we ſhould take moſt heed to cōſider in what wiſe ẏ Lord hath ſhewed himſelfe to be ẏ father & ſauior,both of our ſelues & of al ẏ are his:what excuſe will there be for vs?Ye ſee then here is a leſſon ẏ toucheth vs.For if euer God vttered himſelfe:ſurely we of our time haue ſeene ſuch deeds of his,as are worthy of remēbrance. And whē men ſhal reherſe thē a hundred yeres hereafter, (if ẏ world indure ſo long)it is certain ẏ they ſhal ſerue to make them aſhamed ẏ ſhall haue heard thē ſpoken of,ſo we may wel ſay,(as is ſaid by ẏ prophets) ẏ the ſtrāgenes of thē ſhal make their eares to glow ẏ ſhal heare of thē: for Ier.19.3. ẏ is ẏ maner of ſpeech which the Prophets vſe in ſuch caſes.And we haue ſeene theſe things, and had experience of them.Now if ẏ report of them in time to come,ought to moue ẏ people ẏ ſhalbe then: although they ſhall haue had none other knowledge of thē: ought not we much rather to be moued by them now preſently ? Ought they not to pearce our hearts?Muſt not Satan needes haue vtterly ſotted vs,whē after ſuch perceiuing of gods benefits & power, we ſee nothing at all, but go on ſtil & conceiue nothing? Is ſuch blockiſhnes to be borne with? No verily.And therefore let vs bethink ourſelues,& conſider wel how god hath wrought in gathering vs together,& in that we can worſhip him purely as he requireth. Who is he,(be he a citizen borne or a ſtranger,) which hath not cauſe to ſay,lo how my god hath ſo vttered himſelfe to mee, as if I had ſeene his hand come downe from heauen to me in ſome viſible ſhape?For what hope had they which are here townſmen borne,to be either in libertie,or to be but euē a mean people? Inſomuch as it ſeemed ẏ al ſhould haue gone to wrack, & come to vtter ruine ere this time.As touching ẏ Goſpel, this citie was but a helliſh gulfe of ſuperſtitions and diueliſhnes,(as was to be ſeen euerywhere) and al maner of abuſes, ydolatries & practiſes of Satan did ſo reigne in it, as there was no likelyhood that euer there ſhold haue bin any roome for Gods grace. And therefore thoſe whom God hath viſited ſo louingly , and to whom hee hath vouchſafed to come home into their houſes to ſeeke them out, haue good cauſe to glorifie him. And as for them yͤ are come out of forrein countries, and are gathered together here as it were into one flocke, what can they ſay, but that our Lord hath performed yͤ thing towardes them at this day, which he ſpake ſo long ago by his prophet Eſay: namely that he would make charyots and wagons trotte apace through the world , to bring folke from al coaſts to ſerue & worſhip him in his Church? Nowe then if we looke not vp at ſuch things, ſurely it wilbe no excuſe or ſhift for vs, to ſay: I thought not on theſe things, becauſe they were not knowen to me: for God ſheweth vs thẽ apparantly ynough, ſo as we need but to opẽ our eyes to ſee them. Thus ye ſee how we ought to practiſe this leſſon nowadays, where it is ſaid, I ſpeake not to your children which might reply that they neuer ſawe nor heard of theſe things. For looke what you ought to know as cõcerning Gods power, he hath done you to vnderſtand it by his deeds.

Eſa 2.3. Ier.17,25.

And now by the way let vs be contented with the experience which we haue had of the goodneſſe and power of our God, in his redeeming of vs from yͤ endles confuſion wherin we be al born in Adam. For what is our original? Whence doth God draw vs when he vouchſafeth to haue vs to be of his flock? Frõ our mothers womb we bring nothing with vs but vtter curſednes: we be heires of endleſſe death: wee be forlorne & damned: if God ſhould iudge vs after our deſerts, he ſhould needs be our enemy and aduerſary, and imploy all his power againſt vs. Now if our nature be ſo graceleſſe & frowarde, that as long as it beareth ſway in vs, it bendeth it ſelfe againſt God: muſt we not needs alſo wage battel againſt him? Yes: for looke how many luſts be in vs, ſo many defiances are there, as if our purpoſe were to arme him to vengeance againſt vs. Yet notwithſtanding it hath pleaſed him to pull vs backe. When God taketh vs ſo to him to be his people and of his houſhold, it is more than was his deliuering of the Iewes out of the thraldome of Egypt. For that was but a figure of this redemption that is wrought by our Lord Ieſus Chriſt. For his deliuering of vs is not from thraldom to ſome earthly & mortal prince: but from the gulf of hel, & from Satans bonds. Where doth God take vs, when he vouchſafeth to call vs to him, & to make vs feele his grace? Muſt ſome meſſenger be faine to bring vs newes from farre? Let euery of vs looke vpon himſelfe, and we ſhall finde that as in reſpect of our ſelues, our ſtate is nothing but eternal death. Therefore to applie this doctrine to our vſe, wee muſt vnderſtand yͭ when God calleth any of vs to him, it is more than if hee had rid vs out of all the bondages and ſlaueries of this worlde, yea euen of the cruelleſt that could bee indured. Let vs know that: and alſo let vs apply our ſelues aduiſedly to the cõſidering of Gods works: for that is the thing whereto the ſcripture bringeth vs, to make vs perceiue the benefites that he hath beſtowed vpon vs, that wee may fare the better by them. And it is alſo a way to bring vs to yͤ knowing of God, and to prouoke vs not onely to worſhip him as our God, and to make vs ſtoope vnder his glorious maieſtie : but alſo to beare him ſuch a childly loue, as to come vnto him willingly, and to yeelde him ſuch reuerence, as he may accept vs and auow vs to bee his, for our Lorde Ieſus Chriſts ſake.

Now let vs caſt our ſelues downe before the heauenly throne of our good God, acknowledging our wretched ſinfulnes, yͭ we may be wholly caſt downe before him: & yet notwithſtanding, praying him to vouchſafe to admit vs in yͤ name of our lord Ieſus Chriſt, ſo as we may not be ſhakẽ off at his hand, though we be worthy of it, but rather yͭ he beare with vs of his infinite goodnes, vntil he haue conueied vs quite & cleane out of this world, & clothed vs againe with his owne righteouſnes, & with yͤ perfection which he hath promiſed vs. And ſo let vs ſay, Almighty god &c.

On Munday the xxiij. of September. 1555.

The Lxxv. Sermon which is the ſecond vpon the eleuenth Chapter.

5 And what hee did for you in the wilderneſſe, vntill yee came vnto this place:

6 And what hee did to Dathan and Abyram the ſonnes of Eliab the ſonne of Ruben: how the earth opened her throte, and ſwallowed them vp with their houſeholdes and Tentes, and with all the ſubſtance that was vnder their feete, in the middes of all Iſraell.

7 For your eyes haue ſeene all the greate workes of the Lord which hee hath doone.

8 Therfore keepe all the commaundementes which I commaund you this day, that yee may bee ſtrong and goe in and poſſeſſe the Land, whereunto you goe to poſſeſſe it.

WE haue ſeene heretofore howe Moſes hath tolde vs , that ſuch as haue bin witneſſes of Gods wonders,are much leſſe to bee excuſed than ſuch as haue but only heard yͤ things by report, and haue not ſeene them with their eyes. For when God hath beene ſo gracious vnto vs as to ſhewe vs his power to our faces; it muſt needs be that we bee too blockiſh,if wee bee not mindfull therof. When our children ſhal but heare of it,it ſhal becom thē to be moued at it:& what ought then to bee done in the very preſentneſſe of the things? Hitherto Moſes hath ſhewed after what manner God had delt with his people through his goodnes, for he had behaued himſelfe as an vtter enemie to yͤ Realme of Egypt,to ſhew himſelfe to be the ſauiour of the linage of Abraham. It is a benefite that ought to bee very highly eſteemed, when God chooſeth vs after that ſort to be his:which is not for any worthines that he findeth in vs,but of his owne onely goodnes, in that he vouchſafeth to prefer vs before others, ſo that although we bee no better than they, yet he taketh part with vs,and fighteth for vs at our neede. If folke doe trouble and torment vs, and God be alway ready to ſuccour vs; is it not ſuch a bond,as if we keepe it not vnbroken, the verie world may condemn our malicious frowardnes? Nowe after he hath ſpoken of the wonders that were wrought in Egypt, & in the paſſing of the red ſea,he telleth them briefly, *that they ought to conſider well,how God handled them in the wilderneſſe.* And vnder that ſpeech hee comprehendeth the thing which we haue ſeene expounded heretofore:that is to wit,both yͤ great number of benefits which they had receiued at Gods hand, and alſo his chaſtiſements:for both of them ought to teach vs to feare God, & to walk in his wayes.If he do vs good, it is to draw vs to him by gentlenes, yͭ we ſhould worſhip him. And if he correct vs for our faults,it is to meekē vs,yͭ we may learn to beare his yoke,& to ſerue him as becommeth vs. Moſes therefore comprehendeth here both twain of them:As if he ſhould ſay,Seeing yͭ God hath fed you wͭ Manna,without any trauell or labor of your own;ought ye not to giue your ſelues al wholy to yͤ ſeruing of him? If a mortal man had kept you in his houſe & maintained you wͭ foode & apparel,ſhould ye not be ſo bound vnto him,as your whole life might bee anſwerable to ſuch a benefite? Behold,God hath maintained you in yͤ Exod.16.4. wildernes,by ſending you Manna from heauen. Now then if ye ſhold forget ſuch a gracious good turne,what an offence were it? Nay,he hath not Deut.8.4. only ſent you Manna:but he hath alſo preſerued your garmēts,ſo as thei haue not bin marred nor outworne by yͤ ſpace of forty yeares together. Exod.13.21. He hath ſhewed himſelf to be your guide in yͤ night, in giuing you a viſible ſign by fire:& he hath kept you likewiſe a day times from yͤ heate of yͤ ſun, by ſpreading his clouds ouer you.In al ſorts he hath tendered you as much as was poſſible. Exod.17.6. When ye were thirſty,he made water to come guſhing out of yͤ rock that was dry before.To be ſhort,he left nothing vndone,wherby he might ſhew himſelf a louing & liberal father towards you.Now then what can you leſſe do, than yeeld your ſelues to yͤ obeying of him? Again,remember what he did, Numb.11.3 33. when ye murmured againſt him for your fonde luſts ſake. Did ye not then feele his heauy hand for your labor? When ye required fleſh, indeede he ſent it you ; but he made ye to pay deare for yͤ ſhot:for yͤ meat was as good as a choking of you. While the meate was yet in your mouthes , his wrath came downe vpon you. Againe,when yee misbehaued your ſelues in whoredome,ye know Num.25.1.9. yͭ his hand ſtrake ye in ſuch ſort,yͭ a great nūber of people periſhed among you. When yee were Num.11.1.& 21.5.6. diſobedient to his mouth,he ſet a fire amōg you yͭ conſumed you, vntill yͤ braſen ſerpent was ſet vp. All manner of wayes therefore haue you bin chaſtiſed at Gods hande;ſo as if ye be not mindfull of it,ye be worſe than brute beaſtes.

Now after that Moſes hath declared al theſe chaſtiſemēts: he inferreth an example yͭ was notable and worthy to be borne in mind aboue all yͤ reſt:that is to wit,*of the rebellion that was made by Coree,Dathan, and Abiram.* For(as is declared in yͤ Num.16.1 ſixteenth of yͤ numbers) , theſe three with another of yͤ tribe of Rubē,made inſurrection againſt Aaron,laying to his charge yͭ he had vſurped the prieſthood , which was an office of great authority among yͤ people.For Aaron was there as in yͤ perſon of our Lord Ieſus Chriſt,& went into the Sanctuary to make attonement between God & the people. Nowe it ſpited theſe men, that they could not come to yͤ like dignity,& therfore vpon enuy they would needs ſtir the people to a commotion,ſaying: What? This is a derogation to yͤ prerogatiue yͭ belongeth in common to al of vs yͭ are the children of Abraham. Exod.19.6. God hath ſanctified vs , he termeth vs his heritage and a prieſtly kingdome: & yet ye ſee here how Aaron and his children haue taken yͤ thing peculiarly to themſelues,which belōgeth generally to yͤ whole people. Therfore let vs maintain our right,& not ſuffer this dignity to be turned to a ſtate of inheritance. This was their pretence: but indeed they did it of great ſpite. For firſt of all God had well prouided aforehand,yͭ there ſhold be no indirect or wicked ſuſpition againſt Aaron, & his childrē for the prieſthoods ſake. Moſes was yͤ leader of yͤ people;he was yͤ ſetter of them at liberty,& therefore there was good likelyhood yͭ his ofſpring ſhould haue bin preferred before all others. Hee had childrē:& yet he took not yͤ prieſthood vnto himſelfe,but left it to his brother. True it is yͭ he made no choice,god did that. But howſoeuer he fared,to yͤ intent that yͤ law and the things yͭ depended thereupon ſhold not be ſuſpected: Gods will was not to doe Moſes ſo much honour as to make him yͤ prieſt,but he was faine to ſtand humbly aloofe wͭ the reſt of the people worſhipping God , when Aaron his brother went to carie the names of yͤ people of Iſrael into yͤ ſanctuary,& to Exod.28.1 offer ſacrifice to God in their behalfe. And what wer his childrē? They abode in yͤ inferior degree, without aduancemēt to yͤ dignity, which remained to his brother Aaron. Wherby God ſhewed that thoſe things were not done vpon ambition or worldly couetouſneſſe, but that it was his own doing, who had ſet down the order that ſhold be kept in his Church and Temple. Notwithſtanding al this, thoſe leawd perſons fel to rebelling, & charged Aaron falſly with vſurping ẏ dignitie of ẏ highprieſthood. So was God faine to maintaine his own doing. And thereupon Moſes ſaid vnto thẽ, How now? What is Aarõ? As if he ſhold ſay, hath he thruſt himſelfe in of his owne head? No: & now although he be of Gods aduancing to ẏ high and honorable ſtate, yet if ye conſider all things aright, hee doth but onely ſerue you. But thoſe malicious creatures were not contented ẇ that. We be ſãctified (ſaid they) we be gods people; & what are you more? In this caſe god was to put to his hand for ẏ redres of it: And according as was commanded by Moſes, To morow (quoth he) let euery of you bring his ſenſor, & you ẏ are the chief of this rebellion, (for they were as then to ẏ number of two hundred & fifty) come together, & you ſhall ſee by your offerings, whether parties ſeruice is beſt liked of God. This done he ſaid vnto ẏ people, Aſſure your ſelues that if theſe folk do dye ẏ common death, and ẏ God lay not his hand vpõ them in your ſight, ſo as ſome horrible & dreadful puniſhment do not light vppon their heads: I am contẽted ẏ ye ſhal not eſteeme me as ſent of God. But if ye perceiue ẏ god make good the thing ẏ I haue vttered with my mouth, then be ye ſure that I haue don nothing on mine owne head; but that I haue faithfully performed that which was inioyned me from heauen. Hereupon the earth opened and ſwallowed vp thoſe rebels ẏ had made the inſurrection among the people. And when this was done, ẏ people forbare not to murmur ſtill & to ſay, See here I pray you, how Moſes and Aaron fall to deſtroying of Gods people. Thoſe whom God hath choſen muſt be fain to periſh at their pleaſure, to maintaine their prieſtly dignitie, and of ẏ ſame number are we alſo. What an vnkindneſſe is this? Ye ſee here how God had wrought a myracle that ought to aſtoniſh & amaſe the whole world, yea euen the very brute beaſts & al. and yet this people which reported themſelues to be choſen and holy, ceaſe not to repine & rebel ſtill of malicious ſet purpoſe, againſt God and his hand that Num.17.2.8 was openly to be ſeene. God was faine to ratifie Aarons prieſthood yet once againe: whereupon he commanded that euery of them ſhould bring a wodden ſtaffe ẇ their names written vpõ them and put them altogether, ſo as they might not bee diſcerned aſunder but by the ſight of the names. Theſe Staues were laid before God in ẏ Sanctuary: & when they were taken thence againe, Aarons ſtaffe that had his name vpon it did floriſh, & al the reſidue remained drie: wherby God ſhewed that he had choſen that houſe to the Highprieſthood.

Of theſe things doth Moſes here put ẏ people in remẽbrãce, to do them to vnderſtand, firſt ẏ if they dalyed any more with God by ſeeking any chaunge, or by attempting any thing againſt the commandemẽt of his word: they ſhold feele his vengeance in likewiſe as they had ſeene it light vpon Coree, Dathan, & Abiram, and their partakers. Beſides this, he telleth them of their ſpitefulnes, how they had prouoked God againe, euẽ after they had felt his iuſtice: to ẏ intẽt they ſhould no more returne to ſuch doings, becauſe ẏ if they abuſed Gods patience & bearing with them for ẏ one time, he wold in ẏ end vſe ẏ greater rigor againſt thẽ. And ſo ye ſee what ẏ intent of Moſes was. Now hereby we be warned to conſider wel with our ſelues, ẏ whenſoeuer any fault or offẽce is cõmitted among vs, & God hath laid his hand vppon vs for it; wee ought to beare it ſo printed in our hearts, as it may make vs *to keepe his commaundements*, as Moſes addeth afterward. For it is not ynough for vs to know ẏ bare ſtorie: but we muſt alſo apply ẏ ſame to our inſtruction. So ẏ if god haue corrected vs gently, we muſt acknowlege his fatherly goodnes towards vs. And from thencefoorth let vs not prouoke him any more, but to ẏ intent we may keepe our ſelues frõ offending, let it ſuffice vs to know ẏ he cannot away with ſin. That (ſay I) is ẏ thing wherof we be warned in this text. And herewal let vs alſo haue ſuch humilitie printed in our hearts, as to be cõtinually ſory for the faults ẏ we ſhall haue committed. And if our God haue bin ſo gracious as to execute his wrath vppon ſome others, let vs bee wel ware ẏ we wrap not our ſelues in ẏ ſame cõdemnation with them, by taking their part. Nay, let vs ſhun them a great way off, and let vs haue nothing to doe with them, if wee intende not to prouoke ẏ wrath of our God. That is the effect of the matter which Moſes ſpeaks of here. And it is written for our ſakes, to the intent that euery of vs ſhould haue an eye to himſelfe.

I haue tolde you already, ẏ the thinges which 1.Cor.10.11. were ſpoken as then to ẏ people of Iſrael, do concerne vs likewiſe. After what ſort haue wee felt Gods hand? I meane as well thoſe that are Citizens borne, as thoſe ẏ reſort hither from ſtrange Countries. Is there any of vs that hath not perceiued gods wonderful power in his deliuerãce? For hath not this Towne bin as it were appointed to ruine and deſtruction? Was it not likely ẏ it ſhould vtterly haue periſhed, and ẏ there was none other remedy as in reſpect of ẏ world? Yet hath God reached out his hãd after ſuch a faſhion, as the world hath ſeen an incredible alteration. It was as a dreame, men would neuer haue thought it: euen they themſelues ẏ did ſeruice in it, were aſtoniſhed at it afterward. Nowe then, if this be forgotten, on whom ſhall we lay ẏ fault? And God hath not only giuen liberty to thoſe ẏ were in bondage, and drawen them out of ẏ gulf of death at ſuch time as it was looked ẏ al ſhould haue gone to hauocke: but alſo vouchſafed to ſet vp his kingdome among them. He hath planted his Goſpel here, he hath ſet vp his chayre of eſtate here, here hath he choſen him a ſanctuarie & a place to dwel in. And as touching them that are come from ſtrange Countries, how hath god reached his hand to thẽ? Were not they alſo as it were in ẏ gulfe of hell, when they were in the curſed popedome? Ye ſee then how we be gathered here, altogether vnder ẏ hande of God. And therfore wel ought we to eſteeme this grace, and not onely to preach it with our mouthes, but alſo to ſhew throughout all our whole life, that foraſmuch as our Lord hath gotten vs to him, wee be willing to be his, & thereupon indeuor to pleaſe him in al things. Vnleſſe we do ſo, ſurely there wil be no excuſe for vs, but ȳ we ſhalbe a hundredfold more blameworthy, than thoſe whom God hath let alone, ſo as they continue ſtill in their old trade, ẘout finding him ſo gracious & fauorable towards them. Beſides this, Gods working in our behalfe hath not bin for once & away: but if we looke wel vpon his maintaining of the ſtate which he hath ſtabliſhed in this city; there hath not bin any yeare wherein he hath not renewed his myracles, & made it appeare openly by ſome notable ſigne, ȳ he hath had a continuall care of vs, and ȳ he hath neuer forſaken vs. And in deed we be worſe than blind, if we perceiue not ȳ our life hãgeth as by a threed. For there needeth but ȳ turning of a hand to diſpatch vs al: one conſpiracy was likeinough to haue put ȳ whole church of God in daunger of deſtruction. But yet for all this God hath preſerued vs. And after what faſhion? We cannot tell. Had we any drop of wiſedome, ſurely as oft as it came to our minde wee wold be aſtoniſhed at it & ſay; Lord, how far haſt thou exceeded ȳ expectation of men! Againe on the other ſide let vs mark, let vs marke I ſay how God hath lifted vp his hande to puniſh ſuch as went about to trouble ȳ order of his Church, and to ouerthrowe ȳ building which he had ſet vp by his Goſpel. For it is certaine ȳ he hath puniſhed them, to ȳ end that we ſhould take inſtruction at their coſt. He hath bin ſo gracious to vs as to let vs ſee and know his vengeance, and yet wee our ſelues haue beene exempted from it: not for our own deſerts, (for there is none of vs al, but vpon due examination of his doings, he ſhall find him ſelfe faulty) but becauſe it pleaſed God to ſpare vs. Neuertheleſſe hee hath ſhewed vs as it were with his finger, that it is not for any man to prouoke him: and that if any bodie ſtep vp againſt him, he ſhall finde himſelfe too hardly ouermatched. This (ſay I) hath bin tolde vs ſufficiently. But what? God worketh, and we haue no eyes to ſee his working: & although we haue, yet do wee wilfully ſhut them againſt him. Yea &(to goe no further,) let vs apply this ſtorie to our owne vſe. Truly I touch things as ſoberly as I can; but yet is not ȳ holy ſcripture written to ȳ end we ſhould but onely know what was done to the people of Iſrael: but to ȳ end we ſhold conſider the likenes that is betweene them & vs, ȳ when the like matters befal amõg vs, we might do our ſelues good by the warningpeales that are giuen vs by thẽ. 1.Cor.10.11 According wherunto S. Paul ſaith, that ȳ things which God did at that time, are as a picture for vs to look vpon, to ȳ end we ſhould refer al to our own profite: For ȳ end of time (ſaith he) is come vpon vs, and we ſee nowe the perfection of the things which God had but begun as then.

And here is mention made of *Coree*, *Dathan*, *and Abiram*, ȳ is to wit, of ſuch as could not abide the obſeruing of thinges in ſuch ſort as God had then commanded them by Moſes. True it is that they profeſſed thẽſelues to be Gods choſen, & the children of Abraham: mark ȳ for one point. For they alledged ȳ they were ſanctified; their intent was that their circumciſion ſhould be as a warrãt for them that they were a holy & ſacred generation. But yet for al ȳ, they would none of the preeſthood, at leaſtwiſe not as God had ordeyned it, but euery of thẽ would haue it to him ſelfe. Now I pray you, haue not we for our part ſeene the like rebellion againſt God & his word? For wherefore hath al the skirmiſhing bin, both againſt the doctrine & againſt ȳ diſciplyne of the church with ſuch rage: but to diſplace the order ȳ God ſet among vs? When heretikes, (yea euen ſuch heretikes as brought mo blaſphemies than euer were herd of ſince there was any chriſtian Church) came hither: they were mainteyned here with tooth & nayle, & openly, yea euen by ſuch as ſate in the ſeate of Iuſtice: in ſo much as they tooke part with them, and ſhewed them as much fauor as Turkes ſhoulde haue vnder Mahomet. Afterward when other heretikes came hither to bring in *Freewil* again, & to ſet it vp to the derogation of Gods grace, blaſpheming his election and Prouidence: they had thoſe mẽ for their Patrons & Aduocats, which ought to haue bin their Iudges: & thoſe ſpake for them in our preſence, and that with ſuch impudencie, as if they had bent them ſelues like buls to ſtrike vs with their hornes, & to ſet themſelues as ſhamefully as could be, againſt God and his doctrine. This haue we ſeene. Againe, when thinges were ſhewed them ſo plainly by the holy ſcripture, as would haue beene receiued euen among the very papiſts, and when ſo cleare and euident texts were alledged, as coulde not be gaineſaid, which things we not only ſpake by mouth, but alſo gaue them the articles in writing, & ſet downe ȳ ſentences of the ſcripture whereby the truth was pointed to as with ones finger: They were not aſhamed to reiect all, but ſtepped forth proudely ſtill, as it were to ſay; wee will fight againſt God whatſoeuer come of it. True it is that they ſpewed not out ſuch ſayings with full mouth, for they proteſted ſtill to hold themſelues to the Goſpel. O (ſayd they) our deſire is to haue ȳ Goſpel. Yea but what maner of Goſpell? A tauerngoſpell. There was no talking among them of the grace of our Lord Ieſus Chriſt: For it was a cõmon byword among them to ſay, There needs no more to be knowẽ than ȳ which al of vs know; that is to wit, that we muſt loue God and our neighbour. And what needeth there ſo much preaching for that matter? If a man replyed hereupon & ſayd vnto thẽ, how can ȳ be? If yee wil haue preaching to ceaſſe & the Sacraments to be ſuperfluous, thẽ muſt the whole order which God hath ſet in his church be diſanulled: Wel (would they ſay) then let ȳ Goſpel be preached ſimply ẘout ſuch ſtorming. And againe as touching ȳ Sacraments, belong they not to vs as well as to you? Why not? would we ȳ there ſhould be no more order kept? Nay we cã miniſter ȳ ſupper as wel as you preachers. Such things as theſe (I ſay) were ſeen and herd. But if Coree, Dathan, & Abirã be condemned here by ȳ holy ghoſt, to haue intẽded ȳ breaking of al order: I pray you what ſhal a man ſay, of thoſe which haue fought ſo manifeſtly againſt god after this faſhion? for theſe things were not done of ignorãce. Although they be ſo ſhameles as to ſay ſtil, wee haue ment no ſuch thing: yet is their malice too too apparant. For had no man ſpoken to them of it, or had no man pointed thē as with his finger to yͤ texts of the ſcripture, ſo as it might haue bin ſaide, ſee here the will of God, there is no difficultie in yͤ matter, it needeth not any ſcanning as though there were any doubtfulnes in it, ſee here yͤ opē text: [they might haue had ſome colour for their pretence]. But ſeing yͤ things were ſo ſhewed vnto them, & yet they cōtinued wilful ſtill: ſee yee not that it was an open making of war againſt God? Is it not to be ſeene alſo what pretence was made by Coree, Dathan & Abiram? Out of queſtion, their ſayings were after this maner: Why? If Aaron haue the high-prieſthod alone to himſelf, he ſhal haue al ſuperiority, & what ſhal we be? Euen ſo ſtandeth yͤ caſe with theſe men: to their ſeeming, al were marde on their ſide, if God ſhould beare yͤ ſway. But god will beare the ſway by this order, and we ſee it is no impeachment at all to the ciuill power which is a thing vtterly diſtinct from it, neither can any thing better maintaine Magiſtrates in their ſouerainty, foraſmuch as yͤ order of Gods Church is ſpiritual, ſo as it medleth not with yͤ puniſhing of mens bodies, nor wͭ penalties, nor with impriſonments, nor with ſuch other like things: but all is referred to yͤ word & the ſacraments. Seeing yͭ this is apparant doth it not ſerue better for yͤ ſtabliſhment of Empyres, kingdomes, & Lordſhips: than if there were nothing elſe to be had than a confuſed tyranny, where nothing were reſerued vnto God & to our Lord Ieſus Chriſt? And therfore when men ſtreine themſelues to yͤ vttermoſt of their power to ouerthrow yͤ order, do they not fal to ſpitting in yͤ face of Ieſus chriſt to ſpite him withall? For it is his will to reigne among vs, yea & he will haue his kingdom to be in vs. Now thē, when he chooſeth men & ſetteth them vp to gouern his church in his name, is it not too ſhameful an vnthankfulnes to ſay, we will not admit it, but thruſt it from vs? As who ſhold ſay, they wold make men beleeue yͭ the Conſiſtory were a thing vtterly ſeuered from Geneua it ſelf, wheras God hath granted vs yͤ grace to make it a member of the body. Nowe then, to diſmember Ieſus Chriſt by ſeparating yͤ things which he hath ioyned together, is it not a ſetting of themſelues openly againſt him? We ſee then yͭ theſe rebellions haue happened among vs: & who is to bee blamed for it? Truly yͤ heads of the ſedition are to be ſeene, and yͤ perceiuing of thē hath not bin at ſome one time, or a day or twaine ago, but it is now a ſeuen or eight years ſince it began, inſomuch as Gods children haue bin faine to grone and ſigh vnder their burthen, & to cry out alas, beſeeching God to haue pitie on his poore Church, ſeing it was in ſuch a hurly burly. Things went worſe & worſe, and one licentiouſnes brought in another, ſo as they bare thēſelues in hand yͭ al things were lawful for them. And yet notwithſtanding, of all that while they did but double the ſtings which they had felt afore in their wicked cōſciences, by thinking thus wͭ thēſelues: What? We can neuer hold out, except we lay our heads together to fortifie our ſelues thus & thus. Herupon they made cōtinually new prouiſions. And after what maner? By practiſing al maner of treaſō & diſloyalty, & by applying their minds to al wicked ſhifts for yͤ maintenance of yͤ thing yͭ they had misbegun. But in yͤ end our Lord wrought. And what haue we to cōſider therin? That we be worthy of blame. For although thoſe folk did fight opēly againſt God: yet would he not haue ſuffered ſuch miſeries to haue happened among vs, but for our offences. And therefore let vs conſider yͭ ſeeing he hath ſo puniſhed yͤ parties that came to ſet themſelues apparantly againſt him, & made their reckening to ouerthrow all yͭ he had builded: he hath ſcholed vs at their coſt, & therefore we ought firſt of al to thank him for his ſparing of vs, and that he wrapped vs not in yͤ cōfuſion yͭ was prepared for vs, but hath put a myraculous differēce betwene them & vs. Thus ye ſee that the thing which we haue to marke, is on the one ſide Gods mercy in bearing with vs, & on yͤ other, the puniſhing of a few folk, which ought to ſerue vs for an inſtructiō to teach vs to fare yͤ better by it. For it is certain yͭ thereby God hath ſhewed vs, how it is his wil to haue things go peaſably, & to keep their ordinary courſe according to his worde. For it is not for men to pretend Gods name falſly in this behalf, to ſwarue aſide one way or other. The miniſters of yͤ word & ſuch as are appointed to be preachers, muſt for their part bee able to proteſt before God, & to ſhewe openly before men, yͭ they neither be nor deſire to bee counted any other, than as perſons to whom God hath committed yͤ charge of preaching & of adminiſtring his ſacraments, with ſuch purenes as things may not bee corrupted in yͤ church. Whē it is ſo: let vs vnderſtand yͭ we muſt ſubmit our ſelues thereto, & that we ſhal winne nothing by ſtriuing againſt it, but Gods hand muſt needs be always againſt vs. For he forgetteth not what he hath ordeined, but wil maintaine & defend yͤ ſame continually. Therefore let vs learn to leaue yͤ ſeeking of any change againſt Gods ordinance. Let vs looke vpon the rule that is conteined in the holy ſcripture, & let no man attempt to incounter it by any maner of meanes, Let vs rather die than alter any thing, or attempt any thing againſt our God. Let vs be as ſheepe, if we will haue Ieſus Chriſt to bee our ſhepherd. For whatſoeuer hee is that hath not a meeke heart like a lamb, is vnworthy to be counted of Gods Church, becauſe our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt wil not be our ſhepherd, but vpon yͭ condition. That then is the thing which wee haue to beare away in the firſt place. But let vs alſo look wel vpon the maliciouſnes of yͤ Iewiſh people, & take good heede that we become not like them. Sothly it is a terrible caſe yͭ God ſhold ſhew forth his power ſo vpon rebels, yͭ the very earth ſhould open and ſwallow them vp with their wiues and children. There were to the number of 250 that had murmured againſt Moſes and Aaron, which were al rooted out in yͤ open ſight of men, ſo as men ſaw that God wrought from heauen: & yet notwithſtanding complaintes were ſtill caſt foorth againſt Moſes and Aaron, men charged them with al yͤ blame, all yͤ fault was laid in their necks. Seing it was ſo, muſt it not needs be that yͤ people was exceedingly hardharted? Yes: but let vs nowe looke into our ſelues. For we alſo are guilty of the like maliciouſnes nowadays in that

Mat.16.24. & Ioh.10.27

behalf.For there are a number to be ſeene which foſter poyſon in their hearts,& are wilfully wedded to wicked matters , and yet knowe neither why nor wherefore. If a man aske them what it booteth them: they cannot tell, ſauing that the diuell hath ſo caryed them away, that they bee eaſily wonne to maintaine euill matters, and to murmure and grudge: and therwithal they fal to running vpon thoſe that cannot doe withall, for none other cauſe but ẏ they indeuour to mainetaine the things that concerne God. How haue wee had an eye to the thinges which God hath done beyond mans expectation? He wrought of al the while,when no mã thought it.There were neither Iudges, nor people, nor miniſters of the word,ẏ euer thought vpon ẏ thinges ẏ are come to paſſe.Wel:is the thing done & paſt?and do we not perceiue ẏ God pitied vs in ẏ ende, and that therby he ment to ſchole vs,and ẏ we ſhoulde be mindfull of that deed for euer?Why conſider we not ẏ he laid his hand vpon vs to humble vs, to ẏ intent we ſhould henceforth liue in al ſubiection vnder him,& according to his order? Are they not too too vnexcuſable, which cannot make their profit therof?Yes ſurely.For it is as a wilful ſhutting of their eyes againſt Gods workes. But no maruel if things be ſo out of order nowadays. For wee ſee ẏ in the countries where the Goſpel is,there is more inordinate liberty & more leaudnes than is among ẏ papiſtes. Whereby we may vnderſtande, ẏ God doth iuſtly giue them ouer. For when men haue heard ẏ goſpel and will not beleeue it: they muſt needs alwayes become deuils incarnate and as badde as monſters, ſo as nothing may be ſeen in thẽ but curſed diſorder. In deede ẏ Papiſts,foraſmuch as they be deadly enemies vnto God, are well worthy of ẏ reprobate minde wherin they be.But as for them that boaſt of ẏ Goſpel, & make a mocke of it,vtterly refuſing al good doctrine,& fighting againſt god: muſt not God needs vtter greater rigor towards them,as men ſee he hath done?And a mã needs not to looke far for ẏ matter. Let vs but looke a little about vs, & we ſhall ſee ẏ Gods vengeance hath broken out to ẏ vttermoſt, vppon thoſe vnhappie creatures which doe ſo refuſe his grace dayly offered vnto them.Now then,if thoſe kind of folk conceiue rancor againſt al goodnes,what get they by it,but ẏ they heape vp ſtil greater puniſhment vpon their owne heads? But as for our part,let vs learn to keep our ſelues in aray vnder ẏ ſtandard of our God: and then let vs aſſure our ſelues, ẏ as he made Aarõs rod to floriſh in ſpyte of all ẏ rebels,ſo will he alſo make ẏ order to floriſh which he hath ſet among vs.Let vs wait vpon him,& reſt vppon that order:and in ẏ meane while ſhrowd our ſelues vnder his wings,and not ſeeke any thing againſt his preeminẽce & dignity,but honour him all of vs both great & ſmal. If we proceede after ẏ faſhion,we may wel hope that as he wrought then,ſo will he continue alſo towardes vs.

But by the way let vs beare in mind what Moſes ſaith here. *Bethink your ſelues* (ſaith he) *euen to keepe the commaundementes which I ſet before you this day.* Hereby he ſheweth vs whereto ẏ minding of the chaſtiſements which we haue perceiued to haue bin done by Gods hand,ſhold ſerue vs. Namely to bring vs vnto his obedience.For if we think to quit our ſelues by condemning ſuch as haue ſo troubled gods order,& gone about to ouerthrow the doctrine of our Lord Ieſus Chriſt:and yet in the meane while do play the ſame pageants,and followe their footeſteppes within an houre after:ſurely wee ſhalbe double puniſhed. Wee ſee what befell to Iehu, and it is a lookingglaſſe for vs to behold continually. For if a iudge turne his one hand vnto bribes, and puniſh theeues with the other for his owne profite:is not he himſelfe worthy of dubble puniſhment? Euen ſo ſtoode ẏ caſe ẘ Iehu. True it is ẏ God vſed his ſeruice in puniſhing ẏ ydolatries & abhominations of Achabs houſe:but yet for al that,Iehu himſelf followed the ſame,& therfore was God faine to puniſh him alſo as a robber,& to vſe greater rigor againſt him than againſt the houſe of Achab, though al things were out of order there and ful of wickednes. As much ſhall befall vs when wee ſhall haue condemned the wicked, and the deſpiſers of God, and ſuch as haue turned quite & cleane againſt him: if we our ſelues reſemble thẽ afterward. Therfore let vs take heede to ẏ which is ſpoken heere, which is that God calleth vs home to him, by our beholding of ẏ deſolation that men had practiſed.Very well then,our Lord puniſheth them:but his puniſhing of the wicked is for our benefite. For his meaning is ẏ by their example we ſhoulde learne to turne head when we haue gone aſtray,that wheras erſt we followed him not,ne framed our liues according to his word,we ſhold come to attonemẽt again in him, and take heed to our conuerſation, ẏ we obſerue al the cõmandemẽts which he ſetteth before vs.

2.Kin.10,30 31.& 15,12.

Againe, Moſes ſheweth vs heere, that it is not ynough for vs to ſerue God by halues, as men commonly doe to make their market as they liſt themſelues. Indeede we wilbe aſhamed ſo to do, ſpecially if we perceiue that God chaſtiſeth any man for the like doings, and that wee our ſelues haue found that hee hath vouchſafed to beare ẘ vs,and to ſhewe himſelfe as our father. I ſay wee will be aſhamed to diſdaine to haue any regarde at all of it. But what? We will ſet a good face vpon the matter,and we will pretend ſome ſhadow of vpright dealing,at leaſtwiſe in ſmal particular matters: but otherwiſe, wee will holde on ſtill in our old trace,and we will do ſuch thinges as may wel bewray that in al the reſt there was nothing but hypocriſie,ſo as we went not to work roundly & ſoundly becauſe we be doublcharted. But god admitteth no ſuch parting of ſtakes.He ſaith expreſly,Looke about you when I puniſh ſuch as haue done amiſſe.For vnleſſe ye purpoſe to wrap your ſelues in the ſame curſe, ye muſt not onely reforme your liues in one or two points, but alſo rule your ſelues throughout according to my law,ye muſt walk in ſuch vprightnes,as it may be perceiued that ye haue giuen your ſelues to my ſeruice, and ẏ your whole ſeeking is to haue me to be your Lord & maſter. Thus ye ſee whereat Moſes looked in ſaying. Therfore do yee all the cõmandements which I ſet before you this day.

But ſurely mans frailty is ſuch, as he can neuer attaine to the full performing of the law: but yet muſt we ſtil indeuour towards it. When we haue inforced our ſelues to ẏ vttermoſt, yet ſhal we be behind hand ſtil in many things. And if we enter into accoũt for euery poynt which we ſhal haue performed, we ſhall haue failed in a hundred. Therefore let vs acknowledge our faults: but yet for all that, the marke that wee muſt ſhoote at, muſt be the obeying of our God without exception, ſo as we make no parting of ſtakes with him to ſay, Go to, as for in this thing, I am contented to yeelde to God, but hee muſt pardon me in that thing, and he muſt beare with me for the other matter. If we fall to ſuch chaffaring with him, wee ſhall finde in the ende that our fond ouerweening hath beguiled vs.

And in any wiſe let vs wey well this ſaying, where he ſayth: *that it is hee himſelfe that ſetteth forth the commaundements of God.* And thereby he bringeth vs back to Gods word in ſuch wiſe as it is preached, for he wil not haue vs go ſeeke in the aire, nor yet aboue the clowdes for ẏ knowledge of his wil. We muſt be contented with his comming downe vnto vs, and with his ſpeaking to vs by the mouthes of men. The rebellious ſort haue alwayes ſayd that their intent was to ſerue God: for it were too horrible a thing to be ſo blaſphemious in wordes, as to ſay that they giue ouer God and will be none of his. Therefore doe they make faire proteſtations: but in the meane while they tread vnder foote the worde whereby God will be knowen and ſerued. This hath bin ſeene in all ages: and we haue found it in theſe deſpiſers that haue crept in here among vs to corrupt vs, that all their talke hath tended to none other end, but to aboliſh ſome peece of the holy ſcripture. For they haue giuen forth that there is no more neede of the Lawe and the prophets, but that they be quite aboliſhed. And this blaſphemie hath bin held or rather fluſhed out in ſuch ſort, as it required to be reſiſted with ſtouteneſſe. Inſomuch as they haue not bin aſhamed to ſpew out ſuch wicked ſayings as theſe in my preſence: namely ẏ the old Teſtament was to be reiected, and belonged not at all vnto vs. And on their Alebenches they made it a common prouerbe, that the hauing of the Goſpell was ſufficient, that is to ſay, that wee ought to holde vs contented with theſe two wordes, A man muſt loue God, and he muſt loue his neighbour. Thus ye ſee how they haue gone about to bring in a Turkiſhneſſe vppon vs, yea and a confuſion more horrible than Turkiſhneſſe, in that they durſt ſo openly pronounce all thoſe leawd ſpeaches. Let vs marke then how it is not without cauſe that Moſes ſayth here, *The commaundementes which I ſet before you*, as if hee ſhould ſay: come not hither to proteſt diſſemblingly that your intent is to ſerue God: but [ſay flatly] ẏ ye wil not admit his Lawe becauſe it is preched vnto you by me, by me (I ſay) which am a mortall man as you be and not your God, leaſt ye ſhould make an idoll of me. Alledge none of all theſe ſhiftes, ſayth he: for God hath ordained me to ſet forth his Lawe, and he will haue it receiued at my hand. And ſeeing he hath giuen me that charge and office: it behoueth you on your ſide to obey. Now againe wee knowe that our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt intendeth not to dwell here viſibly in his owne perſon among vs. Hee hath ordeined Paſtors in his Church, and hee will be heard by their meanes: that is the perfection whereunto hee bringeth vs, vntill wee come to that happy meeting, to bee throughly ioyned vnto him. 1.Cor.13.12 Thoſe are the wordes of Saint Paul. Now if wee will not ſubmit our ſelues to that order: it is as if we would rend aſunder the body of Chriſt as much as in vs lyeth. Therefore let vs beware that wee yeelde due authoritie to Gods word, and accept it reuerently when it is preached vnto vs. So then, whenſoeuer we haue to deale with Gods ſeruice and religion: let vs not fall to fancying of high ſpeculations, as if we would ſay, Let God ſhewe me what pleaſeth him, and I wil doe it. For that is but a vaine excuſe, as wee ſhall ſee that Moſes himſelfe will tell vs hereafter where he ſayth: Thou needeſt not to goe ouer the ſea, nor to mount vp into the ayre, nor to goe downe into the deepe, foraſmuch as thou haſt the worde in thy heart and in thy mouth. Deut.30.11.12.13.14. And this word (ſaith S. Paul) is not only that which was preached by Moſes: but alſo the ſame word of faith which we preach at this day. Rom.10.8. Sith it is ſo, let vs beare in minde ẏ God ment as it were to bridle vs by telling vs ẏ it was his wil to make vs ſubiect vnto him, and ẏ for the bringing thereof to paſſe, it behoued vs to obſerue the doctrine which he did ſet forth by the hand of Moſes. And cõſequently it behoueth our Lord Ieſus Chriſtes gouerning of vs nowadays to be ſuch, as we receiue and beleeue whatſoeuer is preached to vs in his name. Ye ſee thẽ that the way for Gods word to haue due preheminence and authoritie among vs: is that wee gouerne not our ſelues after our owne lyking: but hearken to the voyce of Ieſus Chriſt to ſubmit our ſelues thereto, ſo as hee may haue the ſouereintie ouer vs that is giuen him by God his father, and we receiue his word without exception or gainſaying, knowing that that is the meane whereby God intendeth to try what obedience wee yeelde vnto him.

Now let vs kneele downe in the preſence of our good God with acknowledgement of our faultes, praying him to make vs perceiue them better than wee haue done heretofore, ſo as we may fare the better by all the inſtructions that are giuen vs, as well by the benefites that are dayly beſtowed vppon vs at his hand, as by the chaſtiſementes which hee ſheweth vs: that thereby we may be brought to feare him, and to honor him by all meanes, and not take vppon vs the name of Chriſtianitie falſely, but become his people in very deede, being ſeparated from all worldly infections, and from all wiched luſtes that are contrary to his lawe, or which ſtriue againſt it. That it may pleaſe him to graunt this grace, not onely to vs but alſo to all people and nations of the earth, &c.

On Tewſeday the xxiiij of September. 1555.

The Lxxvi. Sermon, which is the third vpon the eleuenth Chapter.

8 Therefore keepe all &c.

9 And that yee may prolong your daies in the lande which the Lorde ſware to your fathers to giue to them and to their ſeede, euen a lande that floweth with milke and honnie.

10 For the land which thou goeſt vnto to poſſeſſe it, is not as the lande of Egypt whence thou cameſt: where thou diddeſt ſow thy ſeede and water it with thy feete as a garden of herbes:

11 But the Lande which thou goeſt vnto to poſſeſſe, is a land wherin are hilles and plaines, and it drinketh raine water from the skie.

12 It is a land which the Lord thy God regardeth: the eyes of the Lorde thy God are continually vppon it, from the beginning of the yeere to the end of the yeere.

13 And if ye be diligent in obeying my commaundementes which I commaunde you this day, ſo as ye loue the Lorde your God, and ſerue him with all your hart and with all your ſoule:

14 Then will I giue the foreraine and the afterraine in ſeaſon vppon your lande, that thou mayeſt gather vp thy Corne, thy Wine, and thyne Oyle.

15 Alſo I will giue thee graſſe vpon the feeld for thy Cattell. So ſhalt thou eate and haue thy fill.

After that Moſes hath warned the people to keepe Gods commaundements, now hee harteneth them by ſetting Gods promiſes before them, as if GOD ſhould tell them, that his will was they ſhould not ſerue him but for good wages. And in deede, God perceiuing how loth & ſlowe we be to follow him, allureth vs to it, by promiſing vs that wee ſhall not loſe our labor in ſo doing. Not that he is bound to doe it, or that he intendeth to haue vs as hirelings, or that we can deſerue or earne any thing at his hand: wee muſt rid away all ſuch imaginations. It is meete yͭ wee ſhould yeeld obedience vnto God, though no reward at al were behighted vs. For we ought to loue him for his owne ſake, & not for any recompence that can be looked for. Againe on yͤ other ſide, our affection muſt be francke & free, and not lyke theirs that wil doe nothing, except their profite be alwayes before them. We muſt loue God wͭ a free heart. Thirdly, we can deſerue nothing at all by our doings: doe what we can, God is neuer yͤ more bound vnto vs for it. For we be his already, & what can we bring, which is not due to him already by nature? Yet is he contented to apply himſelfe to our rawneſſe, in ſaying yͭ if we ſerue him, there is a reward ready for vs, ſo as we ſhall not neede to be afraid yͭ our Labor in honoring him ſhoulde be vnprofitable to vs if we indeuour ſo to honor him. Now we ſee what a fondneſſe it is for men to conclude, that becauſe God promiſeth rewarde to ſuch as keepe his Lawe, therfore men can deſerue at his hand: For that is not his meaning: but it is done for our infirmities ſake becauſe God ſeeth that wee haue nede to bee quickened vp. And therefore all the promiſes of the lawe are as ſtrokes with yͤ ſpurre. Beſides this, we muſt alſo come backe to the doctrine of S. Paul, which is, that whatſoeuer promiſe with condition God doe make vs in his lawe, it ſtandes vs in no ſtead. For wee on our ſide, in ſteade of performing the thinges yͭ God commaundeth vs, doe goe cleane backe from them, and by that meanes are farre off frō all yͤ benefit yͭ is behighted vs there. And whereas the Lawe ſayth, hee that doth theſe thinges ſhall liue in them: that booteth vs nothing at all vntill God of his owne free goodneſſe be at one with vs againe. For then writeth he his lawe in our heartes, and we learne to obey him: which thing we cannot doe by nature. And yet for all that, we doe it not then perfectly, but there is ſtill ſome blemiſh in our doings, ſo as God might iuſtly reiect our workes, becauſe they be altogether ſinfull. Neuertheleſſe hee taketh them in good woorth, and yeeldeth vs reward, not as of duetie, but of his owne good will.

Gal. 3.10.11. 12.

Rom. 7.14.

Leuit. 18.4.

Rom. 7.22. 23.

Phil. 3.12.

Therefore to come againe to the firſt matter, let vs note yͭ God prouoketh vs to the keping of his commaundements, by ſuch meanes as he knoweth to be moſt conuenient for vs. And that is the cauſe why he ſayth, that if wee be wholy his, he alſo is ours: and yͭ if wee draw neere vnto him he will drawe ny vnto vs: & will bleſſe vs, & he wil not only proſper vs in this tranſitorie lyfe: but we may wel hope for a far greater reward in yͤ kingdome of heauen. All theſe thinges are told vs: and to what end? Not to puffe vs vp with any vaine preſumption, as though wee were able to deſerue aught at Gods hand, but to incorage vs the more to doe well, ſeeing that our God which

might

Gen. 15.1. &

Exod. 19.5.

Pſal. 16.6. & 144.15.

Rom. 8.30.

might well exact the performance of all that is conteined in his Lawe,without allowing vs any rewarde at all, doth neuertheleſſe voutſafe to binde himſelfe freely of his owne accord. Marke that for the firſt point. For we ſee here, ȳ Gods promiſing of all theſe thinges to that people, was not for any obedience that they had yelded vnto him; for the land had bin promiſed to their fathers, yea euen by othe,long before they were borne. And if a man ſpeake of the time that was to come: we ſee that God had no reſpect of that, he looketh not that the people ſhould behaue themſelues ſo well as to receiue reward of him for it: but he ſayth; I haue already promiſed you the land,yea I haue promiſed it you for your inheritance, to the intent ye ſhould not thinke ye haue gotten it by your owne purchaſe. And for proofe thereof, I aſſured it vnto you by free gift before you were begotten: but yet if yee intend to inioy it, take heede that yee giue your ſelues to me. Here yee ſee how God preuenteth all deſeruing: he regardeth not what wee haue deſerued,but whereas he ſeeth vs to be wretched and deſtitute of all goodneſſe, ſo as he findeth nothing but ſinne in vs, whereby we deſerue to be reiected: yet neuertheleſſe he of his owne infinite mercie bindeth himſelfe vnto vs,& telleth vs he will doe vs good,as though we had ſerued him according to his law.Marke ȳ for one point.

And thereupon he ceaſeth not to ſay, *Do the thinges that I haue commaunded you, that ye may inioy the benefites that I haue promiſed you.* The reaſon is, that he will not haue his goodneſſe dalyed withall. If he be liberall, he will not haue men to abuſe it as they commonly doe. When it is told vs that all that euer we haue at Gods hand, is of his onely free gift: wee beare our ſelues in hand, that we haue leaue to doe euill, and to liue euery man after his owne lyking,and that it is no matter what we doe.But God wil not haue his gratious goodnes ſo diſgraced. For his ſhewing of himſelfe fauorable vnto vs, is to another end and purpoſe: namely to prouoke vs to loue him againe; and that becauſe wee finde him ſo good a father, we ſhould be lykeminded againe towardes him, & behaue our ſelues as his children. That is the thing which Moſes telleth vs here when hee ſayth, Looke that yee obey your God, if ye minde to poſſeſſe the land which he promiſed to your fathers. For on the one ſide hee ſheweth that the land of Chanaan was an heritage of freegift: and yet hee forbeareth not to tell them, that they muſt not dallie w̄ God in abuſing ȳ liberalitie of his, but ſo much the rather both loue him & feare him. And when they ſee that God hath powred out the great riches of his mercie ſo vpon thē; the ſame ought to inflame them to ſay, let vs giue ouer our ſelues wholy to our God: Seeing that hee hath ſought vs out at ſuch time as wee were gone from him, & preuented vs w̄ his goodneſſe, not reſpecting our vnworthineſſe,but taking occaſiō of himſelf to doe vs good: let it kindle ȳ greater deſire in vs to ſubmit our ſelues to his power and will.

And whereas Moſes ſpeaketh here but onely of the land of Chanaan,& of the fruites that the people ſhould gather there for their finding and ſuſtenance: it is not for that God meant not to leade the faithfull any further than ſo at ȳ time: for it is certeine that they had the promiſe of life after the ſame maner as it is conteined at this day in the Goſpell. And therefore it is horrible blaſphemie againſt God, to ſay ȳ God held the people of olde time lyke ſwine in a ſtye, and that they had no more but a certeine figure of ȳ ſpirituall good thinges which are giuen vs preſently in theſe dayes, as that wretched caytife ſayd which was puniſhed here, who turned all thinges vpſide downe, & was ſo bold as to belke out this hereſie,ȳ the olde teſtamēt was nothing elſe but a figure: inſomuch ȳ euen Abraham the father of all the faithfull, had but a fantaſticall faith and knew not God aright. And for proofe therof(quoth he,)he worſhipped Angels in ſtead of God, & had no knowledge of the euerlaſting lyfe.Loe what curſed ſtuffe here was:for we know (ſaith S.Paul)ȳ the fathers of old time were the Gal.4.1. childrē of God,& heires of ȳ kingdome of heauē as well as we.There is but this difference, ȳ they were lyke young children: but yet for all ȳ,they failed not to poſſeſſe ȳ benefite, howbeit ȳ they were ſtil vnder tutors and gouernours,according to ȳ ſimilitude that S. Paul alledgeth there. The auncient fathers had the law & the ceremonies & ſuch other lyke thinges: but yet they wanted not the ſubſtance & trueth alſo.Now then,Gods ſetting forth of the land of Chanaā to the Iewes was not to the intent they ſhould ſtand poring vpon ȳ, lyke ſwine that ſtand muſling with their groyns in their ſwiltrough:but vnder the earthly inheritance which he had promiſed to their fathers, he gaue them a taſte of the heauenly heritage, accordingly as we ſee ȳ in their ſacrificing, although they offered brute beaſtes: yet were they made partakers of the redēption that is purchaſed for vs by our Lord Ieſus Chriſt; and their offering of ȳ brute beaſtes in ſacrifice, directed thē to ȳ redemption ȳ was wrought by the Hebr.9.23. ſonne of God, when he ſhedded his holy bloud 28.& 11,13. to waſhe away our ſpottes and ſinnes. And after 14. the ſame maner was it w̄ the land of Chanaan. For ſuch was their ſlender capacitie, ȳ it behoued thē to be guided that way.The land of Chanaan then, was to thē not onely a pledge but alſo an earneſt penny of the heauenly lyfe & endleſſe welfare which the fathers hoped for as well as we,inaſmuch as they had the ſame faith that we haue. So then let vs marke well,that whereas here is mentiō made of the land of Chanaan, and of Gods mainteining of his people there in wealth:it ſerueth not to the end that the Iewes ſhould looke for nothing els but earthly things: but to the end that by taſting of Gods goodnes in this trāſitorie life,they ſhould vnderſtād that he had prepared thē another heritage in heauē, which was more worth than al the world.

But our Lord vſeth no ſuch maner of dealing with vs nowadayes. True it is that(as ſaith Saint 1.Tim.4.8. Paul vnto Timothie)if we walke as becommeth vs, we haue promiſes both of this preſent life, & of ȳ life to come. God telleth vs ȳ he wil not only receiue vs into ȳ euerlaſting life, but alſo ȳ he will wil neuer forſake vs ſo lõg as we be in this world and in this earthly pilgrimage, but will ſtil haue a care of vs to doe vs good, and to ſuccor vs and prouide for vs in all our needes : howbeit the heauenly lyfe is the chiefe thing, and that is the place whereunto our Lord draweth vs, notwithſtanding that he ad this preſent lyfe to it as an acceſſorie. And that is done becauſe wee haue a greater light nowadayes, than our forefathers John 1.51. had vnder the Lawe. For Ieſus Chriſt is come downe from heauen, and hath opened the euerlaſting kingdome vnto vs: & he is gone vp thither as in our perſon: for he is riſen againe in yͤ nature of man which he took of vs. Ye ſee then yͭ heauen is now opened : and therefore it is not to be wondered at though God ſpeake in a larger language now, thã he did in the time of the law. For it behoued the people of thoſe dayes to bee led as we ſee little children are:& (as ſaith Saint Gal.4.4. Paule) we be come to mans eſtate, in compariſõ of them. Yet notwithſtanding we may gather hereupon, that God intending to incourage his people to ſerue him with the better will, telleth them yͭ he will ſhewe himſelfe a father towardes them, euen in reſpect of this world, howbeit not in all pointes, but onely ſo farre forth as may giue them ſome taſte and feeling of his fatherly loue, that they may lift vp the eyes of their faith yet higher, and vnderſtand that God hath reſerued the true bleſſedneſſe and perfection of glorie for them, till they be taken out of this worlde and out of this corruptible lyfe. Thus ye ſee in effect what we haue to gather vppon that text: Yea and it behoueth vs to marke wel this ſaying, *That thou maiſt be ſtrengthened.*

¶ Hereby Moſes declareth that God for his parte is faithfull, and that when hee hath once ſpoken the worde, we may well aſſure our ſelues of it. But foraſmuch as we drag our legges after vs, and although he allure vs to him ſo gently, and draw towards vs of his owne accord: yet are we lazie & ſlow in comming vnto him : we haue need to be ſtrengthened. That is the very end yͭ al yͤ promiſes of the lawe do tend vnto. It is not meant that God ſhould binde himſelfe vnto vs as our detter: it is not for that he looketh whether wee haue deſerued any thing at all or no: neither is it of purpoſe to bargaine or indent with vs, as though he ſhould take vp hackencies among vs to ſerue his turne withall, by conſtraint: but foraſmuch as he ſees wee be feeble, and haue not ſo reſolute a minde as were requiſite, but are intangled in this world, and held backe with a number of vanities, and wicked affections, and (to be ſhort) are not ſo liuely as to yeelde our ſelues vnto his obedience: his purpoſe is to ſtrengthen vs, and to help vs. He ſeeth our default, and he remedieth it. Be ſtrõg therefore. And how ? Euen by conſidering thus with your ſelues: Go to, Our Lord might commaund vs peremptorily at one word: for he hath full ſouereintie ouer vs, and we be his by nature. And when we haue all of vs ſtreined our ſelues to the vttermoſt of our power, yet can wee not doe as we ought to doe. Yet notwithſtãding, he will not be ſerued at our handes wͭout recompence, but he ſaith yͭ if we doe but a peece of that which is due to him, he bindeth himſelfe to vs for it. Sith we ſee this, are we not too leawd if wee bee not touched to the quick, & amend not all ſlothfulneſſe, to go forth vnto God luſtily without ſtopping for any worldly impedimẽt or hinderance? That is yͤ ſtrength which Moſes ſpeakes of here.

And he addeth hereunto, *that it is not enough to be entred into the land: but wee muſt alſo abide and dwell there*: for if wee haue once receiued the promiſe of ſaluation, and God hath bleſſed vs & made vs to proſper to yͤ worldward: we muſt not thereupon fall a ſleepe, but wee muſt ſtill folowe our cauſe. We know that this life is a way, and therefore wee muſt ſtill goe on foreward. And 2.Cor.5.6. whither is it that God calleth vs? Saith he to vs, when ye haue gone on a little way, tary ſtill intangled in the world? No: but we muſt trauel ſtil vpward to the heauenly lyfe. And that can not be done without forſaking the world continually more and more. Then let vs marke well, how it is told vs here, yͭ when God hath once put vs in hope of ſaluation, ſo as he hath taken vs into his Church and into his flocke, and begunne to doe vs good: we muſt not fal aſleepe vpon it, but proceede on ſtil, aſſuring our ſelues yͭ al is to no purpoſe, vnleſſe wee hold out to our liues end, without ceaſing or failing in the middes of our way. This is it yͭ Moſes meant, in ſaying yͭ when the people were once entered into yͤ lande, it behoued them to haue an eye to yͤ euerlaſting inioying & poſſeſſing thereof which had bin promiſed them with the ſame. Hauing ſaid ſo, he addeth *that the land of Chanaã is not as the land of Egipt*. And why? *For your being in Egipt* (ſaith he) *was as it had bin in a garden*. For men doe water their gardens, ſo as when they haue ſowed or ſet their herbes, they wil haue water at hand to moyſten thẽ wͭ al. After yͤ ſame maner was it with you in yͤ land of Egypt, which is watered partly by cunning, & partly by nature. For we muſt vnderſtãd, yͭ that land hath one propertie which all other landes haue not. We reade not yͭ any other coũtrie of the world is vnmoyſtened with raine and ſhowers frõ aboue, ſaue only Egypt. For once a yeere yͤ riuer Nilus ouerfloweth his banckes, & according to yͤ growing therof, ſo doth it behight thẽ abundance of fruites. Inſomuch yͭ if it ouerflowe not aboue fiue or ſixe foote deep, it is a token of dearth, as who ſhould ſay yͭ God threateneth famine to yͤ whole countrie. If it riſe to twẽtie foote or ſomewhat vpward, well, there will be ſome abundance. But if it increace to thirtie or fortie foote, then will there be much more: ſo as in Egypt they haue none other ſigne of a good yeere & a fruiteful harueſt, than the ouerflowing of Nilus. Whereas all other riuers doe marre the landes where they ouerflowe: and although they be muddie, yet doe they much harme : This riuer, by his ouerflowing, cauſeth yͤ land to yeeld great abũdance. That is yͤ cauſe why it is ſaid, yͭ at yͭ time yͤ Iſraelites had as it were euery man his garden, & were faine to haue water to moiſtẽ thẽ wͭ all after yͤ maner of yͤ coũtrie, which is cut into many ditches & trẽches to water the land wͭ all: & all this is according to yͤ ordinance which God hath ſet there. But here Moſes telleth the Iſraelites, that it ſhall not be ſo with thẽ in the land of Chanaan. For why? There is ſmall ſtore of riuers in many of the countries, yea and in the moſt part of them. True it is that Iordan paſſeth through it, and there are certaine lakes alſo: but that is all, and yet one of them ſerues but to infect the land. For the lake where Sodom ſtood, did rather marre the countrie, than yeeld any commoditie. And therewithall wee ſee how the fathers had much adoe to digge pittes, and were in daunger to be vndone with drought: inſomuch that they were driuen frõ place to place for lacke of water. Ye ſee then that the land of Chanaan was not watered after the maner of Egypt, neither had it water at hand and at commandement as Egypt had. And therefore is it ſayd vnto them, See how God viſiteth the land of Egypt but once a yere: and if the riuer flowe luſtily ouer all the countrie, it is as good as if he had rayned neuer ſo much vpon it, ſo as the Egyptians are ſure of a good harueſt, when the riuer hath increaſed after that faſhion. But your God muſt be faine to ſend you raine and conuenient moyſture from aboue, from the one end of the yeere to the other. When yee haue ſowen your ſeede, ye muſt waite for raine from aboue, and thinke thus with your ſelues, Alas Lord, wilt not thou make the ſeede to increaſe which wee haue layd into the ground? Now muſt thou ſhew that thou regardeſt vs, and that it is thy wil that our labour ſhal proſper. And when thou haſt ſo giuẽ vs raine, we muſt be faine to returne againe and looke vp ſtill to heauen, that thou our God maiſt haue thine eyes cõtinually vpon the land, to make it yeelde fruite. For it is not enough for you ỹ your God ſend you rayne once; but he muſt be faine to hold on ſtill: for other way there is none to water ỹ land, except your God power out his bleſſing vppon you from heauen. Otherwiſe the land muſt needes lye dry and vntilled. Thus doe we ſee how Moſeſes meaning is, to ſtirre vp the people to liue in awe and feare, and to prouoke them to call vppon God continually, and therewithall to ſubmit themſelues to his gouernment, and to conſider how great need they haue of his help, ſo as they may ſay: Alas Lord, what will become of vs if thou bleſſe vs not?

Moreouer hee putteth them in minde alſo, to conſider what a fatherly care God had of ỹ land of Chanaan, ſith it was his pleaſure to raine ſo vpon it, not for once a yeere onely, but yerely from the beginning of the yere to the ende of it. That is the effect of the thinges that Moſes intended to ſay here. And thereby wee be done to vnderſtand, that Gods bringing of vs into diſtreſſe and neceſſitie, is to prouoke vs to repaire vnto him, and to looke vp to his goodneſſe, ſo as wee ſhould not onely haue cauſe to giue him thankes for his benefites; but alſo bee driuen to call vpon him by being held at the ſtaues end, and thereupon dayly reſorte vnto him. After the ſame maner, wee ſee nowadayes how wee haue neede of faire weather; and that not for fower or fiue dayes in a yeere: but as oftẽ as ſeed is to be layde into the ground, or the lande is to be tilled; or elſe we ſee men coulde not put the plough into the ground, nor ſowe their corne: if they ſhould, it would rotte immediately, and neuer take roote in the earth. Againe the grapes would rotte vppon the vines and neuer ripen. Neuertheleſſe, when corne is layde into the ground, it requireth rayne; and it is mard if there followe an vnmeaſurable drought. Afterward in ſomertime when harueſt commeth, the time muſt be fit for it, and likewiſe for dreſſing of vines and for mowing of graſſe. To be ſhort, all the yeere long God calleth vs to him, by making vs to haue neede of him. And although wee were not prouoked at all; yet the very wit and vnderſtanding that he giueth vs by nature, may cauſe vs to ſee that hee calleth vs dayly to come vnto him, and to put our whole truſt in his goodneſſe. This is the thing in effect which we haue to remember vppon this text.

But the chiefe point is to put this leſſon well in practiſe. And therefore whenſoeuer we ſee that our God hath looked vppon vs throughout all the yeere; let vs vnderſtand that his intent was to ſhewe the more familiarly, what a fatherly care he hath ouer vs. For if wee had any riuer lyke to Nilus which watered the land in ſtead of rayne: wee would thinke thus with our ſelues; well, now hath God done pitying of vs for this yeere: & it would not touch vs ſo wel, as when we ſee ỹ God not onely regardeth vs in the ſpringtime, but alſo holdeth on all the yeere lõg, ſo as there is not any one day of all the yere, wherein we may not behold Gods wonderful goodneſſe, in making ỹ earth to yeeld fruite for our ſuſtenance, by conſidering how he is faine one while to hold ỹ raine lockt vp, & another while to opẽ the windowes & watergates of heauen, that wee may haue moyſture in due ſeaſon: How hee is faine to ſend heate, and to aſſwage it againe: & to ſend cold and to abate it againe; how hee is faine to ſend faire weather & fowle, and to temper the one with the other: ſo as finally, we haue neede of all theſe diuerſities, in their due times and ſeaſons. And ſith we ſee that God prouideth vs of all theſe thinges; ought wee not to be the better aſſured that he hath a continuall regard of vs and neuer forgetteth vs, and that hee is a father to vs all the yeere long? Lyke as a man ỹ is mindful of his houſhold, riſeth betimes a morninges to goe to his buſineſſe; & when hee hath done one thing, looketh about if there bee any thing els to ſet in order; forecaſting in his minde how to diſpoſe the thinges ỹ are giuen him, ſo as the benefite thereof may redound to his whole houſhold: euen ſo God behaueth himſelfe as a houſholder towardes vs, ſo as hee ceaſeth not to watch for our benefite both earely and late; not that he is faine to toyle after the maner of men: but that howſoeuer the caſe ſtand, hee maketh vs to feele that he is more than a foſterfather to vs, & we be too blind & beaſtly if we conſider it not. Thus ye ſee how the practiſing of this leſſon of Moſeſes, conſiſteth in giuing thãks to our God, according to the varietie of ỹ time & weather which we perceiue in ỹ yere. And whẽ he hath prouided vs for the whole yeere; let vs aſſure our ſelues that hee hath had pitie of vs, and regarded vs,and neuer turned his eye from our benefite,to the end that we might be furniſhed and prouided thereof. Furthermore, it is not enough for vs to thanke God when we haue ſo felt his goodneſſe: but lyke as Moſes ſayeth here,that his eyes are alwayes vpon the landes yͤ are full of hils & dales, where hollow groũdes are not at commaundement to cut trenches in, nor ſtreames at hand to water yͤ fields as it were gardens: ſo when we thinke vpon thoſe thinges, we muſt beare in minde that God hath his eyes continually vpon vs,to yͤ end that we alſo ſhould lift vp our eyes vnto him,to call vpon him and to reſorte to him for ſuccor all yͤ yeere long, & that when he hath giuen vs a good ſeaſon, we ſhould pray for the continuance thereof thereafter, as we ſhould haue neede of it,and it ought to prouoke vs to doe yͤ lyke from day to day. But contrariwiſe, we ſee our owne negligence. For when thinges fall out according to our minde, wee doe as it were deſpiſe God. If we ſee there hath bin a good ſeede time, then go to, let vs make good cheere:ſeeing the ſeede time was ſo good, we are lyke to haue as good a harueſt. And doe we wonder yͤ God diſappointeth vs of our deſire, becauſe of ſuch vnthankefulneſſe? What a leawdneſſe is yͤ? God hath his eyes vpon vs, & yet we ſhut our eyes at him, & kicke & ſpurne againſt him,& mocke at him: and thinke we yͤ he either ought or can beare w̃ ſuch beaſtlyneſſe? Nay rather,ſeeing yͤ he ſayth firſt, My children, I looke vpon you & haue a care of you, to prouide ſuſtenance for you: it would become vs to be anſwerable vnto him. Seeing yͤ our Lord beginneth after yͤ faſhion, what ought we to doe? Ought we not at leaſtwiſe to ſay, well Lord,and we likewiſe will haue an eye vnto thee? Nay, contrariwiſe, when we haue receiued benefites at his hand,we fall to kicking againſt him. He would take vs into his protection,& we fall to flinging away from him. Againe,where is yͤ care yͤ we ought to haue to cal vpon him? It would become vs to conſider thus with our ſelues, Our Lord holdeth vs as it were at yͤ ſtaues end, to yͤ intent we ſhould ſtand in awe of him:now therefore,let vs not giue our luſtes the head: as if a father ſhoulde ſay to his children,ſirs, looke yͤ yee apply your ſelues wel, the one of you at his booke and the other at his worke, & then ſhall ye haue your dinners, & elſe ye ſhall haue nothing.If a father hold his childrẽ at that point,ſo as they knowe not wether they ſhall haue meate & drinke or no, except it appeare that they haue done ſome good, ſurely it will moue thẽ though they haue no reaſon nor vnderſtanding.Behold,our God could well giue vs at once all that euer we need:or elſe he could in one day ſhewe vs yͤ the yere ſhould be proſperous, ſo as there ſhould bee both a good harueſt and a good vintage: but he wil not doe it. When wee haue paſſed ouer one day, we muſt beginne againe the next day to pray to him: & God hath ordeined that it ſhould be ſo,becauſe he ſees wel yͤ it is more thã requiſite for vs to be held in awe. And therefore let vs learne to profite our ſelues by this leſſon: & whenſoeuer we want raine, let vs beware yͤ we be patient, in waiting quietly till God open yͤ clowdes. And on yͤ other ſide,when he voutſafeth to water yͤ earth; let vs vnderſtand yͤ he giueth vs ſuſtenance w̃ his owne hand, and let vs call vpon him dayly: & ſith wee perceiue yͤ he watcheth for vs;let vs lykewiſe haue our eyes vpon him againe.Thus ye ſee in effect what Moſes meant to declare here.

Now he addeth thereunto; *If ye keepe the commaundements which I ſet before you,ſo as ye loue your God, & ſerue him with all your heart, in the lande which I will giue you.* Here Moſes putteth yͤ people in minde againe what yͤ true ſeruice of God is: namely yͤ we learne to obey him. This hath bin ſufficiently layd forth alreadie: but yet is it not w̃out cauſe yͤ the holy Ghoſt ſpeaketh of it ſo often. For it ſtandeth vs in hand to haue ſuch warnings ſet before vs, as it were euery minute of an howre. And for proofe thereof, how ſerue wee God,but by force & conſtreint? We haue no willingneſſe nor deſire at all to it. But our Lord telleth vs yͤ he accepteth no ſeruice yͤ is done vnto him,except it come from the heart, & that wee loue him as our father,according as it is ſayd in yͤ pſalme. yͤ we cannot feare God but becauſe he ſheweth himſelfe mercifull vnto vs. Psal. 130. 4. 7. For ſo long as we cõceiue nothing in God but rigor; we can doe nothing elſe but ſhun him, & ſhrinke away from him as farre as is poſſible: & although wee be conſtreined to looke vnto him, yet ſhall hee drawe nothing yͤ is aughtworth frõ vs. Therfore yͤ firſt ſtep to ſerue God wel & to loue him, is to knowe his fauorableneſſe,that we may reſt vpon it,& looke for mercie & fauor at his hand. For lyke as in yͤ ſayd hundred & thirtie pſalme: ſo alſo here,mention is made of obediẽce after loue, to ſhew vs yͤ it is not enough to pretend yͤ ſeruice of God; but that we muſt ſo ſubmit our ſelues to him,as we may ſay, Lord thou haſt giuen vs the grace to rule our lyfe aright; & therefore voutſafe to gouern vs in ſuch ſort, as none of vs may take leaue to doe what he liſt, but all of vs may harkẽ ſimply to thy voyce, to ſubmit our ſelues thereunto.

Now let vs come to yͤ word yͤ Moſes addeth; which is, *I will giue.* Here he ſpeaketh in the perſon of God. He had ſayd afore, looke yͤ yee obey the cõmandements which I ſet before you,& the Lord your God will bleſſe you.And now he ſayth: *I wil giue,* as though he himſelf were god. It is not w̃out cauſe yͤ he chaungeth the perſon after that faſhion:for it ſerueth to giue the greater authoritie to his doctrine,& to make it to be the better receiued. For we be inclined to ſuch contempt & ſkornefulneſſe, yͤ when God ſpeaketh vnto vs by men, we make no account of it, becauſe his worde is preached vnto vs by mortall men. Behold, a man ſpeaketh in the pulpit, & we bee not touched with his doctrine as were requiſite. It ought to haue there a heauenly maieſtie;and we be ſo dull and groſſe, that we perceiue not how it is God that ſpeaketh there. In this reſpect Moſes ſaith here; *I will giue thee:* and yet for al yͤ, he was not able to giue them one drop of raine. And what is his giuing then? Verily hee ſheweth that his ſpeaking is not of himſelfe, but of

God, and therefore that wee muſt receiue it as if God had ſpoken it with his owne mouth, and had ſhewed himſelfe in viſible ſhape, and vttered his glorie to the eye. Let vs marke well then that in this text we be done to vnderſtand, that when we come to the hearing of a ſermon or to the reading of the holy ſcripture, wee muſt not bring deafe eares with vs to bee no whit moued at the wordes, nor to bee quickened vp by the commaundementes and exhortations that are giuen vs there: but wee muſt yeelde our ſelues vnto our God, aſſuring our ſelues that although he ſerue his turne by men as his inſtrumentes, yet is it hee himſelfe that ſendeth the meſſage and authoriſeth the word, according to this ſaying Luke.10.16 of our Lord Ieſus Chriſt: Hee that heareth you heareth me, and he that receiueth you receiueth mee. And whoſoeuer reiecteth you, reiecteth mee alſo, and lykewiſe my father that ſent me. Ye ſee then how it is an open rebelling againſt God, when wee diſdayne to heare his word that is preached vnto vs by men, and to heare it with as much humilitie as if he himſelfe came downe vnto vs, or as if he ſent it vs by the Angels of heauen. That is the matter which Moſes meant to ſhewe here.

Now in the end he ſayth, *that they ſhall haue their fill, and be well maintained, when they ſhall haue kept Gods commaundements after that faſhion*. Wee haue two points to marke in this text for a concluſion. The firſt is, that our Lord telleth his people, that hee wil not barely giue them whatſoeuer is needefull for them: but alſo giue them their fil of his benefits, ſo as they ſhal be throughly ſatiſfyed with them. That is for the one. The ſecond is a comming backe to that which hath bin touched alreadie: namely, that although God ſpeake but of temporall goods, ſuch as concerne but this tranſitorie lyfe; yet hee leadeth them further thereby. Firſt therefore let vs vnderſtand, that God not onely giueth and beſtoweth vppon vs, ſuch thinges as hee knoweth to be needefull for vs; but alſo inlargeth and extendeth his riches yet further, by vſing a kinde of ouermeaſure. And in very deede wee ſee it to be ſo. For as in reſpect of naturall neceſſitie, what needed wee more than bread and water? Pſal.104.15. But God addeth wine to cõfort and glad mans heart, as is ſayd in the pſalme. Againe wee ſee he voutſafeth to pleaſure vs after all ſortes, by ſending vs ſo many thinges as are in the worlde to delight vs withall, which are all witneſſes of his liberalitie towardes vs, in that he not onely prouideth vs of all the thinges which we coulde not forbeare; but alſo addeth as an ouerplus, a great number of good thinges that ſerue for our pleaſure: Whereby wee ought to bee the more prouoked to loue him, and they ought to bee as winges to vs, wherewith to fly vnto him. But contrariwiſe, if God giue vs ſtore, wee cannot forbeare to pamper our ſelues lyke brute beaſts, inſomuch that wee be wedded to this world. I ſpeake not only of drunkards and Gluttons that cram themſelues till they be without wit & reaſon: but alſo of all ſuch as are in loue with their delicates and delightes, ſo as if they haue abundance more than ordinarie, they cannot holde themſelues within any meaſure, but thereupon doe fall aſleepe, and in ſtead of being prouoked to reſort vnto God, doe runne away from him, or rather lye weltring and bathing of thẽſelues in their pleaſures, and forget themſelues I wote not how. Wherefore let vs marke wel, that whẽ God giueth vs abundance, it is not to miniſter occaſion of diſorder, but to make vs the more in loue with him, foraſmuch as he handleth vs not as ſeruantes or hirelinges, but as his owne children, from whom he withholdeth nothing. Now then, ſith we ſee this; let vs learne to fare ẏ better by it. Thus much concerning ẏ word *Fill.* But yet let vs marke, ẏ although God giue vs not our fill; yet faileth he not to ſhewe his freegoodneſſe in ſo dooing, inſomuch that there was neuer yet ſo great a famin, but that our Lord hath alwayes ſhewed himſelfe a father, yea and more than a father towardes men: but ill is that conſidered of vs. And that is a cauſe alſo why hee beſtoweth not ſo much as were requiſite. Becauſe Gods benefites haue ſo ill intertainment at our handes, he alſo is faine to ſhut his bleſſings from vs, and to lette vs alone in want and penurie. Thus much concerning the firſt poynt.

And touching the ſecond, let vs marke that when God feedeth and maintaineth vs in this world euen to our owne contentation; the ſame muſt be a prouocation to vs to conſider by faith, the infinite riches that are reſerued for vs aboue in heauen. It is ſayd in the pſalme, I ſhal haue my Pſal.16.11. fill of the abundance of thy goodneſſe. And in an other place it is ſaide, Lorde howe greate is the abundance of thy goodnes, which Pſal.17.15. thou haſt layd vp for them that loue thee? True it is that God maketh vs to feele the abundance of his goodneſſe, partly euen in this world: but yet ſhall we neuer haue our fill of it, (as is ſaid in the ſixteenth pſalme) vntill our Lord haue taken vs vp to himſelf, & rid vs quite out of this world. And ſo let vs marke, that the full meaſure of the good things that are promiſed vs, & which we looke to inioy, is not to be found here beneath, it is enough that we ſee ſome part of them. Yea and although our Lord beſtow but as much vpon vs as he ſeeth requiſite for our infirmitie: Let vs alwayes be led vp higher therby, ſo as it may make vs to cõſider, ẏ when the time commeth wherein God wil ſhewe himſelfe vnto vs face to face, then ſhall we be linked much neerer to him, than we be now: and (to be ſhort,) that whẽ we be gathered vp into his heauenly kingdome, then we ſhall haue our fill of all thinges. Ye ſee then that we muſt ſo paſſe through this world, as we muſt not take our fill, contentation, and reſt in the thinges that are here, but bee drawen euer higher and higher to the ſpirituall good thinges: and that if we linger in penurie heere beneath, we muſt conſider that by that meane God prouoketh vs to come vnto him, vntill wee bee perfectly vnited vnto him, as the vnion ſhalbe at the laſt day.

Now let vs kneele downe in the preſence of our good GOD with acknowledgement of our faultes, praying him to make vs feele thẽ better than we haue done, ſo as it may cauſe vs to hũble our ſelues continually, and to miſlyke of our ſelues, and to aske him forgiueneſſe of the great number of ſinnes and iniquities which we haue committed; and that in the meane while it may pleaſe him to beare with vs in our weakeneſſe, vntill he haue clothed vs againe with his owne righteouſneſſe, and alſo taken vs vp into his endleſſe glorie. That it may pleaſe him to graunt this grace, not onely to vs but alſo to all, &c.

On Wednesday the xxv of September. 1555.

The Lxxvij Sermon which is the fourth vppon the eleuenth Chapter.

16 Beware that your heart bee not beguyled, and that yee turne not away to ſerue other Gods, and to bowe downe before them,

17 Leaſt the wrath of your God bee kindled againſt you, and hee ſhut vp the heauen that it raine not, and the earth yeeld not her fruit, and leaſt ye periſh ſodenly from of the good Land which the Lord giueth you.

18 Therefore lay vp theſe wordes in your heartes and in your mindes, and tye them for a token to your hands, & let thẽ be as frontlets written between your eyš.

19 And teach thẽ to your childrẽ, talking of thẽ when thou art at home in thine houſe, & when thou goeſt abroad, and when thou lyeſt down, & when thou riſeſt.

20 See thou write them vppon the portals and gates of thy houſe,

21 That your dayes & the dayes of your children, may be increaſed in the Land which the Lord ſware to your fathers to giue you, as lõg as yͤ skyes are ouer yͤ earth.

WHen as Moſes ſayth here, *that men muſt beware that they ouerſhoote not themſelues:* thereby he doth vs to vnderſtand, howe frail we be, & how inclined vnto euill, if we be not diligently reſtreined by the feare of God, & by continuall minding of yͤ doctrine whereby he guideth and gouerneth vs. To our ſeeming it had bin enough to haue ſayd; Keep the cõmandements of your God. Yee ſee what he requireth of you: ſith yee know his will, holde your ſelues to it. But foraſmuch as men are vnconſtant, & a ſmall thing or nothing will make them ſtart out of yͤ right way: he addeth yet further this warning, that they ſhould beware; As if he ſhould ſay; Syrs, keepe good watch. Why ſo? For wee ſhall be ſurpriſed by and by, if we watch not to withſtand Satans temptations & wiles. Specially when yͤ caſe cõcerneth yͤ ſeruing of God, wee bee ſtreightwayes turned aſide, and we need none other bodie to tempt vs, for euery man ſhall finde continually ſome ſeede of ſuperſtition in his owne heart, and the minde of man is a warehouſe of Idolatrie, ſo as euen without ſchooling, euery of vs will forge idols, & ouerthrow the ſeruice of God. For yͤ diuell 1.Pet.5.8. ſleepes not, ne ceaſeth to intangle vs in many fond & wicked fancies. Hereby therefore we may iudge how needefull this warning is for vs, where we be willed to be watchfull. Yea and wee know yͤ frailetie of our minde to be ſuch, yͭ if wee be not well fenced to wͭſtand Satans tẽptations conſtantly, he wil ſoon haue turned vs out of the way of ſaluation, & from yͤ pure doctrine of God. And therefore let vs vnderſtand at a word, yͭ we haue need to ſtand continually vpon our garde, as long as we liue in this mortall lyfe. For why? On the one ſide yͤ diuell tempteth vs, & hath an infinite number of wiles to winde about vs euery minute of an howre: & although his tẽptations were not ſo great as they be; yet are we ſo weake of our ſelues, yͭ euery thing of nothing is able to ouerthrowe vs. Sith it is ſo with vs, let vs watch, ſpecially ſeeing yͭ the ſpirit of God warneth vs ſo to doe. But what? It is well ſeene how we be takẽ vnwares & vnprouided, and God puniſheth our negligence in falling ſo aſleepe, as though wee were at peace & reſt here. Nay our life muſt bee kept occupyed here as though there were continuall warre, & the diuell faileth not to put vs to infinite aſſaultes & skirmiſhes on all ſides. And therefore ſeeing we on our ſide be ſo ſleepie, and our enemie on yͤ other ſide is ſo watching to cut our throates: it is good reaſon yͭ we ſhould ſo be ouercome. For ſeeing yͭ God warneth vs to ſtand at our defence, & we voutſafe not to be mindeful of it, & to cal vpon him & to refer our ſelues vnto his protectiõ; muſt he not needes ſhew vs by experience, yͭ his warning of vs is not wͭout cauſe? Yes; & therefore let vs beare this exhortation in mind, & ſpecially when God is to be ſerued (as I ſaid afore), let vs aſſure our ſelues there needeth nothing to dazle our eies, as appeareth by experience. As ſoone as yͤ true & pure religion is ſtabliſhed in any place; by & by mẽ fal to imbacing of it; for their very nature affordeth it. And therfore ſo much yͤ more behoueth it vs to hold our ſelues as impriſoned, and not to ſwarue one way nor other, yͭ we may hold our ſelues continually in yͤ pure ſimplicitie of Gods word. Againe let vs not be out of quiet though neuer ſo many mẽ do turne out of yͤ right way: for it is their kinde ſo to do. Wherfore let vs ſtrengthẽ our ſelues againſt ſuch ſtumblingblocks, when we ſee corruptions creepe in againe, & that ſuch as were in a good trade doe diſgrace themſelues. Sith it is ſo yͭ men doe eaſily fall aſleepe, & take no heede to themſelues: let vs not maruell though euery thing of nothing do corrupt them. Thus ye ſee how this ſentence may ſerue vs to dubble purpoſe.

And it is ſayde expreſly, *that our heartes ſhould not*

not be beguiled. For it is not enough for a man to abſteine from doing of euill wilfully : but alſo all fond deuotiõs are lykewiſe condemned, becauſe our Lord wil not haue men to be ſelfewiſe, but to obey ſimply whatſoeuer God commandeth thẽ. Men thinke it to be a reaſonable excuſe before God, when they can ſay, I meant to doe wel: but that meant is but a mockerie, as Moſes ſheweth here. And for proof thereof, although our harts be beguiled, ſo as men perceiue not their owne euil doings and deſtruction, but make their reckoning that God will take their doinges in good worth: yet are they condemned here (as ye ſee) with all their good intentes, and they faile not to offend God neuertheleſſe, and in offending him they faile not alſo to heape vp vengeance vppon their owne heads. And why ſo? Euen becauſe they walke not in obedience vnto him. Now then, let vs learne, not to ſheeld or ſhrowd our ſelues any more vnder deuotions after the fooliſhe maner that hath reigned too much in the world: but let vs vnderſtand that our Lord will haue vs to fetch light at his word, and to rule our liues by that. And ſith he is ſo good to vs as to teach vs what is good, to the intent that Satan may not haue any entrance into vs, but that hee may bee put backe though hee goe prying about vs and indeuour to vndermine vs, and ſeeke neuer ſo many bywayes to creepe into vs: let vs aſſure our ſelues throughly, yͭ we haue but only one way, from yͤ which it is not lawful for vs to ſtep aſide in any wiſe. And when we ſtand ſo vpon our gard, let vs not doubt but yͭ God will reach vs his hand, & ſo fence vs on all ſides, as Satan may well practiſe what he liſteth, but hee ſhal neuer win any thing at our handes. For otherwiſe this exhortation were to no purpoſe. If God ſhould ſay vnto vs, beware, & in the meane while we had no meanes to beware, hee might ſeeme to mocke vs. But inaſmuch as when wee reſorte vnto him, he voutſafeth to guide vs, by giuing vs yͤ ſpirit of wiſedome & diſcretion, to yͤ end we ſhould not be deceiued: ſurely whatſoeuer the deuill practiſe, yet ſhall he not preuaile, but we ſhall euer ouercome his temptations, at leaſtwiſe if wee ſuffer our ſelues to be gouerned by Gods pure word, ſo as wee forſake our owne fanſies, & truſt not to our own wit, but pray God to inlighten vs, and to ſhew vs by his holy ſpirit, what is acceptable vnto him. When wee goe to worke after that faſhion, ſo as our warineſſe is matched with humilitie, it is certeine yͭ God will alwayes reach vs out his mightie hand. Thus ye ſee that the thing which we haue to put in vre, is firſt of all to be vigilant & to keepe good watch: and ſecõdly that foraſmuch as we know we may quickly be deceiued, we muſt pray God to defẽd vs, & vtterly diſtruſting our ſelues, leane onely vnto him. Theſe two thinges wil ſo preſerue vs, that we ſhall continually keepe yͤ right way, euẽ in the middeſt of darkneſſe. For why? God him- Eſa.60.19. 20. ſelfe will ſerue vs both for Sunne and Moone, as it is ſayd in the Prophet Eſay.

And now by the way he ſheweth that if yͤ children of Iſrael continued not in yͤ ſeruing of God and in his pure religion, they were leſſe to bee excuſed than all the infidels of the world: for it is ſaid vnto them, *turne not away*. Men that haue neuer had any good inſtruction, are by nature as brute beaſtes; but when God hath called vs and ſhewed vs the true ſoundeneſſe, then if we faile afterward, it is not with vs as with the ſillie infidels that haue euer bin blinde and ignorant, but it is a rebellious turning away vnto wickednes, as though we meant to ſpite our God by ſeparating our ſelues from him, by renouncing the couenant which he had made w̃ vs, to hold vs vnder his ſubiection. This ſaying therefore ought to be well weyed, & ſpecially of vs in theſe dayes which haue the pure trueth of yͤ Goſpel, whereas wee ſee how all our neighbours round about vs runne headlong on ſtill in blindneſſe. In deede it is pitie yͭ they haue not knowen Gods trueth; but yet ſhal not yͭ excuſe them. But what is to be ſayd to vs in compariſon of them, ſeeing that our God hath ſhewed himſelfe to vs, & hath layd the 1.Tim.3.16 matter ſo playne before vs, as we cãnot miſſe but knowe how to obey him? Wherefore let vs take heede yͭ we keepe on our courſe, when God ſhall haue ſet vs in yͤ way of his obedience, & taught vs how to do it. Let vs beware (I ſay) that we ſtep not aſide in any wiſe, vnleſſe we intẽd to be worthie of dubble blame. Let vs bethinke vs of this ſaying, that yͤ ſeruant which knoweth his mai- Luk.12.47. ſters will, ſhal haue dubble puniſhment if he doe it not. And yͭ we may ſo doe, let vs ſeeke to ſettle our ſelues yͤ more by Gods word. When he hath once told vs what he would haue vs to doe, let vs profite therein, & let vs be ſo ſtrẽgthened thereby, yͭ the diuel (doe what he can, and inforce hee himſelfe neuerſomuch againſt vs) may not bee able to turne vs out of the way.

Now he ſpeaketh afterward *of ſtrange Gods*. For the welſpring of all euil, is the not knowing what God we ſhould ſerue. If men bee to ſeeke in that point, needes muſt all the reſt of their lyfe be vtterly vncerteine, & wrapped vp altogether in error. And therefore it is not for naught yͭ God ſtãdeth vpon this point, yͭ men ſhould know him, & ſerue & worſhip onely him alone. For when wee ſay we muſt ſerue no ſtrange Gods: it importeth two thinges. The firſt is that we ſhould be able to diſcern who is our God, ſo as we ground not our ſelues vpon falſe opinion or fanſie, but vpon ſubſtantial certeintie: which thing cannot be if we giue way to our own mother wit. For yͭ is yͤ roote whence all the ſuperſtitions in the worlde haue ſprong. And the very cauſe of yͤ huge confuſion yͭ is ſtill in the world at this day, is that men take leaue continually to imagin whatſoeuer comes in their heads. O (ſay they) I trow God will lyke wel of this: & to my ſeeming, ſuch a thing is good Now if men behaue themſelues ſo after their owne imagination, all things muſt needes be out of order. Ye ſee it is euen a very ſeagulfe. Therefore let vs learne to giue eare to God when hee ſpeakes to vs, & let vs not take leaue to cõceiue any thing of him, otherwiſe than is ſhewed vs by his worde. This then is the firſt point, that we ſhould learne to diſcerne our God from all the Idols which the world forgeth to it ſelfe: & therewithall yͭ we ſhould not attempt any thing, but that which he alloweth. For yͤ Papiſtes can welenough proteſt, yͭ their intent is to ſerue yͤ God yͭ made both heauen & earth; & ſo alſo doe the Iewes & Turkes: yͤ caſe is common to them all. But yet for al yͭ, ye ſee how yͤ Turks haue wounde themſelues into a maze of ſuperſtitions, through yͤ deceitfulneſſe of their Mahomet who hath bewitched them. Again yͤ Iewes on their parte are growen out of kinde, & haue mingled yͤ Lawe wͭ their owne inuentions, refuſing yͤ redeemer that had bin promiſed them, who is the very foundation of all yͤ religiõ which they ſhould haue held. And as for yͤ Papiſts, yͤ world ſees how they haue corrupted all trueth, & turned it vtterly into lying. Therefore let vs learne, yͭ if we will not worſhip ſtraunge Gods, we muſt ſo holde our ſelues in awe, as we attempt not any thing, vnleſſe we be ſure yͭ it is according to Gods will. For whenſoeuer we fal to worſhipping him after our owne deuice; we doe ſet vp an idoll in our owne braine: & that is a thing which he vtterly miſlyketh, reiecteth, and abhorreth. Thus ye ſee yͭ the thing which we haue to remember vpon this place is, yͭ ſeeing God hath graunted vs yͤ grace to haue his word to be our guide, we ought to be yͤ more watchfull: & ſith we be ſo weake as we neede not any thing to thruſt vs out of the way; wee ought to take ſo much yͤ moore heede, yͭ we may profit dayly by his word. And beſides yͭ, let vs aſſure our ſelues throughly, that it is not enough for vs to weene we doe well: for we win nothing by being deceiued, our caſe is neuer a whit amended by it before God: & therefore let vs learn to pray him to inlighten vs. And therewithall let vs knowe, yͭ whẽ God hath ſhewed vs his wil, we muſt hold vs to it without adding aught thereto. Thus yee ſee in effect what we haue to remẽber vpon this text of Moſeſes.

Now he addeth immediately, *that men ſhoulde lay vp the things in their heartes which he telleth thẽ, & that they ſhoulde make a continuall monument of them: as if it were of bracelets about their wriſtes, or of attyres on their heades, or of deuices in writing at the entrance of their dores: to the intent they might occaſion them to thinke vppon the lawe of God, ſo as at their ryſing in the morning, & at their going to bed at night, men ſhould talke & conferre of it, that their children might learne thereby*. Hereby Moſes ſheweth yet better, yͭ vnleſſe men be held as it were by force, they will ſoone ſtart away frõ God: Lyke as whẽ a man thinkes he hath made a Foxe tame, if he let him alone but one halfe day, he returnes againe to his kinde by and by. Euen ſo is it with vs. We be ſo wilde, yͭ although it may ſeeme for a time that we be throughly brought home vnto God, & very wel reformed: yet in yͤ turning of a hand all is quite forgotten. And therefore our Lord is faine to put vs in remẽbrance, (as hee doth in this text) & to quicken vs vp to inforce our ſelues to ſeeke al the means and helps yͭ may be, to hold our ſelues in awe vnder his obediẽce. That is the cauſe why he ſaith, yͭ folke ſhoulde make thẽ frontlets as ornaments of their heads. Whereas men doe commonly weare brooches, buttons, & ſuch other thinges, & women weare billiments of gold and other coſtly attyres vpon their heades: the attire of the faithful muſt be to haue ſome remembrãce of Gods law. In ſtead of bracelets & other fine toyes to apparell & deck our ſelues wal; we muſt vſe ſuch an attyre as may teach vs to garniſh our ſoules, yea & to giue our ſelues wholy to God, & to ſubmit our ſelues altogether to his word. In ſtead of the hauing of gay things to furniſh our houſes withal for delight, we muſt haue ſome ſuch thing as may put vs in minde to ſay, Theſe are the things that our God calleth vs vnto, he will neuer haue vs to forget him. And if we haue ouerſhot our ſelues, ſo as our minds do wander abrode, he calleth vs home againe, & telleth vs yͭ we muſt not raunge ſo after our own vaine fanſies. Thus we ſee yͤ ſumme of that which is contained here. We haue had the like ſaying in the ſixth Chapter. Deu.6.7.8.9 But yet this ſheweth vs more expreſly, that it is not ynough for vs to haue withdrawen our ſelues for once frõ our vain and wandering imaginations: but God muſt bee faine to bring vs to that point againe, by putting vs in minde of our ſlouth and negligence, or elſe we ſhall dwel in it continually, and he muſt be faine alſo to ſhewe vs the weakneſſe & feebleneſſe of our ſpirites. And in deede, very experience ſhewes it: for the whisking of a flye before our eyes, is ynough to make vs run after it, & to do what we can to ſtop her. Wee builde caſtles in yͤ aire, & by and by al vaniſheth away. Now then ſeeing there are ſo many vanities in our braine, do we wonder yͭ we doe very quickly ſtart away from God? What a nomber of occaſions are there in this world, to turne vs this way & that way, ſo as we ſhal be led & caried quite away ere euer we thinke on it? Again, Satan is ſuch a ſuttle Sire, that if we be not wel armed againſt him, we ſhal neuer continue in yͤ obeying of our God. This repetition therfore is not ſuperfluous, where God telleth vs again, yͭ it is good for vs to haue his law written eueriwhere, ſo as we might reade his cõmandements vpon our fingers. And he hath diſpoſed them into ten ſentences, to the end they ſhould be yͤ better knowen vnto vs. For looke how many fingers there are vpõ our hãds, ſo many are yͤ commandements of God, to yͤ intent they ſhould be yͤ eaſier to beare in remẽberãce: ſo as there needeth no lõg regiſters, (which were hard to carie away,) foraſmuch as he hath giuen vs ſo ſhort a rule, yͭ if we be long in learning of it, we proue our ſelues to be wilful. To be ſhort, if we ſhut not our eyes wilfully, we cãnot ſay but yͭ we may ſoon haue lerned yͤ things which our god ſheweth vs. Againe ſith it is his wil yͭ in ſtead of yͤ deckings wherunto both men & women are too much giuen through fond deſire of vainglorie, wee ſhould haue wherewith to put our ſelues in mind of his lawe, yͭ we might be held in awe by it: what excuſe wil there be for vs, if we fal to going aſtray, or if we bee wedded to this world, or giue our ſelues to wickedneſſe? Thus much concerning this text.

But according to yͤ faſhion of yͤ world, which is alwaies giuen to hypocriſie, & to ſhamefull mocking at al Gods ordinances, yͤ Iewes made them frontlets of certaine ſentences of Gods law, and they obſerued the law very well as in reſpect of

the

ẏ words ẏ are ſet down here. For they had bracelets of them,& rolles,& attires on their heads, ſo as it might ſeeme ẏ there was nothing but holineſſe in them. Alſo they had the commaundementes written in their houſes. All this (ſay I) was well done. But they ſurmiſed that they ſerued God by theſe outward ſhewes: and that was nothing ſo. We alſo for our part ſhould come to the ſame point lykewiſe, if wee conſidered not what the will of our God is, to ſubmit our ſelues thereto. For as I ſaid afore) hypocriſie is ſo rooted in mans nature, that they would alwayes be dalying with God,& content him with counterfeitings, ſo as there might be nothing but diſſimulation:& yet for all that,they beare thẽſelues in hand, ẏ he ought to hold thẽ diſcharged. But we muſt marke that God will not bee ſerued by the wryting of ſome ſentence of his Lawe vpon a poſt or a doore, or at the entrie of a houſe; his meaning is nothing ſo. But what? Foraſmuch as he ſeeth that we be ſhort witted,& that although we haue bin taught his word duely, yet we bee eaſily turned away frõ it;it is not without cauſe ẏ he will haue vs to ſeeke all the helpes that can be, ẏ we may haue the better ſtay of our ſelues, & learne the remedies of our frailetie, ſith wee need none other thing to turne vs out of ẏ way. And ſith we know ẏ vice to be in vs;let vs bee the diligenter in ſeeking God, & let vs ſay: How is it poſſible ẏ I ſhould hold my ſelfe in ẏ feare of my God? If I ſhould paſſe but one day ẇout thinking vpon him & vpon his cõmaundements: I ſhould forget him by & by. What is to be done then? As ſoone as I riſe in the morning, the diuell offereth me ẏ many lettes. Now it ſtandeth me in hand to reſiſt him,& that I tary not till mine enemie giue me ẏ aſſault: but I muſt think vpon my God who calleth me to him. Againe at night when I goe to bed, foraſmuch as a nighttimes the diuel ceaſeth not to put many fond fancies in my head, and a man is not able to reſtreine his own minde from conceiuing ſome vaine thoughtes or other: it behoueth me to be ſtil fenced by being mindful of my God,& by referring my ſelfe vnto him & by reſting wholy there. For if I tary long, I ſhall be ſo ẇdrawen from him, ẏ I ſhall not finde the way thither againe, lyke as when a man taketh no heed, but runs galloping on ẇout minding of his way whether he be right or no; ẏ longer he traueleth, the further he is from his way; yea & if there be folke to ſet him in the way,& he regardeth not to take the right way againe, then is hee well woorthie to wander ſtill out of his way. If one ſay to him, Sir, you muſt take on that hande, and yet he will needes goe the contrary way, as though his wits were rouing in the aire,& ſo goeth on ſtil: in the ende hee ſhall find himſelfe farre off from the right way. And therefore let vs beware that we be not ſo headſtrong in our vanities, as not to indeuour to amend our ſelues. For (as I ſaid afore) we may eaſily wander out of ẏ way euery minute of houre, ſo as we need not any thing to make vs ſtray frõ ẏ right way. But if wee bee out of it, let vs ſeeke to come in againe by & by & to be reformed. For our God is not far frõ vs, he promiſeth by his Prophet Eſay, Eſa.30.21. that he wilbe at our backs, as a ſcholemaſter is at the back of a yong ſcholer. And like as ẏ mother ẏ hath her eye alwayes vpon ẏ childe ẏ ſhe bringeth vp, wil alwayes be at hand by it: ſo God ſheweth by a familiar example, ẏ he wil be at our elbowe, if ſo be that wee ſeeke him & ſuffer him to reforme vs. And therefore let vs learne to exerciſe our ſelues in ẏ ſtudie all the time of our life. And ſpecially ſith we ſee there is ſo vrgent neceſſitie, let euery of vs quicken vp himſelfe, & let vs not tarie til ẏ diuel haue caried vs ſo farre aſtray, ẏ we can no more return into ẏ way; but as ſoone as we ſet but one ſtep awry, or ſwarue neuer ſo litle aſide, let vs bethink our ſelues againe by & by: Nay let vs not tarie ſo long; but let vs be aforehand,& let vs call ſo much ẏ more earneſtly vpon our God to guide vs, & to preuent vs with his goodneſſe. Let vs follow his word, which is ẏ true ſhooteanker,& the very lampe to giue vs light. Let vs open our eyes to behold the light that he ſheweth vs,& let vs often call to minde ẏ things which we haue learned. Let euery of vs marke to what vice he is inclined, ẏ he may ſeeke the remedie of it, as ſome be giuen to one affection & ſome to another. And ſo when we once know our owne diſeaſes, let vs apply the fit medicines vnto them. In Gods word we ſhall finde ynow of them wherewith to heale & cure vs, ſo we be willing to vſe the good ẏ is offered vs there. Thus ye ſee in effect how we ought to practiſe this text. It conſiſteth not in the doing of a ſort of Ceremonies, nor in pretending faire countenãces, by wearing texts of Gods law vpon our apparell, or by writing vp of a nomber of goodly ſentences without any other minding of them at al; al ẏ (ſay I) is nothing. What then? We muſt ſeeke the meanes to confirme our ſelues in ẏ feare of our God, and to recouer againe into the right way: & bicauſe wee bee ſo weake, wee muſt receiue ſuch remedies as God appointeth vs.

Aboue al things we muſt obſerue that which is ſaid here; *Lay vp the commandements which I ſet before thee, in thy heart and in thy ſoule.* To the intent then ẏ men ſhould not ſtand poring vpon ẏ outward faſhion & figure; that is the chiefe poynt. The marke (ſay I) whereat hee ſhootes, and whereunto all this doctrine is to bee referred, is that Gods lawe ſhould be in our hearts and in our ſoules. For though wee haue it euer before our eyes,& at our tongues end, ſo as wee ſeeme to ſet neuer ſo great ſtore by it, and yet in the meane while our heart is locked vp,& wee haue no courage to ſerue God: truely we doe but deceiue men, & procure our ſelues the ſorer condemnation before God. Now then let vs haue Gods law written, let vs haue the ſayings of it painted vpõ our walles as in tables, & let vs haue thinges to put vs in minde of it earely & late: but let not ẏ ſerue for our diſcharge, as though God were to be payed in ſuch coyne. How then? Let vs indeuer to haue it ſo grauen in our heartes, as it may neuer be wiped out againe, yea euen in our harts & in our ſoules, ẏ is to ſay, in ſuch ſort as it may poſſeſſe al our affectiõs. For that is ẏ place where Gods word is to bee kept. But what? The thing ẏ S. Iames ſpeaketh of, is ſeene more now- Iames.1.23.

adayes than euer it was; namely that they which come to heare Gods word, take as much profite by it, as by looking vpon themſelues in a glaſſe: they be no ſooner gone, but all is forgotten. What fareth a man the better by his ſeeing of himſelfe in a glaſſe? As ſoone as he turneth away his face, his ſhape vaniſheth away. Euen ſo is it with vs. Whereas our comming to Gods word, ſhould be to be transformed into yͤ lykeneſſe of 2.Cor.3.18. God, (as S. Paul teacheth vs in the ſecond to yͤ Corinthians,) & whereas it is the power & propertie of yͤ Goſpel, to transforme vs into the glory of God, by beholding him in the perſon of Ieſus Chriſt: we come to it but to make a paſtime of it, ſo as anon all ſlippeth away againe, & there remaineth no ſubſtance nor power of it with vs. And by that meanes the precious ſeede of the Goſpell periſheth. For it lighteth amõg ſtones, ſo as it can take no roote. A man may looſe a good deale of corne, if he caſt it vppon the drye Matt.13.19 ground, or in a footepath, or vpon ſtones: for the byrdes will picke it vp by and by. Euen ſo let vs not maruel though Gods word enter not into vs, for whereas our heartes ought to be tilled as when a plowgh hath eared a peece of land: they lye ſtill vnopened & vnbroken vp at all. By reaſon whereof, Gods word may wel be giuen vs as a ſeede, but it ſhall doe vs no good, the diuell wil catche it away by and by, becauſe it ſinketh not into our heartes & our ſoules. That is the cauſe why I ſayd yͭ al yͭ Moſes hath ſpoken of frontlets, of bracelets, & of writings ſet vp in mens houſes, muſt be referred altogether to this, yͭ wee ſhall fare neuerawhit yͤ better for yͤ vttering of yͤ Lawe vnto vs, nor vnderſtand any thing at all by it, vntil it haue taken roote in vs, & that wee haue receiued it with hartie affection to giue our ſelues vnto God.

And yet is not all yͭ wee haue to doe, neither doth God thinke it enough yͭ euery man ſhoulde indeuer to profite himſelfe by it: but he will alſo haue the fathers to teach their children. Wherin he ſheweth yͭ (as I haue ſayd afore) it is not enough for vs to ſerue our God during our owne liues; but we muſt alſo prouide yͭ the ſeede of religion may remaine after our deceaſe. For we be tranſitorie, & our lyfe is but a ſhadow: & therefore inaſmuch as Gods trueth is immortall, it is good reaſon yͭ it ſhould continue for euer, & that it ſhould be preſerued frõ hand to hand, & that men ſhould put their indeuour thereunto. And ſpecially whẽ God hath giuẽ them childrẽ, it behoueth them to know yͭ it is a treaſure, and that they muſt yeeld an account thereof. For it is no ſmall honor yͭ God doth to men & women, when he giueth them children. They be creatures faſhioned after yͤ image of God, & we terme them yͤ ſeede of yͤ Church. Now then ſeeing that God committeth thẽ to our charge; it is good reaſon yͭ we ſhould indeuour to bring thẽ vp in ſuch wiſe as God may be ſerued by them, yͭ when religion ſhal haue continued her courſe all our lyfe long, it may alſo hold out and continue ſtil euen after our death. But here we ſee our owne negligence, or rather our leawdneſſe. For wee bee not onely ſlothfull; but we ſee how the moſt part of vs doe ſhun & eſchew (as much as we can) to be trained in Gods worde. If men bee ſpoken to of it, it is a corſie to them, & if they perceiue yͭ there ſhall be talke of any good doctrine, they haue no regard to come there. It is well ſeene yͭ a number are worſe than yͤ Turkes, & are ſo bewitched wͭ their owne fond opinions, yͭ as ſoone as yͤ bell tolleth to call & prouoke vs to come dayly to yͤ hearing of Gods worde, they goe another way. And for proofe thereof, what a number are there which wͭdrawe thẽſelues from it as much as they can? Yea & when they come, they ſtoppe their eares wilfully, becauſe they bee occupyed about their wicked affections, and the diuel hath ſo beſotted them, as they finde not any ſauor at all in any word that is ſpoken vnto thẽ, but are weary of it as ſoone as there is any matter ſpoken concerning God.

As for yͤ bringing vp of children, yͤ world ſees what it is. Fathers are loth to haue their childrẽ better than thẽſelues, for feare leaſt they ſhould put them to ſhame. Foraſmuch as they themſelues haue deſpiſed God all yͤ time of their lyfe; they be contented yͭ their children ſhall deſpiſe him full as much or dubble: & if they happen to haue any regard of yͤ doctrine, it is but for faſhions ſake, & by way of conſtreint. But wee bee ſo taught theſe thinges in this text, yͭ it ſhal coſt vs full deare to haue bin ſo warned by God, if we regard not the thinges yͭ he hath tolde vs. Therefore let vs bee alwayes carefull to beare Gods word in minde, aſſuring our ſelues yͭ although we haue profited neuer ſo wel; yet are we but in the way, & we muſt goe on ſtill; ſo as the once knowing of things is not enough for vs, but we muſt be faine to be put in rememberance of thẽ continually, & to be ſtirred vp by God; or elſe wee ſhall ſtart away by and by. Now then let vs think vppon it, & let euery of vs haue an eye to yͤ charge yͭ is committed vnto him. Let ſuch as haue children bring them vp in the feare of God, & let yͭ be their chiefe care; for it is the beſt inheritance yͭ they can leaue them. For otherwiſe, although they leaue them neuer ſo riche, and ſet them at neuer ſo good a ſtay; al muſt needes go to ruine. For God will curſe all, if it bee not grounded vppon the pure religion. For whereas our Lorde ſpeaketh of going to bed, and riſing vp, of reſt and labor: it is not for nought. For he ſheweth vs that wee haue neede of all the helpes that can bee, to put vs in minde of his lawe. And therefore ſith we ſee that by all manner of meanes we be turned away frõ the remembring of God, if the helps that are ſhewed vs here bee not ſet ſtill before vs: theſe occaſions ought to quicken vs and ſtirre vs vp thereunto.

Firſt of al then, whereas it is ſaide; *when ye goe to bed at night, and when ye riſe a mornings*: it ſheweth vs that wee may well take our reſt, and thinke vppon all our bodily needes, ſo as a man may wel ſeeke his eaſe when hee is weary of trauelling & of following his buſines al day long: but if we be ſo careful to ſeeke the reſt of our bodies: Matt.11.29. is it not ſaid alſo yͭ the reſt of our ſouls is to heare yͤ voice of god? If a man ſay, I haue no leaſure: haſt thou no leaſure to riſe in the morning? Againe, when thou commeſt to the table to take thy repaſt, haſt thou not time ynough to edifie thy ſelfe in the feare of God? Moreouer, when thou art about thy buſineſſe all the day, or when thou art going a iourney; muſt God needs be forgotten all the while? No: but yet doe men alwayes finde lettes to keepe them from comming vnto God. Indeede we may eaſily finde trifling excuſes to content men withall: but when God ſaith vnto vs, Go to, what haue you to doe all your life long? are yee ſo ſore troubled that yee cannot ſpare a little time to exerciſe your ſelues in my worde? I giue you time ynough to followe your owne buſineſſes: and yet ſo as yee may beſtowe ſome time in the ſtudie of my doctrine: but you thinke not vpon it: Nay rather you take occaſion to turne away from it at euery ſmall let that can happen. And by that meanes you bee hardened in all euill, ſo as a man cannot reclaime yee, but ye become worſe than wilde beaſts. Thus ye ſee of what contempt and vngodlines we be conuicted, when we benefit not our ſelues by Gods doctrine, wherein we ought to keepe our ſelues occupied at all times.

Furthermore whereas he ſpeaketh *of talking of it*; it is a rebuking of the wicked corruption yͤ is among men, who neuer make an ende of their fooliſh talk: but when they ſhould ſpeake of god, the matter muſt be cut off by & by the waſte, and they thinke it to be but matter of griefe. Yea and they be not contented to vſe fond and fooliſh talke; but they do alſo vſe ribaldrie & leawd talke, ſuch as tendeth to the poyſoning one of another. And therefore it is good reaſon, that God ſhould tel vs that the thinges which wee haue heard to day, had neede to bee brought oftentimes to our rememberance: and that God had neede to quicken vs vp, ſo as wee may bee made to bethink our ſelues; And that foraſmuch as we be pulled backe with ſuch ſloth, and we ſee our ſelues are caried away with ſo great and vrgent neceſſitie, that our mindes are giuen altogether to euill; inſomuch that whenſoeuer God allureth them to good, by and by they ſhrinke away vnto euill: we perceiuing the ſame, ſhoulde take the helpes yͤ God ſetteth down for vs, in telling vs that we muſt think vpon his lawe both at our vpriſing a mornings, and at our going to bed a nights, & that we muſt talk of them all the day long. Let vs aſſure our ſelues it is not without cauſe that God ſpake ſo to his owne people; but that it is a generall leſſon for all men in all ages; and hee ſpeaketh not onely to the rude and vnſkilfull, that they ſhoulde take thoſe helpes to refreſh their rememberance: but he ſaith *All of you*, doe it euerie one of you. Hee ſpeaketh to thoſe that weene themſelues wiſeſt. And therefore let no man thinke himſelfe excepted here. Let ſuch as haue the charge of teaching others, vnderſtande that this is not ſpoken onely to the rude and ignorant; but alſo to the intent that euen they themſelues ſhoulde learne to rouſe vp themſelues, and yͤ all of vs together ſhould ſhew our ſelues ſo deſirous to profite in Gods word; as we may ſeeke to be put continually in mind of it. And let vs aſſure our ſelues, that it is the chiefe thing wherein we ought to occupie our ſelues, ſo long as we be in this world.

And nowe let vs caſt our ſelues downe before the maieſtie of our good God with acknowledgment of our faultes, praying him to bring vs to ſuch repentance; yͤ being aſhamed of our ſelues, our only ſeeking may be to win his fauor by fleeing to his mercy, and that we may attaine thereunto by meanes of our lord Ieſus Chriſt, praying him not only to forgiue our offences paſt, but alſo to correct them after ſuch ſort in vs, as our whole ſeeking may be to obey him. And that in yͤ meane while it may pleaſe him to guide vs by his holy ſpirite, vntill hee haue brought vs to the full fruition of the glorie whereunto we be nowe going. That it may pleaſe him to graunt this grace, not onely to vs, but alſo to all people and Nations of the earth &c.

On Thurſday the xxvj. of September. 1555.

The Lxxviij. Sermon which is the fifth vpon the eleuenth Chapter.

22 For if ye do earneſtly keepe all the commandements which I command you to doe, and that you loue the Lord your God and walke in all his wayes and ſticke vnto him:

23 Then the Lorde will driue out all theſe Nations before you, and yee ſhall poſſeſſe Nations that are greater and ſtronger than your ſelues.

24 Whatſoeuer place the ſole of your foote treadeth on, it ſhalbe yours. Your bounds ſhalbe from the wildernes and from Libanus, and from the Riuer, euen the riuer of Euphrates, vnto the vttermoſt ſea.

25 No man ſhall be able to ſtand againſt you. The Lorde your God will caſt the feare and dread of you vpon the face of all the Land whereunto you go, as hee hath ſaid vnto you.

WE haue ſeene what promiſe Moſes made to the Iſraelites: namely ẏ they ſhold poſſeſſe ẏ land which was giuen them to inherite. Howbeit foraſmuch as their enemies might bee a ſtop in their way, and it might well ſeeme that God was not yet fully minded to performe that which he had ſaid: he addeth further, that that let alſo ſhould be taken away. As howe? *Euen by this, that God would caſt a terror vpon all the nations whom he had erſt condemned, ſo as none of them ſhould bee able to withſtande the people that was ſo guided by his owne hande.* That is the effect of Moſeſes meaning in this place. And it is as much as if he had ſaid vnto vs, Whẽ God hath once warranted vs a thing, although all the lets in the world ſhoulde incounter vs, yet ought we not to doubt of his promiſe. For why? The thinges that may ſeeme vnpoſſible to men, are altogether in his power, becauſe no creature is able to reſiſt him. And therefore when we be abaſhed at the ſight of the impediments that come before our eyes: wee muſt fall to the conſidering of the mightineſſe of our God, which is able to ouercome all things. So then let vs marke well, that wee muſt fully conclude with our ſelues, that God is able to performe whatſoeuer hee hath vttered with his mouth: inſomuch that although all acceſſes bee (in our iudgement) forecloſed vnto him; yet will hee wade through them all by his power. And therefore let vs not meaſure the effect of Gods promiſes, by our owne eyſight, nor by the conceite of our owne naturall vnderſtanding: but let vs aſſure our ſelues that hee hath victorie alwayes in his hande, howe much ſo euer the worlde ſet it ſelfe againſt him, and ſtriue to ſtop the performance of that which hee hath ſpoken.

Herewithall, it ſtandeth vs in hand to applie this thing chiefly to our owne ſtrenthening: and foraſmuch as we ſee the diuel euer ready to hinder our welfare, yea and to diſappoint it vtterly: let vs haue this ſaying continually printed in our rememberance, that God which hath receiued vs into his fauour, and promiſed to leade vs into the heritage of the kingdome of heauen, is the God of hoſts and of victorie, and that although all the furniture of hel do ſet it ſelfe againſt him, it is all noughtwoorth, but ſhalbe turned into ſmoke: inſomuch that although wee bee driuen to abide neuer ſo many aſſaultes in this worlde, and that the diuell neuer ceaſe to practiſe one thing or other againſt vs: yet are we ſure that god will welynough worke ſuch deuiſes, as wee ſhall neuer be ouercome, ſo hee be on our ſide, as hee hath aſſured vs, ſo that wee keepe our ſelues vnder his protection. And this is to be vnderſtood, not onely of Satan himſelfe, but alſo of al his vpholders. For the diuell vſeth all the meanes that can be; he hath all the wicked at his becke; hee ruleth them and driueth them to all euill. Foraſmuch therefore as they be led by the wicked ſpirite; they vex and trouble vs as much as they cã. But we haue God on our ſide to fight for vs, and we ſhalbe defended by his power. Wherefore let vs not feare but that hee will alwayes giue vs the victory, though wee bee faine to indure much paine and trouble; for it cannot bee but that in ſuch incounters, there muſt euer needs be ſome terrour, becauſe wee ſee that the wicked are alwayes as whot as fire to annoy the children of God, and that as ſoone as they bee able to ſtirre but one finger, by and by they begin a new skirmiſh. Therfore muſt we beare it patiently, whenſoeuer it pleaſeth God to exerciſe vs after ẏ faſhion. And we muſt waite for the end which Moſes promiſeth here to the faithful; which is, that they ſhal alwayes haue victory of their enemies. And ſo we ſee to what end this doctrine is to bee applied.

Now remaineth to be noted alſo, that whereas God promiſeth ſuch thinges, hee hath mens harts in his hand: for he addeth the mean, which is, *that hee will caſt our dread and our feare vppon all our enemies.* As if hee ſhould ſay, hee will print his mark vpon vs, ſo as the wicked (be they neuer ſo full of rancor, and bee they caried with neuer ſo great fury and rage) ſhalbe abaſhed, diſmayed, & vtterly at their wits end. As to the worldwarde, they may well ſeeme to haue the heartes of Lyons: but God will make them to melt away like water, ſo as men ſhall ſee with their eyes, that there is not ſo much as one drop of corage in any man, but ſo farre forth as God giueth it them. And as for vs, although we bee afraide, and haue not ſo ſtoute a courage by nature: yet wil God change vs, & giue vs inuincible conſtancy, ſo as although we had bin men of warre, and very valeant; yet ſhould our manlineſſe bee nothing like to ẏ which he will make vs to feele in our ſelues, ſo we goe not preſumptuouſly to worke, but reſt vpon him, ſeeking to be vphelde by his hand and fauor. The matter therefore which wee haue to mark vpon that place, is, firſt that wheras our life is as a warfare, yet muſt wee not bee afraid, becauſe god hath promiſed to fight for vs. Yea, but we haue to do with an ouermightie enemie: and it is not one diuell alone that wee haue to withſtand, but infinite legions of diuels. What cã we do then, ſeeing wee be ſo fraile, and are tempted ſo on all ſides, & (to be ſhort) our ſafetie is ſet as it were to the ſpoile? For what haue we to defende our ſelues withall? But wee muſt haue an eye to our god. I haue told you heretofore, that it is not without cauſe that he intitleth himſelfe to be the Gods of Hoſts. It ſerueth to ſhew that he will defende vs in ſuch ſort, as our enemies ſhalbe diſappointed. Although they aduance themſelues with neuer ſo raging violence, & that we be ſcared at their firſt alarmes, yet ſhal we always get the vpper hand, by the helpe of him which hath all power in his hand. And indeede wee knowe that God hath his Angels, whom he hath ordeined for our ſafegard. He thinks it not ynough to reach out his arme to helpe vs, but he hath alſo vttered foorth all his bleſſings, to fence vs with them on all ſides. Therfore let vs truſt to it, and let vs walke on boldly through all the troubles that are prepared for vs, not doubting but that we ſhall ouercome them, hauing ſuch a guide as is ſpoken of in this text.

Pſal.34.8.& Hebr.1.14.

Againe, let vs alſo apply theſe things euen to the neceſſities of this preſent life. Indeede the chiefe point is, that god ſhould ſuccour vs to the intent wee may finiſh the courſe of this preſent life. But yet muſt we be faine to be aided by him euerie minute of an houre, ſo as hee leade vs through the great number of euill wayes which we haue to paſſe, and preſerue vs from all daungers. So then we muſt be fully reſolued of this, yͭ God will not onely giue vs victorie in the ende, thereby to bring vs to the kingdome of heauen; but alſo will helpe vs continually in this worlde, ſo as we ſhal wade out of al the troubles and perplexities wherin we be; inſomuch that euẽ when we ſeeme to bee vtterly ouerwhelmed, he needeth no more but to reach vs his hand, and by & by wee ſhalbe aflote againe. Moreouer let vs aſſure our ſelues, that ſeeing God hath promiſed Rom.16.20. & Eph.6.12.13. vs ſuch victory againſt Satan and our Ghoſtly enemies: men alſo ſhall not bee able to preuaile, when they ſet thẽſelues againſt vs: but although the whole world be bent againſt vs and at deadly foode with vs; yet ought it to ſuffice vs, that God is fauorable to vs. For inaſmuch as he hath promiſed that al their practiſes which they attempt ſhalbe to no purpoſe, and that he wil turne them vpſidedowne: we may wel be quiet, and tary his leaſure ſtill with patience; and although we be abaſhed for a time, and perceiue not that God intendeth to worke according to his ſayings: yet let vs ſtand ſtedfaſt in his doctrine, vntil he haue ſhewed vs the effect of his truth. That is the way for vs to deſpiſe and defie all the wicked yͭ ſeeke nothing elſe but to deſtroy vs. They be like a ſort of madde dogges, and when they cannot bite they wil barke. They haue their throtes alwayes open, and their teeth always ſharpened, & their pawes are alwayes in a readines, ſo as whenſoeuer God letteth them looſe, they be crueller thã Lyons or any other beaſts. Let vs ſticke alwayes to this that our Lord hath taken vs into his protection, and that when the wicked haue done what they can, in yͤ end they ſhalbe ouerthrowen and all their attempts ſhall come to no purpoſe or effect: That is the thing which wee haue to remember here. Notwithſtanding, foraſmuch as it cannot but bee a trouble and vexation of minde vnto vs at al times, to ſee what power our enemies are of, and to ſee howe ſpitefull they ſhew themſelues againſt vs; let vs haue recourſe to that which is ſaid here, namely that God hath mens hearts in his hande. And therefore be the pride of men neuer ſo great, and their ſtoutneſſe ſuch as were able to make the aire and the world to tremble: yet let vs aſſure our ſelues that our Lord will turne it into feare and cowardlynes, ſo as the parties that would needes be ſo feared of others, ſhall in the ende haue leſſe courage than women and children. For why? it is God that giueth men corage and conſtancie: and it is he that bereaueth them of it again whẽ he liſteth. Now then if we be fully perſwaded and reſolued yͭ our Lord bridleth mens hearts: we wil not doubt but that he will alwayes giue vs victorie againſt our enemies; and it is the point which the ſcripture ſtandeth expreſly vppon. And to the intent wee may know that men haue not one ſpark of proweſſe or manhood in them, furtherfoorth than god giueth it them, Salomon ſaith expreſly, that Prou.21.1. the hearts of kings are in the hand of God. It ſhoulde ſeeme that though all the reſt of mankind be in ſubiection and bridled; yet kinges bee exempted from the common aray: for no man dares once open his lippes againſt them: & when they haue once ſpokẽ yͤ word, by and by it muſt be put in execution. It ſhold ſeeme therfore that they haue a prerogatiue aboue al yͤ world beſide. Yea, but like as God maketh yͤ riuers to run here and there, and turneth their ſtreams which way he liſteth: ſo alſo doth he hold yͤ hearts of kinges in his hand ſaith Salomon. And what ſhall then become of yͤ little Goſlings when they perke vp, & haue no power nor ſtrength at al? Shall we be diſmayed at their threatnings? The thing then wherin we muſt truſt, is our yeelding of yͤ honor to God which he requireth at our hands, to wit, yͭ it belongeth to him to giue men corage when they be fearefull, & to daunt the corages of ſuch as are as luſtie as if they had the thunder & lightening at their commandement: for God will ſo cut their combes, as they ſhal not know where to become, but be vtterly diſmayed, ſo that in ſteed of yͤ ſtoutneſſe which they had ſhewed before; there ſhalbe nothing in them but weakneſſe and fearefulnes. After that manner muſt yͤ faithfull aſſure themſelues. For otherwiſe what will become of vs? In what taking are we? As I ſaid afore, we be hemmed in on al ſides by Satan & his vnderlings. There is not yͤ minute of an houre, 1.Pet.5.8. wherin we haue not ſomewhat to be afraid of: a thouſand dangers beſet vs round about: & therefore what will become of vs, if wee be not ſo fully perſwaded of this doctrine, as to make it to ſerue vs for dyches & rampyres, to hold out al yͤ aſſalts that our enemies make vppon vs? And ſo, foraſmuch as our life is full of vnquietneſſe, & we bee threatened with many ſortes of death, ſo as wee cannot ſtep foorth one foote but wee ſhall meete with ſome miſchance or other, ſpecially conſidering thẽ meanes which the diuell hath to annoy vs withal, & the indeuer which he putteth thereunto; & alſo conſidering yͤ multitude of yͤ wicked, whom hee driueth forward & carieth headlong: let vs put this leſſõ in vre, yͭ the god of hoſts who hath yͤ victorie in his own hand, is on our ſide & wil defẽd vs, ſo as we ſhal not be ouercome, but be preſerued & defended by his power. Haue we this once well printed in our hearts, we may go on boldly: and though we ſee men neuer ſo full of pride that they ſpew it out again, and ſo ſpitefull that they coulde finde in their hearts to eate vs vp at one bit: let vs not paſſe for that; for God will ſtrike them in ſuch a feare, that they ſhalbe daunted and diſcouraged; and although wee haue neither ſworde nor ſtaffe, yet ſhall they be vanquiſhed by themſelues, & not perceiue why nor how, but only by Gods ſecret working. Let vs looke vpon it, & experience will ſhew vs that God ment not to beguile vs when he behighted it vs with his own mouth. But our own vnbeliefe & leawdneſſe, ſuffer vs not to perceiue the thing by experience which is ſpokẽ here. We cã wel ynough

nough make our complaints and ſay; howe happeneth it that God giueth ſuch proweſſe to our enemies?how happeneth it yͭ we be ſo cowardly and forlorne?We can aske ſuch queſtions wel ynough.But we conſider not the cauſe of them: & yet it is in our ſelues: & our enemies haue none other power,than we our ſelues giue them:and I ſay the ſame of Satan,as well as of all his vnderlings.For whẽ we forſake our god it is good reaſon yͭ we ſhould be diſfurniſhed of his help,and yͭ he ſhould let vs alone like poore forlorne caitifs looking on either ſide of vs,& not eſpying any remedy to reſiſt our enemies withal,becauſe we be bereft of yͤ garde and inuincible fortreſſe yͭ God promiſed vs,according as it is ſpoken of, both in Exodus and in the Pſalme, where it is ſaid that yͤ people were diſappointed of their ſtrong holde, when they had once forſaken God. Exod 32.25 & Pſal. 106. 23. I pray you if we ſtand not in awe of God,is it not reaſon that he ſhould make vs afraide,both of men & beaſts, Leuit.26,36 yea and euen of a flie when it doth but flie by vs, as the ſcripture telleth vs? Beholde,our God offereth himſelfe in his maieſty, requiring that we ſhould do him homage, by humbling our ſelues 1.Cor.6.20. vnto him,and by offering our ſelues both bodie & ſoule in ſacrifice to him,yͭ he may poſſeſſe vs:& we deſpiſe him, making but a mocke at his holie word,ſo as he cãnot get any ſeruice at our hãds, for we ſtriue againſt him like wild beaſts.Seeing yͭ this is apparant,is it not reaſon that he ſhould chaſtiſe vs,by making vs to ſtand in feare of mẽ? Yes:for what are we?Behold I am ſcared & made afraide,at the peering of a worme that doth but put vp his head at me. I neede not to ſeeke farre to knowe the cauſe thereof. Let me but conſider whether I haue behaued my ſelfe well towardes my God,in yeelding him obedience in al things. Nay contrariwiſe, I haue turned away frõ him, and moreouer I haue played the rebell, I haue leaped beyonde my bounds, and to bee ſhort, I haue fought againſt him: and therefore I muſt not thinke it ſtraunge, if I bee afraide of men, which are nothing. Verily God will yet more laugh our pride and ouerweening to ſcorne.For he will make vs to quake at the falling of a leafe from a tree. To be ſhort,as Salomon ſayes, Prou.28,1. wee ſhall flee when noman followeth vs: euerie little noyſe ſhall make vs to thinke that we be purſued with maine ſtrokes. Verily it is a ſingular gifte of God to haue quietneſſe of conſcience, ſo as wee may bee aſſured of his defence. And on the contrarie part, if we be not vnder his protection, wee ſhalbe diſmayed without any cauſe on mans behalfe, onely becauſe we haue God againſt vs. And ſo the cauſe why our enemies doe ſo trouble vs as wee wote not where to become; is that we regard not our god. For is it reaſon that hee ſhoulde bee our friende when we be not on his ſide? No: but he muſt rather ſet himſelfe againſt vs. And that is yͤ cauſe why Moſes both in other places, and ſpecially Deut.32,30 in his ſong that is in the 32. Chapter, ſaith, How coulde it bee that a hundred of you ſhoulde flee before one man, and that a thouſande of you ſhould be chaſed by a hundred of your enemies, if it were not for that the Lorde hath forſaken you, and deliuered you as priſoners into your enemies handes? Conſider then (ſaith hee) that when yee be afflicted by your enemies, it is for that your God hath appalled you. For you be not worthy that he ſhoulde put his power into you, or vtter it in your behalf. And therfore whenſoeuer we ſtand too much in feare of our enemies, & are ſo diſmayed that we can hardly call vpon God, but are ouerwhelmed with diſtruſt and vexation of minde: let vs vnderſtande that God hath withdrawen himſelfe from vs,and hath left vs deſtitute after yͭ faſhion,becauſe we be turned away from him, and haue ſhaken off his feare, and not ſtoode in awe of him as wee ought to haue done, in reſpect whereof hee threateneth vs by men, & maketh vs to feele our owne wretchedneſſe, to the intent we ſhould returne vnto him. Furthermore hee ſheweth well by the ſequele,that his promiſe was not in vaine. What a proofe was there thereof, at the entring of the people into the land of Chanaan? For they had ſuch a multitude of enemies, as might haue made them al diſmayed. But what for that?God himſelfe fought for his people. And that did the poore harlot well perceiue,when ſhee ſaid to the Ioſua,2.9. men that were come to ſpie out the land, I know that your God is the God of heauen and earth, which reigneth ouer all. And for proofe therof, I ſee yͭ al the inhabiters of theſe countries,are aſtoniſhed at the only fame and report of you,wherwith they be diſcoraged, that they be as good as vanquiſhed already. She attributeth this indeed to yͤ wonderful working of God. Now ſeeing that this ſilly woman, hauing but a little taſt of faith, did lay ſo ſure hold vpon it:I pray you ought not we to behold yͤ ſtrẽgth much more openly,which our Lord promiſeth vs here,which is,that he wil caſt a terrour and fearefulnes vpon all thoſe that are much ſtronger & mightier than we?It is ſaid yͭ euen when God ſetteth his mark vpon kings & Dan.2.38. princes, yͤ brute beaſts which haue no reaſon do ſtande in awe of them. And why is that?Becauſe God worketh by a ſecrete meanes vnknowen to vs. If our lord had not ſuch power to inſpyre men withal;ſurely principalities & ſeniories could not continue one minute of an houre. Now then ſeeing that God imprinteth ſuch a marke, yͭ he maketh not only mẽ but alſo beaſts to ſtand in awe, & to be ſubiect to thoſe to whom hee hath committed the ſword of iuſtice:let vs note yͭ if we bee his children, wee ſhall alſo beare his image;inſomuch yͭ if we be vnder his tuition, wee ſhalbe defẽded in deſpite of our enemies: yea & we ſhall be feared, ſo as wee ſhall perceiue by the effect, that it is long of none but our ſelues that wee be not ſuccored by him, and yͭ although our vnthãkfulnes do beat backe his hand, yet doth he ouercome vs wͭ his infinite goodnes. For we ſee yͭ although the wicked haue the Law in their owne hand;yet notwithſtanding they be ſo abaſhed & diſmaied, yͭ they be quite and cleane wͭout heart. We muſt needes ſee it, or elſe we be duller than blockes. For our Lorde hath wrought with ſuch power, that though wee were blinde, yet wee might grope it with our hands,namely that God hath daunted thoſe that thought to haue cut the throtes

throtes of his children, euen when no man durſt lift vp his little finger againſt them, inſomuch ẏ when they thought themſelues to haue wonne ẏ gole, then were they ſeen to be ſo ſtriken down & diſcoraged, & caſt into ſuch feare & perplexitie, and ſo at their wits end, as they wiſt not what to do nor where to become. Indeede they had ẏ Law in their own hand (as I ſaid), they had practiſes and deuices ynow, and ẏ world ſees ẏ they had neither vprightnes nor faithfulnes in them. But yet howſoeuer they fared, they were diſcoraged, & were made to ſtand gaping & gaſing one vpō another, & could not tel what to do for feare Hereby we ſee that our Lord not only held their hands tyed; but alſo bereft them of heart; ſo as he diſappointed them of wit & reaſon, by reaſon whereof they were ſo dulled, that there was leſſe skill in them than in little babes, yea or euen in beaſts. Ye ſee then how it is a goodly proofe of ẏ which is promiſed here: ſo as if we yeeld god his due honor, we ſhould bee the more ſtayed vnder his protection, to walke on continually, yea & to keepe our ſelues from ſtepping out of the way.

Now let vs take good heed to ẏ which I haue ſaid, namely ẏ ſuch as do ſo go aſtray & giue thēſelues to naughtines, haue not ẏ protectiō which our Lord hath promiſed: for they goe wilfully to caſt themſelues vp as it were to ẏ ſpoile. Therefore it is good reaſō ẏ God ſhould forſake them, & that they ſhould find themſelues to be taken vnprouided. But if we walk in humility, & ſeeke to be always guided by ẏ hand of our God: then let vs hardily put our truſt in him, and we ſhal euer be maintained. Although men gape vppon vs like Lyons with opē mouth; & although we haue not wherewith to reſiſt them: yet will God be able ynough to beate them backe. Wee may be driuen to fight; but in ẏ mids of the incounter we ſhalbe ſuſtained as God hath promiſed vs, and ẏ will be an inuincible fortres vnto vs. That is the thing which we haue to remember vpon this place.

Yea and Moſes ſaith expreſly, *People or Nations that are mightier and ſtronger than you*, to the intent wee ſhoulde not make compariſon with the things that are ſeene, to thinke that God wil not helpe vs except there be ſome naturall meanes, or ſome worldly enterance. No no, wee muſt not bee at that point: but wee muſt conſider that his power is infinite. Therefore wee doe him great wrong, when we reſtraine his power to ẏ which our ſenſes can attaine vnto. Nay, when our enemies are too ſtrong and too mighty for vs, and when it ſeemeth that they be ready to treade vs vnder foote: euen then muſt wee perſwade our ſelues that God wil vtter his power to ſuccor vs. And therefore let vs go on boldly, at leaſtwiſe ſo there bee no preſumption in vs, and that we bee not ſtubborn againſt our God. For there are two things which are very requiſite for vs. The firſt is that we giue ouer our ſelues wholly to the ſeruing and honoring of our God: & ſecondly that we put our truſt in him, and ſticke vnto his promiſes, not doubting but that he will giue things a good ende, though they ſeeme vtterly paſt all hope. Thus you ſee in effect what we haue to remember vpon this leſſon.

Now immediatly Moſes addeth, *That wheresoeuer the people ſet their foote, they ſhall poſſeſſe the whole land, from the wildernes vnto Libanus, and from ẏ great Riuer Euphrates vnto the Sea.* For thoſe were the bounds & borders which God had promiſed to his people, as appeareth in the perſon of Abraham. For the promiſe that is made here is no Gen.13.14. newe thing, but a ratifying or confirming of the ſame thing that God had ſpoken long afore. As if he ſhould ſay, nothing ſhal bar you from inioying ẏ heritage ẏ I haue aſſigned you: ſtick you to me, & I wil performe whatſoeuer I haue ſaid vnto you True it is that if ye haue an eye to ẏ great nūber of Nations which you haue to ouercome; ye may be ſo ſcared as to ſay, How ſhall we nowe do? Indeede wee be a great multitude of vs; but what are we in compariſō of our enemies, which are men exerciſed in feats of armes, & houge mē like gyāts? as we haue ſeene already heretofore. Againe they be neſtled alreadie, they haue their townes well fortified, and when we ſhal haue taken a two or three hundred of their townes, yet is it nothing in reſpect of ẏ reſt, but our enemies will be continually both before vs & behinde vs. Ye ſee then ẏ theſe were thinges that might well haue made ẏ people afraid. But it is ſaid vnto thē; Although ẏ land be neuer ſo large, although yee haue neuer ſo many cities to take, and although there be neuer ſo great a number of battels prepared for you: yet ſettle you your ſelues vpon the promiſe of your God, for he can skil wel ynough how to performe the thing that he hath ſpoken. Shut you your eyes againſt all likelyhoodes of thinges that may daunt your corages, and open your eyes to behold ẏ ineſtimable power of your God, & doubt not but he will ſhew himſelf faithful. Now we ſee wherat Moſes amed. But yet was not this thing accompliſhed to the ful, vntill the reigne of Dauid & Salomon. For although Ioſua made partition of their portions, & god appointed him to ẏ office: yet were ẏ vnbeleeuing people mixed ſtil with ẏ Iewes; and (which worſe is) wheras they ſhould haue rooted them out quite & cleane, & haue had peaſable poſſeſſion of the land: they payed tribute to their enemies, which held thē in bondage like ſlaues & fleeced ẏ wool from their backs. They were vexed in ſuch ſort, Iudg.3.8. & 13.1. ẏ they were as good as ſlaine quick, & they indured ſuch cruelty as was pity to ſee. It ſhold ſeeme therfore ẏ God kept not touch ẇ them. But here is an excellent goodly text, to open vnto vs the thing which I haue expounded afore, and which wil come to be ſpoken of again. It is ſaid that *God will giue his people the victory, conditionally that they keepe all the commandements which are inioyned them.* God tieth it ẇ a conditiō. Do whatſoeuer I commaund you (ſaith he,) & then ſhall you finde my power to be ſuch, as your enemies (do what they can) ſhal not be able to preuaile any whit againſt you. Nowe let vs ſee if ẏ Iewes were able to performe all Gods cōmandements. Nay, they were vtterly diſobedient vnto thē. And we alſo ceaſe not to take ẏ clean contrary way to ẏ which god teacheth vs & commandeth vs vntil he haue re- Ro.7.19.23. formed vs by his holy ſpirit. Ye ſee then that the Iewes were diſobediēt vnto god, & therfore were diſappointed of his promiſe. Yea, but yet for al ẏ he ceaſed not to make place for his owne mercy ſtill by meanes of their leawdneſſe. For although their enemies pricked them like thornes ; yet they held ſtil the poſſeſſion of the dwellingplace that God had appointed them. Trueth it is that it is ſaid expreſly, foraſmuch as ye haue behaued Ioſua 23.13 your ſelues leawdly, and prouoked your God, by refuſing to goe forwarde when he was readie to guide you: therfore ſhall you not ouercome your enemies, but they ſhall remaine ſtill, and bee as thornes in your ſides, & as waſpes to ſting you, yea and they ſhal euen picke out your eyes, becauſe yee haue not taken courage as ye ought to haue done, nor ſubmitted your ſelues to God, to go forwarde at his commaundement. Lo what threatnings are made vnto thẽ: & they perceiue them wellynough: and afterward they become ſubiect vnto them, inſomuch yͤ they were fain to beare charges & tributes euen til they groned again. But our Lord hauing chaſtiſed them ſo many waies, did afterward ſhew vnto them, that he failed not to pity them ſtil; for he raiſed them vp ſuch men from time to time, as ſaued them frõ their enemies. And ſo howſoeuer yͤ world went with thẽ, they ſtill inioyed Gods gracious gifts, at leaſtwiſe in part: not that they were worthie 2 Sam.7.10. 11.13. of them, but becauſe Gods wil was to be as good as his promiſe, ſo as mẽ might not be diſappointed of it through their own leaudnes & vnthankfulnes. In the end, Dauid and Salomon obtained the promiſe, ſo as God by their hand did ſet the people in ful & perfect liberty, & their kingdome was perfectly ſtabliſhed, becauſe god had ſo promiſed. But wee muſt note, yͤ Dauid and Salomon were a figure of our Lord Ieſus Chriſt: and we be ſure yͤ it is long of none but our ſelues, that God ſheweth not himſelfe bountifull & liberall to the vttermoſt. For if we obeyed him according to his commaundement; wee ſhould want nothing, but we ſhould euen in this earthly life feele his drawing of vs vnto euerlaſting ſaluation. And foraſmuch as he is yͤ fountain of al goodnes, he would giue vs ſuch abundance of all thinges, that wee ſhould haue al things at wil; and we ſhould paſſe through this world as through an earthly paradiſe, and afterward attaine to yͤ kingdom of heauen yͤ is prepared for vs. Lo howe God offereth himſelf vnto vs in his law: but yet with condition yͤ we do whatſoeuer he commaundeth vs. But we be ſo far off from doing it, yͤ we drag back from it, and there is not that thought nor that affection in vs, which is not enemie to God & his righte- Rom.8.7. ouſnes. By reaſon wherof, in ſteede of the inioying of his benefites which hee hath promiſed in his Lawe, he is faine to become our enemy, & to arme himſelfe againſt vs, and to conſume vs till we be vtterly come to nothing. Sometimes hee thundreth in ſuch ſort, yͤ wee be ouerthrowen in yͤ turning of a hand. And wherof commeth that? Euen ſo it muſt needs be: for (as I ſaid afore) god ſheweth himſelf liberal towards vs & vttreth his great treaſures towards vs. But what? Our hearts are ſhut & locked vp. And therfore muſt we needs be bereft of them, and feele the paine therof; we muſt be ſo vexed as we may grone again, & be in ſuch anguiſh of mind, as we may not wote where to become. Yet notwithſtanding, if we be his, he neuer faileth to mingle ſome ſweetnes continually with the corrections yͤ hee ſendeth vs. True it is that hee beareth with the wicked, and with ſuch as are vtter caſtaways: but yet in the end he is terrible to them, and dealeth not in ſuch wiſe with them, as he doth with thoſe whom he intẽdeth to reſerue to himſelfe. Although that naturally all of vs be diſobedient vnto him, yet ceaſeth hee not to haue pitie vpon vs: and although wee feele ſore blowes at his hande; yet doth hee ſhew vs therewithall yͤ he is not minded to roote vs out vtterly. But ſurely we ſhould continue ſtil in our ſins to the end, yea and rot away in them, were it not for his raiſing vp of the promiſed Dauid, that is to ſay, of our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt. For by his meanes wee recouer yͤ which we had loſt by our owne ſinnes, and ſo yee ſee how Ieſus Chriſt ſetteth vs in poſſeſſion of the heritage that was promiſed vs by the Lawe. Yet notwithſtanding we ſhoulde be diſappointed of it, and it coulde not belong vnto vs, vnleſſe yͤ Ieſus Chriſt had as wel made vs partakers of the benefites of God his father in his own perſon, as redemed vs in our owne perſons. Nowe then, wee recouer all this in him, whereas erſt we were quite & cleane bereft and cut off from the inioying thereof. Therefore let vs marke well, that whereas God made ſo many & ſo large promiſes to the Iewes in his law, vpon condition that they ſhold keepe his commaundements: he ment to ſhew that the ſame tooke no place, vntill the kingdome was ſtabliſhed in the perſon of Dauid. And therefore wee muſt not alledge as the beaſtly Papiſts doe, who ſay: Tuſh, God promiſeth vs this and that, if we keepe his commaundements; therefore it followeth that wee winne Gods fauour by our owne deſertes, and that wee purchaſe the kingdome of heauen, and are able to attaine ſaluation by our owne obedience; for God hath an eye to yeeld vnto euery mã according to his deſert. They ſhew fulwell, that they neuer vnderſtoode one ſillable of the holy ſcripture. And euen this text without going any further, is ynough to bewray their beaſtlines & ignorance. True it is that God promiſed his people that they ſhould inioy yͤ land which he had appointed vnto them: but yͤ performance thereof was to bee deferred to the reigne of Dauid. Wherupon let vs marke how it is our Lord Ieſus Chriſt which maketh yͤ promiſes of yͤ Law auailable towards vs, ſo as wee ſhall not be diſappointed of yͤ thinges yͤ are conteined therin. And indeed, yͤ is the very cauſe why yͤ promiſe is made expreſly to Dauid & Salomon, as it had bin made before to al yͤ people. And this ſerueth well to make yͤ doctrine yet plainer which I com to treat of. For there are two ſorts of promiſes in yͤ holy ſcripture. The one is; He yͤ doth theſe things, ſhal liue in thẽ. The other is, He yͤ beleeueth in yͤ ſon whom yͤ father hath ſent, ſhalbe ſaued. Loe here two promiſes, betweene yͤ which it behoueth vs wel to put a differẽce: for they be far vnlike. When God ſaith, He yͤ doth theſe things: he bindeth not himſelf to vs but with an if, namely that wee diſchardge our ſelues by performing his Law; and that, not only in part, but throughout and perfectly. But no man is able to do that;

and therefore yee ſee wee be ſhut out from all hope, and we cannot looke ẏ the promiſe ſhould bee of force any more towardes vs, becauſe of our default. For God continueth alwayes faithful, but wee ſuffer not his goodnes to come vnto vs. Now when he ſeeth vs ſo bereft of all his benefits; he findeth another newe remedie for vs, Matt.28.18. which is this: Lo here my ſonne who is vniuer- 2.Cor.4.4 6 ſal heire both of heauen and earth; hee holdeth Coloſſi.2.9. all the worlde in ſubiection, hee hath the whole Hebr.1,2.3. fulneſſe of the Godhead incloſed in him, my image ſhyneth moſt perfectly in him: which is ſhewed foorth in his Goſpell: and therfore they that are members of his bodie, are made partakers of all the benefites which hee hath in him. That is the way for the promiſes to haue their effect and force in vs, and not to looke ſimply to the doctrine of the lawe. For when God ſayd, I will giue you the lande: to whome ſpake he? To all the people. But yet with condition, if yee keepe my commandements. And that was made voide. As howe? Becauſe the people were diſobedient, and kept not couenant with God. And ſo ye ſee that the whole couenant was broken, ſo as God was ſet free againe, and no longer bounde vnto them, becauſe it was tyed to a condition. What doeth he then? He ſends vs a king to whome he ſayeth, I will giue thee the lande for thine inheritance. Hee vſeth the ſelfe ſame wordes that are ſet downe here by Moſes. I will giue thee the lande (ſaith hee) for thine inheritance, from the wilderneſſe vnto mount Libanus, & from the riuer Euphrates to ẏ great ſea. And to whome doth God giue it? To Dauid & Salomon. True it is that he had giuen the ſame land afore to all the people, but the people were baniſhed from it through their own fault. And was it then but for one onely perſon? was it the worthines of Dauid or Salomon that made God willing to giue them the thing which hee had promiſed to al the ofspring of Abraham? No: but it was becauſe they were a figure of our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt. And in verie deede when the Prophets intended to aſſure the people of the quiet ſtate that was promiſed to thẽ, and of the inioying of the land: they ſaide, I will raiſe you vp a Dauid. Now then, Gods offering to lay foorth his riches to al men without exceptiõ in his law, to maintaine them withall in this preſent life, is as if he ſhould ſay, whatſoeuer I haue promiſed to giue to the fathers of olde time, belongeth to you alſo, at leaſtwiſe if ye obey my law throughly in all points, & not by pieces & ſtarts. But wee be ſo farre vnable to diſcharge our ſelues of that duetie, that we fall to deſpiſing of God, ſo as hee is faine to ſhewe himſelfe an enemie vnto vs. That is al that we be able to win by our keeping of the lawe, if we wil needes ſtick ſimply to it as I ſayd afore. Neuertheleſſe there is this other remedie for it. Whẽ our Lord Ieſus Chriſt cõmeth forth & reacheth vs his hande to pull vs to him; then we find that he is not without cauſe termed the vniuerſal heire of all the goods which God his father hath. And his poſſeſſing of them is Ioh,1,1.&17 5. not for himſelf: for he is one ſelfeſame eſſence ẇ God the father, he hath bin the God of glory at all times. 1.Cor.2.8. But in this fleſh of ours & in our humaine nature wherewith he was clothed, Matt.28.18. he was ordeyned chiefe king, and the dominion of the Phil.2.7. 9. worlde was giuen vnto him, euen as wel in heauen as in earth. Now then if we be once graffed into his bodie, and perfectly made one with him; then ſhall wee recouer that thing in him, which we cannot obteine by our deedes & deſerts. And then ſhal we ſee that Ieſus Chriſt beeing raiſed againe vnto glorie, wil of his goodnes drawe vs after him, to make vs partakers of all things that he hath.

Furthermore, the telling of this thing vnto vs is not to giue men ſcope to do euil; but wee muſt marke that when God reſerueth vs to himſelfe to put vs in poſſeſſion of his goods, he doth alſo reforme vs by his holy ſpirite. Yet notwithſtanding, all that euer we can do, albeit that wee bee gouerned by God & haue a good will to ſerue him, is of no value at all if it bee eſteemed of it ſelfe: but yet for Ieſus Chriſtes ſake God will accept vs and our workes, and the inheritance ſhal abyde ſure & ſtedfaſt vnto vs: for wee muſt not be afraide but that we ſhal attaine vnto it. It is not giuen vs for our own ſakes, but becauſe wee be partakers of our Lord Ieſus Chriſt, & receiue the grace that he hath purchaſed vs, ſo as we bee reconciled to God by his death & paſſion, in reſpect whereof he is mercifull to vs, & we be ſure of the forgiueneſſe of our ſinnes, becauſe all our ſpots are waſhed & ſcoured cleane away. Although there bee ſinnes & imperfections in vs, which might make vs blamable before God; yet are we iuſtified and brought into his fauour againe, when hee hath once renewed vs by his holy ſpirite. Therfore if we go that way to work, let vs not dout but the promiſe ſhal ſtand faſt, ſo as we ſhal feele the effect & force of it to our ſaluation. But in the meane while let vs not glorie in our ſelues, for there is no matter nor cauſe why we ſhould do ſo.

Now let vs fall downe in the preſence of our good God with acknowledgement of our faults, praying him to make vs feele them better, yea and ſo to feele them as that miſliking and condemning our ſelues for them, we may ſubmit our ſelues to our Lord Ieſus Chriſt, beſeeching him ſo to reform vs by his holy ſpirit, as Gods image may ſhine forth in vs, and wee not faile to continue in the poſſeſſion of the heritage which hee hath promiſed vs, becauſe it is not grounded vpon our owne workes & deedes, but vppon his freebeſtowed goodnes. And moreouer let vs pray our Lord to be ſo gracious to vs, as to giue vs ſuch ſtrength while wee paſſe through this world, wherin wee haue a great ſort of enemies to fight againſt, that we may get the vpper hand of them, & be alwayes certified more and more, ẏ he is neere at hand to ſuch as call vpon him & ſubmit themſelues vnto him, that by ẏ meanes he may continually be glorified at our hands, & that it may appeare howe hee will alwayes vphold vs, if wee fight vnder his ſtandarde. That it may pleaſe him to graunt this grace, not only to vs, but alſo to all people and nations of the earth, &c.

On Fryday the xxvij. of September. 1555.

The Lxxix. Sermon which is the ſixth vpon the eleuenth Chapter.

26 Behold, I ſet before you this day a bleſsing & a curſe.

27 A bleſsing if ye obey the commandements of the Lord your God which I commaund you this day.

28 And likewiſe a curſe if ye obey not the commandements of the Lorde your God, but turne out of the way which I cōmaunde you this day, to go after ſtrange gods which ye know not.

29 And when the Lord your God ſhal haue brought you into the land which thou goeſt vnto to poſſeſſe it: then ſhalt thou ſet the bleſsing vpon mount Garizim, & the curſe vpon mount Eball.

30 Are they not on the other ſide of Iordan, on the weſt ſide in the lande of the Cananites, which dwel in yͤ plaine ouer againſt Gilgal, beſide the groue of Moreh?

31 For ye ſhall paſſe ouer Iordan, to go & poſſeſſe the lande which the Lorde your God giueth you: and you ſhall poſſeſſe it & dwell therein.

32 Take heede therefore, & perfourme all the ordinances & lawes which I ſet before you this day.

THE proteſtation that Moſes maketh here, ſerueth to ſhewe yͭ men themſelues are the cauſe of all their miſeries, & that it is not for them to ſeeke the blame therof any where elſe. And on yͤ other ſide, that when God declareth his will vnto vs, the way of welfare is ſhewed vs, & it is long of our ſelues yͭ our life is not happie in al reſpects throughout. So then, the meaning of Moſes is, yͭ God doth men a ſingular good turne, when hee vouchſafeth to teach them by his word. For whē they haue the record of his wil, it is as good as a ſhewing of them howe to attaine to ſaluation, & how to proſper in this tranſitorie life. Contrarywiſe alſo they be warned yͭ if they fare not yͤ better by the doctrine that is deliuered vnto them, vnhappie are they, & they haue not cauſe to cōplaine of God afterward as though it were long of him; for they had choyce. Therefore when we haue beene inſtructed in Gods worde, & knowen yͤ true & pure religion: if we hold not on through out, all the blame is to be layed vpon our ſelues. For God had ſhewed vs the good way; & we held it not, ne kept our ſelues in it. Needes therefore muſt we be barred from al excuſe, and God muſt hold vs as conuicted for that we had leuer to periſh wilfully, & to go to deſtruction, than ſubmit our ſelues to him who was willing to haue led vs to life & ſaluation. For this cauſe Moſes ſayeth, *Behold, this day do I ſet before you a bleſsing & a curſe.* As if he ſhould ſay; Bethinke your ſelues: Seeing yͭ God hath commanded me to publiſh his lawe, it is not for you to fall aſleepe: For on the one ſide hee ſheweth you howe you may proſper all your life long: namely by obeying him. On the contrarie part thinke not to ſcape ſcotfree when ye ſhall haue diſobeyed your God; ſuch vnthākfulnes ſhal not abide vnpuniſhed. For God muſt needes be reuenged of ſuch as haue refuſed his doctrine & made no reckening of it.

So then, firſt we be done to vnderſtand that yͤ hauing of the knowledge of Gods will is an ineſtimable treaſure. All of vs are deſirous to lead a happie life, but there is no meane for vs to attain to it, vnleſſe God open vs the gate to come vnto him. If it be alleged, How then? Shal not men be bleſſed, if they indeuour to do wel? Wil not God accept all their ſeruice when he ſees them go on with a good intent? Let vs marke firſt of all, that men may (to their own ſeeming) haue as greate deuotion as is poſsible, & yet they ſhall but erre. To weene that we do wel is not all that we haue to do. We muſt be ſure yͭ the way which wee take is no bypath, but the way that leadeth ſtraight forth vnto God. Ye ſee then that we cannot bee ſure of any bleſsing, that is to ſay, that our liues pleaſe God, and that the ſeruice which wee doe him is wel liked of; vntil he haue ſhewed vs what he requireth & what he alloweth. For ſo long as we walke after our own imagination, wee go the clean contrarie way; & in ſtead of going forward wee go back. Marke that for one point. Againe, for the ſecond point, when we haue done all, yet is God nothing beholden to vs for it. What oweth he vnto vs? [Nothing.] Now then al that we can hope for is by reaſon of the promiſe yͭ he maketh vnto vs, & by telling vs that if wee keepe his law, we ſhal not loſe our labour nor be diſappointed, but we ſhall haue a good rewarde at his hand. Gods ſaying ſo, is the ground from whence the bleſsing ſpringeth that Moſes ſpeaketh here. And it is the ſame thing that S. Paul telleth vs, where he preſuppoſeth yͭ euen before yͤ law, men could not deſerue any thing: & not without cauſe For if wee had done all that which were poſsible for vs to do, (as I ſaid afore) were it poſsible for vs to deſerue aught at Gods hande? No: for wee owe it him euery whit of it, & he oweth nothing vnto vs. And ſo yee ſee why Moſes ſayeth here, yͭ when the lawe was publiſhed, then was a bleſsing ſet before the people. As if he ſhould ſay, Heretofore ye haue knowen no rule, ye haue beene as the wretched infidels which go on at all aduenture & haue no certeintie to truſt vnto. But now hath your God gathered you to him, & ſhewed you yͤ right way. Therfore yͤ way for you to leade a happie life is to obey the wil of your God. Rom. 1.2.3.

Alſo here is a promiſe added to it, whereby the people might bee in the better hope yͭ God would bleſſe them.It is al one then with ẏ which I haue told you alreadie, namely ẏ God is verie gracious to vs, in ſhewing vs after what manner we ought to lead our life. For without that,wee might martyr our ſelues as much as we liſted, & yet it ſhould be to no purpoſe. Wherefore let vs beware that we receiue the word the more reuerently which is preached vnto vs in his name, ſpecially ſeeing it bringeth vs a bleſſing,not only in ẏ we learne therby to know what Gods wil is, & how to liue in his fauour; but alſo for that hee bindeth himſelfe of his own good wil:inſomuch ẏ although no duetie compell him thereto; yet vouchſafeth he to couenant with vs in ſuch ſort, as we ſhal not ſerue him in vaine. But here a mã might caſt a dout, how it commeth to paſſe that Moſes ſpeaking of the law, ſayth that he ſetteth forth a bleſſing? For(as was declared yeſterday) whatſoeuer God promiſeth vs in his lawe, wee fare neuer a whit the better by it, becauſe of the conditiõ that goeth with it, which is that ẏ promiſe of his bleſſing is tyed to performing of his commandemẽts.But no man doth that; & therfore are we al diſappointed of the promiſe of the lawe,by reaſon of the vnpoſſibilitie of the condition.It ſhould ſeeme then ẏ Moſes ſpeakes to no purpoſe in this text,in promiſing a bleſſing to the people.And in deede wee heare how S. Paul Rom.4.15. & 7.14. ſpeketh of it.He ſaith ẏ the law bringeth nothing but Gods wrath & vengeance; for it rebuketh euery one of vs,ſo as there is none of vs all that is righteous,neither hath euer any man bin. All of Pſal.14.3. vs then are conuicted by the lawe, as tranſgreſſors againſt Gods righteouſnes; & ſo be wee in danger of endles death. Sith it is ſo: it followeth ẏ the law of it ſelfe can do no more but ſhewe vs that we be accurſed of our God, & that he is our deadly enemie & muſt needs be our Iudge. And where is then the bleſſing that Moſes ſpeakes of here?The anſwere hereto is this;that if we looke no further but what we be in our own frowarde nature,in reſpect of the ſinne ẏ we haue drawen from Adam: the law can doe nothing but curſe vs. For whereas God ſheweth vs what our righteouſnes ought to be; if we fall to the examining of our liues;we ſhal find ẏ we haue offended him in euery point, & therfore we be paſt hope. Yea, Rom.7.14. & 8.7. but ẏ ſpringeth not of the nature of ẏ law, but of our own ſinfulnes, in ẏ we are ſtubborne againſt God,ſo that in ſteede of obeying him, wee indeuour altogether to follow our own wicked luſtes. The lawe then as in reſpect of our ſelues, bringeth nothing but wrath & death. But as in reſpect of it ſelfe,ſurely it bringeth bleſſing. For were we as we ought to be,that is to wit,were we ſo ſound & vncorrupted ẏ we were as throughly diſpoſed to ſerue God as was our forefather Adam by creation before his fall: the lawe ſhould bring vs his bleſſing. For why?It ſheweth vs that we muſt loue God with all our heart. When wee be once ioyned vnto him, & when wee bee once knit vnto him in all perfection of goodneſſe, of ioy,of life,& of glorie; then ſhal this ſaying bee found true.For were we of nature good & right, we ſhould be anſwerable to this doctrine,& wee ſhould obſerue it:& ſo ſhould this bleſſing be performed towards vs. Wherof is it long ẏ as now the law bringeth vs nothing but death & damnation? Euen for that wee be not able to receiue the promiſes ẏ are conteined there. Our Lorde ſaith,Come ye to mee, & I will fill you full of all goodnes;& we ſhrinke quite & cleane from him. So is it not long of the doctrine. Wherof then? Euen of our ſelues. Where is the fault to bee found? In the law? No: but in our owne ſelues. Now then let vs mark, that whereas Moſes proteſteth here ẏ he ſetteth a bleſſing before ẏ people,his ſo doing is not without cauſe.

But here it might be replyed, that although our own ſin be the let that we be not made partakers of ẏ bleſſing that is behighted in ẏ lawe to enioy it;yet notwithſtanding,for aſmuch as wee be vtterly excluded from it;it is in vaine for him to ſay,I ſet before you a bleſſing. That is not ſo: For we haue two points to note. The one is,that Gods ſpeaking after that maner concerning his word,is to the ende ẏ we ſhould haue it in reuerence & eſtimation,& alſo loue it & ſet our harts vpon it;& moreouer fall to the conſidering of our owne curſednes,ſo as we might be humbled & caſt downe,& be ſorie when we ſee our benefite turned to our bane, & our life into death becauſe we be not diſpoſed to receiue it. But God ſhall haue wunne nothing at our handes by letting vs alone there: wee muſt be faine to go one ſtep further.Foraſmuch as we ſee our ſelues bereft of the bleſſing of the law ſo long as it continueth but a dead letter;that is to ſay, ſo long as 2.Cor.3.6. it doth but only tel vs what wee ſhould do, & giueth vs not power to do it in deede: wee muſt reſort to our Lord Ieſus Chriſt, whoſe office is to write the thinges in our heartes which God had 2.Cor.3.3. written in ſtones, that hee may make vs willing to obey,in ſteede of our ſwaruing aſide to ẏ contrarie.Againe,our Lord Ieſus Chriſt hath deſerued this bleſſing for vs; that wee might henceforth be receiued into fauour for his ſake, & our workes be accepted at Gods hande though they be nothing worth of themſelues. For we come not as euery man in his own perſon, nor as they ẏ had performed the law thẽſelues:but we come in the name of our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt, as members of his bodie. Ye ſee then that the bleſſing is perfourmed in vs by ſeeking the remedie which we want, which is that whereas God hath promiſed to bleſſe men vpon condition, foraſmuch as the ſame booteth vs not, there is added another point of fauour, which is that he receiueth vs for his ſonnes ſake, & writing his lawe in our Ier.31.34.& 36.26.29. harts,imputeth not our ſins vnto vs; by meanes wherof we faile not to bee partakers of the bleſſing that is contained here, though we be not able to performe the law, but that the ſame paſſe our abilitie.Marke that for one point.

Now let vs come to ẏ which Moſes ſayth concerning ẏ curſe. He ſayth ẏ like as the law offereth vs Gods fauor, which is the bleſſing ẏ tendeth to our welfare;ſo alſo we muſt not ſet light by the threatnings ẏ are ſet downe there. For if we giue deafe eare to Gods ſpeaking, ſo as our harts rancle againſt it through ſtubborneſſe, or ẏ we play the ſcoffers which turne all thinges to

2.Cor.2.15.16. laughter:let vs beare this in mind, that howſoeuer the world go,Gods worde ſhall either be our life or our death, there ſhall not ſo much as one word therof fall to the ground. Such as benefite themſelues by ẏ things ẏ are told them on gods behalf, ſhall find ẏ the doctrine ſerueth to their ſaluation: And on the other ſide, the deſpiſers thereof, & ſuch as refuſe to be taught by it,muſt yeeld an account thereof, and they ſhall feele ẏ no one iote of it ſhalbe loſt, neither is to be deſpiſed.For ſhould the thing be vndone & vaniſh away wout effect, which paſſeth out of ẏ mouth of God?No.And therefore let vs marke well,ẏ if men cannot find in their hearts to vſe Gods doctrine to their benefite when he ſendeth it vnto them;it ſhal turne to their euerlaſting death, & their damnation wilbee doubled, becauſe they held ſcorne of the benefite ẏ was profered them. And this is very needfull for vs. For we ſee how men dally with Gods word; & they ẏ caſt it not quite & cleane away,do thinke themſelues to be more than half perfect; becauſe they becom not vtter enemies to fight againſt it, they beare thẽſelues in hand ẏ God ought to hold himſelf contented with it.But think we that God wil ſuffer ſo good a thing to periſh? He offered vs life,and we refuſed it:and doeth not ſuch vnkindnes deſerue horrible vengeance? Againe,God ſetteth more ſtore by his own honor, than by the ſaluation of our ſoules.And good reaſõ it is ẏ he ſhould. Now he hath ſhewed vs after what manner he wilbee glorified by vs,& wee make no account of it but reiect it vtterly.And therfore let vs conſider wel, ẏ if we receiue not the bleſſing of Gods worde, ẏ is to ſay, if it ſerue not to reconcile vs to him, ẏ we may take him for our father:we muſt (ſpite of our teeth) feele him our Iudge,& his worde muſt condemne vs.Wheras it ſhould haue ben a witnes of his loue towards vs to bring vs to ſaluation,& to the inheritãce of ẏ kingdom of heauen: it muſt become an inditement to paſſe vpõ our liues,ſo as we ſhalbe accurſed in this preſent life,& after our death Gods vengeance ſhal purſue vs for euer, becauſe we obeyd not gods word when it was preached & ſet forth to vs.

Now then,ſeeing ẏ God telleth vs ẏ this is ẏ conuenient time, & ẏ he calleth vs vnto him:let vs learne, let vs learne I ſay to go to him and to make haſt,leaſt this threat light vpon vs,that we be curſed for our wickednes, in ẏ we liſted not to receiue ẏ benefite that was offered vs. And ſpecially nowadayes we ought to be ẏ more prouoked therunto,becauſe our fathers of old time had not the like occaſion.It is true that Moſes might wel ſay he offered ẏ bleſſing to thoſe people in ẏ law: But we in theſe dayes haue the bleſſing ſet forth more openly in ẏ Goſpel. The promiſes at ẏ time were dark,& they pointed at Ieſus Chriſt, howbeit a farre off.They yeelded ſome ſmal taſt of life;but wee at this day haue our fill of it, ſo as god giueth vs euen his hart there without omitting of any thing, to ẏ intent to make vs to perceiue his ineſtimable loue, therby to draw vs & to win vs vnto him.Sith it is ſo,ẏ the law ſheweth vs it aloofe, & ẏ goſpel bringeth it neerer to vs: let vs not bee ſo frowarde as to ſhrinke away as though we would needs ſpite God of purpoſe to be curſed: but let vs rather imbrace the bleſſing which coſteth vs nothing as they ſay:For there is no more for vs to doe but to receiue it willingly, according to ẏ promiſe which he maketh vs,ſaying:Opẽ thy mouth & I wil fil it. Psal.81.11. And for ẏ ſame cauſe alſo doth S.Paul ſay,Now are ẏ acceptable dayes,now are ẏ dayes of ſaluatiõ; Esa.49.8. ſhewing how ẏ ſame is to be applyed to ẏ preaching of ẏ Goſpel.His alledging of that text of Eſayes is as he ſhould ſay, Our Lords deſire is nothing elſe but to do ẏ office of a ſauiour among vs: & therfore ſuffer him to ſhew himſelf ſuch a one.Againe,let vs vnderſtand ẏ we neede not to ſeeke farre for him;for he offereth himſelf to vs before we once thinke of him, to make vs perceiue his fatherly kindnes & goodnes. And on the contrary parte, when he threateneth vs & is minded to make vs feele his rigour; he runneth not vpon vs at ẏ firſt daſh,neither lifteth he vp his hand by and by to ſtrike vs:but only ſheweth it vs firſt aloofe. Yet notwithſtanding,howſoeuer he fare, let vs mark ẏ the Goſpel is neuer preached, but ẏ he witneſſeth on ẏ one ſide ẏ he is readie to receiue men to mercy,& to open them ẏ gate of his kingdõ, ẏ they may go into it: & on the other ſide that if they be ſtubborne & wilful in their wickednes,it ſhal not boote thẽ to think to eſcape,or to ween ẏ the word ſhalbe vaine & to no purpoſe:for god wil always giue it force & power. What to doe? To deſtroy thoſe ẏ haue ſo refuſed it, & trodẽ it vnder foot,& made a mocke of it, & openly reſiſted it. Now by the way we muſt call to minde again what I haue touched already heretofore in following Moſeſes diſcourſe : namely ẏ God promiſeth not any bleſſing but to ſuch as obey his cõmandements:like as on ẏ other ſide he threateneth none but ſuch as turne away from him. And therby he ſheweth that men may well take much paine,but they ſhal but loſe their labour if they rule not themſelues according to the lawe. Here ye ſee how al ẏ deuotions ẏ men deuiſe,are caſt down:Moſes ſaith they be vtterly fruteleſſe. Indeede ẏ Papiſts, Turks & Iewes doe perſwade themſelues,ẏ they deſerue much at Gods hande by their doing of things vppon their own head, whẽ they be able to ſay; I take it to be very good. They beare themſelues in hand ẏ they come very neere to God by their wãdring in their windlaſſes after ẏ faſhion.But on ẏ contrary parte wee ſee, ẏ God promiſeth not any thing but to ſuch as obey his word.Therfore if we intẽd to be vndiſappointed of our hope,let vs ſeeke to knowe Gods wil by asking it at his own mouth,& therupõ let vs ſimply obey whatſoeuer he telleth vs. For as long as men rule themſelues after their own imaginations, or after ẏ traditions of men; it is no obedience,but a diſpleaſing of God,& he wil not admit it to come in their account. Thus much for the firſt point cõcerning this bleſſing.

On ẏ contrarie,how muchſoeuer mẽ repine at it,ſetting themſelues againſt vs, yea & condemning vs for our refuſing to follow their fooliſh inuentions;God acquiteth vs here,for he threateneth none but ſuch as rebel againſt him. Nowadays ẏ Pope thundreth againſt vs, becauſe wee wil not be ſubiect to him as other do,which hold downe their neckes vnto him and yeeld themſelues in bondage to him like wretched beaſtes.

True it is ẏ their imagining that he hath power to ding vs down to the deepe pit of hell, is ẏ thing ẏ amazeth them, & maketh the rude and ignorãt ſort to quake. But foraſmuch as we heare it at the mouth of our God,ẏ we neede not to be afraid except we haue diſobeyed him:let vs hold vs to it,& be bold to laugh al the popes manaces to ſcorne,for they be no better than the rattling of a bladder with a fewe beanes in it to ſcarre a yong babe withal. In deed it makes a great noiſe: but yet it is but a toy. And euen in like caſe is it with all the manacings that men can make.

But here is yet one other ſaying wel worthy to be noted. Moſes ſaith that *the curſe ſhal come vpon the people when they turne away from their GOD to ſerue ſtraunge Gods and ſuch as they haue not knowen.* Here againe he ſheweth ẏ they which haue bin rightly taught, are much more blamewoorthie than the wretched infidels. For they ſpite God maliciouſly & wilfully:they offend not any more of ignorance, but turne aſide wilfully frõ ẏ way ẏ God had willed them to walke in, & ſeeme to make warre againſt him of ſet purpoſe:by means wherof they make their condemnation the grieuouſer. And therfore let vs marke well, that wee which haue receiued ẏ doctrine of the Goſpell, ſhalbe leſſe excuſable than ẏ papiſts, if we obey not our God. For the papiſtes holde on ſtil their old trade,they be gone aſtray like ſillie beaſts,& all that euer they do is but filth & abhomination. This is true. And yet do we for our partes much worſe in turning away from our God, after his comming vnto vs, & ẏ hee had brought vs nigh vnto himſelfe. And Moſes ſaith expreſſely; *The Gods which you haue not knowen.* Wherein he rebuketh the malice of men,in that they had leuer to follow ẏ vncertaine than the certaine. True it is ẏ we haue a cleane contrarie ground in nature. For if a man be demanded whether he had leuer to be ſure of a thing or to be doutful of it;He wil alwaies ſay he had leuer be ſure of it. And yet for all that,we ſeeme all of vs to ſtriue who may bee moſt wauering,doutful,& vncerteine of his ſoulhealth,& yet notwithſtanding what is there that we ſhould make more account of ? And God is readie to aſſure vs of it , warranting vs it by his word,ſo as we cannot faile of it, if we obey him. We heare it,& can God ly? No: & therfore let vs go on as he hath cõmanded vs, Nay,we be loth to do ſo. And what do we in ſteed therof? I trow,I weene. Loe at what point we be! Let vs ſee howe the papiſts do. When they ſhould pray vnto god, this one good point they haue, that they knowe themſelues vnworthie to preaſe vnto him. That is true. But behold,our Lord giueth vs a remedy, which is, that our Lord Ieſus Chriſt ſhalbee our ſpokeſman:ſo as if he intreat for vs,we ſhalbe admitted & God wil heare all our prayers. It is the thing which the holy ſcripture aſſureth vs of euerywhere. But what do the Papiſtes ? I am not worthie to preaſe vnto God (ſay they)& therefore I wil go ſeeke to the virgin Marie,S.Michael,& S.Peter: & therupon they deuiſe & ſet vp a great ſort of Saints at their own pleaſure . And what a dealing is that? Sure we be that our Lord Ieſus Chriſt wil not faile vs: for as much as it is his office appointed him of his father ; hee will diſcharge it. And why then do we not go rightforth vnto him? He wilbe a good ſtay for vs. Com vnto me ſaith he,alluring vs gently. Againe wee haue promiſes innumerable,that if we reſort vnto him we ſhal not be diſappointed of that which we hope for: & yet for all this wee leane to our own weening,& we ſay , to my ſeeming I were beſt to go to S.Michael or to our Lady . And ſo we fall to forſaking the certaintie ẏ God hath giuen vs,to ketch an vncerteintie: and in likewiſe wiſe deale we with al ẏ reſt. For in ſeruing God according to his law, we be ſure that our ſeruice ſhalbe wel taken. But the Papiſtes fall to inuenting of this & that, & leaue the law of God : & is not that a forſaking of the certaine to followe an vncertaine? Yes,& that is againſt nature. Therefore it appeareth ẏ we be blinded by Satan. For we haue the cleane contrarie in vs by nature. We haue wit ynough to ſay, I would faine be aſſured & we bee loth to hazard our ſelues at all aduenture:& yet in this caſe we be ſo mad,that neither ropes nor chaines can hold vs. My alleaging of theſe examples is to ſhewe after what ſort wee ſhould put this doctrine in vre: for it falleth out ẏ men haue wilfully eſtranged themſelues from God in al caſes. Howſo? For whereas God hath diſcouered him ſelfe vnto them; they haue not vouchſafed to hold themſelues to him,but rather haue buſied themſelues about their own dreams & dotages. In deed they wil eaſily ſay, We know there is but one god ẏ maker of heauen & earth: but in ẏ meane while they hatch a whole ſwarm of other gods,as we may wel perceiue by ẏ idols which they haue forged. And wherof commeth that? Euen of this, ẏ wheras men knew God,yet they haue had no liſt to glorifie him , but haue wandred away after their own imagination, by meanes whereof they be turned away from him. And at ſuch time as God gaue his law, ẏ bleſſing was more darkſom than it is nowadays in ẏ time of ẏ Goſpel. Beholde, God doth not onely report himſelf to be ẏ maker of heauen & earth:but alſo becauſe he is incomprehenſible, & his maieſtie paſſeth all our vnderſtanding: he will haue vs to looke vpon him in his liuely image,that is to wit in our Lord Ieſus Chriſt. He is the ſonne of god, which hath ſhewed himſelf ſo familiarly , ẏ we may be ſure ynough that we worſhip the liuing God foraſmuch as we knowe that the whole fulneſſe of glorie & of ẏ Godhead dwelleth in him. That is the cauſe alſo why ẏ Prophet Eſay ſpeaking of him,ſaith,Lo this is he,lo this is our god. If the caſe ſtoode ſo with the fathers of olde time,ẏ it behoueth them to ſtand vpõ a certeintie euen in the time of the law,ſo as God woulde not haue his people hang in dout, but that they ſhould be certified of as much as was for their behoofe & benefit: much more ought we to bee ſure nowadayes. For we haue a larger diſcouerie of things in our Lord Ieſus Chriſt, ſo as ẏ voyce of the prophet Eſay; Lo this is he; lo this is our God,ought to ſound continually in our eares;by

Ioh.14.13. & 1.Ioh.2.1.

Matt.11.28.

Rom.1.21.

2.Cor.3.18. & 4.4.6.

Col.2.9.

Eſa.25.9.

reaſon whereof it is not for any man to turn away from it, nor to runne gadding at rouers, nor to reele one way or other; but we muſt knowe & aſſure our ſelues ẏ we haue ẏ ful & perfect meſure of al wiſdome, if we can hold vs to Ieſus Chriſt, & to the things which his doctrine teacheth vs. But herein we ſee how the wretched world gaddeth vp & downe, euery man trotting after his own way, ſo as euery mans will is to go aſtray: & yet notwithſtanding we ſhield our ſelues with ignorance. When we haue ſhut our eyes after ẏ faſhion againſt ẏ light, when we haue ſtopped our eares againſt ẏ doctrin of ſaluation, whē we haue turned our backs vpon him at his ſhewing of his face, & whē we haue ſpit at him for his reaching of hand vnto vs: yet we fall ſtil to excuſing of our ſelues by ignorance. So then the thing which we haue to remember here in this place, by Gods vpbraiding of men with their turning away from his word when it is preached vnto them; is that their ſo doing is through a diueliſh ſtubbornes, & ẏ (euen by ẏ witnes of their own conſciēces) it is a worſhipping of gods which they haue not knowen. For our faith muſt not be vncerteine, it muſt not be an opinion or weening, but it muſt bring a ſure knowledge with it. And what maner of knowledge? Truely as in reſpect of our own wit & reaſon, if we intend to come vnto god, we muſt worſhip him ẇ al humilitie, & remēber that his ſecrets ſurmount our vnderſtāding. But yet here withall it behoueth vs to ſtande vppon ſo ſure a ground, euen by knowledge; as our owne conſciences may beare record of it, & wee bee able to 1.Iohn 3.2. ſay with S Iohn, we wote well ẏ we be ẏ children of God. Lo here what the true Religion is. It is not an vnaduiſed zeale, or a liking that men caſt to this thing or that: but a ſure knowen doctrine grounded vpon Gods trueth, wherethrough we be able to ſay ẏ it is he which hath ſpoken to vs, & ẏ he is a faithfull witneſſe of ẏ things ẏ are for our welfare & ſaluation And againe, whatſoeuer we alleage, wee ſhall alwayes abide conuicted of our malice. So that when wee haue once beene taught ẏ word of God, if wee afterwarde worſhip gods whom we haue not knowen, if we ſwarue aſide to any ſuperſtition, or if we continue not in ẏ pure ſimplicitie of ẏ holy ſcripture: ſurely we ſhal iuſtly be accuſed to haue had ſtrange Gods, & to haue bin forgers of them, as folke ẏ loue the vntrueth better than ẏ trueth. According wherunto S. Paul ſpeaking of all ſuch as obeyed not the Ro.1.25.28. Goſpel, ſaith it is good reaſon they ſhold be ſtriken with horrible blindnes, & that foraſmuch as they honored not the creator, it was meete that they ſhould become vnderlings to the creatures, ẏ is to ſay, to the things which they had dreamed in their own fond braine & fooliſh fancies. Now thē ſeeing ẏ our God hath taught vs; let vs learn to hold our ſelues at a ſtay to his word, & to vnderſtand in what maner he hath ſhewed himſelf vnto vs; & let vs benefite our ſelues by al the records which he giueth vs, & beware ẏ we wander not one way or other, ne followe not our owne leaſings. For there wilbe no excuſe for ſuch as would not be certified of God when he was readie to do it.

Now in the end Moſes addeth, *that when the people were come into the land of promiſe, they ſhoulde diuide their companie in two partes: the one halfe vpō mount Garizim, & the other halfe vpon mount Eball: & that they which ſhould bee vppon mount Garizim, ſhould pronounce the bleſsings; & that thoſe which ſhould be vpon mount Ebal, ſhould pronounce the curſes*, which thing wee ſee was done accordingly. For this commandement ſhalbee rehearſed yet againe in the 27. Chapter of this booke. And Io- Deut.27.12 & Ioſ.30.35 ſua in his eyghth Chapter declareth ẏ he had obeyed the cōmandement of Moſes. The effect of ẏ ſtorie is, that when ẏ people were entred into ẏ land, they ſhould meete with two mountaines, ẏ one called Hebal & ẏ other Garizim. Now god had commanded ẏ one part of ẏ people, namely certaine tribes, ſhold be on ẏ one ſide on mount Garizim; & ẏ the reſt of the tribes ſhould be vpō mount Hebal, & ẏ the Leuites ſhold ſtand in the middes of ẏ hoſt bearing the Ark of God, to ſhew ẏ God was chiefe ſouerein there, & that the Leuites were as witneſſes or ſureties to vndertake matters in ẏ behalf of the people, like as if there were two parties to make ſom ſolemne match or couenant, a notarie or regiſter is preſent to take an othe betwixt them: euen ſo God had ordeyned ẏ the people ſhoulde be there to heare & receiue ẏ doctrine of ſaluation, & ẏ they ſhould anſwere on their part, as in ẏ paſſing of ſom ſolemn contract; to ẏ end they might knowe vpon what condition God had choſen thē & preferred thē before al other nations of ẏ earth, as ſhalbe ſhewed hereafter in the foreſaid 27. Chapter. And what were ẏ bleſſings? They were a reherſal of ẏ ſame thing that God had ſpoken afore: namely, al ſuch as keepe my law ſhalbe bleſſed; Al ſuch as worſhip me with a pure conſcience ſhalbe bleſſed: all ſuch as hallow my name, ſhalbe bleſſed: al ſuch as obey their fathers & mothers, ſhalbee bleſſed: all ẏ liue chaſtly ſhalbe bleſſed: all ẏ abſtaine from deceit, extortion, & al maner of euil, ſhalbe bleſſed. God then on his parte promiſed bleſſing after ẏ maner. Hereunto the people anſwered, Amen, Amen: ẏ is to ſay, So be it: whereby they ratified ẏ which had been ſpoken by the mouth of God. Again, on ẏ contrarie part, ẏ curſes were vttered on mount Hebal in this wiſe: Curſed be he ẏ turneth aſide after ſtrange gods: Curſed be he ẏ diſhonoreth his father or his mother: Curſed be hee that offendeth in theft or in whoredom: Curſed be he ẏ performeth not all ẏ cōmandements conteined in this booke. Amen, Amen, ſaid ẏ people. When the curſes were vttered after ẏ faſhion, it behoueth euery man to anſwer Amē. And ſo ye ſee what is ſaid in this text.

Now let vs mark ẏ by that meanes god ment to touch ẏ people neerer to ẏ quicke, by their agreeing to ſuch a couenant. And the ſame belongeth vnto vs. For although wee haue not ẏ ſame ceremonie ẏ was obſerued at ẏ time, yet haue we ẏ trueth howſoeuer the world go: & whenſoeuer Gods word is preached vnto vs, although we receiue it not, yet ſhal it not fal to ẏ grounde, but it ſhal light vpō our heads ſpite of our teeth, & it ſhalbe an intolerable burthen to ſink vs down to ẏ bottom of hel. Therfore when we receiue gods word into our harts, let beware ẏ we like wel of it & ẏ we ratifie the promiſe of our ſaluatiō which he maketh vs. Nowe hee adopteth vs to be his children; and if we be his children we be alſo his heires. Therfore when we imbrace the preached word by faith & obedience, although our mouth ſpeake not a worde, yet doe wee confirme Gods truth to our ſaluation, according to this ſaying of S. Iohns, that as many as beleeue in the only Iohn 3.33. ſonne of God, haue ſet to their ſeales that God is true. Thus ye ſee howe the full meaſure of our ſaluation and of the promiſe is accompliſhed & hath his full effect & power, when we on our ſide do aunſwere rightly Amen. And although it be not ſpoken with the mouth, yet let the heart ſay it: for ẏ is the chiefe point. True it is that if there be faith in the heart, the mouth muſt needes agree vnto it alſo; according to this ſaying of the Pſal.116.10 & 2.Cor.4.13. Pſalme, I did beleeue, and therfore will I ſpeake, which ſaying, is alledged likewiſe by S. Paul to the Corinthians. But my ſpeaking at this time is of the ceremonie; namely ẏ although wee haue not a mount Garizim & a mount Heball among vs; although we aſſemble not together into one cōpanie, to ſeuer our ſelues into two hoſtes, and although there be not a viſible Arke among vs; yet is Gods once declaring therof inough for vs, & his once ſetting downe of a memoriall thereof before vs is ſufficient for vs, to make vs know ẏ ẏ ſame belongeth to vs at this day, & ẏ the preaching of the Goſpell vnto vs in the name of our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt, is all one as if wee confirmed God to be our father by our ſaying Amen. That is ẏ very meane wherby we be receiued to be his children, & wherby we be aſſured of the inheritance of the kingdom of heauen. For otherwiſe, how were it poſſible that we wretched creatures ſhould attaine to ſuch dignitie, as ẏ God ſhould vouchſafe to win vs by gentlenes, & vtter ẏ good loue that he beareth vs, & be willing to haue vs to be his, to the ende ẏ he might be owner of vs? Muſt it not needs be ẏ we be worſe than froward if we benefit not ourſelues by ſuch grace? Yes, & therfore let vs learn to anſwere Amen willingly, when our Lord behighteth vs his bleſſinges. For on the contrary part, although wee harden our hearts & ſhut our eyes, yea & grind our teeth at God as it were in rage & diſpite of him: yet muſt there follow an Amen therupō, which ſhall burn vs like a ſearing yron, wherby God wil ſhew ẏ his word is as a burning fire to conſume all thinges, ſo as we muſt needs feele ẏ inward ſcalding therof when God vttereth ẏ power of his word, by reaſon whereof we ſhalbe in continuall vnquietnes & torment for euer, if he ſet himſelfe againſt vs. Yet for all this ẏ faithfull muſt anſwere Amē, as well to the bleſſings as the curſings. Amen, by imbracing ẏ grace ẏ God offereth vs. Doth God offer himſelfe ſo vnto vs? Cōmeth he to ſeeke vs out when we be vtterly loſt & forlorne? Doth he come downe to theſe horrible miſeries wherein we be plundged? Well, then it is our duetie to go vnto him, and not to be ſo frowarde as to drawe back when he allureth vs ſo gently. Thus ye ſee how we muſt anſwere Amen to the bleſſings, by imbracing ẏ grace of the holy Ghoſt, ẏ we may be guided & gouerned by it, & made acceptable to our God, by faſhioning our life after the rule ẏ he hath giuen vs, in reſting vpon ẏ grace of our Lord Ieſus Chriſt, wherby he is reconciled vnto vs, & accepteth vs for righteous, inſomuch ẏ although we be ſinners, yet he receiueth vs for his ſonnes ſake, & couereth al our ſins & vices. After that ſort therfore muſt wee anſwere Amen, that our Lorde may performe all the free promiſes which he hath made vnto vs.

Alſo we muſt aunſwere Amen to ẏ curſes. For why? We haue ſuch a number of contrarieties in vs, as is pity to ſee. Although God haue giuen vs a good deſire to receiue his word, & ẏ we receiue it in deede; yet do we it not to the full. For wee drag our legges after vs; there is alwayes ſome gainſtriuing in vs; we haue ſtill ſome remnantes of our fleſh; & beſides that, there is too too much ſtubbornes in vs, ſo as we be like aſſes ẏ haue need to be driuen forwarde by force. And therefore I ſayd ẏ we muſt anſwere Amen to ẏ curſes. When we ſee ẏ God will haue vs to paſſe through ẏ afflictions of this worlde, & through the cares ẏ are vpon earth: Let thē prouoke vs to repaire vnto him, and let vs aſſure ourſelues ẏ oftentimes his cauſing of vs to feele his curſe, is for our benefit. Moreouer let vs conſider thus with ourſelues: Alas, if God curſe all ſuch as tranſgreſſe his comādementes; what ſhall become of me? Now then let euerie of vs finde ſuch fault with himſelfe, as we may patiently indure whatſoeuer it pleaſeth God to lay vpon vs in this preſent life. Thus our pronouncing of the curſes muſt be to ẏ end that they light not vpō vs. For they ẏ quicken vp thēſelues after ẏ maner, ſhalbe ſet free from the curſes. 1.Cor.11.31 And let vs mark by the way, ẏ when we ſhall not haue performed all ẏ cōmandements of the lawe, we haue a remedie for it in our Lord Ieſus Chriſt, for otherwiſe we ſhold be accurſed euerychone of vs, according to this alegation of ſaint Pauls to the Galathians: Curſed are they ẏ per- Gal.3.10. forme not the whole Lawe to the full. Whereupō he concludeth, ẏ all men are curſed of God as in reſpect of their owne workes, and ẏ if we will be iuſtified by our owne deſertes, we muſt go ſeeke our payment in hell. For God hath ſhot out one thunderbolt againſt all mankinde, in ſaying, Cur- Deut.27.26. ſed be all they ẏ perform not the whole Law. But no man performeth it. Euen ẏ holieſt men in the world are indebted in ẏ behalfe. So then S. Paul rightly concludeth, ẏ we be all accurſed in ourſelues. But yet he ſendeth vs to our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt, & telleth vs ẏ foraſmuch as he is giuen vnto vs, we be ſet free from ẏ rigor of the Law: ſo ẏ whereas God as now doth teach vs his will, telling vs what way we ſhould walke, & ſetting before vs both his promiſes & his threatnings: although our liues be ſtill vnperfect, yet wil he not ceaſe to accept vs, ſo wee haue recourſe to him which hath ſupplied our want. For our Lord Ieſus Chriſt hath made ſuch ſatisfaction by ẏ ſacrifice of his death; ẏ God accepteth it in full paymēt to couer al our faults. Therfore let vs repaire thither, & let vs ſo plundge ourſelues in it, as we may be clenſed & ſcoured frō al our ſpots. Which thing will come to paſſe, if we learne to walke in humilitie and feare before our God,& abuſe not his goodneſſe & patience. For ẏ is the meane to make vs acceptable vnto him,ſo as his curſes ſhal be turned frõ our heads,& his grace & bleſſing ſo increaſed after he hath once vttered the ſame, as it ſhal growe cõtinually in vs,vntil it be come to the full perfection.

Nowe let vs kneele downe in the preſence of our good God with acknowledgement of our faults, praying him &c.

On Saturday the xxviij. of September. 1555.

The Lxxx Sermon, which is the firſt vpon the twelfth Chapter.

THeſe are the ordinaunces and Lawes which yee ſhal keepe, that yee may doe them in the Lande which the Lord God of thy fathers hath giuen thee to poſſeſſe,all the dayes which thou ſhalt liue vpon the earth.

2 Ye ſhall deſtroy all the places wherein the people, whom yee ſhal conquere haue ſerued their gods,whether it be vpon high mountaines, or vpon the hils, or vnder any maner of greene trees.

3 Alſo yee ſhall digge downe their Altars,and breake their images,and burne their woods with fire. Yee ſhall deſtroy the images of their gods, and diſpatch the names of them out of that place.

4 Yee ſhall not deale ſo with the Lord your God:

5 But looke what place ſoeuer the Lord your God ſhal chooſe out of al your tribes to ſet his name in and to dwel in: there ſhall yee ſeeke him,and thither ſhall yee reſorte.

WHeras Moſes exhorteth ẏ people here againe to obſerue the ordinances & ſtatutes of ẏ law, and to do thẽ;it doth vs to vnderſtand, ẏ if we be not diligẽt in following Gods will,we ſhal ſoone be carried away vnto wickednes one way or other.For it falleth out vpon vs ẏ we do cõmit many faults through ouerſight, we ſtumble at euery turning of a hand becauſe ẏ deuill doth eaſily beguile vs;& we haue no great wit or diſcretion in vs,our mind is ful of fondnes,& conſequẽtly vnconſtant : & therfore if we be not very diligent in obeying our God:we ſhall neuer obſerue his law as we ought to do.Now thẽ let vs beware ẏ we ſet our minds earneſtly to ẏ ordering of our life. For if we bethinke vs not aduiſedly of it, ne haue any great care of it;we ſhal not fail to do amiſſe ſome way or other. That is ẏ thing which we haue to gather vpon this place where Moſes ſaith ẏ we muſt not only put gods cõmandemẽts in execution,but alſo *keepe thẽ to do them.* As if he ſhould ſay,ẏ if men holde not themſelues well in awe; if they bee not very watchfull in following their duety, & if they be not well aduiſed & earneſt in their doings: by & by they ſlip away, and there is no ſtedines in them;and although there haue bin ſome good zeale in them, yet it vaniſheth away out of hande.

And he ſayth expreſly that *they be the ſtatutes and ordinances of the God of their fathers.* Which ſerueth to the better confirming of the matter ẏ we haue ſeene heereto fore:which is,that the Land of Chanaã was giuen thẽ by vertue of the couenant and promiſe ẏ was made before they were borne. The Iewes then are put in minde in this place to thinke thẽſelues beholden to Gods free beſtowed goodnes,for their promiſed inheritãce foraſmuch as they coulde not boaſt of it as of a cõqueſt, becauſe God had aſſigned it to their fathers before they were borne. Neuertheleſſe his purpoſe is alſo to confirme them in the doctrine of the Law, to the end they might knowe ẏ they worſhipped not a new god,or a god lately found out:but the ſame God which had bin reueiled to their fathers in all ages afore, & therfore he telleth them they were leſſe to be excuſed, if they held thẽ not to the religion ẏ had bin knowen in all times afore, at leaſtwiſe among their fore fathers. For we heare what God vpbraydeth them withall by his prophet Ieremie. Go ſeeke all the worlde about(ſaith he)go ouer ẏ ſea,& ſee if the Ier.2.10.11. heathen nations haue changed their gods, and yet they be but idols.Sith you ſee ſuch ſtedfaſtnes & conſtancie in the infidels, ẏ they be not variable in their ſuperſtitions, but rather as it were wedded & wilfully giuẽ ouer to thẽ:what a ſhame will it be to you to haue forſaken the liuing God when ye haue knowen him,& not to continue in his word?Then let vs marke wel in this text,that Gods vpbraiding of ẏ Iewes with his manifeſting of himſelf vnto thẽ &to their fathers ſo long time aforehand,is to ẏ ende they ſhould be the more worthy to be condemned, if they hild not them ſelues to the doctrine which had bin ſo well warranted vnto thẽ. But let vs marke alſo ẏ it is not inough for vs ẏ our forefathers held ſome kind of religion:but we muſt alſo ſee ẏ the ſame be alowable. And whereas it is ſayd here, ẏ their forefathers knew the ſame God which had ſetforth his Law to thẽ at ẏ time: the knowledge or opinion which the fathers had,is not ẏ chief ground that we ought to ſtand vpon; for God preſuppoſeth ẏ he had ſo certified thẽ of his word, as they were not in any doubt at all.Therfore firſt let vs learn to knowe what our Lord declareth vnto vs; and then let vs afterward go to antiquitie. And it is certaine that if the religion be true,& good, it is not new nor deuiſed in our time;but our repaire muſt be to the things ẏ are witneſſed in the Law and ẏ prophets. There we ſhal ſee how God hath gathered his Church, how he hath gouerned it, & how it hath alwayes had his truth, euen from the beginning of the world. In dede the number of people is but ſmall ẏ haue followed godlineſſe: the reſt haue turned away after their owne inuẽtions. Howbeit, we muſt not haue an eye to the world, but let it ſuffice vs ẏ god hath had a church of his owne in all ages, whereunto it behoueth vs to be ioyned & to become one ẇ it. For although the Church haue bin deſpiſed of the worlde; yet hath it alwayes bin precious in Gods ſight. And we ſee the like ſtill at this day. True it is that the moſt part of ſuch as boaſt thẽſelues to be beleeuers, are doted with leaſinges, errours & abuſes: but wee muſt let thẽ alone, & ſubmit ourſelues to the truth ẏ God telleth vs, knitting ourſelues in vnity of faith & concord with the faithfull which are contented to followe whatſoeuer God hath ſhewed thẽ. Thus ye ſee ẏ the way for vs to put this text in vre where the God of the fathers is ſpokẽ of, is ẏ it is not ynough for vs to haue ſom antiquitie as the papiſts alledge, ſaying; we haue bin a long time in poſſeſſion: but we muſt be well groũded vpõ certainty, ſo as we know ẏ the God whom we worſhip is not an idoll. When a man knowes ẏ once, then let him proceede to the cõſent & agreement of faith, according to our beleef wherby we confes ẏ there is but one almightie god, which is ẏ father of our lord Ieſus Chriſt, and by the ſame reaſõ our father too; ẏ our Lord Ieſus Chriſt is the redeemer that hath appeared vnto vs; that we be ſanctified by the holy Ghoſt, and alſo ẏ we can beare record of the maieſty of our God, at leaſtwiſe according to his vttering of himſelfe vnto vs by his holy ſcriptures. Which done, then let vs adde, ẏ we beleeue the holy catholike Church, and that there is a cõmunion of Saincts, ſo as there is but one body. But yet muſt God be faine to ſhewe him ſelfe to vs to be the almighty: that he is ẏ ſame which made both heauen & earth, that he is the ſame at whoſe hande we muſt hope for ſaluation; ẏ he is able to maintaine his owne glory, ſo as all the thinges ẏ men haue deuiſed of their owne braine are but lies. That is the firſt end whereat we muſt begin. And afterward we muſt agree with the holy patriarks, Apoſtles, & all the faithfull that haue liued ſince the worlde began. We muſt haue ẏ indiſſoluble band of faith, & al muſt come to this point, namely that they be grounded vpon the certaine and vnfallible truth. As for example, The Iewes that came after, had the fathers as well as they, of whom alſo they made thẽſelues a ſheelde. but God did vtterly miſlike their ſo doing, according to this ſaying of the prophet Ezechiel; Walk not

Ezech.20.18 after the righteouſnes of your forefathers. At the firſt bluſh here ſeemeth to be ſome cõtrarity. For in this ſame place it is ſayd, Worſhip ye the God of your fathers, ſtick to him, & beware ye change not your religion. And there ẏ prophet Ezechiel ſayth contrariwiſe, beware that ye follow not ẏ deuotion of your fathers. Yea verily: for there were two ſortes of fathers among the Iewes: the one was Abraham, & the holy Patriarkes & Prophetes, and ſuch as knewe the liuing God, & ſerued him in all pureneſſe: thoſe it behoued the Iewes to rule thẽſelues by. And in ẏ reſpect doth Moſes ſay now vnto them, beware ẏ ye turne not away from the God of your fathers, but cõtinue ſtill in their faith. Beſides this, they had other fathers alſo, which were backeſliders, & frowarde, and had corrupted the Lawe, & made a minglemangle of it with all the ſuperſtitions of the heathen. In reſpect of this it is ſaid, beware ye folow not your fathers: for they were frowarde & falſeharted towardes God. In the ſame taking is the world at this day. The Papiſtes alledge their fathers. But what? Are not the Apoſtles the true fathers of the chriſtian Church? Yes, but the papiſtes will not heare them ſpeake, nor any other that haue ſtabliſhed ſuch order in the Church as God cõmanded. But they haue their baſtardefathers like themſelues, which being a misbegottẽ generation, they take Monkes & old dotterelles for their fathers. Againe, when they alledge any of the auncient doctors, if there be any folly or ſuperſtitiõ in their writings, they can skill to cull it out euery whit: but as for the good, they caſt ẏ a great way off. Now then let vs beware of ſuch maner of fathership, & let vs vſe diſcretiõ in choſing out ẏ true fathers, & let vs put ẏ in vre which Paul ſpeakes of where he ſayth ẏ all fatherhood Eph.3.15. dependeth vpon God and vpon our Lord Ieſus Chriſt. Thither (ſay I) muſt we refer our fatherhood, if we wil haue good fathers; ſo as God may be the chiefe father of them all, & they giue record ẏ they be his ſonnes, ẏ they may beget vs by the vncorruptible ſeede of his word: or els there wilbe nothing but vtter confuſion. Thus ye ſee what we haue to remember vpon that ſaying.

Now heretofore Moſes addeth further, ẏ the Iewes muſt not ſerue God at the firſt, and afterward become cold: but ẏ they muſt perſeuere in it all the time of their life. And after ẏ maner will God be honoured of vs. For he taketh vs not to hyre for certain dayes, & then to let vs go, or to giue vs leaue to depart at the ende of our terme: he taketh vs for life & death. And it is good reaſon, as S. Paul ſheweth vs where he ſayth ẏ our Lord Ieſus died & roſe again to reigne both ouer Rom.14.9. the quicke & the dead. Though there were none other reſpect than this, were it not ynough? Behold, ẏ ſon of God which bought vs by his death and paſſion, is riſen againe immediatly: & is it not meete then ẏ we ſhold giue our ſelues to him & to God his father, and ẏ we ſhould be wholly dedicated vnto him, & that we ſhould both indeuor to ſerue him as long as we liue vpon ẏ earth, and alſo ẏ our death ſhould be as a ſacrifice & offering vnto him, to ſhewe ourſelues obedient to him in all points? Yes: & therefore let vs marke well, ẏ we muſt not doe it, as it were in a pang, as a number of folke do, who are very whot in gods ſeruice for a two or three dayes, and afterward their mind is altered, & their deuotion is quite gone, & they ſhew full well ẏ there was no zeale in thẽ. But let vs alwayes beare in mind to ſerue God as long as we liue. And therewithall let vs alſo bethinke vs of ẏ which is ſet downe heere, where Moſes ſpeaketh yet againe of the heritage that had bin promiſed to ẏ Iewes. For ſeeing that our Lord doth daily put vs in mind of his grace: it is good reaſon ẏ wee ſhould plucke vp a good corage to honour him, & gather new ſtrength to ſay, foraſmuch as I haue liued out this day in the world, & haue ſerued God this morning, ſeeing ẏ I perceiue he cõtinueth his goodnes ſtil towards me, yea, & increaſeth it: is it not reaſon that my zeale & mine affection to ſerue him ſhould be ẏ more kindled, and ẏ my hope ſhold not be abated? That is the thing which Moſes ment in ſaying, Ye ſhall poſſeſſe ẏ land: & as long as ye poſſeſſe it ye ſhal haue a faire mirrour before your eyes to ſhewe you how your God calleth you to him, & mainteineth you in the poſſeſſion of the benefit which he hath once beſtowed vpon you.

And therefore let vs marke, ẏ we deſerue well to be bereft of the grace ẏ God ſhal haue granted vs, if we acknowledge it not toward him, but forget it, & apply it to another end than he ment it. Deut.11.21. It hath bin ſayde heretofore ẏ the Iewes ſhould poſſeſſe the land, as long as ẏ heauen hung ouer the earth. And yet we ſee how they be put out of it, inſomuch ẏ at this day they poſſeſſe not any part of it, but wander abroad in the world, & are hunted to & fro. And what is ẏ cauſe therof? Surely God had mainteined them in the inheritance which he had promiſed thẽ, if they had not turned away frõ him after ẏ faſhion. Pſal.132.14 For it was not without cauſe, that ẏ land was called Gods reſtingplace. As if he had ſaid, ẏ when al the reſidue of the worlde were toſſed & turmoyled, ẏ Iewes ſhold dwel at eaſe & reſt in ẏ land, ſo as if any mã made war vpon them & troubled them, yet God wold ſtabliſh thẽ there. Yea but they haue brokẽ couenant ẇ him. And therfore at this day (as we ſee) they be baniſhed frõ reſting in any place of the whole world. They be as vagabonds euerie where. And what is the cauſe of it but their own vnthankfulnes in ẏ they haue forſaken gods promiſe through their vnbeleefe and ſtubborneſſe, and haue vtterly diſanulled it to the vttermoſt of their power? Therefore let vs bethinke ourſelues. Hebr.11.13 16. True it is ẏ we muſt be as wayfarers in this world, if we wilbe heires of heauen, as ẏ Apoſtle telleth vs. But howſoeuer the caſe ſtand, if we intend to be bleſſed of our God, & to feele ẏ he is a good defence for vs: let vs hold vs in obedience & ſubiectiõ to him. Otherwiſe let vs aſſure ourſelues, ẏ although al ẏ whole world hold with vs, yet we ſhall finde ourſelues ſo perſecuted and purſued, as we ſhall finde no reſt any where. If a faithful man walke in the feare of God, although he be perſecuted & tormented; yet may hee reſt vpon this point to ſay, yet is God my protector; and he will call vpon him, & by his calling vpon him he ſhall finde cauſe of cõfort. But on ẏ contrarie part, if an vnbeleeuer play ẏ rebell againſt God, although he haue peace to the worldward, and be in fauor of men, yea & alſo dreaded: yet ſhall he euer be vnquiet & agaſt. And the reaſon is, becauſe he ſeketh not to be at peace with God. So then let vs marke that whereas Moſes exhorteth the people heere to ſerue God all their life long; it is to the end wee knowing ẏ God renues his mercie and goodnes daily toward vs; ſhould be inflamed to ſerue him with ẏ greater corage, & that frõ day to day we ſhold always continue therin as though we were at reſt. We ſee ẏ euen ſleepe ſetteth a man in good plight againe, ſo ẏ when he hath wearyed himſelfe with walking or working, he becommeth ready and diſpoſed to returne to his labour againe the next morning. Euen ſo muſt we take corage at our Lords incoraging of vs, and at his calling of vs vnto him, ſo as it may appeare that we be willing and readie to follow him.

But now let vs come to that which Moſes hath ſet down concerning the Lords ordinances and ſtatutes. The firſt cõmandement ẏ he giueth the Iewes, is that when they be come into the Land which they were to poſſeſſe for their inheritãce *they ſhoulde beate downe all the altars of the heathen, breake and deface their ydolles, burne all the groues where they had vſed their ſuperſtitions, and vtterly root out the remembrance of them.* Here we ſee again how hatefull a thing ydolatrie is vnto God, and that he can not abide ẏ his ſeruice ſhould in any wiſe be corrupted. Let vs marke I ſay, that God accepteth not any ſeruice at our hands, when it is mingled with any abuſe or folly of our owne heades: but as we muſt ſerue him onely, ſo muſt we ſerue him not after our owne faſhion, but according to his owne wil, cõmandement & allowance. Wherein we ſee how a great number of ignorant wretches beguile themſelues nowadayes: For hauing proteſted that their intent is to ſerue ẏ only one God, they put to many patches of their owne, bearing themſelues in hand that ẏ is not amiſſe. And why? So long as mine indeuour be to ſerue God ſay they, & that I do it of a good intent; why ſhold it be condemned? Yea, but we heare how our God can not away with any companion, as he declareth euerywhere; and Eſa.42.8. euen in this text we be taught the ſame expreſly ynough: for God will haue all remembrance of ydols vtterly rooted out. For why? As long as ydols haue their vſe; God is defaced & ouercouered that he can not be diſcerned, and likewiſe all things in the world are confounded by it. Therfore it is all one as if mẽ ſhold go about to ſpoile him of his maieſtie & glory. And euen ẏ papiſts themſelues auow the ſame thing in their cõmon byword, when they ſay that God is not knowen for the Apoſtles. And it was Gods will that they ſhould make a common prouerbe of it, to ſhewe that they cut their owne throtes with their own knife, in that they can alleadge no excuſe at the latter day. For they ſay they ment it not: no, but will not their prouerbe proue them liers? Yes: for their owne wordes ſhall iudge them. Howſoeuer they fare, let vs note that if Gods ſeruice be not kept in the owne pureneſſe, all is marde: ſo that although men worſhip him neuer ſo much, yet hee miſliketh it, as wee ſee by his ſpeaking thereof in his prophete Ezechiell. Ezec.20.39 Goe ſerue your owne Gods ſayth he, for I haue done with you. As if hee ſhould ſay; belong altogether to the deuill if you will: Seeing that ye hold ye not all wholly to me, but that I muſt haue companions ioyned with me, and ye make me but as one of the common ſort, ſo as I muſt bee as good as no body: I renounce you and giue you ouer yͭ ye may goe to the deuill; for I will haue no more to doe with you. So then let vs marke well, that to ſerue our God aright, wee muſt yeelde ſuch preheminence to his maieſtie, as to depende all wholly vppon his worde and doctrine, without adding any thing to that which hee commaundeth, as ſhall be declared more at length in the next Lecture.

Nowe furthermore, whereas it is ſayde *that the* [*very*] *remembraunce of ydolles muſt be rooted out*: it is to the end that folke ſhould be the better aduiſed. Truely God ſheweth vs on the one ſide (as I haue ſayde) howe greatly he hateth all ydolatry, ſeeing hee willeth men to burne the woods & all that euer hath ſerued to the mainteinance thereof, inſomuch that hee will haue the very ſtones beaten to pouder, and the golde and ſiluer broken, ſo as all may be quite & cleane done away. Seeing that God doth ſo condemne the creatures which are good as in reſpect of thẽ ſelues, becauſe they haue beene inſtrumentes of ſuperſtition: thereby we ſee well that hee can in no wiſe away with ydolatrie. Beſides this hee hath alwayes reſpect to the frailetie of men: for as ſoone as we meete with any thing, by and by we be miſcarried: wee be euer ſtarting one way or other. And what is the cauſe? Naturally we be inclined to ydolatrie: and becauſe wee bee earthly and fleſhly; wee bee euer imagining of God ſome thing that ſeemeth good to ourſelues, by reaſon whereof wee turne him into ſundrie ſhapes. If we haue neuer ſo ſmall an occaſion, by and by we be drawen vnto euill. If a flye do but croſſe our eyes, we make an ydoll of it. We ſee then whereat God looked when hee gaue ſo ſtraite commaundement to beate downe the altars, to heawe downe the groues, to burne vp the woods, to breake the images, and to deſtroy the puppets vtterly. For had thoſe things continued ſtill among the Iewes; there woulde euer haue been ſome among them, which would haue giuen themſelues to the ſuperſtitions of the heathen. Tuſh, would they haue ſayd: what and if a man had deuotiõ to it? it is a hallowed thing: like as at this day, ſuch as haue beene nuſled in papiſtrie, are ſo held to it as long as they ſee their pelting traſh, that they can neuer winde themſelues out of it, though they would neuer ſo fain. If a man that hath beene long inured to the Maſſe doe ſee a chalice: his minde giues him ſtill that there is ſome holineſſe in it; whereas cleane contrariwiſe it is as filthie and ſtinking an infection as any can be, and yet notwithſtanding wee can not conceiue it. For why? As I ſayde afore, we be fleſhly by nature: and beſides that, Satan vſeth ſuch ſlight, that when he ſetteth ſuch thinges before our eyes to beguile vs with, we be ſnared by them out of hande; and therefore there is none other remedie, but to make cleane riddaunce of all ſuch thinges as may allure vs to ſuperſtition. Truely if their were puppettes among vs as are in the Popedome, it might be alleadged that they could not hurt vs as long as they were not worſhipped. In deed it is true that they of themſelues could not hurt vs: but lette vs looke into ourſelues, and wee ſhall finde ourſelues ſo weake, that wee ſhoulde be blinded immediatly by ſuch baggage, and it would turne vs away from Gods pure worde, inſomuch that if we had altars ſtill, we ſhould not knowe that the Lordes ſupper were miniſtred vnto vs to the intent wee ſhould be partakers of him, and inioy all his goods: but there woulde remaine I wote not what a wicked imagination of yͤ helliſh Sacrifice which is done in the popedome; namely of the Maſſe, wherein men thinke that Chriſt is offered there to GOD his father for the remiſſion of our ſinnes. And ſo there woulde alwayes remaine ſome wicked fancie ſtill in our heade. That is the cauſe why God hath ſo ſtraitly commaunded to breake the ymages, deſtroy the altars, and burne vppe the woods or groues where ydolles haue beene ſerued and worſhipped. The Papiſts in theſe dayes replie that that commaundement was giuen but to the Iewes, becauſe they were giuen to ſuperſtition. Verily as who ſhoulde ſay that we were better diſpoſed noweadayes than they were. True it is that GOD giueth not this commaundement to vs as touching the Ceremonie of burning all thinges wherewith ydolles haue beene ſerued: but yet for all that, his will is that we ſhould make cleane riddaunce of all thinges that may turne vs from the pure religion. If it were of neceſſitie that all thinges ſhoulde bee doone away wherewith ydolles haue beene worſhipped; this temple ſhoulde not nowe ſtande to haue the name of GOD preached in it. It hath beene a brothelhouſe of Satans, but nowe muſt wee apply it to good vſe, by taking away the trumperie that hath reigned in it, which was quite contrarie to Gods worde. But howſoeuer the worlde goe, if we looke well vppon our infirmitie, wee ſhall finde that this leſſon belongeth to vs at this day, namely that all remembraunce of ydolles is to bee vtterly raſed out. And nowe inſomuch as the maladie of ſuperſtition is ſo rooted in vs, there is none other remedie for it, but to take away all obiectes that may moue vs thereunto, that the deuill may haue no more any meanes to intangle vs in his nettes which hee layeth for vs: but that wee may knowe ſimply after what manner God wilbe worſhipped and ſerued.

Alſo we may gather further vppon this text, howe mad men bee in their ſuperſtitions, accordingly as the prophetes doe ſpeake thereof. For they vſe ſuch ſimilitudes as theſe; namely that men not onely reſemble ſuch folke as are carried away with fonde loue, and haue loſt both honeſtie, witte, and countenaunce: but alſo reſemble horſes that ney after Mares, and ſuch other brute beaſtes. Ier.5.8. Yee ſee then after what manner the wretched Idolaters are carried away in their ſuperſtitions. And this is declared vnto vs, in that wee heare him ſpeaking of *woods of high growth*, as men terme them, and *of Mountaines and Hilles*. For there was not that odde nooke wherein the Iewes hadde not ſome peculiar deuotion; after which manner we ſee howe our ydolaters alſo haue poyſoned the fountaynes, Woods and Hilles with the filthineſſe of their ſuperſtitions and charmes. Whereſoeuer was any notable thing, by and by there was reared ſome Temple, or there was ſome chappell builded, and all to worſhippe ſome ydol in. There is neuer any ende or meaſure when men take leaue after that faſhion to worſhippe GOD after their owne liking. And foraſmuch as wee ſee that, wee ought to brydle our ſelues the more, that we attempt not any thing without the warrant of Gods worde. For if we hold not ourſelues within our bounds, and as it were tye our ſelues ſimplye to that which GOD hath commaunded: it can not bee but that Sathan ſhall leade vs out of the way, ſo as there will be horrible confuſion in our caſe.

The firſt reaſon then is, that ſuch as will needes ſerue GOD after their owne fancie, doe alwayes goe into ſuch a dungeon as they can neuer gette out of againe, and they fall continually from one ſuperſtition to an other. Marke that for one point. And on the other ſide we ſee howe greatly it will bee to our condemnation, that we can not finde in our heartes to dedicate our liues vnto GOD, ſeeing that the ydolaters are ſo carried away by their fooliſhe fancies, that they haue neuer doone with them, nor can neuer thinke themſelues ſuperſtitious ynough. Therefore if we for our parte ſeeke not to keepe ourſelues in obedience to our GOD, what will become of vs? For God hath layde ſuch a yoke vpon our neckes, as is gentle ynough. He hath an eye to our infirmitie, hee giueth vs ſuch ſtrength as he knoweth to be meete for vs, hee beareth with vs as gently as may bee. And yet for all this, hee can not compaſſe vs, wee bee ſo nice as is pittie to ſee. Wee fall to complayning and ſay; Alas, GOD pincheth vs too ſore. And if wee doe him but halfe ſeruice, yea or but the hundreth parte of our duetie, wee thinke hee ought to holde himſelfe contented with it: whereas in the meane while the ydolaters doe martyre themſelues out of meaſure, they indure after a ſorte the peines of damned ſoules, and they are euer readie to increaſe their ſuperſtitions.

Matt.11.30.

Wherefore let vs looke well to ourſelues; and ſeeing it is not lawefull for vs to attempt any thing beyonde Gods will; but it behoueth vs to knowe what he requireth of vs, and to ſubmitte our ſelues wholely vnto him: lette vs be gentle and meeke minded to beare the yoke patiently which GOD layeth vppon vs, ſeeing it is neither harde nor greeuous (as I ſayde afore). And ſeeing that the ydolaters doe ſo followe their geere, and nothing can ſtay their trotting and gadding, but that they doe as it were flye to the ſeruing of their ydolles: Lette vs ſteppe forewarde alſo, ſith wee ſee that our Lorde ſheweth vs the way, yea and ſuch a way as though it be verie harde as in reſpect of our corruption, is neuertheleſſe verie playne and eaſie to vs, in reſpect of the grace of his holy ſpirit.

Heere is this moreouer, that Moſes ſayeth not heere, ẏ the Iewes ſhall deſtroy and breake the ydolles in all places whereſoeuer they become: but that GOD commaundeth them to doe it in the lande that is giuen them to inherite. Wherein we ſee that the holy Ghoſt commaundeth not all the faithfull in generall to pull downe and to breake all ydolles in the worlde: but onely where they themſelues haue authoritie. And it is a point well worth the noting. For if we be among ydolaters, it lyeth not in vs to ridde the Lande from the ſuperſtitions that reigne in it. What is to bee doone then? Euerie man muſt reforme himſelfe in his owne heart, ſo as all ydolles may be thruſt out from thence. When I ſee Gods ſeruice corrupted any where, I muſt forbeare to haunt that place or to communicate in companie with thoſe ydolaters, I muſt cutte off all the wicked affections that are in my fleſhe, and I muſt ſhew moreouer that I am not minded to forſake my GOD, nor to falſifie the faith that I haue plighted vnto him by defiling my ſelfe with the ydolatries that are about mee. Therefore euerie man muſt firſt and formoſt reforme his owne heart, and ſecondly ſeparate himſelfe from all things that may defile him. And that is becauſe GOD hath giuen vs a charge of our owne perſons, and made vs as it were keepers of his temples, to the intent that euery of vs ſhoulde looke narrowly to ourſelues. That is a thing which it behoueth vs to doe when wee be in the countrey of Idolaters. Beſides this, euerie man muſt purge and clenſe his owne houſe from all filthineſſe. So as if a man be a houſholder, hee muſt looke well about him that he hold well his children and ſeruauntes in the feare of GOD and in the pureneſſe of religion. For if a man ſuffer his houſe to be defiled, and all thinges there to goe to hauocke: he ſhalbe ſure to make account thereof to God. Not that a man can holde his wife and ſeruants continually tyed to his ſleeue to turne them to the chriſtian faith when he lyſteth: but my meaning is, that he muſt not ſuffer any ſuperſtition or ydolatrie. For why? Seeing that GOD hath giuen him ſoueraigntie in his owne houſe; it behoueth him to deale in ſuch wiſe as GOD bee honoured there, and as no filthineſſe be mingled with the pure religion, but that all be ridde quite and cleane away. But as for Kinges, Princes, and Magiſtrates, which haue power and authoritie, they muſt roote out all ſuperſtition and ydolatrie. And ſeeing that GOD hath armed them with the ſworde: it behoueth them to vſe it in that behalfe, ſo as they doe not in any wiſe ſuffer or giue leaue, that there be anie vncleanneſſe to greeue GOD withall, or to aboliſh or deface his ſeruice. Thoſe are ẏ thinges which we haue to marke vpon this text of Moſeſes. And therefore to be ſhort, let vs remember that hee commaundeth euery of vs to keepe cleane his owne

body

1.Cor.6.19. 20.

body and ſoule. For why? God hath laide ſuch a charge vppon vs, that he will haue vs to be the Temples of his holy Ghoſt: and therefore hee will haue euerie of vs to keep his bodie as cleane as can bee. Nowe then let vs bee carefull to driue al idolatrie farre from vs, and not to meddle with it in any wiſe. And agayne, let euerie of vs haue an eye to his houſeholde, that there bee no infection in it to mar the ſeruice of God. And thirdly let thoſe that are in eſtate of cheefe ſouereintie; as kinges, Princes and magiſtrates, let them I ſay conſider, that ſith the Lord hath giuen them authoritie and power, if they ſuffer his ſeruice to bee defaced; they ſhall bee called to account for it. For it is ſaide that when thou art come into the lande: thou muſt driue out al Idolatrie, and vtterly deface whatſoeuer hath ſerued to any ſuperſtition.

And in ſpeaking after that manner, Moſes ſheweth that the putting away of idols is not all that wee haue to doe: but that the cheefe point is the aduauncing, reſtoring and ſtabliſhing of Gods pure ſeruice. And that is well worthie to be noted. For wee ſhall ſee a great number nowadayes, which can wel enough mocke at the follies of the Pope, & at the abuſes which reigne vnder his tyrannie. They dare well enough eat fleſhe vpon frydayes, and they make no great account of Lent & Saints euens, or of the taking of holy water, or of kiſſing of Relikes, or of gadding on Pilgrimage, or of anie other ſuch petie traſhe. They haue no great deuotion to yͤ maſſe, or to Shrift, neither paſſe they for the deade, or for the ſinging [of diriges and ſuch other paltrie] for ſuch as are deceaſed. Wee ſhall ſee a great number that can well enough deſpiſe all the ſuperſtitions of the Popedome, yea and euen laugh them to ſkorne and vtterly condemn thē. But what? There is no feare of God, there is no Religion in them. Surely it were much better for them to haue gone on ſtill like bruite beaſtes in their ignorance, than by ſuch contempte to fall to ruſhing againſt Gods Maieſtie like wilde beaſtes, and not to perceiue that there is a God which reigneth ouer the whole worlde. Then doeth it not greatly boote to haue aboliſhed Idols, except the true religion bee ſet vp in the ſteede of it: Like as when a houſe is builded amiſſe, if it be ſaide to bee nothing worth, or that there be many faultes in it; it ſhall be wel done to pull it downe againe, whereas notwithſtanding if it were let alone in the ſame plight, ſo as a man had leuer to haue ſome Hoggeſcote to lodge in; yet for all the ilfauoredneſſe and faultineſſe of it, it would ſerue his turne after a ſorte being let ſtande ſtill: but if it were pulled downe and raſed to the grounde and none other builded vp in ſteede thereof, the pulling downe of it were to no purpoſe at al.

Ier.4.4.

Let vs marke then that here Moſes deliuereth vs a perfecte doctrine which conſiſteth of two rules: Namely that wee worſhip our GOD purely; and moreouer that all ſuperſtitions bee caſt downe, ſo as nothing may hinder the worſhipping of God according to his worthineſſe, but that men may haue an eye to him alone, & holde themſelues alonely to his Maieſtie. And firſt he ſpeaketh of the aboliſhing of al ſuperſtitions. Why ſo? For if a man intende to til & ſow a feelde, if the ſame bee full of bryers, thornes, and noyſome weedes, he muſt firſt and foremoſt cleanſe yͤ ground, or elſe he muſt breake it vp wͭ yͤ plough to kil wicked weedes before he lay his ſeede into it. Euen ſo muſt all corruptions be taken from among vs, ere we can giue our ſelues ouer to the ſeruing of God. Well may it be preached vnto vs that there is but one God whome we ought to worſhippe: but if wee bee poſſeſſed aforehande with fond fancies or imaginations, we ſhall be neuer the better for it, but our minds ſhall euer be intangled. That is the cauſe why Moſes beginneth at that ende. But yet hee addeth further, that it is not inough to haue clenſed a peece of grounde, vnleſſe it be alſo tilled & ſowed, that it may bring forth fruite, for elſe it will continue barren ſtill. And what is a man the better then for his plucking vp of the buſhes and brambles that were in it afore? That is the thing which is ſhewed vs here. But firſt let vs marke, that it is but a flat mockerie, when men will needes ſet foorth Gods worde, without correcting of the vices that are contrarie to the right religion; after which manner there are a number to be founde noweadayes in the Popedome, which rowe betweene two ſtreames, of which ſorte are theſe hypocrites which haue perchaunce ſome taſte of the Goſpell, and can boaſt indeede of the preaching of Gods worde But howe is that? Whereas they ſee the wretched worlde as ſore blinded and beſotted as may be, ſo as nothing elſe is minded but idolatrie and ſuperſtition: yet they thinke it enough for them to ſay, there is but one God whome it behoueth vs to worſhippe. They dare not ſay that he onely is to be worſhipped: but let vs worſhip God, ſay they. And will not the Paynims ſay as much? Haue not the Papiſts alwayes ſayd the ſame? And yet when they haue ſaide, wee haue Ieſus Chriſt for our aduocate: it is ſeene neuertheleſſe, that they let him alone behinde them and run gadding after the patrons which the worlde hath deuiſed, and holde the wretched world at ſuch a bay, that (like a ſort of traytors to God and his Church) they make mē beleeue that it is not euill to be partakers of all the abhominations that are committed in it. But we ſee howe Gods meaning is cleane contrarie. For Moſes ſaith not onely, You ſhall ſerue the Lorde your God: but before hee come to that point, he ſaith, Ye ſhal beat downe the Altars, breake the images, burne the groues, and make cleane riddance of all that euer hath ſerued vnto wickedneſſe: euerie whit of it muſt be vtterly done away. And why. For had the people continued ſtill in ſuch infections: it had beene vnpoſſible that God ſhoulde haue beene worſhipped purely. Then it is not enough for a man to giue ſome taſt of Gods trueth: but if we ſee that Leaſinges haue borne ſwaye aforetimes; they muſt be cut off, men muſt crie out againſt them, men muſt be reformed, they muſt bee brought into the right way, and they muſt not bee ſuffered to ſtray ſo any more. But yet therewithall let vs alſo learne, that when men haue cryed out againſt ſuperſtitions, they muſt not ſtay there: but they muſt cheefly proceed to yͤ ſetting vp againe of Gods ſeruice, as Moſes ſpeaketh thereof. For the very cauſe why there are ſo many Epicures in the worlde nowadayes, and why there are ſo manie folke that reſemble ſwine and bruit beaſtes rather than men: is that they be contented to mocke at the fondneſſe and ignorance of the vnbeleeuers, and yet coulde neuer skill thẽſelues what it is to worſhippe GOD purely, and to ſticke to him, and to humble themſelues to his worde. And therefore it is meete that they ſhould be giuen vp to a reprobate ſenſe, & that GOD ſhould giue them the bridle, that they might no more haue any honeſtie, humanitie or aught elſe in them that is good. Wherfore let vs learne not onely to know that Papiſtes are miſerable & wretched creatures, and to condemne them in all their follies & ſuperſtitions: but alſo to be ready to goe vnto God when he calleth vs. And let vs vnderſtand that when he hath beene ſo gratious vnto vs as to teach vs the true religion and doctrine of his Goſpel; thereby he ſheweth vs that it is he onely whome wee ought to worſhip. Thus ye ſee what we haue to remember vntill the reſt may be laide forth more fully.

Now let vs kneele downe in the preſence of our GOD with acknowledgement of our faults, praying him to make vs feele thẽ the more liuely, that being caſt downe and as it were ouerwhelmed in our ſelues, wee may go ſeeke yͤ mercie which he hath promiſed vs for our Lord Ieſus Chriſtes ſake. And ſeeing he hath graunted vs the grace to put away all ſuperſtitions from among vs, let vs beſeech him that his ſeruice may be ſo ſet vp again, as he ſuffer vs not to become heatheniſhe, but that as he hath once ſanctified vs, ſo we may holde out in the ſame, and profit continually more and more therein, vntill wee haue finiſhed the courſe of this life. That it may pleaſe him to graunt this grace not onely to vs but alſo to all people and Nations of the earth &c.

On Wednesday the ij. of October. 1555.

The Lxxxj. Sermon, which is the ſecond vpon the twelfth Chapter.

3.4.5 But looke what place ſoeuer &c.

6 And thither ſhall yee bring your burntofferinges, and your ſacrifices, and your tithes, and the heaueofferings of your handes, and your vowes, and your freewillofferinges, and the firſtborne of your kine and ſheepe.

7 And there ſhall you eat before the Lorde your God, and be merrie both you and your houſehold in all things that you ſet your hande vnto, wherein the Lorde your God ſhall haue bleſſed you.

IN the Doctrine that I haue deliuered vnto you alreadie, there are two partes. The one is that God will haue all thinges vtterly rooted out wherewith Idols haue beene ſerued. And good reaſon hath hee ſo to doe, becauſe he ſeeth the frailtie of men: for if we haue neuer ſo ſmall an occaſion, by and by we be miſcaried. For Idolatrie is ſo rooted in our heartes, that wee haue neede as it were to plucke ourſelues from it by force: and what wil then become of vs, when we be drawen to it? Let vs marke wel therefore, that foraſmuch as we be inclined to ſuperſtition, if we intende to ſerue GOD, we muſt put away all things that may turne vs from the right way, & from the ſimplicitie which God commaundeth vs. And men cannot ſtand too much vpon their gard in that caſe. True it is that a number of mẽ do weene themſelues to be ſo ſtrong, yͭ although they be neuer ſomuch conuerſant among yͤ ſuperſtitions of the vnbeleeuers, yet they ſhal not be atteinted with them: But God is wiſer thã we. And therfore let vs remember the leſſon that he telleth vs: namely that we muſt ſhunne all the ſuperſtitions of the heathen and the misbeleeuers, or elſe his ſeruice will bee marred among vs by and by. But foraſmuch as I haue declared that part alreadie, I wil ſtand no longer vpon it.

Let vs proceed to that which Moſes addeth, namely *that mẽ muſt not deale ſo with God*: by which ſaying he meaneth, that the Iewes muſt not go about to honour the liuing GOD by building vp the altars, Chappels, or any other of all the filthie things again which they had beatẽ down. As if he ſhoulde ſay, GOD will not bee ſerued after the manner of Idols, and therefore regarde not what the heathen haue done, followe them not, neither faſhion yourſelues to their examples: but holde you to this one rule, of doing that which your God commaundeth you. And this is well worth the noting: for when we haue condemned Idolatrie, we ceaſe not for al that to imagine that God liketh well that we ſhoulde do yͤ ſame things in honor of him, which were done by the vnbeleeuers: and yͭ appeareth by the dealinges in the Popedome. After that the Goſpell had beene preached to the worlde, men fell to mingling of al maner of ſuperſtitiõs of yͤ heathẽ with the true ſeruice of God. And what was the cauſe thereof? The heathen had their Pilgrimages: and men knewe well it was a diueliſhe abuſe: neuertheleſſe they did not put them quite and cleane away, they did but onely chaunge them. In ſteede of going on pilgrimage to ſuch an Idol, they goe now to our Ladie of Laurette, to * the holy handekercher, to Saint Michael, to Saint Iames, and to viſite the holy Sepulchre.

It is a Relike in Rome wherin they lay yͤ picture of Chriſtes face is; after it was wiped therewith.

Men ſhould haue vtterly rooted out all yͤ things that had beene ſo brought in by Satan, and in ſteed thereof they did but change them. Wheras men ſaw that the heathen made great feaſts, and kept a great number of ſolemne holy dayes in honour of their Idols: O (quoth they) wee muſt no more doe ſoe, for that were a ſeruing of the diuell: but let euery pariſhe make a Church-holyday, to play, to daunce, and to feede in till they burſt againe, and all in the honour of God. Beſides this, let euery one haue their patron, and let them worſhippe him. And ſo in ſteade of the ſolemne feaſtes that were among the heathen, let others be brought in among vs. O ſirs (ſay they) theſe thinges are not doone any more in honour of the Idols; but in honour of Saint Martine. And then let them daunce and playe the drunkerdes, for all is well enough ſo it be done in the honour of God. Againe the heathen were wont to keepe a holy day which they called the feaſt of all Spirits: and we muſt chaunge yͤ word and haue the feaſt of all Soules. Moreouer the heathen had a Temple which was called the Temple of all goddes: and wee doe nowe call it the Church of all Saintes or all Hallowes. See what an act worthie of remembraunce and an Angelicall act the Pope thought hee did, as the Papiſtes can well skill to make their bragges. For lo (ſay they) there is a temple called the Temple of all the gods: but what? Wee haue but one God, and therefore it muſt not continue after that faſhion. Wel, we will chaunge the worde, and whereas the heathen had a Temple which they called the Temple of All their gods, we wil haue it the Church of all Hallowes, and we will haue a Churchholyday added to it. Again when they ſawe that the heathen had their ſacrifices: Needes muſt they alſo haue their Maſſes ſet vp in the roome of them. Moreouer perceiuing that the heathen had their waſhings, they alſo would needes haue their holywater. To be ſhort, whatſoeuer filth and infection was among the Infidels; the Papiſts tooke it to themſelues to keepe. And what was the cauſe thereof? Euen for want of taking heede to this text, wherein it is ſaide that whereas the Infidels haue many deuotions deuiſed of their owne braine; we muſt not couet to doe the like to our God, nor looke that way; but we muſt harken what he ſaith and commandeth. Were this ſaying of Moſeſes vnderſtoode; all the diueliſh deuiſes that haue reigned & doe reigne ſtill at this day in the Popedome, ſhoulde get them away to the bottome of hell. For we ſee here a generall condemnation, whereby GOD ſheweth that he hateth al ſuch things. And why? Becauſe he will not haue men to deale with him as the ignorant doe with their Idols. A thing may ſeeme faire to the worldwarde, & men may clap their hands at it: but behold God ſaith here, I wil not be ſerued after ſuch faſhiō, or ſuch maner, let not men preſume into my preſēce to deuiſe what they think good thēſelues. And if it be alleadged, yea, but ſhall ſuch a thing bee euil taken, when I doe it in the honour of God? Shal it be ſaid that I ſerue Idols, when I do ſuch a thing of a good intent, and all to ſerue God? Is it ſo great an euil that men ſhould cry out at it? No, no, men muſt hearken what God commandeth, and ground themſelues altogether therepon, ſo as they preſume not to adde any thing thereunto. We ſee then that the meaning of this text is, that wee muſt forget al the follies that haue beguiled vs, and not alledge cuſtome or continuance of time, but receiue the doctrine of the holy ſcripture like litle children. A yong childe will not ſay, thus and thus haue I beene taught; for he knoweth yet nothing at all: But he receiueth that which is put to him, and is the readier to learne, becauſe he is not inured aforehande with anie maner of miſteaching. But if a childe haue been miſtaught and nuſled in his fondnes: then if a man go about to amend him, O (ſayes he) I was taught ſo, and a man ſhal not be able to make him pronounce one ſyllable aright, nor to ſpeake one worde to any purpoſe. And why ſo? Bicauſe he hath bin trained by an Aſſe, who hath framed him to his owne faſhion, and hee hath learned yͤ right trick of him. After the ſame maner it is with a great number of folke that haue been brought vp in curſed poperie: alwayes they hold ſtil ſome relikes of it, ſaying, Yea ſir, but can ſuch a thing be euil? There is euer ſome replying againſt God. But as for vs, let vs practiſe yͤ which is ſaide in the foure & fortith Pſalme: My daughter, forget thine owne people and thy fathers houſe, and thy husband wil take pleaſure in thee.

Pſal.45.11. 12.

We know that in that place our ſpiritual marriage with Ieſus Chriſt is deſcribed vnder yͤ perſon of Salomon. And firſt of all we bee commaunded to forget all that euer is of our owne. For by our people and by our fathers houſe, is meant all that euer we haue of nature, all things that we haue loued afore, and al the pleaſures & delights wherewith we haue beene helde backe. Al theſe thinges muſt be thruſt vnder foote, or elſe the ſonne of God wil neuer like of vs, whoſe calling of vs to him is to make vs all one with himſelfe. Alſo we muſt put the ſame thing in vre which I haue alledged heretofore out of Sainte Peter: namely that we muſt be like newe borne babes.

1.Pet.2.2.

For when a child beginneth at his Apſie he is eaſie to be taught and ſuffereth himſelfe to be ouer ruled: euen ſo in al things, let vs learne this leſſō which God teacheth vs in his doctrine, & let al our wiſedome be to obey him. That is the thing which we haue to marke in this texte where it is ſaid, thou ſhalt not deale ſo with thy God: for God wil not be weighed in the balance nor ruled by yͤ meaſure of Idols; but wil haue mē to imbrace whatſoeuer he commandeth, and to reſt vpon it wout gainſaying or replying. For declaration hereof he ſaith, *Ye ſhal reſort to the place which hee ſhall haue choſen to put his name in, and to dwel in.* Which ſaying here is expounded ofſome tobee his habitation, that is to ſay, his ſanctuary or tabernacle. But all cōmeth to one end: Gods meaning is plain & vndoutful, namely yͭ whereas the heathen had ſet vp many Altars, builded many Chappels, and gone on many pilgrimages: the Iſraelites ſhoulde holde themſelues contented with the only ſanctuarie. Now if it were lawfull for men to bee ruled by their owne reaſon, yͤ Iewes might here haue pleaded in this wiſe againſt God, What, the countrie is great, and ſhall there be no Altar in no place of it but onely in one? There are diuerſe great Cities; and ſhall there be neuer a Temple in them for men to offer ſacrifice in and to doe their deuotions? There are a great number of countries bordering vpon it, [which doe otherwiſe;] and ſhall we in worſhipping GOD looke onely vnto heauen? Why ſhall there be no altar? It might ſeeme therefore that the Iewes had verie iuſt cauſe to refuſe this commaundement and to ſay wee will bee ſo deuout that wee will haue ſome ſigne or marke of Gods dwelling among vs and wee will worſhippe him, and doe ſolemne ſacrifices vnto him. But what? In this caſe men muſt bridle themſelues and holde their owne wits in captiuitie, ſo as they giue God leaue to ſpeake, and they themſelues holde their peace, without attempting to go anie further than Gods mouth permitteth them. Ye ſee then howe it is Gods will to humble his ſeruauntes by making them ſubiect to his word. Wherfore let vs learne that wee muſt not followe our owne ſway nor our owne imagination: but this ought to ſuffice vs, that our ſeruice be acceptable vnto God, by ordering of it according to his will: there is no other way but that.

And it is ſaid expreſſely *in the place which the euerlaſting, thy God ſhal chooſe*: as if he ſhold ſay, it is not in the choice of yͤ Iewes to appoint God a place or to ſay vnto him, here wil wee ſacrifice. Mẽ muſt not preſume ſo far. It belongeth to thy God to chooſe ſaith Moſes. To be ſhort hee will haue Gods authoritie to bee receiued and him onely to be the ruler of his people, ſo as he may command what he liſteth and be obeyed without gainſaying. Ye ſée then that the foundation of true religion is not to ſay, it ſeemeth ſo to me, I weene ſo, I would faine haue it ſo, it is a goodly thing: but to let God ſpeake, and to aſſure our ſelues that it is not for vs to doe any thing but yͭ which he alloweth. And ſo is meant by this ſaying
1.Sam.15.22 that obedience is more worth before him thã all maner of ſacrifice. And in verie deed can wee doe him any greater honor than to reſt vpon his worde, and ſuffer our ſelues to be gouerned by it, and to be as poore blinde folkes vntill hee haue lightened vs and ſhewed vs the way? Now as for thoſe that folow their owne deuotions, they bereaue GOD of his ſoueraintie and yeeld him no reuerence at al: therefore it is but a building in yͤ aire and an vtter confuſion. Wherefore let vs weigh wel this word chooſe, that we may be fully reſolued in our ſelues that none but God hath authoritie to ſet order how he ſhould be honoured and ſerued.

And he addeth yet further, *from out of al your tribes*. Here the people might bee tempted to a kind of ieloſie, for we know that men do willingly drawe things to themſelues, and that it is a greefe and a corſey vnto vs when others are preferred before vs. The ſame might bee alſo among the Iewes. The lande of Chanaan is diuided into twelue tribes, for the Tribe of Ioſeph made two, and the Leuites had no portion at al. But yet for all that, yee ſee there were twelue Tribes, which had euery one his portion to en- Deut.10.9. Ioſua.14.4
herite. Now GOD tolde them that his Tabernacle ſhould be ſet in Ieruſalem; and that his tẽple ſhould be builded vpon mount Sion. Hereupon the reſidue might haue quarelled thus: What? Are not we the children of Abraham aſwell as they? with whome is it that GOD hath made his couenant? Are we not al of one ſtocke? Why then ſhoulde the Tribe of Iuda be preferred before vs? ſpecially ſeeing he is not the firſt begotten. Doth yͤ birth right belong vnto him? Why then ſhoulde he bee more honoured than all the reſt Whence hath hee this priuiledge? After that manner might the matter bee debated. Alſo it might be alledged that the Arke ought to be remoued euery moneth of the yere frō one tribe to an other throughout al yͤ twelue Tribes. There are twelue moneths in the yere, and we be twelue tribes of vs: and therefore wee ought to begin according to the order of birthright, ſo as the eldeſt haue the carying of the Arke the firſt moneth, and euery Tribe after in his order. Were it not reaſon it ſhoulde be ſo? Yee ſee then that the reſt of the Tribes might haue made that allegation when they ſawe the Tribe of Iuda preferred before all the other Tribes. But Moſes preuenteth that, ſaying, it belongeth vnto thy GOD to chooſe and to commaunde what hee thinketh good. According whereunto it is ſaide in the Pſalme, that the land of Chanaan was in deede made holy, and that God had promiſed it to his ſeruant Abraham. But what? He refuſed the tribes of Manaſſes and Ephraim, and reſted not there, Pſal.78.67.
but chooſe the Tribe of Iuda. And why? becauſe it pleaſed him. If a man ſhoulde looke vppon the outwarde apparance, it is wel knowen that the kingdome of Iſraell was farre greater than the kingdom of Iuda. True it is that in king Dauids time they were all one kingdome: but when the people fell away, then the Tribe of Ephraim became of greateſt honour among them: but yet for all that, God reſerued this dignitie to the citie of Ieruſalem and to mount Sion, that hee woulde be worſhipped there. Sith it is ſo, let vs vnderſtande that to ſerue GOD aright, men muſt vncaſe themſelues of al pride, ſo as they ſeeke not to aduaunce themſelues, but ſubmit themſelues wholy to Gods wil without regarding to bee honoured aboue others after the ambitious manner of the Papiſtes which ſtriue who ſhall goe foremoſt to the offering. They pretend to doe it of deuotion; but indeed they doe it of diueliſh pride. And therefore if we wil haue God to accept our ſeruice, let vs learne to come vnto him with humilitie and not to turne our tayles to our neighbours: & if God

god vouchſafe to endue any others with greater grace than our ſelues, wee muſt not ſpyte them for it, as wee be warned of it. Wee ſee that God diſtributeth his giftes more vnto one than vnto another; What is nowe to bee doone? ſhoulde wee haue ſpite at it? Shoulde wee gaſe aboute vs howe to make our ſelues iolie fellowes? Alas wee doe but wander away from GOD when we ſteppe foorth to aduaunce our ſelues before men. Therefore let vs proceede with all lowlineſſe, and not bee ſo fondly and wickedlie diſpoſed as to haue a will to bee preferred before our neighbours. And ſo we ſee what Moſes meant to expreſſe here in ſaying, God wil chooſe him out ſome one certaine place from among thy tribes: and let it not greeue them that are put backe from it. For why? If it bee Gods will to humble them, they ſhall gayne nothing by their comming to ruſhe againſt him. And therfore let euery man holde himſelfe contented with his degree and meaſure, and let him that is little holde himſelfe contented with his littleneſſe.

And nowe hee addeth expreſſely alſo, *that God will chooſe a place to put his name in.* Whereby he meaneth that he is not to be incloſed in it as in reſpect of his ſubſtance. For (as I haue declared afore) there are alwayes two thinges which it behooueth vs to marke well. When we haue an outwarde order or forme of ſeruing God, wee muſte obſerue two thinges therein. The one is that foraſmuch as God ſeeth vs to be rude and earthly, hee ſtoopeth vnto vs, and pleaſureth vs ſo far, as to giue vs things fit for vs. As for example, when wee in praying doe vſe theſe ceremonies of kneeling down, of putting off our cappes, and lifting vp our handes: wherfore doe we ſo? It is not for that GOD hath neede of it for his part, but for our owne weakeneſſe ſake. Becauſe we bee ouer groſſe, we bee faine to be exerciſed after that faſhion. After the ſame manner wee haue Baptiſme, and the Lords holy Supper, all which thinges are for the weakenes of our nature. And ſo ye ſee that that is one thing which wee haue to marke on our part. But when as God beareth with vs after that faſhion, let vs beware that wee ſurmiſe him not to be like our ſelues, or that wee thinke him not to behaue himſelfe after our luſt. For men are alwayes in daunger of falling into that extremitie. The thing then in effect which Moſes ment to ſay, is this: The Lord will chooſe him a place to ſet his ſanctuarie in, there will he haue you to worſhippe him: there will he haue you to offer your ſacrifices to him, thither will hee haue you to bring your oblations; there will he haue you to honor him wͭ your perſons & goods, proteſting your ſelues to bee whely at his deuotion. But yet muſt you not thinke that your God is come downe from heauen and ſhut vp in a cofer or cheſt. You muſt not thinke that he ſitteth betweene Cherubins after the manner of men: but that it is ynough for you that his name is there, that is to ſay that he giueth you ſome token of his preſence and power, to the intent yee may be ſure that he will heare all our prayers and be mercifull to you. And yet for all that hee filleth heauen and earth, howſoeuer the worlde goe. Therefore ye muſt not fall to ſhutting vp of the infinite maieſtie and ſubſtance of your God, into a corner, or into a material & corruptible Temple. Beware of ſuch ſuperſtition, and be contented with the hauing of his name, that is to ſay, yͤ your God is there called vpon, that his Law is there preached to you, that his promiſes are there ſet before you, that you be grounded vpon his grace, that you neede not to doubt but that he is your father and Sauior, that you may boldly ſue vnto him, and that you be ſure he is ready to receiue your requeſts. That is the intent why your God is minded to be among you.

Of this place we haue a good leſſon to gather, which is, that ſeeing God hath ordeyned means agreable to our infirmitie to ſerue him withall; we ought to vſe them, according to this ſaying, *thou ſhalt ſeeke out that place.* For Moſes hauing warned the Iewes of their rudeneſſe, commaundeth thẽ to benefite themſelues by ſuch meanes as the Lord teacheth them: that is to wit, by the ceremonies which he would giue them. Noweadayes we haue not the like ceremonies to thoſe that were vnder the lawe. But yet doth our Lord beare with vs alſo, ſo farre foorth as hee ſeeth it requiſite, and giueth vs ſuch ceremonies as are meet for vs, in reſpect wherof we haue the meetinges that are made among vs, as I haue ſaide afore. And why? To the end that Gods worde ſhould be preached to vs, that we ſhoulde make cõmon prayers as it were with one mouth, that we ſhould confeſſe our faith, and chriſtendome together, and that yͤ Sacramentes ſhould be miniſtred in the companie of the faithful. Seeing yͭ our Lord giueth vs ſuch meanes, it behoueth vs to vſe them. For whoſoeuer deſpiſeth thẽ, mocketh God openly. Let vs marke wel that whatſoeuer our Lord hath ordeined for our behoofe, we muſt receiue it, & be diligent to ſtrengthen our faith therby dayly more & more. For if I thinke my ſelf to be ſo perfect, yͭ I paſſe not to come at yͤ Church, there to benefit my ſelf with others: it is a diueliſhe ouerweening; and it were better for me that I were ſome poore begger that had neither witte nor vnderſtanding, (ſo as in the meane while I knewe mine owne pouertie) than to be ſo high minded. For it is the next way to caſt me downe to the bottome of hell, when I will needes exempt my ſelfe from the common order. And therefore whoſoeuer hath any zeale and affection to ſerue God, muſt doe that which is commaunded here in ſeeking the place that God hath appointed: that is to ſay, he muſt not holde ſkorne of any thing which he hath ordeined for the confirming of our faith. That is one point.

Againe we muſt alwayes beare in minde, that when God vouchſafeth to plant his name amõg vs, we muſt not ſerue him after our owne faſhion, and after our owne rude manner: for his ſeruice is alwayes ſpirituall, and the thinges that he ſheweth vs here beneath, muſt draw vp aloft to heauen. And hereby a man may ſee howe the wretched world hath bin beguiled. For yͤ greateſt warrant that we haue of our Lorde Ieſus Chriſts preſence among vs, is left vs in his holy ſupper. There he doeth as it were put himſelf into our handes, of purpoſe to be incorporated into vs, as the breade and wine become one ſubſtance with vs when we haue eaten it and taken ſuſtenance of it. The ſonne of God ſheweth himſelfe familiarly vnto vs. Yet for all this, we muſt not imagine that he is come downe from heauen,& that wee handle him here betweene our pawes, or that he is incloſed within any certaine place. No: but his comming downe to vs, is to drawe vs vp to him. Therefore when wee receiue the communion, let it content vs that wee haue there a good and ſure pledge of the grace of our Lord Ieſus Chriſt, and that we be ſure of his dwelling in vs, and of our beeing one with him. And yet for all that, we muſt not be ſo fleſhly and groſſe, as to ducke downe our heades to it, or to worſhip it: but rather wee muſt beholde him by faith in his heauenly glorie,& ſeeke him there. For wee ſee howe beaſtly the papiſtes became: They beare themſelues in hande that there was no God at all, if hee were not ſhutte vp in a boxe: they worſhipped Ieſus Chriſt after ſuch a groſſe manner, that they became vtterly brutiſhe and witleſſe. Foraſmuch then as we ſee that the wretched worlde hath beene ſo bewitched by Satan, let vs reſorte to the remedy. For the fault grewe of this, that men followed not the rule that is conteined in this text, *There ſhal you ſeek your god.* And why? For there is his name. Where as it is ſaide you ſhall ſeeke him there: it is not meant that ye ſhoulde ſhut him vp there: but that ye ſhould there glorifie his name. True it is that notwithſtanding the choſing of that place, yet the people were ſtill taught to ſerue him ſpiritually. For God renounced not his own nature, when he appointed a temple to be worſhipped in: but his doing thereof was to the end that the people ſhoulde exerciſe themſelues continually in his ſpirituall ſeruice, notwithſtanding that the Ceremonies were outwarde. That is the thing which we haue plainely to gather out of that place.

Nowe we haue to marke likewiſe, that God helde his people a long time in ſuſpence, before hee ſhewed them the place where hee woulde dwell for euer. True it is, that whereſoeuer the Arke was, there the ſacrifices were to bee made. Yet notwithſtanding the place was not appointed out, that is to wit Mount Sion. Although the Arke were for the moſt parte at Silo: yet did it wander vp and downe for a great time, and the people were in continuall wayting where it ſhould reſt: and that was a greate temptation. For ſee what might haue beene ſaide: G O D promiſed vs to chooſe out a place: but hee doeth it not. And why then ſhoulde wee not chooſe a place our ſelues? And why ſhoulde not hee like well of vs for ſo dooing? Howeſoeuer the worlde goe, it is not lawefull ſo to doe. The matter ſtoode not here vppon tenne, twentie, thirtie, a hundred, or three hundred yeares: but yee ſee the people were faine to tarie a much longer time, euen to the reigne of Dauid. There had beene a number of chaunges, a great ſorte of Iudges one after an other, and a great ſorte of gouernours: and yet of all that whyle G O D ſpake not one worde of that matter, whereby it might ſeeme he had vtterly forgotten yͤ promiſe yͭ he had made by Moſes. But yet muſt the people tarie his leaſure ſtill. And therefore let vs not bee as though wee ſtoode vppon thornes, when our Lorde liſteth to holde vs at a bay, Let vs beare in minde that hee tryeth our obedience. If hee vtter not thinges vnto vs at the firſt as wee woulde wiſhe, it is his meaning therein to trie vs the better, whether wee can finde in our hearts to be ſubiect to him or no,& whether we haue the lowlines and reuerence to walk on in the ſimplicitie of his word. That is the thing which we haue to mark concerning yͤ firſt point.

Furthermore, wee muſt vnderſtande, that when God hath choſen a place; it is not for vs to remooue to and fro. And yet wee muſt not bee drowned in ſo brutiſhe ſuperſtition, as to thinke that G O D is tyed to the place which hee hath choſen. Indeede it was an excellent prerogatiue for the citie of Ieruſalem to bee called the royall citie of G O D, ſo as he would vouchſafe to haue his Temple there. But we ſee what befell them for abuſing ſo honourable a tytle, and for refuſing to ſerue G O D with pure conſciences. After that God had patiently wayted for their conuerſion, hee withdrewe himſelfe from them. When he ſawe the Iewes become ſtubborne; hee tooke away his glorie from that place. Yea and the Prophete Ieremie had vpbrayded them with it aforehande. Goe your wayes to Silo (ſayth hee) and ſee how deſolate it is at this day. Ier.7.12. And yet notwithſtanding Silo had beene preferred before Ieruſalem. For Gods Arke had beene there a long time, and yet was that place raſed to the grounde. Beholde a thing euen at this preſent that might make your hayres to ſtand vp vpon your heads.

Doe yee boaſt of your Temple (quoth Ieremie?) Ier.7.4. Thinke you that God is ſo much bounde vnto you that hee can not withdrawe his glory from thence? The threatenings were vttered by Ieremie; but the people followed ſtill their wicked trade: and in the ende Gods glorie was faine to departe, as is ſaide by Ezechiell. Ezec.10.18. For the Maieſtie of G O D was ſhewed him in the Temple, ſo as hee ſawe there both heauen and earth, and thinges that were aboue nature. And yet for all that, hee ſawe alſo that all vaniſhed away as ſmoke, and the Temple abode emptie and was vnhallowed, becauſe G O D had forſaken it and giuen it ouer. Whereby wee bee done to vnderſtande, that when our Lorde ſheweth vs fauour aboue others, we muſt liue the more warely and fearefully; and that if wee will continue in the poſſeſſion of the benefites that wee haue receyued, wee muſte not abuſe them. Had Rome beene choſen as was Ieruſalem, howe proude would they haue beene? For although they boaſt themſelues to haue the Apoſtolike ſea, and that the Pope is the head of the worlde, ſo as the vniuerſall ſupremapremacie of all thinges is there: yet haue they not one ſyllable for them in the holy Scripture, but haue vſurped all that euer they chalenge to themſelues, and they haue no colour that God liketh of them. But what though there were ſome text that God gaue preheminence to that Citie? Yet we ſee that as now it is a very dungeon of hell, inſomuch that they haue not onely burſt out into all maner of leaudneſſe, and by all meanes wrought diſhonour vnto God: but alſo are become as voyd of religion as Sodome, ſo as the deuils themſelues haue more feare and reuerence to Godward, than al thoſe filthy and ſtinking rable that rule the roſte there. Seeing then that there is ſuch contempt of God, and ſo outrageous wickedneſſe there, thinke wee that God is ſo bound vnto them, that he cannot depart from them? He had ſaid of Ieruſalem, This is my reſting place: but of Rome he neuer ſayde Pſal.132.13 any ſuch thing. And therefore wee ſee what a fondneſſe it is to make ſuch bragges as to ſay, that howſoeuer the Pope doe, yet is hee ſtill the head of the Church. Nay contrarywiſe wee haue God for our head, and it is not lawfull for vs to change him, except we wil go to deſtruction with thoſe whome wee ſee to haue beene ſo farre ouerſeene after that faſhion. And nowe ſith wee ſee that this is fallen out in the Popedome, let vs looke well to it when God dwelleth among vs, that we driue him not away, but that we ſerue him with all pureneſſe, that as hee reigneth ouer vs at the preſent, ſo he may continue with vs to the ende, and neuer forſake vs. That is the thing which wee haue to beare in mind when wee looke vppon the examples that Ioſua.18.1. befell both to Silo and to Ieruſalem. I ſay, to Silo 2.Sam.4.4. where the Arke had beene a long time: and to Ieruſalem where the place was appointed for the Pſal.132.13. building of the Temple, according to the promiſe that Moſes had made.

And now hee addeth, *That they ſhould reſort thither to offer their Sacrifices and burnt offeringes, there to doe all their deuotions, and to pay all their vowes.* As if he ſhould ſay, that they might not attempt any thing vppon their owne fonde heads, but hearken vnto God, and be gouerned by his only word. And herewithall wee muſt call to minde what hath beene touched afore; namely that Gods ordeining of Sacrifices, burnt offeringes, vowes, and ſuch like things, was not for any neede that hee himſelfe had of them, or for that they could ſtand him in any ſtead: but to keepe the people occupied with thoſe ceremonies, and all bicauſe men are ſo fraile and earthly. God then did ordaine Sacrifices. And to what purpoſe? To inſtruct folke withall. For when the Iewes came thereunto, it was for them to conſider thus with themſelues: Wee be wretched ſinners, wee bee not worthie to approche vnto the Maieſtie of our God, for he is righteous and the verie righteouſneſſe it ſelfe, he is the fountaine of all cleanneſſe, and wee on our ſide bring nothing to him but all maner of filth and vncleanneſſe. Therefore it ſtoode the Iewes in hand to haue ſome meanes to waſh themſelues and to make themſelues cleane before God. It ſtoode them in hand to bee diſcharged of their debtes, and of the curſe wherein they felt themſelues to bee wrapped. For the dooing whereof God gaue them the ſaid Sacrifices. When they came to him, they proteſted on yͤ one ſide, Alas Lord, wee deſerue death, but wee hope that thou wilt heare vs for the blouds ſake which is to bee ſhed for the waſhing away of our ſpottes. Beſides this, they had waſhings, wherby they were made to acknowledge thus: True it is Lord that wee be full of filth, but it is in thee to make vs cleane. And ſo yee ſee that the Sacrifices were ordeined to inſtruct the people, as I ſayde afore, and wee likewiſe haue the ſame order at this day, which God would haue to continue ſtill among the Chriſtians. And therefore let vs referre all to that ende, namely that in aſmuch as wee bee groſſe and rude, it is for our behoofe to be exerciſed with ſome Ceremonies. Yea, but yet muſt not thoſe bee of our owne inuenting. For wee ſhall neuer haue doone, if we goe to worke after our owne faſhion. Let vs content our ſelues with the playne thinges that are conteined in Gods woord. For that is all our wiſedome.

Finally Moſes addeth, *There ſhall yee eate and drinke in the preſence of your God, both you and your houſhouldes. And when yee come thither your God will bleſſe you.* Heere Moſes addeth that when the people ſubmit themſelues after the manner aforeſaid, God will make them to proſper. That is the effect of his meaning heere. And heerewithall he ſheweth vs, that euen in the matters yͭ concerne this temporall life, wee muſt dedicate all things to the ſeruice and honour of our God. And that is a thing well worthy to bee marked. For wee ſee howe the worlde is deſirous to diſcharge it ſelfe in ſuch wiſe to Godward, that when they haue once ſerued God a little, they woulde haue truſe for a good while after. As how? When the greateſt hypocrites in the Popedome haue performed all their ceremonies in their Churches, as the beſprinkling of themſelues with their holy water, their croſſing of themſelues, and their much mumbling of their *Mea culpaes*: they beare themſelues in hand that all the day after they may turne their backs vppon God as ſoone as they haue turned their tayles from the Church, and God ſeeth them no more. For why? He is well payde, and he muſt holde himſelfe contented. After that manner doe men behaue themſelues. And why ſo? It is bycauſe that although wee knowe Gods ſeruice to bee ſpirituall, yet notwithſtanding wee conſider not that all things which wee doe in this preſent life muſt bee referred to the ſeruice of GOD: like as when wee eate and drinke, it is trewe that the dooing thereof is to ſuſtayne vs in this worlde till GOD take vs out of it. Againe, wee haue other needefull thinges to bee doone, as the applying of euery mans trade, in traueling and labouring for his liuing. True it is that all theſe thinges are worldly and earthly, and therefore they muſt not withdrawe vs from the heauenly things, whatſoeuer come of it. Therefore when we eate and drink, our taking of our bodily ſuſtenaunce muſt bee after ſuch a ſort, as therewith we muſt find ſome further taſte of the goodneſſe of our God, and ioy in him for that hee is our foſterfather, of whom we haue our dayly bread, as wee profeſſe by asking it at his hande. And when we haue taken our repaſt, wee muſt proceede to take ſuſtenance of ẏ good things that are prepared for vs in heauen, againſt wee departe out of this worlde, that wee may haue ſome beginning of them afore hande, and trauell towardes the attaynement of them dayly more and more. That is the thing which Moſes ment plainely in this place ſaying, When yee haue offered ſacryfice to your GOD, yee ſhall make merry there in his preſence. For the people were woont to make feaſtes at their ſacrifices. And what maner a ones? Holy feaſtes: not that God was honoured by their eating and drinking: but for that it was a teſtifying, that it behoued them to beare in mind that they were all their life long in Gods ſight: So as it behoued them not onely to think vppon him at the beginning of the yeere, or a three or foure times a yeere when they came to Ieruſalem to do ſacrifice, but alſo to thinke thus with themſelues continually: Although wee bee farre off from the Temple, ſo as wee cannot bee there to doe our ſacrifices: yet doth not our GOD fayle to regarde vs: for hee watcheth ouer vs, and wee bee in his protection. Therefore whenſoeuer wee eate or drinke, let vs aſſure our ſelues that hee ſeeth vs, and we cannot hide our ſelues out of his ſight, neither ought wee on the other ſide to forget him, as men commonly doe when they be minded to make merry. They friske it out in ſuch ſort, as if they thought they could get away from him. But on the contrary parte, Gods will was to doe the people of old time to vnderſtand, that whenſoeuer they did eate and drinke, they ſhould thinke that God ſawe them. Wee in theſe dayes haue no ſuch Ceremonie of feaſting in Ieruſalem and in the places neere about the Temple: but yet doth the truth thereof continue ſtill to vs: which is, that we be done to vnderſtand ẏ after we haue beene at the Church, and haue mette there together in the name of our God; when euery of vs returneth home to his houſe to dinner, we muſt not let god alone in the Church, and take our leaue of him; but we muſt beare in mind that God guideth vs, and when we be come home to take our repaſt euery man by himſelfe, we muſt behaue our ſelues as in the preſence of our God, & our mirth muſt be after ſuch a ſorte, as he may bee the witneſſe of our gladneſſe. For we know that if our mirth be vnholy, it is curſed of God. Therefore let vs learne to beare alwaies in mind, that our God is our guide euery where, and that he neuer forſaketh vs, to the intent that we on our part ſhold not be as beaſtes that runne aſtray. That is the thing which wee haue to marke vpon this text. The Ceremonie thereof was in force during the time of the Lawe. But as for vs nowadayes, let vs bee contented with the truth therof, & learne to vnderſtand ẏ ſith our Lord Ieſus Chriſt is come, we neede no more any materiall Temples to tell vs that God is with vs. For our Lord Ieſus hath not for naught taken to him ẏ name of *Emanuel* Eſa.7.14. (as the Prophet Eſay calleth him) that is to ſay: God with vs. And foraſmuch as our Lorde Ieſus Matt.28.20. Chriſt telleth vs ẏ he wil be with vs continually to ẏ worldes end, let vs not feare but ẏ God will accept vs for his childrē, ſo ẏ in paſſing through this tranſitorie life, we haue our eye alwaies vpō him, and goe foreward ſtill towards his heauenly kingdom. For then wil he make all the reſt to be dedicated to his honor, ſo as euen our eating & drinking ſhalbe a peece of his ſeruice, & he will take it in good worth & like well of it, ſo that we do wholly worſhip him, looking to be fed at his hand, not onely with this corruptible foode, but alſo with ſuch nouriſhing foode to himſelfward, as wee may liue with him the ſame life that he himſelfe liueth.

Nowe let vs kneele downe in the preſence of our good God with acknowledgement of our innumerable faults, which we cōmit dayly againſt his Maieſtie without ceaſſing, praying him to make vs perceiue thē better than we haue done, and in the meane while to beare with vs, vntill he haue rid vs quite & cleane from all vices, and vnited vs throughly to his righteouſneſſe. And ſo let vs all ſay, Almightie God heauenly father, &c.

On Munday the vij. of October. 1555.

The Lxxxij. Sermon, which is the third vpon the twelfth Chapter.

8 Yee ſhall not doe according to all the things that you doe heere this day, that is to wit euery man as he thinketh good.

9 For as yet you be not come into the reſting place and the inheritaunce which the Lord your God giueth you.

10 You ſhall go ouer Iordan, and dwell in the land which the Lord your God will make you to inherite. And he wil giue you reſt from all your enemies round about you, and you ſhall dwell in ſafetie.

11 And when the Lorde your God ſhall haue choſen a place there, to put his name in: Ye ſhall bring thither all that I commaund you that is to wit, your burnt offeringes, your ſacrifices, your tenthes, your Heaue offringes, and all the choiſe of your vowes which ye ſhall haue vowed to the Lord.

12 And ye ſhall make merrie in the ſight of the Lord your God, both you your ſelues and your ſonnes and daughters, your Menſeruauntes and your Maide ſeruauntes, and the Leuite alſo that is within your gates: for he hath no part nor inheritance with you.

13 Beware that thou offer not thy burnt offeringes in all places which thou ſeeſt.

14 But in the place which the Lorde will chooſe in one of thy Tribes. There ſhalt thou offer thy burnt offerings, and thither ſhalt thou bring all the things that I commaund thee.

Although Moſes haue treated of this matter heretofore, yet is it not without cauſe that he goeth to it againe for yͤ better confirming thereof. For as I haue told you alreadie, Men are alwaies deſirous to paſſe their boundes, & cannot ſubmit themſelues to God, to attẽpt nothing beyond his word. Wherfore let vs marke well that God thinkes it not ynough to tell men once for all, that they ſhould behaue themſelues according to his word & ordinance: but he repeateth yͤ ſame leſſon oftentimes, to the intent that men ſhould take yͤ better heede of it, and marke it the better. And bicauſe yͤ people had not as yet the law written as touching the Ceremonies; it is ſaid expreſſely, *You ſhall not doe as ye doe now.* For it behoued the people to bridle themſelues thereafter as they were taught. Howbeit, for the better vnderſtanding of this text, it might bee demaunded firſt, whether the Iſraelites did for a time offer ſacrifice at their own pleaſure, without rule, or without being certaine what God required or allowed. The anſwere hereunto is, that they had alwayes ſome marke to ſhoote at, and that they had not the bridle ſo looſe in their neckes, but that they knew how they ought to ſacrifice. And in deede, wee heare how the Apoſtle ſaieth to the Hebrewes, that frõ Abel forth on, there was no ſacrifice accepted but by faith. And fayth importeth alwayes an obedience, ſo as if men deale at alauenture, there is no faith at all in them. But the Apoſtle ſaieth expreſſely that Abels ſacrifices pleaſed God bicauſe of his faith. Whereupon it followeth, that God hath euer ſhewed his will to yͤ faithfull, ſo as they haue not gone to woorke vnaduiſedly, but haue had ſuch certaintie as was requiſit for them. And wheras Moſes reporteth in Geneſis that Noy ſacrificed of cleane beaſtes vnto God; it doth vs to vnderſtand that Noy muſt needes haue had ſome knowledge of the difference of them aforehand: for it paſſed his vnderſtanding to finde out which beaſtes were cleane. Needes therefore muſt it bee that God had imprinted it in him: and that order hath continued for euer. And ſo is it certaine that the Iſraelites neuer had any ſuch lawleſſe libertie, but that they knew which was the trewe way of worſhipping GOD. Alſo it is expreſſed by Moſes that Abraham would inſtruct his poſteritie in the iudgements, Lawes and Ordinaunces of GOD. Whereby he doth vs to vnderſtand, yͭ although there was not as then any law writtẽ; yet notwithſtanding Abraham failed not to haue knowledge of the things yͭ God required & of whatſoeuer elſe was requiſite. For Moſes coulde haue ſayde at one woorde, Abraham will teach his children to liue well and holily and according to the wil of God: but he ſayeth that he wil teache them his lawes, ſtatutes & ordinances. To what purpoſe? I haue told you before, that it was to magnifie God the better, for his well prouiding of all things requiſite to the ſeruing of him, ſo as the faithful could not ſtand in any doubt, but were ſure of their dutie what they ought to doe.

Hebr. 11. 4.

Gen. 8. 20.

Gen. 18. 19.

According hereunto therefore let vs marke, that when the people of Iſrael came out of Egypt, their ſacrificing was not after the maner of the Heathen, according to the inuention of man: but after a heauenly order, that is to ſay, according to the order which God had appointed. Yet notwithſtanding, it is true that there was not as yet any ſuch particular declaration made of the Sanctuarie, and of all the appurtenances and things belonging thereunto, as wee ſee is ſet downe in Exodus and Leuiticus. Theſe things (ſay I) were not ſo particularly ſet forth: it was not yet ſayd vnto them, You ſhal haue but one altar, which ſhalbe of ſuch a meaſure, of ſuch a heigth, and of ſuch a breadth: you ſhall haue a Tabernacle of ſuch manner of ſtuffe, of thus many peeces, thus long, and thus broade: You ſhall haue fire burning continually in the Sanctuarie: Your ſacrifices ſhall neuer bee offered without Salte: there ſhall alwayes bee lyght and perfume in the Temple: The cakes that ſhall bee offered in the Temple ſhall bee of ſuch a faſhion: There ſhall be bread continually before the Lord, and it ſhall be renewed day by day: Againe there ſhall bee a hygh Prieſt, which ſhall enter once a yeere into the narrowe Sanctuarie, and there ſhalbe an Aultar of burnt ſacrifices for him to offer vpon from day to day. Theſe things were not yet thus ſet out: & that is the thing which Moſes meaneth in this text whẽ he ſaith, Ye ſhall not doe after the ſame manner as we doe this day. For there was greater libertie before ſuch time as God had ſet foorth his commaundements to brydle the people withal, and to hold them in ſuch awe as they ſhould not attẽpt any thing vpon their own head, nor ſtep aſide to the right hande or to the left; but followe the thinges roundly which were conteyned in his Lawe.

And heereof wee haue to gather, that after as God vttereth his will vnto vs, ſo are wee the more bound to follow the ſame. For if we knew not what to doe, and that God had let vs alone in ſuſpence: we might haue ſome excuſe for our doeing of thinges as ſeemed good to our ſelues. For why? Our Lord hath not bin ſo gratious to vs as to ſay vnto vs expreſly, Thus ſhal ye doe: And therfore we may do according to our owne skill, ſeeing we haue no expreſſe word to yͤ contrarie. After that maner might a man reply. But now that God hath witneſſed his will vnto vs, we muſt ſtoope to it, and it is not lawefull for vs to adde any thing thereto, For that were as much to ſay, as we would fall to ſcanning whether God or wee were the wiſer. And what a preſumption were it, if wee would needes haue better thinges than thoſe which he inioyneth vs? Yet notwithſtanding, if men cannot find in their heartes to yeelde to the thinges that GOD commaundeth, they enter into this diueliſh preſumptuouſneſſe of purpoſing to be wiſer than God hath giuen them leaue to be. Wherfore let vs learne, that when we haue once aſſurance what God alloweth, we muſt reſt wholly vpon it. And herewithall we muſt marke, that God did not without cauſe giue the people of olde time ſo many rules to ſhewe them how to doe ſacrifice. When we read the thinges that are conteined in Leuiticus, to our ſeeming there bee many needeleſſe thinges. For God might well haue ſayd in feawe woordes, I will haue a Temple, and there will I haue you to ſacrifice vnto me. But there are ſuch a ſort of commaundements as may make a man amazed and out of his wits. And what is yͤ cauſe thereof? True it is that all thinges were made Exod.25.40. and doone according to the patterne that Moſes had ſeene in the Mount, as God himſelfe declareth. And thereby we be doone to vnderſtand that the figures, (although that at this day we know not perfectly in all pointes to what vſe they ſerued) had a ſpirituall truth, which may Heb.9.8.10. bee referred to the thinges which we haue nowadaies by the comming of our Lord Ieſus Chriſt: Col.2.17. for hee is the very body and ſubſtaunce of all the ſhadowes that were vnder the Lawe. When wee reade that the highprieſt might not enter into the Sanctuarie, but with ſuch attyre as is Leuit.16.4. there deſcribed; wee would thinke it ſtraunge to ſee a man ſo diſguiſed, with ſo many thinges about him. And why was that? We muſt marke that it was to doe the people to vnderſtand, that the partie which was to bee the mediator betweene God and men, was not of the common ſtate and ſorte of men, but that it behooued him to haue a ſpeciall kind of holineſſe to preace vnto GOD withall. And that was the cauſe why hee caryed this tytle in his frontlet vppon his head; *Hallowed vnto God, or the holineſſe of God,* Exod.28.36 Againe, hee had other attyres about him, ſo as hee coulde not goe or ſtirre, but there went a noyſe or ſound from him. For hee ware belles Exod.28.33 35. vppon the ſkirtes of his garments; and that was to ſhewe that all men ought to giue eare, when it is told them that the ſonne of God was offered for vs in ſacrifice, ſo as the ſame may ring into our heartes, to the intent wee may ſeeke the meanes to be reconciled to GOD. There were other things whereof a man may perceiue the reaſon. As the twelue precious ſtones Exod.28.21 which the highpreeſt ware on his breſt aloft vppon the Ephod: and the names of the twelue tribes grauen in other ſtones vpon his ſhoulders. Exo.28.9.12 Whereby was ment that Ieſus Chriſt did nothing for himſelfe but all for vs and in our behalfe: and that his going vnto God after that faſhion, was to bring vs into his preſence, according to this ſaying of his, I ſanctifie my ſelfe to Ioh.17.19. make you all partakers of the ſame holyneſſe. Nowe then wee ſee the reaſon of many thinges that were commaunded in the law, and we know it was not without cauſe that the Apoſtle ſayde Hebr.8.5. that all things were made according to the patterne that Moſes had ſeene vpon the Mount: after the which maner Saint Steeuen alleageth the ſame text in the ſeuenth of the Actes. Act.7.44. Neuertheleſſe wee muſt note, that Gods meaning was to hold his people in awe, that they might be the ſurer what to doe, and not bee occaſioned to tranſgreſſe the true ſeruice of God, by mingling of any inuentions with it. I ſay it was Gods intent to inure his people to obedience. For if we ſhew our ſelues to ſerue God otherwiſe, all that euer we doe will bee nothing woorth: nay Rom.14.23. it will be ſinne. If I weene I doe well, and in the meane while ſtand in doubt and perplexitie; al muſt needes goe to wrecke. For if wee bee not inlightned by certeintie of faith; God alloweth not any of our doinges. And therefore I ſay his intent was to keepe the people of old time in obedience. And that was the cauſe why hee willed that there ſhould bee light continually in the Exod.27.20. Temple. It was not to giue light vnto God, or to doe him any ſeruice, but to do the rude people to vnderſtand, that we muſt not doe thinges diſorderly, and be as blind folkes when wee approch vnto God: but that we muſt haue light to guide vs by, which light is not to be found in our owne braines, but muſt come from aboue. And for that cauſe the holy candleſticke had Lampes vpon it, wherein was oyle continually. Whereby was ment, yͤ if men be not guided & gouerned by yͤ holy Ghoſt, they do nothing but wander vp & downe, & in yͤ end they ſhall fall into deſtruction. Again, God willed that no ſtrange fire ſhould be Leuit.10.1. brought vnto his Altar. Wherby is ment yͤ men muſt not bring aught of their own to the ſeruing of God: but we muſt haue the holy fire, yͭ is to ſay we muſt pray to God in yͤ Church, & not go beyond his word, or beyond yͤ doctrine yͭ he giueth vs. Moreouer it is ſaid yͭ no ſacrifice ſhold be offered wͭout ſalt. Leuit.2.13. And why ſo? For when wee offer things to God wͭout warrant yͭ he alloweth them & requireth thẽ, they haue no ſauor at al before him. Thus you ſee in effect how it was Gods intent to cõfort his ſeruants, & to incourage thẽ, yͭ they might ſerue him as became them. And again, it was his wil to cut off al occaſiõ of adding any thing which they had learned of yͤ heathen. We know yͭ although mẽ haue no incoũters before their eies, yet they ceaſſe not to forge many fond things, weening to pleaſe god by yͭ meanes. But when we ſee examples on either ſide of vs, it is a further prouocation to vs. Beſides yͤ tickliſhnes which we haue already of nature, it pricketh vs foreward to ſay, why ſhould not ſuch a thing be good? For yͤ Iewes had ſeen yͤ faſhiõs of Egypt & of other heathẽ folke: & therfore they might haue bin prouoked to faſhion thẽſelues like vnto them: & that had bin a corruption to ouerthrow yͤ whole ſeruice of god. To preuent this miſchief, God gaue them a remedy, which held them occupied in ſuch ſort, as they had ynough to do in yͤ things yͭ were inioyned them, & had no leaſure to withdraw themſelues or to adde any deuiſe of their own. And ſo we ſee it was not for naught yͭ God gaue his people ſo many lawes, rules, & ceremonies at their going into yͤ land of Canaan. For firſt of al, it was meete yͭ the figures and ſhadowes ſhold ſupply yͤ roome of yͤ truth yͭ was yet vnreuealed, vntil Ieſus Chriſt was ſhewed opẽly to yͤ world. Secondly it was Gods will to try yͤ obedientnes of his people by yͭ means. And thirdly it tooke away al occaſion of intermedling thẽſelues wͭ yͤ ſuperſtitiõs of yͤ heathẽ & vnbeleuers.

And for yͭ cauſe doth Moſes ſay, *You ſhal go ouer Iordan, & God wil giue you reſt in the land that he hath promiſed you, & there ſhall you dwell in ſafetie, though you haue enemies round about you.* And then wil he chooſe him a place in one of your tribes, and thither ſhal you bring your ſacrifices, burnt offerings, & oblations. And the very true ſacrifice (ſaith he) is to do nothing vpon your own heads, but to obey your God throughly in all poyntes. Whẽ he ſaith yͭ they ſhall come into yͤ land, it is to ſhew yͭ Gods deferring to giue his law til that time, was to declare more particularly what things he liked of. For it was his will to performe his promiſe made vnto Abrahã, before he would eſtabliſh his owne ſeruice. And thereby he gaue thẽ to vnderſtand yͭ the land of Canaã ought to haue led thẽ to a further thing. For had there bin no further matter in it than yͤ land it ſelfe; it had bin ynough for thẽ to haue bin ſetled in it, and there to haue had wherewͭ to finde them abundantly. But God ſetteth vp his ſeruice, & ſheweth thẽ after what ſort they ſhold honor him thẽceforth: & al is referred to our Lord Ieſus Chriſt. We ſee then yͭ the land of Canaan ſhould haue guided yͤ Iewes to yͤ hope of yͤ heauenly life; ſo as they ſhould not haue ſet their mindes vpon yͤ inioying & poſſeſſing of the profits yͭ came therof, but haue proceeded on further & conſidered yͭ Gods meaning was to raigne among thẽ after a ſpirituall maner. That was yͤ cauſe why he liſted not to giue thẽ yͤ ceremonies at yͤ firſt, after the maner yͭ they be ſet down in Leuiticus: but reſerued the ſetting of them foorth, vntill the people were come into their inheritance.

And he ſaith expreſly *that the Iewes ſhould dwel in quiet & ſafetie, notwithſtanding that they were beſet round about with enemies.* Hereby we bee done to vnderſtand, yͭ it was not ynough for thẽ to haue conquered the country, but yͭ it behoued God to maintaine them ſtil vnder his protectiõ. And as the Iſraelites were warned of it then: ſo doth the ſame belong to vs at this day. For God telleth vs yͭ if he hath once called vs, it is al one as if he had made vs to paſſe the red ſea. True it is yͭ he could cal vs without making of vs to chaũge our place. But let vs conſider from whence God taketh vs, & whither he draweth vs. He taketh vs out of yͤ bottom of hell. For ſo long as we be in our owne Eph.2.12. nature, we haue none acceſſe to yͤ kingdome of heauen, nor any acquaintance with him, but are vtterly baniſhed from yͤ hope of life. And whẽ he hath drawen vs out of ſuch confuſion, he pulleth vs vp to himſelf, to the end we might cleaue vnto him: & although we dwel as yet on the earth; yet notwithſtanding wee ceaſſe not to be heires of yͤ heauenly inheritance. This is a farre greater thing thã to paſſe the red ſea. For we haue an enemy yͭ is greater and much ſtronger than was Pharao & al his people. For what can we do whẽ Eph.6.12. we haue all yͤ diuels againſt vs, labouring to hinder our ſaluation, & being ſo ſuttle & hauing all yͤ meanes yͭ can be to do it withall? They be called Eph.2.2. the princes of yͤ aire, & they reigne ouer our heades, ſo as they might eaſily ouerthrowe vs if God deliuered vs not from them. Therfore it is a great power which God vttereth when it pleaſeth him to gather vs vnto himſelfe. And yet is yͭ to no purpoſe, except we be preſerued ſtill vnder his hand & tuition. For as long as we bee in this world, we ſhalbe inuironed continually round about 1.Pet.5.8. wͭ enemies. The diuel ceaſſeth not to trouble vs; he hath wyles & ſlightes ynow to doe it withall: & we on our ſide are vnarmed & vnprouided; & therefore it ſtandeth vs greatly vpõ, to haue God to bee our defender. Nay, the diuell Rom.6.12.13.& 7.23. needes not to ſeeke farre: for we carie ſuch a nũber of vices with vs of our owne, as we might be ouercome a hundred times without any great adoe or noiſe. Let vs mark wel then, yͭ like as God promiſed to maintaine the Iewes in the inheritance yͭ he had giuen them: ſo it ſtandeth vs in hand at this day to be maintained by his hand in the faith; yͭ we may perſeuer in his ſeruice: or elſe our ſaluation wil go to wreck euery minute of an hour, ſo as there wil be no ſtay nor continuance.

Now afterward Moſes addeth: *God wili haue you thenceforth to ſerue him in the place which he ſhal haue choſen to put his name in.* Which is as much to ſay, as that we muſt not make this our reſt; to inuẽt this or that; but we muſt hold our ſelues in quiet, and abide vnder the gouernment of our God. When we be at reſt, then is our mind much troubled wͭ vnquietnes, which is cleane contrary to Gods meaning. For if he giue vs reſpit, ſo as we be not troubled with feare & terror, to what end is it? Is it not to the end that we ſhould bee ſo mild as to ſay, go to my God, if I were vexed or diſquieted in minde, I had ſome cauſe to bee caryed here and there and to doe ſome thing or other. I ſhould bee ſeeking of ſundry remedies. But now that thou vouchſafeſt to maintaine me in quiet reſt, it is good reaſon that I ſhould bee ſtill, and ſuffer my ſelfe to bee ruled by thy word, and to bee bowed which way thou liſteſt, without giuing heade to my luſtes, for that were a wicked vnthankefulneſſe. That is the thing which Moſes ment by that text. And the ſame matter concerneth vs alſo. For whenſoeuer God vouchſafeth to giue vs reſt from our enemies, wee ought to bee ſo much the quietter in our ſelues. As for example. If we were among the Papiſtes, wee might bee in ſuch feare, as we ſhould bee driuen to ſeeke new ſhiftes euery day, as the poore ſoules are which bee among them, who may well ſay, Alas, I haue no liberty to ſerue God. How may I behaue my ſelfe in ſuch ſorte as I may not defile my ſelfe with the ſuperſtitions of theſe Idolaters? Thus ye ſee how theſe poore catifes are faine to ſeeke al the waies to the wood to find ſome ſhift to ſwim between two ſtreames. And no maruell though they be in that taking. In deede it is no ſufficient excuſe; for howſoeuer the world goe with vs, we muſt bee fully reſolued in our ſelues to ſerue God neuertheleſſe. But yet are we the leſſe to be borne withal, when we abuſe the time of quietneſſe that God giueth vs. If we be at libertie, then muſt nothing withhold vs from hauing our religion pure and clean. For he offereth himſelfe to vs dayly in his word. And therefore let vs refraine our ſelues from wandring after our owne imaginations, and let vs bridle our ſelues in that behalfe. Seeing that God hath giuen vs reſt: let vs followe all that he ſheweth, without attempting any thing at all to the contrary. But we ſee the contrary come to paſſe. For commonly it falleth out that when men be in reſt, ſo as no man trubbles them nor diſquietes them; then fall they to bee luſtie or ſporting like a horſe that is broken loſe and hath neither bridle nor ſaddle. And the experience hereof is too cōmon, in ſo much ẏ thoſe to whom God hath graunted ſuch fauour as to haue his truth in moſt ſafetie, doe thinke it better to behaue themſelues after another ſorte, and to chaunge their ſtate: and what a kinde of dealĩg is that? It is a diueliſhe rage that we be caried away withall, when wee cannot bee quiet in our ſelues at ſuch time as god hath giuen vs outward reſt, and holdeth our enimies locked vp, ſo as although they be round about vs, yet he ſuffereth them not to make any chaunge to diſquiet vs with all, and yet we our ſelues cannot abyde to ſit in quiet. Wherefore let vs marke wel, ẏ ſeeing God is ſo gracious to vs as to grant vs libertie to ſerue him purely: it is our dewtie to holde our ſelues quietly vnder his obedience, without attempting any thing at all. But the Papiſtes haue well ſhewed in this caſe, that they cannot find in their harts in any wiſe to ſubmit themſelues vnto God, and that their intent is not to yeeld him any obedience. For firſt of all they looked not what God ment by the olde figures of the Lawe, and yet they followed the things that Moſes cōmaunded concerning lightes, perfumes, and apparell. And why was that? Bicauſe they conſidered not that all thoſe things were referred to our Lord Ieſus Chriſt. They were much more brutiſh than the very Iewes that had no faith at all. For the Iewes at leaſtwiſe held themſelues to the rule that was giuen them. In deede they knewe not the right vſe of their Ceremonies: but yet had they an expreſſe commaundement from God, & durſt not attempt any thing againſt the ſame. But as for the Papiſtes, notwithſtanding that Ieſus Chriſt bee manifeſted, and haue accompliſhed all the thinges that were betokened in olde time: yet haue they vtterly ouerthrowen that good and ſubſtantial foundation, and thruſt his death and paſſion vnder foote. They fall to taking vp of lightes. And what needes that? The holy ghoſt hath ſhewed himſelfe viſibly in the perſon of our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt, and afterward Mat.3.16.& Act.2.3. vpon the Apoſtles, to doe vs to vnderſtand that we muſt no more looke for any outward figures, bicauſe we haue the truth and ſubſtance of them. But what? The Papiſts haue aboliſhed the infinite grace of God, and vtterly made a mocke of it. They will needes offer ſacrifice, and haue attyred their prieſtes thereafter, diſguiſing them as though it were to the playing of an enterlude. And all this geere is but gugawes, for they bee not commaunded of God, and beſides that, they be done as it were in deſpite of him. All that was doone in the law was of Gods ſetting vp: & theſe men fall to ſetting vppe of newe faſhions ſuch as God neuer ſpake of. Againe, they place a mortall man in ẏ roome of our Lord Ieſus Chriſt; as who ſhold ſay that the office of our Lord Ieſus Chriſt were not welynough knowne and apparant, vnleſſe it were figured out with newe and ſtraunge toyes. It is all one as if a body ſhould ſhew forth the picture of a man when the partie himſelfe is preſent, and ſhoulde ſaye, Behoulde this picture, and yet the man is there himſelfe who can much better ſhew himſelfe what he is than the picture can doe. Euen ſo doe the Papiſts in ſetting forth of ẏ picture of Ieſus Chriſt. He is named the liuely image of God. Although the father be incomprehenſible in his owne maieſty: yet hath he ſo vttered himſelfe in the per- 2.Cor.4.4. Hebr.1.3. ſon of his ſonne, as wee may behold him there 2.Cor.3.18. face to face, as ſayth Saynt Paule in the ſecond to the Corinthians. But the Papiſtes drawe a Curteine before it, and tell vs that wee muſt bee contented with pictures. It is therefore a turning of all thinges vpſide downe, and a bringing in of diueliſh confuſion. Neuertheleſſe, wee ſee that in the Popedom there is no harkning what God ſaies; but all is doone at the appointment of man. Looke whatſoeuer they do, they terme it by the name of Gods ſeruice. Yea, but how is God dewly ſerued? God ſayth, ye ſhall not doe whatſoeuer ſeemeth good to your ſelues: ſeeing that I haue ſet you downe a certaine order, bee contented to bee gouerned by my woord. But what ſay the Papiſtes? Mee thinkes this is good: This we take to be excellent: euery man caſtes to his collup, and in all Gods woord a man ſhall not finde one ſyllable of al the things which they terme Gods ſeruice, and which they will needes haue to paſſe in their account. For let a man ſearch all ẏ things through which are compriſed vnder ẏ name in ẏ Popedom, & he ſhall find thē

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euerychone to bee forged and builded by men, and that God not onely diſclaymeth them, but alſo condemneth them, bicauſe he hath ſhewed vs his certeine and infallible truth, which is the thing that we muſt frame our ſelues vnto. Wee ſee then howe all this doctrine hath beene wickedly throwen downe in the Popedome: and that is bicauſe they haue peruerted the true vſe of the figures of the Lawe, and taken inordinate liberty to doe whatſoeuer came in their heades, without hauing any regarde to the witneſſinges that God giueth vs, whereby they might haue ſaid, Theſe be the thinges which we ought to do. Now ſo much the more diligẽt ought we to be in marking this place: For were wee ſtill in doubt nowadayes what to doe, ſo as wee knewe not what thinges God alloweth: then might wee haue ſome fancie to make vs to ſway to and fro. But ſeing that God hath tould vs what hee requireth at our handes: that ought to be ynough for vs. And now hath hee aboliſhed, the Cere- Col.2.14. monies of the law that were of his owne appointing? Yea. And wherfore? To ſhew vs therby yͭ he wil not haue vs any more intangled in the out- Col.2.27. ward figures. The reaſon is added; bicauſe we haue them throughly fulfilled in Ieſus Chriſt. Now then, if we wil not deface the glory of our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt, and ouerthrowe the benefits that he bringeth vs; we muſt put away the old figures. Marke that for one point.

Againe, wee ſee that God is contented with fewe ceremonies. For it is not his will that wee ſhold haue any more deckings, lights, perfumes, Cakes, ſacrificings of beaſtes, nor other ſuch thinges: but his wil is that in our baptiſme we ſhould haue ſuch an aſſurance of our waſhing & Eph.5.26. clenſing by the grace that is purchaſed for vs in our Lord Ieſus Chriſt, as ſhould continue with vs for euer. Haue we that? We muſt hold our ſelues contented with it. For God could haue added more, if he had liſted: but he liſted not ſo to do. And ſo ye ſee heere is a bridle which muſt reine vs backe to gather vs home to GOD, or elſe he ſhall neuer be able to weeld vs. Now what haue the Papiſtes done? Tuſh, this ſimplicitie of baptiſme pleaſed not them, they would needs adde this & that to it at their own pleaſure. What ſay they? Should there be but ſheere water? What a thing were that? yea, but god hath ſo ordeined it, Ieſus Chriſt who is the infinite wiſedome of God his father hath ſo appointed it. It is ſaid that laſt Hebr.1.2. of all God hath ſpoken to vs by his mouth, and Matt.28.19 that we muſt ſtand to whatſoeuer he ſaith. Now he hath ordeined it in water alone. Yea, but wee muſt haue a taper (ſay the Papiſts) to repreſent the holy Ghoſt: we muſt haue ſalt, to repreſent yͤ heauenly wiſedome, and the grace of God: wee muſt haue diuers other things, and we muſt haue ſpittle to make infantes and dum folks to ſpeake, and we muſt haue a number of other gugawes to mocke God wͭall, which are ſo groſſe, and fond, as they can ſerue for nothing but to make Chriſtianity a laughingſtock to the Iewes and Turks: and the diuell plaies his part with them, when yͤ world is ſotted after ſuch a ſort. We ſee thẽ that the Papiſts haue broken and tranſgreſſed Gods order, by adding after yͤ maner to yͤ things which he had ſet downe certaine, and in ſuch meaſure as he would not haue men to go beyond them.

But there hath bin yet a farre more outrageous diſorder in yͤ Lords Supper. For therein our Lord Ieſus Chriſt ment to ſhew vs, yͭ his wil is yͭ we ſhold ſettle our whole truſt in him, bicauſe we Iohn 6.51. be fed wͭ his ſubſtance, & therfore wee muſt not ſeeke life any where elſe thã in him: we muſt not eate there & drink ſomewhere elſe; for we haue there ful ſuffiſance for yͤ ſuſtenance of our ſoules, we haue yͤ ful perfection of all goodneſſe in him. That is yͤ thing which he ſheweth vs by his holy ſupper, & his wil is yͭ we ſhould receiue yͤ bread & wine in witnes therof, and yͭ it ſhould be diſtributed among vs, to the end we ſhould be knit togither in him, to become members of his body. 1.Cor.10.17 But on yͤ contrary part, they haue ſet vp yͤ abhominable Maſſe, & wil needs ſacrifice Ieſus chriſt. And whereof comes that? Euen of yͭ they vnderſtãd not yͭ they vſurpe yͤ office which is allotted to him in the holy ſcripture, according wherunto he hath offered vp himſelfe once for al, & behold, mẽ wil needs take vpon them to coũterfet him, for by their owne ſaying, it is all one ſacrifice. Yet for al yͭ, they be but Apes to Ieſus Chriſt. For it becommeth them not to take vpon them the office yͭ is not allotted vnto thẽ. Againe they wil needs make a minglemangle of al things: for they not only diſguiſe & falſifie all thinges that were ordained by our Lord Ieſus Chriſt, but by Luk.22.17. all likelihood are fully bent to fight furiouſly a- 19. gainſt his inſtitution. Ieſus Chriſt ordeined yͭ the bread & wine ſhould be diuided among yͤ faithful. But it is ynough wͭ them yͭ one doe take it all, & eate it vp alone. Yea & when the people come of purpoſe to cõmunicate with them, (which is but once a yeere) they be faine to content themſelues wͭ the one part of it, & the other part is reſerued. Beſides this, there is no opening of Gods word, their ſaying is yͭ they go to receiue their God, & they make a charme & ſorcerie of their conſecrating of the bread & wine. Thus ye ſee how proudly they be turned away frõ Chriſtes ordinaunce, ſo as they could not deuiſe howe to fight againſt him wͭ more violence. Now ſith we ſee theſe things, we ought to acknowledge Gods grace in drawing vs out of ſuch confuſion. And therewͭall let vs marke, yͭ Gods ſtanding ſo much vpon yͤ point yͭ his people ſhold not do what they liked thẽſelues, is not wͭout cauſe. For why? we ſee what mẽ are whẽ they once go aſtray. Whẽ they once take yͤ libertie, they diſguiſe the trueth, and there is no end of their leaſings. Therfore let vs beware yͭ we hold our ſelues ſhort, ſpecially whẽ God hath giuen vs reſt from our enemies, & wee dwel in a place where we may worſhip him purely, let vs keepe yͤ ſimplicitie yͭ he commaundeth, & alloweth by his word, wͭout any ſwaruing aſide from yͤ ſame how little ſoeuer it be. For we had need to keepe our ſelues farre off frõ al corruptions, if we be determined to obey our God. And why ſo? For mans heart is a dreadfull gulfe. And again, euery mã drawes his neighbor into error after him. Therefore it is like an endleſſe maze wherof there is no way out again, vnleſſe yͤ thing be obſerued that is ſpoken here:namely *that men do not what euery man thinks good in his owne eyes.*

And let vs note alſo, yͤ by this ſaying, al our intentes (as men terme them) are condemned, though they ſeeme neuer ſo good to our ſelues. For we be no competent Iudges; God muſt tell vs what is good:& if we on our ſide find any apparant reaſō, it is altogether but ſmoke. So then for as much as God in this place ſetteth his own word, and yͤ teſtimony of his will, directly againſt all our deuotions, and al that euer ſeemeth good to vs: let vs aſſure our ſelues that it is not lawfull for vs to followe whatſoeuer we think good. For al that is nothing worth:but al yͤ ſeruice that wee do vnto god, muſt be grounded vpon his word & his infallible truth. Without yͭ, we doe but build in the aire, that is to ſay, all that euer we do is but dreaming.

Now Moſes addeth yͤ ſame things again which he had ſpokē concerning *Sacrifices, Burntofferings, freewillofferings, vowes & tenthes*; namely, *that all thoſe things muſt be done & paide in the place that God had choſen out of one of their tribes.* This thing was not ſo ſoone performed as I haue ſhewed heretofore. And yͤ reaſon is, for yͭ god intēded to proue his peoples patience, & alſo for yͭ yͤ people were not worthy yͭ God ſhold ſtabliſh the order at the firſt, in ſuch ſort as he had promiſed it. And that is a thing well worthy to be marked. For we ſee yͭ gods gracious gifts are oftentimes long in comming. And yet God ſaith, ye ſhal no ſooner haue ſpoken, but I will be ready to ſuccour you, yea & my hand ſhalbe ſtretched out to helpe you before your words be out of your mouths. So doth God promiſe:& yet notwithſtanding he ſuffereth vs to linger. And why? Bicauſe we haue hindered the courſe of his grace by our vnbeleefe; and we be ſo rechles, that hee maketh no haſte to come vnto vs, bicauſe we for our part come not to him but wͭ great hardneſſe, & as it were limping. Yet notwͭſtanding he doth alwaies ſurmount all our vices wͭ his infinite goodneſſe, as it came to paſſe in yͭ which Moſes ſpeaketh here. God had promiſed to chooſe a place for his Sanctuary to reſt in for euer. Now, yͤ thing was to haue bin done as ſoone as yͤ Iſraelites were entred into the land of Canaan; & yet it was delayed a long time: inſomuch as there paſſed a hūdred yeeres or twaine, yea three or four hūdred before yͤ promiſe tooke effect. And that was bicauſe the people were not worthy to be ſo ſatisfied, as God had declared, & therefore were faine to abide the puniſhment of their ſin. For they draue not out their enemies as he had commaunded them, but became negligent: and beſides yͭ, they themſelues turned away & fell into all maner of vices & corruptions. That therfore was the cauſe why God withdrew his hand, and performed not his promiſe till the time of Dauid. 2.Sam 7.10 Neuertheles, although yͤ people were malicious, although they were vnthankfull towards God, although they prouoked his wrath ſo many waies to yͤ vttermoſt:yet could they not vtterly diſappoint yͤ promiſe altogether. The reaſon was, for yͭ it depended not vpon yͤ deſerts of men. Therfore although men be vnworthy of it; yet doth God in yͤ end performe whatſoeuer he ſaith. Yet notwithſtanding there is a delay made for a time, to the intent that folke ſhould learne to know their own naughtines, and miſlike of it, and be ſory for it. Wherfore let vs learne hereby, that if God at any time do ſhew himſelfe vnwilling to put vs in poſſeſſion of his benefites out of hand:it is bicauſe that we haue procured the delay of them by our own naughtines. But yet ſhal we not be vtterly bereft of them, ſo we acknowledge our ſinnes and be ſory for them: but in the end he will reach out his hand again, to put vs in poſſeſſion of the benefites wherof we had deſerued to be vtterly diſpoſſeſſed. Truly this wil not boot the hypocrites at al:but as for gods church, although it liue in ſuſpence for a time; Yet will our Lord ſhew in the end, that his goodneſſe ſurmounteth all the ſinnes of men, and that he will not faile to be faithfull, though all of vs be lyers. 2.Tim.2.13 Sothly (as I ſaid afore) we muſt not vnder this colour flatter our ſelues. For if we be ſtubborne in euil, our Lord wil welynough find the meanes to diſcharge himſelfe of the promiſe wherof we ſhal haue beene diſappointed. But let vs learne to acknowledge our ſinnes; & when we haue acknowledged them, let vs learne alſo to reſt vppon the goodnes of our god, not doubting but that it is ſo great and infinite, that notwͭſtanding all the lets which we on our ſide ſhal caſt in the way of it, yet it will ſo get the vpper hande, that in the ende we ſhall find the welfare from the which we had ſhut our ſelues out of doores. That is the thing which we haue to remēber vpon this text of Moſes where he ſaith that god wold appoint a place, euen ſuch a one as he had choſen out from amōg all the tribes of Iſrael, where he would haue his name to be called vpon. The reſidue which cānot bee declared as now, ſhalbe purſued heereafter.

Now let vs fall downe in the preſence of our good god with acknowledgement of our faultes, praying him to make vs perceaue them better than we haue done heretofore, ſo as wee may miſlike them more & more, & therby be brought back vnto him: and that ſith wee for our partes bring nothing to him but vtter corruption; it may pleaſe him to graunt vs the grace ſo to reforme vs by his word, as yͤ ſacrifices which we ſhall offer vnto him may be made holy by faith, and he accept them for our Lord Ieſus Chriſts ſake. And for as much as we knowe that he requireth ſpirituall ſacrifices:let vs call vpon him wͭ ſuch bouldnes, as we may be hard at his hand, & yeeld him praiſe for all his benefites beſtowed vpon vs; and moreouer indeuer to diſcharge our ſelues of our dueties euery man towards his neighbor, bicauſe thoſe be the ſacrifices which he receiueth & aloweth. That it may pleaſe him to graunt this grace not onely to vs, but alſo to all people and nations of the earth; &c.

On Tewſday the viij. of October. 1555.

The lxxxiij. Sermon, which is the fourth vpon the twelfth Chapter.

12.13.14. And ye ſhall be merry, &c.

15 Neuertheleſſe, looke whatſoeuer thou haſt a mind vnto, that maiſt thou kill and eate within any of thy gates, according to the bleſſing of the Lord thy God, which hee hath giuen thee; as of the fallowe deere or of the Red deere: both hee that is cleane and he that is vncleane may eate therof.

16 Onely of the bloud ſhal you not eate, but you ſhal powre it vpon the ground as water.

17 Thou maiſt not eate the tithes of thy Corne, of thy wine, or of thine oyle, within any of thy gates, nor yet the firſt ingendred of thy kine, or of thy ſheepe, nor any of the vowes which thou ſhalt haue vowed, nor the free will offringes or the liftinges vp of thy handes.

18 But thou ſhalt eate thoſe thinges in the preſence of the Lorde thy God, in the place which the Lorde thy God wil chooſe to himſelfe. *There ſhalt thou eate them, both* thy ſelfe, thy ſonne, thy daughter, thy manſeruant, thy woman ſeruant, and the Leuite that is within thy gates. And thou ſhalt bee merrie before the Lord thy God in all things whereunto thou putteſt thy hande.

Moſes going forewarde ſtill with his matter, commaundeth the Iewes here to bee merrie in the preſence of the Lorde. Nowe although this leſſon haue bin laide foorth alreadie, yet is it requiſite for vs to bee put in minde of it againe. For the treating of it heere newe againe, is not for nought, neither hath the holy Ghoſt ſet down any thing more than needeth, as I haue ſayde heretofore. Men cannot keepe meaſure in their mirth without ſome diſorder alwayes. And the cauſe therof is ẏ they haue not an eye vnto God in their making merrie. Nay rather (which worſe is) they thinke it is no mirth at all vnleſſe they turne their backs vpon him. Whereas we ſhould ſeeke all our welfare in GOD to haue our reſt there: wee beare our ſelues in hand that wee be beſt at eaſe when we bee furtheſt from him. For this cauſe God ordeined the ſayde Ceremonie of ſolemne feaſting when the folke offered ſacriſice vnto him, as it were of purpoſe to put them in remembrance, that God was there preſent, and ſhewed himſelfe vnto them. Not that the doing thereof once a yeere was a ſufficient diſcharge to them; but that euery man ought to make a leſſon & a generall rule of it, that whenſoeuer they did eate or drinke, they ſhoulde referre it wholly vnto God, accordingly as Saint Paule warneth vs to doe. 1.Cor.10.31 And thereby wee ſee that yͤ truth thereof abideth vnto vs, though the Ceremonie thereof bee done away. Wherefore let vs learne, that in playing and ſporting after the faſhion of the children of this worlde, wee ſhake off God and bereaue him of his honour. And ſurely it is an vnexcuſable vnthankfulneſſe, when we acknowledge not the author of all welfare. If we referre all our mirth vnto God, it will be alwayes moderate. Beſides that it ſhall euer haue a good end, God wil ſo hold vs in aw by his Maieſtie, as we ſhall not paſſe our boundes as we ſee the wretched and blind vnbeleeuers do, who haue no more ſtay of themſelues in their making merrie, than wild beaſtes haue. Now then, if our eies be ſo ſet vpon God; we ſhalbe ſober and modeſt ynough. Marke that for one point.

But beſides this, it is the meaning of Moſes alſo, that fathers ſhould teach their children, and maſters their ſeruants, to do the like. For it is not ynough for a faithful man, that he himſelfe ſerue God: but he muſt alſo gouerne his houſhold, aſſuring himſelf that it is committed to him to the ſame end, & that he is to yeeld account of it. And in deede, what reaſon is it ẏ a man ſhould haue ſuperioſitie ouer his neighbors ẏ are creatures faſhioned after yͤ image of God as wel as he, and that in the meane while God ſhould be bereft of his right, and not be vſed as chiefe ſoueraigne of all? What a preſumption were that? Were it not an vtter peruerting of the order of nature? Then let vs marke well, that heere wee bee warned to rule our houſes in ſuch wiſe, as GOD may bee ſerued both of great and ſmall. Let him to whome God hath giuen children, beware that he bring them vp in the right religion, & let him do the like to his men and his maides, ſo as God may be the common father and maiſter of them all. That was the thing whereof Moſes intended to warne the Iewes, & in their perſons it behoueth vs alſo to bee taught at this day to doe our duties, in yͤ behalfe. And therewithall wee be exhorted to gentlenes alſo. For although the maiſter of a houſe haue preheminence & authoritie ouer his houſhold; yet notwithſtãding his inioying thereof, muſt not be to himſelf alone: but he muſt impart it to al his whole houſhould: for elſe it is a ſeparating of himſelfe from yͤ ſtate of mankind, & a barring of the common ſocietie which God hath ſet among men. Therefore there are here two points to be noted. The one is ỹ whoſoeuer hath charge of children and ſeruants, muſt do his indeuer to lead them to god. And ỹ other is, that all ſuch as are ſet ouer others and haue inferior perſons vnder them in what ſtate of ſubiection ſoeuer it be, ought to be kindharted towardes them, and not to reigne ouer them with tyrannie and cruelty, but to rule them ŵ al gentleneſſe, ſo as they make them partakers of the benefites and gratious gifts which they haue receiued at Gods hand.

That which Moſes addeth concerning *the Leuites*, ſerueth for a further confirmatiõ of ỹ which he had ſpokẽ of their reioycing or making merrie in ỹ preſence of God. For (as I haue declared alreadie) God had appointed ỹ townes of ỹ Leuites to be diſperſed among ỹ tribes, to ỹ intent Leuit.35.8. & Ioſ.21.3. there ſhould be good doctrine taught throughout ỹ whole country. We know what the ſtate of ỹ tribe was, namely how it is ſaid in ỹ ſecond of the Prophet Malachie, ỹ the lippes of the prieſt Mal.2.7. ought to teach knowledge, & that men ſhoulde ſeeke for good doctrine at his mouth, & that the Prieſts were as the meſſengers of ỹ liuing God. God then had choſen ỹ tribe of Leuie to be cõtinually among his people, to hold them in the true and pure religion. For had they bin placed all together in ſome corner by themſelues, after the ſame maner ỹ the reſt of the tribes were in their portions; all the people beſides had bin ŵout teaching. But inaſmuchas there was no tribe where the Leuites had not ſome towne allotted to them; by that meanes the ſeede of Gods word was ſpred abrode, ſo as the perſons whom God had ordained to gouerne his Church & to haue the charge of mens ſoules; were ſo diſperſed ỹ the land was furniſhed with them throughout. And now it is ſaid ỹ the Iſraelits ſhal make merrie with the Leuites ỹ were mingled among thẽ. And why? For they might holde the people in ſome awe. Though there had bin ſome vnruly perſons, yet if they had ſeene the Leuites, who bare their marks, & were ſpecially choſen to the ſpiritual gouernmẽt of ỹ Church: it would haue bin a bridle to reſtraine thẽ ŵal. Thus the Lord ſeeing ỹ frailtie of his people, gaue thẽ this help to hold them in order & modeſtie. As if he ſhold ſay, True it is that I haue choſen you for mine inheritãce, & you be ỹ people whom I haue dedicated to my ſelf: but yet is there a ſpecial holineſſe in the Leuites, bicauſe they preace into ỹ Tabernacle, and are appointed to teach you the lawe, and to keepe you from running into ſuperſtition, & from ſtarting aſide to ſtraunge gods. Seeing then ỹ I haue committed this charge to my Leuites: let them be in your company, that by your beholding of them you may be ỹ more prouoked to feare mee, and to bee merrie after a holy manner, without defyling of your ſelues with the luſtes of the world as ye ſee the vnbeleeuers doe, who ruſh out into all diſorder: that ſeeing I haue appointed my Leuites to bee as meſſengers from me, and ỹ my lawe is in their mouth, & their office is to beare abrode my doctrine: you may not be ſo giuen to diſorder, but rather conſider ỹ I dwell among you, ſo as the very ſight of my ſeruants may do you to vnderſtand, that I am neere at hand, & that you ought not to ſeparate your ſelues from me. And hereby we be put in minde to behaue our ſelues ſoberly and modeſtly, & that we haue neede to be exhorted dayly thereunto by the word of God, for feare of ſtarting out into vnthriftineſſe; for we ſee what feeblenes is in vs. True it is ỹ when we be once entered into a wicked trade, we ſhall ſoone be hardened in it: but to be conſtãt in doing good, we ſhal haue much ado. Therefore although we haue ſome good diſpoſition & deſire to ſerue God: yet muſt he bee faine to quicken vs vp ſtill from day to day. Wherfore let vs ſeeke the meane; which is to reſort to the doctrine ỹ ſhould be our guide, and to yeeld willing eare to the warnings ỹ are giuen to draw vs vnto God, & to confirme vs in his feare & obedience. Yea and when wee haue bin at a ſermon, and haue heard ỹ word that is preached to vs in his name: let it ſerue to keepe vs in awe, & although we bee tempted to vnthriftines, yet let it be as a bridle to reine vs backe vnto God. Thus you ſee howe we ought to vſe the meanes & remedies ỹ God hath appointed vnto vs to redreſſe the frailtie that is in vs. For otherwiſe we would ſtart away by and by, and wonder that we ſhould be ſo vtterly ſtrayed away from our God. That is the thing in effect which we haue to remember vpon the firſt ſentence that is ſet downe here.

Now he addeth afterward, as we haue ſeen alreadie heretofore, *that the people ſhould not ſacrifice in all places, but only in the place that God ſhold chooſe among their tribes.* And that is to hold the people in obedience, that they ſhoulde not attempt to ſerue God after their owne fanſie & imagination. In deede a man might ſay at the firſt bluſh, ỹ there needed no rehearſing of the thing ỹ was eaſie ynough of it ſelfe. But the caſe concerneth not ỹ only vnderſtanding of it, there is another reaſon why god ſetteth down this ſaying ſo oftẽ: which is that men cannot refraine frõ ſwaruing one way or other, but that although they be fully minded for a time to ſerue God, yet doe they ſtart aſide in the turning of a hand, bicauſe they be vnconſtant & light minded. Not ŵout cauſe therefore doth God rehearſe here ỹ ſame thing that we haue ſeene here before, namely that the people ſhoulde not offer ſacrifice in all places. And why? For thinges in thoſe dayes were very darke, & it was needefull for the people to be reſtrained, to know ỹ there was but one God. The heathen had euery one their religiõ by himſelf, & there was no certaintie at al among them. But it behoued the people of Iſrael to be fully reſolued in this wiſe. The God whom we worſhip is the maker of heauen & earth: & bicauſe we bee not able to gette vppe vnto him, hee hath ſhewed himſelfe vnto our fathers, ſo as wee cannot doe amiſſe, if wee worſhip him according to his Lawe. It behoued the people of Iſrael to bee at that point. For had they had diuers altars, and ỹ euery man might haue followed his owne deuotiõ: what a thing had it bin? There wold haue bin ſtore of inuẽtions: they would haue brought in diuerſitie of religions, euery man would haue deuiſed what he had liſted, & the God of Abrahã ſhold no more haue bin worſhipped after his owne maner. For this cauſe is it ſaide, you ſhall haue but one Altar and one Sanctuarie, and God reſerueth to himſelfe the chooſing and appointing out of the place wherin he wil be worſhipped & ſerued. We ſee then ẏ here all libertie is taken from men, ſo as they may not take any thing at all vpon them in the ſeruing of God. Marke that for one point.

Againe, it is ſhewed vs here moreouer, ẏ foraſmuch as we be ſubiect to this corruption of forging fond opinions, & conſequently of falſe and wicked opinions out of nomber: God ment to hold his people in ẏ true vnitie of faith, and his chooſing of one Sanctuarie was as a band of cõcord, to the intent yͤ men ſhould not run gadding euery one after his owne fanſie. To bee ſhort, without agreement in yͤ one faith, wee cannot ſerue God or doe any thing to his liking. And hereby we ſee that men do themſelues no good at all by their fooliſh deuotions, but rather prouoke Gods vengeance the more, by their ſtraining of themſelues to do the things yͤ they haue deuiſed of their owne braine. For yͤ very ground of religion is to knowe whom we ought to ſerue, Iohn 4.22. as our Lord Ieſus telleth vs in ẏ fourth of Iohn, ſaying: We knowe what we worſhip. Nowe he ſpeaketh there of the Iewes, bicauſe they had yͤ law, & therein the full certeintie howe God was to be ſerued. But it is ſaid by the Prophets, that at the comming of our Lord Ieſus Chriſt there Eſa.19.19. & 23.24. ſhould be three Altars, one in Egypt, another in Aſſyria, & the third in Iewrie. Whereby is ment ẏ God ſhulde be ſerued euerywhere. For the materiall Altars were beaten downe. As for the things that are termed Altars in the Popedom they be diueliſh abhominations: for their ſetting of them vp is to ſacrifice chriſt on thẽ. But he hath offred himſelfe once for all, according to yͤ office ẏ was Hebr.9.26. giuen him by God his father. And therefore it were high treaſon & blaſphemie againſt God to haue altars nowadayes among Chriſtians. For Ieſus Chriſt is our onely ſpiritual Altar: & when we be knit vnto him; then is God duely worſhipped and as he himſelfe requireth. Wherefore let vs learne ẏ although the ceremonie be diſanulled; yet ẏ meaning of it may greatly profite vs: which is, ẏ we muſt ſerue God, not by turning aſide euery man after his owne conceites, but by linking our ſelues together in ẏ bond of faith & by agreeing rightly together. And whereupon ſhal this concord be grounded? Vpon Gods word & vpon our Lord Ieſus Chriſt, who is his very wiſdome. For if we reſort to him, we ſhal haue a certaine marke to ſhoote at, & ſuch a one as cãnot deceiue vs. But as ſoone as we ſwarue aſide from him, be it neuer ſo little; by & by we vaniſh away in our own fooliſh thoughts. Thus ye ſee in effect what we be taught as concerning this place.

And let vs marke wel that it belonged to God to chooſe the place, as hath bin told you before, ſo as yͤ Iſraelites had not leaue to ſpie it out thẽſelues, & to ſay, This is the fitteſt place: but God bare all yͤ ſtroke alone. Hereby we be done to vnderſtãd yͤ it is not for vs to ſet vp a ſeruice of god after our own lyking, but ẏ we muſt herken vnto him, and ſo receiue his woord as nothing be added thereunto, as ſhalbe declared yet better in yͤ end of this chapter. And verily when as he ſaith that he will choſe it in *one of their Tribes:* thereby he doth vs to vnderſtand that we muſt not enuie our brethren, though one of them be more honoured than another. Let it content vs that god accepteth our ſeruice; & although ſome of vs be leſſer and ſome greater and excellenter than others: yet muſt not that breed any hartburning among vs, nor occaſion vs to be greeued at Gods graunting of more fauour vnto others than to vs: but euery of vs muſt doe his dewtie in his owne degree, & ſeeke no further but to bee receiued at Gods hande all togither, both they that goe before, and they that come after.

Furthermore let vs marke well, that whereas God ſaith he wil *chooſe that place to put his name in:* it is not ment that his beeing was ſhut vp in the Sanctuarie: but onely that folke ſhoulde there haue a recorde of his preſence. And that was to the intent that the Iewes ſhoulde not buſie their heads about groſſe imaginations, as we ſee men commonly inclined to doe. When God ſtoopeth to imparte himſelfe familiarly vnto vs, wee take occaſion to make him ſome Image; if wee could wee woulde tye him to ſome ſtone or to ſome piller, or coope him vp in ſome corner: and wee thinke wee haue him not with vs, except wee haue ſome viſible ſigne of him. And this was the cauſe why men made puppets and Idolles to repreſent God by. For this cauſe he telleth them expreſly that he himſelfe wil chooſe the place wherein hee will bee worſhipped and ſerued, howbeit not that his being ſhall bee ſhut vp there, but onely that his name ſhall bee there, that is to ſay, that hee will bee called vppon there. And moreouer the Iewes were to bee put in minde, to Exo.25.40. looke vp to the heauenly patterne that Moſes Hebr.8.5. ſawe on the Mount, as oft as they looked vpon the arke of couenant and the other ſignes that God had giuen them, and thereby to bee led to the ſpirituall ſeruice which was figured by thoſe things, wherof Ieſus Chriſt was yͤ very ſubſtance. Col.2.17. True it is that euen at this day ſtill God commeth downe or ſtoopeth vnto our rudeneſſe; inſomuch that it is his will wee ſhoulde haue temples or Churches to aſſemble in, and thither we come together to make our cõmõ prayers there. Againe, Baptiſme is miniſtred there, for Ieſus Chriſt alſo is there amõg vs & ruleth ouer vs, & in his ſupper we haue an aſſurance yͤ we be knit vnto him, & graffed into his body, ſo as we haue but one life cõmon to vs all. Yet muſt we not be held downe by the ſignes and tokens that God giueth vs for our helpe; but wee muſt rather bee conueied vp by them, and not bee wrapped in ſuperſtitiõs, to worſhip god after a fleſhly maner. Wee muſt conſider that hee filleth all thinges, yea euen abyding in his heauenly glory, and there muſt wee ſeeke him by fayth. When wee thinke vpon him, we muſt not draw him downe hither to haue him here after a fleſhly manner, but wee muſt mounte vp by faith into heauen where he dwelleth, as the ſcripture ſpeaketh of him. That therefore is the thing which we haue to remember vpon this place beſides ẏ thinges ẏ haue beene declared already. For I doe but put you in remembrance of the thinges that haue beene diſcourſed more at large heretofore. Pſal.2.4.& 113.5.& 123.1.

Nowe afterward here is leaue giuen by God to his people, to eate fleſhe throughout all the lande of Chanaan, ſo it be not of any Sacrifices, tithes, burntofferinges, Heaueofferinges, or firſt fruites. It ſhall be lawful then for you to eate of all common fleſhe euery where; but as for that which ſhal haue bin ſacrificed vnto me, let it not be eaten of in any other place, than in the ſame which I ſhall haue choſen to ſet my Sanctuarie in. Howebeit, he addeth one worde more here, ſaying: *according to the bleſſing which thy God ſhall giue thee*. Here wee ſee firſt of all, that it were not lawfull for vs to eate one bit of breade, vnles we were ſure in our minds that God giueth it vs and that wee haue leaue of him to eate it. And that is the cauſe why Saint Paul requireth faith where he ſpeaketh of eating and drinking; ſaying that whatſoeuer is not of faith, is ſinne. Rom.14,23 And whereof treateth hee there? Euen of the eating of fleſhe or of herbes, of bread or of fiſhe, and of all manner of foode: and hee ſaith that it muſt be doone with faith. As howe? Some will ſay that faith is too precious a thing to bee mingled with corruptible meates. Yea, but wee muſt be ſure in all our life, that wee attempt not any thing which may diſpleaſe God, or that is not lawfull for vs to doe by his leaue or warrant giuen vnto vs. Therefore in the foreſaide text, by the worde *Faith*, Saint Paul meaneth the recorde that we haue in our eating and drinking, that God ſheweth himſelfe a father to vs, by giuing vs foode to nouriſhe our bodies withall: and that our vſing of the benefites which the earth yeeldeth, is not by ſtealth as though wee woulde robbe him of them; but as it were by receiuing them at his hand. When a father giueth his children euery one his pittance, ſaying, hold here, & eat it: it is no more than God doth dayly vnto vs, when we be certified by his word, ẏ he hath giuen power to ẏ earth to bring foorth corne & wine for our vſe, & deliuered vs ẏ beaſts & all other things to eat of. We muſt aſſure our ſelues ẏ the growing & encreaſing of victuals in the worlde commeth not by haphazard, but of Gods ordinance, who hath appointed them to feede vs through his goodnes. I tolde you this doctrine is verie needeful. For what a thing were it, if we could not eat a morſell of bread without offending God? And yet S. Paul auoweth it to be ſo. And why? For if in my eating & drinking at all times & in all places, I know not that I am beholden to God for ẏ good things ẏ hee hath ordeined for mee: it is al one as if I ſtole it frō him: I do but filch it frō him like a dog or a cat, which taketh that which was not ordeined for her. Yee ſee then that that is one fault.

Againe, it is as it were a burying of God, whē men knowe not that it is he which giueth them the foode for their ſuſtenance. If wee bee not fully perſuaded of that; then is God diſappointed of the honour that belongs to him, ſo as wee acknowledge him not for our father and foſterer, but become ſo brutiſh that wee minde no more the life which is prepared for vs in ẏ kingdome of heauen. But his taking of ſuch fatherly care of vs in this world, is to leade vs vp higher thereby. And ſo wee ſee that vnleſſe we bee ſure that God giueth vs leaue to eate and drinke according to his bleſſing; wee bee but as brute beaſtes, and much worſe than they. Againe, on the other ſide, who giues vs authoritie to deuour Gods benefits? Shall wee wretched creatures which offend God without ceaſſing, preſume to do it of our own heads, without conſidering that wee haue thoſe things of his free goodneſſe, and that they belong not to vs otherwiſe than of Gods good will, who vouchſafeth to ſhewe him ſelfe liberall towardes vs? Surely then doe wee rauin all things to vs without any right or title. Therefore are we blame worthie euerie way for our eating and drinking, till wee knowe that GOD is the giuer of all. And heereby wee bee doone to vnderſtande further, that in our eating and drinking wee muſt not obſerue the traditions of men, but content ourſelues with the teſtimony of Gods good will. And thereunto alſo doeth the holy ſcripture referre vs by condemning the fond toyes that men deuiſe of themſelues, as when they ſay, it is not Lawefull to eate fleſh vpon ſuch a day, this muſt be done and ẏ muſt be done. And what authoritie haue men to bid and forbidde ſuch thinges? For the Pope and all his rable are not able to make a ſilly flye: and ſhall they forbidde vs to eate beefe, mutton, or any other of the thinges that were made for our ſuſtenance? What elſe is their vſurping of ſuch authoritie, than a robbing of GOD of his ſoueraignetie ouer vs? Now then let vs haue an eye to the will of our GOD. And ſith wee knowe that hee hath giuen vs all meates without exception: let euerie of vs vſe them ſoberly, and bee contented to bee ruled by his worde: for to him onely doeth it belong to lay Lawes vpon vs, and it is not for any mortall man to preſume ſo farre. If any man take that vpon him which is not due to him, let vs deſpiſe him, yea and abhorre him, as one that goeth about to ouerthrowe ẏ authoritie of God. And ſo ye ſee what wee haue to marke in Gods ſuffering & giuing leaue vnto his people, to eate fleſh in all places, ſo it were not ſacrificed. As if he ſhould ſay: In your eating and drinking conſider well what is lawefull for you. And howe may you diſcerne that? By my word. Giue your ſelues once ouer vnto me; and you ſhal no more be afraide of any thing. If men lay new Lawes vpon you; make no account of it: for it is ynough for you, that ye haue leaue at my hande.

And nowe Moſes addeth expreſly, *according to the bleſing which thy God ſhall haue giuē thee*. wherby he doeth vs to vnderſtande, that euerie man muſt haue an eye to his owne abilitie, and therby rule his deſires. For if the riche man hauing whereof to liue, doe fare according to his abilitie, and the poore man will needes fare as wel as he: he muſt needes ſmart for it. And God liketh not of it when he that hath not wherewith will needes fare as dayntily as hee that is riche. Indeede we muſt alway beare this leſ- 1.Cor.7.30. ſon of Saint Pauls in mind and put it in practiſe, namely that he which hath abundance glut not himſelfe till he burſt, ne giue himſelf to his pleaſures, according to his ſaying in the xiii. to the Rom.13.14. Romanes, that we muſt not haue a care of our fleſhe to cocker it too much: For our fleſhe deſireth not the beſt things, and our appetites are inordinate: and therefore the following of them were but a confuſed diſorder. Although the richer ſort haue great ſtore of all thinges, yet muſt they not pamper themſelues out of meaſure, ſo as they ſhoulde at any time fall into diſorder, and not indeuour to beſtow of their abundance vppon ſuch as are in neede and pouertie. For Gods meaning is to try the charitie of ſuch as haue wherwith, by giuing them more than they themſelues haue neede of, to the intent they ſhoulde not bee nigardly of the thinges which they haue, but be helpefull to their poore brethren & to ſuch as want. Neuerthelatter, a rich man may fare according to the bleſſing ẏ God ſhall haue giuen him, and the poore man muſt content himſelfe with browne breade if he haue none other, and not ſtrayne himſelfe to eate whytebread as wel as the riche man, but beare his pouertie patiently, and pray to God to nouriſhe him as it were with Manna from heauen: And although hee haue nothing elſe but drie bread to feed on, the ſame muſt ſerue his turne in ſteede of all other vittels. That is the thing in effect, which Moſes meant to ſhewe vs here. And it is a verie good and profitable leſſon: for thereby wee bee doone to vnderſtande that if God giue vs abundaunce, it is a continuall putting of vs in remembrance that hee dwelleth among vs, that wee bee not as theſe drunkardes which in a yeare when there is ſtore of wine, do deſpiſe God and plaie the very brute beaſtes, ſo that if they may not drinke wine till they ſpewe it out again, and powre it in as it were with tunnelles, they haue neuer enough. Let vs beware of ſuch beaſtlines: and let vs beare in mind that we be in Gods preſence. And ſurely if wee beare him that reuerence, we will bee aſhamed to cram our ſelues like dogges or ſwine, and to deface his image in vs by vnmeaſurable eating & drinking til we burſt againe. Lo what we haue to beare in minde.. Likewiſe on the other ſide, if the yeare be barren, ſo as there be ſmall ſtore of wine, and corne is deere: This text teacheth vs to thanke God for it, and to cut our morſels the ſmaller, and to bridle our ſelues. For why? It is ſaide that our eating muſt bee after as our God hath bleſſed vs, ſo as we muſt haue an eye to the abilitie that God hath giuen vs: and accordingly as we haue wherewith, ſo muſt euery of vs learne to rule himſelfe, and not play the vnthrifts ẏ are led away by their luſts, which put all into the platter (as they ſay) to ſatisfie their bellies withal. Some are ſo delicate of their diet, that rather than they wil forbeare when God ſendeth them ſcarcetie, they will ſell their cotes, yea and their diſhes and platters too. Such folke might conſider, that it were good for them to keepe ſomewhat in ſtore, for afterwarde, to the intent that if they fel into ſickneſſe or any other neceſſitie, they might haue wherewith to releeue them. Had they anie honeſtie or any ſtay of themſelues, to thinke that it is Gods will to deale ſparely with them at that time: Had they anie conſideration at all I ſay: they might ſay, Lord thou haſt all good thinges in thine hand, and that ſo plentifully, as thou couldeſt wel giue vs much more: but thou intendeſt to try our patience. Vouchſafe therefore to bleſſe the little that thou haſt giuen vs, ſo as it may ſuffice vs. Let it be as the Manna to vs, that we may perceiue thy fauor towards vs, euen thereby though there were none other thing. But what? All our minde is vpon the filling of our bellies; yea euen without regarding how far God giueth vs leaue to goe. So much the more therefore ought all men both rich and poore, to mark wel this text. Let ẏ man of wealth ſay in himſelfe, it is the bleſſing of my God: & ſith it is ſo, I muſt yeelde him account of it, and I muſt looke verie well about me howe I may vſe theſe thinges aright according to his ordinance: ſo as I giue not my fleſhe whatſoeuer it liketh or luſteth for, but that I behaue my ſelfe ſoberly howſoeuer the worlde go, and alſo imparte my ouerplus to ſuch as haue want or neede, and releeue them with mine aboundance. Let the rich deale after that maner. Againe on the otherſide, let the poore bethinke them thus: Wel, God giueth vs not wherewith to finde our ſelues, and therefore it behoueth vs to beare our poore ſtate patiently, and not giue head to our luſtes: for then ſhall we but prouoke Gods wrath, by following our deintie deſires & ſuch other like thinges: wherefore let vs be well aduiſed to content our ſelues with the little that he giueth vs.

Thus ye ſee that although the rich enioye their eaſe & haue wherewith to maintaine their delights for the preſent time: Yet they muſt bee of ſuch mind, that if God liſt to bereaue them of all things the next morrowe, they muſt not repine to giue ouer al, but ſo humble thēſelues as they may ſay, Lord I wil liue to day according to the bleſſing which thou haſt giuen mee: and if thou liſt to impoueriſhe mee to morrowe, doe thy good pleaſure: onely graunt mee the grace to learne to content my ſelfe with anie other ſtate of liuing than I liue in to day. Whereas to day I fare according to mine abilitie; if thou liſt to bring me downe to browne breade, let mee abide to be brought thereto, and let my necke be pliable to receyue thy yoke. That is the effect of the thinges which we haue to marke vppon this ſentence of Moſeſes, where he declareth that euery man muſt moderate his dyet and fare according to gods bleſſing, that is to ſay, according to the abilitie that God giueth him wherewith to doe it.

And wee bee further warned to beware that we deuoure not all that euer wee can get by pilfry and wicked trades: for that is no bleſſing of

God. When a man hath raked other folks goods to him by fraude and Leawde dealing, can that be called Gods bleſſing? True it is that riches come alwayes from Gods hande: but yet whoſoeuer he is that inricheth himſelfe by rauin & fraude, is reiected of God, and vtterly miſliked of him. So then, let vs marke that although a man coulde by wicked ſhiftes gaine wherewith to feede himſelfe fat; yet muſt he not take ſuch libertie to him. For why? In this place we bee reſtreyned backe to the bleſſing of God. Were this point wel marked, we ſhould not ſee ſo much naughtineſſe in the world as there is to be ſeene nowadayes. For all the care is howe to gette wherewith to maintaine vs: but as for whether the meanes be Lawfull and reaſonable, no man entereth into the examination of that: but ſo he may ſcrape and catch, he neuer takes any further care at al. We ſee what rauening there is, we ſee what deceitful and leawd dealing there is; in ſomuch as there is not anie ſtate or trade of men in ẏ world this day, which is not ſo peruerted as wold irk a man to think vpon it. Euery mans ſeeking is to pul to himſelf ẏ goods of other men, & commonly all is fiſhe that comes to net. For why? We haue no regard of Gods bleſſing, but we winde them in vnto vs, ſome by lying, and ſome by faire gloſing. And to what ende? Forſooth to finde our ſelues withal. Beholde, God calleth vs all, & telleth vs that his bleſſing ſhall Pſal.128.2. light vpon vs if we followe his worde ſimplie: & that he will not faile vs in any thing, at leaſtwiſe if we indeuour to doe what we can. Indeede we may hap to fare hardly nowe and then, ſo as God will not feede vs ſo full as we woulde wiſh: but yet howe ſoeuer wee fare, hee promiſeth to giue ſuſtenance to as many as reſort vnto him. But wee diſappoint our ſelues of it by our owne leawdneſſe. For firſt and formoſt we be troubled and tormented with diſtruſt; ſecondly our vnordinate luſtes doe tempt vs and tickle vs: & thirdly the diuell doeth ſo blinde vs, that wee make no conſcience of pilling and polling, of deceyuing and beguiling, and of giuing our ſelues to al naughtineſſe, ſo we may bee fat fedde, and liue deintily: as for all the reſt wee make none account of it. And therefore let vs remember this worde Bleſſing, as whereby God ſheweth vs that we muſt reſorte wholy vnto him, accordingly alſo as our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt teacheth vs by bidding vs to aske our dayly breade of God his father, whereby wee proteſt that wee holde all thinges of his bleſſing.

Finally he addeth, *That as well the cleane as the vncleane may eate thereof.* Our Lorde doth not here giue leaue to the vncleane, to eat the fruits of the earth with an euill conſcience: but his meaning is that there is not ſo great ſtreitneſſe to be vſed in the receiuing of the cõmon meats and drinkes, as in eating of the ſacrifices. For ẏ eating of the Sacrifices was to another purpoſe. In thoſe holy feaſtes aforementioned, it behoued them in any wiſe to be cleanſed afore hande according to the ceremonie of the lawe: ſo as it was not for any man to come to the Temple and to eate of the Sacrifices, vntill hee hadde firſt cleanſed himſelfe; and water was ſet readie at the comming in of the dore for the ſame purpoſe. But here it is ſaide that there was no ſuch ſtraite bondage to bee obſerued in their common eating and drinking. That is the verie meaning of Moſes. But yet muſt wee marke alſo therewithall, that all that euer we touch is defiled by our vncleanneſſe, if wee our ſelues be not dedicated vnto God, according to this ſaying of Saint Paules, that all things are cleane to the pure and cleane, which haue their conſciences right before God, and cleanſed by faith: Tit.1.15. whereas on the contrarie part, the vnbeleeuers and ſuch as haue no feare of GOD, defile the breade and wine by their touching of it, and do but make all thinges vncleane, ſo as Gods creatures are infected by ẏ filthines that is in them.

This muſt wee holde for a rule: and ſpecially in eating and drinking wee muſt haue the ſaide cleanneſſe of dedicating our ſelues vnto God. Neuertheleſſe wee muſt note that wee cannot at all times be ſo well diſpoſed in our eating and drinking, as when wee come to the Church: there we muſt bee of an other minde. True it is that euen in our laboring, and in our looking to our houſeholde, wee ought to haue God alway before our eyes; and that when we eate and drinke, we ought to doe it in his name, according to the leſſon that I alleadged out of Saint Paule. But when wee come to the Church God is yet neerer vs and more familiar with vs. For our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt aſſureth vs that he is Matt.18.20 there among vs when we come together in his name: and by our holding vp of our hands towardes heauen, wee ſhewe that our comming thither is to preſent our ſelues in the ſight of our God. And therefore wee muſt haue a more ſingular and earneſt affection when we bee come thither, than when wee bee doing of our common buſineſſe. Ought there not to bee a difference put betweene the Lordes ſupper and our common eating and drinking? True it is that whenſoeuer we receiue our ordinarie repaſt, we ought to call vpon God and to giue him thanks, or elſe wee bee defiled. But yet when wee come to the holy ſupper, wee muſt be rauiſhed after an other faſhion, as though wee were no more in this worlde: Our mindes muſt not runne vppon the feeding of our bodies, but vppon Ioh.6.51.53.& 11.25.& 14.6. the ſonne of GOD, who calleth himſelfe our life, telling vs that his fleſhe is our foode, and his bloode our ſpirituall drinke. And therefore it is meete that it ſhould be ſeparated from the thinges that belong to the common order of this earthly life.

Wee ſee then that the meaning of Moſes in this place where our Lorde giueth vs libertie to eate and drinke, is that wee ſhoulde call vppon him: and that although there bee infirmitie in vs, yet muſt not we therefore forbeare ẏ libertie and leaue that GOD giueth vs to vſe the foode which he hath appointed to our vſe: which thing wee may doe with a quiet conſcience, not doubting but that GOD doeth well like of it, ſeeing hee hath giuen vs ſuch warrant, & hath diſpenſed with vs of his owne free goodnes, And ſpecially that when we reſort vnto him, we muſt retyre & call our ſelues backe from al earthly cares, ỳ we may mount vp wholy vnto heauen. As for example, when we be to receiue the holy ſupper, or when wee ſee ỳ Chriſt aſſureth or warranteth vs by Baptiſme, ỳ we be made cleane by him, and newly reformed, ſo as he accepteth vs and taketh vs for his members, to the intent that his fathers iudgement ſeate ſhoulde not be terrible vnto vs: when we thinke on theſe thinges I ſay, it becommeth vs to bee drawen to the heauenly life, and to be as it were ſecluded from our earthly cares, that wee may the better ſticke vnto our God, and fare the better by it all the dayes of our life.

And nowe let vs fall downe in ỳ preſence of our good God ẘ acknowledgement of our faults, praying him to make vs perceiue thē daily more & more, & to teach vs ſo to ſerue him, as we may abide continually in the pure ſimplicitie of his worde, without adding aught to it or taking aught frō it, vpon our own head. And ſeeing we know our ſelues giltie before him of ſo many ſins committed againſt his maieſtie, let vs flee for refuge to his mercie, and not doubt but that ſeeing hee hath vouchſafed (not to haue a viſible Sanctuarie among vs, but) euen to knit himſelfe to vs in the perſon of his ſonne Ieſus Chriſt, wee may aſſure our ſelues that he alwayes hath cōpaſſion of vs, to receiue vs, notwithſtanding that we be ſo wretched creatures as we bee well worthie to bee cut off from him, and to bee vtterly thruſt out of his kingdome. That it may pleaſe him to graunt this grace not onely to vs but alſo to all people and Nations of the earth, &c.

On Wedneſday the ix. of October. 1555.

The Lxxxiiij. Sermon, which is the fifth vpon the twelfth Chapter.

19 Beware that thou forſake not the Leuite of all the time that thou ſhalt be vpon the earth.

20 When the Lorde thy God ſhall haue inlarged thy borders as he hath ſaide, and thou ſayeſt, I will eate fleſh: if thy mind be deſirous to eat fleſh, eat thou whatſoeuer fleſh thou haſt a mind vnto.

21 If the place which the Lord thy God will chooſe to put his name in, be farre from thee, thou ſhall kill of the Oxen and ſheepe which the Lord hath giuen thee, as I haue commanded thee, and thou ſhalt eat of it within thine owne gates, according to thine owne hearts deſire.

22 As the Fallowdeere and the Reddeere are eaten: ſo ſhalt thou eate them. The cleane and the vncleane may eate therof alike.

23 Onely take heede that thou eate not the bloud: for the bloud is the life, and thou mayeſt not eate the life with the fleſh.

24 Therefore thou ſhalt not eate it, but ſhalt powre it vpon the earth as water.

25 Eate not of it therfore: that it may go wel with thee and with thy children after thee, when thou ſhalt haue doone the thing that is right in the ſight of the Lorde.

26 But as for the halowed things that are in thy cuſtodie, and thy vowes; thou ſhalt take and carie them to the place which the Lorde hath choſen.

27 And thou ſhalt offer thy whole burnt offerings both the fleſh and the bloud, vpon the altar of the Lord thy God. And of thy Peace offrings thou ſhalt powre the bloud vpon the altar of the Lorde thy God, and thou ſhalt eate the fleſh.

28 Take heede and hearken to all theſe words which I commaund thee, that it may go well with thee and with thy children after thee for euer, when thou ſhalt haue done the thing that is good and right in the ſight of the Lord thy God.

VE ſawe yeſterday why God appointed the Leuites to haue cities here & there throughout the land of Iurie: namely for the mainteining of the true & pure religion among his people. For if any of them would haue turned away to ſuperſtition, or idolatry; thoſe whom God had appointed to his owne ſeruice, might haue amēded them by good admonitions. So by ỳ meanes was ỳ ſeed of good doctrine ſowen euery where. now purſuing ỳ ſame matter Moſes addeth, *That*

the peo-

people ſhoulde beware in anie wiſe that they defrauded them not of their right. And not without cauſe. For as I haue told you before, God had appointed them of purpoſe to ſerue him, and the greater part of them alſo to teach his people, that his lawe might be knowen. Seeing it was ſo, it was good reaſon that they ſhoulde haue wherewith to find and maintaine them. For in very deede a part of the inheritance belonged to them, becauſe they were deſcended of the linage of Abraham. But GOD had put them from it, to the ende they ſhoulde not bee troubled neither with tilling of the grounde nor with any other buſineſſes, but onely giue themſelues all wholly to the doing of their office. And it is not without cauſe that Moſes plainely exhorteth yͤ people to doe their duetie in this behalfe: for wee ſee the vnthankfulneſſe of the worlde. The Idolaters can finde in their hartes to maintayne their prieſtes, and they ſpare for no coſt: but as for them that ſerue God purely, there is commonly no account made of them, as hath beene ſeene in al times. We ſee how God himſelf complaineth that he was defrauded both of his firſt fruites and alſo of his offeringes, and of all the reſidue which he had appointed to himſelfe in his lawe. But if a man had inquired howe the heathen behaued themſelues towardes their idols: he ſhould haue founde that they were willing to ſpende the moſt part of their ſubſtaunce in their ſuperſtitions. We ſee then as I haue told you alreadie, that the worlde is ſo thankeles towardes the liuing God, yͭ if men be not throughly quickened vp, they let ſlippe al that euer God commaundeth, and coulde bee contented that ſuch things ſhould neuer be ſpoken of. Specially as for thoſe whom God hath ordeined to preach his word, men can find in their hearts, not onely to ſet light by them, but alſo to forſake them vtterly. And why? It is becauſe god rebuketh vs for our faults, but we wold he were further off from vs, & that he would lay the bridle in our neckes, ſo as euery man might do what he liſted: & therfore it greeueth vs to be touched by Gods word. But yet for al that, if thoſe yͭ haue that charge cõmitted to them do their duety; they muſt be importunate in calling vpon vs, by rebuking, exhorting, and reprouing vs, that they may ouercome vs by their liuely rebukes & ſharpe threatnings. Now, that is not yͤ thing which the world coueteth & deſireth. Nay yͤ world had leuer to maintaine ſuch as ſhoulde neuer ſpeake worde of it, than to haue a preacher that woulde rebuke ſin liuelyly. And if it were in yͤ worlds choice, it had alwayes leuer to maintaine a whole couent of Munkes & Chanons to houle out with ful gorge, than to find one preacher that would ſpeake as he ought to do. Men can be contented to haue Organs. And why? For they put men to no griefe by rebuking their ſins. But as for ſuch as preach Gods worde to the quick, men could find in their hartes that they were rid out of the worlde, if it were poſſible. And therfore it is not wͭout cauſe yͭ our Lord ſaith he will not haue them forſaken, which beare abrode yͤ true doctrine in his name. For by that meanes folke bereaue themſelues of the foode of life, in that they refuſe to mainteyne thoſe that bring them the doctrine of ſaluation, which is all one as if they ment to ſtarue themſelues for hunger. And that is the cauſe alſo why Saint Paul ſtandeth ſo much vpon yͤ warning. 1.Cor.9.14.15. Certaine it is that he ſought not his owne profit. Inſomuch that he forbare to take his due wages in ſome places, becauſe he ſawe that men grudged at it. And he choſe rather to take it of other Churches, where he ſerued not, than of yͤ Corinthians, becauſe of the vnthankefulneſſe, which he ſawe among them. Nay, he choſe to labour with his owne handes, rather than hee woulde giue them any occaſion to ſpeake ill of him. Thus haue we a man that is not giuen to his owne profite, but rather forbeareth willingly euen that which God had granted vnto him; and yet he ceaſeth not to tel them, that yͤ preachers of Gods worde ought to be found & mainteined. And why is that? Becauſe wee ſee the diuelles ſuttletie, who deſyreth nothing ſo much as that the Churches ſhoulde bee deſtitute of good ſhepeherdes. Againe Saint Paul hath an eye to the ſpitefulneſſe of the worlde. And that is the cauſe why he ſtandeth ſo much vpon the ſaid point, That thoſe to whome God hath committed the charge of the preaching of his world, ſhould be faithfully mainteined. 1.Cor.9.11. It is a great matter (ſaith he) that we for bringing our ſpiritual goods vnto you, ſhould haue wherwith to ſuſteine our bodies. It is a very faire recompence. And yet if yͭ miſlike you, you ſhewe great malice, and that yee ſet but litle ſtore by the ineſtimable treaſure ſent you of God. Now we ſee to what purpoſe Moſes commendeth here the tribe of Leuie vnto them. It was not ſo much for the profite of thoſe that were to be mainteyned by the offrings, firſt fruites, and tithes; as for the common benefit of the whole people. For it was to the end they ſhould be mainteined altogether in the true vnion of faith, & that they might alwaies haue men to put them in mind to liue in obedience towardes God, and that the Religion might be preſerued in yͤ purenes therof. This is not for yͤ peculiar benefite of yͤ Leuites, but for yͤ general welfare of the whole Church of God.

Now hereupon Moſes repeateth yͤ ſame thing again which I haue expounded heretofore: that is to ſay, *That the Iewes might eat fleſh throughout all the land of Iurie, conditionally that the ſacrifices were reſerued for the ſanctuarie, & for the temple whē the time were come that it were builded.* I haue tolde you already that the cauſe why God gaue ſuch leaue, was to the end that men ſhould learne to refraine frõ the attempting of any thing which they were not ſure to be lawfull for them to do. And howe ſhall we knowe that the things which we doe are acceptable to God? By hauing his word which he giueth vs. For it is not for vs to be further of his counſell, than he diſcloſeth vnto vs. To be ſhort, it is ſhewed vs here, that in all our life wee muſt not ſtirre one finger, except we be ſure that GOD hath giuen vs leaue. Now he for his part leaueth vs not in doubt, but hath giuen vs a ſure and vnfallible rule, ſo as we may alwayes diſcerne the certaintie at leaſtwiſe if wee will holde our ſelues contented with the thing that God alloweth, without adding any thing to his doctrine and his lawe. For there he hath vttered his wil in ſuch wiſe vnto vs, that if we want any thing nowe, it is becauſe we liſt not to harken to him that hath all dominion ouer vs. As for example, all the doubtes that are among the Papiſtes proceede of nothing elſe but of a fooliſh curioſitie which they haue to do better than G O D commaundeth them. O (ſay they) I woulde be ſo holy as nothing might paſſe from mee which ſhoulde not be good. And is it not enough to obey G O D? Yes (ſay they), but I would do yet more. He ẏ paſſeth thoſe bounds, ſhall but torment himſelfe, and dwell in vnquietneſſe al the time of his life, as wee ſee theſe hypocrites are, which are alwayes toſſed and turmoyled with ſome doubt. And what is the cauſe thereof? It is a reward which they deſerue verie well becauſe they will not rule themſelues by Gods worde. But (as the Prophet Eſay ſaieth) if we walk purely and ſimplie according to Gods word, we ſhall haue reſt in our ſoules, and wee ſhall be free from all theſe troubles and debates which the wretched vnbeleeuers make: for they wote not at which ende to beginne, neyther knowe they where to make an end. Therefore let vs marke well howe it is not without cauſe, that G O D ſpeaking of eating and drinking, doeth giue here expreſſe leaue to his people, to the ende we ſhoulde not aduenture anie thing, but in his name, and to doe vs to vnderſtand that he hath ſuch a care of vs, that hee will guide al our ſteppes, and therefore we muſt liue as in his preſence.

Eſa.55.3.

Furthermore let vs learne to receiue the libertie which G O D hath giuen vs, that we may enioy it ſo far forth, as is expedient: for we know ẏ this libertie of ours ought to carie a reſtraint with it: & S. Paul telleth vs ẏ al the things which are lawfull, are not alwaies behoueful, bicauſe they do not always edifie our neighbors. But yet howſoeuer the caſe ſtandeth, we muſt haue our conſciences free, ſo as wee may vſe the thinges that G O D hath graunted vs by his worde. And therefore both in eating and drinking wee may giue him thankes with a cheerefull hearte, as they that knowe howe it is hee that feedeth vs, and that we doe receiue all thinges at his hand. Moreouer we bee continually put in mind hereby, ẏ he is neere at hand with vs, and ẏ his prouidence extendeth euen to ẏ leaſt things. For it may well ſeeme that eating and drinking are no ſuch thinges as are worthie that God ſhoulde haue regarde of them. But yet it is Gods will to beare ſway in that behalfe, to the ende that we ſhoulde knowe the fatherly care that hee hath of vs, not onely in reſpect of our ſoules, but alſo in reſpect of our bodies, though they bee tranſitorie and corruptible.

1.Cor.6.12. & 10,23.

Hereunto Moſes addeth, that *the people ſhoulde refrayne from eating the bloude of beaſtes.* Whereby he doeth vs to vnderſtande, that wee muſt ſo vſe Gods creatures, as we abhorre all crueltie. For at the firſt ſight it ſeemeth an vnnaturall thing to kill the beaſtes to whome G O D hath giuen life, by knocking of them downe and by cutting of there throtes. It ſeemeth to be a chaunging of Gods ordinaunce, and an vtter peruerting of all thinges, when men take leaue to doe ſuch thinges. Yet notwithſtanding our Lorde ſayth that men may lawfully eate the fleſhe of beaſtes, and that hee hath created them for mans vſe. Neuertheles to the intent to inure his people to meekeneſſe, hee willeth them to abſteyne from bloude. But that ſerued but for the time of the Lawe and the ceremonies. For as wee haue ſeene alreadie, our Lorde gouerned the people of olde time as little babes. And wee knowe that men teach young children all thinges that are good: but for aſmuch as they haue not yet the capacitie to vſe thinges as they that are come to mans eſtate: men holde them in awe, and ſuffer them not to haue thinges at will which are lawfull of themſelues. As howe? Men beate a childe for handling a knife, becauſe hee cannot tell yet howe to vſe it. So then G O D vſed a childiſhe kinde of inſtruction and as it were rudimentes, or euen as wee ſay, the A, B, C, to enter that people withall which was yet rude and weake; but yet wee knowe what the ende and intent of the Lawe was, in commaunding men to abſteyne from the bloud of beaſts. For Gods will was that men ſhoulde abhorre all crueltie. And the ſame expoſition hereof is ſet downe by Moſes himſelfe in the ninth Chapter of Geneſis. For after the floude God declareth that men may well eate the fleſhe of beaſtes, ſo they forbeare to eate of their bloud. And why is that? Becauſe it is to bee conſidered, that the ſoule or life of euerie liuing thing is after a ſorte repreſented by the bloude. And I forbidde you all manſlaughter (ſayth G O D:) beare well in minde that men are created after myne owne image: and therefore yee muſte not worke any outrage one to an other. For whoſoeuer ſheddeth mans bloode, ſhall haue his bloude ſhedde by man. Wee ſee (I ſaye) that the reſpect which our Lorde hadde, was not of the brute beaſtes: but rather that his meaning was to holde vs together in brotherly loue. And therefore hee gaue the people of olde time a figure, whereby to put them in minde that they ſhoulde not offer any outrage to the reaſonable creatures. That is the very effect.

Gen.9.3.

Gen.9.4.

Gen.9.5.

Nowe as touching the Ceremonie, that is no more in vſe: it was meete that all ſuch thinges ſhoulde bee doone away at the comming of our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt: but yet doeth the ſubſtance of it continue with vs ſtill, ſo as G O D commaundeth vs to liue peaceably one with another. For ſeeing it is tolde vs in his Lawe, that it was not lawfull to eate the bloude of beaſtes: howe much the rather ought wee to ſpare the bloode of men? For men are not ſette in the worlde to make meate of; but G O D hath prynted his marke vppon them, and made his owne image to ſhine foorth in them, to the ende that wee by our ſparing of them, ſhoulde ſhewe what reuerence we beare towards GOD. There are two thinges which we ought cheefly to regarde in maintaining concorde and friendſhip among men. The one is that wee bee all of one kinde. Eſa.58.7. Thou ſhalt not deſpiſe thine owne fleſhe, ſaith the Prophete. And in deede, we ſee that euen the wilde beaſtes do through a naturall inſtinct keepe companie together, and euery of them liues quietly with others of the ſame ſort. Needs then muſt wee bee more peruerſe and leſſe reaſonable than the brute beaſtes, if wee fall to deuouring one an other, and play the cats and dogges, as they ſay. Neuertheleſſe, conſidering the inordinate vnrulineſſe that is among men, howe there is neither vprightneſſe nor indifferent dealing among them: ſurely there needeth none other iudge to condemn them of their crueltie, than the very wilde beaſtes.

But there is yet a further thing, which I ſaide to bee the ſeconde point: and that is, that God hath ſet his image in vs. Therefore when I doe any outrage to my neighbour, it is all one as if I ſhoulde deface the image of GOD, and ſo am I guiltie of high treaſon. Wherefore let vs beare well in mind ẏ our Lord maketh great account of the maintenāce of peace & agreement betweene men: the meane whereof is that no man offer any violence or wrong vnto his neighbour. And ſurely wee knowe howe greatly God miſliketh manſlaughter. For the lawe was made Deut.21.1. ſo ſtrait in that behalfe, that if a bodie were founde deade by chaunce, and it was not knowen who killed it, the elders ſhoulde meete about it, and after great ſearch for the matter, they ſhoulde take a ſolemne othe that none of them was guilty of the murther: thereupon they ſhoulde offer a ſacrifice, to witneſſe that the land ſhoulde be as it were defiled if God puniſhed not ſo heynous an offence, thoughe the murtherer were not founde. And what ſhall then become of vs when our handes are imbrewed with bloode, and the murtherer is knowen, and we be full of crueltie towardes our brethren? Thinke we to ſcape the hande of ẏ Iudge vnpuniſhed, when as he hath pronounced ſuch ſentence? Yea and euen when manſlaughter is committed in battels, although the ſame be permitted when the warres are Lawfull: Yet notwithſtanding the ſcripture telleth vs there is a kinde of defiling in it, to the end ẏ euen when men are compelled to ſlaie their enemies 1.Chro.22.8 in the maintenaunce of iuſt quarels, they ſhould conſider thus with themſelues: Alas, I muſt be faine to deface here the creatures that are ſhaped after the image of God: and thereupon be ſorie and loth to doe it. Nowe then let vs marke that aboue all thinges it is Gods will we ſhould liue quietely among our ſelues, without offering of any violence or outrage one to another. But truely, murthers are aboue all thinges moſt horrible in Gods ſight: and yet muſt we marke therewithall, that by that meanes all other outrages are forbidden. And that was the cauſe Eſa.1.15. why the Prophete Eſay vpbraided the Iewes, with the blouddineſſe of their handes. It was not for that they had robbed by the highwayes ſides, or for that they had ſo beaten or ſtricken foolke, as they might haue beene indited for it before earthly Iudges, but it was for the pilferies and extorſions which they had committed ſecretely, and for their wrongfull conſuming of other mens ſubſtaunces. Although then that there bee no open murther committed nor any ſuch outrageous act done as may be condemned by ordinarie iuſtice: yet doeth not God accept that as ſufficient, except wee bee free from all rauin, and wrongdealing, and haue liued ſo vprightly among our neighbours, as we haue done nothing to them which wee woulde not haue done vnto our ſelues.

Moreouer we haue to note howe Saint Iohn 1.Ioh.3.15. in his Canonicall Epiſtle ſaith that he which hateth his neighbour in his heart, is a murtherer alreadie before God. Although this hatred of ours be not knowen, although wee ſhewe no outwarde token to the worldewarde that we be caried with deſire of reuēge, although there appeare no ſuch thing as may diſcouer our malice vnto men: Yet are we guiltie of murder before God, if we haue any hartburning at all within vs. For euen that were a giuing of place vnto Satan, as Saint Paul telleth vs here where hee warneth vs that the ſunne ſhoulde not go downe Ep.4.26.27 vppon our anger. He ſaith that the partie which hath his heart ſo infected with hatred and rancor giueth Satan the poſſeſſion of him to reigne ouer him. That is the thing which wee haue to beare in mind.

I tolde you euen nowe, that the vſe of this ceremonie hath ceaſed euer ſince the comming of our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt. And therefore we ought to bee the more incouraged to ſerue GOD, ſith wee ſee that wee bee not reined in with ſo rough a bitte, nor held ſo ſhort as the Fathers of olde time were. Yee ſee howe at this day, GOD giueth vs leaue to eat the bloud of beaſtes, which thing was not graunted to the Iewes. Wee knowe what is tolde vs of it by the Apoſtles themſelues. For they made not a decree of it, as the Papiſtes vnderſtande it, neither chaunged they any thing in Gods word, (for that had beene high treaſon to God): but foraſmuch as they knewe that our Lord Ieſus Chriſt, had by his comming aboliſhed the Ceremoniall lawe: they ſhewed that it might bee lawful to eate bloude, ſo it were done without offence to others. For their forbidding of it in the fifteenth of the Actes, was but for a Act.15.20. 29. time; and thereby they ſhewed that it was free for euery man according to conſcience, to maintaine peace and concorde withall. In deed they counſelled men to abſteyne from it, howbe it that was but for a time (as I ſaid) vntil the faithfull were better ſetled in the doctrine of the Goſpell.

And nowe let vs applie this doctrine to our owne vſe. I haue told you alreadie, that firſt and foremoſt it behooueth vs alwayes to brydle our ſelues, aſſuring our ſelues that nothing is permitted vs which breedeth offence. And why? Becauſe God bindeth vs one to another. But yet for al ẏ, we haue our conſciences at liberty, ſo as wee knowe that the thinges are free to vs, which were not permitted to the fathers of olde time. Nowe then ought not this to moue vs the more to ſerue God, which ſheweth himſelf ſo freeharted towardes vs? For if we were vnder the bondage of the Lawe; wee ought to abſtaine from manſlaughter, ſeeing that the bloude of beaſtes were forbidden vs, which at this day is permitted vnto vs. And therefore let vs beware wee abuſe not ſuch goodneſſe of our God: but rather the more that hee graunteth vs, the more let euerie of vs bethinke him to holde himſelfe in his obedience & ſubiection, that we play not the looſe Colts as the prouerbe ſaith. That is the effect of the thinges which wee haue to note vppon this text.

Now as touching the *Vowes and Oblations* wherof Moſes ſpeaketh ſo much; let vs remember what hath bin ſaide heretofore; namely howe it is not Gods will that his people ſhould eate and drinke, without hauing ſome recorde that all commeth of him: As for example, whereas at this day he giueth vs leaue to eate and drink, euerie man according to his abilitie; his meaning is that wee ſhoulde giue our neighbours part with vs, and ſhewe by our almoſedeeds that wee doe homage vnto him with the things that he hath giuen vs, as belonging vnto him alone. There is not nowadayes the like order that was vnder the Lawe of Moſes, concerning oblations, firſtfruites, and Sacrifices: but Almoſedeedes are the ſacrifices that God liketh of, as **Hebr.13.16** is ſhewed vnto vs, ſpecially in the Epiſtle to the Hebrewes. And it is a doctrine that is verie rife in the holy ſcriptures. But there it is ſaide expreſly, that wee muſt not forget the brotherly loue which wee ought to haue in ſuccouring our neighbours that are diſtreſſed: for they bee the ſacrifices which God requireth and alloweth. Sith it is ſo then, let vs marke well, that if a man haue wherewith to maintaine himſelfe abundantly, hee muſt not exempt himſelfe from doing ſeruice vnto God therewithall. And after what manner? Euerie man muſt ſtreine himſelfe to the vttermoſt of his power to ſuccour and releeue ſuch as haue ſcarcetie & want of worldly goods. Thus yee ſee howe the right vſe which our Lorde appointeth to all his creatures, is to offer them vp vnto him, to ſhew that we holde all of him. That is the very meaning that was intended in all the firſt fruites of olde time. And although the Ceremonie continue not at this day; yet ought the truth thereof to reigne ſtill among vs. Wherefore let vs learne to cheriſh our ſelues in ſuch ſort, as wee forget not other folks: and ſpecially let vs beare in minde, that our vnthankfulneſſe will defile all our good fare, if wee acknowledge not God to bee the giuer of all thinges vnto vs. Wee heare what our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt ſaide to the hypocrites that tooke greate paines to make cleane their veſſelles that there might bee no **Matt.23.25.26.** ſpotte in them. Make cleane the inſides of them too, quoth hee. And afterwarde hee addeth, that the right way for men to make themſelues cleane, is to giue to the poore, and not to buſie themſelues about a ſort of pelting trifles as the worlde doeth continually, who thinke to dally with God, and woulde giue him rittlerattles to play with as if hee were a babe, but they cannot beguile him ſo. Therefore according to Ieſus Chriſtes exhortation, if wee meane that the meates which we take ſhoulde be ſanctified vnto vs, let vs looke that God bee honoured by them, and let vs beare well in minde howe it is of his onely freegoodneſſe that wee bee nouriſhed by them. And foraſmuch as wee can neither doe him good nor harme, neither hath hee neede of any thing: let vs ſhewe our good will towardes his poore ſeruauntes: For they bee his bailifes whome hee ſendeth to vs, to receiue the fines and other ducties that wee owe him for all his benefites. Thus yee ſee in effect what wee haue to gather vppon that ſaying.

Nowe it is ſaide further, *that if the people doe the thinges that are right and iuſt before God, they ſhalbee bleſſed, both they and their children*. Hereby wee bee ſtill warned, that if wee will direct our life aright, wee muſt not followe our owne good intents as they cal them, but hearken what God ſayth vnto vs, and reſt ſimplie vppon his will, as ſhalbe declared more at large to morrowe by Gods will. Neuertheleſſe Moſes warneth the people here as he doth in manie other places, ÿ they muſt not demeane themſelues after their owne fancies, but in any wiſe giue eare vnto God. If thou doe that which is good and righteous ſaieth he; And in whoſe ſight? In the ſight of men? True it is that we ought to liue in ſuch ſort as wee giue no cauſe of offence to any bodie, ſo as if any ſpeake euil of vs, they may haue their mouthes ſtopped. But yet muſt not men bee made iudges of their liues; that authoritie muſt bee reſerued vnto GOD. And that is the cauſe why the ſcripture meaning to betoken an angelicall perfection, ſaieth that ſuch a man hath walked before God. For if wee ſhoulde faſhion our ſelues after the worlde, what a thing were it? Wee ſee howe the greateſt multitude liue out of all order, and ſo ſhoulde wee make euill cuſtome a Lawe. When whoredome, drunkenneſſe, outrage, violence, and blaſphemie reigned; wee woulde beare our ſelues in hande that ſuch thinges were permitted vs. And why? Becauſe they be growen into cuſtome.

Nowe therefore, if wee ſhoulde followe the guiſe of the worlde, wee ſhould bee caried quite away. Againe, euen they that pretende to bee fulleſt of deuotion, may chaunce to vſe ſome pelting traſh and baggage in the ſeruing of God: they may happe to make a number of geugawes and rifferaffe: but all ſuch thinges are nothing worth, they bee but flatte mockerie. So then, it behoueth vs to walke before God; & although wee ſee thinges vtterly out of order, and all brought to confuſion, yet muſt wee holde the right way ſtill which GOD ſheweth vnto vs. If wee ſee men goe aſtray, and deuiſe neuer ſo many fonde deuotions, let vs leaue all ſuch thinges, and be contented to follow Gods ordinance. Surely although the worlde like neuer ſo well of our doings, yet ſhall wee not faile to bee condemned: but if God allowe of vs, then haue wee a good warrant. As for example, becauſe that nowadayes wee vſe not the gewgawes of the Papiſts, we haue not any puppets here, wee haue no decking of altars, wee haue no tapers nor ſuch other ſtuffe: they laugh our plaine dealing to ſcorne, and they thinke there is no ſeruing of GOD among vs. But howſoeuer wee fare, wee haue heere a good recorde; which is, that wee doe the thinges that are good in the ſight of our God. And it is not for once onely that Moſes ſpeaketh heereof: Wee haue ſeene other textes heretofore tending to the ſame effect: but here this ſaying is ſet down twice within tenne lines: and it is no more than needeth, conſidering howe frowarde wee bee to doe the thinges which the worlde liketh, inſomuch that wee couet to bee ſoothed, and will needes alwayes iuſtifie our ſelues to the worldwarde. Moſes therefore bringeth backe to that point. No (ſaieth hee), be contented to doe whatſoeuer our Lorde inioyneth you. For if hee allowe of your doings, then is it perfite righteouſnes: and therfore hardily laugh all the world to ſcorne. So then, that is one point which we haue to beare in minde, when Moſes telleth vs that wee muſt doe that which is good before God.

And nowe to giue the people the better courage, hee addeth immediately a promiſe, ſaying: *To the intent thou maiſt proſper, both thou and thy children for euer.* Here firſt of al we ſee that which hath beene touched alreadie; that is to wit, that our Lorde prouoketh vs to ſerue him with the better courage, by profering vs reward. Truely hee is not bounde to vs in any caſe: inſomuch that when we ſhall haue ſerued him, yea though it bee a hundred thouſande times more than wee doe; yet are wee ſtill indetted to him neuertheleſſe: for wee be his. And wee muſt marke our Lorde Ieſus Chriſtes ſimilitude, howe that if a man haue a ſeruant that is as his ſlaue, when his ſeruaunt hath laboured all the day long, and commeth home at night, his maſter will not riſe vp to giue him his ſupper, but commaunde him to waite vppon him ſtill at his table. Nowe it is certaine that wee owe much more vnto God, than men owe one to another. Let vs ſtreyne our ſelues to the vttermoſt of our power, yea and aboue al our power, and yet ſhall wee not bee able to diſcharge our ſelues of the hundreth parte of our duetie towardes him, and what rewarde then can wee deſerue at his hande? Neuertheleſſe, of his owne freegoodneſſe it is ſaide that wee ſhall not loſe our labour in ſeruing him. So then let vs marke that Gods meaning is not to place any worthineſſe in our workes by promiſing vs rewarde: but onely to incourage vs the more to them. And indeede wee bee too ſlothfull, if the regarde therof moue vs not. Beholde, God might commaund me, and exact at my hande whatſoeuer he liſteth, for I am bounde to him in all caſes and all reſpects: and yet to the ende that no ſloth ſhoulde holde me backe, hee telleth me that if I ſerue him hee will proſper mee; and in his ſo doing there paſſeth as it were a couenant, whereby he bindeth himſelfe vnto vs. If this moue vs not, muſt it not needs bee that we bee more harde than ſtones? Yet notwithſtanding, wee ſee that the wretched world cannot be wunne by any meanes. When the promiſes are ſet before vs; that God will bleſſe vs, though wee bee minded to giue our ſelues to his ſeruice, yet do we not ceaſe to yeeld to all euill, and wee beare our ſelues in hande that wee ſhall benefite our ſelues greatly by prouoking his diſpleaſure. If wee ſpie any likelihood of gaine; wee runne gadding after it, and euery of vs is rauiſht in loue of it. And what commeth of it when we go about to inrich our ſelues after that faſhion by craft & wicked practiſes? When wee will needes attaine to ſome ambition or dignitie, what will bee the ende of it? Our Lorde will curſe it euerie whit. It ſeemeth then that we intende to proſper euen as it were in deſpite of God. And wee bee ſo caried away by our affections, and ſo driuen by the headineſſe of them, that God cannot holde vs backe, neither by bridles, nor by ropes, nor by cheynes. Loe here a greate miſchiefe, that although our Lorde allure vs neuer ſo ſweetely to him, & labour to win vs to him by promiſing vs rewarde: yet notwithſtanding we bee ſo full of miſchiefe, that to our ſeeming, all his promiſes are vaine & nothing worth; they moue vs not a whit. But as for the allurements of Sathan, they drawe vs to thẽ, inſomuch that we beare our ſelues in hand, that although God bee againſt vs and our enemie, yet wee ſhall not faile to proſper, ſo the worlde laugh vppon vs, and that there bee ſome likelihood of aduancement. Marke that for one point.

Luke.17.7.

Furthermore, wee ſee that euen the wickeddeſt faile not to ſtande in their owne conceites. As for example, wee ſee nowadayes that in the Popedome men make a ſhielde of theſe textes, to ſhewe that God is beholden to vs, that our workes are deſertfull, and that wee bee able to purchace Gods grace, yea and euen euerlaſting ſaluation; ſo as not onely God muſt needes proſper vs in this worlde, but alſo the heritage of the heauenly kingdome becommeth as a conqueſt vnto vs. The world (ſay I) beguileth it ſelfe in this behalfe. And who bee they that ſpeake ſo boldly of it? Euen the greateſt deſpiſers of God. As for example, ye ſhall ſee a ſort of theſe Frierly flatterers diſpute of deſertes with full mouth; and yet for all that, they bee men without God, without religion, wicked out of meaſure, and ſcorners of God. Alſo let vs take the greateſts pretenders of holineſſe among them, and wee ſhall finde them full of pride and ſtatelineſſe, full of malice and enuie againſt their neighbours, and burning with couetouſneſſe. They make a faire outwarde ſhewe of holineſſe, but inwardly, there is no ſoundneſſe at all. Their life bewrayeth that they bee ranke rebelles againſt God, and that they doe but turne the beſt ſide outward in al their deuotions: and yet in the meane while, all their talke is of Merites, Merites.

rites. And what manner of deſerts? Looke vppon their liues, and you ſhall ſee what they be. But firſt and formoſt, howe can our workes deſerue, but by Gods accepting of them of his owne free goodneſſe? For it ſtandeth vs in hand, not only that he bind himſelfe vnto vs, as he doth notwithſtanding that hee neede not except hee liſted; but alſo moreouer, that hee accept our works in good worth, forgiuing the faults & blemiſhes that are in them. For we cannot bring any one work vnto him which is not defiled with ſome imperfection, ſo as there is alwayes ſome fault to be found in it. Now then we ſhoulde bee found blameworthy in all our vertues if God liſted to examine them with rigour. And ſo what becommeth of the promiſes, which tell vs that our works are deſertfull? Nay, let vs marke that after our Lords binding of himſelfe ſo freely vnto vs, hee yeeldeth vs rewarde for the ſeruice that we haue offered vnto him, and then accepteth our workes of his owne free goodneſſe. As howe? By putting all the blots and blemiſhes of them out of his rememberance, ſo as hee imputeth them not any more. And that is the way for vs to proſper all kinde of wayes, through his onely free goodneſſe. But yet by the way let vs call to minde the matter that wee haue touched afore: namely that we be verie wretched, ſeeing our Lorde allureth vs to him ſo gently and with ſo great courtiſie, ſaying, Go to my childrẽ, I deſire nothing elſe but to maintaine you in proſperitie, doe you no more but followe mee: and yet notwithſtanding, after this choice of proſperitie offered vnto vs, wee forſake our GOD, and runne gadding after the vanities of this worlde, Sathan carieth vs away with his trumperies, and wee ſhut our eyes wittingly, and wilfully, as though all our ſeeking were to bee deceiued that wee might periſh: and yet for all this, wee ceaſe not to complaine when wee ſee the miſeries and aduerſities of this worlde light vpon vs. And in what a time are wee? Wee ſee nowadayes howe there is war on yͤ one ſide, and dearth on the other; all thinges are ſo farre out of order as it is pitie to beholde, and euery man mourneth, but no man hath an eye to the cauſe of the miſchiefe. For if wee thought vppon it, wee coulde not but perceiue Gods hande to be vppon vs, yea and that in ſuch wiſe, as it woulde make vs to bethinke vs after this manner: Alas, wee haue forſaken the fountaine of all welfare, and therefore it is good reaſon that wee ſhoulde nowe feele thirſt. For God is readie on his part to giue vs our fill, hee is not nigardly, his power is not diminiſhed, he hath the fulneſſe of all good thinges in him: and therefore if wee be deſtitute, of whom is it long? When a man runs gadding heere and there, and forſaketh a fountaine, and goeth on wandering into deſert places where hee is in daunger to die for thirſt, ſo as hee beareth out his tongue halfe a footelong, and findeth not a droppe of water to refreſh himſelfe withall: is hee not worthie to die for thirſt, ſeeing he hath ſo forſaken the fountaine? So then let vs marke that God withdraweth his bleſſings from vs, becauſe wee haue forſaken him, and it is a iuſt rewarde whereof wee bee well worthie. And yet by the way wee be warned therewithall, to returne to our God: for his will is not that we ſhoulde pine in ſuch ſort, as he ſhould not bee ready to receiue vs againe. True it is that wee bee driuen to feele our harmes in good earneſt, that wee may bee moued with hartie deſire to returne vnto him: But yet notwithſtanding, for all his rough chaſtiſing of vs, and for all the long continuance of our miſerie, wee miſſe not to come into his fauour againe, and to be made partakers of his benefites, when we ceaſe to ſhrinke away from him, and be fully minded to put our ſelues againe vnder his obedience.

So then, let vs learne to put this doctrine of Moſeſes in vre, namely of doing that which is good and rightfull in the ſight of our God. And let vs marke howe it is not onely for a day or two that God ſaieth hee will bee mercifull and fauourable to his people: but that he will holde out to the ende, yea euen after the deceaſe of thoſe that ſhall haue ſerued him. And heerein wee haue a confirmation of our hope of the euerlaſting life. For if God holde on in doing vs good euen after our deceaſe, in the perſon of our children: it followeth that hee will not forget vs, but that when wee haue finiſhed our race in this worlde, we ſhalbe gathered vp vnto him, to inioy the benefites fully and perfectly, whereof hee hath giuen vs but a taſt by hope. Therefore muſt wee marke that point; and ſith we bee ſo naughtie and frowarde, that wee ceaſe not to go aſtray and to runne gadding here and there: let vs runne backe againe to him, and conſider that his vttering of his will vnto vs by worde of mouth, or his writing of it in paper or parchment, is not ynough for vs: but that hee muſt bee faine to write in it our hearts alſo. Seeing then that wee bee ſo frowarde as to ruſh out into naughtineſſe, and to turne aſide from the right way: let vs pray our good God to holde vs ſo in by his holy ſpirite, that although wee ſee things in horrible diſorder nowadayes, ſo as wee bee moued at the beholding of the preſent ſtate of the world: yet notwithſtādīg we may not ceaſe to holde our ſelues ſtill vnder his hande, and gouernement: which thing if wee doe, ſurely wee may defie all that euer the vnbeleeuers doe practiſe againſt vs. For if they deſpiſe vs, if they ſhake vs off, if they abhorre vs: what for that? Yet are wee ſure that God hath not giuen vs his worde in vaine, but that if wee ſticke thereunto, wee may bee well apaide though men finde fault with vs, for wee ſhall bee acquit and iuſtified before GOD and his Angels, though the worlde haue condemned vs. Thus yee ſee howe wee may walke in ſuch certaintie and hope, that although wee ſee ſtumbling-blockes rounde about vs, yet ſhall wee neuer bee thruſt out of the right way, and therewithall wee ſhall bee well aſſured, that our Lorde will holde vs vnder his protection, ſo as when Satans vnderlinges haue wrought what they can, and the diuell himſelfe hath ſtreined all his force to the vttermoſt to ouerthrowe vs; yet notwith-

Ier.32.39.
Ezec.11.19
& 36.27.
2.Cor.3.3.

withſtanding foraſmuch as wee bee ſhrowded vnder the ſhadowe of our God, and haue his bleſſings printed in vs, wee neede not to feare but that hee will continue the ſame from day to day. And although wee ſee neuer ſo many changes and backturnings in this world: yet are wee ſure that we cannot light but vpon our feete, ſo long as our Lorde bee our vpholder and ſtocke to leane vnto.

Nowe let vs fall downe in the preſence of our good God with acknowledgement of our faults, praying him to make vs ſo to feele them, as wee may bee led to true repentance, and not onely craue forgiueneſſe of the ſinnes which we haue committed, but alſo obtaine ſuch increaſe of his grace in vs henceforth, as he may bee glorified by our whole life, when hee hath brought vs backe againe to his holy Lawe. And ſo let vs all ſay, Almightie God, Heauenly father, &c.

On Thurſday the x. of October. 1555.

The Lxxxv. Sermon which is the ſixth vpon the twelfth Chapter.

29 When the Lorde thy God ſhal haue rooted out before thy face the nations which thou goeſt to poſſeſſe, ſo as thou haſt them in poſſeſſion and dwelleſt in their Lande:

30 Then beware thou be not ſnared by them, after that they be ouercome before thee. And enquire not after their gods, ſaying: Howe did theſe nations ſerue their gods? I wil doe ſo too.

31 Thou ſhalt not doe ſo to the Lorde thy God. For they haue done all ſuch things to their gods, as the Lorde abhorreth and hateth. For they haue burnt euen their ſonnes and daughters in fire to their gods.

32 Therefore whatſoeuer I commaund you, looke that yee doe it, and put not any thing to it, neither take any thing from it.

When we heare that Moſes warneth the Iewes that they turne not away from the right ſeruing of God after his ſetting of them in poſſeſſion of their inheritance: we may thinke they were a very malicious people, & right hard to be gouerned. For what is it that Moſes requireth of them? That they ſhould not forget the partie that had redeemed them, and afterward giuen them his lawe, but that they ſhoulde holde themſelues at a ſtay, and not defile themſelues with the ſupeſtirtions of the heathen. And they had two thinges to hold them to the ſeruice of God. For they ought to haue borne in minde after what maner he had deliuered them from the bondage of Egypt: and did not ſuch a gracious goodneſſe well deſerue that they ſhoulde haue perſiſted continually in the acknowledging of their redeemer? Againe they had very faire lookingglaſſes ſet before them for example, in that they ſawe that Gods rooting out of the inhabiters of the Lande of Chanaan, was a token that hee coulde not away with any of all their abhominations: and ought not the Iewes to haue fared the better by their beholding of ſuch examples? But nowe that wee knowe the naughtineſſe of that people, let vs come to our ſelues and bee well aſſured that wee bee not better than they were, but haue neede of the warning that is giuen heere. And for proofe hereof God doth dayly renew his gracious goodnes towards vs. Had we felt his goodneſſe but once in all our life, it ought to ſerue vs for a bridle to hold vs vnder his obedience. But he ceaſeth not to increaſe his benefites ſtill dayly, and yet wee forget it in the turning of a hand, and wee neuer think vpō it any more, to benefit our ſelues by it. To bee ſhorte, it ſeemeth that all our indeuour is to burie Gods benefites that hee beſtoweth vpon vs, that we might haue no occaſion to honor him. Lo how our vnthankfulnes bewraieth it ſelf too much on yͤ one ſide. Yet notw̃ſtãding we ſee how God giueth vs ſufficient warnings, by chaſtiſing others yͭ haue doone amiſſe before our eyes, and by ſparing vs: and ought wee not to bethinke vs better of the iudgementes which hee executeth, after that faſhion? Yes: for they bee no thinges done in hudder mudder, there is no more for vs to do but to take heede to them. But it ſhould ſeeme that wee play the blinde buſſardes wilfully, and liſt not to knowe any of the thinges which are too too apparant and notorious. Therefore whether it bee that God do drawe vs to him by the great number of benefites which he beſtoweth vppon vs, or that hee teache vs to feare him by puniſhing offenders in our preſence; al this booteth vs not, for we be vnthankfull, and the time is but loſt in doing vs good, inſomuch that although

though wee ſee howe hee hath ſhewed himſelfe iudge againſt ſuch as haue offended him, yet wee thinke not vppon it, but let it ſlippe. Can wee caſt our eye any where nowadayes, but wee muſt needes ſee a great number of manifeſt examples, whereby wee ought to take warning to liue warely and aduiſedly? Wee ſee howe whole Nations and Countries are not ſpared, and wee ſee the like in priuate perſons: all is full of ſighing and crying, and it is all one as if God ſhould ſounde a trumpet to the puniſhing of ſome offender, that euerie man might bee warned to take example by him. Wee ſee theſe thinges: but howe doe wee benefite our ſelues by them? Let vs not thinke then that in this place Moſes ſpeaketh but onely to the Iewes: but let vs vnderſtand ẏ it was Gods will to ſhew vs by them, that euen after wee knowe him to be our father and Sauiour, and euen after hee hath powred out the infinite riches of his mercie vppon vs; Yet haue wee ſtill neede to bee warned to liue in his feare: for otherwiſe wee will turne our backes vppon him. Againe, when hee hath warned vs by many examples; that is not ynough vnleſſe hee quicken vs vp to ſet our minds vpon it, ſo as wee may perceiue wherein it was his will that we ſhoulde fare the better by it.

But there is yet another point; which is, that when wee bee ſo taught by other mens harmes, and by Gods bearing with vs in that hee liſted not to puniſh our faultes: we ſhoulde atleaſtwiſe preuent his anger, and ſeeing there bee ſo manie that ſuffer, yea and which ſuffer to ſerue for our inſtruction, the ſame ſhoulde bee as a ſchooling vnto vs; that when wee ſee our Lorde vtter his rigour after that ſort, and ſhewe himſelfe to bee a Iudge; wee ſhoulde not tarie till hee ſmite vs on the heades, but come meekely vnto him, acknowledging our faultes, and taking good heede that wee wrappe not our ſelues in his curſe with thoſe againſt whom he hath ſhewed himſelfe ſuch an enemie and aduerſarie. That is the thing which we haue to beare in minde.

And Moſes ſaieth expreſly, *Beware thou fall not into the ſnares after them*. As if hee ſhoulde ſay, If yee bee not ſtarke blinde, yee muſt needes ſhunne theſe people and not followe their example, ſeeing that God hath puniſhed them after that faſhion. For if yee meddle with their corruptions, God can make you to fall into the ſame pitte wellynough. Yee ſee into what caſe they bee falne: and therefore take heede to your ſelues, or elſe it will be an open tempting of God, as though ye ſought your owne deſtruction euen in deſpite of him. Neuertheleſſe, wee ſee howe men playe the beaſtes in that behalfe. For when wee haue ſeene GOD correct a man for ſome offence, by and by wee faile not to prouoke his wrath in the ſelfeſame ſorte, that they did which were puniſhed. Indeede wee haue witte ynough to condemne them that ſuffer the puniſhment; O it is good right ſay we, they haue well deſerued it, they bee worthie of ſuch correction. Wee can skil to talke after that faſhion: but in the meane while, when wee plaied the Iudges towardes other men, wee cannot finde the fault in ourſelues, and therefore muſt wee bee double condemned at Gods hande, becauſe our hypocriſie blindeth vs, and wee looke not into our ſelues to correct our own miſdoings.

Moſes therefore ſpeaketh heere expreſly of the ſnares that the Cananites were falne into. As if hee ſhoulde ſay, whatſoeuer you ſee in any vnbeleeuers, is all one as if God warned you long aforehande, to beware that yee fall not into the like curſe by following their ſteps; and therefore ſhunne them. For wee muſt vnderſtande that as oft as our Lorde puniſheth thoſe that haue offended him, and wee knowe it, and hee will haue it ſo; it is all one as if hee ſhoulde make ſome ſigne to vs, or rather arreſt vs with his owne hande and ſay, Take heede to your ſelues, proceede no further, goe not on ſtill; for if yee doe, yee bee vndone, yee bee forlorne. Seeing that our Lorde giueth vs ſuch warning, may it not bee ſaide that wee bee worſe than madde if wee proceede on ſtill? What excuſe will there bee for vs, when God ſhal haue ſhewed vs the ditche and bidden vs beware that wee fall not into it, and yet we bee ſo wilful in wickedneſſe, that he cannot winne ſo much at our handes, as to make vs turne backe againe from it?

Moreouer wee ſee by this text, that it is but a ſimple ſhift to ſay, Other men doe ſo as well as I: and yet a greate number of ſillie ſoules beguile themſelues with it euen at this day. If a man warne the Papiſtes of their ſuperſtitions, to bring them to Gods trueth; O (ſay they) I am not alone, there be many others in the worlde. They beare themſelues in hand that they may by and by diſappoint God, with the multitude of their partakers. But Moſes telleth vs heere, that all ſhall bee tyed together in one bundle, and one of them ſhall not helpe to acquite another or to diminiſhe anothers fault, but that all of them ſhall bee rooted out together, according to this ſaying of our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt, If the blinde leade the blinde, they ſhall both fall into the ditche. What ſhall I haue gained by it, when a great number of people ſhall haue periſhed with mee? Then let vs not thinke our faults the lighter for the greatenes of the number of them that offende with vs: but rather let vs marke on the contrarie parte, that there is not a worſe thing than euill cuſtome: and it is the thing that wee had neede to beware of as long as wee liue in this worlde. For wee ſee verie fewe of that ſort of men which guide vs the right way; but on the contrarie part the multitude is infinite of thoſe that thruſt vs out of the way: ſo as if wee leane vnto men, wee ſhall ſcarſely finde one among a hundred, which walketh aright, but all of them doe go aſtray. Alſo when the Prophet Eſaie ſpeaketh of the diſorders that reigned euerie where, hee ſaieth no more but that euerie man had turned aſide

Mat 15.14. & Luke.6.39.

Eſa.56.11.

after his owne wayes. Whereby hee doeth vs to vnderſtande that we neede not to be beguiled by others, for euerie of vs beguileth himſelfe too much. Therefore when men followe their owne imaginations, then are they quite and cleane out of the way of ſaluation. And ſith it is ſo that we ſhal finde verie few that can amend vs, and all the reſt doe but draw vnto euill: what ſhall become of vs if we grounde our ſelues vpon cuſtome? If wee ſay, O, there be thus many and thus many that take this or that to be good: yea, but God miſliketh it, and it makes no matter what men doe, for wee ſee they bee all giuen to naughtineſſe, and are corrupted in their vnderſtanding. Againe, their hearts are ful of malice, ſo as they dragge cleane backe from that which God hath ſhewed them. And if wee alledge, It is not nowalate that this thing came vp, it hath beene vſed of cuſtome in all ages long agoe: verily it is all one as if wee ſhoulde ſay, the worlde is hardened in naughtineſſe. But yet hath it not gotten ſo ſure holde that it can diſplace God from being Iudge, that he ſhoulde not cōdemne them as they deſerue. And therfore let vs marke wel howe it is ſhewed vs here, that if we followe the ſteppes of ſuch as haue gone aſtray; when God hath puniſhed them, wee alſo muſt come to account after them. Yea and wee deſerue double puniſhment, when wee fare not the better by the corrections that God hath ſhewed vnto vs: for it is all one as if we reſiſted him wilfully. The matter in effect which wee haue to gather vppon this ſaying where Moſes ſpeaketh of the ſnares that are laide for vs, is; that when our Lorde hath once warned vs, and we haue ſeene the verie examples themſelues before our eyes; we ſhould ſet our minds vpon them, that wee intangled not our ſelues in the curſe that is prepared for the deſpiſers of Gods word.

And it is ſaide further, *that men ſhoulde not inquire after their gods*. Heereby hee doeth vs to vnderſtande, that men are oftentimes turned away from well doing, by their fooliſh curioſitie. For when wee bee once inſtructed in the pure ſimplicitie of Gods worde, if wee holde our mindes impriſoned, that is to ſay, if wee holde our ſelues contented with Gods trueth; then are wee ſure that our Lorde will confirme vs more and more, ſo as though all the worlde were on a broyle, yet ſhoulde wee bee knitte ſtill in good agreement of faith. But our wittes are ſo fickle, that they bee alwayes rouing: wee cannot holde our ſelues from inquiring of this and that: not for any benefite that wee reape by it, for wee wote not what is the reaſon thereof: but yet our deſirouſneſſe ſo tickleth vs, and ſo prouoketh vs, that wee cannot holde our ſelues in quiet to ſay, let vs obey our God. Therefore Moſes meant plainely to condemne the vice that reigneth ouermuch in men, and is too deepe rooted in their nature: which is, that in ſteede of ſoberneſſe to holde our ſelues in ſimple obedience to Gods worde; wee bee continually turmoyled with vaine fancies, and all our ſeeking is who did this and who did that, that wee might bee cunning in iudging thereof. As for example, wee ſee a great ſort that woulde faine knowe al the Religions of the worlde. And to what ende? It ſeemeth to them that they bee not ſure of the Chriſtian faith, vnleſſe they knowe Machomets Alcoran; and al the diueliſhneſſe that hath reigned among the Paynims and Papiſtes; and haue their heads full ſtuffed and beſotted with all the dotages of the Iewes. Thus doe they play the beaſtes through their wicked curioſitie, and it appeareth well that there hath beene nothing in them but vtter vanitie and hypocriſie. Wherfore according to that which Moſes hath declared heere, let vs learne not to be too inquiſitiue of the thinges that are not good for vs. 1.Tim.1.4. & Tit.3.9. Wee ſee that euen in reading Gods worde, wee muſt vſe this modeſtie of forbearing to ſeeke thinges needeleſſe which ſerue not to edifying: & what will come of it if wee diſguiſe Gods worde, by ripping vp the thinges which cannot but infect our mindes, and corrupt them, and turne them from the pure trueth? True it is that ſuch as are to make warres are faine to be inquiſitiue of the force and policy of their enemies, that they may beware of them: but when wee be ſo eager, that without any occaſion or neede, wee will needes knowe that which doeth not touch vs nor concerne vs; is it not a tempting of God? is it not a caſting of our ſelues into the ſnares which wee ſee that Sathan hath laide for vs? Therefore when men haue beene taught the Goſpell purely, let them abide quietly therein, let them bee contented with this, that they are approued of God; who cannot deceiue them, and let them refuſe all manner of trumperies, which can ſerue to no purpoſe but to intangle them in trifling diſputations without profite, or without any furtherance to their faith. Wee ſee what hath happened to ſome, I meane of theſe wildheaded fellowes that woulde needs be inquiſitiue of all thinges, and there was not any ſect or opinion, but they woulde needs know it and haue skil to diſpute of it. Verie well: but what wonne they by ſo doing? God gaue them vp, ſo as they were deſtitute of vnderſtanding, and there was leſſe wit and diſcretion in them than in little childrē. Where things were in quiet they would needes ſet all on a broyle, yea euen without any rime or reaſon, ſo as they ſawe not a whit euen in the thinges that were ſo viſible and apparant, that they might haue picked out their eyes with thē. Seeing then that GOD doeth ſo puniſh theſe troubleſome heades that ceaſe not to martyr themſelues in their owne vnquietneſſe, and cannot bee ſatisfied but that they muſt needes bee inquiſitiue of the thinges that are not for their profite; wee ought to bee the more mindefull of Sainct Paules leſſon, which is that wee muſt Rom.12.3. not bee ouer wiſe, but wiſe according to ſobrietie. Let vs bethinke vs of our ſlenderneſſe, howe rude and groſſe witted wee bee, and let it ſuffice vs that GOD can well skill to teach vs, if wee take him for our maſter and teacher. And ſeeing we haue his worde, let euerie of vs keepe himſelfe within the boundes thereof, and not play the colts that are broken looſe.

Nowe after that Moſes hath ſpoken after ẏ maner, he ſaith *Thou ſhalt not do to the Lord thy God, as theſe nations heere haue doone to their gods.* As if he ſhoulde ſay, we muſt not looke vpon men, when we intend to ſerue God aright; but Gods only will muſt bee our rule, as he wil adde for a concluſion in the end. Let vs marke well then that there is not a worſe thing, than to faſhion our ſelues after the cuſtomes of men in caſes that concerne the ſeruing of God. For that hath bin ẏ very cauſe of ſo manie minglemangles and of ſo great confuſion of all things in Chriſtian religion. A man needeth but a litle Leuen to ſowre a whole batch of dowe. But there hath bin ſo much Leuen brought in, that it hath marred all the righteouſneſſe whereunto GOD calleth thoſe that are his. For as I haue declared heretofore, men haue thought it good that in ſteede of the faſhions that were vſed by the heathen, there ſhould bee ſome ſuch faſhions brought in as had ſome reſemblance of them.

As for example, the heathen worſhipped ſuch an idol, or helde ſuch a high feaſt on ſuch a day: and therefore muſt wee alſo appoint a feaſt to ſome Saint vpon the ſame day. Yea, but that was but a changing of the name of the idol: and the neerer they came vnto it, or tooke couert vnder it, the more did they falſely abuſe God his name and defile it. Thus made they an exchange of the ydols of the heathen, and in their ſteeds tooke vp Heeſaints and Sheeſaints and made ydols of them. Nowe ſeeing that this manner of dealing hath bin the cauſe of the peruerting of all things; it ſtandeth vs the more in hand to take heede to the things that Moſes telleth vs here, to witte, that God requireth not that we ſhould do as the wretched and ignorant infidels doe to their Idols: but that if wee will walke rightly wee muſt keepe vs from counterfeiting the thinges that wee may happen to ſee euery where. True it is that foraſmuch as wee bee fleſhly, wee will thinke the thinges that are done by men to bee very godly: but what ſhall wee gaine in this caſe, by bringing our owne weightes and balances? For God will haue vs to hearken vnto him; and ſhall not wee then make a faire bargaine, to ſay I weene I doe well? All ſuch ſtuffe is nothing woorth, it muſt bee ſtriken off, euerywhit. That is the cauſe why Moſes in this text expreſly preſuppoſeth that God wil not haue the thinges done to him which the wretched infidels did to their idols.

And yet to perſwade vs the better in all theſe things, he addeth *that they had done ſuch thinges as God abhorred, as namely the burning of their children in fyre.* Here vnder one kind, Moſes ſheweth that the wretched Paynims ruſhed out into ſo beaſtly dealings, as woulde make a man to abhorre their crueltie to thinke vppon it. For how is it poſſible that they ſhould bee ſo deſtitute of all reaſon, as to forget euen naturall kindeneſſe, when they meant to ſerue their Gods? What a thing was it, that they ſhould goe burne their owne children? Beholde, the fathers which ought to haue conſidered, that when God had giuen them children, it was a ſingular bleſſing, foraſmuch as hee had ordeined them to bee in his owne ſtead, to the end there ſhould alwayes bee ſome ſeede in the worlde to honor him and ſerue him: euen the fathers themſelues (I ſay) did caſt their owne children into the fire, and became murtherers of them. Whereby wee ſee that idolaters may well bee caryed away with ſome deuotion; but the ſame is but as a fury, they bee out of their wittes, and the diuell doth ſo poſſeſſe them, that they haue neither wit nor diſcretion any more. And ſhal wee allowe of ſuch doinges? Wee ſee then whereat Moſes amed in declaring here that the wretched Paynims burned their owne children, by meanes whereof they became ſtarke diuels, and there was not a more horrible thing than was their deuotion, though they commended it neuer ſo much. If it bee obiected that GOD commaunded Abraham to doe the lyke; wee ſee the ende thereof. True it is that GOD meant ſo farre foorth to try Abrahams fayth, by commaunding him to kill his owne ſonne: but that was a ſingular example for a ſpeciall purpoſe, and not a common rule. On the other ſide, GOD prouided for it, and ſhewed that hee deſired not to haue mans bloud ſacrificed vnto him: for hee preſerued Abraham from dooing it when it came to the point. Therefore there is greate diuerſitie betweene the obedience that Abraham yeelded to God in going about to ſacrifice his ſonne Iſaak: and the madneſſe of theſe blinde wretches in purpoſing to honor their idols by murthering their owne children.

Gen.22.2. 12.

Hereby let vs learne generally to marke well, that whenſoeuer wee ſee the wetched vnbeleeuers ruſhe out into diſorder lyke brute beaſts, we muſt learne to haue the more ſtay of our ſelues that wee followe them not. As for example; whereas it is ſayd nowadayes in generall, that wee muſt not followe the ſteppes of the Papiſtes, becauſe that all the thinges which they tearme by the name of Gods ſeruice, are but a heape of vaine fancies, ſuch as euery man liſted to forge of his owne brayne, and a horrible hotchpotch of thinges confounded together, for the dooing whereof they haue not ſo much as one ſyllable in Gods woorde to allowe it, and yet they martyr themſelues exceedingly in the doing of them: beſides this, they become ſo brutiſh, as wee ought to be euen aſhamed of them. For proofe whereof, what a thing is it that they ſhould goe kneele downe before puppets, as though GOD were preſent there? They ſay they worſhip not the images; but men ſee what reuerence they yeeld vnto them, and it is the firſt leſſon that is taught in their Synagogues. And ſurely what excuſe ſoeuer they make, when they kneele downe before the image of S. Barbe which neuer was, (for yee muſt vnderſtand that men haue made a God of ſuch a creature as neuer was in the world) or when they goe to S. Catherin, or Saint

Chriſtopher which are things of the ſame ſtamp and ſay nine Paternoſters and an Auemarie to them : to whome ſpeake they? Is it not a flatte mocking of God, or rather a villanious blaſpheming of him? The heathen therefore had much more than the Papiſtes, wherewith to colour their abhominations when they did thinges ſo farre out of ſquare as was pitie to ſee, and yet thought they pleaſed God in ſo doing. When they drinke til they be drunken vppon the holyday, they thinke that God is content therewith. Againe, when they be well apparelled, they ſuppoſe it is a good ſeruice of God. To bee ſhort, they haue ſuch fond toyes and gewgawes, as are woorthie to bee ſpit at as often as a man heares them ſpoken of. And whoſoeuer hath but one drop of good vnderſtanding may perceiue the fondneſſe that is in them. Inſomuch that when wee conſider the matter, wee thinke it vnpoſſible that men ſhould bee ſo brutiſhe as wee ſee they haue bin. But it is Gods owne Eſa.19.14.& 29.10. dooing, who executeth this threat, made by the prophets, that hee woulde powre out the ſpirit of giddineſſe and blockiſhneſſe vppon the world, to blinde it withall, becauſe that ſuch as haue forſaken the pure doctrine of God, and turned away from the holy ſcripture, are worthie to be ſo caryed away, to the committing of ſuch vnreaſonable thinges as we ought to bee aſhamed of and vtterly to abhorre. And this is tolde vs to teach vs to ſhun their companie, and euen that is the meaning of Moſes when he ſayth, Marke what is befallen vnto them. Now then, let vs beware that God puniſh vs not after yͤ ſame maner, by giuing vs ouer to a reprobate ſenſe. Wherefore let vs receiue the light of his worde, and followe the way while hee ſheweth vs it, ſuffering our ſelues to be held altogether in obedience vnder him. For ſtep we once aſide one way or other, in deede wee ſhall not at the firſt daſh fall into ſo great confuſion as wee ſee the idolaters are, but in the ende wee ſhall bee payed home to our ſmart. For how became they ſo brutiſh? Had they neither wit nor reaſon? yes: but God puniſheth them becauſe they ſubmitted not themſelues to his word. Let vs therefore ſtand in feare of the lyke condemnation: for it is certeine that the lyke ſhall fall vppon vs, if wee followe their ſteppes. And wee heare how Saint Paul ſpeaking generally of all ſuch as liſt Ro.1.25.28 not to obey Gods will, ſayth that they muſt needes haue their eyes ſtopped, ſo as they may not bee able to diſcerne any more, but bee trayned in all thinges to other mens lures. And this threate pointeth at vs. And therefore let vs keepe good watch, and bee wel ware that we ſet not one foote foreward, without the direction of Gods worde; for there is not any other way that is certeine.

Now let vs come to the concluſion that Moſes addeth. *Looke thou doe all that I commaunde thee this daye, without adding any thing to it or taking any thing from it.* Heere hee ſheweth vs the remedie to preſerue vs from all ſtumbling, and from all the wiles of Satan and al his ſnares, and from all occaſions that are miniſtred to thruſt vs out of the way of ſaluation: and that is, to bee contented with the rule that GOD giueth vs, and to followe the ſame, and to bee ſo pliable to it, as wee alwayes haue our eares ſtopped againſt all other ſayinges whatſoeuer, reiecting all thinges elſe, that none but onely GOD may haue dominion ouer vs. And ſo let vs marke well, that wee ſhall neuer haue the witte to keepe our ſelues from ſuperſtition, and from Satans ſleightes; except our Lord remedie the matter by his word. True it is that wee ought to giue good eare to the counſell that is giuen vs, and not to followe the follies and errors of the world, nor intangle our ſelues in ſuch a ſorte of fond toyes; but to bee ſhorte, to eſchewe all the fooliſhe deuotions that men haue deuiſed of their owne heades; wee ought well to marke that. But yet is not that enough. For there is none of vs all which hath not a ſtorehouſe of many errors in his own head, in ſo much yͭ euery of vs is a prouocation to himſelfe although we be not furthered by others. What remedy then? There is none other way, but to ſuffer our ſelues to be gouerned by God. And that is the cauſe why Moſes, after all his exhortations, telleth vs that if wee followe not Gods worde, wee ſhall euer bee intangled in many wicked imaginations, whereby the diuell will finde a gappe open, or as it were a breache to win vs by. Therefore if wee purpoſe to put Satan backe, and to bee preſerued from all vncleaneſſe of ſuperſtition: let Gods word haue his authoritie among vs.

And firſt of all Moſes ſayth; *Doe whatſoeuer is commaunded thee.* Whereby hee meaneth (as I haue declared in other places) that it is not enough for vs to obey GOD by halfes (for he can away with no ſuch partnerſhip:) but that wee muſt ſubmit our ſelues to his commaundementes in all caſes and all reſpectes, without any gainſaying. And that is a thing very worthie to bee noted. For moſt men can well enough finde in their heartes to confeſſe that it is good reaſon that GOD ſhould bee ſerued, yea euen according to his owne wil as he himſelfe requireth: but yet they ceaſe not to take exceptions ſtill, and to ſay, This lykes mee not, ſuch a thing woulde doe better. To bee ſhorte, for all their pretence of obeying GOD, and although that in many reſpectes they yeelde to the thinges that are ſpoken to them; Yet doe they beare themſelues in hand, that they may let the reſt alone. But contrariwiſe, GOD admitteth not any exception, but ſayth that whatſoeuer hee commaundeth, muſt be done; and that wee muſt not enter into diſputation with him, to make him amendes in one thing for miſſing in another; but that his Lawe muſt bee obſerued, yea euen according to the contentes and ſubſtaunce thereof. For if I ſhould receiue ſome couenant or ſome publike inſtrument or writing made vppon it, and yet ſay, as for this poynt or that article, I will not admit it: what a thing were it? It were to diſanul yͤ whole. So thē let vs marke, that to honor God and to yeelde him

him obedience, his worde muſt beare the whole ſway, ſo as wee ſubmit our ſelues wholy vnto it. Marke that for one point.

Againe whereas Moſes ſayth *This day*; it is a ſummoning of the people to follow without delay when God calleth them. For is it a ſmall matter that God communicateth himſelfe ſo familiarly vnto vs? Then is it not for vs to require ſpace to deliberate: but as ſoone as God openeth his mouth, by and by wee muſt giue eare to him, and bee conformable to his worde out of hand without delay, by ſubmitting our ſelues thereunto. And not onely this place ſerueth to warne vs how forward wee ought to bee to followe his Lawe: but alſo wee heare how it is Pſal. 95.8. ſayd in the Pſalme, To day if you heare his voyce: ſo that our Lord generally meaneth that as ſoone as men heare him ſpeake, they ſhould by and by followe his ſaying, and faſhion themſelues thereafter. And the Apoſtle in the Hebr. 3.13. & 4.7. third Chapter of the Epiſtle to the Hebrewes, ſheweth vs what is meant by this worde *To day*: Namely the very ſame times wherein our Lord is ſo gracious as to ſend vs his worde, whatſoeuer theſe times bee. Therefore let vs not delay till to morrowe, for it were too great a mockerie: and it may bee that the gate ſhall be ſhut againſt vs. Seeing then that God ſpeaketh vnto vs to day, let vs giue eare vnto him readily and without any delay. That is the thing which wee haue to beare in minde. And therefore when we come to a Sermon, or reade the holy ſcripture by our ſelues, as ſoone as wee haue heard a ſentence, let vs enter into our owne conſciences: and if wee finde any ſloth there, let vs waken and quicken vp our ſelues, and thinke thus: what? It is no dalying with god in this caſe, it is not for vs to defer to come vnto him when hee calleth vs, but wee muſt anſwere him with ſuch readyneſſe, as the thing that is commaunded vs here by Moſes may bee performed, ſo as wee burie not Gods word, ne ſuffer it to hang in the hooke; but receiue it into our heartes at the firſt, that it may take good roote there, and bring forth fruite. Thus yee ſee what wee haue to marke vppon this worde *This day*, or *To day*.

Now let vs proceede to that which Moſes addeth. *Without adding aught to it*, (ſayth hee) *or without taking aught from it*. And this is an excellent text to ſhewe vs how mens lyues may be well ordered. I haue tolde you before, that it is a good tryall of our ſubiection vnto God, when wee receiue his worde, and that his commaundements beare ſuch ſway with vs, as wee bowe downe our neckes to receiue the yoke that he layeth vppon them. But that were not ſufficient, vnleſſe wee had that which Moſes addeth here, which is, that it is not lawfull for vs to adde any whit to yͤ thinges yͭ God commaundeth, nor to take any whit from them, as the Papiſtes doe in theſe dayes, who beare thẽſelues in hand that they cannot doe amiſſe in mingling their owne follies with Gods word. And why ſo? For wee doe as GOD commaundeth vs, ſay they. Wee deny not but that wee ought to keepe God Lawes; but what harme is it for vs to doe more? If we vſe ſome deuotion of ouerplus, will not God take it in good worth? If I doe more than I am bounde to doe, why ſhould not God accept it in good part? I may well doe whatſoeuer hee appointeth: yea, & I will adde ſomewhat more to ſerue him withall. When the Papiſtes get ſuch a ſhrowdingſheet, they beare thẽſelues in hande that all their matters goe very well, but in the meane while they conſider not yͭ God will haue none to be counted wiſe but himſelfe, nor none to haue the authoritie to bee our Lawegiuer but himſelfe. The Papiſtes then doe blaſpheme GOD two wayes: firſt in taking vppon them to bee holyer than hee would haue them to bee. For when wee deuiſe meanes of our owne head to pleaſe God withall after that faſhion; it is all one as if hee had not bin well aduiſed in the matter. Behold God ſayth that all our wiſedome muſt conſiſt in hearkening vnto him. Wee haue ſeene it in the Deut. 4.6. & 10.12. fourth chapter & alſo in yͤ tenth, where it is ſayd, O Iſraell, what is it that thy God commaundeth thee but only to ſticke to him, & to be wholy his. Hereby wee ſee how it was Gods intent to comprise yͤ ſumme of al holyneſſe and righteouſneſſe in his Lawe, ſo as it is a full perfection whereunto nothing can bee added. Neuertheleſſe men thinke and ſuppoſe that they themſelues can doe yet much better. And what is that to ſay? Is it not a blaming of God, as who ſhould ſay hee had forgotten himſelfe, and foreſawe not all thinges? Verily that is a curſed and diueliſh blaſphemie. Therefore, let not the Papiſtes boaſt of their ſeruing of God: for the diuell is their founder, and God diſauoweth all that euer they doe. For hee may alwayes reply againſt thẽ and ſay, Who required theſe things at your handes? And not without cauſe: for their ſo doing is all one as if they charged God with enuy towardes men, as who would ſay he had not faithfully taught them all thinges that were for their behoofe to doe. And I pray you is that blaſphemie tollerable?

But there is yet another point which I glanced at. For thoſe two may bee put both into one. The other point then is, that they vtterly deface the ſoueraigne dominion that God hath ouer vs. For thus doe they alledge: Very well, God hath ordeyned by his lawe, that we ſhould keepe his commaundementes, Statutes and Ordinances: but yet is it not amiſſe to adde moreouer what I my ſelfe would haue done. But if a priuate perſon ſhoulde fall to mingling of the inuentions of his owne braine, with the ſtatutes that are ſet foorth by publike authoritie, ſhoulde he not trouble the whole order of the Common weale? And as for ſuch as took part wͭ him, ſhold they not ſhewe thẽſelues to bee rebels to their ſuperiors? Now our Lord ſaith by his prophet Eſa. 33 22. Eſay yͭ he himſelfe wilbe knowen to be our onely lawgiuer. That is a title which he chalendgeth to himſelfe. Seeing then that God will bee our onely Lawmaker, what ſhal we ſay when men doe thruſt themſelues into his place? Is it not more than to confounde heauen and earth together? And ſurely Saint Iames

expreſſeth

Iam.4.4.12 expreſſeth yet better the ſame thing that was ſayd by the Prophet Eſay. For he ſayth that there is but onely one Lawegiuer which is able to ſaue and condemne. When men are ſet vp in ſtate and authoritie of making Lawes to gouerne our ſoules by, I meane as touching the ſpiritual gouernenment; (for wee treate not here of ciuill Lawes, but of the ſeruing of God;) when men (I ſay) are ſo highly exalted or take ſo highly vppon them: it is all one as if they bereaued God of the title of Sauiour and Iudge. For if hee be not the onely Lawemaker, Saint Iames concludeth that he is not the onely Iudge, nor the partie that hath power alone to condemne vs or to ſaue vs. And what a preſumption is it that the creature ſhould proceede ſo farre, as to father our ſaluation vppon wretched carkeſſes and earthwoormes, which is to be fathered alonely vppon God? So then let vs marke well, that whereas Moſes hath tolde vs heere that it is not Lawefull for vs to adde any whit to the thinges that God commaundeth in his Lawe: thereby hee condemneth all the deuotions that euer were inuented by the world. It will ſeeme ſtrange why God hath ſo ſtreitly forbidden men to adde any thing to his Lawe: but ought not the reaſons to ſuffice which I will aleadge? Verily the world condemneth it ſelfe by his owne mouth. Hath this prouerb bin inuented in our time? Hath it not bin euer a common ſaying among the Papiſts to ſay, Thou art the deuils ſeruant, for thou doeſt more than thou art bidden? This manner of ſpeech hath bin vſed a hundred yere before we were borne: It hath bin a common byword. And what haue the Papiſts done? They haue let the commaundementes of God alone, to runne gadding after their owne inuentions, and gewgawes: And yet neuertheleſſe they ſay dayly ſtill, Thou art the deuils ſeruaunt. If a Maſter bee angrie with his ſeruaunt for leauing the thing vndoone which he had commaunded him; to do the thing which he had conceiued in his owne imagination, and he thinketh to content his Maiſter in ſaying: I haue done better than you were aware of: thou art the diuels ſeruant (wil his Maſter ſay) for thou haſt done more than was commaunded thee. And I pray thee, what art thou? Thou doeſt the lyke to God. For thou wilt needes ſerue him after thine owne faſhion, without regard what he hath commaunded thee. And therefore let vs beare in minde, that foraſmuch as GOD is robbed of his honor, and the creatures ſet themſelues in his iudgement ſeate, when they take vppon them to make Lawes for the ſtabliſhing of a ſpiritual gouernment: God declareth that he Eſa.29.14. wil take horrible vengeance of it, & deale terribly with them. And why ſo? Euen becauſe they haue ſerued him after the commaundementes of men, and not held themſelues to his ſingle worde, and therefore hee will blind the wiſeſt of them, ſo as they ſhall be deſtitute of all reaſon, and become ſo brutiſh that they ſhal not be able to diſcerne any thing at all. Is not this enough to make the hayre ſtand vp vppon our head? What is to bee done then? Let vs followe this ſaying: That obedience is better than ſacrifice. 1.Sa.15.22. Loe here a ſentence that needeth no gloſe. The Papiſtes ſhew themſelues to be farre paſt ſhame in theſe dayes, in that they will needes maintaine the tyrannie of that idoll, and ſtill continue in their wilfulneſſe of folowing their owne fond deuotions, which haue not any foundation in Gods word. Behold, our Lord requireth but obedience, that is to ſay that men ſhoulde ſubmit themſelues to his trueth, and be contented with that which he commaundeth. And the declaration hereof is deliuered vs here by Moſes in two wordes; that is to wit, that they ſhoulde neither ad nor diminiſh aught at all in Gods worde; but that when God ſpeaketh, they ſhould receiue his ſayinges with quiet obedience, ſaying: Yea Lord, all this is iuſt and rightfull, there is not any thing to bee gainſayed in any one poynt. Againe, thou Lord haſt ſet vs boundes within the which it behoueth vs to holde our ſelues and not preſume to ſay, this is good, or I will doe this more than is commaunded me. No, but wee muſt aſſure our ſelues that our true wiſedome and perfect ſoundneſſe, is to ſubmit our ſelues meekely to thy word. If wee haue that, let vs not doubt but that God alloweth our whole lyfe. And if wee ſwarue neuer ſo little from it; wee ſhall not onely bee vtterly miſlyked of him, but alſo prouoke his vengeance againſt vs.

But now let vs kneele down in the preſence of our good God with acknowledgement of our faultes, praying him to make vs to perceiue thẽ better, ſo as it may bring vs to a true and liuely repentance. And becauſe wee bee ſo much inclined to followe our owne inuentions, it may pleaſe him not to ſuffer ſuch hardneſſe of heart in vs, as may make vs to turne away from his commandemẽts, but rather that euery one may ſubmit our ſelues to his word, and frame our ſelues wholy thereafter, that being voyde of all ouerweening of our owne wit and diſcretion, we may ſuffer our ſelues to bee guided & gouerned by his hand: and ſpecially that when he ſendeth vs preachers to ſhew vs his wil, hee vouchſafe vs ſuch grace, as wee may ſubmit our ſelues thereunto, ſo as wee may not onely receiue his word when it is preached by the voyce of men, but alſo haue it written in our heartes by his holy Ghoſte. That it may pleaſe him to graunt this grace, not onely to vs but alſo to all people and nations of the earth. &c.

On Fryday the xj. of October. 1555.

The Lxxxvi. Sermon which is the firſt vpon the thirteenth Chapter.

IF there riſe vp among you a Prophet that is a dreamer of dreames, which giueth the ſigne or a myracle;

2 And the ſigne or myracle which hee hath tolde thee, commeth to paſſe: and he ſay vnto thee, let vs walke after other Gods which you haue not knowen, and let vs ſerue them:

3 Thou ſhalt not hearken to the words of that Prophet, or dreamer of dreames; For the Lord your God trieth you, to weete if you loue the Lorde your God with all your heart and with all your ſoule.

HEERE god ſheweth what ſteadfaſtneſſe of faith ought to bee in thoſe yͤ haue bin taught by his word namely euē ſuch as may bee able to withſtād all the lyes and ſleightes of Satan, ſo as they bee not hindered by any falſe doctrines or errors; but may continue alwayes in the trueth. For if wee receiued his worde when it is preached vnto vs, and yet it had no hold in vs: but that wee ſhould turne aſide from that which we had learned as ſoone as we perceiued any thing to thē contrary: what a thing were it? It is ſayd that faith muſt be the victorie whereby to ouercome 1.Iohn.5.4. the whole worlde: for ſo doth Saint Iohn ſpeake thereof in his firſt Epiſtle. And if wee yeelde to euery winde, ſo as euery blaſte of vntrueth is enough to withdrawe vs from GOD: our faith will ſoone bee ouercome; and where is then our victorie? Therefore let vs marke that when GOD graunteth vs the grace to bee taught by his worde; it is not onely to the end wee ſhoulde learne the thinges that are ſpoken, and beare them in minde for a while; but alſo to the ende wee ſhoulde ſtaye vppon them, and bee ſo grounded vppon them, that if all the troubles of the worlde ſhoulde riſe vp againſt vs, wee ſhoulde ſtill holde our owne, and continue ſtedfaſt and inuincible. If this were ſayd to the people of olde time, which had not ſo large inſtruction by a great deale as wee haue: much more dooth it belong to vs nowadayes. God gaue the Iewes ſufficient inſtruction, ſo farre foorth as was requiſite for their welfare. That is true: but yet did he teach them vnder ſhadowes and figures, which maner of teaching was darkeſome in compariſon of that which we haue nowadayes. For in the Goſpell wee haue the ſunne of righteouſneſſe Mal.4.2. ſhining as it were at nooneday. So then, Gods worde muſt ſerue vs, not onely to ſhewe vs the right way, but alſo to inable vs to withſtand all the temptations of Satan and his vpholders. We muſt (ſay I) be ſo armed, as we may fight and put backe all errors and falſehood, ſo as after we haue once knowen God, we may ſtick to him ſtedfaſtly to the vttermoſt. And that is the cauſe why Saint Paul treating of the vſe of the Goſpell, ſayth that we muſt not be lyke little Eph.4.14. babes which are drawen too and fro, ſo as we ſhould no ſooner ſee any trifling toye to beguile vs, but we ſhould by and by be gadding after it: and what a thing were that? But we muſt (ſayth he) be ſo ſetled in the fayth, that if there come any couſiners that goe about to leade vs by craft, and to deceiue vs, wee may bee fenced againſt them, and not bee ſhaken by them ouerſoone. True it is that we muſt needes haue a begetting in our Lord Ieſus Chriſt, and that at the firſt our faith may be ſo weake, that we ſhall be lyke little babes: But we muſt growe ſtill, and dayly gather new ſtrength, vntil we come to mans eſtate that we be perfect to meete with our Lord Ieſus Chriſt. Thus yee ſee what force the doctrine of trueth ought to haue, when it is taught vs. That is to wit, we muſt not onely count it good in conſenting to it; but alſo be ſo well aſſured of it, that the diuell, doe what he can, may not be able to remoue vs, by reaſon of the certeintie which wee haue, whereby wee bee inabled to beate backe whatſoeuer ſhall be ſet againſt vs. And doubtleſſe wee ſee by the example of our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt, that ſuch as haue bin faithfully taught, may well repulſe all the wiles of Satan. For when Ieſus Chriſt was tempted, Matt 4.7. wherewith armed he himſelfe but with the holy Scripture? Wee ſee that if there riſe vp neuer ſo many falſe Prophets among vs, yet if wee be throughly well grounded in faith, & ſetled in it as we ought to be: we ſhal cōtinue ſtedfaſt, & the diuell ſhall win nothing at our handes. True it is that now & then we ſhal find ſome impedimēts; (for Gods ſeruauntes ſhall bee ſure of trouble, that ſerueth to humble thē:) but yet whatſoeuer it be, their faith is alwayes the better prooued by errors, hereſies, & ſuch other lyke thinges, whereby our Lord ſheweth that we haue profited well in his ſchoole, & that wee can neuer be led away vnto wickedneſſe, whatſoeuer betideth. Alſo we heare what Saint Paul ſayth, when hee armeth vs againſt all ſpirituall battels that may befall vs: hee giueth vs the ſword of Gods word, hee deliuereth vs the Shield of faith, and hee giueth vs the helmette of hope. And thereupon hee inferreth, that wee ſhall not onely be inabled to withſtand all the aſſaultes that Satan can make vppon vs, but alſo bee defended from his fiery dartes when there is no lykelyhoode for vs to eſcape from his ſubtleties. Now therefore, whenſoeuer the Goſpell is preached vnto vs, or that wee reade the holy ſcripture, let vs learne not onely to receiue the thinges as true which are told vs out of the mouth of God, but alſo to bee ſo fully reſolued of them in our ſelues, as we may not be trayned vnto wickedneſſe nor turned aſide from the right way when the diuell ſtirreth vp any hereſies. And ſo ye ſee what is told vs in this text. For our Lord thinkes it not enough that the faithfull ſhould ſerue him and hold them to his trueth when they bee in quiet & without temptation; but alſo hee will haue them to yeeld ſuch truſt vnto his worde, that if the diuell fall to ſowing of his darnell to marre al, and wicked men riſe vp to deface the truth by al the meanes they can, and to turne it into lyes: ſuch as haue learned what the true religion meaneth, ſhould not change nor be fickle and vnconſtant, but ſhewe that the thinges which they know are of God, and an abiding trueth, ſo as it is not for men to ſwarue or ſtart from them in any wiſe.

Eph.6.12.& 16.17.

Now thē, let vs beare this warning wel in mind, and euery of vs examine himſelfe; and when we haue once vnderſtoode ẏ things ẏ haue bin told vs, and are neceſſary to our ſaluation: let vs not imagine our ſelues to haue a perfect and right faith as is requiſite, vnleſſe wee bee ſo conſtant and fully reſolued in the thinges that our Lorde hath ſhewed vs, that we abide by it and followe our courſe ſtill, whatſoeuer come of it. For whoſoeuer fleeteth or ſtarteth aſide at euery matter, ſheweth that hee neuer knewe Ieſus Chriſt as hee ought to doe. And therefore Saint Paul in another place vſeth two ſimilitudes to ſhewe of what force Gods word ought to bee with vs, to hold vs faſt vnto him in his obedience. Hee ſaith that wee muſt be throughly grounded and rooted. For many haue a kinde of faith: but that is but in outward ſhewe and appearaunce: as for inwardly it hath no liuely nor deepe roote. For if a man haue but a faire braunch couered with flowers, to what purpoſe is that? One blaſt of wind will deface it. But if a tree bee well planted, the roote of it will hold it faſt in the middeſt of all ſtormes. Euen ſo muſt wee bee rooted in our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt, and we muſt be throughly well grounded vppon him, ſo as men may perceiue not onely that wee haue knowledge, but alſo that our heartes doe yeeld record of our playnedealing. And marke here the cauſe why ſo many men are ſo greatly hindered, and indeuour no further but to purchaſe themſelues credit among men. When they come to a Sermon where the Goſpell is preached, for the moſt part they thinke they haue well profited, when they can skill to talke of it: and there are very feawe that haue a care to be ſo grounded in it, as to lay it vp in their hartes, that GOD may be witneſſe of it: there are very fewe that indeuour to atteine to that ſteddineſſe. And therefore doth God abhorre that fooliſh vaineglorioüſneſſe, wherethrough men ſeeke but onely to win themſelues eſtimation, by ſetting a faire face and countenaunce vppon the matter.

And therefore let vs marke in feawe wordes, that Gods word ought to ſerue vs to dubble purpoſe. Firſt to teach vs his will, that wee may ſubmit our ſelues ſimply vnto it: ſo that when wee haue the grace giuen vs to haue the doctrine purely taught vs, then euery of vs ſhould agree thereunto, and hearken to the voyce of our ſheepheard, and followe whatſoeuer is tolde vs, without gaineſaying. The thing which wee muſt doe when wee haue order in the Church, ſo as there be no ſectes nor troubles in it, but Gods trueth is purely preached: is, that there muſt bee true concorde and brotherly loue among vs, to anſwere our God all with one hart and one mouth, that his trueth may be aduaunced among vs. The ſecond vſe thereof is, that when it falleth out that Satan indeuoreth to turne vs away, and there ſpring vp hereſies, falſe doctrines and errors among vs: wee muſt withſtand all ſuch things, and ſhew that Gods trueth is ſtrong enough to hold vs ſtill vnto him; according to my former ſaying that our faith muſt get the vpper hand of all the world, ſo as wee bee ſtarke deafe in hearkening to any of all the wiles that are put to vs to intice vs from GOD and his pure trueth. Thus yee ſee in effect what is told vs in this text.

And let vs marke well Moſeſes maner of ſpeache. *If a prophet ſteppe vp among you* ſayth he. Hereby hee ſheweth that wee muſt not onely withſtand the open enemies that fight againſt Gods word, and pretend not at all to bee of his flocke, or to haue any partnerſhip or neighborhoode with vs: but alſo reſiſt our homebred battels, inſomuch that if there riſe vp any deceiuer among our ſelues, that is to ſay if any ſuch as maketh pretence to be of the fellowſhip of the faithfull, and to be as it were of the very houſehold of faith, ſtep vp: we muſt not bee troubled at it out of meaſure. And that is well worthie to be noted, for if the chriſtian faith be impugned by the wicked, which pretend not to come vnto God, (as by the Turkes, Paynims, and Iewes) ſo as they blaſpheme with open mouth: foraſmuch as they be vtterly cut off from the Church lyke rotten members, their reſiſting of the Goſpell, and their ſtriuing to aboliſhe the Chriſtian religion, is no great woonder to vs. For why? Wee be as it were hardened with ſuch examples. Therfore when the opē enemies ſet themſelues againſt God & his word, it is a tēptation that will eaſily bee ouercome. But when thoſe that are knitte vnto vs, and are as it were of our owne bodie, doe fall to tearing of the vnitie of our faith in peeces, to peruert Gods trueth, and to marre it in ſuch wiſe as it ſhoulde bee diſfigured: that is ſuch a perplexitie and griefe to vs, as wee wote not where to become. And that is the thing that troubleth ſo many ſimple folkes nowadayes. What ſhall wee doe, ſay they? For wee ſee ſo much diſputing in the Church, and ſo greate diuerſitie of opinions, that it were better to aske no queſtion of any thing, inſomuch that a great number become careleſſe, for feare to bee intangled in wicked matters and to bee beguyled, and therefore they let all alone, and will not in any wiſe come neere vnto God. Wee ſee a greate ſorte of men of that ſtampe. Otherſome let looſe the raynes of the brydle, and take libertie to maintaine one while one mans ſaying and another while another mans, and are neuer fully perſuaded of any thing; but are in one mynde to day, and in another minde to morrowe, and chaunge at euery minute of an houre.

Wee ſee a number of wild heades nowadayes which haue no ſtay at all, but thinke that all thinges are lawfull. And why? For I ſee there are diuerſe opinions, ſay they. But ſuch men do ſhewe that they neuer taſted what Gods trueth is. The firſt ſort doe well bewray a curſed vnbeleefe. For our Lorde promiſeth that ſuch as Eſa.45.19. ſeeke him with a lowly heart, ſhall not be diſap- Matt.7.7. pointed, but hee will ſhewe him ſelfe to them. Let Luke.11.19. vs knocke, and the doore ſhalbe opened. If wee deſire reuerently to be guided by God, ſurely he will not faile vs. Let vs diſtruſt our owne infirmitie and rudeneſſe; and our Lorde will giue vs the ſpirite of diſcretion, ſo as wee ſhall not bee beguyled. To be ſhort this ſaying of Saint Paul which I haue alleaged alreadie heretofore ſhall 1.Cor.11.19. euer be perfourmed; namely, that hereſies ſhall turne to the true tryall of our faith, and not bee able to ouerthrowe it. Fot as touching thoſe that are ſo fleeting without cauſe; they ſhewe that there was nothing in them but a falſe pretence, and that they did but play the hypocrites in making a countenance to ſticke to Gods trueth; for had they beene well rooted in it, as I ſayde, they woulde haue continued ſtedfaſt in it ſtill.

To conclude, let ſuch examples prouoke vs to put this leſſon the better in vre. And when wee ſee the troubles that are nowadays in the world, let vs not be ouercome by them, neither let our faith be defaced. But the more the diuel laboureth and inforceth himſelfe to vndo it, the more let it aduaunce it ſelfe and get the vpper hande of ſuch aſſaultes. And when wee ſee falſe prophets ſtep vp among vs, let vs not ceaſſe to yeeld this honour ſtill to God, that wee hold our ſelues to his word, and ſtart not from it by any means. And very neceſſitie conſtraines vs to it in theſe dayes, becauſe wee ſee that ſuch as call themſelues Chriſtians and take that title moſt vppon them, are the worſt enemies of God that a man can finde. For the Turkes & Iewes are not more fierie and venemous at this day againſt God, to deface the whole doctrine of ſaluation; than are the Papiſtes. And therefore let vs arme our ſelues with the warning that is giuen vs heere: which is, that when wee ſee falſe prophets ſtep vp in the ſheepefold and in the middes of Gods houſe: yet notwithſtanding wee muſt not faile to hold on ſtil, nor make a ſtumbling blocke of it to ſtep aſide or ſtart away, but ouergo it through the power of faith. Yea, and to come yet neerer the matter, when wee ſee theſe varlets that had pretended to be at oddes with the Papiſtes, and had mingled themſelues among vs, do thereupō fall to inuenting of falſe opinions: let vs not bee ouermuch amazed for all that. True it is that wee be not ſenſeleſſe, & that we haue neede to be waked: but yet muſt wee alwayes conclude thus with our ſelues: How nowe? Our Lord hath beene ſo gratious to vs as to open his owne holy mouth to giue vs the certeintie of faith by his Goſpel: and ſhall wee nowe turne away at euery puſh? After that manner (ſay I) muſt wee withſtande all the temptations that may befall vs, when deceiuers and falſe fellowes ſtep vp amōg vs, of purpoſe to deface by their ſuttletie the pure doctrine that hath beene preached to vs, & wherein we haue beene trayned vp.

Now firſt of all it is ſaid, *Thou ſhalt not hearken to the Prophet when he ſayth vnto thee, Let vs go and ſerue other gods which thou haſt not knowen.* It behoueth vs to wey well all theſe woordes of Moſes; For here he ſpeaketh to al beleeuers. He ſpeakes not only to the great doctors that haue beene at the Vniuerſitie all their life long, but alſo to the vnlearned. Although then that we be no clerks, yet let vs learne that we muſt haue this conſtancie of faith, of not following the wyles of Satan to bee withdrawen from our God when he hath beene ſo gracious vnto vs, as to communicate himſelfe to vs. Wee muſt not ſay, Alas, I haue no learning, nor fineneſſe of witte, to be ſo cunning; euery man hath not like meaſure. I graunt that euery man is not of abilitie to enter into diſputation againſt ſophiſters, and againſt ſuch as are full fraught with malice to deceiue yͤ ſimple: but yet, all men from the moſte to the leaſt ought to haue this inuincible ſtedfaſtnes of ſticking vnto God and his trueth when they once knowe it. There is no excuſe in that caſe. For it is not in vaine that God hath ſet downe this generall law for all his Church. And it is certaine alſo that he will giue vs power, ſo wee reſort to him, and ſeeke to him for ſuccour. For what is yͤ cauſe why ſo many folke are ſeduced, but onely their own fond preſumption, or their negligence, or elſe their contempt of Gods worde? For yee ſhall ſee ſome ſtand ſo much in their owne conceits, as (to their own ſeeming) no man is able to ouermatch them: and yet for all that, they are but ſillie beaſtes. Our Lorde therefore doth blow away their pride, as men may perceiue: and experience ſheweth that God puniſheth many folkes pride, which had too great an ouerweening of themſelues. Now thē, what is to be done? Let vs humble our ſelues & pray God to gouern vs ſo by his holy ſpirit, & to giue vs ſuch wiſedōe, as wee may not bee taken tardie when the diuel goes about to make a breach into vs to enter at. If we goe ẏ way to worke, let vs aſſure our ſelues that God will guide vs, and that wee ſhall neuer be caught in Satans ſnares. But there are many that keepe on their race without care, as though they were priuiledged from all dangers. But let vs for our part keepe good watch, and haue ſuch a care to warde our ſelues, as the deceiuers (whē they come) may not finde vs aſleepe. And that will ſo bee, if wee beare ſuch reuerence to Gods worde, as wee acknowledge it to bee the precioueſt treaſure that we haue. For if a man make ſo little reckening of a thing, that he leaue it at al aduenture: the firſt that commeth may robbe him of it: but as for him ẏ locketh vp his goods, (ſpecialy thoſe that are the chiefe and which he counteth to bee moſt worth:) he cannot bee ſo bereft of them. And therefore let vs put our faith in good cuſtodie, and be ſo warie in the keping of it, as [it may appeare] that we haue it in ſuch eſtimation as it deſerueth; for it is an ineſtimable treaſure. Thus yee ſee what wee haue to note here, where Moſes ſpeaketh to all ſuch as had taſted what Gods lawe is, exempting no man from ſtanding ſtoutly in battaile and defence againſt the lyes and ſleyghts of Satan.

Nowe hee addeth, *If he ſay vnto thee, Let vs followe ſtrange gods, which thou haſt not knowen.* This ſerueth to ſhewe vs who bee falſe prophets. For God telleth vs that wee cannot withſtande the wyles of Satan, without the knowledge of the trueth: that is the onely meane. And no maruel though the wretched worlde nowadayes be allured to deſtruction: for Gods worde is as it were buryed: and when men are deſtitute of that light, it is certaine that they bee in horrible darkneſſe, ſo as they cannot but ſtumble & ſtray here and there, becauſe they haue no certaine aime at any thing. But here our Lorde declareth that wee muſt bee inſtructed in his worde; and thereunto alſo is this ſaying after a ſort referred. For hee preſuppoſeth that wee bee in a good trade alreadie, and that wee knowe the way of ſaluation: accordingly as Moſes wil proteſt hereafter; ſaying, I haue ſhewed you the way of life and the way of death. eut.30.15 9. Nowe therefore, whenſoeuer wee will reſiſt falſe Prophets, and their lyes, let vs take to vs the doctrine of trueth. And that is the cauſe why it is ſaide, *The gods which thou haſt not knowen.* For in this caſe wee muſt match the liuing God whome wee haue knowen, againſt all the ydolles which the worlde hath forged to it ſelfe. For God ſpeaketh not to ſuch as neuer heard nor vnderſtood any thing of him before: but to ſuch as he had giuen his lawe vnto, whome hee had ſet in the right way, and to whome hee had giuen an infallible rule. When hee hath ſo fenced men aforehande, then ſayeth hee vnto them, Beware that yee followe not the gods whome yee haue not beene acquainted with.

To be ſhort then, it is ſhewed vs that this doctrine concerneth ſuch as haue beene duely inſtructed in the faith. Will wee beate backe all Satans deuices? Let vs haue the skill to ſay, It is God that hath certified vs, hee is a faithfull witneſſe to vs, wee neede not to be in dout or vncertaintie any more, or to caſt doutes, or to ſay, What? Which way ſhall we goe? We may well aſſure our ſelues that this is the way, that is the thing which wee muſt ſtay vppon. That in effect is the order which wee haue to keepe, according as it is ſhewed vs in this text.

But let vs marke alſo, that wee muſt haue our eares ſo ſtopped, as we may vtterly miſlike whatſoeuer may cauſe vs to ſwarue to the contrarie of thoſe things which we haue learned by Gods worde. For as ſoone as wee giue eare to them, by and by wee be halfe corrupted, according to this ſimilitude which Saint Paul alleageth in the ſeconde to the Corinthians, 2.Cor.11.2, 3. that when a woman giueth eare to a bawde or a Ruffian, although ſhee conſent not to him out of hande, yet is ſhee alreadie peruerted, and it is already an euill token. For if a woman bee chaſte and ſhamefaſt, ſhee will in any wiſe ſhunne all ſuch meſſages as may be brought to her to intyce her to follie, and to make her to breake wedlocke. Shee muſt eſchewe ſuch manner of thinges. Nowe Saint Paul ſayeth, that as long as wee abyde in the ſimplicitie of the Goſpell, wee bee as a chaſte wife that keepeth her faith & troth to her husbande, and that our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt who hath made ſuch couenant with vs, to chooſe vs to bee of his bodie, taketh and receiueth vs for his owne. But if wee hearken to the lyes and trumperies that are brought vnto vs; and wee refuſe not to learne what Darnell is: it is an euill ſigne, and wee bee corrupted alreadie. And therefore let vs beare well in minde, that wee ought ſo little to conſent to falſe prophets, as wee ſhoulde not in any wiſe giue eare vnto them, but ſhunne them a farre off, as ſoone as wee perceiue that they goe about to deceiue vs and to entyce vs to naughtineſſe. And to ſay the trueth, this curſed curioſitie hath beene the cauſe of many mennes deſtruction. For it ſeemeth to many high minded perſons, that all thinges ſhould paſſe the tryall of their wit: and that when they haue ſifted things after their owne imagination, they may followe whatſoeuer they themſelues thinke good, for they bee able ynough to diſcerne the trueth of all thinges. But when our Lorde findeth ſuch ouerboldneſſe in them, hee putteth them to confuſion. The trueth is, that they would ſo inquire of all things, as nothing might eſcape them: in ſo much as they could finde in their hearts to mingle Mahomets Alcoran, and all the dotages of the Heathen, and all the ſuperſtitions of the Papiſts with the pureneſſe of ẏ Goſpell, and to make a medly of them, that whē they had well clowted them together in their owne brayne, they might ſaye, This is the thing that is good. But our Lorde (as I ſaide afore) cannot abyde that men ſhoulde truſt ſo to their owne wittes. And againe on the other ſide, hee cannot abide ſuch iniurie to bee done to his worde, as that it ſhoulde bee matched with the wyles of Satan, ſo as it might bee ſayde, now will I chooſe what liketh mee beſt.

It is too high a mounting for men to make themſelues iudges and vmpers of Gods trueth, which the Angels do honour with all reuerence. Needes therefore muſt ſuch men fall into horrible deſtruction. And therfore let vs beware that wee brydle our ſelues, ſo as our mindes wander not out into fond curioſitie. And as ſoone as wee perceiue that ẏ diuel goes about to falſifie Gods pure trueth, let vs ſtop our eares, and not harken to any ſuch thing, but vtterly abhorre it.

Now moreouer Moſes ſayth, *That although the falſe prophets ſhewe ſome ſigne or myracle, & the ſame commeth to paſſe, yet muſt not men giue eare vnto thē.* Here he ſheweth that we muſt haue ſuch conſtācie and ſtedfaſtneſſe in our faith, as it may not bee ouerthrowen though there bee neuer ſo great occaſion of ſtumbling. As for example, if there bee ſuch an illuſion of Satan, that a falſeprophet ſay vnto vs, ſuch a thing ſhall come to paſſe, and it commeth to paſſe in deede: then are wee at our wittes end, and it is ynough to ouerthrowe our whole building though it were neuer ſo well builded, vnleſſe God worke on our ſide aboue the power of mans abilitie. But yet howſoeuer the world go, Gods trueth muſt be of ſuch force with vs as to holde vs backe againſt al ſuch temptation, ſo as if the diuel bring any illuſion, he may not gaine any thing at our handes, nor preuaile againſt vs.

And let vs marke, that before that Moſes ſaith ſo: he giueth vs a ſure declaration of falſe prophets, that is to ſay, of ſuch as go about to turne vs from the true God, whome wee haue once knowen, and would wrap vs in wicked ſuperſtitions wherin there is no reaſon. If any ſuch thing befall vs, no maruel though our Lorde will haue vs to reſiſt all that euer the diuel putteth to vs to bleare our eyes withal, yea, euen though there bee falſe miracles, in ſo much that although all that the falſeprophet or deceiuer foretelleth, do come to paſſe; yet muſt wee not be led away by it. We ſee then in effect what the meaning of Moſes is, that we muſt be ſo well fenced by gods worde, that although the diuell ruſh againſt vs, with neuer ſo great violence, and worke all the meanes he can to beguyle vs; yet we muſt not be ouercome, but our faith muſt be as a wel garded fortreſſe, that notwithſtanding any aſſault, or any battrie made againſt vs, yet it may warde all blowes, and bee able to ſaue it ſelfe from beeing vanquiſhed by any enemies.

And now let vs marke, that if God ſende ſuch falſe miracles; it is not to intrap thoſe that are his; but to puniſh ſuch as haue not beleeued the Goſpel, as Saint Paul ſpeaketh thereof in the ſeconde to the Theſſalonians. 2.Theſ.2,12 And therfore doth Moſes alſo adde, *Then is it Gods will to try thee whether thou loueſt him with all thy heart & all thy ſoule or no.* It is a ſaying that deſerueth to be wel marked. For firſt Moſes doeth vs to vnderſtande, that ſuch thinges happen not without the ordinance of God: and ſecondly hee ſheweth the ende or reaſon wherefore: namely that the faithfull may haue wherewith to bee confirmed, knowing well that God will giue them conſtancie to holde out, though the temptation be neuer ſo rough and violent. Thoſe are the two thinges which wee haue to remember here. Firſt, it is ſayd, *God tryeth thee.* Hereby hee ſheweth, that Satan hath no power ouer vs, nor can ſowe any wicked weedes, further foorth than God giueth him leaue. And that is a verie needefull thing for vs to marke. For were wee perſwaded that the doore were open for Satan, and that all errours might ſpring vp at all aduenture, and that God ouer ruled them not: alas what a thing were it? For wee ſee howe mad the diuel is to ouerthrowe all trueth: wee ſee with what furie hee goes to worke when hee is to fight againſt the kingdome of our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt: and we ſee what ſpite hee beareth to our ſaluation. And therefore things would go too much to hauocke if God wrought not to hinder Satan of his full ſcope, that hee might not ſet vp his lyes among vs. Wherefore let vs vnderſtande, that whenſoeuer there is any trouble, diuiſion, or diuerſitie of opinion in the Church, the ſame happeneth not at all aduenture, but God worketh from aboue, and ouerruleth the whole matter, according to this proteſtation of Moſes, Thy God tryeth thee. Yee ſee then that by knowing that God holdeth vs vnder his hande, wee bee aſſured that no errours or abuſes can haue acceſſe vnto vs, vnleſſe ſo farre foorth as our Lorde giue them acceſſe. And marke it for a ſpeciall point, to the ende wee thinke not that the diuel reigneth at his owne pleaſure, and doeth all thinges as it were whether God will or no: for hee muſt bee faine to haue leaue of his maſter.

And nowe let vs come to that which Moſes addeth concerning the ende and reaſon why God doeth it: For wee may thinke it ſtrange. What? That God ſhoulde trye vs? That errors ſhoulde bee ſaide to come ſo of God? Then is hee the author of lying. Againe, doeth God ſtirre vp the diuell vnto euill? Then might wee take occaſion of ſtumbling at it. Yea; but in as much as Moſes addeth that God doeth it for iuſt cauſe, the ſtumbling blocke is taken away. Hee ſayth that God *tempteth vs,* that is to ſaye, that hee tryeth vs. After what maner? *Whether we loue the Lorde our God or no.* And hereby hee ſheweth, (as I haue declared heretofore) that if wee haue a right meaning and pure heart, and haue receiued his trueth without hypocriſie, he will helpe vs at our neede, and we ſhalbe vpheld by his power, ſo as Satan may well ſtraine himſelfe to the vttermoſt, but the victorie ſhall alwayes go on our ſide. And this is the thing that I haue touched out of Saint Paul where he ſayth, 2.Theſ.2,12 that all the falſe miracles which befall vnder the reigne of Antichriſt, (as many haue been ſeene) are all reuengements of God, to puniſh ſuch as woulde not obey his trueth. And it is good reaſon that Satan ſhoulde driue them to deſtruction, ſith they woulde not open their eyes at ſuch time as God woulde haue enlightened them. And ſeeing they haue thruſt all good doctrine vnder foote; it is meete that they ſhoulde bee deceiued by lyes.

But let vs come backe againe to the wordes of Moſes. *He ſayth that wee be tryed, to weete if wee* *loue the Lorde our God.* Heereby hee ſheweth, that God putteth a difference betweene the hypocrites and ſuch as ſerue him in ſoundneſſe of heart, at ſuch time as hereſies ſpring vp and that there is trouble and diſagreement. And why? For it is certaine that ſuch as loue God are preſerued by the power of his holy Ghoſte, & that the troubles which they ſuſteyne are a good proofe and ſealing vp of their faith, whereby the ſame is made autenticall. God ſheweth by effect howe hee hath wrought in them, and that they bee in verie deede of the number of thoſe whome hee hath choſen. So then let vs vnderſtand, that all the errours and hereſies which the diuell ſhall haue ſowed among vs, ſhalbee turned to good ende to all Gods children. So farre off is it that they bring vs any hurte or harme, that they ſerue euer to make our faith ſhyne the brighter, and to warrant vs that God hath ſuccoured vs, and that hee will haue the ſame knowen to the whole worlde, ſo as he may bee glorified for it. And we alſo haue the more cauſe to reſt vppon him with the greater certaintie of faith, and to truſt that hee will neuer faile vs.

For as much then as wee ſee that our Lorde worketh in ſuch wiſe as hee turneth darkeneſſe into light, and deadly poyſon to our health: haue wee not whereof to reioyce? and ought wee not to bee patient albeit that troubles doe vexe vs for a time, and that wee haue much adoo to reſiſt? Yet ought not our heartes to quaile, ſeeing that God giueth it ſo happie an iſſue. Thus much concerning the firſt poynt; that is to witte, that if wee loue God with all our heart, that is to ſay, roundly and ſoundly and without counterfayting: hee will not ſuffer vs to bee beguyled: but whenſoeuer Satan comes to ſowe troubles and hereſies, wee ſhalbee confirmed ſtill better and better, and profite in ſuch wiſe, as wee ſhall neuer bee ouercome. And therewithall wee ſhall haue the better proofe that wee bee of the number of his ſeruauntes, and of thoſe whome hee hath committed to the cuſtodie of our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt, and that wee ſhall ſee this ſaying Ioh.18.9. fulfilled, that hee will neuer ſuffer any of the things to periſh, which his father hath put into his hande. Wee ſee then howe our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt is the keeper of our ſaluation; & that wee finde the thing by experience which Saint 1.Pet.1.4.5. Peter ſayeth; namely that our ſaluation is kept in heauen by faith, and that wee our ſelues alſo ſhall get the vpper hande of all the temptations which the diuell ſtirreth vp againſt vs, by ſowing ſuch cockle and darnel to the preiudice of Gods trueth.

But let vs marke alſo, that ſuch as are windeſhaken, doe ſhewe that they neuer wiſt what it is to loue God with all their heartes, and that there was nothing in them but vanitie and hypocriſie. And therefore when wee ſee men ſeduced, let vs not wonder as though God were cruell to them. For it was meete that their hypocriſie ſhoulde bee diſcouered. They meant to mocke God, and vſed a kinde of verniſhing and painting to make a ſhowe of that which they were not: and God bewrayeth what they were in deede. Nowe therefore, whereas wee ſee the wretched worlde ſo carried nowadayes into darkeneſſe, ſuperſtition and ydolatrie; wee muſt not thinke that they doe it of meere ſimplicitie, as though they were innocent and faultleſſe, and that God had giuen Satan the brydle without cauſe: but wee muſt rather conſider that God with iuſt vengeance puniſheth the vnkindneſſe of ſuch as had neither purpoſe nor deſire vnto him.

Trueth it is, that a man ſhall ſee ſome outwarde ſhewe of holineſſe in a number of thoſe that are ſeduced in the popedome and elſewhere. But yet for all that, they bee double hearted, and God perceiueth what they bee in ſecret. So then, let vs vnderſtand that God is a iuſt Iudge, and let vs glorifie him for his puniſhing of ſuch as loued him not ſoundly in their heartes as they ſhoulde haue done. That is the thing which wee haue to note.

And in deede, experience ſhewes it in ſuch as turne backe and fall to naughtineſſe after they haue once knowen the Goſpell. Wee haue ſeene here that when Satans vnderlinges haue come hither to ſet troubles in the Church, thoſe that haue beene ſeduced by them haue knowen them welynough of olde, and not nowe of late, for I ſpeake of the ſpace of eyghteene yeares. Since the troubling of this Church, diuers ſectes haue beene ſeene, and ſtil God hath beene faine to ſhewe and to poynt theſe out with his finger, which had nothing in them but diſſimulation & hypocriſie, howe faire countenance ſoeuer they did make. And I ſay that this hath beene knowen nowe theſe eyghteene yeres; inſomuch that euen they that haue pretended to bee great vpholders of the Goſpell, are well knowen to mee howe they haue behaued themſelues, & I could rehearſe their doings if neede were, but it is ynough to giue men an incling of them, that others might take example by them. When the Anabaptiſtes came hither to infect all, there was great cheere made them in the townhouſe, and this was about an eyghteene yeares ago. True it is, that men were conſtrained to reproue their doctrine openly: but yet in the meanewhile they were ſtill chockt vnder the chinne; & in ſteed of reſiſting them luſtily, feaſtes were made to entertaine them with. And ſince that time, wee haue ſeene in our owne dayes, (and that not long ago) howe other heretikes haue beene fauoured at their comming hither, and ſpecially howe that horrible blaſphemer was ſupported. And by whom? By ſuch as had ſo long deſpiſed God, that in the ende their ſhame was of neceſſitie to bee diſcouered. They proteſted ſufficiently that their deſire was to haue the Goſpell: but that was the goſpell of Mahomet to turne all thinges vpſide downe, and to bring all things to confuſion. For the worlde hath ſeene howe farre they ouerſhot themſelues; inſomuch that they tooke parte againſt God and his word. Nowe ſith wee haue ſuch examples, let vs learne to liue in feare and warineſſe, and alwayes come backe to that which is tolde vs here, that is to wit, that it is not without cauſe that our Lorde ſayeth, that hee tryeth and examineth ſuch as were diſguized afore: and that when hee ſuffereth falſe prophets to bee ſtirred vp by Satan, to ſowe their darnell among vs, it is to trye vs whether wee loue him with all our heart or no. And therefore let vs proceede more and more in the feare of our God, accordingly as it is ſaid here, that wee muſt ſerue him and obey his holy commaundementes, not douting but that hee will make vs to get the vpper hande in al aſſaultes and conflictes wherewith wee be aſſayled, ſo as wee ſhalbe ſure of the victorie, becauſe hee will fight for vs.

Nowe let vs kneele downe in the preſence of our good GOD with acknowledgement of our faultes, praying him to make vs ſo to feele them, as wee may not proceede to prouoke his wrath through our vnthankfulneſſe; but that ſeeing he hath giuen vs the infinite treaſure of his holy worde, whereby wee haue full aſſurance of our ſaluation; wee may imbrace it with all reuerence and liue in ſuch pureneſſe of heart before him, as hee may beſtowe his riches more and more vppon vs & make vs partakers of them, and that wee may walke the whole race of our life after ſuch ſort in his obedience, as wee may moreouer reſiſt all our enemies, and by the power of the ſpirituall ſworde of his worde, and of the ſhield of faith, beate backe all the aſſaultes that ſhalbe made vppon vs. That it may pleaſe him to graunt this grace, not onely to vs but alſo to all people and nations of the earth, &c.

On Saturday the xij. of October. 1555.

The Lxxxvij Sermon, which is the ſecond vpon the thirteenth Chapter.

2.3 And the ſigne or miracle, &c.

4 Yee ſhall walke after the Lorde your God, and feare him, and keepe his commaundements, and obey his voyce, and ſerue him, and ſticke to him:

5 But that Prophet or dreamer of dreames ſhalbee put to death: for hee hath ſpoken to turne you from the Lorde your God (which hath brought you out of the lande of Egypt, and deliuered you from the houſe of bondage) and to thruſt thee out of the way which the Lorde thy God hath commaunded thee to walke in. And ſo ſhall you ridde away the euill from among you.

WEe ſawe yeſterday wherefore God giueth the brydle to Satan, in ſuch wiſe, that hee ſoweth many errours and corruptions, not onely in the worlde, but alſo in the Church. For it is good reaſon that our faith ſhould be tryed, to weete whether we liue in vprightneſſe, ſoundnes, and loue before our God, or whether there bee any faynedneſſe in vs. And there is not a truer tryall thereof, than when wee come to the incounter to know, whether Gods trueth ought to bee inuincible againſt all erroures and leaſings. And therefore let it not offende vs when wee ſee him ſowe darnell: but let vs bethinke vs of that which is ſayde here, namely, that our Lorde wil ſearch vs to the harde bottome, whether wee beare reuerence to his worde in good earneſt and vnfeynedly or no. Not that hee knoweth not welynough what wee bee; (for it is not for himſelfe that hee doeth it:) but to the ende that our faith ſhould ſhewe it ſelfe, and that there ſhoulde be true record thereof.

Nowe moreouer it is tolde vs, *that wee muſt followe Gods worde and hearken to him, that wee may ſerue him and ſticke to him.* And this is ſtill to ſhewe vs that which I haue declared afore: namely, that wee can neuer bee at any ſtay, vnleſſe wee knowe well what God it is whome wee worſhip. For if wee bee in dout, there needeth nothing to ſhake vs downe, as wee ſee by experience. Therefore let vs learne to profite ſo in our Gods ſchoole, as wee may not bee remoued by falſe doctrines, but may haue wherwith to withſtande the ſleightes of Satan, as was declared more at large yeſterday.

But let vs goe backe againe to this ſaying, *that although the falſe Prophet haue giuen ſome ſigne or foretolde ſome wonder, and the ſame thing is come to paſſe: yet notwithſtanding wee muſt hold our owne ſtill.* Here it might be demaunded whether the diuell can propheſie or no. I ſtande not much vppon that, it is not materiall: but I haue anſwered before, that GOD is aboue him, and that it is his will that his Church ſhoulde liue in warrefare, to the ende that the faith of all his might be exerciſed. Then if a deceiuer foretell a thing, and the ſame fal out in deede: it is not to bee ſaide, but that GOD hath giuen him the brydle. Therefore it is not for vs to trouble our ſelues greatly,to knowe whether Satan foreſee thinges to come or no. For it is very certaine that notwithſtanding all the craft and ſuttletie that is in him, yet knoweth hee not any more than our Lorde imparteth vnto him. And all is to deceiue the vnbeleeuers according to their deſert: or elſe to ſhewe, that doe what he can, yet ſhall hee neuer get the vpper hande of the choſen, as is ſayde in other places of the ſcripture.

Matt.24.24 & Iohn. 10. 28,29.

Let vs then leaue theſe needeleſſe queſtions, whereby many folke haue deceiued and intangled them ſelues; to wit, whether the diuels doe knowe more than men doe: for it is nothing to the matter as I ſayde afore. But rather let vs vnderſtande this iuſtice of GOD, that it is his will to puniſh the vnbeleeuers,becauſe they bee neuer contented with the ſingle trueth, but will needes bee ſtill wandering here and there, and therefore are they woorthie of ſuch payment. Beſides this, the faithfull alſo are exerciſed by incounters; and that is alwayes to their benefite, and to their welfare. For God doeth ſo preſerue them, as it is not poſſible for them to be deceiued.

Deut.18.22

But as yet there remayneth one queſtion more: for it is ſaide in the eyghteenth Chapter, that a man may diſcerne a true Prophet from a deceiuer by this ſelfe ſame marke. If a Prophet (ſayth Moſes) haue foretolde a thing, and the ſame is come to paſſe:yee ſhall vnderſtand that that Prophet hath ſpoken truely and in the name of God. But if he be founde a lyar in the thinges that hee hath ſpoken, it appeareth that he was puffed vp with pryde and preſumption,& that he tooke too highly vpon him: and therefore let him be driuen away and rooted out from among you. It may ſeeme at the firſt bluſh, that here is ſome contrarietie: but wee muſt marke that in ſo ſaying, Moſes intendeth to declare, that God deceiueth not his ſeruauntes as the ydols are wont to doe, that is to ſay,as the diuels haue vnder the title of ydols deceiued the ignorant wretches that did put their truſt in them. For they foretolde lyes: and the people founde them ſelues diſappointed in giuing eare vnto them. And that is the cauſe why it is ſayd by the Prophet Eſay,that the gods of the Heathen can do neither good nor euill. But our Lord ſeparateth himſelfe there from all the gods that had beene inuented by mans deuiſe, and telleth vs ſaying: It belongeth to mee onely to ſhewe what is to come. And why? For I order all things,and I haue the worlde in my hande; and therefore I can well tel what ſhal come to paſſe. But as for ÿ ydols, they haue no power at all: and therefore howe can they declare any thing to ſuch as ſerue and worſhip them? This then is true in general. And according hereunto, the Prophet Ieremie ſpeaking to Hananiah in his eyght and twentith Chapter,confirmeth this ſaying of Moſes which wee ſhall ſee in the eyghteenth Chapter of this booke of Deuteronomie. I wiſhe (ſayth hee) that the thing which thou haſt foretolde may come to paſſe. For, that lyar did foade the people with vaine hope. When Ieremie told them ſaying; you haue offended your God too much, and haue continued in your wilfulneſſe vnto this daye; I haue often times warned you to come to amendement, but you would not heare mee, and therefore wee bee come nowe to the laſt caſt; thinke not that GOD will beare with you any longer,but prepare your ſelues to beare the yoke and burthen; for yee muſt bee carryed away to Babylon, where your ſtate ſhalbe miſerable; Becauſe you haue forſaken your God, hee hath giuen you ouer to bee a praye to your enemies, and therefore there is no more remedie but to diſpoſe your ſelues to patience, that this aduerſitie may tame you, and your GOD ſhewe pitie vnto you at the ende of the terme which hee hath ſet you: Hananiah ſetting himſelfe againſt him, ſaide no, feare not that any ſuch thing ſhall befall you. And therewithall hee went and put a yoke vppon his neck, in ſkorne of Ieremie who had worne bondes & lynes about his necke. Beholde (ſayes hee) I come to breake the thing that Ieremie hath ſhewed you for a ſigne that you muſt bee priſoners in Babylon. Very well (ſayde the Prophet Ieremie:) I woulde it were ſo; I wiſh not any harme to my countryfolke: but yet muſt not thou on the other ſide abuſe them with vayne hope as thou doeſt. Moreouer, thou ſhalt finde whether it bee ſo or no: and experience ſhall ſhewe whether thou bee a true Prophet or no: for whoſoeuer foretelleth a thing and the ſame commeth to paſſe; yeeldeth proofe that hee was ſent of God, and that hee ſpake out of Gods owne mouth. But if it come not to paſſe, it appeareth that all was but a lye. In that place Ieremie had an eye to the foreſaide text which wee ſhall ſee hereafter. Yee ſee then howe it is a generall rule for all of vs to holde, that it belongeth onely to God to foretell thinges to come, and that ſuch as declare thoſe things truely, do by that token ſhewe and proue themſelues to be true Prophets. Yet notwithſtanding, it may well bee that particularly GOD will permit a deceiuer to foretell ſome thing to come. And yet doeth not that falſifie the generall rule. For why? when our Lorde foretelleth things to come, it is to frame al men to his lawe: And the falſe prophets what ſay they? In abuſing the people, and turning them from God, they promiſe them that all ſhall go well with them: whereas contrariwiſe Gods ſeruauntes doe alwayes matche faith and amendement of life with their admonitions: and they vſe a kinde of teaching that hath a good foundation to buylde vppon: but the ſpeaking of the other ſort is altogither in the aire. Nowe wee ſee howe deſirous the worlde is to be beguyled, accordingly as it is ſayde in the Prophet Micheas, that the vnbeleeuers doe like of none but ſuch as bring them good tydinges of a good vintage or of a good harueſt. For ſo ſaith hee expreſſely, when it is ſayde vnto them, Yee ſhall bee fatte fedde, and GOD fauoureth you, take no thought, make good cheere. Thoſe are the thinges which the worlde deſireth. Neuertheleſſe GOD will nowe and then

Eſa.41.23. 26,27.

Ier.28.9.

Mich.2.11.

then permitte the deceiuers to ſpeake trueth: but that is but in ſome peculiar caſe, and then doe they builde without foundation. Therefore is that no impediment to the continuall trueth of this rule, that when Gods prophetes foretell thinges to come, it is a proofe to warrant their doctrine, ſo as men may thereby knowe of whome they bee ſent. For in verie deede although there appeare ſome trueth at the firſt bluſhe in the falſe prophetes: yet notwithſtanding there is no holde of it. Marke that for one ſpeciall point. Againe all the matter lyeth in the falling out, which in the ende ſheweth it ſelfe cleane contrarie to that whiche was ſurmiſed. For in the turning of a hande all thinges goe backewarde, and the vnbeleeuers finde that it was but a blearing of their eyes to make them the more blockiſhe; and that their hauing of ſome trewe ſigne was but a baite to beguyle them, whereas in yͤ meane time they ceaſed not to hoord vp Gods wrath & vengeance ſtill againſt themſelues.

Then let vs beare well in minde, that whereas it is ſayde in this text, that a prophete may ſay ſome thing that ſhall come to paſſe afterwarde, and yet neuertheleſſe not haue the more warraunt to bee taken for a ſeruaunt of GOD: the reaſon is, for that his matter hath no grounde in the worde of GOD, as I haue ſayde afore: And ſecondely, that it is but as a bayte, and a peculiar caſe, whereof there is no holde to be taken; like as when God ſuffereth Satan to transforme himſelfe into an Angell of light, it is to harden the vnbeleeuers as they de-
2.Cor.11.14 ſerue to bee. And becauſe they woulde not conuert, therefore muſt the darkeneſſe be made the thicker for them, and the deuill muſt haue all manner of effectualneſſe of errour, as ſayth Saint Paule in the ſeconde to the Theſſaloni-
2.Theſ.2.10 ans; inſomuch that GOD not onely giueth him leaue to deceiue, as a point belonging peculiarly to his office, and as wherein hee is his craftes maiſter: but alſo giueth him ſuche efficacie of errour, that is to ſaye ſuch force and power, that men are blinded by him beyonde all meaſure. Thus yee ſee what wee haue to note. And therefore wee bee warned in effect, to pray GOD to giue vs the ſpirite of wiſedom and diſcretion, that wee may not be ſnarled by Sathans lyes, what colour or couerte of craftineſſe ſo euer he vſe. Marke this for one point, that men muſt in any wiſe beware of preſumption. For they be not ſo well able to iudge as were requiſite. But let vs reſorte vnto God, and hee will make vs to diſcerne betweene whyte and blacke.

Againe on the contrarie part, we muſt vnderſtande that whenſoeuer any good is promiſed vs, or any euill is threatened vs, wee muſt take Gods doctrine for our foundation, aſſuring our ſelues that Gods will is not to ſeparate his bleſſing and grace from his Lawe; And therefore that it is in vaine for vs to hope for fauour at his hande when wee haue offended him. For ſeeing wee haue prouoked his wrath wee ſhall finde that his threatening of vs is not in vayne: ſeeing that hee ſayeth in his Lawe, that hee will perſecute all ſuch as ſet themſelues againſt him; it muſt needes bee performed. Therefore let vs firſt lay the foundation of faith and repentaunce; and then ſhall wee not be deceiued as in reſpect of the particular propheſies, but that this rule ſhall alwayes holde trewe, to witte, that ſuch as ſpeake the trueth are ſent of GOD. Yet notwithſtanding Sathan will not leaue off to haue leaue after a certaine ſorte to deceiue the vnbeleeuers as they bee worthie: but that trueth is no trueth (as ſayeth Saint Paul): ſuch miracles are but illuſions to deceiue thoſe that truſt to them, and the ende that they 2.Theſ. 2.9.
tende vnto is but to ſeduce the wretched world. 10.
After the ſame maner alſo doeth our Lorde Ieſus ſpeake of them. And therefore let vs marke wel Matt.24.24.
that although the deceiuers haue a ſhowe of trueth in ſome particular caſe, yet is it nothing woorth: for there is no holde of it: and it is ſo farre off from any ſubſtantial trueth, that in the ende it appeareth to bee vtter vanitie and vntrueth, to deceiue the wretched vnbeleeuers withall, which are turned away from God. That is the thing in effect, which we haue to mark vpon this text. But howſoeuer the worlde goe, if we put the thinges in vre which are ſpoken here by Moſes, that is to wit, if we followe the Lorde and walke in the way which hee ſheweth vs: wee neede not to feare but that we be out of all danger of being deceiued by the wylineſſe of our enemie. Although the deuill be the father of lying, and doe forge an infinite number of illuſions againſt vs, and although wee on our ſide be neuer ſo roughly aſſayled by him: yet will GOD preſerue vs, ſo wee abide continually in the obedience of his worde, and be willing to harken to him in all caſes.

But nowe let vs come to that which Moſes addeth. *As for the prophet* (ſayeth hee) *or the deceiuer which ſhall haue deceiued and abuſed folke, to make them turne away from the Lorde their God; Let him be put to death, and let the euill be taken from among you.* Here our Lorde will haue vs not onely to beware that wee harken not to falſe prophetes, but alſo to roote out ſuch peſtilent perſons vtterly. And therein he ſheweth how earneſt wee ought to be in the mainteyning of his honour. Therefore to the ende wee ſhoulde abide in the pure ſingleneſſe of faith, he had ſayd afore, Beware that yee harken not to the falſe prophete. And not without cauſe hath our Lorde forbidden all his to giue eare to the bringers in of newe learninges. For why? Sith wee haue the worde of GOD, that ought to content vs well ynough: and if that will not ſatiſfie vs, what an vnthankefulneſſe is it? For if wee will needes intangle our ſelues in falſe doctrines, is it not a yeeelding of our ſelues to bee a pray to Satan? Doe wee not well deſerue that God ſhould leaue vs deſtitute of vnderſtanding, to be drawen into all errours like brute beaſts? But it behoooueth vs not onely to ſhunne falſe prophetes and to giue their ſubtilties no

Gal.5.9 12. & Tit.3.10.

John 12.31.

entraunce into vs: but alſo (as Saint Paul ſayth) to bee diligent in purging of Gods Churche from them, that ſuch a plague be not nouriſhed among vs. And truely if wee knewe our owne frailtie, and conſidered well on the other ſide what Sathan is able to doe againſt vs: it is certaine that wee woulde ſtande more vppon our garde than we be wont to doe. Trewe it is (as I haue ſayde alreadie) that wee woulde fayne repoſe and ſtaye our ſelues vppon GOD, ſo as we might not miniſter any occaſion to Satan to beguyle vs; and ſurely if wee through our owne fonde deſire of ſeeking lyes, did not caſt ourſelues into Sathans ſnares, wee ſhoulde be ſure that GOD woulde alwayes preſerue vs. But foraſmuch as we bee too too weake, and Sathan needes no more but to holde vppe his finger to vs, to carrie vs out of hande from the right way of ſaluation: in reſpect thereof wee ought ſo much the more to ſeeke the remedies whereby to preuent the miſchiefe. Againe let vs conſider what Satan is able to doe: He is the prince of this worlde, and therefore wee ſhall ſoone be ouertaken by him, the rather if wee be ſlothfull, careleſſe, or negligent. Then is it not without cauſe that our Lorde warneth vs to take ſo good order, as ſuch a plague may not lurke among vs; that is to wit, that wee may not haue deceiuers to beguile the ſimple, and to marre them by turning them from the pure trueth. For it is a likelihoode that wee woulde faine bee turned away from GOD, when wee giue the miſchiefe ſuch ſcope. If there were a breach in our towne wall, and our enemies were at hand or that wee were alreadie beſeeged, ſo as wee looked for the aſſault euerie minute of an houre; would we not prouide for it? Now the caſe ſtandeth ſo with vs, that our enemie is not onely at hande, but alſo is entered in already. When wee heare his lyes, and withſtand them not, ne make account of thẽ; we may ſeeme to be wilfully diſpoſed to periſh, as wee bee worthie. And as touching vs that are ſhepheardes, it ſtandeth vs in hande to haue a double voyce. For wee muſt gather together the ſheepe as much as is poſſible: and when they bee in the flocke, wee muſt keepe them there quietly. But if there be wolues alſo, and theeues that woulde inuade the flocke: againſt thoſe we muſt crye out aloude. And yet beſides this, ſuch as haue the ſworde in their hande, muſt prouide for it alſo, and euerie man to his power muſt ſtreine himſelfe to keepe Gods Church from infecting with ſuche poyſon, that the deuill may not haue his full ſcope to falſifie the pure trueth, to aduaunce himſelfe againſt GOD, to ouerthrowe the right religion, and (at a worde) to turne all thinges vpſide downe: but we muſt let theſe thinges as much as we can. Wherefore let vs marke, that it was Gods will that falſe prophetes ſhoulde be rooted out from among his people. Nowe at the firſt ſight this Lawe ſeemeth to bee ouerſtreite: for is it meete that a man ſhoulde bee puniſhed ſo ſore for ſpeaking his minde? Verily it is a wonder that we can abide that one ſhoulde be puniſhed for ſpeaking againſt a mortall man, and that when a man ſhall haue blaſphemed the liuing GOD, we coulde finde in our heartes that he ſhoulde ſcape vnpuniſhed. It appeareth what zeale is in them, which woulde haue ſuch rigour aboliſhed. If a Prince be miſuſed, men will thinke that death is too ſmall a thing for the offender, and that the fact can not be ſufficiently reuendged, inſomuch that whoſoeuer ſpeaketh againſt the princes authoritie ſhall bee puniſhed, and no man will ſpeake againſt it. If a man be founde ſo wicked as to procure a rebellion, or to rayſe an inſurrection among the people, verie well, he muſt looſe his heade for it, and no man will ſay that ſuch a Lawe is vniuſt or wicked. And why? Becauſe it ſerues for the mainteynaunce of the ſtate and common weale of the Countrey. And yet for all this, whereas GOD hath the ſoueraigne dominion of all, a woorme of the earth ſhall ſette himſelfe againſt him, and goe about to robbe him of his honour, and to deface his maieſtie and authoritie; and yet all this ſhall be as nothing, it ſhall be let ſlippe, and becauſe it is but woordes, there is no reaſon why ſuch puniſhement ſhould enſewe of it. But they that ſay ſo, doe well ſhewe that they haue no loue at all towardes GOD, but (which worſe is) that they coulde finde in their heartes that all thinges were confounded together in a hotchpotche, ſo as men might ſcoffe at GOD and at his maieſtie, and turne all religion into a mockerie and ſcorne. To be ſhorte, whoſoeuer he is that ſpeaketh ſo: he is not to be taken for an ignoraunt perſon, ſeeing hee woulde that falſe doctrines ſhoulde be vnpuniſhed: but rather hee is to bee counted a deſpiſer of GOD, and an vphoulder of the deuill, which ſeeketh nothing elſe but the turning of all thinges vpſide downe in the worlde. For our parte, lette vs learne to haue Gods honour in ſuch eſtimation, that wheras we reuenge the wronges doone to men, wee thinke it much more reaſon that the partie ſhoulde bee puniſhed which violateth the maieſtie of him that hath created and faſhioned vs. And the matter concerneth not onely the honour of God, but alſo the ſaluation of our owne ſoules: for they be thinges inſeparable. And that ought well to whette vs on the more, not to beare with the erroures and deceites of falſe prophetes. See howe GOD witneſſeth the infinite Loue that hee beareth vs, in that hee matcheth our ſaluation with his owne glorie, ſo as men canne not touche the one without hurting of the other: inſomuch that if a man deface the honour of GOD, the ſaluation of man is aſſayled therewithall. In reſpect whereof GOD ſayeth vnto vs, ſuffer mee not to bee miſuſed among you, nor your ſelues to bee inticed to ſhrinke from my obedience: But if there be any wicked man among you, that goeth about to egge you away, beware yee nouriſhe not ſuch a plague. Doeth not our Lorde in ſo ſaying ſhewe, that wee can not ſerue to his honour, nor mayntaine him in his eſtate, but that in ſo dooing wee procure our owne welfare? And therefore theſe dalyers and mockers that

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woulde haue vs to beare withall manner of falſe doctrine, and that it ſhoulde bee Lawefull for euerie man to ſpewe out whatſoeuer hee lyſteth, (beſides that they ſhewe themſelues traitours to G O D, and vtter defacers of his maieſtie if it lay in them to doe it:) doe alſo bewraye themſelues to bee enemies of mankinde, and deſirous to bring their ſoules to ruine and deſtruction, ſo as they bee worſe than murtherers. Let vs marke then that if Gods honour bee precious in our ſight, and that the ſaluation of our owne ſoules bee deere vnto vs; we muſt not nouriſhe hereſies, nor abuſes, nor any other of Sathans trumperies; but euerie of vs in his owne ſtate and calling, muſt procure the purging of Gods Churche from all euill, that wee may worſhippe him with one common conſent, that his doctrine may bee receiued, and that there may bee no diuiſion among vs.

But this was ſayde to the people of olde time. Yea, and Gods honour muſt not be diminiſhed by vs at this day: the reaſons that I haue alleadged alreadie doe ſerue as well for vs as for them. Then lette vs not thinke that this Lawe is a ſpeciall Lawe for the Iewes: but let vs vnderſtande that G O D intended to deliuer vs a generall rule, to which wee muſt tye our ſelues. In deede it is alleadged that when our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt came into the worlde, he aduaunced not his doctrine by the ſworde, but rather both he and his were perſecuted, and therefore that the right way to mayntaine the true religion, is not to puniſhe ſuch as ſet vppe themſelues againſt it: but rather to holde our ſelues contented with the ſpirituall ſwoorde, and to vſe that in our fighting againſt Satan, ſo as our vnholding of the trueth, bee alwayes by ſufferaunce and patience, if the worlde doe perſecute it. But lette vs ſee whether our Lorde haue excluded and baniſhed Princes and Magiſtrates and Officers of Iuſtice out of his flocke, ſo as they may not be Chriſtians. No ſurely. For when he ſpeaketh of the kingdome of our Lorde Ieſus Chriſte, hee ſayeth expreſly; Yee kinges ſtande you in awe; and yee Iudges of Pſal.2.10. the earth, humble you your ſelues, and all of you kiſſe the ſonne. Moreouer, before hee ſpeake to priuate perſons, hee willeth expreſly that Kinges, Iudges, and Officers of Iuſtice ſhoulde doe homage to our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt: then they bee called to the knowledge of yͤ Goſpell. And in deede, according heereunto it is ſayde in the Pſalme, that kinges ſhall come to Pſa.72.10.11 & 138.4. & Eſa.49.7.23 ſubmitte themſelues to him that was to bee ſent to be the redeemer. And againe that they ſhal be as foſter fathers to the Churche, and that Queenes ſhall giue her ſucke; that is to ſaye, that ſuch as haue the ſworde of Iuſtice in their hande, ſhall take Gods Churche into their protection to mainteine it in the pure doctrine, and in the ſame Religion that is ſet downe in Gods worde. Sith it is ſo, it is to be concluded, not onely that it is Lawefull for all Kinges and Magiſtrates, to puniſh heretikes and ſuch as haue peruerted the pure trueth: but alſo that they be bounde to doe it, and that they miſbehaue themſelues towardes G O D, if they ſuffer errours to rouſt without redreſſe, and employ not their whole power to ſhewe a greater zeale in that behalfe than in all other thinges. For is it reaſon that he which ſitteth in the ſeate of Iuſtice, ſhoulde puniſhe a theefe for doing wrong but to the valewe of fiue ſhillinges: and in the meane while let a traytour to G O D goe vnpuniſhed? Gods name is thereby blaſphemed, his 2.Cor.3.18. trueth whiche is his image is trampled vnder foote, and it is much more than if a man ſhould rende ſome [princes] Cotearmour in peeces. In ſo dooing the liuing image of G O D is ſkorned, and as it were ſpitted at, and the ſaluation of mennes ſoules hindered: and ſhall the Magiſtrates ſit ſtill at it like ydolles? They muſt puniſh a theefe for the valewe of fifteene pence; and beholde, this is ſuch a traytour as goeth about to confounde heauen and earth together, and muſt the ſame go vnpuniſhed? What a dealing were that? Doeth not euen nature teache what is to be doone in this behalfe? And as for thoſe that ſay that we ſhould let the euill weedes growe ſtill, doe they not ſhewe themſelues to be growen out of kinde like monſters, and that they bee more intollerable than if they were ſtarke madde? For it ſhoulde ſeeme that their meaning is to defie the whole order of nature, and men ſee that they not onely ſpeake againſt G O D, but alſo poyſon mennes ſoules, and bewray themſelues not to haue one droppe of ſetled diſcretion. Nowe then let vs marke, that ſith God hath declared that in the reigne of his Sonne, euen kinges ſhoulde bee called to the knowledge of the trueth, and become a parte of his Church: It behoueth them to giue example to their people, and it is good reaſon that they ſhoulde employ their whole power and authoritie to maintaine the good doctrine, and to cauſe G O D to be honored and ſerued, and to driue away all ydolatrie and ſuperſtition, and to ſee that it bee not Lawefull for anie man to ſpewe out blaſphemies agaynſt G O D. That is the thing which we haue to marke vpon this place.

And whereas it is alleadged that Ieſus Chriſt vſed not the materiall ſworde to aduaunce his doctrine withall: that is true, and wee alſo bring not the ſworde in our hande into the pulpit to prooue the things that wee preache. But lette vs learne to put a difference betweene offices, and let vs conſider howe our Lorde Ieſus Chriſte came to preache his worde, when hee woulde that ſuch as receiue it ſhould euerie man in his owne ſtate and calling, followe whatſoeuer is ordeined for him. Nowe it is true that in the time of our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt, the great men of the worlde claue not to the Goſpell, no more than we ſee them doe yet ſtill at this day: but the little ones and weakelinges were faine to be choſen, thereby to beate downe the pride of the worlde, as Saint Paule auoweth in the firſt to the Corinthians. Ye ſee (ſayeth he) that there bee not many noble men, men of power, 1.Cor.1.26. or wiſe men among you. And why? For men are but too much giuen to the aduauncing of themſelues:and if God had begunne at the great ones, the litle ones ſhoulde haue ſeemed as nothing. But God ment to beate downe all pride, that men might learne to chalendge nothing to themſelues. Notwithſtanding howſoeuer the caſe ſtand, when the great ones are called to the ſeruice of God, then muſt they imploy thẽſelues in the thinges that belong to their charge. For the thinges that I alleadged out of Eſay, Dauid, and diuerſe other Pſalmes, belong to the reigne of our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt, and to the ſtate of the Chriſtian Church. Therefore muſt we needes conclude, that our Lorde will haue Princes and magiſtrates to vſe the ſworde that is giuen them, to the mainteynaunce of his honour, and of the vnitie of faith and good agreement; ſo as if any man rayſe vp trouble or goe about to ſowe darnell, he may be rooted out. But is not that puniſhment too rigorous? [Yes:] for ſome will well ynough graunt (as conſtrained thereunto) that it is good that hereſies ſhoulde be repreſſed: but that it were too great an extremitie to proceede ſo farre as to puniſhe them with death. Yea, but (as I ſayde afore) wee muſt eſteeme Gods honour as it deſerueth. For if wee woulde that deceiuers ſhoulde be reprooued, ſo as they might not haue their mouthes open, and yet that they ſhoulde not bee vtterly ſuppreſſed as were requiſite: it were all one as if we ſhoulde ſay, In deede we ought to pleaſe God, but as for to put a man to death for blaſpheming him, what a thing were that? Loe at what point we be.

Bet God for all that, will not faile to be had in eſtimation as I ſayde afore: yea and that to our coſt, if wee goe that way to worke. For the very cauſe in deede, why we ſee the worlde infected with ſo many troubles and errours, is our laſines in that wee haue neither zeale nor diſpoſition to beate downe the leaſinges of Satan. Nay rather (which worſe is) there are a great number which maintaine them willingly. And yet in the meane while men crye out that all thinges are confounded, that all thinges goe to hauocke, and that there are ſo greate troubles as is pitie to beholde. And what is the cauſe thereof? Euen the princes that are willing to maintaine errours, and further them by all the meanes they can, ſo as it may ſeeme that they bee of Satans ſetting vp, as it were to vpholde his part againſt God and his worde. Their people likewiſe deſire nothing ſo much, as to be fedde with lyes; that is al their ſeeking, and God ſendeth it them. For (as I haue ſhewed afore) it is a iuſt rewarde for them. Why then ſhould men cry alas, or why ſhould they be greeued at the matter, when all men both great and ſmall ſeeke the vtter defacing of Gods trueth, and to giue ſcope to all manner of leaſinges? Therefore let vs learne in any wiſe to haue the zeale and affectiõ which our Lorde commaundeth vs: or elſe it wil come to paſſe that hereſies and errours ſhall in the end picke out our eyes, if we feede them ſtill as wee be ſeene to doe. Let vs take the forementioned example of Ananias, and Ieremie. Ieremie taught in the name of God, and it was prooued ſufficiently that hee ſtepped not foorth on his owne heade: and yet for all that, the people woulde haue hadde him to let them alone, that euerie man might haue followed his owne wicked luſts; they could not away with him, God his threatninges were to corraſiue, and therefore euery man ſought to withſtande Ieremie. Yea (quoth they) ſhall this fellowe trouble vs thus continually? Nowe heereupon God ſent a deceiuer that went about to make Ieremie a lyer before all the people aſſembled in the Temple: and no doubt but a great number were offended at it ſpecially ſuch as might conſider, or ſay thus: What? We haue heere the Temple of God, as he himſelfe appointed, and it is the place where he will be worſhipped; wee haue the Lawe, wee haue Gods promiſe that he will dwell among vs for euer. And yet nowe beholde, heere are two prophetes, of whome the one ſayes, ye ſhall go into captiuitie, and the other ſayes, it ſhall not be ſo. Beſides this the deceiuer fell to buffeting of Ieremie as it were to ſhame him, and giueth him the lye, ſo as Gods prophet was faine to ſtande there as abaſhed at the ſight of ſuch trouble. By reaſon whereof many might be ſore moued as I ſayde afore. But what? Let vs a little conſider the ſtate of that people. For when the gouernours were aſſembled, (which ought to haue mainteyned the pure religion, and had the prophet Ieremie as it were in their keeping) they to ſhewe themſelues voyde of all iuſt dealing, did not onely ſette themſelues againſt Ieremie, but alſo (which worſe is) affirme him to be worthie of death. Thus yee ſee howe Gods prophet was condemned both of greate and ſmall: inſomuch that euerie man ranne vppon him. For they were fully bent to giue themſelues to all wickedneſſe, and to bee no more threatned in the name of GOD. If wee ſee the like noweadayes, let vs vnderſtande that we bee worthy of ſuch payment. For without going anie further, for all the preaching of the Goſpell among vs, howe is it receiued? what reuerence yeelde wee to it? All men ruſh out into diſorder, and we neede not ſpeake any more of the popiſhe ſuperſtitions: for there is ſo deuiliſh wickedneſſe to bee ſeene, that euen ſuch as haue beene counted the ſimpleſt cloynes, are fraughted full of blaſphemies to ſpyte GOD withall and to laugh his worde openly to ſkorne. Yee ſee what murmuring there is, ſpecially when vices are rebuked. To be ſhorte, mennes onely deſire is to haue dumbe dogges, ſuch as may haue no authoritie at all to ſpeake, and vnruly people, drunkardes, gluttons, Leacherous, and I wote not what elſe. At a worde, men woulde haue either dogges or ſwine in the pulpit. This is the thing that they ſeeke for; And this is mennes deſires in moſt places; who in ſteede of good and faithfull ſeruauntes to GOD, doe chooſe dogges and ſwine. And if a man ſeeke the remedie and the redreſſe of it: Hee muſt goe to the newefounde yles, for there is no man heere that will meddle with it. Sith we ſee ſuch dealing, let vs conſider what manner of obedience and feare of God there is in ſuch folke. So

Ier.28.9.

2.Sam 7.10. & 1.Kin 6. 13.& 8. 13. Exo.25.8.& 29.45.

Ier.36.8.11

much the more therfore doth it ſtand vs in hand to beare yͤ exhortation wel in mind which I haue ſet downe alreadie: namely yͤ Gods working of our ſaluation is alwayes matched with his owne glorie. And therefore whenſoeuer he perſwadeth vs to maintaine his honour, it is all one as if he ſayd, Ye wretched people, if ye make reckening of the ſaluation of your owne ſoules: yee muſt prouide alſo that I may beare ſway among you, and that I may be honored: and therefore ſee that yee lay for it. Gods meaning then heereby is to ſhewe vs that he will haue his honour mainteined by making vs furtherers of his caſe, and that he will haue vs to ſette it foreward as much as in vs lyes, or elſe we ſhalbe a pray to the deuill. Seeing that hee vttereth ſuch loue towardes vs, it is no reaſon that wee on our ſide ſhoulde be negligent: but it behoueth vs to indeuour that errours and hereſies may be rooted out from among vs. For if we doe not, we muſt looke for the rewarde that I ſpake of, and God giueth vs too much proofe of it. On the other ſide when wee followe the order that is ſhewed vs heere, we muſt vnderſtande that it behoueth vs to haue Gods honour in ſuch eſtimation, as all other thinges may bee nothing with vs in compariſon of that. Which thing will come to paſſe, if wee ſticke ſtedfaſtly to his worde, and holde ou ſelues to it though wee bee aſſaulted on all ſides; and ſpecially if wee reſiſt the miſchiefe by looking to it aforehande, ſo as it neſtle not among vs. Therefore let vs take heede that we bende our ſelues to it euerie man in his calling; and then wee neede not to doubt but that GOD will ſtrengthen vs and ſtabliſh vs in the faith which wee haue receiued of him, ſo as we ſhal continue ſtedfaſtly therein vnto the end, and be throughly well fenced againſt all the aſſaultes of Satan and his vnderlinges.

Nowe let vs fall downe in the preſence of our good God with acknowledgement of our faultes, praying him to make vs perceiue them better, And therewithall foraſmuch as wee ſhould ſoone be ouertaken by falſe teachers, let vs flee for ſuccour to our God, and yeelde him thankes for his ridding of vs from the hereſies and errours wherein wee were ſnarled, and for his giuing of vs the foode of life; praying him to make vs to taſt thereof in ſuch wiſe, as wee may neuer be turned away from it, but wiſely diſcerne the way of life and the way of death aſunder, to the ende that our ſaluation may bee kept ſafe in his handes, and we in the meane while eſchewe the wyles that Satan worketh againſt euerie of vs particularly, ſo as wee may put them from vs luſtily, and they haue no acceſſe vnto vs: but that wee may ſticke ſo ſtedfaſtly to our God, as our whole ſeeking may be to acknowledge him for our king, and wee behaue our ſelues as his people, that hee alſo may alwayes auowe vs to be ſo. That it may pleaſe him to grant this grace not onely to vs, but alſo to all people and nations of the earth. &c.

On Wedneſday the xvj. of October. 1555.

The Lxxxviij. Sermon which is the third vpon the thirteenth Chapter.

6 If thine owne brother the ſonne of thy Mother, or thine owne ſonne, or thy daughter, or the wife that is in thy boſomme, or thy neighbour that is to thee as thyne owne ſoule, goe about to intice thee, ſaying ſecretly, Let vs goe and ſerue other gods which thou haſt not knowen, nor yet thy fathers:

7 That is to wit, any of the gods of the nations that are about thee, whether they bee neere thee or farre off from thee, from the one ſide of the earth to the other:

8 Conſent not to him, neither giue eare vnto him: neither let thine eye fauour him, ſhewe him not any pitie, neither conceale him.

9 But thou ſhalt put him to death, thy hande ſhalbe the firſt vpon him to put him to death, and afterward the hand of all the people.

10 And thou ſhalt ſtone him with ſtones and ſo he ſhall die: (for he hath ſought to thruſt thee from the Lorde thy God, which brought thee out of the land of Egypt, from the houſe of bondage:)

11 That all Iſraell may heare and be afraide, and not doe ſuch a wicked thing among you any more.

Had

Psal.69.10. HAd we the zeale in vs that is ſpoken of in the Pſalme, that wee tooke the reproch which is done vnto GOD, as if it were offered to our ſelues: this lawe here were in a manner needeleſſe. For euerie of vs woulde willingly of his owne accorde indeuour to maintaine Gods honour. But nowe inaſmuch as manie men thinke it to be too exceſſiue rigour to put the troublers and peruerters of religion to death: thereby it appeareth that we deſpiſe Gods honour and make no greate account of it. For euerie of vs would faine haue his owne honour maynteined, and if anie man haue ſtormed againſt vs, wee thinke the time will neuer come ſoone ynough for vs to bee reuenged. If a man doe vs any wrong or iniurie, wee woulde that euerie man ſhoulde ſette himſelfe againſt it in our defence: but if Gods honour bee trampled vnder foote, wee lette it ſlippe. Wee ſee then howe colde and vnluſtie wee bee, but this vnluſtineſſe of ours deſerueth a more ſhamefull name. For if a man ſuffer his father to bee ſcorned, folke will ſay hee is not worthie to liue in the worlde, becauſe he doeth againſt his kinde. And beholde, GOD is as it were torne in peeces by wicked mennes aduauncing of themſelues to rend aſunder the vnion of the fayth wherethrough it is his will to bee knowen, and whereby it is his will to reigne among vs: and that is borne withall. And is not that a token, that if it lay in vs wee woulde neuer haue any remembraunce of GOD at all? But foraſmuch as there is ſo litle zeale in vs; therefore is this Lawe giuen vs. And GOD declareth that hee is not vnmindefull of his owne maieſtie, but that hee will haue the defacing thereof to bee puniſhed. Naye rather hee ſheweth that hee diſclaymeth vs for his people, if we haue not a ſpeciall regarde of this caſe of his.

Wee haue hearde heeretofore what hath beene ſayde concerning falſe prophetes: namely that if anie man troubled the Churche of GOD, hee ſhoulde bee ſtoned to death without ſparing. Nowe God expreſſeth yet better the thing that he hadde ſpoken: which is, that we muſt put all affections of nature vnder foote, when his honour commeth in queſtion, ſo as the father muſt not ſpare his ſonne, nor the brother his brother, nor the husbande his wife, nor the friend his friende ẏ is as deere to him as his own life, ẏ he be not put to death. And good reaſon. For doe not all the friendeſhippes in the worlde proceede of that order of nature whiche the creator hath eſtabliſhed? Then if wee will not ſette the carte before the horſes, wee muſte Eph.3.15. alwayes beginne at GOD. And Saint Paule doeth not without cauſe ſay; that al kinred commeth from thence, and iſſueth out of that fountayne.

Alſo when there is any friendſhippe betweene man and man; it muſt alwayes bee referred to this marke, that GOD haue ſtill the cheife preheminence, and that wee be ioyned together in him. And curſed be al alyaunce that ſeparateth vs from our maker, in whome conſiſteth all our life, welfare, and ioye. Then if a husbande loue his wife, without regarde of GOD, hee is woorthie to bee thruſt out amonge the brute beaſtes. In like caſe is the father, which aimeth not at the ſame marke in louing of his children. If wee be ſo linked together, and haue ſo plighted our faith and trothe one to an other, as wee may ſeeme after a ſorte to haue as ye would ſay but one ſoule in two bodies, and in the mean while GOD be lette alone vnthought on: doe yee not ſee that it is too ſhamefull a beaſtlineſſe? Then is it not without cauſe that GOD hath tolde vs expreſly that his honour is to bee preferred before al worldely or naturall conſiderations. And lette vs marke well the wordes that are ſette downe heere; for they bee of great weight.

Moſes coulde haue ſayde ſingly, *If thy brother, thy wife, thy ſonne, or ſome friende of thine intice thee, and goe aboute to allure thee to naughtineſſe*; but hee addeth (which is of much more vehemencie) *If thy brother the ſonne of thy mother*, which laye in the ſame bellie that thou thy ſelfe diddeſt. And to what ende is this doone of GOD, but to ſearche the bottome of our affections, by entering euen vnto our bowels, as if hee ſhoulde ſay, I will ſee whether yee loue mee better than yee doe theſe carkeſſes? For what is thy brother? Hee is but a mortall creature: and I will ſee whether thou ſette more ſtore by him than by mee. Naye (ſay wee) but he and I laye both in one bellie. That is trewe, (ſayth GOD:) but is it not meete that I ſhoulde alwayes haue the vpper hande and higheſt preheminence? The ſame caſe is it when hee ſayeth, *thine owne ſonne, thine owne daughter, thy wife that ſleepeth in thy boſome*. Hee coulde haue ſayde ſingly; *thy wife*: but hee ſayeth, No, thou muſte forgette and quite and cleane ſhake off all the loue which thou beareſt to thy wife, if ſhee goe about to plucke thee away from me.

Agayne, *If thou haue a friende* (ſayeth hee) *which is as deere to thee as thine owne life*: thou muſt lay thy hande vppon him alſo to ſtone him: thou muſt not onely bee his accuſer and giue euidence againſt him; but thou muſt alſo ſette hande vppon him without ſparing: all mercie and pitie muſt bee put away in that caſe. Hereby wee ſee in effect, as I ſayde afore, that Gods will is to trie vs, whether wee truely loue him. And for that cauſe doeth he ſette downe vnto vs whatſoeuer might holde vs backe, or hinder our deſire from ſhewing ſuch zeale as wee ought to haue to the mainteinaunce of his honour: declaring vnto vs that if any thing bee an impediment to our continuall keeping of the vnion of fayth aboue all thinges, in ſuch wiſe as it is contayned in his woorde: wee bee traytoures and falſe hearted towardes him, and hee will ſhake vs off; and in ſteede of taking vs for his children, hee will giue vs ouer and baniſhe vs from his kingdome and his Churche: for hee will haue that order obſerued among thoſe that are his. Marke that for one point.

And herewithall it behoueth vs to conſider of whome hee ſpeaketh. Hee ſayeth not onely, if a man goe about to aboliſh all religion, as wee ſee ſome worldlings doe, which coulde finde in their heartes like a ſort of dogges and ſwyne, that men ſhoulde make a mockerie of all the ſeruice of God; hee ſpeaketh not of ſuch kinde of men: But his ſaying is, if a man go about by ſuperſtitious meanes to turne thee from mee to the ſeruing of ydolles; although it bee of the gods that are moſte renowmed in the worlde, in the ſeruing and worſhipping of whome, the people that are about thee doe thinke themſelues to do well: If any man labour to turne thee from my worde, to make thee followe after thoſe gods: let him bee rooted out.

Nowe then, wee ſee, that God puniſheth, not onely thoſe that woulde aboliſh all religion: but alſo thoſe that woulde corrupt his trueth. And therefore for the better vnderſtanding of this lawe that is giuen vs heere, let vs marke at a worde, that it is not for vs to ſaye, There is no God, it is but folly for men to trouble themſelues about any deuotion, for wee ſhall gaine nothing by it: but [wee muſt conſider,] that if a man bee neuer ſo deuout, and thinke to doo neuer ſo well, yet if hee turne himſelfe to the ſuperſtitions of the Heathen like a renegate, and knowe not the true God: hee is condemned. And it is a diſtinction which wee ought to beare well in minde. For our Lorde ſheweth vs, that hee will haue vs to bee contented with his worde, and to reſt wholly vppon it, that wee may bee brydled by it, and not attempt to alter any thing, ſeeing hee hath once declared with his owne mouth what hee alloweth.

And hee ſayeth expreſſely, *the gods which neither thou nor thy fathers haue knowen.* By this ſaying hee doeth vs to vnderſtande that it behoueth vs to bee well aſſured of our religion. For to put a man to death without hauing knowen which is the true God, were but a frantike zeale, as wee ſee the Papiſtes doe at this day, and the Heathen haue beene wont to doe at all times, yea, and euen the Iewes alſo, who haue put this lawe in execution (howbeit amiſſe) againſt the prophets. And vnder the ſame pretence were our Lorde Ieſus and his Apoſtles driuen to ſuffer perſecution.

As for the Heathen, when they made lawes for the obſeruing of the manner of religion that was ſtabliſhed among them; they had a good grounde and foundation for the thing they did. For it is not ynough for Magiſtrates to make lawes to repreſſe robberies, murther, and violence; but they knewe alſo howe it was meete that God ſhould haue the forehande. Nowe if nature taught them ſo much; what excuſe will there bee for vs that profeſſe Chriſtianitie, if we ſay it is ynough for men to repreſſe robberies, aduowtries, murthers, and other ſuch violent and outragious dooings that tende to the hurt of priuate perſons: and in the meane while make none account of God? What a dealing were that? The Heathen then had a good grounde in that they knewe that in a well ordered Common weale, religion ought to bee obſerued, and that if any man attempted ought to the contrarie, he was to be puniſhed: in ſo much that it was a matter of life and death among them, and it was obſerued throughout all the worlde in all ages.

The Iewes did not amiſſe in beeing zelous in puniſhing falſe prophets after that God had giuen them this lawe. Likewiſe in theſe dayes, whereas the Papiſtes ſay that Heretikes are to bee puniſhed; that is true, wee confeſſe that they bee worthie of it. But therewithal they ought to come to the poynt that is ſet downe heere, namely, that it behooueth vs to knowe which is the GOD whome wee ſerue, and that wee bee ſure that our religion is not a thing ſet foorth at all aduenture, but that wee holde the infallible trueth of Gods owne ſending, and that it is preached vnto vs in his name & by his authoritie: ſo as it is hee on whome our faith is grounded. It woulde become vs (ſay I) to come to that poynt. But the Papiſtes play the beaſts in that behalfe, bearing themſelues in hand that ſo they ſhut their eyes, they may execute their rage and furie vppon innocents.

And after the ſame manner haue the Heathen ouerſhot themſelues. For, becauſe religion was to bee maintained, they not diſcerning what they did, nor perceiuing whether it was good or euill: did ſet themſelues againſt the ſeruauntes of God. Likewiſe dealt the Iewes with the Prophets. Yee ſee then here is a point which it ſtandeth vs in hande to wey well all our life long: and that is, that wee muſt haue knowen the true God, ſo as wee may iuſtly and without grudge of conſcience condemne the errours which men woulde drawe vs to. Which thing will come to paſſe, if wee haue the light of Gods worde to ſhewe vs the way: for thence it is that all good diſcretion commeth.

Nowe then, to the intent wee may benefite our ſelues by this text, let vs marke firſt of all what loue wee ought to beare to our Lord God, when hee hath vttered himſelfe vnto vs. Namely that wee muſt beware that in any wiſe hee may bee ſerued without gainſaying, and that the rule which hee hath giuen vs bee vnbroken, and that nothing bee chaunged in his worde, but that we make much more account of the doctrine which wee haue receiued of him, than of our liues. And therefore let vs not bee plucked backe from the ſaide zeale for any worldly reſpect as wee ſee the worlde is, which fauoureth more his owne fleſhly affections than God. But howſoeuer the caſe ſtande, yet muſt wee fight againſt all impedimentes and diſtreſſes, vntill the ſaide zeale doe get the vpper hande in vs, ſo as wee will rather cauſe them to dye which ſeeke the defacing of the true Religion, than ſuffer ſuch a plague to preuaile in the Church, to the infecting and marring of our ſelues or of any others.

Pſal 69,10.

And hereof wee may gather a good exhortation; which is, that when wee ſee Gods honour impaired any manner of way, it muſt greeue vs at the heart, according to the generall ſaying of the Pſalme, concerning all reproches. I ſay wee muſt not beare with any thing whatſoeuer it be, whereby Gods honour may be impeached or defaced. But what? Little (in deede) is this doctrine imbraced nowadaies. For blaſphemie hath his ful ſcope euery where; and if a body be to be reproued for ſo doing; though a doſen perſons bee at the hearing of the blaſphemie; yet ſhall not a man finde ſo much as one witneſſe. In this caſe God ordeyneth all both ſmall and greate to bee his aduocates, and hee will haue euery man to doe him ſeruice in it. For it needes not to bee ſayd to a man, Haue a care to bewray blaſphemie when ye heare it: No for hee is knowen to haue beene preſent; and yet if hee bee asked of it, hee doeth but wring his groyne like a ſwyne, and ſaye, I heard him not. Such folke are well worthie, not only that God ſhould plucke their eares from their head, but alſo vtterly ouerwhelme them. They bee monſters that can heare the name of their maker blaſphemed, and yet couer ſuch filthines and ſuffer it to abyde vnpuniſhed. Is it not reaſon that God ſhould ſhew how it is hee to whom they be to yeeld accompt for it? And though he winke at it, yet let not vs thinke that they which forſweare themſelues ſo vntruſtily, ſhall ſcape ſcotfree, but that in the ende GOD will ſhewe howe it is not without cauſe that hee hath pronounced, that to fauour euill is worſe than to doe euill. For it may bee that hee that doeth the euill is carried to it by choler or by ſome other affection: but as for him that cloketh it, he is not onely a partaker of it, but alſo a wilfull iuſtifier of it as it were in deſpite of GOD: and that is an vtter peruerting of the order of nature. And therefore lette vs learne by that which is tolde vs heere, that euerie of vs muſt beare ſuch zeale to the mainteinaunce of Gods honour, as not to ſpare anie kinne or friende, if they ſteppe vppe to ſette themſelues againſt him to whome wee belong, and to whome wee owe all ſeruice, going about to ouerthrowe his ſeate, and to diſappoint him that hee may no more reigne among vs. And therefore whenſoeuer Gods honour is darkened or diminiſhed among vs, let euerie of vs in his ſtate looke to it that we be ſo zealous as to redreſſe it to the vttermoſt of his power. This is yͤ firſt point which we haue to marke heere.

And moreouer, if any man ſhoulde goe about to alter the Religion, ſo as GOD ſhoulde after a ſorte bee driuen from among vs; it were meete that our zeale ſhoulde in that caſe be kindled yet more. For if wee bee nice in hauing our owne honour touched: what ought wee to be when Gods kingdome is in daunger of vtter diſpatch? If there be ſome wicked practiſe in a Citie, ſo as ſome treaſon, inſurrection or alteration of the ſtate is a bruing, and one hauing but ſome ſecret incling of it tolde him in his eare, doe conceiue it; ſhall hee not bee taken as acceſſarie, and bee adiudged woorthie of puniſhment? If it be proued againſt a man that ſome wicked treaſon was a practiſing; and hee heard of the matter and yet diſcouered it not; he ſhalbe puniſhed as a traytour, and men will ſay hee was well worthie of ſuch puniſhment. And ſhall we bee helde excuſed of our ſilence, when an inſurrection is made againſt GOD, and men goe about to ouerthrowe his holy temple, that he might not dwell any more among vs, ſo as they indeuour to deface his maieſtie, and furthermore to caſt vp the ſaluation of mennes ſoules as a pray to Satan, and wee ſay nothing to it? Doeth not our diſſimulation import both trecherie and periurie againſt GOD? Yet notwithſtanding there be ſome ſo farre paſt ſhame, that they demaunde at euerie turne, Who is he that findeth faulte with mee? Whome haue I wronged? Behoulde, hee hath played the blaſphemous and wicked wretche, in fluſhing out ſome matter ſo vglye againſt GOD, as hee ought to be rooted out for it; and yet hee ſayes, Who complaines of mee? If hee had ſtolne but fifteene pence, he ſhoulde be whipped; and for the ſeconde or thirde offence, he ſhould goe to the gallowes: and like a Churchtraytour hee hath trampled Gods maieſtie vnder foote, wherin hee hath doone worſe than the theefe that cuttes a trauellers throte, in a wood; and yet to his owne ſeeming he is iuſt ſtill. And whereof commeth this, but of the forſaid laſineſſe, that no man bethinks himſelf of his dutie in that behalfe? GOD doeth vs the honour to make vs mainteyners of his trueth, as though he made vs a ſolemne commiſſion of it.

And is not that ſuch a preheminence, as of duetie ought to make euerie of vs to ſtreine himſelfe (yea euen beyonde his power) to ſhew a conſtant and inuincible zeale in cauſing men to ſerue and honour GOD? For if a prince imployed a man in his afaires, and did put him in commiſſion; hee woulde ſtrayne himſelfe ſo farre, as he woulde euen hazarde his life; and hee woulde thinke that what paine ſo euer hee tooke, though he did much more, yet all were too litle ſeeing hee hadde ſo honourable a charge.

Beholde, the liuing GOD taketh vs as if wee were his defenders, and will haue euerie of vs to repreſent his owne perſon: and yet for all that, we deſpiſe all thoſe thinges; when Gods name is blaſphemed wee make no reckening of it; the partie himſelfe that hath taken the othe to conceale no ſuch thing, ſhall playe the traytour firſt. And therefore it is no woonder though wicked folke take ſuch libertie, and that when they bee conuicted, they alleadge that no man complaines of them, & that they haue done no man any wrong.

For were wee the true children of GOD, ſurely wee woulde tender the wronges that are doone to him, more than the wronges that are doone to our ſelues, and wee woulde take them much ſorer to hearte.

For if wee our ſelues bee offended, is it any great matter? But when Gods holy name is lightly eſteemed, and reproched; then wee ought to bee verie tender hearted. And becauſe wee thinke not of it; when wee haue blaſphemed God, wee ſay wee haue done no man any wrong.

Furthermore, let vs conſider (as I haue ſaide afore) that if wee muſt endeuour by all the meanes wee can to haue ſwearing redreſſed: much more reaſon is it that wee ſhoulde not ſuffer any man to ſtep vp to trouble the Church, and to make any rebellion, but vtterly roote out ſuch a peſtilent fellowe out of hande. But yet before all other thinges, let vs looke that wee knowe Gods trueth aforehand, that wee may be able to maintaine the ſame: for without that, wee ſhall goe lumpiſhly to worke, and our zeale ſhalbee but as the rage of madfolkes, as I haue alreadie ſhewed by the examples of the heathen men, Iewes, and Papiſtes. The Papiſtes haue a faire colour, in ſaying that if a man deface the maieſtie of a Prince, hee ſhall not ſcape vnpuniſhed: and therefore it is much more reaſon that men ſhoulde bee puniſhed for ſetting themſelues againſt God. Yea: but in the meane while they wote not what GOD they worſhip: for they bee carried away with their owne wicked and diueliſh ſuperſtitions. Let vs marke then, that wee muſt not take this lawe here at alauenture; but that to begin well, wee muſt lay this foundation, that wee bee ſure that the religion which wee holde is of God. As for example, wee haue the holy Scripture; and there our Lorde hath ſhewed vs his will. Hee proteſteth Eſa.45.19. by his Prophet Eſay that hee hath not ſpoken vainly nor couertly, nor meant to beguile men in bidding them to ſeeke him. Then haue wee an open declaration of Gods trueth, ſo wee obey his worde by faith, and receiue it without gainſaying.

When wee bee at that poynt, wee may well with good conſcience and ſafetie puniſh ſuch as ſeeke to turne vs away from the trueth. But if wee be doutfull and wauering, and go to it but by weening: what will come of it, but that wee ſhall puniſh innocent perſons, as wee ſee the Papiſtes doe by perſecuting our Lorde Ieſus in his members? It were better for them nowadayes that they killed one another without colour of iuſtice, than to perſecute the children of God after that faſhion. For the matter ſtandeth not vppon the puniſhing of men by taking away their liues, or by ſheading of giltleſſe bloud through wicked crueltie: but vppon the making of warre againſt the liuing God, and vpon the ſuffering againe of our lord Ieſus Chriſt in his members.

And let vs marke, that whenſoeuer wee falſly pretende the name of God for a colour; our fault is doubled in ſo abuſing it, and we become ſo much the more blame woorthie. As for example, when the Papiſtes nowadayes doe perſecute the faithfull, and vſe ſuch exceſſiue crueltie as they doe: they can welynough ſay, it is the zeale of God that driueth vs to doe it. If a man haue ſlayne one or robbed one; very well, hee ſhalbee layde vppon the wheele. And what ſhalbee done when Gods maieſtie is defaced? Shoulde the partie ſcape vnpuniſhed? So will they alleage. Yea; but firſt they ſhoulde inquire of the caſe. For like as ſometimes men puniſh giltleſſe perſons accuſed of falſe crymes: ſo may it well bee (and wee ſee it by experience,) that Martyres are perſecuted in ſteede of heretikes. Therefore were it meete to looke well to the matter.

But nowadayes if a man ſay that wee ought to call vppon none but onely God in the name of our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt, and that wee ſhoulde not fetche any further compaſſes after the imaginations of men, by praying to the virgine Marie or other Saintes deceaſſed to bee our patrones and aduocates; but that wee ought to holde our ſelues contented with Ieſus Chriſt, to whome that office is giuen by God his Father: By and by they crye out, to the fire with him. And howe ſo? It is the pure doctrine of the holy Scripture. Yea, but the church of Rome admitteth it not.

If a man ſay; wee muſt worſhip God after a ſpirituall manner, without making any puppets to him, and that the breaking of the rule which our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt hath giuen vs, is vtter abomination: out vppon it, thats a foule hereſie, at leaſtwiſe by the iudgement of the popedome. But yet for all that, the Scripture beareth it. If a man ſay wee haue no freewill to doe good, but that wee bee vtterly corrupted; and that if there bee any goodneſſe in vs, it proceedeth of Gods meere grace and mercie, ſo that our going forwarde towardes the marke, is becauſe wee bee renewed by his holy Ghoſte; and yet neuertheleſſe that wee bee weake, and had neede to flee continually for refuge to the forgiueneſſe which GOD promiſeth vs, and whereby wee bee reconciled vnto him, whereunto wee attaine not by our owne deſertes and ſatisfactions, but muſt bee faine to bee purged by the bloudſhed of our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt, and by that meanes wee obtaine ſaluation: if theſe thinges (ſay I) bee alleaged: by and by hee muſt bee haled to the ſtake. And why? Becauſe all this is condemned by their Synagogues.

Yea, but it were meete for them that they ſhoulde giue eare vnto God. For did hee forgo his authoritie when hee ſayde that we ſhould neither ad too nor diminiſh from the thinges Deut.12.32. that hee hath ſpoken, as wee haue ſeene alreadie heretofore? For thereby doeth he ſhewe at what ende it behooueth vs to beginne. Then is it a helliſh kinde of dealing, when men ſtay not vppon the thinges that GOD commaundeth, and that are conteyned in his worde, and yet notwithſtanding doe take vppon them to burthen other men with what lawes they liſt.

If a man ſay that wee muſt ſerue God according to his commaundementes, and not depend vpon thoſe that take vpon thẽ to enioyne lawes to mens ſoules, and that all ſuch inuentions are fooliſh: What? Shall the traditions of our mother holy Church bee ſo reiected? That were a deadly and intolerable cryme. If a man ſpeake of the Sacraments, & ſay that baptiſme ought to be miniſtred in a knowen tounge, that men may vnderſtande to what ende our Lorde Ieſus ordeyned it, what fruite it yeeldeth, and how to vſe it aright: and moreouer that men may perceiue that baptiſme ſendeth vs to our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt, and hath no power of it ſelfe further than God worketh by his holy ſpirite, which appeareth when wee haue an eye to him that is the verie ſubſtance of baptiſme: and that all the trifling toyes ought to bee put away wherewith men haue mocked God to the full, namely, the ceremonies of their owne inuenting which are but vtter corruptions of baptiſme, as their ſpittle, their ſalt, & all their other maygames which they play withall: If a man talke ſo of their ſtuffe, he muſt be put to death for it out of hand. And why? Fye vppon him, hee is a ranke heretike, he is not to bee borne with. Yea, but they ſhoulde ſee firſt whether it bee an hereſie or no. For by that meanes they make God him ſelfe an heretike for want of due examination; and what a dealing is that? If a man ſay that our Lordes ſupper ought to bee receiued according to the rule which hee him ſelfe did giue vs, that is to wit, that wee ſhoulde communicate togither, ſo as the bread might bee a warrant to vs that wee bee truely become partakers of his bodie, and the wine a warrant that wee bee partakers of his bloud, and conſequently that the Maſſe is an abhomination of the diuels owne deuiſing, for that therein the Chriſtians are ſo farre off from communicating together, that one man ſeparates himſelfe from all the reſt of the company: beholde, then muſt excommunication ſerue as a ſauce for all meates.

Againe, if a man come at Eaſter to receiue the Lordes ſupper, hee muſt haue but a morſel, and hee muſt holde him contented with the one halfe of it: and moreouer, contrarie to Chriſt his inſtitution, which ſayes: take and eate: they woulde beare God in hand that he ſhall receiue; wee giue it thee, ſay they. Beſides this, if a man intende to bee reconciled to GOD, the Maſſe muſt ſerue as a new ſacrifice, and although they ſay it is the ſame that Ieſus Chriſt himſelfe offered, yet doe they oftentimes reiterate it. If a man open his mouth againſt ſuch abhominations, O that is an vntolerable cryme. The aire muſt ring of the great outcryes that ſhalbe made againſt it. How now, ſay they? What ado haue wee here? Hee hath ſpoken againſt the decrees of the holy Councels. Yea, but before that God commaunded the puniſhment of Renegates that ſhoulde goe about to trouble the Church, and to ſet diuiſion in the faith; he ſaide, Thou ſhalt not doe what ſeemeth good in thine Deut.12. owne eyes; but thou ſhalt ſubmit thy ſelfe obediently to my ſayinges, and not ſtep aſide from my worde, but yeelde your ſelues to it both great and ſmall; and therefore that order ought to bee maintained.

But wee ſee that all thinges are turned vpſide downe. And therefore let vs looke that wee bee well informed, (as I ſaide afore) and that wee bee well aſſured that wee haue Gods certaine trueth, and that wee bee throughly reſolued of it, ſo as wee may bee able to ſay, It is God that hath ſpoken it, we haue beene taught it in his ſchoole, and wee renounce all imaginations of men: for wee knowe there is nothing but vanitie and vntrueth in men. God then muſt bee the author of our faith, and allowe it, before wee can ſay, This is the trueth. And when wee bee ſo reſolued, then may wee obey this commaundement here.

But wee muſt marke therewithall, that it is not ynough for men to excuſe themſelues by ſaying, as for mee I meane not to aboliſh all religion; and yet if I like well of this thing, why ſhoulde it not bee lawfull for mee to haue it? Moſes ſheweth vs that although a man pretend the title of ſome god, yet is that nothing: for wee muſt haue the liuing GOD; and that when wee haue once the knowledge of the true Religion, that muſt ſuffice vs, and that if wee goe aſtraye, it is through our owne fault, and there is no excuſe for vs. That is the meaning of Moſes, and it is a doctrine well worthie to bee noted. For many men might finde ſtarting holes in this behalfe.

May not a man bee ouerſeene through ſimplicitie? Yes: but when wee haue once knowen God, wee cannot bee ſeparated from him, but our malice muſt needes bee vtterly vnexcuſable. And therefore let vs take courage to benefite our ſelues: and when Gods worde is giuen vs freely and preached vnto vs purely, let vs bee ſo confirmed in it, as wee bee not anye more like wauering reedes, yeelding to euery Eph.4.14. wynde, nor as little children whome euery man may beguyle: but let vs vſe wit and diſcretion. And in deede our Lorde giueth vs his worde, not onely to the intent wee ſhould ſaye, Lo, this or that is good: but to the ende that euery man ſhoulde keepe himſelfe from euill, & bee fenced and armed againſt al temptations of Satan, ſo as wee might haue wherewith to reſiſt him when hee goeth about to thruſt vs out of the way.

Nowe, Gods worde is tearmed a ſpirituall Eph.6.17. ſworde: and therefore wee haue wherewith to outſtande all aſſaultes, ſo wee haue profited in Gods worde as wee ſhoulde doe. And hereby it appeareth what diuels they bee, which would nowadayes leaue all things in dout. For there are fantaſticall perſons which ſay, What? If a man will puniſh Heretikes, hee muſt do it continually; becauſe all thinges are out of order. True it is, that men ought to ſerue God. And if any man woulde ſaye there were no diuine maieſtie in heauen, there is no GOD, there ought to bee no religion in the worlde, O, that were not to bee abidden. But as long as men holde this grounde, that there is a GOD; it is ynough.

And although the heathen keepe ſtil their dotages, although the Iewes be wilfull in maintayning their falſe expoſition of ẏ lawe, although the

Turkes holde ſtill their Mahomets Alcoran, although the Papiſtes bee ſtill intangled in their ſuperſtitions: all is one, ſo they holde faſt this principle, that there is a God. Yea, but Moſes ſayeth here expreſſely, that although a man pretende an intent to ſerue God: yet muſt hee bee ſtoned to death, if it be knowen that hee meant but onely to ouerthrowe or diſguiſe the true religion. And what more then? For (as I haue ſayd) wee muſt not onely pronounce with our mouth that there is a God: but wee muſt alſo diſcerne him from all the abuſes that men haue inuented of their owne brayne. For otherwiſe it is but a mocking of all the holy Scripture. I ſhall ſay I worſhip God, and in the meane time I worſhip a puppet. And what is my God? It is a fantaſie that I haue deuiſed in mine owne head: it is not the liuing God, hee diſclaymeth all ſuch dealings, & ſo am I but a forger. For (as Rom.1,21. Saint Paul ſpeaketh of it in the firſt to the Romanes,) ſuch as haue wandred away after their owne imaginations, haue transformed the maieſtie of GOD, though their intent was to worſhip the liuing God, as the Papiſtes doe, which proteſt that they worſhip God the maker of heauen and earth; and likewiſe the Turkes, who ſay the ſame thing; and ſo alſo doe the Iewes, notwithſtanding that they abhorre Ieſus Chriſt.

And it is ſayd in Saint Iohn, that hee which 1.Ioh.2.23. beleeueth not in the Sonne beleeueth not in the Father which ſent him. Nay he that turneth away from Ieſus Chriſt, doeth vtterly renounce God. For where dwelleth the fulneſſe of the Col.2 17. 1.Tim.3.16. Godhead but in Ieſus Chriſt? When the Turks ſet their Mahomet in the place of Gods ſonne, knowing not that God hath manifeſted himſelf in the fleſh (which is one of the chiefe articles of our faith): what a dealing is it? So then, how many thinges ſoeuer men terme by the name of 1.Cor.10.20 God, they bee but diuels of their owne deuiſing and ſetting vp, if they keepe not themſelues faſt incloſed within the boundes of the holy ſcripture. And therefore let vs marke well, that wee muſt holde vs to the pure Religion; and when wee bee well aſſured of that, then muſt we come to this lawe whereof Moſes ſpeaketh here. And whoſoeuer aduaunceth himſelfe againſt it, let him bee rooted out.

Nowe if the man that woulde drawe vs to the ſeruing of ſtraunge gods, deſerue to bee put to death: what is to be done to theſe dogges whoſe whole indeuour is to turne all vpſide downe, and to beſotte the whole worlde, ſo as men may not knowe any more what religion is? And in theſe dayes wee ſee this kinde of weede to riſe thorough the whole worlde, a ſorte of heatheniſh people, which ſerue to no purpoſe but to ſcoffe and ieſt at all thinges that are ſpoken of GOD. Alſo what ſhall become of thoſe that commit ſo open blaſphemie, as they may ſeeme to make but a mockerie of all the holye Scripture, as though it were nothing elſe but fables? Nowe then, ſith wee ſee that Moſes ſpeaketh ſo: what doe they deſerue which do ſo trouble and defile the holy thinges?

Beholde there comes mee an hypocrite that woulde deuiſe a newe Religion, as it were to ſet vp a popedome here againe, or to bring in the Alcoran of Mahomet: nowe ought ſuch a one to bee put to death without forbearing, for ſo hath God ordeyned. And if any man ſay, it is crueltie; let him finde fault with God for it, and wee ſhall ſee if he can preuaile.

On the other ſide, if wee may well ſpit in ſuch mennes faces, notwithſtanding that they ſaye that their ſo doing is to maintaine Gods honor, what is to bee doone to ſuch as will needes after a ſort deface it quyte and cleane? But let vs come backe againe to the matter. There is a man that goes about to peruert the trueth thorough fonde deuotion; and to turne it into vntrueth: the ſame man ought to dye. There is a Royſter that caſteth forth lewd ſcoffes againſt the holy Scripture, as doeth that diueliſh fellowe which is called Pantagruell, and all his filthie and ribauldly writings: and this ſort of men pretende not to ſet vp any newe Religion, as though they were deluded by their owne fooliſh imaginations: but like madde dogges they belke out their filthineſſe againſt the maieſtie of God, and their meaning is to ouerthrowe all religion: and ſhoulde ſuch bee ſpared? Why not? for they haue the Cardinalles for their vpholders, they bee fauoured and maintained by them: in ſo much that the names of theſe Lord Cardinalles are blazed in thoſe goodly bookes, which ſerue to mocke God as well as Mahomet. All is one, all may bee abidden, ſo the Cardinalles bee curryed, it is welynough, and it doth them good to bee ſo regiſtred: whereby a man may ſee that they not onely mocke at all Religion, but alſo coulde finde in their heartes to aboliſh all religion quite and cleane.

But herewithall let vs alſo ſee howe wee may apply this to our owne vſe, for wee muſt not onely condemne thoſe that haue ſhewed themſelues ſuch as I haue ſpoken of: but wee muſt alſo fare the better by their example, to the end wee may knowe howe it is too wicked, yea, and too diueliſh a thing, that when men go about to make ſome backeſlyding or to ſet ſome trouble among vs, and much rather to driue away all feare of GOD, and bee fauoured or ſhrowded, or harkened vnto, or haue any gappe left open to them, or be let alone vnpuniſhed; it is the next way to vndoe and marre all. And yet wee haue ſeene examples of ſuch as haue maintained ſo curſed thinges, yea, and of ſuch importance as the verie Papiſtes themſelues coulde not endure them. For it is certaine that the two heretikes that were here, did wreſt the holy Scriptures much more than the Papiſtes. As touching this Triacle maker, who was the firſt of them; hee maintayned free will, & deſtroyed Gods election: and are thoſe thinges maintained among the Papiſtes? Neuertheleſſe wee ſee how he was fauoured, & hee was held vp by the chinne as it were in deſpite of God.

Againe, as touching the ſeconde, wee knowe how he was ſo horrible a blaſphemer, that al mē abhorred his leawde opinions: and yet for all that, had he not his maintainers and defenders? Yes: for men ſhewed them more fauour than if they had beene the neereſt of their kin. And yet was it not euident that they conſpired continually againſt God and his trueth, to wage battel againſt him? Therefore let vs looke neerlyer to our ſelues, & to conclude let vs vnderſtãd that when God hath giuen vs the grace to haue the certeintie of faith, ſo as we be grounded vpõ his worde; wee muſt holde vs to it after ſuch a ſort, that whenſoeuer we ſee any bodie go about to trouble the order which God hath ſet, wee may all ſet our ſelues againſt it, and not tary till al agree in one, but that whoſoeuer of vs doth firſt perceiue the miſchiefe, the ſame doe diſcouer it out of hande, and euery of vs do his duetie in ſuch wiſe, as ſuch plagie perſons bee not nouriſhed among vs. For (as I haue declared alreadie) wee ſee there is ſuch frailtie in vs, that a verie little leauen will ſower our whole batche of dowe; and as ſoone as wee giue eare to Satans iuggling trickes, by and by wee bee ouerthrowen and ſo intangled, that in the ende wee bee carryed quite away from our God and from the true religion.

1.Cor 5.6. & Gal.5.9.

God therefore beeing acquainted with our frailtie, meant to prouide for it by ſhewing vs that it behoueth vs to cut vp the wicked weedes out of hand. Accordingly alſo as the Apoſtle in the Epiſtle to the Hebrewes ſayeth, that wee muſt not ſuffer any euill weedes to growe: for they will marre the good corne, and if the time bee foreſlowed, it wilbee too late afterwarde. Then muſt wee not driue off till to morowe; but euery of vs muſt quicken and ſtirre vp himſelfe, following the exhortation that is made vnto vs heere.

Hebr.12.15.

Moreouer, ſeeing wee bee commaunded to plucke vp whatſoeuer is contrarie to the maieſtie of God, and whatſoeuer may peruert or put away the true religion: let euery of vs ſee that hee ſo offer and dedicate himſelfe to our God, as wee may not thruſt one another out of the right way. If any man goe about to thruſt mee out of the way: beholde, God commaundeth mee to riſe vp againſt him; and though it were mine owne brother, my ſonne or my wife; yet is it ſayde that I ought not to ſpare them. Now then, if I my ſelfe thruſt others out of the way, is it not a farre more heynous crime? I ſhalbe taken for an acceſſarie if I doe but conceale another bodies misbehauiour, and I ſhewe my ſelfe a traytour to Godwarde: Nowe then, if I my ſelfe bee an author of euill, howe deepe am I in? So then, if wee will correct other folkes miſdealings ſo roughly, let vs beare in minde that wee muſt in any wiſe holde our ſelues in the feare of God, ſo as in caſes concerning his honour, wee bee not a ſtumbling blocke to driue wretched ſoules to deſtruction; but rather indeuour to gather home the ſtray ſheepe into the flocke, & to bring back the wanderers into the right way, and to maintaine and further ſuch as are in the good way alreadie, and all of vs lende our helping handes one to another, that wee may goe ſerue our God with one common accord.

Nowe let vs kneele downe in the preſence of our good God with acknowledgement of our faultes, praying him to receiue vs into his fauor, and that although wee be wretched ſinners and vnworthie to come in his ſight; yet notwithſtanding it may pleaſe him to accept of vs, and to refourme vs in ſuch wiſe by his holy ſpirite, as all our life may bee imployed to his glorie, and our whole ſeeking hencefoorth may bee to aduaunce the kingdome of our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt his ſonne. And ſo let vs all ſay, Almightie God, heauenly father, &c.

On Munday the xxj. of October. 1555.

The Lxxxix Sermon, which is the fourth vpon the thirteenth Chapter.

12 If thou heare ſay, that in any of the cities which the Lorde thy God giueth thee to dwell in,

13 Some wicked men are gone from among you, and haue ſeduced the inhabitants of their cities, ſaying, let vs go and ſerue other gods whome yee haue not knowen:

14 Then ſhalt thou ſearch, and inquire, and examine the matter throughly, & if it be true & certaine that ſuch abhomination hath beene doone among you:

15 Thou ſhalt roote out the inhabitants of that citie with ÿ edge of the ſword, and vtterly deſtroy the citie, and all that is in it, and the verie cattell thereof with the edge of the ſworde.

16 And thou ſhalt gather al the ſpoyle thereof together into the middes of the citie, and burne vp the citie and all the ſpoyle thereof with fire to the Lorde thy God: and it ſhalbe a heape for euer, and neuer be builded againe,

17 And none of the curſed thinges ſhall ſticke to thy handes, that the Lorde your God may turne away the fierceneſſe of his wrath from thee, and giue thee mercie, and haue pitie vpon thee and multiply thee, as he ſware to thy fathers,

18 Becauſe thou ſhalt haue obeyed the voyce of the Lorde thy God, in keeping all his commaundementes which I commaund thee this day, to the ende thou mayeſt doe the thinges that are right in the eyes of the Lorde thy God.

WE haue ſeene heretofore what manner of zeale wee ought to haue to yͤ mainteining of Gods true ſeruice & the pure religiō: that is to wit, that we muſt forget al yͤ friendſhip of the world, and ſhewe that we make more account of the honor of our God, than of all thoſe that are as deere to vs as our owne ſoules. But now Moſes proceedeth further, and ſayth that wee muſt vſe ſuch rigour not only againſt particular perſons, but alſo *againſt whole cities*. Now if a whole Citie ought to be raſed for breaking yͤ ſeruice of God; what ſhalbe done to any one man? Should he be borne with? Here then we ſee how Gods honour ought to be preferred before the whole worlde. And becauſe he had ſet downe a right and pure order to yͤ people of Iſrael how to do it; his mind was that it ſhould be kept to the vttermoſt, and that if any man tranſgreſſed it, he ſhould be cut off; inſomuch that if it were a whole people that had done it; they ſhould be delt withall after the ſame maner. Now then we ſee yet better, howe carefull wee ought to be for the preſeruation of religion in his purenes. True it is that we ought to be alwayes mindefull of yͭ which we haue ſayd already; namely that it ſerueth not to excuſe ydolaters whē they be ſo inraged with zeale without diſcretion. For we muſt be ſure aforehande, that the religion which we holde is holy, & that God alloweth of it, ſo as it is not a doctrine forged at the pleaſure of men, but Gods owne will vttered vnto vs of his owne free fauour, whereof we haue good and infallible record, that if any ſet himſelfe againſt it, he muſt be cutte off: yea though it were a whole Citie. So litle ought any priuate perſon to be forborne, that euen a whole citie ought to be deſtroyed for it.

But to the intent this doctrine may be yͤ better vnderſtoode; let vs marke the order which God commandeth here to be kept. *If it be ſayde*, that is to ſay, if the report go, *that ſome wicked perſons are gone from among you, and haue led away the inhabitantes of a Citie: make good inquiſition of the matter, & ſearch it out diligently and vnfainedly to the vttermoſt: and if it be found to be ſo: let that Citie bee vtterly deſtroyed with the edge of the ſworde*, and ſo forth. Now firſt our Lordes will is, that when any brute goeth of an euill deede, we ſhould firſt inquire how yͤ caſe ſtandeth. And hereby he ſheweth that ſuch as haue authoritie of the ſword, & ſit in the ſeate of Iuſtice, muſt not be retchleſſe, in ſuffering thinges to paſſe before their eyes, without making any countenance to ſee them. Is there then any brute of a thing? Inquiſition muſt be made of it. For if it be let paſſe, we ſhew that our intent is to nouriſhe the euill: and the parties that haue ſo concealed it, muſt in yͤ ende abide their payment, which is that it muſt light wholly vpon their owne heads, as we ſee it commeth to paſſe. And it is a iuſt puniſhmēt of God, that when ſuch as are in office to remedie & redreſſe euill, doe beare with it, they themſelues ſhould abide the paine of it. And when they ſuffer it, it happeneth not by haphazard, but God yeeldeth them the iuſt wages which they haue deſerued. Therefore we muſt marke this text, that God will haue vs to be doing aforehand as ſoone as the brute is reported or giuen forth, & not to tary till the thing be apparaunt, without ſetting hand to it or without making inquiſition of it: but he will haue the Iuſtice to inquire of it betimes, ſpecialy when there goeth any brute of it. And by the way, to the intent there be not a ſlight inquirie made of it as it were but for faſhions ſake; he vſeth here three wordes: and afterwarde he addeth that it muſt be done throughly, ſo as there be an exquiſite care vſed in the matter. For diuers times, informations are taken when ſome cōplaint is made, and that the euill is knowen, yea and yͭ in ſuchwiſe as they be aſhamed to cloke it altogether, and ſo witneſſes bee called. But they will not ſeeke to vnderſtand the pith of the matter, they doe but vſe a kinde of forme for faſhions ſake, as who ſhould ſay yͤ matter is not buried, becauſe there hath bin ſome ſeeking to knowe the truth of it. But what? This is no proofe: that is to ſay, we wil not ſearch how the caſe ſtands in deede. For the witneſſes are diſpatched ere they haue tolde halfe their tales: and that which they haue ſpoken is let ſlip, ſo as wee ſee not the thing that is as apparant as the nooneday.

Now to the end that men ſhould not daly after that ſort with God; it is ſayd expreſly *that inquiſition ſhould be made, that the matter ſhould be examined, and information dewly taken*. And therfore let Iuſtices vnderſtand, that they ſhall not goe quit, but that God will hold them giltie, for neglecting their duetie, if they do not what they can to bring matters to light, when they heare any complaint or any brute of them. Neuertheleſſe our Lords meaning is not that mē ſhould iudge at aladuenture, but that the crime ſhould be duly proued whether it be ſo of a truth in deede. He vſeth two wordes to ſhew that a Iudge ought not to be led by bare ſuſpition to conclude what hee liſteth. For wee muſt be faine to beare with the euill when it is not knowen, becauſe God hath not yet brought it to light. As for example, there be ſome ſinnes (ſayth S. Paul) which make haſt to come to their condemnation; and we ſee that 1.Tim.5.24
God doth ſo thruſt and driue ſome wicked men forward, that they runne a head into miſchiefe.

For ſometimes it is Gods will to humble vs by making our offences knowen, that we may feele them and be ſorie at the heart for them. Yea & [ſometimes againe] a man knowes not at what end to begin, but is letted that he cannot puniſh, becauſe he findeth no mean how to do it. Therfore a Iudge muſt be diſcreete and milde, that he giue not ſentence vpō bare coniectures, but that he firſt of all do ſee the matter ſubſtantially proued. Now then, here are two notable thinges: the one is that we muſt not be rechleſſe, but diligent in ſearching out of thinges, that ẏ euil may be diſcouered & not nouriſhed. The other is, that we ſhould not iudge raſhly, but that the matter ſhould be wel knowen and throughly brought to light, before me come to giue diffinitiue ſentēce of it, ſo as our iudgement may be ripe & ſettled.

Now this being ſo, it is ſayde, *thou ſhalt deſtroy the inhabitants of that Citie with the edge of the ſword.* Wherby God ſheweth (as I haue declared already) what affection wee ought to beare vnto his ſeruice. For if we conſider what a thing his glory is, it ought to be more deere to vs thā all ẏ whole world. What ſee we either in heauen or on earth but litle ſparks of ẏ power, righteouſnes, goodnes & wiſedome which are infinite in God? They be not to be meaſured: we haue but only ſome litle ſignes and tokens of them in heauen and earth. Therefore it were better that the worlde ſhould periſh ten thouſand times, than that Gods glory ſhould be defaced. But it falleth out that his glory is conueyed ouer vnto ydols, yea & beſtowed vpon Satan, when his ſeruice is corrupted. And therefore it is not for vs to fal aſleepe or to cocker ourſelues in this caſe, as we haue bin wont to doe, making ſale of Gods honour, and letting it paſſe as though we ſeemed to count it as a thing of nothing. But contrariwiſe we ſee here how he putteth all cities to deſtruction, if they haue defaced his honor. So then let vs vnderſtand that it is not for vs to rowe any more betweene two ſtreames as we haue bin wont to, if we intend to keepe our religion vnappayred: but we muſt ſee that all Churchtreaſons, that is to ſay all outrages that are doone to the maieſtie of God, may be puniſhed. Seeing we know and nature teacheth vs that robberies, murthers, theftes, and all manner of pilfries ought not to bee borne with; what ſhal we do when gods name is blaſphemed, all religion turned vpſide downe, and the pure doctrine falſified, to thruſt folke out of the way and to breake the vnion of faith? Such thinges are not to be winked at: for they be too heynous crymes.

Yea and it behoueth vs to marke how it is ſaid heere, *that if any wicked men be riſen vp, and haue ſeduced the inhabitants of a Citie.* For it may ſeeme that this circumſtance ſhould ſomewhat abate the fault, foraſmuch as the whole citie went not away of their own accord, but were carried away by certain wicked perſons, as in deed a few ſuch firebrandes of hell are ynough to ſet all thinges out of order. Yea, but yet are not they to be born with, which haue giuen eare to ſuch deceiuers; they muſt be puniſhed for it neuertheleſſe: yea and ẏ not with ſtripes of roddes onely, but euen with death. And in deede, how trifling an excuſe is it for a man to ſay, I was vndermined, I would neuer haue done amiſſe if I had not bin inticed to it, ye may ſee what ill counſell is. Yea, but yet notwithſtanding thou haddeſt bin taught by the voyce of thy God, thou kneweſt his will, & waſt aſcerteined of it. Beholde, a man whome thou kneweſt to be wicked came to ſeduce thee, and thou gaueſt more credit to his leaudneſſe and to thine owne wit, than to ẏ infallible truth of thy God. Thou knoweſt ẏ thy God ſpeaketh for thy benefite, and thou leaueſt him, thou giueſt him deafe eare, thou art loth to giue him any hearing, thou refuſeſt all that he telleth thee: and is that to be excuſed? Nay rather, ſhoulde wee not ſpit in the faces of ſuch men as will needes make a ſhield of other mens inticementes? Yes: and for that cauſe doth not God hold a whole Citie excuſed, when the people of it haue bin deluded by wicked perſons. Both great and ſmall (ſay I) muſt be puniſhable: and God is not cruell in puniſhing them all, as wee ſee hee hath ordeined heere.

Furthermore, let vs marke well ẏ God ment to do vs to vnderſtand what it is to haue wicked perſōs in a citie. For (as ſaith S. Paul) a little leuē ſoureth a whole lump of dow. Nowe then, wherſoeuer deceiuers be, there are the people by & by infected. God ſpeaketh ſo thereof plainly, to the intent we ſhould not ſuffer euill to harbor amōg vs. If there be any poyſoninges, we are all afraid of them, and it troubleth vs to prouide howe to ſaue our ſelues frō them: ô (ſay we) ſuch a plague muſt not abide among vs. Now it is certain that there is not a worſe nor a more deadly plague, than the ſtepping vp of vnruly perſons, deſpiſers of God, and wicked men, which ſeeke to turne al thinges vpſide downe, and to bring all to confuſion, corrupting all thinges to the intent to haue the more libertie to doe euill. When ſuch foke riſe vp, & be borne withall; it is good reaſon that al ſhould be giltie of their fault. And we ſee alſo that God puniſheth thoſe ẏ beare with euill doinges when they both ſhould and could correct them: inſomuch that the common prouerbe is verified in them, that when a man is ſaued from the gallous, he could finde in his heart to ſee thē hanged ẏ deliuered him from it. And good reaſō it is that they ſhould haue ſuch reward, for their corrupting of Iuſtice, and for their impeaching of right. Therefore when we ſee men goe about to turne all thinges vpſide downe, wee muſt repreſſe them aforehande: and not tarie till ẏ end, for that is a curſed patience. True it is (as I ſaid afore) that if God giue vs not the meane to rid away euill ſo ſoone as we would; then muſt wee be ſory for it & haue patience. But when things are euident, & there is none other let than lacke of corage: then if we be cold and laſie, and ſhut our eyes becauſe wee be loth to ſuſteine diſpleaſure; [as if a man ſhoulde ſay,] I will not be too forwarde, leaſt I bee left in the bryers, for feare leaſt I pay for the ſhot when I haue entered into ſuch a quarell, for I ſee that ſuch fellowes are ful of reuendge and may eaſily be euen with mee: when we vſe ſuch cowardlyneſſe, then muſt wee

1.Cor.5.6. & Gal.5.9.

abide the penaltie of it. And ſurely it is a great grace of God to haue power to redreſſe a miſchieſe that hath bin knowen of long afore: and therfore it muſt not be let ſlip without prouiding for it in time conuenient.

Moreouer we muſt heare what a ſimple ſhift it is to alledge pitie, when men marre all thinges by giuing cauſe of offence. For what kinde of pitie is it to ſpare two or three to cut yͤ throtes of a whole nation? On the contrarie part, if they that be ſo wickedly bent, be repreſſed that they may no more haue their own ſwinge, but rather be vtterly rooted out: it is a purging of the whole nation, it is a healing of a common ſore. So then if wee loue the welfare of all men, lette vs not giue head after that ſort to ſuch as intice men to forſake the right way. But wee muſt goe backe againe to the matter which I haue ſpoken of alreadie, and which Moſes goeth forwarde withall ſtill in this text: to wit, that the worſt corruption which can befall a nation, is to haue deſpiſers of God that falſifie the true religion, or to haue vpholders of Satan that leade men into ſuperſtition and ydolatrie, to aboliſhe the pure doctrine and the trueth which they hadde receiued. True it is that if there bee gluttons, drunkardes, whooremongers, and ſuch other like folke, it is an infection that is wel worthie to be feared, & meet to be redreſſed out of hande, leaſt the miſchieſe growe too ſtrong: But as for thoſe that put all thinges out of order, ſhewing themſelues to be bent to ſpite God, and to make men to yeelde no more reuerence to his maieſtie: it is as a gathering of all ſinnes togither into one heape, and a packing of them vp in one bundle. For there can be nothing pure when Gods ſeruice in taken away, and when men walke not in his feare, all other thinges muſt needes be out of order. For the knowing of God and the worſhipping of him as he deſerueth, is the verie brydle that holdeth men in all holineſſe and honeſtie. But if men turne their backes vppon him, they muſt needes play the beaſtes, and their life muſt needes become ſo looſe and lothſome, that a man ſhal ſee as it were a gulfe of hell among them. And therefore not without cauſe are we ſo ſtraitly commaunded in no wiſe to beare with men, when they become wicked and goe about to inuegle folke to doe ſeruice to ydolles. Let vs marke then, that if we be deſirous to liue as wee ought and in good concord; we muſt aboue all thinges haue Gods ſeruice in eſtimation, as the thing wherein it behoueth vs to vſe ſeueritie and rigor, or els all will go to wrecke and confuſion. That is the thing which we haue to gather vpon this place: and would to God that it were better in vre now adayes. For as I haue touched heretofore, men are moued at the thinges that concerne and touch themſelues. Inſomuch that if we perceiue that the ſuffering of an offence will turne to our harme or loſſe, euerie of vs cryeth out to haue it puniſhed. And why? Becauſe wee haue no regarde but of our ſelues. But if GOD his honour bee impeached, that is let ſlippe, and we ſay it is not ſo great an euill. And why? For our purſes are not pinched by it: and therefore it ſeemeth to make no skill at all. Nowe ſee heere on the contrarie parte, howe GOD puniſheth vs as we deſerue. For thinges become ſo farre out of order among vs, that wee wote not which way to turne vs. And good reaſon it is that it ſhoulde come ſo to paſſe, euen becauſe we haue forſaken GOD, and beene more mindefull of ourſelues than of his maieſtie, ſo as we haue not yeelded him his dewe honour whereof hee is worthie, and which hee requireth at our handes. Thus much concerning this text.

And it is ſayde, *that all that euer is in the Citie muſt be brought together on a heape, and ſet on fire, & be taken as a curſed thing, and be made a ſacrifice vnto God.* Heere Moſes ſheweth howe hatefull a thing ydolatrie is, and conſequently whatſoeuer ouerthroweth the true ſeruice of God and the pure religion: and that is done to moue men ſo much the more. But [you will ſay, that] when ſuch a fault is committed, the Citie it ſelfe, the cattell, and the houſes are not to be blamed for it. And why then will GOD haue all to be deſtroyed? It is to the ende that folke ſhoulde learne to abhorre ydolatrie the more, that wee might vnderſtand that the wicked folkes whom Satan dryueth to giue themſelues to ydolatrie are ſo little to be borne with, that we muſt euen abhorre the verie place where they haue dwelled, yea and the verie ſight of them, and thinke with ourſelues, beholde, this is a place wherein Gods wrath hath beene prouoked, and that was ynough to haue ſoonke vs all to hell. Wee ſee then whereat God aimed. For hee knewe that we ſee nowe with our eyes; namely that we haue not ſuch zeale to maintaine his glorie, as wee ought to haue, we paſſe not for it, euerie man is occupied about his owne gaine, and about the thinges that concerne himſelfe. Nowe becauſe we be ſo colde, God on the other ſide quickneth vs vp, and telleth vs that the corrupting of his ſeruice is a great miſdeede, yea and ſo horrible a thing, as might make the hayres to ſtand ſtiffe vpon our heades. That is one point which wee ought to marke.

And herewithall we haue to marke alſo, that the rigour of this Lawe, is not to be obſerued of from point to point as it is commaunded heere to the people of Iſraell. But yet the ſubſtance thereof abideth ſtill in force, as I haue declared heretofore intreating of ydolatry, where I told Deut.12.2. you that wee were commaunded to put away all places that haue ſerued to ſuperſtition. Nowe then, we in theſe dayes be not in ſuch thraldom, but that we may vſe a Church that hath beene one of Satans brothelhouſes. Ydolles haue bin worſhipped heere, and GOD hath beene blaſphemed heere: and yet for all that wee bee nowe come heere together in the name of our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt. This place then is newe dedicated, according to the ſaying of Saint Paul, that all thinges are ſanctified vnto vs by 1.Tim.4.5. faith and by calling vpon the name of God. And therefore if a place be put to ſuch vſe, that God is honoured there, it is a kinde of hallowing of

that place. But vnder the Lawe God helde the people in greater and more ſlauiſhe bondage, commaunding them to make cleane riddaunce and vtter diſpatch of all thinges that had beene vſed in the ſeruice of ydolles. So is it in this text, where GOD commandeth that the whole Citie ſhall bee raſed, and neuer inhabited anie more. And the ſtraitneſſe of this bonde ſerued for the time wherein the fathers were go-
Gal.4.1. uerned like litle children. But yet doeth the ſubſtaunce thereof abide with vs ſtill: and wee haue to gather of this text, that our Lorde abhorreth ydolatry aboue all thinges; and that if other offences bee to be puniſhed, this is not to be indured in any wiſe, but that we ought to abhorre it. And becauſe wee be too colde in that behalfe, we be warned to quicken vp our ſelues, and to take the meanes which wee knowe to be fit for it, to the ende wee may bee the forwarder in cauſing God to bee ſerued purely among vs, and open no gap to deceiuers, ne make any way for ſuperſtitions and ydolatrie, that might bereaue vs of the pure trueth and drawe vs vnto lyes. Thus yee ſee what we haue to remember vpon this text.

But heere a man might aske a queſtion, howe Moſes may ſay that all the thinges which ſhalbe founde in ſuch a Citie ſhalbe accurſed; and yet they muſt bee put ouer vnto God as an offering or ſacrifice? Yet doeth GOD ſpeake after that faſhion in manie places, and not without cauſe. For it is an offering of ſacrifice vnto him, when we proteſt that only he ought to be worſhipped, and when we make as it were a ſolemne homage vnto him. And againe when other appurtenances come in place: as when men ſacrificed vnder the Lawe, they proteſted that they were worthie of death, and yet notwithſtanding they had a warrant of their reconcilement vnto God, by the ſacrifice that was to bee offered. Alſo men offered of their goods vnto GOD, as who ſhoulde ſay, Lorde, all that I haue commeth of thee, and it is alwayes at thy commaundement. Yee ſee then that ſacrifices were bleſſed: and yet neuertheleſſe there was a kinde of curſedneſſe in the ſacrifices that were offered for ſinne. In the Firſtlinges, Tenthes, and ſuch other like things, there was nothing but the praiſing of God and giuing of thankes vnto him: but as for the ſacrifice that was offered for ſinne, it behoueth Gods curſe to be thereupon, as who ſhoulde ſay, Loe this is hee that ſhall aunſwere for all. To the ende that men may bee acquit and deliuered from death, this ſacrifice muſt anſwere for them. And therefore thoſe ſacrifices were called ſinnes: and the ſame name is attri-
Leuit.7.2. buted to our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt, becauſe he bare
2.Cor.5.21. our curſe in his perſon. But heere is an other kinde of curſedneſſe; namely that GOD is honoured, and homage is doone vnto him by rooting out the thinges that hadde defaced his honour before. Therefore when a Citie is deſtroied that had erſt beene a denne of ydolatry, and all the ſpoyle thereof is ſet on fire: it is a ſacrifice that God liketh verie well of. And why ſo? Becauſe it is a proteſting that wee be not willing to ſuffer any thing that impeacheth the honoring of him at all mens handes, and that all men ſhoulde ſubmit themſelues to him, and his maieſtie be knowen as it ought to be. Nowe then we ſee howe it is not without cauſe that Moſes commaunded ſacrifice to be done vnto GOD with the vtter deſtruction of all thinges that had beene infected and defiled with ydolatrie.

And hee ſayeth expreſly, *to the ende that the wrath of God bee not vpon thee.* Whereby he confirmeth the matter that I haue touched already, which is that we muſt beware that wee wrap not ourſelues in other mens ſinnes. For they that correct not euill dooinges when they may, and when their office requireth it; are giltie of it themſelues. As for example, if a preacher winke at the vices that reigne; ſurely he is a traitour and vnfaithfull: for he ſhoulde keepe good watch, and waken ſuch as are in daunger of vndoing. Then if I beare with the euill wittingly or through negligence: I am the firſt that ſhalbe condemned. Likewiſe if they that holde the ſworde of Iuſtice, execute not the rigor which they ought to redreſſe mẽs misbehauiours: ſurely the wrath of God is vpon them continually, yea and vpon yͤ whole country, becauſe no man is found, that complaineth of this, that the miſchiefe was ſo borne withall. One good zealous man is ynough to turne away the wrath of God; for hee will inforce others that were negligent. But when no man beginnes the daunce, but all men drawe backe, and euery man ſayes, What nowe? If all the reſt put not to their handes, what can I alone doe? Surely none of them all can exempt themſelues from condemnation before God; when euerie one of them ſpeaketh ſo. Not without cauſe then doeth Moſes here wrap vp a whole Countrey vnder condemnation, if a wicked deede bee borne with, or not puniſhed when it commeth to knowledge. And hereby we be put in minde, to be more diligent than we are wont to bee, in ridding away of all filth and vncleanneſſe from among vs. For it is all one as if we ſhoulde lay wood vppon the fire that is kindled ynough [and too much] alreadie, ſo as we ſhall all of vs be conſumed with it in the end; and yet wee doe ſo euen wittingly and wilfully. Why then doe wee not open our eyes, ſith our Lorde ſheweth vs the daunger ſo euidently, and warneth vs to prouide for it aforehande? Why doe wee not thinke vppon it? Nay, wee be well worthy to periſh, and to be vtterly confounded, becauſe wee haue not vouchſafed to receiue the counſell that God hath giuen vs.

After that Moſes hath thus threatned vs; now he addeth a promiſe *that God will bleſſe his people, if they obey his voyce, & doe the things that are right before him.* Our Lord indeuouring after his maner, to winne vs to him alwayes by gentleneſſe and friendely dealing: when hee hath doone threatning of vs in this text, doeth alſo attempt the contrarie way ſaying: If ye finde the meanes to haue my ſeruice purely mainteyned, I will be with you; yee ſhall finde that my ſeeking is but to increaſe the benefites which I haue begonne already to beſtowe vpon you, yee ſhall inioy the

Lande that I haue giuen you to inherite;ye ſhall perceiue that my promiſing of my fauour and mercie to your fathers is not in vaine. And let vs marke, that heere it is our Lordes intent to drawe vs to a willing ſeruing of him. True it is that yet for all this, wee muſt not forgette his threatenings, ſeeing we be ſo ſlowe in reſorting vnto him. Then lette vs be afrayde of them, and conſider that wee ſhall not ſcape his vengeaunce except we maintaine his ſeruice. But yet howſoeuer the worlde goe with vs, lette vs not doe it by conſtraint, but let vs goe to worke with a free courage. And howe may that bee doone? Euen by beeing drawen by the gentleneſſe that Moſes ſheweth heere vnto vs: as if he ſhoulde ſay, goe to, happie will our ſtate bee if we ſerue our GOD, and euerie man endeuour to drawe his neighbours with him, and ſuffer not any man (as farre as lyeth in vs) to peruert or trouble our ſtate when it is well ſetled. If we doe ſo, our Lorde telleth vs that hee will be among vs, bleſſing vs in ſuch ſorte as wee ſhall proſper more and more, and that he will ſtabliſh vs in the poſſeſſion of all the benefites which he hath giuen vs. Seeing the caſe ſtandeth ſo; too too leaude were wee if we woulde not ſubmitte ourſelues to him, ſeeing that his deſiring to haue vs, is altogether for our benefite and welfare. Let vs learne then on the one ſide to quicken vp our ſelues with Gods threatninges; but yet on the other ſide let vs be moued and allured to ſerue him with a free and pure affection, voyde of inforcement or conſtraint. Let vs goe to worke of our owne goodwill, aſſuring our ſelues that wee be bereft and diſpoſſeſſed of all good thinges, if wee ſerue not our GOD. And why? Becauſe wee can not proſper but by his fauour. And let vs not delude ourſelues: if we ſee that he make vs to proſper this preſent time, lette vs not fall aſleepe, but let vs conſider that wee haue neede of the continuaunce of his benefites and free fauour towardes vs. And this is a very needefull warning: for we ſee howe men take libertie, as ſoone as they haue any reſpitte. So long as GOD ſheweth vs his roddes, or as wee feele his ſtripes; wee make countenaunce ſtill to ſerue him. Yea, but that is but hypocriſie, according to this complaint which the Lord
Pſal.78,34,36. maketh by his prophete. As long as I afflicted them, they turned vnto me; but either the ſame day or the next morow they became like themſelues againe. Therefore let not vs doe ſo; but although GOD let vs alone in reſt, and wee perceiue no harme at hande; yet let vs looke for it afarre of, and forecaſt that there will come a ſuddeine tempeſt which wee looked not for, if we ſwarue aſide from his ſeruice. Wee ſee howe that in ſummer the wether chaungeth in a minute of an houre: euen ſo may it fall out in reſpect of Gods wrath: and therefore let vs not welter in our delightes. When God proſpereth vs, let vs not fall to friſking as abuſers of his goodneſſe and patience: but let vs remem-
Deut.12,9,10. ber howe Moſes ſayeth, that when he hath giuen vs a Lande to inhabit, he muſt be faine to maintaine vs in it, and to ſtabliſhe vs in the poſſeſſion thereof. For I haue tolde you heeretofore that vnder this worde *The Lande of Chanaan*, all the benefites that GOD beſtowed vppon his people, were comprehended, as all in one perticular. Nowe then, let vs looke to our ſelues; and if we purpoſe to continue in the perpetuall inioying of the benefites belonging both to our bodies and to our ſoules which GOD hath beſtowed vpon vs: let vs looke that wee continue ſtedfaſtly in the ſeruing of him, without ſwaruing one way or other. And moreouer lette vs labour that there may be one common accord among vs, and that euery of vs hearten vp his neighbour to doe well, ſo as we may doe as hath beene declared alreadie, and as we haue ſeene heeretofore; that is to wit, that it is not for vs to demeane ourſelues after our owne imagination and fancie as wee ſee men doe in bearing with themſelues, not onely when they doe as ill as may be, but alſo when they doe their duetie by halues, and yet they beare themſelues in hande that they haue doone ynough, and that there is no fault to bee founde in them, GOD can require no more at their hande. And though a man point them to a thing with his finger, as if he ſhoulde ſay, This is a generall rule, and wee muſt not goe to it by halues; but God muſt haue all that belongeth vnto him, or elſe hee will accept none of all the thinges that can bee doone: they ſhut their eyes at it. O (ſay they) it makes no matter, wee muſt haue a reſpect of our infirmitie, we muſt be well aduiſed by wiſedome and diſcretion. Yea, but for all that, ſhall we ſwarue from that which GOD hath ordeined? Lette men vſe as much diſcretion and gentleneſſe as can be: but yet howſoeuer the caſe ſtande, let him look wel to it, ẏ Gods honour be not troden vnder foote, and that mennes ſinnes bee not ſo bolſtered, that any body come to aduance himſelfe againſt the ſacred maieſtie of him that made vs and faſhioned vs, which alſo maintaineth vs, by whoſe power wee bee vphelde, and without whoſe grace we could not continue one minute of an houre. Let this bee well conſidered, and let men doe the thinges that are right in the eyes of the Lord: for hee will not frame himſelfe to our dyet. Imagine we our ſelues to doo thinges neuer ſo well, to the contentation of men, yet wil not GOD be contented with them, becauſe hee meaſureth not himſelfe by our weyghtes and balance. He will haue vs to harken to his worde, and to haue an eye to the thinges ẏ he liketh, ſo as we may ſay, Lord, thou ſhalt haue the gouerning of vs. Thus yee ſee what we haue to remember vppon this text; if we entende to eſchewe the curſe which GOD denounceth againſt all ſuch as haue ſuffered the peruerting of the true Religion and the corrupting of his ſeruice, and to haue him not onely to bleſſe vs, but alſo to increaſe ẏ benefites which we haue receiued at his hande, and alſo to continue them towardes vs to the ende.

Nowe let vs kneele downe in the preſence of our good God with acknowledgement of our faults, praying him to make vs feele thē ẏ better, ſo as we may be able to ſhewe that his inſtructing of vs in his worde hath not beene in vaine, but that we may yeelde him ſuch reuerence, as our whole ſeeking may bee to haue him purely worſhipped among vs, and ẏ the ſame may be done with one accorde, and all ſtumblingblockes bee cut off frõ among vs, ſo as we ſuffer not ourſelues to bee deluded wittingly, nor the ignoraunt to be led to deſtruction, but that we may looke to the drawing of them backe: and that hauing ſuch zeale to amende other folkes miſdeedes, euerie of vs may beginne at himſelfe, and not giue our owne fleſh ſuch libertie, as that it ſhould turne vs aſide and alienate vs from our God, but reine our ſelues ſhort; fearing his threates and alſo in reſpect of his bleſſinges and promiſes which hee maketh vs for that it is his will to maintaine vs in his houſe as his children. That it may pleaſe him to graunt this grace, not onely to vs, but alſo to all people and nations of the earth. &c.

On Tewſday the xxij. of October. 1555.

The XC. Sermon which is the firſt vpon the fourtenth Chapter.

YE be the children of the Lorde your God; Therefore you ſhal not cut your ſelues, nor make any ſhauinges betweene your eyes for the dead.

2 For thou art a holy people to the Lorde thy God. And the Lorde God hath choſen thee from all people that are vpon the face of the earth, to bee a peculiar people to himſelfe.

3 Thou ſhalt not eate any manner of lothſome thing.

4 Theſe are the beaſtes that ye ſhall eate of: namely, the Oxe, the ſheepe, and the Goate:

5 The Red deere, the fallow deere, the Bugle, the wilde Goate, the Vnicorne, the wilde Oxe, the Chamoyſe,

6 And all maner of beaſtes that deuide the hoofe and cliue the hoofe into two clawes and chaweth the cudde alſo: among the beaſtes them ſhall ye eate.

7 But as for theſe, yee ſhall not eate: among thoſe that chawe cudde or doe but onely diuide their clawes, that is to wit, the Camell, the Hare and the Cunnie. For inaſmuch as they chewe cudde and yet diuide not the hoofe, they ſhalbe vncleane to you.

8 Alſo the Swine, (becauſe he clioueth the hoofe, and yet cheweth not cudde,) ſhal be vncleane to you. Yee ſhall not eate of their fleſhe, nor touch their dead carkeſſes.

9 Theſe are they that you ſhall eate of all that are in the waters: namely, whatſoeuer haue finnes and ſcales.

10 And whatſoeuer hath not finnes and ſcales, yee ſhall not eate thereof, but it ſhalbe vncleane to you.

11 Of all cleane birdes yee ſhall eate.

12 But theſe are they of which yee ſhall not eate: namely the Eagle, the Oſpray, and the Fawcon:

13 The Gleade, the Kite, the Vultur after their kinde:

14 All manner of Rauens after their kinde:

15 The Eſtrich, the nightcrowe, the Cuckowe, and the Sparehauke after their kinde:

16 The Skritchowle, the great Owle, the Swanne,

17 The Cormorant, the Pellicane, the Dopchicken,

18 The Storke, and the Heronſewe in his kinde, and the Lapwing, and the Backe.

19 And all creeping foules ſhall be vncleane vnto you, and yee ſhall not eate of them.

20 But of all cleane foules yee may eate.

Wee

WE haue here two cōmandements to expounde, which God gaue vnto his people: The one is *that when anie man died among them, they ſhoulde make no exceſsiue mourning and lamentation for them in diſfiguring their bodies,* after the ceremonies and faſhions of ẏ heathen. The other concerneth meats: for it was not lawfull for the Iewes to eate of all meates indifferently: there was a difference ſet them betweene cleane beaſtes and vncleane beaſtes. Nowe as touching the firſt, Moſes telleth them, *that they be a people choſen of God to bee ſeparated from al other Nations of the world.* Wherevppon hee concludeth, that they muſt not then diſfigure themſelues: for inaſmuch as God had ſet his marke vppon them, they ought not to do anie wrong or violence to their owne bodies. And therewithall this commaundement is ſo moderated, that if a man haue forgone any kinſman or friende of his, hee muſt not lament for him out of meaſure as wee ſee men doe, who are wont to be too exceſſiue in their paſſions. When a body is deade, we ſee what ſorrowing is made for him, yea euen with grudging againſt God, ſo all is out of order and there is no reaſon at all in their dealinges. Moſes therefore commaundeth the Iewes to be patient, when it pleaſeth God to bereaue them of their kinſefolke or friendes. And therewithall he telleth them it is a ſhame for them to diſfigure themſelues after the manner of the heathen, for aſmuch as it was a defacing of Gods image which was in them becauſe they were made holy from among all the people of the worlde. Nowe as touching the firſt point, for as much as this inconuenience reigneth as well nowadayes, as it did at anie time heretofore; that is to wit, that men are too exceſſiuely giuen to making of ſorrowe: this is not ſuperfluous for vs. In deede this ceremonie of rending folkes hayre, and of ſcratching their faces to diſfigure themſelues is no more vſed: but yet wee ſee howe God is grudged at in ẏ greefe that men take for ẏ death of their friendes, inſomuch as they martyr them ſelues without regard of ſubmitting themſelues to God. There is no dealing with them to comfort them, they bee caryed with ſuch rage, as God cannot bee hearde, whatſoeuer yee ſay to them they bee deafe. Nowe then, ſeeing that this miſdealing continueth ſtill at this day, wee muſt vnderſtande that this doctrine concerneth vs alſo.

And here we haue to marke firſt of all that if the heathen and the vnbeleeuers, and the poore ignoraunt ſoules which haue not beene trayned in the worde of God were not excuſed for this vice: wee on our ſide offende God much more greeuouſly and without all excuſe. For he hath ſeparated vs from all the worlde. Yet notwithſtanding men may well ſooth themſelues: for there is not any thing where God tryeth our obedience more, than by the liuing and dying at his pleaſure, ſo as wee knowe that our liues be not in our owne handes, but that it belongeth to him to diſpoſe of them: and euerie of vs is readie to departe out of this worlde, Rom.14.8.9 whenſoeuer it pleaſeth him to call vs: Or if hee take away our kinſefolke or friendes from vs, we be well contented with it. And indeede, why pray wee dayly that his will ſhoulde bee doone, but to proteſt that we bee willing to holde all our affections in captiuitie, and to keepe them in awe? Sith it is ſo: ſurely they that vexe themſelues with immoderate lamenting for the deceaſe of their friendes, are ſufficiently conuicted by the onely order of nature, that they ſtriue with God and rebell againſt him. Neuertheleſſe, (as I ſaide afore) if the ſillie ignorant ſoules torment themſelues after that faſhion, they bee to bee pitied. For they knowe not that our dayes are determined, and that God reſerued the authoritie and priuiledge of calling vs vnto him, when hee ſent vs into the worlde. They knowe none of all this: and therefore it is no wonder though they vſe ſuch exceſſe in their mourning. Moreouer, they haue not wherwith to comfort themſelues: for none of them hath euer had any vnderſtanding of the euerlaſting life. To their ſeeming, if a man bee once deade, all is loſt, hee is vtterly forlorne, hee is quite and cleane come to nought. And that is the cauſe why they conceiue ſo exceſſiue and vnmeaſurable greefe. Otherſome goe at aladuenture: and although they haue ſome imagination of the endleſſe life, yet are they not aſſured of the ſaluation of the parties, and therefore they cannot comfort themſelues with the fauour of God. But as for vs, wee knowe that death is but a parting of the ſoule and bodie aſunder, to the ende that God may ſhewe his ineſtimable power in rayſing vs againe. And we knowe alſo that hee is a faithfull keeper of our ſoules when hee hath receiued them: and therefore that wee may well put them into his handes, aſſuring our ſelues that our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt dyed not for vs in vaine.

Seeing wee haue ſuch comfort, is it not too great an vnthankefulneſſe to torment our ſelues after the maner of the heathen and the infidels, when God taketh any man away from vs? Yes: And therefore when Saint Paul exhorteth the faithfull to haue patience in the departure of their friendes, he ſaith expreſſely, Sorrow not as the vnbeleeuers doe. 1.Theſſ.4.13 In deede Saint Paul ſawe well that we can not bee ſenſeleſſe: for in verie deede it were no patience if wee felte no greefe. If wee were ſtarke blockes, it were no vertue at all If a man ſhoulde laugh at the death of his wife or of his father, it were a beaſtly brutiſhneſſe. Therefore it behoueth vs to feele the inconuenience and to be touched with it, ſo as it pinch vs and greeue vs: But yet muſt God aſſuage it againe, becauſe we know that he hath all ſuperioritie ouer our liues, and wee muſt ſuffer him to diſpoſe of vs as hee thinkes good. Againe we muſt goe boldly vnto him, being well aſſured of his goodnes and mercie, and we muſt not doubt but that death ſhall bee to our ſaluation, and that whether we liue or die, al ſhal without fayle turne to our benefite and welfare ſo we be in Chriſt Ieſus. Thus yee ſee what we haue to beare in mind.

To be ſhorte, that we may benefit ourſelues by this leſſon of Moſeſes; let vs vnderſtand, firſt of all, that vntill God brydle vs, our affection wil euer be inordinate whether it be in mirth or in mourning. If wee haue proſperitie, by and by it makes vs to forget our ſelues what we be, ſo as we thinke not our ſelues to be mortall men. And wee ſee howe all men fall to flinging as it were in deſpite of God when they haue their eaſe and delightes. Likewiſe on the contrarie part, if our Lorde afflict vs whether it be by the death of ſome kinſeman or friende of ours, or by ſome other aduerſitie: we be piteouſly forlorne, wee cannot meaſure our greefe, wee be ſo ouerwhelmed with ſorrowe as is pitifull to beholde, and finally our heart is full of bitterneſſe and poyſon. Wee ſee howe a number doe ſpewe out blaſphemies againſt God. Let vs conſider all theſe vices in our ſelues, and ſeeke the remedie of them as it is ſet vs downe here. Let vs beare in minde (I ſay) that our Lorde commaundeth all of vs to holde our ſelues as in captiuitie, that if our nature be faultie in that behalfe, we ſhoulde not nouriſhe the euill, but withſtand it aſmuch as is poſſible. This cannot be doone except we vſe force in ſubduing our ſelues to the obeying of God, and euen ſtreyne our ſelues to the vttermoſt. And one of the cheefeſt ſacrifices that 1.Sa.15.22. God requireth of vs and whereof he liketh beſt, is that wee conſider that wee muſt not ſorrowe out of meaſure, when we be afflicted, but flie vnto God praying him to giue vs the grace to ſubmitte ourſelues wholly to his wil: ſo as if the huſbande be bereft of his wife, he may beare it patiently. And why? Becauſe he knoweth it is Gods will to trie his obedience in that behalfe. Let the wife doe the like by her huſbande, and let euery body ſubmit themſelues to this order of Gods, that wee may bee able to ſay, that like as he hath ſet vs in the world, ſo alſo it is good reaſon that hee ſhoulde take vs hence againe, not at our pleaſure but at his. For it is not without cauſe that he hath limited the race of our life, & that Pſal.39.5.6. it pleaſeth him to take away one rather than an other. We be mortall before we come into this worlde: for a yong babe may die as well in his mothers wombe as after hee is borne. Sith it is ſo; as ſoone as God giueth vs diſcretion, let vs applie our indeuour to vnderſtande that death beſeegeth vs euerie minute of an houre, and that we muſt not promiſe our ſelues life till the nexte morrowe, nor ſet any terme to God: for his daylie prolonging of our life is but ſo much reſpiting of vs. But howſoeuer wee fare, let vs bee mindfull of our owne frailtie, and let the ſame leade vs to conſider that if GOD take vs out of this worlde, ſooner than wee looked for, it is meete that he ſhoulde haue vs at commaundement, and that euerie of vs ſhoulde offer vp our owne bodies to him in that manner of ſacrifice, in ſuffering GOD to ſeparate vs aſunder; that what friendſhippe or bende of kinred ſoeuer there haue beene betwixt vs, yet wee may not faile to glorifie God when he taketh away our kinſefolke and friends, nor vſe this beaſtly impatience, in pulling our ſelues by the hayre of our heades, and in ſcratching and disfiguring of our faces, as though wee knewe not what it were, to liue in the obedience of God, and to die in the ſame likewiſe.

And moreouer as well in this as in all other thinges, let vs take heede to that which is tolde here to the Iewes by Moſes: namely that when God is ſo gratious as to dedicate vs to him ſelfe, and to gather vs together to bee his people, we muſt giue our ſelues ſo much the more earneſtly vnto him. True it is that in reſpect of nature we differ nothing at all from the ſillie ignorant & vnbeleeuers. For our being of Chriſts Church befalleth vs not by the right of inheritaunce. Indeede the promiſe extendeth to a thouſande generations: but yet for all that, it is of his freegoodneſſe, that we haue the prerogatiue to bee of his houſe. Sith it is ſo, let vs acknowledge the honour that he doeth vs, in ſeparating vs from the heathen and vnbeleeuers though we were forlorne and damned as wel as they; and let vs benefite ourſelues by that grace, that it periſhe not through our owne wickedneſſe. Thus ye ſee for what purpoſe Moſes ſaid, Thou art a people ſhooled out to thy God; haue a care to maintaine thy ſelfe in thy calling: acknowledge the good that is doone vnto thee, & goe not about to bereaue thy ſelfe wilfully of ſuch fauour. Let vs thinke vppon it (ſay I.) and that in ſuch ſort as God may be glorified in vs, accordingly as hee hath vouchſafed to call vs.

And Moſes ſpeaking here expreſſely of God his election or choyce whereby hee had choſen the Iewes, addeth *That they muſt bee a holy people.* For God gathereth not the ofſkowringes of the worlde to keepe them in his Church; his intent is not to haue his Church to bee as it were a Swine ſtie, ſo as there ſhoulde bee nothing but filth and infection; but hee purgeth vs from all vncleaneſſe. Nowe then whereas God calleth vs vnto him, it is with condition that we ſhould worſhippe and ſerue him in all pureneſſe. True it is that he findeth vs as it were drowned in the depth of all leawdneſſe, ſo as by nature we haue nothing but vtter vncleanneſſe, and we be altogether ſo defiled that we be euen loothſome to him: but yet doeth hee purge vs and make vs cleane by his holy ſpirit, and it behooueth vs to lead a holy conuerſation al the time of our life. And ſo yee ſee howe hee woulde that men ſhoulde ratifie their free election, as Saint Pe- 1.Pet.1.10. ter ſpeaketh of it. And that is a thing which wee haue to marke in this ſaying of Moſes: wherevppon wee haue to conclude that it is not lawfull for vs to take example at the vnbeleeuers

uers and ſuch as haue not beene brought vp in Gods ſchool. And it is a verie neceſſarie doctrine for vs, conſidering howe wee euer ſhroude ourſelues vnder the cauſes of offence which we ſee: & if any body giue vs an euil example, we beare our ſelues in hande that we bee excuſed before GOD, and that ſuch a perſon is a ſhelter to vs. But contrariwiſe Moſes telleth vs here, that we muſt bee a people ſanctified vnto GOD, ſo as if the wretched vnbeleeuers doe playe the vnthriftes, we muſt not maruell at it. When wee ſee a ſillie blinde ſoule ſtumble or ſtray out of his way, we pitie him becauſe he is in darkenes, but we thinke it no ſtraunge thing. Euen ſo is it with thoſe that neuer knewe the trueth of GOD: they be ſillie blinde ſoules that goe in darkeneſſe. But GOD inlighteneth vs, and ſheweth vs the way of ſaluation. If we ruſhe againſt thinges, or if wee wander out of the way; whence commeth the fault? Are not wee our ſelues to bee blamed for it? Yes, and therefore let vs euer beare in minde the greatneſſe of the grace which we haue receiued of GOD, that it periſhe not through our owne leawdneſſe and negligence. And aboue all things, let vs take heede to that which is ſpoken here concerning the moderating of our ſorrow & heauines. And this ſhall be doone, if wee bee not troubled and greeued out of meaſure for the death of any of our kinſefolke or friendes, or for any other affliction that befalleth vs, but that we ſuffer God to vſe our liues as hee liſteth, to diſpoſe of them according to his good will. Thus yee ſee in effect what we haue to remember vppon the firſt point that is conteined heere.

Nowe as touching the ſecond, Moſes ſaith, *that the Iewes muſt not eate of all manner of meates, but that they muſt haue a care to diſcerne betweene the cleane beaſtes and the vncleane.* And afterward hee nameth the beaſtes, whereof it was lawful for them to eat: & alſo the ſeueral kinds which it was not lawful for them to touch. And to be ſhort, he ſaith that the beaſtes *which chaw Cud,* (that is to ſay; which keepe in their mouthes yͤ laſt of their meat, to chaw it againe) are cleane, ſo as they might eat of them, conditionally *that thoſe beaſts do alſo clyue the hoofe.* Now, to ſeeke here for nice points, as what this ſhould meane, that yͤ hooues ſhould be clouen, or that they ſhould chawe the cud; were no matter to be greatly ſtoode vppon. And as for them that haue pried into the matter to fetch the new & the old Teſtament out of yͤ beaſts cleauing of their hooues, & haue told vs yͤ we muſt needs put a difference betwixt them; & moreouer, that we muſt chew our cud, yͤ is to ſay feede vpon the doctrine againe and againe, that we may the better digeſt it, becauſe it is yͤ foode of our ſoules: it is too too curious. For if it bee ſo, what do the ſcales of the fiſhes betoken? There will be occaſion of ſeeking euerywhere, and wee ſhal fall into many fond ſpeculations. And therfore let vs be aduiſed to vſe modeſtie in this caſe. Some hold opinion that God had no further reſpect but to the health of mens bodies, when he forbade the eating of ſuch beaſts as he tearmeth vncleane, & they thinke that God plaide yͤ part of a Phiſition. But that is too colde & too barren ſtuffe, & the ſcripture ſheweth vs the contrarie. In deed a man may wel think that our Lord had regard what was good and cōuenient for mens bodies: but to thinke that he had a further conſideration, than to ſpy out what meats were beſt for mans health; that is too childiſhe a matter. And (as I ſaid afore) it is no matter for vs to ſcan vpon, ſeeing the holy Ghoſt hath told vs plainely, that god amed at a far other end. Let vs mark wel then, that this commaundement is no ſuch order as is wont to be preſcribed by a phyſition for the preſeruation of a mans health: but a ceremoniall lawe that ſerued for Gods people in the time of the lawe, to holde them in obedience and to leade them vp higher and higher to the cleanneſſe of the minde: for it was Gods wil that the Iewes ſhoulde alwayes haue as it were lookingglaſſes before their eyes, to make them ſee that they ought not haue to doe with the defilements of the world, but to applie their whole indeuour to keep themſelues in ſuch wiſe as god might be glorified in thē. That is the firſt point, which we haue to marke. For when the Apoſtles treated of meats, they alleadge not that GOD meant to do the office of a Phyſition. And that is a very ſhort ſolution. When S. Paul declareth yͤ the falſe Apoſtles and couſeners troubled the Church, going about to holde men in bondage to the olde lawe: he ſheweth that this difference of meates was a part of that childiſhe doctrine, vnder the which GOD led the people of olde time, becauſe there was more rudeneſſe, and infirmitie at that time than there is now adayes. Not that we be better, or ſtronger in faith, or that we be any perfecter in our ſelues than they were: but becauſe that God hath ſet vs further forward, by giuing vs the doctrine of the goſpel. For the lawe was as an Apſie in compariſon of yͤ doctrine that is preached vnto vs at this day. It is not to be maruelled then though there were many Ceremonies for that people, and that we haue not thoſe Ceremonies in vſe nowdaies, which ſerued but onely for that time. If a man replie then and ſay, that the preaching of thē vnto vs is more than needeth: wee ſee the contrarie. For although the figures be paſt & vtterly aboliſhed by the comming of our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt: Yet doeth the ſubſtance of them continue ſtill with vs, ſo as it behoueth vs to knowe ſtill for what purpoſe God would haue yͤ Iewes forbeare the meats that are forbidden thē here. Seeing then that the ſame reaſon and force remaineth common to vs which ſerued for them, it is not vnprofitable for vs to haue yͤ ſame things ſhewed vnto vs. Moreouer although the Sunne doe driue away all darkeneſſe with his light: yet is it not vnexpedient for vs to thinke vppon the night in the daytime, and vpon that wonderfull order which God hath eſtabliſhed, ſith that in winter we thinke vpon ſommer, and in ſommer thinke vpon winter. For we ſee how God ſetteth foorth his wiſedome therein. And if there were no ſuch varietie, we ſhoulde haue no ſuch occaſion to wonder thereat and to glorifie our God. Againe, on the otherſide, wee bee aſſured of the

Col.2.16.

grace that is brought vs by our Lord Ieſus Chriſt: for we be preferred before the holy fathers and Patriarkes which were worthier to haue beene preferred than wee, and yet notwithſtanding God kept them vnder like litle children, whereas nowadayes hee dealeth with vs as with perfect men of full age and grouth. Seeing then that God vſeth ſuch goodneſſe and liberalitie towards vs: haue we not the more cauſe to honour him?

1.Pet.1.10. & Gal.4.1.

But nowe let vs come backe againe to the matter which I was in hand with afore, and ſhew yet further howe all the ſaide thinges may redounde to the benefiting and profiting of vs, as well in faith as in the feare of God. I haue tolde you alreadie, that whereas God did put a difference betweene beaſtes, declaring ſome to be cleane and ſome vncleane, it was to accuſtome the Iewes vnto the ſpirituall cleanneſſe, euen in eating and drinking. True it is that God inioyned them ſoberneſſe and temperaunce therein: but he had yet a further reſpect, which was that in all thinges they ſhoulde haue a care to be vndefiled, and to haue ſuch a ſtay of themſelues, as they might not bee ſteyned with the vncleanneſſe of the worlde. Gods intent then was to giue them as it were a kinde of exerciſe, to keepe them the better in vre. We knowe howe men do take too large ſcope in eating and drinking. For whereas the reſt of their life doth put them in minde to pray vnto God, and to take paines, and to diſcharge themſelues of their dutie: when they take their repaſt, they giue them ſelues to mirth and reioycing. And it is lawefull for them ſo to doe, ſo they keepe meaſure. But what? They ſo ouerſhoote themſelues in the turning of a hande as a man might wonder to ſee their exceſſe of mirth. This was the cauſe yͤ God woulde haue his people put in mind of the ſoberneſſe which we ought to vſe in our eating and drinking al our life long, that it might be as a bridle to reſtraine vs, for after as our diſeaſes bee, ſo doeth God giue vs medicines for them. Now (as I ſaide afore) there is more diſorder in eating and drinking, than in all our life beſides. And therefore it was requiſite that our Lorde ſhoulde exerciſe his people in that behalfe. And for the ſame cauſe did he deliuer them inſtructions, to warne them that they ought to behaue themſelues purely in all things, and to put them alwayes in minde thereof. Ye ſee then that the firſt point which wee haue to remember vppon this text, is that God telleth the Iewes that foraſmuch as hee had choſen them to be his owne inheritance, they ought to dedicate themſelues to him euen in things that concerne the outward conuerſation, and to abſteine from worldly corruptions, not intermedling themſelues with the vices of the heathen after our common maner which we knowe to bee alwayes tending vnto euill. Gods will was to holde them in that awe. And nowe wee ſee howe it is no more than needeth. For why? True it is that the ceremonie continueth not nowadaies: for our lord Ieſus Chriſt hath ſet vs in greater libertie than the fathers were vnder the law: but yet is not the pith of it put away, that is to wit, that we ſhould liue ſoberly vnder the feare of our God, cutting off all corruptions, and abridging our ſelues of all libertie of hauing to doe with the luſtes of the worlde. What though the vnbeleeuers doe beare with themſelues too much? ſhould we doe ſo too? Seeing that our Lord telleth vs that wee be his temples, ſo as he dwelleth in vs by his holy ſpirite, and that he woulde haue vs to be as ſacrifices vnto him, ſo as wee ſhoulde offer vp both our ſoules and bodies vnto him dayly: is it lawful for vs to caſt our ſelues into the vncleanneſſe of the worlde, without anie regard how to repreſſe it? Then let vs mark well that although the ceremonie be no longer in vre, yet the lawe in it ſelfe is not doone away, but that God inioyneth vs the ſame ſobrietie at this day, whereto he meant to leade the people of olde time by the meanes that were agreeable to that time. Againe ſith we ſee what priuiledge God giueth vs; let the ſame mooue vs the more to yeelde our ſelues freely vnto him. If we compare our ſelues with the fathers of olde time, we ſhall finde that God led them but as yong babes and yet were they as Angels among mortal mē. If we look vpon the life of Abraham, what a perfection of holineſſe ſhall we find there? As much is to be ſaide of the reſt of the Patriarkes and Prophetes: and yet neuertheleſſe, yee ſee howe God held them in darkiſhnes, giuing them but a ſmall taſt of his grace, inſomuch that his ſhewing of Ieſus Chriſt vnto them, was but a far off. But we in theſe dayes haue much further preheminence: for God ſheweth himſelfe fully vnto vs, and we haue the ſpirite of adoption, whereby we may crie with full mouth, that God is our father, euen wee that come of the heathen, and had no acquaintance with God, but were vtterly vncleane, and (to be ſhort) were by nature curſed, & had none other heritage than death and damnation. Nowe then is it not an ineſtimable priuiledge, that God hath brought vs ſo neere to himſelfe? What is to be doone then? Seeing that God allureth vs more freely than he did yͤ fathers, let vs be the more earneſtly minded to ſerue him. He diſchargeth vs of the burthen as concerning the ſhadowes and figures: what is to be doone therfore? We muſt haue this willingneſſe of giuing our ſelues to yͤ ſpiritual ſobrietie which he requireth continually now ſtil as wel as he required it then. Therfore let euerie man bethinke himſelfe, and inaſmuch as God giueth vs leaue to eate of all manner of meates freely without exception, (that is to ſay, of all ſuch as may ſerue for our ſuſtenaunce:) let vs haue this conſideration with our ſelues, Alas my God, yet muſt I not abuſe thy goodnes. How manie waies doeſt thou ſhewe thy ſelfe liberall to me? Therfore doeth it become me to bridle my ſelfe of mine owne accorde and to cut off all the wicked affections that reigne in me.

Col.2.14.

2.Cor.6.16. Rom. 12.1.& 1.Cor.5. 10. & 2.Cor.7. 1.

Rom.8.15. & Gal.4.6. & Eph.2.3. 12.13.

And firſt of all let vs put the doctrine in vre which Saint Paul ſetteth down in the thirteenth to the Romanes, which is, that wee bee not carefull for our fleſhe, at leaſtwiſe to fulfill the luſtes thereof (for that is a gulfe that can

Rom.13.14.

neuer be filled)but onely looke to the ſuſteyning of our bodies, ſo farre foorth as they may bee maintained in good plight, & ſo vſe Gods creatures, as wee defile them not. For although Gods creatures are permitted vnto vs; yet doe we not ceaſe to defile them by our vnbeleefe, intemperance, gluttonie, or other abuſes which we commit. G O D ſheweth that as now we may eate both of the Hare and of the Connie, as wel as of the ſheepe or of the Goate. Yet notwithſtanding if wee glut our ſelues with them, the meate that is cleane of it ſelfe becommeth vncleane vnto vs, becauſe we bee vnthankefull to G O D, in that we conſider not to what end he giueth vs ſuſtenance. One man ruſheth foorth into all exceſſe, and yet is neuer the more mainteyned in ſtrength of bodie by it: for he is readie to burſt, and maketh himſelfe altogether vnweeldie. A drunkarde playeth the Swine or ſome other brute beaſte, and the wine ſo ouercommeth him, that he hath neither wit nor reaſon. And although wine be a creature that God hath bleſſed, and haue no vncleanneſſe at all in it ſelfe: yet is it defiled by ſuch miſuſing of it. Otherſome neuer remember to giue G O D thankes, nor to call vppon his name. And that is an other kind of defiling our foode. Againe otherſome abuſe it to vaineglorie and deliciouſneſſe, and growe ſo farre out of order, that they can no skill to ſerue G O D. Otherſome are ſo giuen to daintie fare, that it maketh them to put their conſciences in ieoperdie, inſomuch that they will not ſticke to make them bondſlaues to all leawdneſſe and wickedneſſe, ſo they may haue good cheere. Otherſome are afraide of want, and fall to ſnatching, to filching, to catching, and to al that can be deuiſed, to get ſomewhat by hooke or by crooke. And thus doe all of vs defile Gods creatures, which of themſelues are cleane. And that is the cauſe why I ſaide, that ſith our Lorde hath giuen vs greater priuiledge, and ſet vs more at libertie, to the end that the bondage of the lawe ſhoulde not haue dominion ouer vs: therefore wee ought to bee the willinger to reſtraine ourſelues in abſteining from all vncleanneſſe, and to conſider that the cauſe why God hath giuen vs the free vſe of all kinde of meates, is that wee ſhoulde vſe them purely, and not be defiled on our ſide, ſo as we might not bee blamed for defiling of the things which haue no manner of vncleanneſſe in them ſelues, in reſpect ot God and in reſpect of the order that hee hath ſet among vs. And we muſt haue this regarde not onely in reſpect of meate and drinke, but alſo in reſpect of our whole life in general. Conſidering then that God nurtured the people of old time, by forbidding certaine meates, to the ende that they ſhoulde thinke thus with themſelues; well then, ſeeing that our God hath forbidden vs the things that are lawfull for the heathen, and which they take leaue to doe; let vs vnderſtande that it behooueth vs to liue in all manner of pureneſſe, and that ſeeing God will haue vs to bee pure in ſmal thinges, hee will much rather haue vs to bee ſo in great thinges. Let vs nowadayes conſider to what purpoſe this ceremonie of the lawe may ſerue vs, to the ende that euerie of vs may enter into himſelfe. As for example, if a man be led with ambition, ſo as hee wil needes aduance himſelfe and clymbe too high: or if he be caried away with couetouſneſſe, ſo as he burne therewith: or if hee be an vnthrift and leade a lawleſſe life: or if hee bee a whorehunter and giuen to beaſtly luſt: let vs bethinke ourſelues thus: howe nowe? Our Lorde abhorreth euerie little vncleanneſſe euen in eating and drinking: and what will come of it then if our ſoules be defiled, ſith they be the thinges wherein he will haue his glorie to ſhine moſt cheefely? True it is that our bodies alſo are the Temples of the holy Ghoſt: but yet hath God ſet his owne image in our ſoules: and what a thing were it then to defile them after that ſort with all diueliſhe and worldly vncleanneſſe? Thus ye ſee whereunto it behooueth vs to applie this doctrine to vſe it wel.

1.Cor.6.19. & Eph.4.23 24.

And by the way let vs marke, that Gods wil was to holde the people of olde time in obedience that they might knowe howe it is not for men to take ſuch libertie and licence as they liſt, but that they muſt receiue it at his hande. To bee ſhort, let vs not attempte any thing in al our whole life, except wee knowe it to be acceptable to our God. When wee haue leaue of him, then may we well goe forwarde: but if hee ſay it not; then let vs be ſtill. And indeede although this prohibition were not put in writing; yet had God put a difference afore betweene cleane beaſtes and vncleane beaſtes, as we may eaſily perceiue by that which is written of Noe. God commaunded him to make ſacrifice after the fludde. And whereof? Was it of all beaſtes in generall? No: Neither had hee reſerued ſo great a number of the vncleane beaſtes as of the cleane, and that was by reaſon of ſacrificing. Then was there a difference alreadie euen at that time. And whereof proceeded that? Had men deuiſed it of their owne braine? No. And therefore let vs marke howe God reſerued to himſelfe the prerogatiue of putting difference betweene the beaſtes that were cleane and the beaſtes that were vncleane, to the intent that men ſhoulde know that it is not for them to liue as they liſt, & to haue ẏ bridle looſe in al things; but that it behooueth them to looke vpwarde to harken what God giueth them leaue to do. And when he giueth them leaue; then let them vſe their libertie, or elſe let them keepe themſelues ſtill. Ye ſee here a doctrine that is as profitable as that which we haue touched alreadie: for wee ſee howe men burſt foorth into ſuch diſorder, & with ſo great headineſſe, that they haue no mind at all to vſe Gods benefites according to his meaning. Ye ſhall not finde one among a thouſande that will conſider with him ſelfe whether God giueth him leaue to doe a thing or no. But men ruſhe out into all diſorder, as though they had leaue to doe what they liſt. Nowe then ſeeing wee be ſo leawde and vnkinde that wee fall to thruſting our groynes into thinges like ſwine, and conſider not from whence the benefites

Gen.8.20.

come: good cauſe haue we to remember this doctrine, wherein it is ſhewed vs that euen from ẏ beginning of the worlde, G O D did put a difference betweene the cleane beaſtes and the vncleane. And let vs vnderſtande, that although the ceremonie continue not any longer nowadayes; Yet notwithſtanding the ſame ought to ſerue vs for a warning, to lift vp our mindes on high in our eating and drinking and in our vſing of all the reſt of Gods creatures, that wee may know howe farre God hath giuen vs leaue, and ſimply ſubmit our ſelues thereunto.

Again, if he giue vs libertie, let it always prouoke vs to glorifie his name & to giue him thãks: for it is one of the ſacrifices which he requireth of vs, that wee ſhoulde doe him homage for all his benefites as holding them from him. Pſal. 50. 14. 23. But that cannot be done, except wee bee firſt put in minde that we cannot ſo much as eate one bit of breade, without it be giuen vs from aboue, not onely for that he hath created all thinges, but alſo for that it behoueth vs to receiue all things as at his hande. Therefore whenſoeuer we eat or drinke, we muſt not onely call to minde that God hath created all things for mans vſe; but alſo that hee feedeth vs, as a father that cutteth out meate to his little children, ſo as our hauing of thinges is as it were by his deliuerance, as if he ſhould ſay to vs, I doe the office of a father, I haue a care to nouriſhe you. If wee knowe not this, it is vnpoſſible for vs to thanke God hartily and vnfainedly. True it is that euen they that haue no ſuch thought will ſay grace; but that is but for faſhion ſake and in way of hypocriſie. Wil wee then magnifie Gods goodneſſe truely: then muſt we bee fully reſolued, not onely that God hath created all thinges for mans vſe: but alſo that he ſtil ſheweth himſelfe a father, and giueth vs aſſurance that he will ſuſteyne our bodies, and maintaine vs in this tranſitorie life. Sith it is ſo, is it not an incouragement vnto vs to yeeld him the thankes as he deſerueth? Yes: For it is not without cauſe that hee liſted to put a difference betweene the ceremonies of the Lawe, and the thinges that we haue at this day. But although this prohibition was done away by the cõming of our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt; yet ceaſe wee not to come backe ſtill to this point, that foraſmuch as our Lord Ieſus Chriſt giueth vs leaue to vſe all his creatures indifferently, we muſt vſe them in ſuch wiſe as he may be glorified by them, ſo as wee referre all to him, and take all as at his hande.

And herewithall we ſee what priuiledge wee haue, in that we may quietly and with ſafe conſcience eate the thinges that God giueth vs. For as for the wretched papiſts, which behaue them ſelues after the maner of the worlde, in forbearing certaine meates that are forbidden them, whereas they think themſelues to ſerue God in making but ſmall meales vppon ſome certayne dayes, and abſteyning from egges and whytemeates on ſome other dayes; and beare themſelues in hand that their ſo doing is great deuotion, and that God is greatly bound to them for it, and yet in ẏ meane while ſuffer themſelues to be led like ſilie beaſtes by the tyrannie of men: in what caſe are they before God? They can not eat one bitte of breade without doubting, becauſe they knowe not who it is that giueth it to them. But ſith we ſee that our Lorde hath ſet vs at libertie, ſo as we may vſe all manner of meats with thankſgiuing: 1.Tim.4.4. let vs conſider that it is ſuch a priuiledge as cannot be eſteemed ſufficiently: and therfore let vs acknowledge it in our eating and drinking. Sith we perceiue ẏ God hath ſuch a care of vs, as to ſtoope ſo lowe, as to be chary of our food: 1.Cor.10.31 [let vs aſſure our ſelues ẏ] although our bodies be but carions; yet notwithſtanding God wil giue them ſuſtenance to maintaine thẽ. Seeing wee haue ſuch a certeintie & knowledge (which cannot be without faith,) that is to wit that we be ſure what God hath graunted vnto vs: we ought greatly to magnifie his grace, and therewithall to vſe all his creatures with ſuch ſobrietie, as we may yeeld him good account of them at the laſt day, & glorifie him in al pointes as long as he keepeth vs in this world.

Now let vs kneele downe before ẏ maieſtie of our good god ẇ acknowledgement of our faults, praying him to make vs feele them better than we haue done, by touching vs to the quicke, ſo as we acknowledging him to bee the authour of all good things, may learne to ſeeke him in all our life, and cleaue wholy to his will: and that for the bringing thereof to paſſe, it may pleaſe him to graunt vs the grace to forſake all our corruptions, and to fence vs ſo from the wiles and ſuttleties of ſatan and the world, as nothing may keepe vs from being truely vnited to him that is the fountaine both of life, of ioye, and of al happineſſe. That it may pleaſe him to graunt this grace, not onely to vs, but alſo to all people and Nations of the earth, &c.

On Wednesday the xxiij. of October. 1555.

The XCj. Sermon, which is the ſecond vpon the fourteenth Chapter.

21 Ye ſhal not eat of anie dead bodie, but thou ſhalt giue it to the Straunger that is within thy gates, that he may eat it: or elſe thou ſhalt ſell it to a ſtraunger: For thou art a holy people to the Lord thy God. Thou ſhalt not ſeeth a kidde in his dammes milke.

22 Thou ſhalt giue the tenth of all the increaſe of thy ſeede which groweth yeerely on thy Land:

23 And in the place which the Lorde thy GOD will chooſe to put his name in,thou ſhalt eate before him the tythe of thy grayne,and of thy wine,and of thine oyle,and the firſt borne of thy kine,and of thy ſheepe,that thou maiſt learne to feare the Lord thy God alwayes.

Yeſterday I tould you the cauſe why God forbad the people of olde time to eate of ſome certaine kindes of meats. For in as much as we be fed & ſuſtained by his hand, it is good reaſon yͭ we ſhould vſe his creatures purely, and that we ſhould haue leaue of him, ſo as euery man take not leaue to doe what he liſteth, but what Gods word permitteth vs to doe. Therewall I ſhewed alſo, yͭ although the ceremonie be no more vſed nowadayes, nor we any more bound thereto as the fathers of old time were which liued vnder the law:yet notwithſtanding the doctrine thereof ceaſſeth not to be profitable for vs. And hereby we be doone to vnderſtand, that it is not lawfull for vs to eate or drinke without faith, (as S. Rom.14.23. Paul ſpeaketh of it in the xiiii. to the Romanes) that is to ſay, vnleſſe we be ſure that God giueth vs the thinges which wee receiue for our ſuſtenaunce, as if a father ſhoulde feede his children. On the other ſide, wee haue farre greater libertie nowadayes, than was vnder the Lawe. Wee ſee how liberall GOD is towardes vs: and wee haue the more cauſe to yeeld him thankes. Moreouer the thing that was ſet downe in figures to the Iewes in olde tyme, is vttered as nowe vnto vs without figure: that is to ſay, that in all caſes & all reſpects we muſt bridle our ſelues, ſo as we medle not wͭ the defilements of yͤ vnbeleeuers, but ſeparate our ſelues from them, ſeeing yͭ our Lord hath gathered vs into his flock and ſheepefold. And this figure of the old time, is a warning for vs nowadayes. For although we be no more bound to the keeping of it; yet notwͭſtanding it ought to moue vs yͤ more to ſerue our god purely, ſith we ſee he hath giuen vs a greater priuiledge than he gaue to yͤ Patriarkes & Prophets. After yͤ ſelf ſame maner is it wͭ the things yͭ Moſes addeth here. For yeſterday he treated of the meats yͭ were foule and vncleane in thoſe dayes. And hee ſorted them into their ſeuerall kindes. You ſhal eate of ſuch beaſtes, ſayd he: but in any wiſe beware yͭ ye touch no ſwine, nor any ſuch like things. Nowe he treateth of ſtrangled meats, as of fleſh yͭ dieth alone wͭout killing and wͭout letting of it bloud. And no doubt but yͭ his ſetting downe of this, is to ſhew that in ſo doing there is a double abhomination according to yͤ lawe. For firſt & formoſt when a beaſt died ſo alone of it ſelf, it was vnholy aforehand, & the very only touching of it was able to make a mã vncleane. And yͭ was the cauſe why God did ſo forbid his people to eate therof. Again, the bloud of it was ſetled in it, & we haue ſeene already how it was not lawful for yͤ Iewes to eate bloud, & that was bicauſe yͭ in the bloud wee haue as it were a liuely image of yͤ ſoule & of the life: & Gods meaning was to teach his people to abſtaine frõ all crueltie. And hereof we haue yͤ reaſon expreſſed in Geneſis, at ſuch time as Noe and his ofſpring Gen.9.4.6. were forbidden to eate bloud; where it is added yͭ we muſt ſpare men, bicauſe a man is yͤ image of God, & whoſoeuer doeth any outrage vnto him, ſhal not ſcape vnpuniſhed. Now then, Gods care was not for the beaſts when he forbad yͤ Iewes yͤ eating of their bloud: but his intent was to teach them by yͭ meanes to abſtaine from all crueltie, ſo as they ſhould be loth to do any outrage, and ſpecially any murther. But as for vs in theſe days we bee not in ſuch bondage. For our Lord Ieſus Col.2.14. Chriſt hath freed vs by his death and paſſion. Neuertheleſſe, howſoeuer we fare, yͤ groundwork abideth ſtill; ſo as a man may forbid a little child to handle a knife, leaſt he ſhould hurt himſelfe wͭ it: and yet an elder body alſo is to be forefended from hurting of himſelfe, wheras yet notwithſtãding, the handling of a knife were not euill for a child but in reſpect aforeſaid. And therfore God who tooke yͤ Iewes as little children, forbad thẽ Gal.4.1. ſtreitly the things yͭ are permitted vs at this day. Howbeit, the finall end is all one both to them & vs: inſomuch that we muſt conſider, that if Gods wil was to haue the Iewes kindharted, & to know yͭ the ſhedding of bloud is a deteſtable thing: the ſame ought alſo to be regarded of vs at this day, although the figure therof be aboliſhed. True it is (as wee reade in yͤ xv. of the Actes) yͭ the Apoſtles Act 15.20. 21. forbad yͤ Gentils to eate bloud or any thing that is ſtrangled: but yͭ was not for any ſin yͭ was in ſo doing. It was to auoide occaſion of offence, bicauſe (as it is there alleaged) Moſes was read openly, & the law was publiſhed abrode in all Cities, ſo as they heard it there forbidden. The Iewes could not abide at yͤ firſt, to ſee them eate bloud, which named themſelues Chriſtians: for yͭ was a lothſome thing to them. Therefore men were faine for a time to forbeare yͤ libertie that God giueth nowadayes to al the faithfull, accordingly as S. Paul ſpeaketh therof, ſaying that the 1.Cor.6.12 & 10.23. things which are lawfull for vs are not alwayes expedient: for they edifie not. We haue in deede our conſciences free before God: but yet if I ſee my brother offended, it behoueth me to beare wͭ him, if his ſo doing be through infirmitie, and in any wiſe I muſt haue a conſideration, whether a man be already throughly inſtructed in the faith or no. The intent of the Apoſtles then was not to make a grounded law wherewith to tie mens conſciences, & to hold thẽ in bondage: but only to auoide al occaſion of cauſing folk to ſtumble. But this hath bin ill marked of a great ſort of ignorant perſons. For they haue thought it to bee deadly ſinne to eate yͤ bloud of any beaſt, as wee ſee it mainteined ſtill at this day: and that was a fooliſh & beaſtly ſuperſtition. For (as I ſaid afore) our Lord Ieſus Chriſt hath cancelled the obligation of the Lawe of Moſes, ſo as we be no more Col.2.14. bound vnto it. But yet for all that, it behoooueth vs to liue in concord one with another, and to haue a regarde what our neighbours are able to beare. There is not the like reaſon for vs noweadayes to forbeare the eating of fleſhe vppon frydayes: for it is a meere deuotion, and it was forged and inuented without any likelyhoode of reaſon, yea and it was matched with a kinde of Idolatrie, for as much as the Papiſtes haue ſurmiſed themſelues to ſerue God by that meanes in forbearing to eat fleſhe vpon certaine daies, which was too groſſe a folly. Neuertheleſſe, if a chriſtenman ſhold come among the Papiſtes, and goe about to teache them that are yet altogether blinded, the point yͭ he ſhould begin at, muſt not bee the eating of fleſh vpon frydayes, for that would ſcare them quite away; bicauſe they neuer heard that it is lawful to do it, and therfore could neuer conceiue the truth of it, and beſides that they ſhould ſee him go about to breake a law which they take to be moſt holy, without informing them of the true meaning of the whole. Such dealing therfore ſhould be contrary to Gods meaning, and to Chriſten liberty. And therefore order and meaſure are to bee obſerued in thoſe caſes. But by the way, let vs remember that wee haue cauſe to giue thankes to our God, for exempting vs from yͤ bondage that our fathers were ſubiect to vnder the law: & that we muſt alſo benefite our ſelues by thoſe figures, by learning to liue friendly with our neighbors, abhorring all murthers and outrages, not onely actual murthers but alſo hatred, which is likewiſe condemned for murther before God, though it 1.Ioh.3.15. be neuer ſo ſecret and cloſe kept, as ſaith S. Iohn. That is the thing which we haue to note when it is ſayd vnto vs that God vttereth his will without any ſhadow, and not in darke ſpeeches as he did to the fathers, but as one that ſpeaketh with open mouth: and therefore let vs hold our ſelues contented therewith.

Now after this commaundement, Moſes addeth *that wee muſt not ſeeth a Kidde in his dammes Milke*: but woorde for woorde, it is but in *Milke*. It hath beene commonly vnderſtoode, that a man ſhoulde not ſeeth a Kid in his dāmes milke, or make ſawce with Goates milke to eate Kiddes fleſhe withall. And thereuppon, the Iewes (who will needes bee alwayes adding of ſomewhat to the pure worde of God) haue made a Lawe that it ſhoulde not bee lawfull for a man to eate cheeſe made of Goates milke after he had eaten kiddes fleſh, vntill he had firſt well ſcoured and waſhed his teeth, for to their ſeeming, that woulde haue bin a defiling of the man. But when al things are wel conſidered, the meaning of this text is yͭ men ſhoulde not roſt a kid as ſoone as he were new yeaned, but yͭ they ſhould let it ſucke for a time, yͭ it might be fleſh meete to bee eaten. And this was doone to the ende that folke ſhould not inure themſelues ſo much to the following of their owne appetites, as to fall into any beaſtly crueltie: for from the one, men come to the other. Let vs alwayes beare in minde howe it was declared yeſterday, that GOD was well willing to giue his people leaue to eate of all maner of good & conuenient meates, ſauing that he meant to holde them in awe for the trial of their obedience, and yet notwithſtanding ment not onely to ſet them downe ſome order of diet or fare like a Phiſition. For it were too groſſe an imagination to thinke that God prouided but onely for the diſeaſes of his people, as though all his Ceremonies had tended but to the feeding of their bodyes. For the putting hereof among the olde figures and ſhadowes was not for nought. Then let vs conclude that God had a further regarde when he forbad the eating of a kidde in his dammes milke. And in deede we ſee how in another place hee forbiddeth men to catch an olde birde ſitting vpon her yong ones, for it is a kind of cruel- Deut.22.6. tie. If a man finde a neſt of Partridges or other birdes, and catch the dam ſitting vpon the yong; God condemneth it, that is to ſay, he condemned it in olde tyme in the Lawe among the Ceremonies. And why ſo? Bycauſe it is againſt nature. For wee ſee howe the ſeely birdes are ſo carefull for their young, that the damme will rather ſtarue than forſake them. Whereby wee bee put in minde to doe the like. Seeing then that the ſeelie birds, to diſcharge their naturall duetie, doe forget themſelues ſo farre that they paſſe not what miſerie they indure, nor what care they take for the cheeriſhing of their yong ones, in ſo much as they ſuffer themſelues to bee taken with hand, and yeeld themſelues as it were into bondage for them: were it not an acte of extreme crueltie for a man to goe kill them? Good cauſe therefore had God to forbid it, to ſhewe that men ought not to paſſe their bounds, and take leaue to doe what they liſt, but to reſtraine themſelues to ſome kind of humanitie. And ſo whereas in this text God forbiddeth men to eate a kid in his dams milke; it is as much to ſay, as men ought not to deuour a yong beaſt as ſoone as it is come into yͤ world, vntill it haue ſucked a time: neither can the fleſh of it be kindly and good to eate. Nay, moreouer it importeth a kind of barbarous ouerfiercenes, when mē are ſo greedie yͭ they will needs take the beaſtes at the firſt fal of them, and not tarie till they may come to their full ſeaſon to be eaten, as ſome haue bin ſeene to be ſo beaſtly, yͭ they haue ripped yͤ dams bellyes to take out the yong ones. It hath beene ſeen that a glutton hath not bin contented with the creatures which God hath brought forth into the world, but he muſt alſo go rip vp a Hinde to haue the Calfe for the ſatiſfying of his appetite. It is ſayde that the earth is full of infinite riches, and yͭ god hath powred out ſuch treaſures Pſal.35.5. as are able to amaſe vs: & yet for al yͭ ye ſee how ſome man wil play the deteſtable monſter. Whē he hath pāpered his belly with ordinarie foode, he fals to deuiſing I wote not what: in ſo much yͭ if it were poſſible he wold create a new world, to feede his paunch wͭal. And although he be not able to make a flie, yet falleth he to imagining, I

will

wil go ſlit a Hinde or a Doe, and take out ẏ vntimely fruit out of her belly to feed vpon. And is not ẏ too great a wickedneſſe? No doubt but that ſuch deſires haue beene in all ages; but behold, God telleth vs that wee muſt vſe ſuch temperance and ſoberneſſe in our dyet, as wee may alwayes haue a regard to the mainteining of humanitie. Wee muſt preſcribe a rule our ſelues, and our eating and drinking muſt not bee ſo barbarous, that it ſhould be a meane to harden our hartes & make vs to forgo all humanitie, which is a thing diuers times quite forgotten; but that we ſhould liue together in good quietnes, & abſtaine from all iniurie and euill dealing.

And as touching the Ceremony wherof I am to ſpeake, which the Iewes obſerue and whereof they haue made a very ſolemne law: we ſee therby how the world will needes pay God alwayes with petie trifles. And ẏ is it from whence ſuch ſuperſtition is come. It is all one with that which we haue ſeene heeretofore, where God forbad his people to disfigure themſelues at the death of any of their friendes. But the Iewes conſidering not to what end ſuch prohibition was ſet downe: obſerued it according to the letter. Well then, they muſt not disfigure themſelues: but yet they had not an eye to gods meaning, which is ẏ men ouerſhoot themſelues too far in making too much ſorrowe at ẏ deceaſſe of their friends, tormenting themſelues ẇout meaſure, blaſpheming the name of God, and fretting inwardly. And therfore God intended to repreſſe ſuch corruption. Yea and as though mens ſins prouoked not Gods wrath ſufficiently of themſelues: they thinke it not ynough to be impatient, but they do alſo prouoke themſelues to it ſtill more & more. For we ſee there is no meaſure in mens ſorrowing, but they inforce themſelues to weepe, and doe many other thinges to increaſe their greefe and heauineſſe, kindling the fire ſtill more and more, which is great ynough already of it ſelfe. After the ſame maner deale they in all other thinges. But what doe the Iewes ſtill in this behalfe? They may not disfigure themſelues: but in the meane while they rend their garmentes. And ſo the meaning of the Lawmaker, which was ſimple, is diſfeated. For to their ſeeming, when a friend of theirs is dead, they muſt not be without ſorrowe for him, for that were a diſhonouring of him, and therefore they muſt rend their garmentes for him. And beſides that, they muſt make ſuch Countenances, and ſuch Ceremonies, ſo as they muſt not eate that day in their owne houſes, but ſpend that day abrode in mourning, and in doeing this and that. When they haue finiſhed a hundred pelting toyes, they beare themſelues in hand that they haue wel pacified God; and yet notwithſtanding that they may diſpiſe him all their life long. And heerein we ſee as in a lookingglaſſe, how greatly our nature is inclined to ſuperſtition; and ſecondly that alwayes we will needes haue ceremonies to content God withall, and to diſcharge our dewties towardes him. Our nature (I ſay) is ſo bent to ſuperſtition, that if God forbid a thing, in deede wee dare not doe it with intent to reſiſt him, but wee ſeeke ſome other byway, ſo as GOD ſhall bee diſappointed, and neuer haue the thing that hee demaundeth. As for example, the Chriſtians which beare that name, take not vpon them the very ſuperſtitions of ẏ Idolaters as they terme them; but yet they followe the ſelfe ſame in deede with a little diſguiſing of them, and ſo they beare themſelues in hande that god eſpies them not at all. The Idolaters caryed bread and drinke to the graues of the dead, bearing themſelues in hand that the ſoules were fed therewith; and they caryed thither lightes to the intent to glad them. Nowe the Papiſtes haue thought this to be too great an abſurditie. But what for that? They offer vp bread, & wine, and candles, and monie at their Maſſes; and the ſoules departed (ſay they) ſhall finde releefe by it. Verily if it bee replyed that the ſuperſtition of the Papiſtes is not all one with the ſuperſtition of the heathen: in deede there is ſome difference betwixt them. But to what ende do they ſo, but to content GOD with ſome newe exchaunge? For (as I ſayde) it is a thing rooted in mans nature. And wee ought to marke it well: for wee woulde ſoone fall into it, if wee were not reſtrayned by Gods woorde, as by a ſhort and rough brydle. And all commeth from out of this ſpring, that wee will not ſerue GOD as he requireth, but by a ſorte of Ceremonies I wote not what. And when wee haue once made ſome ſhewe of deuotion; wee beare our ſelues in hand that he is well appeaſed, and that he ought not to preſſe vs any further. And thus ye ſee that the cauſe why men in all ages haue toyled themſelues ſo much in the ſeruing of God, and haue inuented ſo many trifling things: is that they will needes paye him in ſuch coyne, bicauſe they were loath to deale vprightly and faythfully with him. God requireth our hearts: & if he poſſeſſe not them, 1.Sam.16.7 al the reſt is nothing worth. Now we bee full of hypocriſie, and wee bee not willing to diſcouer our backnookes which are full of diſſimulation, malice, and rebellion, but would alwayes keepe them ſtill to our ſelues. And yet in the meane ſeaſon wee pretend a maruelous holyneſſe with our eyes, our feete, and our handes. Therefore let vs learne that this miſcheefe hath reigned in all ages, to the intent we may rid our ſelues of it; and let vs aſſure our ſelues that God will not be ſerued at our handes by outwarde Ceremonies. True it is that all our whole life ought to beare witneſſe that the feare of him is well rooted in our hartes. Faith is a dead thing if it vtter not it Iames 2.17 ſelfe by good fruites. Moreouer if we intend to haue our ſeruice accepted of God, let vs aſſure our ſelues that we muſt begin at the ſoundneſſe of hart, and that all Ceremonies are to no purpoſe, except they ſhewe ẏ our hart is right, pure, and vnfeined. Thus much concerning the ſuperſtition and abuſe ẏ reigned among the Iewes and ſtill reigneth at this preſent.

We muſt alwayes come backe to this ſaying of our Lorde, that the thinges which goe into a mans mouth defile him not, but the thinges that come out at his mouth, as all maner of wicked affections. One is full of ambition and pride, another burneth in couetouſneſſe, and a third practiſeth ſpitefullneſſe and treaſon. Euery man hath his vice himſelfe, ſo as one is a glutton and another is a whoremonger. Theſe are the things that infect the man, yea and they infect the whole world. Therefore let vs learne to clenſe our ſelues from all ſuch filthineſſe: and as for Ceremonies, let vs knowe that wee ought to vſe them ſo farre foorth as God requireth them for the vttering of our faith: but yet muſt we vſe them ſimply, and not bee wedded too much to them. For wee ſee that the deuill will by and by haue a towell ready to blindfould our eyes withall, ſo as wee ſhall no more conſider the principall, but forget it vtterly and abuſe our ſelues to thinges of nothing. To the intent then that we may not haue our eyes ſo bleared; let vs follow God that way which hee calleth vs: that is, to ſerue him in all pureneſſe.

And now as touching the principall point of this ſentence, where it is ſaid that a kid muſt bee eaten in his dammes milke: let vs vnderſtand that God will haue vs to vſe honeſtie and ſoberneſſe in our eating and drinking: that is the thing in effect, which wee haue to remember in that text. Truely as touching the figure, we be no more tyed to it, as I haue ſaid afore: but as for Gods meaning, that is durable. When men doe giue themſelues to their leawde and outrageous appetites, it is all one as though they ment to ouerthrow the order of nature. Yee ſee how drunkardes (when they bee ſo full that they be ready to burſt) doe inuent ſuch ſhamefull thinges, that an honeſt man would bee ready to caſt vp his ſtomacke to heare the things ſpoken of which thoſe ſwine doe. When they be as full as their ſkinnes can holde, they whet their ſtomacks, & take ſhooinghornes (as they term thē) to drawe on a cup of wine, and ſuch other like things; ſo as wee may ſee that men cannot content themſelues with any meaſure; but although God ſhewe himſelfe liberall towardes them, yet notwithſtanding they wil needs follow their inordinate luſtes ſtill, declaring yͤ their deſires are vnſatiable, & neuer at reſt, till they haue brought themſelues to ſhameful diſorder, without regard of any modeſtie. Sith we ſee ſuch things, we may well perceyue howe it is not without cauſe that God hath warned the Iewes to vſe a kind of honeſtie in their liuing and feeding: which thing belōgeth much more to vs at this day. Although we haue not the Ceremonie any more; yet will God haue vs to liue honeſtly, & to vſe a ſobrietie in our eating & drinking, ſo as we may alway lift vp our eyes & ſay, Lord, we haue receiued foode at thy hand, & we know yͤ thou ſheweſt thy ſelfe a father towards vs. But if we make a hotchpotch of al things w̄out diſcretion, ſurely it is no taking of them as at Gods hand, but wee ſhall finde at the laſt, that we rauened them vp like beaſtes. And therfore let vs learne to refraine our ſelues. Thus wee ſee howe the doctrine that is conteyned heere, is not vnneceſſarie at this day, ſo wee can applie it duely, and with diſcretion of the holy Ghoſt to our inſtruction.

Now after this, he ſayth concerning *beaſts that are ſtrangled, and are dead in their bloud; that they ſhoulde giue them to ſtraungers or elſe ſell them.* It ſeemeth heere at the firſt ſight, that God ſhould aswell condemne thoſe beaſtes for the ſtraungers as for the Iewes. For if it be not lawfull for me my ſelfe to doe a thing; why ſhould I bee an occaſion to my neighbour to doe it? Am I not giltie of ſinne in ſo doing? Here we haue to conſider the reaſon that Moſes addeth: *Thou art a People holy vnto thy God.* Heere he ſheweth that God had ſhooled out yͤ Iewes from all other nations of the earth, and therefore hee would not haue them to defile themſelues with any kind of meate. Now if it be demaunded, and why then had they leaue to ſel or giue the things to ſtrangers, which were abhominable as in reſpect of themſelues? The reaſon is this: That god hauing named the beaſts which he would haue his people to eate of, did leaue all beaſtes without difference for all other men to feede on which were not inſtructed in his Law. True it is that he had forbidden al mankind to eate the bloud of any thing, and conſequently to eate of any beaſt that was ſtrangled or died alone. But the moſt part of the world was already gone aſtraye, ſo as they knew not the law any more, & we ſee how yͤ euen in the life of Noe, his poſteritie intangled themſelues in a nomber of ſuperſtitious & Idolatries, and had forgotten god who had preſerued them ſo wonderfully: ſo as there was no more but the linage of Sem, which was but a very ſmall portion, that held themſelues to any pureneſſe in the ſeruing of God. By reaſon wherof yͤ whole world grew into ſuch a licentious liberty, that all was mard. God therefore reſerueth a people to himſelfe, & bringeth them backe to the firſt law, ſaying. Seeing I tel you that I haue choſen you to be my houſhould: I ſet you downe a ſpeciall order, yͤ you may haue my badge wherby to be knowne from al yͤ vnbeleeuers of the earth. After yͤ maner doth god deale. But men runne gadding on their own head, & follow alwaies their own affections, & cānot find in their harts to ſubmit themſelues ſimply to Gods law as he requireth. Truely the thing of it ſelfe were not euill, if there had bin no law againſt it. And this law was giuen to yͤ Iewes, for the two reaſons which I haue alleaged afore. The firſt was for the tryall of their obedience, yͤ they ſhould ſhew themſelues to be ſubiect vnto God. And the ſecond was, yͤ thereby they might be quickned vp to keepe themſelues from al corruption. But as for the heathen, they might haue eaten of all meates, ſo they had acknowledged the giuer of them and the creator that had made all thinges to their vſe, worſhipping him purely and abſtaining from al cruelty & outrage: but they liued in yͤ world like beaſtes. They had in deede a kinde of Imagination that there was one God; & they forged a great nomber of gods: and yet for all that while euery man had an Idoll by himſelfe, the liuing God was forſaken of all men. For as much then as the heathen had not the Law appointed vnto them: the Iewes might well leaue thoſe kind of meates vnto them.

Gen. 11.4. & 12.1.

And verily therby they were done to vnderſtand,ẏ the thing of it ſelfe was not euill. Seeing ẏ God gaue them leaue to ſel or giue vnto ẏ heathen the fleſh of ſuch things as were not ordinarily ſlaine; thereby they might perceiue how it behoued them to looke yet further. And why ſo? As touching murther, bicauſe it is forbidden of it ſelf, if it be not lawfull for me to kill a man, neither is it lawfull for mee to lend a ſworde to kill him withall, nor to vſe any maner of treacherie. Now then, in things ẏ God condemneth of thēſelues, & which are euil of thēſelues: it is certaine ẏ all men ought not onely to abſtaine frō them, but alſo to beware ẏ he giue not any occaſion to any other body to do thē. And ſo it is to be concluded, ẏ ſith the Iewes might without offending God giue or ſel the fleſh of ſtrangled beaſts: God ſhewed thereby, that ẏ thing of it ſelf was not euil; & that his forbidding of it was but to hold thē vnder awe, & thereby to leade them yet further, intending to make thē vnderſtand, ẏ they ought to liue in al maner of purenes, bicauſe they were a holy people. This is ẏ which we haue to remēber vpon this place. Nowe, whereas he ſpeaketh here of ſtraungers, he meaneth all the heathen which were not of ẏ line of Abraham, as if we in theſe dayes ſhould ſpeake of ẏ Turks & Sarazins, wee might ſay they haue no fellowſhip ẇ vs bicauſe they weare not ẏ badge of Baptiſme, and deſpiſe ẏ God whom we worſhip. For Gods lawe ſpeaketh to all men alike, at leaſtwiſe the morall lawe as they terme it, that is to ſay, the lawe ẏ ruleth our life: but the lawe ẏ belongeth to ẏ Goſpel, ſpeaketh to none but to ẏ Church of God. As for example ẏ Turkes and the Sarazins haue not to do with the ſupper of our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt, neither can they any ſkill of Baptiſme. True it is that they haue waſhinges, and they waſh themſelues oft ynough: but al ẏ euer they haue is no better than ẏ holy water of the Papiſtes. As for ẏ thinges ẏ are peculiar to vs, & which God hath giuen to vs as to his children and houſholdfolk, thoſe belong not to ſuch as are altogether eſtraunged from ẏ Church, & the holy ſcripture. And therefore let vs marke well, ẏ whereas God doth here giue the heathen leaue to eate al maner of meats: it is bicauſe he was not ſo gratious to them, as to giue them the inſtruction that was peculiar to ẏ children of Abraham, & to the holy linage which he had choſen from ẏ whole world. Nowe notwithſtanding all this, if the Iewes had complained ẏ God held them in more ſubiection than he did the heathen, and ẏ their owne eſtate was worſe than theirs: might we not ſay ẏ it were too great an vnthankfulnes? If a Iewe ſhould ſay, How nowe? Seeing ẏ God hath choſen vs for his children, why doth he not giue vs as great libertie at the leaſt, as he hath giuen to thoſe that belong not vnto him? Is it meete ẏ we ſhould be inferiour to them? If a Iew ſhould ſpeake after that maner, we would be his iudges, and euery of vs would ſay, fie on him wretch, he ſheweth himſelf tootoo vnhoneſt & churliſh. For ſeing ẏ god hath choſen them for his people, & inſtructed them in his pure doctrine: ſhould they finde fault with him for his holding of thē vnder ẏ obedience of his law? But nowe let vs apply this to our ſelues. For in as much as God hath gathered vs togither into his houſe; he wil haue vs to walk more carefully and warely, than the ſillie ignoraunt ſoules that are ſtrayed from the way of Saluation. If wee ſay that that were too rough and ſeuere a dealing; wee our ſelues are too vnthankefull. It is ſaid that we muſt liue as childrē of the light: & no maruaile it is though ſuch as haue not learned Gods word do ſtut and ſtumble, & go aſtray; for they be like blinde wretches in the darke. But wee haue Gods worde, which is as a lampe to giue vs lyght, and again we haue beene inlightened by the holy Ghoſt, ſo as wee knowe the will of God. And ſhall wee nowe runne aſtray as though wee had neuer knowen any good doctrine? Nowe then whereas God hath tyed vs ſhorter than he hath tyed the ignorant; if we thereupon wil needes ſhake off his yoke and fall to checking at him, as though wee had leuer to haue the licentious libertie of the vnbeleeuers, than to bee held vnder the obedience of God our father: we were worthie to bee rooted out of the world. For it were too great a defacing of Gods gracious goodneſſe, to doe ſo, when GOD hath choſen vs to himſelfe and giuen vs his badge, as if hee ſhould ſay, I wil raigne among you, let it appeare that yee haue beene in my ſchoole, let not my ſhewing of my ſelfe to haue beene your father and Sauiour bee in vaine. So then, let vs marke well, that whereas God calleth vs vnto him, it is with this condition, that wee ſhoulde not liue any more after the manner of the ignorant wretches which woote not howe to order their conuerſation: for they doe followe their owne beaſtly luſtes. It is ynough (ſaieth Saint Peter ſpeaking to the heathen that had beene conuerted to the beleefe of the Goſpell,) it is ynough (ſaith hee) that yee haue done heeretofore, ye haue giuen too much heede to your wicked affections already, ſee that none of you take ſuch licentious libertie any more, but ſubmit your ſelues to Gods yoke; and ſith it is gods wil to haue the gouernment of you, ſuffer your ſelues to be guided by his hand, and obey his worde in all thinges, vtterly forſaking your owne wicked luſtes.

1.Theſſ.5.6

Pſal.119.104.

Eph.1.17.18 & 5.17.

1.Pet.4.3.

Nowe then, whereas in theſe dayes we ſee the worlde to bee altogether corrupted: let vs not alledge other mens croſſe dealinges in defence of our own, neyther let vs make a ſhield of them to ſay, why ſhoulde wee bee held more in awe than other men? Alas, is it to bee maruailed at that thoſe ſhoulde goe aſtray, which haue no lyght? But ſeeing that GOD hath ſent vs the Sonne of righteouſneſſe, let vs aſſure our ſelues that it will bee no excuſe for vs, though the ignoraunt wretches doe goe aſtray after their owne imaginations. Surely this is yll put in practiſe. For our whole ſeeking nowadayes, is nothing elſe but to heape together all the offences in the worlde, to make a confuſed hotchpotch of them. If it bee ſayde that there bee a nomber of men which are giuen to fraude and guyle, and are full of ſuttletie and deceite: wee reſt vppon that and are contented to counterfet their vices, & to alleage them in ſport.

As for mens vertues, wee let them alone, and make none accounte of them: but as for their vices, wee make a barre of them againſt God. O ſay wee, ye ſee howe ſuch a man doth ſo, another doeth after that faſhion: this is a common cuſtome euerywhere: and wil ye haue vs to be holyer than al other men? Beſides this, it is alledged thus alſo. What I pray you, doe not the Papiſtes ſo before vs? Yes: but the Papiſtes haue ſhaken off the yoke of our Lord Ieſus Chriſt, they haue withdrawen themſelues from him and from his Church. True it is yͭ they haue baptiſme which is yͤ ſigne of Chriſtianitie: but they haue vtterly aboliſhed the true vſe of baptiſme, and we ſee how they haue no skil at al either of God or of his word. As for our part, forasmuch as we haue the Goſpel, and that wee are thereby conuicted yͭ it is Gods trueth, and we be preferred before thoſe that were at leaſtwiſe as good as we in reſpect of the world, & ſeeing he hath choſen vs after that faſhion, are we not too much to blame, if wee come not to offer our ſelues wholly vnto him, ſaying, Lorde gouerne thou vs, and let vs not looke at other mens dooings to bee caryed away by their miſexample; but let vs alwayes bee gathered together as it were vnder the ſhadowe of thy winges? Thus ye ſee what wee haue to marke vpon this admonition of Moſeſes, *Knowe ye* (ſaith he) *that the Lord your God hath ſeparated you out from all other nations of the earth.*

After this, he cõmeth to the tythes whereof he had ſpoken afore, & ſaieth, *Yee ſhall tythe the firſt of all your fruites which ye ſhall haue gathered, as well of Corne, Wine, and Oyle, as alſo of the firſt borne of all your Cattell.* The repetition which our Lord vſeth here is not more than needeth. For (as we haue ſeene heretofore) men are ſo wedded to their owne profit, yͭ their duetie cannot be had at their handes, but by force, and they muſt bee faine to haue their eares beaten dayly, or elſe (if it bee poſſible) they will doe what they can to exempt themſelues from dooing their duetie, ſpecially when it commeth to the Lawe of God and to the things that he requireth at our hand: for we wil be aſhamed if wee yeeld not our duetie vnto men. Whẽ a man hath misbehaued himſelfe towards mẽ, ye ſhal ſee him aſhamed to lift vp his head. True it is yͤ faults ſhal not faile to be committed, & that there wilbe a thouſand deuiſes to defraude men by theft, robberie, extortion, and other wicked practiſes: but yet will men alwayes looke the warelyer to themſelues, bicauſe they be reſtrained by ſhame. But as for to Godward, men are quite paſt ſhame, and ſet all at randon as though they would pul out his tongue, or forbid him to ſpeake, when they haue taken from him yͭ which belonged vnto him. And ſo yee ſee what is the cauſe that God hath ſpoken ſo oft of tythes which he would haue offered vnto him, & likewiſe of yͤ firſt fruits. I haue tolde you already yͭ the tythes were allotted to the Leuites, bicauſe God reſerued them to do him ſeruice: & it behoued them to liue vpon yͤ Altar, bicauſe they were dedicated therunto. The ſame reaſon is in force at this day towardes vs. Not that we be bound to the ſame maner of tything that the Iewes were, furtherforoth than ciuill order requireth: but that wee muſt alwayes come backe to this ſaying of Saint Paul, that lyke as the Leuites liued 1.Cor.9.13 14. vpon tythes bycauſe they were dedicated to the ſeruice of GOD: ſo nowadayes they that haue the charge of teaching in the Church, ought to be maintained with liuing likewiſe, & God hath made an euerlaſting law thereof.

But yet moreouer, we haue to note, that the tithes were allotted to the Leuites as in recompence of their inheritance whereof they were depriued. For God had promiſed the Land of Canaan to all the linage of Abraham, by reaſon whereof the children of Leuie ought not to haue beene bereft of their portion. Yet notwithſtanding, God bereft them of it. And why did he ſo? To the intent they ſhould not toyle themſelues in tilling the ground as other men do, but giue themſelues wholly to his ſeruice as became thẽ. In reſpect whereof it was good reaſon that they ſhould bee recompenſed after another manner. Truly this matter cannot be diſcourſed at large as now, and therefore wee will delay the going through with it till to morrowe, taking this breefe ſumme of it for a concluſion, that our Lordes meaning in this place, was to ſet downe a Lawe for the maintenance of his ſeruice. And for that cauſe it was his minde that the Leuites ſhould haue whereon to liue: for they were the parties that had the charge to maintaine the pure religion: and for that purpoſe were they diſperſed throughout the whole land of Canaan to the end they ſhould keepe the people in the pureneſſe of Gods ſeruice, as we ſee the prophet Mal.2.7. Malachy ſpeaketh of them, ſaying yͭ they ought to be expounders of gods law, as at whoſe mouth men ought to ſeeke what is good and lawefull. The cauſe then why GOD hath not onely ſet downe this lawe but alſo repeated it, is for that he will haue his ſeruice mainteined. And bicauſe men are negligent in yeelding him his dewe, he hath vouchſafed to repete the law againe which he had ſet downe before; and beſides that, his intent was alſo to put vs in minde to honour him with al the goods which he beſtoweth vpon vs in this life. For ſurely if men eate and drinke without yeelding any honor vnto God, they defile yͤ things which they receiue. For yͤ true meane to ſanctify meates, is by faith & praier ſaith S. Paul. Without faith and prayer, all things become vnclean to vs. 1.Tim.4.5. And now ye ſee here how god cõmãdeth men to offer vnto him their firſt fruites and tenthes. And why is yͭ? Bicauſe that by yͭ meanes folke were prouoked to ſay, True it is yͭ the earth bringeth forth her fruites, wee haue a good harueſt and vintage, we haue ſtore of Oyle and vittelles; & who is he that giueth vs all theſe things? Hath the earth a ſoule to determine with it ſelfe to nouriſh vs? No, it is God our father that doth it: and therfore it is good reaſon that wee ſhould haue regard of him, & conſider how much we be bound vnto him. Thus ye ſee how yͭ in the tithes and firſt fruits, there was a ſolemne proteſtation yͭ whatſoeuer we haue we receiue it at gods hãd, & therfore we ought to do him homage & ſacrifice therewith. Which thing is then done, when we pray vnto him to bleſſe them all, and when wee ſhew effectually by our almesdeedes and ſuch other like thinges, that we be willing to offer all things vnto him which hee hath put into our handes, and to vſe them in ſuch ſorte, as wee may haue a care to follow meaſure, and to frame our ſelues to the ſobrietie which hee hath commaunded vs.

Now let vs kneele downe in the preſence of our good GOD with acknowledgement of our faultes, praying him to vouchſafe to behold vs with pitie, and not to impute vnto vs the great number of offences whereof wee bee guiltie before him, but that it may pleaſe him to rid vs cleane from them, euen by forgiuing them: and moreouer to drawe vs ſo vnto him by his holy ſpirite, as our whole ſeeking may bee to dedicate our ſelues throughly vnto him, continuing throughout in his holy calling, to the end. And ſo let vs all ſay, Almightie God heauenly father &c.

On Thurſday the xxiiij. of October. 1555.

The XCij. Sermon, which is the third vpon the foureteenth Chapter.

24 And if the way be too long, ſo as thou canſt not bring them, becauſe the place which the Lord thy God ſhall haue choſen to ſet his name in, is too far from thee: and that the Lord thy God haue bleſſed thee:

25 Then ſhalt thou make it into monie, and take the monie in thy hande, and repayre to the place which the Lorde thy GOD ſhall haue choſen for himſelfe.

26 And thou ſhalt giue the monie for whatſoeuer thy heart deſireth; whether it be oxen or ſheepe, wine, or ſtraunge drinke, or any other thing which thy heart liketh of. And there feede thou on it in the preſence of the Lord thy God, and bee merrie both thou and thy houſeholde.

27 And thou ſhalt not forſake the Leuite that is within thy gates: for he hath no portion nor inheritance with thee.

28 At the three yeres end thou ſhalt gather together all the tythes of thine encreaſe of that yeare, and lay it vp within thy gates.

29 And then the Leuite which hath no part nor inheritance with thee, and likewiſe the ſtraunger, the fatherleſſe, and the widowe which are within thy gates, ſhal come and eate, and be refreſhed, that the Lord thy God may bleſſe thee in all the workes of thy handes which thou doeſt.

Deut.12,5 6

Forasmuch as Moſes, in ſpeaking heretofore of firſt fruites and offeringes, and freewill oblations; had commaunded that they ſhould be offered in Ieruſalem, or elſe in the place which God was then to chooſe: now hee addeth, *that if a man dwelt too farre off from that place, hee might make mony of the thinges that were to bee giuen for an offering vnto God, and after the ſale thereof, buy the lyke thinges againe, which ſhould be wholy dedicated to God whatſoeuer they were.* Now I haue tolde you already, how it was not for naught that God would haue one certeine place, wherin to offer ſolemne ſacrifices vnto him and to worſhip him: for it ſerued to mainteine the vnitie of faith. Inſomuch that if euery trybe, or at leaſtwiſe euery citie had had an Altar by themſelues; it had bin enough to haue made hauock of all, and men could not haue continued in concord and brotherly loue. Therefore it behoued the Temple to bee a meetingplace for Gods people, to the intent they ſhould altogether acknowledge themſelues to be but one bodie, and vnderſtand that they were bound all to one rule, which is the lawe, and all of them obey the ſame, without any diuerſitie of opinions, or ſtraunge maner of dealinges, or ceremonies among them. And in the ſame reſpect alſo were they commanded to offer in the Temple, to the end that euery man ſhoulde not behaue himſelfe after his owne deuotion as they terme it. For when men will needes ſerue God after their owne fancie, there will be nothing but corruption. Wee muſt alwayes beare this ſaying in minde, that obedience is better than all the ſacrifices in the worlde. And therefore they were forbidden to offer ſacrifice in any other place than onely one which was appointed for that purpoſe, to the intent they ſhould not euery man muſe vppon fooliſh ſuperſtitions, but hold themſelues to the order that was ſet down, without attempting any thing raſhly and fondly vppon their owne heades as I ſayd. And this is ſpoken expreſly vnto vs. For although wee haue not the ſelfeſame order of religion which was among the auncient fathers vnder the Law: yet doth this ground ſtand ſtill, that God will

1.Sa.15,22

not be worſhipped after our opinion, but according to his owne will. Therefore let vs bee well ware that we inuent not ſuperſtitions (as the Papiſtes haue done) vppon ſurmiſe that they will be accepted of God: for they will doe nothing elſe but prouoke his wrath, inſomuch that when men turne away from Gods trueth, the more they inforce themſelues foreward, the further off doe they ſtill ſtray from it. Will wee then keepe the right way? Gods word muſt ouermaiſter vs. And this thing is yet the better confirmed to vs, by Gods reſeruing of the place to himſelfe wherein he woulde be ſerued. For he could well haue ſayd by Moſes; Chooſe what place you your ſelues lyke beſt, and when yee haue ſo done, God will giue you leaue to come euery man thither, and there to doe him ſeruice. Al this might wel haue bin ſayd. But God ſayth, it belongeth to mee to chooſe, I will not giue the choyce to men. Herein wee ſee how hee reſerueth the right of ſouereintie to himſelf, to the end that the faithfull ſhoulde the better knowe, that it is not for them to enterpriſe aught at aladuenture, but that it behoueth them to haue warrant from aboue, ſo as they may ſay, God accepteth all that euer wee doe; for we doe nothing but what he commaundeth vs, none of vs dealeth vppon his owne head in this behalfe. Wherefore let vs marke well, that God hath here done vs to vnderſtand, that he wil not haue his ſeruice mingled with our inuentions, but that wee ſhould ſimply followe the thinges that are conteined in his worde. And ſo yee ſee that as concerning the thinges which I haue ſayd already, God was to bee worſhipped ſolemnly no where elſe than in the Temple of Ieruſalem after it was declared: and that vntill that time, it behoued the Iewes to reſorte to the Arke and to the Sanctuarie. But now let vs come backe againe to that which is ſet downe here in writing.

If the place (ſayth Moſes) *bee too farre from thee, thou ſhalt ſell the thinges which thou wart minded to offer*, or the thinges which thou oughteſt to offer. For it behoued them to offer the firſt borne of all their cattell. Nowe they that dwell in the vttermoſt coaſtes of Iewry ſhould haue had much ado to driue thither their Lambs, Sheepe, Goates, and Calues. Therefore they were to be borne withall: and God being no oppreſſer of his people, giueth them here a remedie, to the intent they ſhould not be greeued too much. As for thoſe that dwell neere to Ieruſalem ſayth hee, let them bring thither as wel the firſt borne of their cattell, as alſo all their freewill offerings, and whatſoeuer other thinges they haue dedicated vnto God. For otherwiſe the Citie of Ieruſalem might bee famiſhed. If all that had come thither ſhould haue bought their ſacrifices there: what a thing had that bin? Therefore it was Gods will that men ſhould bring thẽ thither from al the countries, vnleſſe the places were ouerfarre off. And in that caſe hee ſaith it ſhould bee Lawful for them to ſell the thinges that they had dedicated, namely ſuch as were due by commaundement of the Lawe: as the firſt borne thinges, in remembraunce that God had ſmitten the firſtborne of Egypt, and ſpared the firſtborne of Iſraell, whereof he would haue the memoriall to continue for euer. *Thou ſhalt ſell it* (ſayth he,) & put vp the mony, or *folde it vp* (for ſo doth the word ſignify which he vſeth.) Folde vp the mony in thy hand (ſayth he:) that is to ſay, conſider with your ſelues that that mony is none of your owne, but that it muſt bee put vp alone by it ſelfe as a holy thing. *And when thou commeſt to Ieruſalem, thou ſhalt buy thine offeringes after thine owne lyking, and after that the ſame hath bin offered in the Temple, the Prieſtes ſhall take their dues therof, & then ſhall you eat and drink therof before the Lord* as ſoone as you haue made your oblation therof, *and you ſhall be merry in eating of your ſacrifices, as farre as euery mans portion will extend.* That is the thing in effect which wee haue to remember in this text.

Exod.12.29 & 13.1.

And here wee ſee (as I haue ſayd afore,) that although God held his people vnder very ſtrait bondage, yet notwithſtanding hee layde no more vppon them than they were able to beare, but ſo mitigated the rigor of the Lawe, as no man could ſay it was vnpoſſible to doe the thinges that hee had inioyned. Sith wee ſee it is ſo; Let vs aſſure our ſelues, that if our good GOD doe in theſe dayes lay any burthen vppon our ſhoulders, that may bee too heauie for vs; hee doth alſo giue vs abilitie to beare it, ſo as wee bee not borne downe by it, at leaſtwiſe if wee commit our ſelues to him; ſo as we haue no cauſe to complayn of him as though he did vtterly ouerwhelme vs. True it is, that the righteouſneſſe which God requireth of vs in his Lawe, dooth farre ſurmount all our abilitie, yea and we come ſo farre ſhorte of the performing of all that hee hath commaunded vs, ſo as wee bee not able to ſtirre one finger towardes it; nay, wee cannot ſo much as thinke one good thought towardes it: GOD muſt be faine to giue vs euerywhit. But when he aſſiſteth vs with his holy ſpirit, then wee finde his yoke ſweete and eaſie, ſpecially, when hee layes it vppon our neckes by the hand of our Lord Ieſus Chriſt. And that is the cauſe why Ieſus Chriſt proteſteth that his burthen is not too heauie, nor his yoke too hard. But how commeth that to paſſe? It is becauſe God giueth vs both the will to ſerue him, and alſo the abilitie to put the ſame in execution. And therewithall hee addeth a ſecond grace, which is that hee beareth with vs when wee haue done amiſſe. For wee of our ſelues are ouerfraile, wee cannot throughly performe the thinges that hee commaundeth vs, & therefore he pardoneth our infirmities & forgetteth them. But howſoeuer the caſe ſtand, yet haue wee good cauſe to ſerue him freely & with a francke hart, foraſmuch as we ſee that hee on his ſide deſireth no more but to guide vs as the father dooth his children, as hee auoweth by his Prophet Hoſheah.

Matt.11.30

Phil.2.13.

Pſal.11.3.

But now let vs marke, that whereas Moſes ſayth, *Let them buy whatſoeuer they haue a minde vnto*: his meaning therein is not to giue men leaue to play the gluttons at their pleaſure, as though there were no meaſure nor modeſtie to bee obſerued. A certeine ſect of Heretikes called the Manichees, which ſkorned Gods Law & the Prophets, alledged this preſẽt text & ſuch other lyke, to ſhew that the God of the olde teſtament as they blaſphemouſly termed him, was a God of diſorder, and ſuch a one as kept no good rule. For why, ſayd they; hee layd the bridle vpon his peoples necke, and bad them eate whatſoeuer they lyked, and ſo his meaning was to make them drunkardes and gluttons, by incoraging them to eate and drinke after that faſhion. But the true God (ſayd they) will haue folke to bee ſober, whereby a man may ſee that the Lawe was not giuen from heauen. But we ſee how this text was corrupted by their malice, yea euen by their ſhamefull malice, in blaſpheming without any colour of truth, ſeeing that the luſtes of men were reſtreined afore by the ſame Lawe. I tolde you yeſterday how it was Gods will to bridle his people, by reſtreining thẽ from the eating of all ſortes of meates without exception, wherein hee meant to haue a tryall of their ſobrietie. Sith it is ſo: it is a fowle ſhame to alledge this text as a placarde for the ſetting of all luſtes at libertie. The worde *Lyking, Longing*, or *Liſting*, ought rather to bee reſtreyned to the thinges that were Lawfull, and which God had giuen them leaue to deale with. As if it had bin ſayd, Thoſe that haue a minde to eate of any kinde of meate which is Lawfull for them to eate, let them buy it and make an offering thereof vnto God. And when the Prieſtes haue taken their rightes thereof, let them eate the reſidue themſelues.

So then let vs marke that here are two things conteined. The one is, that our Lorde ſheweth himſelfe liberall towardes his people in that hee ſayth, Go too, although I coulde withhold my bleſſing from you; yet notwithſtanding I giue you leaue to make your owne choyce of your meate and drinke, howebeit with this exception, that yee take heede that you touch not any meate that is not pure and cleane to you: for it behoooueth you to be exerciſed for a time in the indeuour of dedicating your ſelues vnto mee, that yee bee not tangled in the defilementes of the infidels. Therefore let that prouiſo ſtand for euer, ſo as yee alwayes take good heede to vſe your libertie in ſuch ſorte, as yee may haue no cauſe to blame mee as though I helde you too ſtreit. For I leaue you to your owne likinges, ſo they be well ruled. Now then let vs vnderſtande, that heere our Lorde beareth with vs, in that hee vouchſafeth to giue vs the vſe of his creatures, not onely for our neede without other deſire to them, but alſo euen for our pleaſure: and yet notwithſtanding, that wee muſt alwayes take good heede, that our mirth be not exceſſiue, but rather well moderated. And for that cauſe is it ſayd, *Thou ſhalt eate there in the preſence of thy God*, which ſaying hath bin ſet downe already heretofore. Neuertheleſſe it is not for naught that Moſes repeateth it here againe. For wee ſee how men are wedded to their owne ſenſualitie, and how they forget themſelues in their eating and drinking, ſo that it is very hard to keepe ſuch meaſure as God bee not offended, yea euen ere wee thinke of it. I ſay that euen ſuch as are not giuen to gluttonie and drunkenneſſe, and which haue a care not onely to the health of their bodies, but alſo the ſober vſing of the things which God giueth them for their repaſte; euen they (I ſay) faile not to commit ſome fault or other. So then, let vs beare well in minde what is ſayd here, where God commaundeth men to eate and drinke in his preſence, ſpecially at their ſolemne feaſtes when they came to Ieruſalem: namely how that thereby he did warne all the faithfull to haue an eye to him in their eating and drinking when they were at home in their owne houſes.

Therefore when men ſit downe to the table, they muſt in any wiſe beware that they take not their repaſte without minding of God. For why? Firſt it is a defiling of all our meates and drinkes when wee begin not at the calling vppon his name. Of whom ſhall we receiue our foode, if we ſeeke it not at Gods hand? Then muſt wee beginne at prayer and that is as it were a dedication, to the ende that our meates may become cleane and holy vnto vs, as Saint Paul ſpeaketh of them. But yet beſides this, we muſt come againe to the thing that is ſayd here; namely that we muſt come eate as in the preſence of our God. Were it wel printed in our mindes that our God is preſent at the table ẘ vs: ſurely wee would vſe another maner of modeſtie than wee doe. And out of doubt, the putting of this leſſon in vre, that God is among vs, is a true proofe of our Chriſtianitie. But it is a wonder to ſee what an inſenſibleneſſe there is in theſe dayes among Chriſtians. For it was Gods wil that euen among the Infidels there ſhould remaine ſtil ſome confuſed tokens of that which is ſayd here. Becauſe the heathen were of opinion that their Gods were alwayes attendant at their meales; they termed their Tables holy. And why ſo? It is certeine that they vnderſtoode not the reaſon of it: for al things were become vnholy among them, by their miſuſing of all thinges againſt their kinde. Yet notwithſtanding, God to make them vnexcuſable, did leaue this marke ſtill among them, as if he ſhould ſay, whenſoeuer men doe eate and drinke, I am preſent at it, ſo as all things done there muſt needes come to account before me. Now then, if wee knowe leſſe hereof than thoſe blind wretches, what a thing is it? So much ỹ more therfore ought we to marke wel this leſſon, where God commaundeth the people of olde time to eate and drinke in his preſence, to the intent that the ſame might holde them in awe, and make them to conſider that whenſoeuer they did eate or drinke, God gouerned them and beheld their doinges. And now although we haue not the ceremonie that was vnder the law; yet let the trueth thereof haue his force among vs: which is that we neuer come to the table, without conſidering that God is preſent there, and that as he voutſafeth to haue a care to feed

1.Tim.4.5.

vs,ſo wil he alſo haue vs to take our foode with al reuerence & honeſt behauiour,like as if a childe be at the table with his father, and his father ſitting at the vpper end doe looke vpon him,ſurely he wil not vſe ſuch boldneſſe as if hee were in a corner by himſelfe. For there perchaunce hee would play the wag,and throwe his trẽchor vnder foote, and play other wanton prankes:but if hee bee at his fathers table,either hee muſt behaue himſelfe ſoberly, or elſe be rebuked for his labor. Let euery man bethinke him of this,and let it be a meane to holde vs in ſuch awe,as the meates which God giueth vs may haue their pure and lawfull vſe. That is the thing which we haue in effect to remember vppon this text.

And now he ſpeaketh lykewiſe of *mens houſeholdefolke*, ſhewing that if we intend to be merry before God, we muſt alſo haue a care to inſtruct thoſe that are committed to our charge. Marke that for one point. It is not enough for a man to liue in the feare of God himſelfe; but the father that hath children, and the maiſter that hath menſeruantes and maideſeruantes muſt leade them with him, and there muſt be one conſent in euery houſhold,ſo as both great and ſmal doe ſerue God.For it is an vntollerable leawdneſſe, when a man letteth his houſhold play the beaſts, ſo as God is not knowen among them.And what a thing is it that men ſhould looke to be ſerued of their folke,& in the meane while forget God? There is none of vs all but hee will looke to bee knowen for maiſter in his owne houſe: & in the meane while what a pride is it yͭ God ſhould bee thruſt out of doores?What a thing is it, that we which are but wretched earthwormes ſhoulde looke to haue our dueties yeelded to vs,and that God ſhould be defrauded of his? That is yͤ cauſe why it is ſayd expreſly, that men ſhoulde make merry with their houſholdes before God.

Neuertheleſſe, hereby God meant alſo to inure his people to humanitie. For we ſee a number of men that can finde in their hartes to cram themſelues til they burſt, & in the meane while paſſe not though others ſtarue: & it ſhold ſeeme yͭ a whole world were little enough to finde one of them. But our Lordes will is that there ſhould be courtiſie among men, that whẽ the maiſters haue ſuffiſed themſelues with meate and drinke, they ſhold not be nigardly in giuing foode & ſuſtenãce to ſuch as take peins in their ſeruice,but haue a care of thẽ. That is a ſecond thing which our lord ment in this text. But now let vs pas on.

After yͭ Moſes hath ſpoken of firſtfruites and offeringes;he returneth againe to Tythes, and treateth more fully of them. *Thou ſhalt not forget the Leuite* (ſaith he) *which is within thy gates. Euery third yeere ſhalt thou lay aſide the tenth of al thy fruits, and the Leuites ſhall come and gather them, and lykewiſe the widowes,the fatherleſſe, and the ſtraungers, that thy God may bleſſe thee in all the workes of thy handes*. Yeſterday I began to tell you that in old time yͤ Tythes were appointed to the Leuites, becauſe they ſerued at yͤ altar:& that God would not haue thẽ occupied about any ſuch labor, as might hinder them either from teaching yͤ law, or frõ doing of ſacrifice & ſuch other like things. For inaſmuch as God had reſerued thẽ to yͭ purpoſe,his wil was yͭ they ſhould giue themſelues wholy thereunto. That was yͤ cauſe why he exempted them from tilling of yͤ ground,and from ſuch other labors.Beſides this, there was alſo an other reaſon,which was,yͭ they ſhould haue had a portion in yͤ land which was promiſed to the linage of Abraham,for there was a whole tribe of them: but God had excluded them frõ it, & put in two tribes in ſtead of yͤ one,ſo as Ephraim and Manaſſes the ſonnes of Ioſeph made two heads. And ſo were there twelue portions of yͤ Land. But yet in ſtead of the Leuites ye ſee yͭ Ephraim ſucceeded: for Manaſſes was yͤ firſtborne of Ioſeph,& yet was he put after his brother & ſet in the ſecond place, & made inferior to him. And ſo were yͤ Leuites excluded. But yet behoued it them to haue their right.And therefore God recompenced them,& lyke as if a man ſhould giue his childe a recompence ſome other way when he would not haue him to come to yͤ parting of yͤ inheritance wͭ his brethren, euen ſo ſtoode the caſe wͭ the Leuits. Thoſe were yͤ two chiefe reaſons for yͤ tythes. Neuertheleſſe it was Gods wil yͭ the ouerplus ſhould be deuided among yͤ poore & needie.For yͤ Leuites had not ſo large a portion giuen thẽ to make them gluttons & to inrich thẽ aboue other men:but to yͤ ende they ſhould be as deacons to haue a care of Gods poore folk, and to diſtribute his almes to his people. Now we ſee what was the cauſe of the tithes.

But it is cleane cõtrariwiſe in the Popedome, where it is ſayd that by Gods Lawe the tythes are due to the Prieſtes. Although (ſay I) that their Prieſtes were ſuch as they ought to be, ſo as they were not the prieſts of Moloch and of other idols, but that they ſerued God purely: yet were it a groſſe ignorance to imagin that tithing were an euerlaſting order ſet downe for all nations to obſerue. Againe it was a flat fraud, in that the Prieſtes being ouerruled by couetouſneſſe, did beare men in hand that the tythes belonged to them by Gods lawe. For the contrarie is well knowen. And their chalendging of that, was at ſuch time as the whole world was corrupted, and men were vtterly ignorant of the meaning of the holy ſcripture. For ſince the time that Chriſtianitie hath begunne to floriſh,and that there hath bin greater ſoundneſſe of iudgement than was before, it hath neuer bin ſaid that Tythes are due to the Shepheardes,nor to thoſe which haue the ſpiritual gouernmẽt of yͤ Church: but it hath bin alwayes orderly obſerued,that Princes & Lords haue taken the Tenthes:yea & in ſome places and coũtries which are leſſe fruitful,they haue taken but the Thirtithes or at leaſtwiſe but yͤ Twentithes: whereas in other places where the landes are more fruitfull, & where there is greater abundance thã is ordinarily in other countries, they haue taken the tenthes.Hereupon the prieſtes and Cleargymen of yͤ Popedome,haue taken occaſion to finger all things, & to vſurp vppon all mẽ moſt wickedly. For they haue thũdered out their excõmunicatiõs againſt ſuch as would not graũt thẽ their robberie, ſo as mẽ were driuẽ to

let them

them haue their owne willes. And then fell they together by the eares among themſelues lyke a ſort of cutredogges about a bone. The Monkes ſayd, they bee ours: the Prieſtes ſayd they were theirs: and to bee ſhorte, there was nothing but vtter diſorder among them.

Yet notwithſtanding, wee muſt returne againe to that which was touched yeſterday, and which I am about to rehearſe againe now preſently: which is, that inaſmuch as the ſacrificing Prieſtes were found at the common charges of the people, in the time of the olde Lawe, it is good reaſon that the preachers of the Goſpell ſhoulde bee mainteined lykewiſe at this 1.Cor.9.14. day, as Saint Paul ſpeaketh thereof, howbeit not for his owne aduauntage ſake, but to the intent there ſhould not bee ſo great vnthankfulneſſe among thoſe which name thẽſelues Chriſtians, as to defraud thoſe of their bodily liuing, which preach to them the word of lyfe, & bring them the ſpirituall foode of their ſoules. The thing it ſelfe then remaineth ſtill: but that it ſhould be taken vp in this kinde or in that kinde, that is not ſo: it is not ſo ſayd by Gods Lawe, and therefore what ſhall become of Tythes? Let the poſſeſſion continue ſtill, and let the vſe of them be amended. That is to ſay, becauſe mẽ ſee euidently that Tythes haue bin wrongfully vſurped, and that the parties which holde them in their handes haue wreſted them by ſuperſtition: let vs now conſider the right vſe of them. And to ſay the trueth, looke how many Prieſtes there are in the Popedome, ſo many theeues are there. I ſay not this according to the holy ſcripture, but according to their own Canons, wherby they bee all excommunicated for theeues & robbers. For their Canons commaund them to part their Church goods in ſuch ſorte, as the poore haue one fourth parte of them, and ſtrangers another fourth part. To be ſhort, the one halfe of the Church goods ought to be beſtowed in almes vppon the poore and vpon ſtraungers. Who ſayes this? Not Gods word, (for the Papiſts make none account of that) but their owne Canons haue ſo decreed. Ye ſee then how al the Byſhops, Chanons, Pryors, and Abbots in the Popedome are excommunicated euerychone from the higheſt to the loweſt, euen by their owne Canons: ſo as there is euery where moſt horrible confuſion among them, I meane euen according to their owne orders. But it is not enough for vs to condemne them: wee muſt alſo haue an eye to our ſelues, and ſee that the right vſe of the thinges which haue bin dedicated to God, bee ſet vp againe: And that where any abuſe hath beene, the ſame bee redreſſed. And how may that bee? Wee ſee it was Gods will that the poore ſhould bee found and mainteined by a part of the tythes, that is to ſay of the offeringes which were made in thoſe dayes. After the ſame maner muſt wee come to the vſe of Gods Lawe at this day: and foraſmuch as Tenthes or Twentithes were left euen in old time to Princes and chiefe Lordes, and that the ſame order was ſet downe for the benefite of the Church; Let vs conſider how it may bee imployed to the benefite of the Church at this day. It is not meant that ſuch as beare the name of Prelates and Paſtors ſhoulde glutte themſelues with them: nor that when they haue ſotted themſelues in their pleaſures and delights and ſpent more than needeth in prodigalitie and ydle expenſes, they ſhoulde haue wherewith to maintaine whoredome and other ſtumblingblockes, as wee ſee that the Churchgoods are commonly waſted in ſuch thinges. For we knowe that ſuch doings are againſt the order of nature, and therefore can in no wiſe be iuſtified by Gods word. What is to be done then? Let the poſſeſſion remaine quietly, and in the meane while let men returne them to their right vſe. Let thẽ be mainteined whome God hath commaunded to be maintayned. And let the thinges be continued which are requiſite for the well ordering of the Church. Moreouer, Let the poore and needy be pityed; Let men knowe them to be the takers vp of Gods rents; and that it is an acceptable kinde of ſacrifice Hebr.13.16 vnto him when ſuch are releeued as ought to be ſuccored. After that maner wee may iuſtly condemne the Papiſtes at this day, yea and take them for Churchrobbers and theeues, by reaſon of their wrongfull chalendging of the thinges to themſelues which belong not to thẽ. And wee on our ſide ſhall not bee condemned for the lyke, if wee runne backe to Gods will, and diſpoſe the Church goods in ſuch wiſe, as the poore bee not defrauded of them, but that ſuch almesdeedes be done with them, as the neceſſitie of thoſe bee relieued whome God commaundeth vs to ſuccour, and whom he offereth vs as in his owne ſtead, according to this ſaying of his; that looke whatſoeuer wee doe to the poore, hee taketh it as done to himſelfe. Sith it is ſo, let vs folow that rule. For we ſee how Matt.6.4 & 25.40. this leſſon is greatly for our behoof nowadayes, and how we may put the ſame in vre.

Let vs marke well then, that it is not onely ſayd ẏ the Leuites ſhal come and gather vp their right; but alſo it is added, ẏ the widowes, the fatherleſſe & the ſtrangers ſhalbe ſuſteined lykewiſe. Yea verily: Albeit that the ſtrangers were not ſome times of the body of ẏ Iſraelites, nor of their religion: yet was it Gods will ẏ they ſhould be pityed. Not to nouriſh any filth & vncleanes thereby; (for if folke might haue reſorted thither from all nations, and haue dwelled there, it had bin the next way to haue turned the people away vnto wickedneſſe:) but it ſerued for trauellers, & for ſuch as had intercourſe of marchandiſe with them, whome Gods will was to haue ſuccored when they fel into any aduerſitie. Now ſeeing that the Iſraelites were to relieue thoſe that were not ſo neere neighbors vnto them: what ought wee to doe to our brethren, and to ſuch as are all of one ſelfeſame faith and Religion with vs? If we ſhake thẽ off & ſuffer them to pine away for pouertie, how greatly ſhall wee bee to blame, ſeeing that God cõmendeth vnto vs ẏ poore ſtrangers, yea euẽ which haue no acquaintance ẇ vs in the ſeruing of the true God?

But howſoeuer ẏ caſe ſtand, let vs remember in generall, that of the goods which were conſecrated in thoſe dayes vnto God, part was to be imployed not onely vppon the Prieſtes and Leuites, but alſo vpon the reliefe of the poore, ſo as it behoued them to haue a part with the prieſtes ſo farre foorth as the tenthes woulde yeelde. What is to be done then nowadays? Foraſmuch as the Ceremonie of bringing of our Freewill offeringes to a place choſen for that purpoſe is done away, if wee intend to offer ſuch ſacrifices as may bee acceptable to G O D, euery of vs muſt doe almesdeedes according to his abilitie, and thinke thus with himſelfe: Go too, my God hath giuen mee chaunge of meates, I eate one kinde of porredge to day and another kinde to morrowe, and yet might I content my ſelfe all my lyfe long with bread and water. But God of his bounteouſneſſe giueth mee moreouer what meates ſoeuer I lyke of beſt, yea and chaunge of them alſo; ſo as if I bee weary of one meate, I may take another according to my abilitie. Seeing then that he dealeth ſo with me, what an vnthankfulneſſe is it for mee to deſpiſe him that ſheweth himſelfe ſo liberall towardes mee? True it is that our ſo dooing is neither here Iob.35.6. Psal.16.2. nor there (as they ſay,) in reſpect of God: the ſeruice that wee doe him doth neither amend him nor appaire him: but he giueth vs the poore among vs, to bee ſuccored at our handes, to the ende that none of vs ſhould ſo glutte himſelfe by cramming his owne bellie, as to deſpiſe others that are in neceſſitie, but that wee ſhoulde bee well aduiſed to make an offering vnto God of the thinges that he hath put into our handes, and that the ſame might become holy by that meanes. Not that wee ſhould pay it as a raunſome to God: but that the acknowledgement which we make vnto him in hauing compaſſion vppon our poore needy brethren, is as though our Lord ſhould allow of our eating and drinking, ſaying thus: Now is all lawfull for you, I lyke well of it, I giue it vnto you; and that is becauſe yee honor mee in dooing almesdeedes to ſuch as are in pouertie. Thus yee ſee what euery man hath to beare in minde as in his owne peculyar and priuate behalfe.

Howbeit, for common orders ſake, becauſe there are reuenewes appointed to the Church, as I haue touched afore: let vs beware that they bee not abuſed by beeing deuowred I wote not how, or that they be not miſſpent about worldly matters. For men are alwayes giuen to cantle out the poore folkes morſels as ſhort as can be, and it ſeemeth to them that whatſoeuer is beſtowed in hoſpitalitie, is loſt. O (ſay they) we muſt locke vp, wee muſt ſpare, wee muſt play the good husbandes: but curſed bee that good husbandrie which regardeth not the welbeſtowing of a mans goods. Therefore let vs haue an eye to the diſpoſing of the thinges which G O D offereth vnto vs, and whereas there haue bin abuſe and ſuperſtition, let vs vnderſtand that all ought to bee brought backe again to their right vſe: and that although the ceremonies continue not ſtill; yet notwithſtanding G O D will not bee mocked: but that this principle muſt alwayes ſtand in force, namely, that whatſoeuer hath bin dedicated to G O D, muſt bee diſtributed accordingly. Now there was alſo a tything of the tythes, whereof I cannot but ſay ſomewhat. For after that the generall tythes were taken vp, the high prieſtes tooke their tenthes thereof, and afterward layd out a tenth part for the poore. Foraſmuch as this third tything was not intended by God; but proceeded of the couetouſneſſe of the Leuites who could haue found in their heartes to haue raked all to themſelues: it was meete that they ſhoulde bee reſtreined. And after the ſame maner, the Popes Canons that I ſpake of, were made of purpoſe becauſe men ſawe the Church goods deuowred by the Prieſtes, by reaſon whereof it behooued them to bee bridled. The tythes therefore were parted in ſuch ſorte, as the poore might haue their portion, and not be defrauded of the right that was aſſigned vnto them. But (as I ſayd) wee neede not as now to ſtand ſifting of theſe thinges by percelmeale: it is enough for vs that wee haue the meaning of the Lawe, and that wee knowe wherein the abuſe reſted, to the ende wee may reteine the right vſe of them ſtill.

Now it is ſayd conſequently, *That the Lorde thy God may bleſſe thee in all the workes of thy handes.* In this text wee haue two things to marke. The one is that all our Labour would bee to no purpoſe, if God of his meere grace did not proſper it. Let that ſerue for one poynt. Another is, that if wee will haue God to further vs, wee muſt honor him with the goods which hee giueth vs, by vſing them in ſuch wiſe as he commaundeth vs. For if hee be defrawded of his right, hee can ſoone bereaue vs of his bleſſing, ſo as wee ſhall bee diſpurueied and ſtript out of all thinges; and when wee thinke our ſelues to haue abundance of all thinges at will, hee will make it to vaniſh away to leſſe than nothing. Thoſe bee the two thinges which wee haue to beare in minde. As touching the firſt, let vs beare in minde that men are commaunded to Psal.128.2. trauell for their liuing, and that ſuch as doe take paynes ſhall be maintained by their labor. But yet muſt not men ſay, It is mine owne policie, it is the labor of mine owne handes that hath gotten me this or that, as wee haue ſeene in the eight chapter, where God fed his people fortie Deut.8.3. yeeres with Manna, to make them to knowe that when they were come into ẏ land of Chanaan, albeit that they tilled the ground, gathered the grapes, and reaped downe the corne; yet they ſhould not imagin that their liuing proceeded from elſewhere than from Gods meere goodneſſe who bleſſed them. And that is the Psa.127.1.2 cauſe why it is ſayd in the pſalme, that wee may well riſe early and goe to bed late, and eate our bread with ſorow; & yet notwithſtanding al ſhall goe to decay, and God ſhall holde vs vnder foot, vntill wee be ſure of his bleſſing.

True it is that God doth oftentimes multiply the goods of the wicked, & of ſuch as liue altogether by extortiō, deceit & theeuery: we ſee ẏ ſuch kinde of men may well inrich themſelues, and God beareth with ſuch thinges to blinde their eyes the more with their riches, that they may bee as a poyſon to them, and as a baite to choke them withall. For inaſmuch as they imagine that they can inrich themſelues whether God will or no: he letteth them doe ſo, yea and he giueth them riches as if hee ſhoulde ſay, Gather till yee burſt: yet ſhall it not turne to your ſuſtenance, but it ſhalbe as a poyſon to kill you, as I ſaid afore. For when men inrich themſelues after that faſhion by wicked practiſes, wee ſee what comes of it in the ende. Gods wrath lighteth vppon them, and they be tormented all their life long: and when they looke to inioy the goods that they haue gathered together, Gods curſe doth ſo vtter it ſelfe vpon them, that they cannot do themſelues any good with them: inſomuch that although they haue their garners & ſtorehouſes full fraught, and their bagges full of mony; yet doth God ſende them diſeaſes or ſuch other afflictions, by which he holdeth them as it were vpon ỹ torture or racke; as if he ſhould ſay: What haſt thou done thou wretched creature? Thou haſt offended mee all the time of thy life, and yet haſt thou borne thy ſelfe in hande that all ſhoulde goe well with thee if thou mighteſt heape vp riches ynowe. But thou muſt now be made to knowe, that all thy raking vp of the riches which thou canſt not inioy, will ſtand thee in no ſteede. Thus yee ſee what reward they haue which will needes inrich themſelues as it were in deſpite of God: inſomuch that all their ſcrapings to themſelues on all hands by vnlawfull meanes, are but as cordes to ſnare their children withall, as experience ſheweth. And therefore let vs be throughly perſwaded in our ſelues, that if we will proſper, the onely bleſſing of God muſt ſuffice vs though wee haue not all things at wil. When we haue taken neuer ſo much paines, yet muſt we not truſt in the ſtrength of our owne hands, nor bee ſo blinded with fonde preſumption as to ſay, I am an able man, I am politike & can take paines. But let euerie man referre himſelfe to God, knowing that it is he which giueth him ſuſtenance. And although I take neuer ſo much paines to get my liuing: yet muſt I haue it at his hand, and when I haue asked my ordinarie breade to day, I muſt doe the like to morrow too, and yeeld my ſelfe to the wil of him that giueth it mee. Thus much concerning the firſt point, where mentiõ is made of Gods bleſſing of the workes of mens hands. And therewithall let vs call to minde what hath beene declared therof more at large heretofore, where our Lorde willeth men to conſider how it is onely hee that beareth the ſway in making our labours to proſper. Let that ſerue for one point.

And nowe let vs come to the ſeconde point: which is, that if wee deſire to bee partakers of Gods bleſſing, we muſt firſt yeeld him his right: for if he be defrauded of it, he wil reuenge it vpon vs. Mal.3.8.& 10. And that is the cauſe why hee ſaith by his Prophet, Do ye complaine that ye be afflicted? Conſider the cauſe, ſaith hee. Yee haue defrauded mee. Whereof? Of my Tythes, Firſtfruites, and all other thinges. Yee beare your ſelues in hande that yee increaſe your ſelues greatly by robbing of mee, and that ye gaine much by defrauding mee of my right. The people of Iſrael were ſo witleſſe, that they ſtole the tythes; or if they tythed, they did it but by halues: and likewiſe of their firſtfruits, in ſteede of making good fulſome ſheaues and bundels vnto God, they gelded them and made them verie thinne and lanke: and yet theſe miſerable wretches bare themſelues in hande that they benefited themſelues greatly by laying vp ſome little quantitie more than they ought to haue done. Contrariwiſe our Lorde ſaieth vnto them: Goe to ſirs, ſhoulde yee haue either tithes, or firſtfruites, or any croppe at all, but by my bleſſing? And think ye that your filching away of any of ỹ things that belong to me, ſhall boote you? No no: ye muſt needes be waſted and dye for hunger by reaſon of your vnthankfulneſſe. Therefore let vs learne to yeelde God the things which he reſerueth to himſelfe: and then will hee bleſſe vs. As howe? When we bee to be ſuſtained, the firſtfruits that God requireth of vs, are that we ſhould waite vpon him, and ſue to his meere gracious goodneſſe for all thinges requiſite to the maintenance of this flightfull life. And afterward when he hath giuen vs whereon to liue, we muſt vſe the ſame ſoberly, that our life being ruled after that faſhion, may be as another ſacrifice to him, and conſequently that we giue our neighbours part with vs. Let ſuch as haue wherewith imparte to the poore that want: and let euerie man beware that he filch away none other mens goods, and let vs bee contented with our competent foode and raiment as God liſteth to beſtowe vpõ vs: and in ſo doing we ſhalbe bleſſed at his hand. But what? Our diſtruſtfulneſſe, our exceſſe, and our vnſatiable luſts cauſe God to withdrawe his bleſſing from vs, and that we are, as it were dried vp. Alſo it is ſeene that in ſteade of going forwarde we goe backeward: and what doe wee thereupon? Such as haue plentie can no skil to vſe it according to Gods ordinance, and to bee thankfull to him for the abundance which hee ſendeth them, but they woulde ſtill haue more & more. O ſay they, this is not ynough for me, & though it be ynough for me, yet it is not inough for my children. And ſo wee fall to gathering of more & more. But to conſider how we come by it, and whether it bee lawfull before God or no, we neuer hearken after it: we goe to it by hooke and by crooke, and wee neuer thinke that wee ſhall come to a reckening for it before God. To this point (I ſay) are we come nowadayes. And therefore it is no wonder though wee feele no bleſſing of God, but that wee bee faine to be ſet beſides it. Againe we may ſee hereby how colde and faint our prayers are: for our asking of our daily breade at Gods hand is but from the teeth outwarde: and therefore it is good reaſon that wee ſhoulde receiue as skant and ſlender frute as appeareth that we do. Wherfore let vs mark, that if wee intende to feele Gods bleſſing, and that hee ſhould continue the ſame towardes vs; wee muſt offer vp our ſelues in ſacrifice, and all that euer hee giueth vs, ſo as all may be wholly dedicated vnto him. And when wee ſee the vſe that he alloweth of, let euery of vs behaue himſelfe thereafter, that God may be glorified by vs as his intent is to be.

Nowe let vs kneele downe in the preſence of our good God with acknowledgement of our faultes, praying him to graunt vs the grace to come to him with humilitie, ſorie for prouoking him ſo many wayes as wee doe without ceaſing; and to vouchſafe ſo to burie our offences, as wee preace into the preſence of his maieſtie by meanes of our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt, to bee guided by his holy ſpirit, and to be confirmed more and more in this; that hee holdeth and auoweth vs for his children. That it may pleaſe him to graunt this grace, not onely to vs but alſo to all people and Nations of the earth &c.

On Fryday the xxv. of October. 1555.

The XCiij. Sermon which is the firſt vpon the fifteenth Chapter.

AT the terme of ſeuen yeares thou ſhalt make a yeare of Freedome.

2 And the maner of the freedome ſhal be after this ſort. Euerie creditor ſhall releaſe the debt of his hande which he hath lent vnto his neighbour, and he ſhall not conſtreine his neighbour nor his brother: for it is called the yeare of the Lords releaſe.

3 Thou maiſt compell a ſtraunger, but as for thy brother, forgiue him.

4 In any wiſe let there bee no poore bodie among you: for the Lorde will bleſſe thee in the Lande which the Lorde thy God giueth thee for an heritage to poſſeſſe,

5 Yea if thou obey the voice of the Lord thy God in keeping and performing all his commaundements which I commaunde thee this day.

6 For the Lord thy God will bleſſe thee, as he hath promiſed, ſo as thou ſhalt lende vnto manie folke, and not borrow of any. Thou ſhalt reigne ouer many Nations, and they ſhall not reigne ouer thee.

WE haue here a Lawe for the releaſing of ſuch as were indetted. Now wee knowe that GOD gouerned ẏ Iewes according to their owne rudenes, inſomuch that he graunted them a tolleration in many thinges becauſe they were a people harde to bee ruled. Yet notwithſtanding hee ceaſed not by all manner of meanes to allure them to gentleneſſe, to the ende that no man ſhoulde greeue his neighbour beyonde meaſure, nor vſe too extreme rigour, nor deale cruelly one with another. That is the marke which the Lawe ſhooteth at which I haue read heere preſently; ſo as yee muſt vnderſtande *that it was not Lawfull for them to preſſe any man with his debts in the ſeuenth yeare.* And it hath beene thought that in this place Moſes commaunded the cleere forgiuing of all debtes the ſeuenth yeare. But in that ſuppoſall is no reaſon at all. For if debtes had beene quite and cleane releaſed: much more reaſon had it beene that ſuch perſons as had yeelded themſelues into bondage for the diſcharge of their debtes, ſhoulde haue beene releaſed: for we knowe that the freedome of mens perſons is much more acceptable, than the releaſing of a debte of money. Muſt a poore man bee helde as a ſlaue and make it good with his bodie becauſe hee hath not wherewith to paye that hee oweth: and ſhall hee bee releaſed which keepeth the money ſtill in his purſe, or elſe vſeth ſome odde by ſhift, ſo as hee abydeth freely at home in his owne houſe? That were no vpright dealing. But the caſe ſtoode ſo among the Iewes, that ſuch as yeelded themſelues into bondage for the diſcharge of their debtes, were not ſet at libertie againe till the yeare of Iubilie which was the fiftith yeare. Therefore it followeth that here is not meant the cleare releaſe of all debtes. For that had beene the way to haue procured more diſorder, rather than to haue ſet downe a rule of courtiſie and gentleneſſe. For no man woulde euer haue lent any mony the ſixth yeare. Againe, men woulde haue

Leuit.25.38 39.

haue beene the more haſtie in calling for their dettes, ſo as their detters ſhoulde haue beene much leſſe priuiledged than if there had beene no releaſe at all. Alſo there are other reaſons which are verie ſufficient; inſomuch that euery man ſhoulde haue beene driuen to ſell his owne houſe and lande. To bee ſhort, it is not to be doubted but that Gods intent here, was to commaunde no more but that the ſeuenth yeare ſhoulde be priuiledged. And hereby it appeareth that ſuch as haue interpreted the *ſeuenth yeares compaſſe* to be the *ſeuenth yeares ende*, haue beene too groſly ouerſeene. For the making of this law was in reſpect that the ſeuenth yeare ſhoulde be a yeare of ſolemne reſt. Like as God had reſerued one day in euerie weeke to bee holy to himſelfe: ſo alſo was it his will that euery ſeuenth yeare ſhoulde be a high ſolemnitie, ſo as the grounde ſhoulde not bee tilled that yeare. The Lande of Iurie was batling ynough to haue borne all yeares, that is to ſay, men might haue tilled and ſowed the grounde euerie yeare ſauing the ſeuenth yeare. And that yeare was ſpared, not for feare leaſt men ſhoulde haue worne away the heart of the ſoyle too neere: but to the ende that the people ſhoulde inure themſelues continually to the day of reſt, becauſe it conteyned the chiefe point of the Law, that is to wit, that men ought to gather their wittes to them, to giue themſelues wholly to the minding of Gods benefites, whereby it is ſhewed them that they ſhoulde renounce themſelues, and referre themſelues wholly to his holy ſpirite, to bee ſo gouerned by him, as that their affections and thoughts may no more ouermaſter them. And indeede, becauſe the Iewes did breake the day of reſt, and the Prophetes coulde not winne them to yeelde to that which was commaunded them: our Lorde ſaith that hee woulde puniſh them in ſuch ſorte, that ſith they woulde not, the Lande ſhould take reſt for them. Foraſmuch as you (ſaieth he) will not keepe the Saboth dayes accordingly as I haue ordeyned in my Lawe: I will ſhortly finde out one that ſhall obſerue my Lawe, and that ſhall be the Lande it ſelfe. For ye ſhalbe driuen out of it, and none ſhall be left in it to manure it; all the Sabothes that haue beene broken muſt be put into a reckening, that they may bee recompenſed againe. Threeſcore and tenne yeares were the people baniſhed out of it. And looke howe many commaundementes there are, ſo many tokens were there continually of the ſolemne reſtingtimes. What reſtingtimes? Not euerie ſeuenth day, or euery ſeuenth yeare onely: but for the ſpace of ſeuentie yeares together was the Lande to take reſt. Yee ſee then that this ſeuenth yeare was a confirmation of the fourth commaundement of the lawe, that is to wit, of keeping holy the ſeuenth day. For in that yeare (as I ſaid) men tilled not the ground. And why? To the ende that folke ſhoulde haue the better leaſure to giue themſelues to the ſeruing of God, and be not ſo much letted by their buſines, as indeed they had the more libertie to minde this leſſon, and to bee well inſtructed in the doctrine of God. And for the ſame cauſe alſo was it commaunded, that the booke of the Lawe ſhoulde bee read openly euerie ſeuenth yeare at the feaſt of Tabernacles, as wee ſhall ſee hereafter in the one and thirtith Chapter.

Leuit.26.34 38.& Ier. 17.27.& Ezec.20.13

Nowe that we haue Gods meaning, which is that his ordeining of the ſeuenth yeare was to the end that the people ſhould haue ſome eaſement: let vs aſſure our ſelues that the ſaboth day was not inioyned without cauſe. Not onely to giue men to vnderſtand that our Lorde had forbidden that any man ſhould be ſued for his dets that yeare (for that was likewiſe done euerie weeke): but alſo to auow the thing which we ſee obiected in the eight and fiftith of Eſay, againſt ſuch as through hypocriſie obſerued the feaſte, but yet ceaſed not any whit the more to ſue for their dettes. Verily I am much beholden to you, ſaith the Lorde: for yee ſay yee haue faſted, and obſerued my Ceremonies. But yet is all that euer yee haue done, nothing worth: for the verie ſubſtance of it wanteth; whereas yee ſhould be pitifull to your neighbours, yee do nothing elſe but fleece them and perſecute them to the vttermoſt. And ſurely that is a goodly obſeruing of the Saboth. Therfore doe I renounce you, and I diſauow all your doings, ſaieth the Lord.

Eſa.58.3

So then, we haue here the end of the Law that is ſet downe here, and alſo the thing which the ſame cōmaundeth. For like as God ment not that men ſhoulde pleade the ſeuenth day, to the end they might be the better drawen to obſerue that feaſt, which was to gather men to God, and to cauſe them to reſt in him: ſo ment he alſo cōcerning the ſeuenth yeare: namely that the Iewes ſhoulde giue themſelues to vpright dealing: inſomuch that if it were not lawfull to gather the fruites of the earth, and that the fruites which grewe without tilth were common, ſo as the poore which had no poſſeſſions were partakers of them: it was much more reaſon that if a man were ouerpinched, he ſhold not be purſued with rigour of Lawe. But in the yeare of Iubyle, which was euery fiftith yeare; there was a greater freedome, and ſuch a one as extended much further. For if a man were in bondage, hee was then made free, vnleſſe it were that hee liked ſo well of his maſter, that he bound himſelfe to bee his ſlaue for euer as long as he liued. Afterward, all poſſeſſions returned home againe. True it is that the houſes in Cities could not reuert again, vnleſſe yͤ ſellers of them redeemed them within a yeare. But as for Farmes, and other poſſeſſions in the countrie; the purchacer was to conuey them backe againe at the fiftith yeare, ſo as they returned home againe to their former owners. And according to the neerenes or farneſſe of the yeare of Iubyle, men ſold their poſſeſſions the dearer or the cheaper: inſomuch that the lands ſo purchaſed were releaſed againe within thirtie, twentie, or ten years after the purchaſing of thē. And of this dealing there was one ſpecial reaſon; which was yͤ God hauing diuided yͤ Land of Canaan by lot, intēded to haue it continue in

Leuit.25.6.

Leui.25.38

Leuit.25. 29.30.

that order for euer, to the ende that mens poſſeſſions ſhould not be intermingled together.

And hee ſaieth expreſly, Other Nations poſſeſſe their landes in feeſimple: but I holde Leuit.25.23 you as my farmours. I will not haue you to be as owners, ſo as yee might ſay this is mine: neither ſhall yee bee as purchaſers of the Lande at my hande; yee ſhal haue as it were but a ſoiourning place in it for a time, and yee ſhall bee but as a Farmer vnder a maſter. Loe heere the cauſe why our Lordes will was that the poſſeſſions ſhoulde returne to the firſt owners againe. But as for that which is ſpoken heere, concerneth but the ſeuenth yeare, at which time euerie man ought to bee releaſed, and no man ought to ſew his detters, yet euerie man ought to reteyne his owne right neuertheleſſe ſtill. For Gods meaning was not that hee which had lent money ſhould loſe it, ſo as hee ſhoulde haue no meanes to recouer his dette againe: (for ſo ſhoulde one man haue robbed another of his ſubſtance; and the vntruſtie merchant that had waſted his goods in riot and exceſſe at his eaſe without care, ſhoulde haue laughed his creditor to ſcorne as ſoone as the ſeuenth yeare were come, which had beene a greate diſorder, and woulde haue cauſed vnthrifts to haue become the worſe): but Gods intent was onely that there ſhoulde a kinde of reſpit bee giuen, that the poorer ſort might not be pinched out of meaſure.

But nowe let vs returne to that which is ſet downe in the texte. *In the ſeuenth yeare there ſhall bee a Forgiuing*, that is to ſay, a forbearing or a giuing of further reſpite. Hee meaneth not that there ſhoulde bee a cleare acquitall or releaſing for euer: but onely that hee which had lent money, ſhoulde not challendge his dette out of hande, nor bee ſo greedie and haſtie as to ſeeke it by ſute of Lawe that yeare. And hee ſpeaketh expreſly of the ende of the yeare, to ſhewe that this forbearing or reſpitting ſhoulde not onely bee at the beginning of the yeare, but euen throughout to the ſeuenth yeares ende. And here God meant to bounde his Lawe according to the circumſtance: that is to ſaye, becauſe the ſeuenth yeare was a kinde of reſting time as well as the ſeuenth day was; therefore our Lordes will was that the ſame ſhoulde bee obſerued. Therefore ſaieth hee, *at the terme:* howebeit not to ſignifie the ende of the yeare, but to betoken the continuance of the time appointed by the Lawe. *You ſhall giue a reſpit* ſaieth hee, and the manner thereof ſhall bee thus: If any man owe thee aught, thou ſhalt not conſtraine him, at leaſtwiſe for the *dette of thy hande*. As if hee had ſaide, thou ſhalt not take the thing by force, but ſhalt rather forbeare the dette. And why ſo? For this forbearing commeth ſpecially of God: that is to ſaye, God reſerueth that yeare ſpecially to himſelfe, and hee will haue it openly proclaimed as it was indeede, and he will haue the order thereof to be kept.

Hee addeth, *In any wiſe let there bee no poore bodie among you*. This ſpeech is ſomewhat darke, becauſe the firſt worde that Moſes vſeth, ſignifieth *Nothing*, or *it is not at all*: and ſometimes when it is ioyned with another worde, (as it is in this place,) it betokeneth *except that*, or *ſauing that*. And for that cauſe ſome men vnderſtande that our Lorde ſetteth downe an exception heere, namely ſo there were no poore folkes. For if the detters were riche, they might alwayes bee well contented to pay. But the poorer ſort were to bee borne with, and to haue ſome eaſement; the vexing of whō after ẏ ſort, was a kind of ſucking of their bloud, and a drawing of the marrowe out of their bones. Againe the ſeuenth yeares reſpit was as a meane for them to gather ſomewhat towardes their diſcharge.

Moreouer there was the more cauſe why the poore ſhould bee borne withal the ſeuenth yere, the ground was not tilled that yeare, and therefore Corne might become the dearer by reaſon that there was no gathering of any thing that yere. For it was not with them in thoſe dayes as it is with vs in theſe dayes, that when one peece of grounde lay fallowe, as they ſay, another peece was with corne, ſo as they might haue a croppe euerie yeare one after another wherewith to finde themſelues. In the Lande of Iewrie they gathered not ſo much as one kernell of wheate, Otes, or other kinde of graine in the ſeuenth yeare, neither was it lawfull for them to till the grounde that yeare: by reaſon whereof the poorer ſort had much adoe to get their liuing by their labour and trauell. That was the cauſe why ſome haue taken it to bee as an exception when our Lorde ſaide, if peraduenture you haue no poore among you. Well may yee demaunde your dets of ſuch as are welthie and well able to pay; but beware that ye pinch not your neighbours that are behinde hande. Otherſome take it thus; *So as there bee no poore among you*; that is to ſay, deale in ſuch wiſe as no man bee brought vnder foote by you, but that the poore and meaner ſort may liue with the rich: and let no man bee ſo greedily minded as to put thinges out of order by his exceſſe, like the great fiſhes that eat vp the ſmaller fiſhes: Take heede that yee vſe no ſuch cruelneſſe towardes your neighbours. Alſo a man might take the ſaid word as betokening *Nothing*; as though our Lorde had ſpoken after our common manner and ſaide, No, no, there muſt bee no poore among you. But as for the meaning of the Lawe, it is certaine ynough to vs, which thing ought to ſuffice vs, and it is all that wee ſhoulde looke for.

Therefore let vs vnderſtand that our Lordes intent was to ſay here in fewe wordes, that men ought to behaue thẽſelues ſo friendly, as no man were oppreſſed, and that although it lie not in men to let that there ſhould not bee both poore and rich among them: yet they ſhould ſo deale as the poorer ſort were not troden vnder foote. For wee ſee that ſuch as are welthie do lay their ſnares, and catch whatſoeuer they can come by, ſo as the poorer ſorte dare not come neere thẽ:

and if they get but the value of a pinne at their hands, they fleece them of it by and by againe. Therefore it was our Lordes intent to prouide a remedie for that miſchiefe among his people. Nowe remaineth that wee apply this matter to our owne behoofe. True it is that this order belonged peculiarly to the Iewes: but yet doth it concerne vs alſo: namely that we ſhoulde not vexe them out of meaſure, which are indetted vnto vs. And it may well bee among thoſe that beare the name of Chriſtians, that they wil not goe to lawe vppon the Sabboth day: and the reaſon is, that vpon that day euery man ought to haue leaſure to withdrawe himſelfe to Godwarde, to minde his workes, that wee may all of vs be prouoked to ſerue and honour him. For, all our life long wee ought to giue our ſelues to praying and ſupplication. Neuertheleſſe cōmon meetings are made that men may heare the cōmon doctrine of ſaluation, and it is good reaſon that on the Sabboth day all other cares and thoughts ſhould be laide aſide. Notwithſtanding let vs take good heede that wee keepe not the ſingle Ceremony onely, but alſo the intent of God therewithall, which is, that our neighbours be not ſo vexed by vs, as they may haue occaſion to deſpiſe God, and to be caſt into deſpaire. For our Lorde will haue vs giue ſuch reſpit as the poore may not bee ouer grieued. Wee ſee howe he ſaith in other places, that wee muſt not take a
Exod.22.25 27. poore mans mattres from vnder him: As for example, when a man hath broken payment, if hee bring his bedde to lay to gage, our Lorde forbiddeth the taking thereof, and likewiſe the taking of a poore mans rayment which hee hath neede of to weare. For if he be a cold (ſaith he) and thou keepeſt his bed from him, although hee ſpeake neuer a worde, yet ſhall his ſides curſe thee, becauſe thou beeſt ſo hardhearted that thou haſt no pitie of him when thou ſeeſt him afflicted in his bodie. And albeit that the poore man be patient in his aduerſitie, yet doeth God in heauen conſider thy crueltie, and in the ende he will reuenge it. Contrariwiſe he that giueth his poore neighbour his gage againe, and is ſo pitifull towards him that he cannot find in his heart to ſee him indure neceſſitie: although the partie ſo releeued do play the Churle, and regarde not the good that hath bin done vnto him: yet ſhall hee
Deut.24.12 haue his good deede to anſwere for him before me, ſaith the Lord.

Yee ſee then that we muſt be kindharted both generally and particularly as time requireth. As how? If there come a yeare of dearth, many men will ſeeke to inrich themſelues by it, and they beare themſelues in hande, that it is a time euen for their owne tooth: and it is a thing too much vſed nowadayes, as it hath bin at all times heretofore: and woulde God we coulde forget it. But we ſhal ſee a number that lye in waite like skouts or ſpies, and if there come a deare yeare, O ſay they, this ſerues well to make me rich; when as in verie deede it is the time wherein they ſhould open their bowels to haue compaſſion of ſuch as are in neceſſitie. Wee ſee that poore folke haue much ado to maintaine themſelues though they be ſuccoured: yea and ſuch as heretofore haue beene able to liue in their owne houſes without being pinched ouer neere, are nowe driuen to borrow. And why is that? They haue their ordinarie earnings as before: but corne and wine are at ſuch exceſſiue prices, that they be not able to buy them; euery man ſhrinkes away and holdes himſelf ſhort. And as for the rich man that hath wherewith to liue, his minde is vppon nothing elſe but howe he may inrich himſelfe, O (ſaieth he) this is a fatte yeare for mee, for it is a leane yeare for all others. Alas, heere is a wretched regarde. So then let vs learne that our Lordes meaning by this Lawe is not that we ſhould forbeare to releeue ſuch as are (as yee woulde ſay) windſhaken already: but that if we ſee a man that hath much ado to maintaine himſelf, we ſhould not runne vpon him to ouerthrowe him altogether. As howe? If I ſee a man a little behinde hand, and I haue a mind to ſome corneegrounde or vyneyard of his; loe hee is in fitte caſe for my purpoſe: and if I take him at the vantage, hee is vndone by it, & it is vnpoſſible for him to ſcape vtter ruine. And when a man hauing that regard to ſelfeprofite, indeuoureth to catch away the poore mans poſſeſſions; ſurely although there were no Lawe of God at all, yet doeth euen naturall equitie condemne it. But heere our Lorde ſheweth vs his will, which is, that whenſoeuer wee ſee any man diſtreſſed, wee ſhoulde ſpare him ſo much the more, vntill hee haue ſome meanes to recouer himſelfe againe; and that wee ſhoulde not lye in waite to catch from him at euerie occaſion that is offered to further the matter but rather that wee ſhoulde vſe ſuch vprightneſſe as to ſaye, If I beare with him hee will pay mee one time or other, I ſee hee is willing ynough, I ſee hee woulde paye mee mine owne and doe aſmuch for mee if hee were not ouerpreſſed otherwiſe; and ſeeing I knowe him to bee ſuch a one, ſhall I nowe ſet vppon him with rigour? That were euen as much as though I woulde cutte aſunder his hamſtringes that hee might bee able to goe no further. I ſee he is ſcarſe able to drawe his legges after him, and therefore if I ſhould fall to cutting of his ſinewes aſunder, and ſo fell him downe altogether; if hee bee vtterly ouerthrowen for want of lending him my helping hand at his neede, am not I the cauſe thereof? Shal not his pouertie crie out for vengeance againſt mee vnto God?

Nowe wee ſee howe this Lawe ſerued as a policie among the Iewes, and yet neuertheleſſe that it ſheweth vs Gods will at this day, becauſe it teacheth vs to beare with the poore and needie. To be ſhort, let vs marke that our ſparing of the poore after that faſhion, is an acceptable ſacrifice to God, and that after the ſame manner, he will accept all other ſeruices that we do vnto him: where as if wee performe neuer ſo manie Ceremonies, and in the meane while haue no equitie nor vpright meaning in vs, we do but prouoke Gods wrath according to the ſaying of the Prophet Eſay which I haue alledged already. If wee reſort to ſermons, and ſhewe our ſelues to haue neuer ſo great zeale and good will to Gods worde; and yet for all that, euerie of vs do practiſe wicked deuiſes to ouerthrowe our neighbours, ſo as we ſeeke to deuour one another like dogges and cattes: our Lorde ſhalbe much beholding to vs for giuing eare to his ſayings, when in the meane while wee make none account of the keeping of them. Nay contrariwiſe, let vs conſider that our comming hither is to bee induced to brotherly loue, ſo as the rich may beare with the poore, and that where any pouertie is among vs, they may be ſo prouided for as they may ſtill come forwarde, and bee ſo comforted as they may eate the breade which God giueth them, with thankſgiuing, and not be driuen to deſpaire, nor the name of God bee thereby blaſphemed. And wee muſt not tarie till the time of forbearing be proclaimed by the ſounde of a trumpet: but wee muſt holde our ſelues contented with Gods lowde crying out vnto vs from day to day. And this worde muſt ſounde into our hearts: By which God requireth that wee ſhould ſo partake with our neighbours that they ſhould no manner of way be grieued by vs: Againe we muſt not looke for a ſeuenth yere, becauſe we muſt haue at this preſent a continuall reſt: Seeing that God hath ridde vs from the olde bondage of the lawe; and therefore hee will haue vs to reſt our ſelues all our life long in him: let vs therefore giue reſt to our neighbours, ſo as they may bee releeued and not haue any occaſion of heartburning againſt vs for our deſpiſing and reiecting of them; but that the fatherly loue which God ſheweth towardes vs, may be as a bande to tie vs together in brotherly good will as members of one bodie, ſo as no man doe miſuſe his brother any more than ẏ hand would miſuſe the foote, becauſe it woulde turne to the hurt of it ſelfe. And therefore let vs haue the ſame conſideration of our ſelues one towards another. Now let vs proceede to that which God addeth.

He ſaith *that his bleſsing ſhalbe vpon the people, ſo as they ſhall all proſper, and haue wherwith to lend, & not be driuen to borrow: and that they ſhall reigne ouer many Nations, and no Nation ſhal reigne ouer them.* The cauſe why our Lord addeth this promiſe, is to confirme the lawe. And at a word (as I haue ſaid heretofore) albeit that our Lord might command after a preciſe manner: yet doth he apply himſelfe to vs, indeuoring to win vs to him, that we ſhould obey him with a free heart, and not go to worke by compulſion and conſtraint. Yee ſee then that ẏ thing which he requireth of vs, is ẏ Pſal.54.8. wee ſhoulde offer him freewilofferings as they terme them. But let vs marke that the vpright dealing which wee haue treated of, ſerued but onely for the Iewes. And therefore this promiſe, *I will bleſſe you,* anſwereth thereunto. For it was lawfull for the Iewes to purſue ſtraungers, ſuch as were not circumciſed. After that maner ment Moſes. But if any ſtrangers receiued the lawe of Moſes, they were priuiledged, as being of the bodie of the Iewiſh people. But as for them that worſhiped not the God of Iſrael, & were among them but onely in way of traffike or for ſome other affaires: they inioyed not the benefite of this law whereby the ſewing of men for det was forbidden. And the reaſon therof was that they kept not the Sabboth for any deuotions ſake. True it is that they were fain to reſt themſelues whether they woulde or no; it was not lawfull for them in any wiſe to worke; they were driuen to ſubmit themſelues to Gods ordinance: but yet in the meane while they had no deſire to ſerue the God of Iſrael. And therefore they were not to be ſpared as in reſpect of common policy. But nowe that Gods grace is ſhed forth euery where, we muſt not make any more difference between Iewe and Gentile. For (as ſaieth Sainct Paul) our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt hath broken downe the Eph.2.14. partition wall, to the ende that being adopted of God for his children, wee ſhoulde maintaine brotherly vnitie among our ſelues, and euerie of vs acknowledge his neighbour to bee as his brother.

And as touching this promiſe, it was reſtreined for that time to ẏ people of Iſrael. But nowadayes, foraſmuch as Gods promiſes are common to all men becauſe hee hath ſhewed himſelfe to be the father indifferently of all men: let vs vnderſtand that our Lorde declareth here in general, that if we feare him and keepe his commandements, hee will bleſſe vs and make vs to proſper: And this promiſe muſt bee referred to the circumſtance of the place. For wee ſee howe couetouſneſſe prouoketh vs to catch what wee can from our neighbours, becauſe we be euer afraid of want. O (ſay we) If I may not haue mine owne, what a thing were it? True it is that our Lorde doeth indeede permit euery man to haue his right: but yet muſt not euery man bee ſo giuen ouer to himſelfe and to his own profite, that he ſhould haue no regarde to ſpare thoſe whom he holdeth as his vnderlings. For whoſoeuer hath no regard of him that ſtandeth at his mercie; ſurely he can finde in his heart, not onely to liue vppon the parties labour, but alſo euen to ſucke his bloud. If I bereaue a man of the meane whereby hee ſhould followe his little trade, ſo as he is brought vtterly vnder foote: it is all one as if I maimed him in his body, ſo as I made him to pine away all his life after. So then let vs marke well, that as touching this promiſe, our Lord had an eye to the eagerneſſe which euery of vs hath to draw to himſelfe. And why do wee ſo? Becauſe we be afraide leaſt we ſhould want. And therefore our Lord ſaith, No, make more account of my bleſſing than of all that euer ye can gather. When ye haue vſed al the craft and force ye can deuiſe to fiſh to your ſelues by hooke & by crook, and when yee haue gathered neuer ſo howge a heape of goods together: al that ſhal not boote you ſo much as my bleſſing, that I multiplie you and giue you ſo much as ſhall ſuffice to maintaine you withall. And although yee haue not ſo greate ſtore of thinges at once, as you coulde finde in your heartes to wiſh: yet will I make the thinges auailable which yee haue in your handes. And if it bee but little, yet ſhall it be ſo inlarged, that yee ſhall liue at your eaſe. Now we ſee what Gods meaning is.

And therefore whenſoeuer wee be tempted

by vnbeliefe to catche other mens goods; Let vs bethinke our ſelues thus: howe-nowe? Shall we become rich in deſpite of God? At whoſe hande haue we our liuing? Haue wee it not of his meere liberalitie? Nowe hee hath not promiſed his bleſſing to any other than to ſuch as walke in integritie, and do ſo beare with their neighbours, that they trample them not vnder their feete through ouergreat rigour. But if I will needes inrich my ſelfe by hooke and by crooke; then doe I ſpite God and prouoke his wrath againſt mee; and what hope is there then that God will bleſſe mee? Nay rather his horrible curſe muſt needes light vppon mee. Therefore let vs thinke aduiſedly vppon theſe thinges. And that wee may ſo doe, Let vs conſider howe it is he that giueth wherewith to finde and feede vs, and that hee muſt bee faine to preſerue the thinges that hee hath giuen vs, and to make them auailable for our vſe; or otherwiſe we may well doe what wee can, and trot vp and downe; but all ſhall bee but loſt labour. God (ſay I) muſt bee faine to open his hande to giue vs wherewith to liue. And when he hath once giuen it, hee muſt alſo maintaine it. For it might ſlippe away from vs euery minute of an houre, if hee ſhoulde not make vs to inioy ſtill the things that he hath giuen vs. Thirdly hee muſt alſo bee faine to giue vs the meane to it, and to turne the thinges to our benefite which hee hath put into our handes. For if wee put them to any other vſe, wee ſhall woonder to ſee howe they ſhall come to naught. And why? Becauſe Gods bleſſing faileth vs. Yee ſee then howe the thing which we haue to conſider when our fleſh is ſo frowarde as to prouoke vs to greeue our neighbours; is that wee muſt thinke thus with our ſelues; yea, but what ſhall I gaine in the end when God is againſt me? Sure I am that I ought to thinke my ſelfe beholden to him for al things: and though I had all the worlde vnder my wing: yet were it nothing worth vnleſſe God bleſſed me. Sith it is ſo, I muſt haue an eye to him, and bethinke mee well howe I may obtaine his bleſſing by inlarging my heart towardes my neighbours after his example, who ſheweth himſelfe ſo liberall towards me.

And Saint Paul giueth the ſelfeſame admonition, not onely to cauſe vs to ſpare thoſe that are in our dette: but alſo to induce vs to doe almeſdeedes, and to ſuccour the needie: for hee ſendeth vs to him that giueth vs ſeede to ſowe. 2.Cor.9.10. Come on ſirres (ſaieth he): thinke yee that yee haue loſt your labour when ye haue compaſſion vppon the poore, and beſtow almes vpon them? No no: no more than the husbandman that layeth his ſeede into the grounde; for he looketh to reape his crop againe at Harueſttime. Therefore Matt.6.4. when ye doe almeſdeedes, ye ſow: and your God auoweth that hee receiueth with his owne hande, whatſoeuer yee giue to the poore, yea and that hee will make it to returne euerie whit of it to your owne benefite, ſo as yee ſhall reape fruite of it, not onely at that great harueſt time which ſhalbe at the laſt day; but alſo euen in this tranſitorie life; your God will make you to perceiue that your almeſdeedes are acceptable to him, and you ſhalbe ſo much the more increaſed by them. And for proofe thereof (ſaith he) is it not hee that giueth the Corne euery yeare to ſowe? When the husbandman hath ſowed his grounde, howe coulde hee ſowe it againe the next yeare, vnleſſe God gaue it a heade againe? Conſider then that when God giueth you wherwith to doe Almeſdeedes, it is to the intent to make it fruitful to you. It is al one as if he ſhould giue you ſeede in your hande and ſay, that if yee intende to gather fruite of it, yee muſt firſt caſt it into the grounde. Will the husbandman keepe his corne ſtil in his Garner? Wil he leaue his Lande vnſowen for feare of beſtowing ſome quantitie of graine vppon it? Euen ſo when yee ſee an vnſowen grounde, that is to ſay a poore neighbour whom God offereth vnto you, leaue him not vnſowen ſtill, but bee freehearted towardes him, and God will not ſuffer the ſeede to be loſt which ye haue beſtowed vppon him, but will make it to yeelde yee fruite out of hande. And ſo yee ſee whereunto the promiſe that is ſet downe heere tendeth, namely *Your God will multiplie you in the Lande which hee hath promiſed you.*

Heere Moſes did put the people expreſly in mind that their hauing of the Land of Chanaan was of Gods gifte. As if he ſhould ſay, whence come the goods that yee haue, but out of the earth? And is that Lande yours? No verily, not as in feeſimple. Ye haue it but as baylyfes. Your God will be knowen continually to bee the Lorde and maſter of it. Seeing then that he betaketh the Lande vnto you, may he not at leaſtwiſe require ſome of the fruite thereof at your handes? And that is done when you bee pitifull towards the poore. That is the thing which Moſes had reſpect vnto, when he ſaide, This lande hath beene promiſed you, and your God will giue it you in poſſeſſion. True it is that at this day wee haue not the Land of Chanaan as the Iewes had: but yet whereſoeuer wee liue, we be harboured there as it were by the hand of God, and it is he that findeth vs. Seeing then that we haue our life and all thinges elſe of him, let vs know that it is good reaſon that we ſhould comfort our neighbours, and that wee ſhoulde vſe compaſſion towards thē in bearing with them, at leaſtwiſe if wee will haue God to continue his weldoing towards vs. To bee ſhort whenſoeuer we bee not ſufficiently ſtirred vp to referre our ſelues to the bleſſing of God; let vs repaire to yͤ thinges which wee knowe by experience. Men cannot finde in their heartes to truſt vnto God, but rather are caried away and inflamed with their owne wicked luſtes, deceits, and leawd practiſes, ſo as they paſſe not howe they come by thinges ſo they haue them. But when wee behaue our ſelues after that leawde faſhion, and paſſe not for the bleſſing of God as we ought to doe: Let vs come to the exhortation that Moſes maketh in this place to vs; namely, that if I haue nothing of myne owne, I hold all thinges of my God. And ſeeing it is ſo that hee hath fed me and maintained me vnto this day: ſhould

I not put my ſelfe ſtill into his hande? Though I had a thouſand times more thã I haue, yet would it ſoone be ſwallowed vp: but if I haue very little yea and yet leſſe, my God who hath not failed mee vnto this houre, will continue his bleſſing ſtill, and that ought to ſuffice mee. Seeing then that experience (which is the ſchoolemiſtres of fooles as they ſay) ſheweth vs howe ſtrong Gods bleſſing is: are we not too leawd if we folow not yͤ thing that is tolde vs in this text, that is to wit, if we haue not pitie vppon our poore brethren, ſeeing wee haue his promiſe, the performance whereof wee haue had accompliſhed by effect? That is the point wherein God will haue a triall of the loue that we beare to him. Now he ſaith that mercie is more worth than all the ſacrifices in the world: and therefore hee will haue vs to honour him yͤ way, that is to ſay by pitying of our poore brethren, by ſuccouring them, and by bearing with them when it lyeth in our power to trouble them: aſſuring our ſelues that God accepteth the thinges that are ſo done to our neighbours for his ſake. And he will not onely ſhewe himſelfe liberall towards vs by making vs to feele the fruite of our Almeſdeeds; but he will alſo continually increaſe his benefits vpon vs, in ſuch ſort that by meanes thereof wee ſhall haue continuall cauſe to bleſſe him and to glorifie his holy name.

Oſee.6.6.
Matt.7.13.
& 12.7.

And now let vs kneele downe in the preſence of our good God with acknowledgment of our faults, praying him to vouchſafe to wipe thẽ out, ſo as they may not hinder vs from being receiued at his hand: and that if he make vs to feele his fauour euen in this corruptible life, wee may much more bee inuironed rounde about with all his ſpirituall benefites, that we may ſo grow in them more and more, as wee may not bee helde backe by the brittle thinges of this world, but rather ſo vſe them as wee may keepe on our way ſtill, and communicate together after ſuch a ſort, as it may be to the exerciſing of the faith which wee haue in God, and in his pure doctrine, and for the confirming of vs in the hope which we haue of the heritage of heauen, ſo as wee may tende euer thitherwarde, as wee bee dayly called thither by the preaching of his worde. That it may pleaſe him to graunt this grace, not onely to vs but alſo to all people and Nations of the earth &c.

On Saturday the xxvj. of October. 1555.

The XCiiij. Sermon which is the ſecond vpon the fifteenth Chapter.

7 If a brother of thine become poore within any of the gates in the Lande which the Lord thy God giueth thee, thou ſhalt not harden thy heart nor ſhut thy hand from thy brother that is poore.

8 But thou ſhalt open thy hand bountifully, and lend him ſufficiently for his neede wherewith he is pinched.

9 Beware that there be no point of peeuiſhnes in thy heart, that thou ſay not, the ſeuenth yeare which is the yeare of reſpiting is at hande, and thereuppon thou haue a wicked eye againſt thy poore brother, ſo as thou giue him nothing; and then hee crie againſt thee to the Lorde thy GOD, ſo as it become ſinne vnto thee.

10 Thou ſhalt giue him freely, and let not thy heart repine at thy giuing vnto him: for becauſe of this the Lorde thy God will bleſſe thee in all thy woorkes, and in all that euer thou putteſt thy hande vnto.

HEre Moſes goeth on with yͤ ſame matter that was ripped vp yeſterday, that is to wit, that in the ſeuenth yeare dettes ſhould be reſpited, to the intent that the poore ſhoulde not bee ſued nor moleſted. And I told you that the meaning therof was not that they ſhoulde be quite and cleane forgiuen, but that the poore ſhoulde be ſo much eaſed. Now Moſes addeth a larger declaration, *That the ſame ought not to hinder men from lending liberally when any bodie had neede.* And this is added becauſe men doe alwayes goe about to defraude the Law. Although equitie be ſhewed vs neuer ſo plainely, and that the Lawes bee ſet neuer ſo well together: yet are men ſo ſutle in naughtineſſe, that they finde alwayes ſome ſtartinghole, to beare the worlde in hand that they haue not offended the Lawe, and yet the intent of the Lawe maker is defrauded. This is a thing too much accuſtomed; and woulde God there were not too many examples of it in experience. But what? When men thinke themſelues to haue ſet things in as good order as can be, a thouſand meanes are deuiſed to ſcape from them, and thereof commeth ſo much brabling in Law. For the end of good Lawes is to ſtop the way to all pratlers, that there might bee no debate not quarelling among men, but that euery man might haue his owne right. And inaſmuch as Lawes doe ſhewe that whoſoeuer offendeth muſt be puniſhed; is it not a mean to hold euerie man in awe? But as I ſaide afore, the Law ſerues vs but to deuiſe wicked ſhifts how to do hurt and harme vntill our hearts be reformed. Neuertheleſſe, our Lords meaning in this text, was to prouide that the Law which he had ſet downe ſhold be kept, and that men ſhoulde not take occaſion thereat to withholde themſelues from ſuccouring ſuch as are in neceſſitie. And yet notwithſtanding, that which is ſpoken here was not onely wreſted to the defrauding of the Law; but alſo applyed much worſe. For ſuch as were too much wedded to their owne profite, tooke occaſion at Gods law to do leſſe good and to ſhew leſſe mercie to their neighbours than otherwiſe they woulde haue done. For why? Had it beene lawfull for them to haue ſued men at all times, ſo as they might haue required their right at all times without exception: they woulde haue lent money in the ſixth yeare as well as in the firſt, and they woulde haue made no bones at all at it. But nowe that a Lawe was ſet foorth, that there ſhoulde bee a forbearing of it in the ſeuenth yeare, if a poore man required ſuccour, euerie man thought thus with himſelfe: if I lende him money nowe, it is layde a water, I looſe a whole yeares occupying of it, and what a thing is that? It were better that this good fellowe ſhoulde goe prouide himſelfe where hee can: for I intende not to hazarde my ſelfe in this wiſe: for what can I tell what will befall within a yeare and a halfe? There needeth but a little hinderance, and beſide, hee may fall into further pouertie, and then am I cut ſhort of my money. Thus ye ſee how euery man woulde ſhrinke away, and vnder colour that God had commaunded men to vſe gentleneſſe towardes their neighbours in the ſeuenth yeare; the poore were diſappointed of help and reliefe, and their throates were cut, ſo as there was no way for them to eaſe themſelues of their want.

And hereby wee ſee yet better, that men not onely be ſuttle in deuiſing new ſhiftes from time to time, to couer their miſdoings: but alſo ẏ whẽ they haue neuer ſo good and iuſt Lawes, they turne them to the cleane contrarie. And this commeth to paſſe not only in worldly gouernment, but alſo euen in matter concerning God: wherein we ſee ẏ horrible corruption of our nature. And this is one point well worthy to be noted. When ſuch as are in authoritie ouer vs, as Princes, Magiſtrates, and Iudges make Lawes & ſtatutes: if wee breake them, that diſobedience
Rom.13.2. of ours (as Saint Paul ſheweth) toucheth God, and therefore is not to be excuſed. But when as God commeth as it were in his owne perſon, and telleth vs his will as it were with his own mouth: if we then dally with him, and ſhroud ourſelues by ſhifts and ſuttleties as though hee were not able to ſee vs: is not that a diuiliſh malapeartnes? But there is yet a farre greater and more outragious extremity, as I ſaid afore. God goeth about to rule our life aright, he ſeeth vs pitifully wandering in our own affections: he ſetteth vs down an order what to doe: and his will ought to bee as a definitiue ſentence for vs to ſtande vnto, ſo as wee ought to inquire no further: for we know that whatſoeuer God alloweth, is perfect righteouſneſſe. Nowe when hee hath beene ſo gracious to vs as to teach vs, What doe we? We not onely fall to diſſemble in his Lawe, but alſo turne al order vpſidedowne, and tranſgreſſe the verie Lawes themſelues which hee giueth vs to direct vs by: Sith wee ſee ſuch frowardneſſe, wee haue good cauſe to miſlike of our ſelues, and to condemne our ſelues vtterly. And therefore ſeeing wee be of malicious and froward nature, let vs learne to ſuſpect our ſelues, and to yeeld to Gods good will, that when he hath giuen vs his Lawe, he may alſo giue vs the grace to receiue it with all ſingleneſſe of heart, ſo as it may bee to our benefite, and that we may not turne life into death, nor light into darkeneſſe. Thus yee ſee what we haue to remember in the firſt place.

Secondly it behoueth vs to marke here, that the keeping of the outwarde forme of the Lawe is not all that we haue to doe: but that wee muſt ſpecially obſerue the ſubſtance of the Lawe. Wil wee proue our obedience towardes God? The way to do it is not by Ceremonies, but to ſeeke out the certaintie of his meaning, and to ſubmit our ſelues thereunto. For men will take good heede to the worldewarde, that they offende not in ſuch wiſe, as they may bee puniſhed: and if a man can finde ſome pretie ſhift to excuſe himſelfe withall when hee commeth before the iudge; hee thinkes all his doings to bee iuſtifiable ynough. A man then will make no conſcience to offende, ſo he haue wherewith to hide himſelfe when he is reproued, and that hee can ſay, as for mee, I vnderſtoode it not ſo: the Law ſaith not ſo. He findeth out ſome little worde that carieth a ſhewe of contrarietie to the true meaning of the Lawe, and ſetteth a counterfait conſtruction vppon it, and ſo beares himſelfe in hande that hee hath well ridded his handes of the matter, and that by that meanes he is cleare of it. And therfore let vs learn that it is nothing worth to haue obſerued the Lawe as in reſpect of the outwarde forme of it, that is to ſay, in ſuch wiſe as men can finde no fault with vs; but that the chiefe point is to liue ſoundly & roundly, accordingly as wee ſee here that it was Gods will that in the ſeuenth yeare there ſhould bee a reſpit, that is to wit that men ſhoulde not ſue for their dettes, but ſuffer it to bee a reſting-time, as I declared yeſterday.

True it is that the Iewes woulde not vtterly tranſgreſſe this order: but yet they thought it ynough for them to diſcharge themſelues of the Ceremonie, and they bare themſelues in hand that God might well holde himſelfe contented with ſuch diſguiſings, when in the meane while the chiefe thing was left vndone. For the poore were not pitied to their reliefe, but rather men tooke occaſion to leaue them vtterly deſtitute. Inſomuch that howe great ſo euer their neede was, they were neuer the more releeued, and all vnder colour that men could not recouer that which they had lent. Wee ſee then how men woulde alwayes appeaſe God with ceremonies. But let vs beare in minde howe hee ſaieth by his Ier.5.3. Prophet, that he hath an eye to the ſoundneſſe of the heart. Therefore let vs deale faithfully with our neighbours, if wee will haue God to accept the ſeruice which we yeeld vnto him.

And nowe let vs come to that which is ſet downe here. *If any of thy brethren* (ſaieth hee) *bee falne behinde hand, at leaſtwiſe of ſuch as dwell within thy gates: looke that thou harden not thy heart, ne ſhut thy hande againſt him.* His ſpeaking peculiarly of the Iſraelites themſelues, was not to giue the Iewes leaue to deuour the goods of the heathen, nor to deale cruelly with them: but his meaning was that there ſhoulde bee the more friendlineſſe vſed among themſelues, becauſe that beſides the kinred that was among them, there was alſo an vnion of faith. For GOD had ſhouled out the lynage of Abraham from the reſt of the worlde, and had knitte them together into one bodie, whereof hee himſelfe vouchſafed to bee the head: and therefore it was good reaſon that they ſhoulde maintaine one another, and be the more inclined one to ſuccor another. But hereof the Iewes tooke occaſion, to holde faſt all that euer they coulde catch; for they conſtrewed all the promiſes of the holy ſcripture to their owne aduantage, as though God had laide the bridle on their necks, and had no more care of the Gentyles than of brute beaſtes. As for example; whereas it is ſaid, Yee ſhall reigne ouer many Nations; therupon they cõcluded, Then is it lawfull for vs to execute all maner of Tyrannie vppon the Gentiles, and to eate them vp: for they be vncircumcyſed and vncleane, and belong not vnto God at al: & therfore let vs ſucke what wee can poſſiblie out of them, and not ſpare them. Yea and they ſtretched the worde *Lende* verie farre: for they ſticked not a whit to ouerlode the ſtraungers with vſurie to the vttermoſt that they coulde beare, without any regarde of vprightneſſe. Thus yee ſee howe the Iewes did alwayes reſtreine the right of Gods promiſes, bearing themſelues in hande that it behoued them to be a little friendlyer to their neighbours, that is to ſay to thoſe that were of their owne kinred: And yet euen in yͤ behalfe alſo they were counted as rauening Wolues, as the Prophet Ier.5.26. Mic.3.1.2.3 Ieremie vpbraideth them, and as ſhalbe declared in due place.

But let vs nowe come backe againe to that which is ſaide here, to applie it to our inſtruction. If the Iewes vſed this hypocriſie of couering their couetouſneſſe with a pretence that they might well pill and poll the heathen and Infidels: let vs ſee if wee our ſelues doe not the like at this day. True it is that our Lord commendeth Gal.6.10. vnto vs the houſholde folke of faith aboue all others: and yet is it not ment that he giueth vs leaue to fleece ſuch as haue not the knowledge of his worde. For hee hath knitte vs generally altogether in that hee hath ſaide Eſa.58.7. by his Prophet Eſay, Thou ſhalt not deſpiſe thine owne fleſh, in which ſaying hee comprehendeth all men without exception. Therefore muſt we behaue our ſelues vprightly and indifferently towardes all men; and likewiſe wee muſt haue pitie and compaſſion vpon al: For in them we behold our owne nature; but yet for al that, the houſholdfolke of faith are linked to vs with a much neerer bonde: in reſpect whereof it is good reaſon that wee ſhoulde loue them more ſpecially as our brethren. Thus yee ſee after what maner this text is to be vnderſtoode, where God ſaith *If any of thy brethren*, that is to ſay of thine owne countrimen. And hee doeth it for that they were linked together in a holie bande, had the true Religion, and were adopted to be the children of God: in conſideration whereof it behooued them to bethinke themſelues to bee kinde hearted and pitifull one towardes another, and yet ought they not to haue deſpiſed the reſt of the worlde as they did.

And whereas it is ſaide *within thy Gates*: it is to ſhew that the exerciſing of our charity ought to bee according to our knowledge of mens neceſſities. For wee bee not able to iudge of all mens needes. True it is that euen without ſeeing the extremities that are euery where, wee ought to be touched with compaſſion. When we heare of warres, that one Countrie hath beene burned, another ſpoyled, and all thinges haue beene turned vpſidedowne; it is not for vs to go to the place to ſee what hath beene done. For if we be not too too blockiſh, we may wel thinke that thoſe thinges cannot bee doone without horrible confuſion. Therefore muſt we pray for thoſe whome wee neuer ſawe: for they touch vs, they bee men as well as wee, they bee reaſonable creatures ſhaped after the Image of GOD. Gen.9.6. And in that reſpect wee ought to pitie thoſe that are nothing neere vnto vs. But as in reſpect of ſuccouring, euerie man muſt ſtraine himſelfe according to the neede that hee ſeeth, for I cannot iudge of thoſe that are far off from me. But if I ſee a bodie in preſent neceſſitie; then muſt I be moued to pitie, and I muſt conſider that God prouoketh and calleth me to the ſuccoring of him that is in neede.

Thus yee ſee why Moſes hath ſet it downe expreſly, that men ſhoulde haue a regarde of thoſe that are within their gates. The heathen coulde well skill to ſaye, that although all mankinde bee alyed together; yet notwithſtanding, the neighbours that are acquainted one with another, ought to vſe a ſpeciall friendlineſſe in ſuccouring one another. And in deede, euen without anie reading of the holie ſcripture, euerie man can well skill to ſaye in his owne behalfe when his neighbour faileth him, Howe nowe? what neybourhood is this? And who teacheth them yͤ leſſon? Nature. Here therefore our Lord telleth vs that if we perceiue any of our neighbors to be in neceſſitie, it ought to ſtirre vs vp, ſo as if wee bee not too vnnatural, wee muſt needes be touched with it w̄out any further putting of vs in mind therof. For the thing it ſelfe ſpeaketh when we ſee our neighbor ſo diſtreſſed.

Nowe he addeth further, *Thou ſhalt not harden thy heart, nor ſhut thy hande*. Hee might well haue begunne at this point, Thy hand ſhall not bee ſhut, for that is the matter which hee tendeth to in effect. But it is not for nought that he ſaith, Thou ſhalt not ſhut vp thy heart. For why, his intent is to preuent the thing that hindereth our weldoing & our ſuccoring of our neighbours that are in diſtreſſe: namely, the hardneſſe of our hearts. For where pitie is, that is to ſay if we be pitifull, wee will indeuour to vtter it if we haue wherewith. In deede a man ſhal ſee a number that can well skill to weepe; but al that they can find in their hearts to do, is but to ſhedde a fewe teares: they caſt forth ſuch ſighes that a man woulde thinke their heartes ſhoulde burſt; but to ſpare one penny out of their purſe, that is no part of their thought. Many ſuch hypocrites are to be ſeene. But let vs haue the true kindheartedneſſe in vs, and let vs not be hardhearted, but let our hande euer followe our heart. And that is the cauſe why our Lorde beganne at this point, That men ſhoulde not harden their heartes. As if hee ſhould ſay, will yee be good Almeſmen? Will ye be wel diſpoſed to ſuccour ſuch as haue neede of your helpe? Then let your heartes bee ſoftened, and not locked vp to holde faſt to your ſelues, but to thinke rather with your ſelues thus: Behold God offereth mee here a man, he is my neighbour, and although hee bee neither kith nor kin to mee, yet is hee a creature ſhaped after the image of God, and therefore muſt I open my heart towardes him, and haue ſome pitie vppon him. As oft then as wee bee colde and negligent in ſuccouring our neighbours, let vs learne to enter into this conſideration that is ſet downe heere, and to ſay to our ſelues: How nowe? Wretched man, if thou wart as hee is, wouldeſt thou not be gladde that others ſhould ſuccour thee? Yes: and if they ſhoulde let thee alone, thou couldeſt skill well ynough to ſay for thy ſelfe, Alas, men make no more account of a creature faſhioned after the image of God, than of a dog. Thou couldeſt well skill to ſay ſo; and yet for all that wilt thou thy ſelfe harden thy heart after the ſame faſhion? Thus yee ſee what wee haue in the firſt place to marke vppon this text.

And nowe for the ſeconde part, let vs marke how our Lordes intent here, is to ſhewe vs that almeſdeedes pleaſe him not, vnleſſe they come 2.Cor.9.7. from a willing and freediſpoſed heart. And therfore let vs learne to order our ſuccouring of our neighbours needes in ſuch ſort, as we doe it not repyningly and vnwillingly, ſo as when our hand is ſtretched out, there be a wicked affection in vs which may hinder vs from offering vp vnto God that ſuccour which we owe vnto our neighbours when we ſee them in neceſſitie. And would God that this leſſon were well put in vre, and that euerie one of vs did beare it better in minde than we do. For although we doe ſome Almeſdeedes, yet may the world ſee that our harts are ſtraitened, and that wee cannot come to this doctrine of Saint Paules, that God loueth the liberall giuer, and that hee will not haue men go to worke as it were, by conſtraint and inforcement, but of a freegoodwill. Howe many be there that put this leſſon in vre? Nay, the giuer hath alwayes ſome hartgrudging in himſelfe, and would faine drawe his heade out of the coller if hee coulde, and his doing of it is as if he were put to his task as they terme it, or as though hee payed ſome tribute. But our Lord calleth Almeſdeeds Sacrifices, to the ende wee ſhould do them cheerefully. Hebr.13.16 And I pray you, if wee will offer any thing vnto God, ſhoulde it bee as the paying of a tribute, or of ſome tallage or impoſt, that is extorted? Shoulde it bee as it were a ranſome giuen to theeues or enemies? Shoulde our honouring of our God by doing him homage for the goods that wee haue receiued at his hande, bee by ſuch force and conſtreint? Nowe wee ſee in effect, what is imported in theſe two ſpeeches; namely that wee muſt not haue our hearts locked vp to hinder vs from well doing; but that not onely our handes but alſo our heartes muſt bee open towards ſuch as are diſtreſſed, to haue pitie vppon them, and to vſe kindneſſe to them. Where this is not, there muſt needes bee all manner of crueltie, as wee commonly ſee that ſuch as haue moſt to ſpare, doe fall to repyning if a bodie go about to wring an almes from them and they make a grudging at it like a dog when one woulde take away a bone out of his mouth. And if they happe to giue any thing, bee it for ſhame or for any other cauſe, it is a death to thẽ to part from it. And ſurely it were better that ſuch rakehelles were rooted out of the worlde, than that they ſhould liue among men. For they bee monſters againſt kinde, they bee foule churles, that coulde finde in their hearts to deuour and ſwallowe downe all the worlde into their mawes. Or rather they bee men full of vnbeliefe, which haue no more truſt in God than diuels, bearing themſelues in hande that the earth is not able to finde them. By reaſon whereof if it come to the point that they muſt giue any thing, it ſtriketh them to the heart, it killeth them, inſomuch that the asking of an Almes at their hande, is as the drawing of a ſworde to cut their throtes. Therefore let vs looke to our ſelues, and when we heare our Lord ſpeake of the not hardening of our hearts, let vs beginne at this point of kindneſſe in hauing pitie and compaſſion vpon ſuch as are in diſtreſſe. And therewithall let our hande bee at libertie afterwarde, in ſuch ſort as wee may proteſt that wee offer G O D a ſacrifice with a free heart.

And nowe Moſes addeth, *Beware that this wicked thought come not in thy heart to ſay, Beholde, the Seuenth yeare is at hande, and if I lende, my money muſt lie dead for the time*. He calleth it a wicked thought when we be helde backe by it too much to our owne profite, and in the meane while forſake the partie that is in neede. For were our thoughts well ruled, ſurely wee ſhould not bee ſo greatly wedded to our owne profite, but that we would alſo thinke vpon thoſe whom God commendeth vnto vs. 1.Cor.13.15 It is ſaide that loue ſeeketh not his owne. True it is that it cannot bee but that euerie man will bee mindfull of himſelfe. But Saint Paules meaning in ſaying ſo, is that men muſt not bee caried away with the loue of their owne profite, as who ſhoulde ſay they woulde haue no fellowſhippe with their neighbours, nor ſtreine themſelues to doe any thing for them. Therefore as for thoſe which ſay, I muſt haue regarde of my ſelfe, and therewithall doe deſpiſe others, and paſſe not what they endure: thoſe ſeeke their owne gaine, and in ſo doing ſhewe themſelues to be vtterly voide of charitie. Contrariwiſe, if wee bee kindhearted, although wee be mindfull of our ſelues, yet are we not ſo caried away with it; but that wee beare an euen hand and proceede to the louing of our neighbours as our ſelues. Whereas our nature wholly draweth vs to our owne priuate profite, let vs bethinke our ſelues thus: What? I cannot ſeparate my ſelfe from thoſe to whom God hath knit me; for that were a wicked diuorce. If I ſhould holde my ſelfe alone, and haue no regard but of mine owne aduantage; It were a cutting of my ſelfe off from mankinde, & I were worthie to be cut from the reſt of the world, for it is againſt kinde. So then, it is not without cauſe that Moſes ſaith, that when a man is ſo mindful of his owne profite, and ſeeketh it in ſuch ſort that he taketh it as an occaſion to refuſe to help his neighbors at all: it is a wicked thought, for thereby wee bee done to vnderſtand, that we muſt not iuſtifie our ſelues becauſe that although men be not able to accuſe vs ſo as we may be condemned by mans Lawe; yet doth it not followe therefore that wee be quit before God. If a man come to borrowe mony of mee, and I thinke thus with my ſelfe, I cannot tell whether this man be able to pay me againe or no, he is a poore man, and when I haue taried a long time, hee may chaunce to growe poorer and poorer, and then is my money loſte. Nowe then if this poore man that was to be ſuccoured abide ſtill in diſtreſſe, and in the end periſh: the other that woulde not lend him, ſhall not be accuſed for it nor brought to anſwere for it before men. And if men caſt him in the teeth with it. O (will hee ſay) It was for mee to ſeeke mine owne profite, I liſted not to hazarde my ſelfe after that faſhion. Well this excuſe may ſerue afore men: but in the meane while what ſaith the heauenly Iudge to it? It is a wicked thought, ſaieth hee: and let men flatter themſelues neuer ſo much, they ſhall winne nothing by it. Therefore let vs marke that wee muſt not wey our woorkes in our owne ſcales, as who ſhoulde ſay wee ſhall goe ſcotfree becauſe wee haue ſome ſtartinghole. For our Lorde telleth vs that the thing which beares a ſhewe to be excuſable of it ſelfe, is curſed in his ſight; that is to wit if wee ſuccour not the partie that hath neede, at leaſtwiſe according to our abilitie. And it is the ſelfeſame thing that our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt putteth vs in minde of, where hee ſaieth that wee muſt doe good to ſuch as are Luke.6.35. not able to requite vs with the like, and that wee muſt lende without looking for any gaine. For neither in lending nor in giuing, commonly is there any liberalitie among men, but euerie man hath an eye to his owne gaine. If a man giue, it is to the ende to receiue giftes againe: and if a man lende, alwayes his reſpect is, that ſuch a one may doe him pleaſure and recompence him with the like good turne againe. It is no Liberalitie when wee doe good in hope to bee recompenſed for it againe. But if wee do good to a poore man, at whoſe hande wee cannot by any meanes reape any profite; that is a point of freegoodneſſe, and God alloweth of it, for it is an acceptable ſacrifice vnto him. And that is the cauſe why hee ſaieth that we ſhould not giue to ſuch as are able to requite vs, but to ſuch as are vtterly vnable, and of whom wee haue no hope to recouer the principall: for it is no Almeſdeede, that is to ſay, no deede of mercie, vnleſſe there bee neede: and where is neede, but among ſuch as are not able to recompence? Yea and euen where our money may ſeeme to bee caſt into the water, inſomuch that wee haue ſuccoured ſuch a man as it may bee ſaide, Verily this is quite loſt for aught that I can ſee? Yea verily, as to the worldwarde. But our Lorde ſaieth, I receiue it: yee thinke Matt.6.4. yee put your almes into a mortall mans hande, but it is I that become detter for it. Although all thinges bee his, yet bindeth he himſelf in the perſon of the poore; and ſhoulde then any nigardlyneſſe ſtay vs from ſuccoring thoſe whom God offereth vnto vs, ſeeing he ſetteth them as in his owne ſteede, and auoweth all to be done to himſelfe which is done to them?

Moreouer let vs marke that Moſes ſpeaketh here, of ſuch as are in neede. For God ment not to maintaine wicked folke in ydlenes & naughtineſſe. The man that ſeeketh to waſt away other mens goods, and to defraude his Creditors, is not commended vnto vs heere of God: but hee ſpeaketh directly of mercy. And that is the cauſe why he ſaieth, Thou ſhalt not harden thy heart. For if wee haue not that diſcretion: doe what Almeſdeedes we will, and yet ſhall none of them be acceptable. Wherfore let vs marke, that here God ſpeaketh not in fauour of all men, but onely ſetteth before vs ſuch as are in neede & wote not what to doe, and ſhoulde periſh in diſtreſſe if they were not relieued. Thoſe are they which are to be helped according to our abilitie. True it is, that to make a Lawe of it, it is not poſſible. God hath ſet this order among his people, that the poore ſhoulde be ſuccoured. But he hath not tolde with what ſūme, nor how oftentimes: hee hath not made a tax of it, to ſay that euery man ſhould beare thus much; Only we muſt reſort to this which S. Paul ſaith, Let euery man doe that 1.Cor.9.7. which he doth with a free hart, and not lay a tribute vpon mē as though they ſhold pay as much as they were ſeſſed at: but let euery mā ſeſſe him ſelf of his own good wil, & think thus, although I ſtreined my ſelf a hundred times more, yet could I not diſcharge my ſelf to my godward. Howbeit foraſmuch as he ſheweth me this fauor to accept it as an offring of my hand, although I do not ſo much as I ought to doe nothing neere, yet doth it pleaſe him to receiue ẏ which I giue him, ſo it be done wͭ a free hart. Sith we know this, albeit that we cannot make a grounded Lawe of it, to ſay how farre we ſhall go in ſuccoring our neighbors, yet let euery of vs ſtreine himſelfe, and alwayes be doing, with the foreſayd free heart.

And it is ſayd, *Thou ſhalt not thinke with thy ſelf, the yeere of reſpit is at hand, and therefore I will not lend*. Hereby it is ſhewed vs, (as I haue touched afore) that if a poore man require help, although he be not able to pay the thing againe out of hand which he borroweth, yet muſt not wee be cold for all that. For we muſt thinke, if I helpe this poore man at this time, he is a faithful man, and my ſuccoring and releeuing of him ſhall ſet him halfe vp againe, but howſoeuer the worlde go, he may be able to mainteine his trade, and at length he may pay mee all that hee borroweth. But if I vtterly faile him at this time, he is quite ſunck, he is brought vnder foote for euer, and hee hath no meanes to get vp againe: and I am too blame if I ſee him periſh ſo. Had we this cōſideratiō with vs, we ſhould not haue the nigardlines that Moſes mentioneth and condemneth here. And how ſo? Let vs knowe that where need requireth, we muſt not haue ſuch reſpect to our owne profite, as to let the poore periſh in their diſtreſſe without lending them our helping hād.

Again, Let vs wey wel this ſaying which Moſes ſetteth downe here: namely that wee muſt open our handes. Hee repeteth it twiſe or thrice: and that is to ſhewe vs that there is nothing but hypocriſie in vs, when we pretend to haue compaſſion, & yet our hand is alwayes ſhut, and nothing can be wrong out of vs. I haue told you already ẏ a number of folke wil not paſſe greatly to ſay; Alas, when they ſee poore people: But they beare themſelues in hand ẏ it is enough to haue pretended a countenance. But here God reproueth mens diſſimulation, if they haue not their handes open: for it is a tokē that their hart is hardened, ſo as there is nothing but beaſtly churliſhneſſe in them, and when their handes be not opened, it muſt needes bee a record of it. Againe he ſetteth downe that the poore is to be ſuccored according to his neede, and that a gage is to be taken of him, if there be a gage to be had: for it may alſo full well be vnderſtood of the taking of gages. And hereby we ſee yet better, that our Lordes meaning was not to haue dettes vtterly releaſed by the reſpit that was giuen in the ſeuenth yeere: but onely to haue a time of reſt giuen for the reſpectes and conſiderations which I haue treated of before.

Furthermore it is tolde vs here, that we muſt relieue our neighbors wants: for our Lord ſpeaketh heere of the lendinges that are doone of almes. And in deede, it is oftentimes a greater almesdeede to lend ſome cōpetēt ſūme, than to giue a very little. For it may be ẏ the giuing of a little will doe a man no eaſe at all: but the lending of as much as neede requireth, releeueth him very wel, & he may in time content his creditor again. That then is the thing whereunto our Lord appointeth vs. And therefore let vs marke the thing which I haue touched already; that is to wit, that although a man cannot ſet downe a Lawe certeine in this behalfe; yet muſt euery man be a rule to himſelf, to doe according to his own abilitie and according to ẏ need that he ſeeth in his neighbors.

Now here is added yet further, *That God will bleſſe ſuch as doe ſo*, according as hee had begun yeſterday to promiſe his bleſſing to all ſuch as were ſo liberally minded towardes the ſuccoring of the poore. And this ſerueth ſtill to correct the curſed vnbeleefe ẏ holdeth our heartes locked vp ſo as no man mindeth aught elſe than himſelf and his own profite. For it ſeemeth to vs ẏ if we forgo neuer ſo little of ẏ which we haue, we be in ẏ way to be vndone by it. That is ẏ cauſe why euery man holdes faſt, & neuer thinkes hee hath enough. O (ſay we) it is true ẏ we may doe ſo and ſo: but thereby I ſhould be impayred, & I cannot tell what may befall to my ſelfe. We caſt ſo many doubtes, ẏ we can neuer finde occaſion to giue any thing. And why ſo? Forſooth becauſe I might want it my ſelfe. But ẏ is a curſed diſtruſt, & ſuch a one as prouoketh Gods wrath. For wee ought rather to hope well at his hand, ẏ as he hath not failed vs heretofore, ſo he will continue to doe vs good ſtil. And yet we go to ſeek theſe doubts afar off, which we be afraid of: inſomuch ẏ it grieueth vs euen to heare thē ſpoken of. If a man ſhoulde ſay to vs, ſuch a thing may befal the if thy houſe ſhould be burned, & all thy goods be cōſumed in it, & thou be driuen to ſell thy landes & poſſeſſions, in what caſe wart thou thē? None of theſe ſonges would pleaſe vs, but we would chafe and ſtorme at him ẏ ſhould ſpeake ſo. And why? For a rich man would faine ſleepe in his riches, hee hopeth ẏ he ſhal ſtand alwayes at one ſtay, & he foadeth himſelfe in his delights. But in ẏ meane while, if he be to doe any good; he by & by forecaſteth, O ſuch a thing might befall me; famine & warre & I wote not what elſe muſt be feared. We heape together all ẏ miſchaunces ẏ can bee deuiſed. And to what ende? Euen to ſhut vp our harts & our hands; ẏ we might do no mā good. Now our Lord minding to correct ſuch diſtruſt, bringeth vs backe to his bleſſing, & ſayth, Know ye ẏ it belōgeth to me to multiply you. And therfore ye may wel hope ẏ when ye ſeeme to be impaired to ẏ worldward, yee ſhall haue a greater treaſure thā if ye had kept all ẏ euer could haue come to your handes, and had neuer done any good to your neighbors to ſuccor thē withal. For I am rich enough to fill you againe, euen when you be vtterly deſtitute of al things. Seeing ẏ our Lord ſpeaketh after ẏ maner, muſt we not needs be woorſe than infidels if wee bee not mooued thereat to doe good? Yea and though we go not to woorke with ſo earneſt mindes as we ſhould doe, yet if wee be not mooued at leaſtwiſe to doe ſomewhat; may it not bee ſayd that wee ſtop our eares againſt God and giue him no audience at all, yea and that we giue no credit nor truſt at all to any of his promiſes? Therefore let vs learne to wey better ẏ valew of this leſſon cōcerning Gods bleſſing, & let no man reſt vpon ẏ thinges ẏ he hath in his own poſſeſſion, ne put ſuch truſt in thē as to ſay; This is my ſtay, this is truſt in them as to ſay; This is my ſtay, this is the ſtaffe that I muſt leane vpon. Let vs beware of ſuch truſt, for it is diueliſh. Nay rather, let vs think thus; Seeing ẏ God hath giuen me wheron to liue, I am contented with ẏ which I haue, and I hope ẏ he wil alſo prouide for me ſtil hereafter; and in ẏ mean time I wil ſo vſe ẏ which he giueth me, as I may ſuccour thoſe that haue neede. And therwithal I wil put from me al things that may draw me from ẏ obeying of my God, and from ẏ truſt which I ought to repoſe in his goodneſſe. Thus ye ſee how we ought to benefite ourſelues by ẏ promiſes of Gods bleſſing, ſo as they may quicken vs vp, not onely to haue recourſe vnto him, but alſo to vſe liberalitie towards thoſe that haue neede of vs, to the end ẏ our Lord may bee prayſed both of great & ſmall, poore & rich, and al of vs haue our cõtentmẽt in him alone, according to ẏ grace ẏ he ſhal haue beſtowed vpon vs.

Nowe let vs kneele downe in his preſence ẘ acknowledgement of our faults, praying him to make vs perceiue them better, & to touch vs to the quicke, to the ende that knowing his infallible truth, & what his wil is towards vs, wee may be moued thereby to followe ẏ ſame, & to faſhiõ our ſelues to his exãple, by imparting ourſelues in ſuch wiſe to our neighbors, & by diſpoſing the good in ſuch ſorte which hee hath put into your hands, as we may one day yeeld him a good and faithful account of them, ẏ we haue not bin too much addicted to our ſelues: but ẏ when we ſhall haue indeuoured to doe good according to his meaning, our whole ſeeking may be to liue & die in his obedience, drawing others with vs to the ſelfeſame fayth, ſo as we may all call vppon him as our father truely and vnfeinedly, becauſe wee mainteine a right brotherhoode with all ſuch as are knitte vnto vs. That it may pleaſe him to graunt this grace, not onely to vs, but alſo to all people and nations of the earth, &c.

On Wedneſday the xxx. of October. 1555.

The XCv. Sermon, which is the thirde vpon the fifteenth Chapter.

11 For there ſhall euer be ſome needie folke in the Lande. And therefore I commaund thee, ſaying, that thou open thy hand to thy brother, to thy needie and to thy poore in the Lande.

12 When thy brother an Hebrewe, or [thy ſiſter] an Hebreweſſe ſhall haue ſolde himſelfe vnto thee, and ſerued thee ſixe yeres: in the ſeuenth yeere thou ſhalt let him goe free from thee.

13 And when thou letteſt him goe free from thee, thou ſhalt not let him goe emptie.

14 But thou ſhalt lode him vpon his necke with ſomewhat of thy flocke, of thy vyneyarde, and of thy winepreſſe. Thou ſhalt giue him of the things wherewith the Lorde hath bleſſed thee.

15 Remember how thou thy ſelfe waſt a bondſeruant in the Land of Egypt, & that the Lord thy God deliuered thee: and therfore doe I command thee this thing this day.

IT is ſayd in the common prouerb, that Lawes are not made for thinges that are not woont to come to paſſe, but for thinges that are in vre, and which it behoueth vs to practiſe dayly. And that is the cauſe why our Lord in this text ſayth, that his ſpeaking of ẏ ſuccoring of the poore is not without cauſe, for that as long as this mortal lyfe indureth, we ſhall euer finde whereon to execute our duetie, by releeuing the neceſſities of our neighbours, *becauſe there ſhall alwayes be poore folke among vs in the world*. Thus we ſee in effect, ẏ Gods intent was to make the Iewes to take the better heede to his Lawe, foraſmuch as it was a very requiſite yea and neceſſarie thing, that they ſhould be put in minde of their duetie in ẏ behalfe. And thereupon we haue to gather, that the more auaileable a doctrine is to the well ordering of our lyfe, ẏ better ought we to ſet our mindes vppon it. We ſee a number of folk which are fond and curious in forecaſting for thinges that happen not once in a hundred yeeres: they imagine things ẏ are vtterly vnpoſſible: & if this ſhould come to paſſe (ſay they) what ſhould wee doe then? They beat their braines about things that haue no profit in them, and in the meane while they ſee not the thinges ẏ are before their feete. And for proofe hereof, how many are to be ſeene nowadayes, which groſly ouerſhoote themſelues in things that ought to be throughly knowen, ſhutting their eyes at them ſo as they ſee not one whit? And yet for all that, they toyle themſelues exceedingly in ſearching out I wote not what: and if a man aske them why they doe ſo, they cannot tel, but that they be driuen thereto by a fooliſh curioſitie. Therefore let vs beare in minde that our Lordes intent is to keepe vs occupyed ſo farre foorth as is for our behoofe. And that is the cauſe why that in the holy ſcripture, we ſee that God hath not voutſafed to feed our humors with thinges which hee knoweth to be of no edificatiõ, but reſtreineth vs to yͤ things which are for our behoofe to put in vre. Let vs conſider then that euery of vs ought to looke diligently to his owne duetie: and that is, the warning that is giuen vs in this text, where God telleth vs that he maketh not Lawes of things that concerne vs not, but that hee hath an eye to the thinges which we ought to put in practiſe dayly.

But now let vs come to this ſaying of his, *That there ſhalbe poore folke continually.* This was ſpoken expreſly, to doe vs to vnderſtand that God will try our charitie. For he is rich enough to ſupply all mens wantes, and it commeth not of any nigardſhip, that he powreth not out his treaſures vppon vs. What is the cauſe then that God ſuffereth men to be poore in this world, but onely to giue vs occaſion to doe good? Therfore when we ſee one man poore & another rich, let vs not attribute it to fortune: but let vs vnderſtand how it is God yͭ diſpoſeth thinges ſo, and that it is not without reaſon. True it is yͭ our eyes ſhal not alwayes ſee why God inricheth one & impoueriſheth another, we cannot diſcerne yͤ cauſe thereof certeinly. And by that meanes God will haue vs to caſt downe our eyes oftentimes, to the end we ſhould yeelde him the honor of gouerning men at his will, and according to his own deuice which is incõprehenſible. Yet notwithſtanding we haue to remember in generall, the thing that I haue touched already, which is, yͭ Gods diſtributing of theſe worldly goods ſo vnegally, is to bewray what is in mens harts, by making a tryall of thẽ yͭ way. So yͭ if a man be rich, he may be the better diſcerned what a one he is. For thereby hee is inabled to doe hurt, and can the better indomage his enemies. But if he abſteine frõ dooing euil, if he extẽd no crueltie towardes his neighbors, if he hold himſelfe wͭin his owne boũdes wͭout coueting more thã God giueth vnto him: it is a ſigne of honeſty, which had not bin knowẽ if ſuch occaſiõs had not bin miniſtred vnto him. Again, if a man of wealth be liberall ſo as he indeuour to doe good to ſuch as haue neede of his helpe, and aduaũce not himſelfe through pride & ſtatelyneſſe; but alwayes behaue himſelf mildly: yͭ is a very good proofe. If another mã being poore take patiently whatſoeuer it pleaſeth God to ſend him, & moreouer be not led to any deceit or naughtineſſe how much ſoeuer he ſuffer, or how hard ſoeuer his ſtate be: that alſo is a good & behoouefull tryal. Now thẽ let vs mark yͭ whereas there are both rich and poore in this world, God hath ſo ordeined it, & it cõmeth of his prouidẽce: & therfore wee muſt hold it for a ſure groũd, yͭ there ſhal neuer want poore folke.

And now by the way let vs come to that which I ſpake of, namely that Gods commaunding of wealthie folke to haue their handes open to ſuccor the poore and needy that are in the land, is not without cauſe. For it is as it were a ſetting downe before our eyes, wherein and after what maner he will be ſerued at our handes: namely in doing him homage with the goods which hee hath beſtowed abundantly vppon vs: Yea verily, for he ſendeth vs poore folkes to be as his receiuers. And although yͤ almesdeed be done to mortall creatures; yet doth God wel accept and well lyke thereof, & putteth it into his accountes, as though yͤ thinges which we beſtow vpon yͤ poore were deliuered into his owne handes. Trueth it is yͭ as in reſpect of God yͤ deede yͭ wee doe is no almesdeede, but an homage of yͤ goods that hee hath giuen vs, & for the which we bee beholden to him. Yet neuertheles there is this moreouer, yͭ beſides his accepting of the acknowledgement which we yeeld vnto him for yͤ good yͭ he dooth vs, it is all one as if yͤ mercie which we ſhew to our brethren, extended it ſelfe vnto him. And yͭ is the cauſe why it is ſayd, that he which ſhutteth his eares at the crying of the poore, ſhall cry himſelfe vnto GOD and not bee heard. On the contrary parte, if wee bee pitifull, and be moued to pitie the poore when we heare of their wants; God alſo wil vſe pitie & compaſſion towards vs to ſuccour vs againe at our neede. And in the ſame reſpect Moſes ſayth expreſly in this text, that God cõmaundeth vs to haue our handes open to the poore that dwel in the land among vs. For God offereth them to vs, to the intent wee ſhould haue no excuſe to ſay, I wiſt not to whome I ſhould doe good. Seeing then that our Lord miniſtreth the meanes vnto vs, we muſt not ſeeke for ſtartingholes: for we ſhall bee ſtill guiltie, becauſe we haue not vſed the occaſion that was offered vs. Our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt goeth yet further and ſaith, that he himſelfe will not be alwayes with vs, but that yͤ poore ſhall euer be with vs. For in cõmending yͤ deede that was done to his honour, becauſe yͤ precious oyntment ſeemed ſuperfluous, whẽ his head was annointed therewith, he ſayd, let it be ſo for this once: but from thenceforth he ſendeth his diſciples to the poore. And why? for it was all one as if he had ſayd, that it was no ordinarie ſeruice that he required, nor for his own perſon, nor for the perſon of God his father, that men ſhoulde preſent him with the precious thinges of this world: for he had no need of thẽ: but his will was yͭ looke whatſoeuer men were willing to beſtowe vpõ him they ſhold beſtow it vpon yͤ poore. And here let vs mark wel, yͭ as I haue touched afore) yͤ almesdeedes which we do to yͤ poore, are accepted of God as ſacrifices done vnto him. Therefore let vs not deceiue ourſelues in our offering vnto him, as though he receiued any thing at our hands: for he doth ſend vs backe agayne, to doe good to ſuch as ſtand in neede of our helpe.

Prou.21.13

Matt.26.11.

Hebr.13.16.

Had this leſſon bin well borne in minde, the wretched world had not ſo miſpent their labor and mony in fooliſh pomps, as we ſee they haue done in the Popedome, where they vſe a greate ſorte of lightes, & a number of other petie trifles. And why is that? O they thinke that GOD taketh pleaſure in paintinges, in imagerie, and in ſuch other gewgawes. That is the thing wherein the world is wholy occupyed: and in the meane while the poore are let alone and forgotten. Contrariwiſe, our Lorde Ieſus telleth vs that yͭ is the thing whereby God wil try whether we be willing to honor him or no. For (as I haue declared already) hee coulde well make all men rich: but he ſendeth vs poore folke, to giue vs occaſion to keepe our ſelues occupyed, if we haue any deſire to ſhewe to whom we thinke our ſelues beholden for our goods,& be minded to apply them to ſuch vſe as he may well lyke of. Therefore if we haue any ſuch deſire, the occaſion to ſhewe it is offered vs & there neuer wanteth any. That is the thing in effect, which we haue to conſider vppon this place.

It ſhould ſeeme at yͤ firſt bluſh, yͭ this agreeth not with yͭ which we haue ſeene already, namely yͭ there ſhould be no poore beggers in yͤ land. But yͤ ſolutiō is very eaſie, becauſe it may wel fall out yͭ there ſhould be poore folkes, & yet that all begging be taken away. And ſoothely it muſt needes be a great ſhame for a people yͭ profeſſe God, that there ſhould be beggers among thē, becauſe it is euen againſt common order & honeſtie. Although we had not the cōmaundemēt of our God; yet let vs conſider according to nature what may inſew of ſuffering beggers to be. Firſt it is a token yͭ the richer ſort do deuour all, & that they haue no regard of ſuccoring ſuch as be in neede & penury. Againe, when the bridle is layd looſe; we ſee it followeth yͭ the moe doe giue themſelues to roging. For men knowe not to whome they giue; inſomuch that when thoſe kinde of people go crying vp & downe yͤ ſtreetes from gate to gate; it cannot bee diſcerned whether they haue neede or no: and importunateſt creatures doe commonly beare away that wherwith the poore ſhould bee fed and maintained. Moreouer the rewarding of ſuch as goe about begging after that faſhion, is a maintenance of falſe harlots. For there is none ſo great deceit to be found, as is in theſe Roges that go begging about. And he that is once nouſled in roging, becommeth a theefe in the end. Finally although there were none other inconuenience; yet wee ſee that thoſe which are once inured ſo with begging, can neuer fall to any labor afterward, nor learne to doe any good, but are idle bodies and loyterers euer after. Thus ye ſee how begging is euen by yͤ order of nature to be alwayes condēned. For it bringeth nothing wͭ it but ſinne and corruption, and all thinges muſt at length needs come to confuſion, where begging is ſuffered & borne wͭ. But wee haue Gods commaundement which is a far higher thing, which ſaith yͭ we muſt not haue any beggers among vs, but yͭ the incōuenience thereof ought to be preuented aforehand, by releeuing ſuch as want, accordingly as men can diſcern of thē, & be of abilitie to ſuccor thē. Ye ſee then that theſe two places are not cōtrary one to another. For wheras he ſaith yͭ there ſhal alwayes be poore folks; it is to the end (as I haue ſayd afore) that yͤ rich ſhould haue occaſiō to offer ſuch ſacrifice to God as he requireth, by ſuccouring the needy with ſuch things as they haue in their handes, and by doing it with diſcretion, by ſearching out as much as is poſſible who they bee that haue neede. But that men ſhould giue without diſcretion, or that it ſhould be lawfull for men to goe begging vp and downe the ſtreetes, or to ſtand begging at the gates or at mens doores: it is a ſhamefull thing & againſt all good order, and bringeth nothing but confuſion, as a nouriſhmēt of euil in all thoſe to whom ſuch libertie is giuen, as I haue ſhewed already.

Now remaineth to put this doctrine in practiſe. Firſt of all we muſt vnderſtand, that according to the greatneſſe of mens neceſſities, God ſtirreth vs vp euer to doe them the more good, & it is then chiefe time to ſtreine our ſelues, whē there is any famine or dearth. For then men ought rather to cut their owne morſels ſhorte, than to ſuffer others to want, themſelues liuing ſo in exceſſe. And whereas many men take occaſion to pinche when they ſee a deere yeere, bearing themſelues in hand that it ſerueth their turne well to make their hand the better: Let vs vnderſtand that our Lord doth then cite vs, and declare vnto vs that if euer we be minded to doe him homage with the goods that hee hath put into our handes, hee will haue vs to vtter it at that time. Let that ſerue for one point. And whereas we ſee many poore folke in neceſſitie; let vs aſſure our ſelues that our Lord warneth vs that it is as a waking of vs from ſleepe; and that becauſe wee haue not bin ſufficiently mindefull of our duetie, our Lord commeth to put vs in remembrance of that which he had commaunded vs: and that if we be not too lazie, we muſt needes inforce our ſelues, to conſider euery of vs the meaſure that is giuen him & the abilitie of his power, & thereafter imploy himſelf. This is yͤ thing that wee haue to marke in the firſt place.

And as touching the ſecond point, Let vs looke to keepe order and pollicie, ſo as this ſhame and diſhoneſtie of begging be not among vs. For why, it is nothing elſe but a nouriſhment of wicked raſcals, and they will neuer bee brought to any good, which are ſo mainteined, but they become roges and idle perſons as I haue tolde you before. And in the end they take a pleaſure in their begging, and lyke ſo well of their ſcrippe or wallet, that they would not chaunge it for a yeerely rent: Which thing experience ſhewes too much. To be ſhorte, of Roges, they become robbers, & in the end what muſt become of that? Therefore let all this bee takē away, vnleſſe we purpoſe to prouoke Gods wrath wilfully, & to cauſe thinges to grow euery day worſe than other. But yet howſoeuer yͤ caſe ſtand, let vs ſee that yͤ poore be mainteined. For if a man forbid begging, & therewithall doe no almes at al: it is as much as if he did cut yͤ throtes of thoſe that are in neceſſitie. Nay, wee muſt ſo prouide for the poore, & redreſſe their want, that ſuch as are ſtout beggers and apparantly ſeeme not to be pitied, may be reformed. For they doe but eate vp yͤ others bread, & rob yͤ needy of that which ſhould be giuen vnto thē. That (ſay I) in effect, is the thing that we haue to marke here. But how may yͭ be done? Firſt yͤ Hoſpitals ſhoulde prouide wel for ſuch needs. For what a ſhame is it, that yͤ goods which are dedicated to God and yͤ poore, ſhold neuertheleſſe be applied to other vſes? That is not ſimple robbery, but a robbing of God. Therefore let thē be imployed according to his cōmaundement; & let not mē play yͤ good husbāds in hording vp yͤ things that ought to be beſtowed vpon God & vpon thoſe whome he offreth vnto vs. Alſo according as euery man knoweth yͤ particular needes of his neighbors, ſo let him indeuour to ſuccour thē, and conſider where wante or neede is; and helpe to remedie it. If this be done, then ſhal beggerie be taken away as it ought to be, and they ſhall not neede to make a ſimple forbidding of it: ſaying; let not men beg any more: & in the meane ſeaſon yͤ poore be left deſtitute, to die for hūger & thirſt.

And truly it is not for nought yͭ our Lord ſaith here, *thy poore & thy needie which are in thy Lād.* He could welinough haue ſaid, *the poore & needie*: but he vſeth another maner of phraſe ſaying, *thy pore and thy needie.* As if he ſhould ſay, if a man bee poore, euery body diſdaynes him and turnes his backe to him: and why is that? Becauſe the rich doe beare themſelues in hand, that the poore are not worthie to come ny them, & they could finde in their heartes to haue a world alone by themſelues. Were it not that they be contented to haue the poore folkes ſeruice, they could find in their harts neuer to ſee thē. But on yͤ contrary part, to pull downe ſuch pride & preſumption, our Lord ſayth, who art thou that deſpiſeſt ſo thy brother? He is thy poore, he is thy needy. He ſpeaketh as to our owne fleſh. Therefore let vs wey well the wordes which the holy Ghoſt hath vſed, that no pride may hinder vs to haue compaſſion vppon thoſe that are ſo vnited vnto vs. And let vs marke that they bee our owne poore folkes, yͭ is to ſay, yͭ the perſons which are ſo in neede, are offered vnto vs of the Lord, as if hee ſhould ſay, it is my will to make ſuch an intercourſe, as the rich may be mingled wͭ the poore, & either of them may meete wͭ other, to the intent they ſhould cōmunicate together, yͤ poore to receiue & the rich to giue, ſo as I may be honored at the handes of them both, as well for yͭ yͤ rich man hath wherwͭ to do good, as for that yͤ poore man acknowledgeth himſelfe to be ſuſteined & mainteined for my names ſake, & ſo both of thē bleſſe me. That is yͤ cauſe why Moſes ſpeaketh of yͤ poore & needy after ſuch a ſorte, yͭ he ſheweth yͤ rich how it is they themſelues whom he ſpeaketh to, & that there ought to be a kinde of intercōmoning between thē & the poore, not to make thē fellowlyke, but to relieue yͤ neede of thoſe whom God offreth vnto thē after yͭ maner.

After this, Moſes addeth a law yͭ ſerued but for yͤ common weale of yͤ Iewes, yͤ ſubſtance whereof continueth neuertheleſſe vnto vs at this day. *If thy brother an Hebrewe* (ſayth he) *or thy ſiſter an Hebreweſſe be ſolde vnto thee, let him ſerue thee the ſpace of ſixe yeeres: At the end of that terme thou ſhalt releaſe him. And at thy releaſing of him, thou ſhalt not ſende him away emptie, but thou ſhalt giue him ſome Corne or ſome Cattell according to thy abilitie, that hee may feele of the bleſſing which the Lord thy God hath giuen thee, and that the ſame may be as a hyre vnto him.* Now we muſt marke, yͭ in thoſe dayes there were no ſuch ſeruauntes as are nowadayes which take certein wages by yͤ yeere: but they were in bōdage after yͤ maner of thoſe whom wee call bondſlaues in Barbarie & in other countries in theſe dayes. So then they were al ſlaues at yͭ time, & among the heathen yͤ bondage was endleſſe: inſomuch yͭ if a man had liued a hundred liues, yet ſhould hee neuer haue bin releaſed, vnleſſe his maiſter had pitied him. Moreouer, the man yͭ had ſuch ſlaues might mary them, & foraſmuch as the wretched ſoules were not free thēſelues, their children alſo were in bondage lyke yͤ beaſtes yͭ we haue. If a man haue Horſes, Kine, Cattel, or Sheepe, hee reapeth yͤ fruite of thē: & ſo did they wͭ their bōd ſeruants at yͭ time. And ſurely yͤ ſtate of bondage as it was then through yͤ whole world, was very hard. For it was Lawfull euen among Chriſtians. It is not cōmaunded to be aboliſhed: Wee ſee yͭ whereas S. Paul ſpeaketh of maiſters yͭ had ſuch bondſeruants & were faithfull, he biddeth them not to ſet thē quite at libertie, but to deale gētly by all kinde of meanes. Know ye (ſaith he) yͭ you haue one cōmon Maiſter in heauē, & that your ſeruantes be Gods children as well as you: and therefore deale gently wͭ them, & hold them not in ſuch thraldome as yͤ vnbeleeuers doe. Eph.6.9. S. Paul, yͭ is to ſay yͤ holy Ghoſt ſpeaking by his mouth, thinketh yͭ to be enough. Howbeit foraſmuch as the Iewes were priuiledged, & God had choſen them for his owne inheritance: it behoued ſome moderation or mitigation to be among them, ſo as they ſhould not vſe ſo extreme rigor as was among the Heathen. Neuertheleſſe it is a good thing, yͭ this ſlauiſh bondage is aboliſhed in time among yͤ faithful; howbeit yͭ there continue ſtill ſome remnantes of it in ſome places, but yet is yͤ ſame much more tollerable thā ſo rough a law could haue bin. For wheras there are ſome perſons which are ſtill taxable (as they terme it) at this day, whether it be in their goods or in their perſons: it is of yͤ olde ſlauery, & they be of yͤ race of ſuch as were very ſlaues in old time, & of ſuch as might haue bin handled as bondſlaues by rigor of Law. But as I ſayd, this may wel be borne wͭ: and it was a vertue worthie of cōmendation, that the parties which had ſuch bondſlaues, releaſed them vppon a certaine qualification.

But now let vs come againe to yͤ Law yͭ is giuē here to yͤ Iewes. It is ſayd that ſuch as were ſolde ſhould ſerue by the ſpace of ſixe yeeres: and the ſeuenth yeere is priuiledged here in honor of yͤ Saboth day, yͭ is to ſay of yͤ reſt, wherby our Lord ment alwayes to reduce the Iewes to gentlenes, by bringing them backe to himſelfe. As if hee ſhould ſay, aſſure your ſelues yͭ your vſing of ſuch mercie towardes your neighbors, is an acceptable ſeruice vnto me. For yͤ day of reſt was yͤ very marke of Gods ſpiritual ſeruice, as is declared vnto vs in many places of yͤ ſcripture, both in Exodus & Ezechiel where our Lorde ſpeaketh preciſely of yͤ day of reſt, & alſo in yͤ xvii. Chapter of Ieremie. Exod.20.8. Ezec.20.12. Ier.17.24. Yea & he ſpeaketh in ſuch wiſe of it, as though all his ſeruice cōſiſted therein. And why is that? Becauſe yͭ on the day of reſt, hee called yͤ people to himſelf, as if he ſhould ſay, know me, let me be worſhipped, let euery man giue his minde to conſider my goodneſſe, my Iuſtice, my wiſedome, & my power. And therewithall reſt your ſelues in me, and let euery of you forbeare his owne will, and his owne lykinges, that yee may be, as it were ſubiected vnder my yoke, and I gouerne you. We ſee then yͭ the day of reſt was as yͤ principal ſeruice of God. Now foraſmuch as mē cānot acquaint thēſelues wͭ the dooing of good to their neighbors, nor wil willingly giue ouer their right whē they haue thē at a vātage, & can

hardly be

be drawen to doe ſo much as they ought to do. Therefore doth our Lord ſet this before them here,and ſay,ſuch as releaſe their bondſeruantes doe me acceptable ſeruice,whereof I giue them the day of reſt for a ſigne & ſure token . Seeing then that I ſet betweene you and me, this token & warrant, know ye ẏ your giuing of releaſe to your bondſeruantes is by mine authoritie,ſo as I am among you & ouerrule you in that act, and your dooing of it is for my ſake . Though yee haue no regard of men , becauſe yee thinke yee ſhould not owe them ſo much ſeruice , at leaſtwiſe yet conſider how much you be bound to me. Thus ye ſee now to what end the ſeuenth yeere was aſſigned. Sixe yeeres (ſayth hee) ſhall they ſerue you,& the ſeuenth yeere you ſhal let them goe . And he contenteth not himſelfe with the onely releaſing of the bondſeruantes,but he will alſo haue men to giue them ſomewhat wherew̄ to ſet vp their trade. And not without cauſe: For euen the heathen themſelues at ẏ ſame time in which I tolde you,ẏ that bondage was moſt rife, could skil to ſay that they were not to be vſed as bondſeruants but as hirelinges, ẏ is to ſay , after ẏ maner of our ſeruants ẏ take wages by ẏ yeere at this day. Is it not a great ſhame ẏ the heathē both Greekes and Latins could ſpeake after this faſhion, we haue bondſlaues,we may vſe thē as Oxen & Aſſes: but that is vilanous, it is out of all order:& therefore albeit that it be lawful for vs by the ciuill Lawes; yet is it againſt all humanitie,& we ought to haue another regard. As how? Surely we muſt vſe thē as though they were freemen whom we hyred for wages. If ẏ blind wretches ſpake ſo;& perceiued that this kinde of vpright dealing was requiſite : what ſhall become of vs ? Verily God hath puniſhed ſuch as haue dealt roughly with them. For it was lawfull for a Maiſter in olde time to kill his bondſeruant , & he needed not to aske leaue of ẏ Magiſtrate to put his ſeruāt to torture, but he might teare him in peeces one mēber from another, yea euen at home in his own priuate houſe:& when his Maiſter had ſo murthered him , no man ſought Iuſtice or reformation of it. True it is ẏ in the ende men were forbidden to kill thē w̄out examination of their caſe: but yet had ẏ Maiſters alwayes ẏ authoritie ſtil. And becauſe they abuſed it, God payed thē home with the lyke againe,ſo as they had a common prouerb among thē , That looke how many bondſeruantes a man had at home,ſo many enemies had he. Alſo they could well skill to cōdemne thēſelues,ſaying:they bee not enemies borne,but we make them our enemies by our crueltie. Seeing then ẏ the heathē knew thus much;it was requiſite ẏ there ſhold be ſome greater mieldneſſe & humanitie among gods people ẏ were choſen of a ſingular priuiledge. That is ẏ cauſe why God ſayd expreſly ẏ they ſhould bee helped at their departing from their houſes in ẏ ſeuenth yeere . For if a poore man be ſent away ſtark naked,now & then he had leuer to continue a ſlaue ſtil,thā to goe ſeeke what ſhal betide him he wot not where . A poore man that hath not much to take to,can finde in his hart to take paynes;& ſo he may haue meat & drinke, hee is at a poynt. Thereupon he taketh paines in his Maiſters houſe:Now if his Maiſter driue him out of his doores & ſay get thee hence: He may cry alas,what ſhal become of me?I haue not a bit of bread to eat,I haue no lodging,I wote not where to become. This ſending away of their ſeruants naked,was an indirect means to hold thē in bōdage ſtill.For this cauſe our Lord ſayth , whē ye haue bin ſerued by ẏ ſpace of ſix yeeres by thoſe ẏ are your brethrē, giue thē ſomewhat in recōpēce of their ſeruice,according to your abilitie.

Cicero in his firſt booke of Dueties.

Again,to ẏ end ẏ men ſhould be ẏ willinger to ſuch liberalitie,Look into your ſtables(ſaith he,) & into ſtorehouſes,& into your garners.Becauſe men are alwayes repining; here God falleth to making of an Inuentorie. O (ſayes one) I haue not ſo much to giue:& what wote I whether I my ſelfe ſhall want or no? Our Lorde therefore maketh an Inuentorie to diſcuſſe ẏ matter, ſaying, What?Cannot he which hath Corne in his garner giue to him ẏ hath ſerued him, whoſe bloud he hath drawen in making him to labor for him? Ought he not at leaſtwiſe to haue an eye to the corne ẏ is in his garner?He hath husbanded his ground,he hath tilled it,he hath toyled himſelfe about it:& is it not reaſon ẏ he ſhould feele ſome ſweeteneſſe & fruite of it?Beſides this, he goeth to his winepreſſe & to his ſtalles:as if he ſhoulde ſay,let euery man ſee what hee hath; for according to your abilitie you be bound to recōpence them ẏ haue trauelled for you , & haue bin ẏ inſtrumentes of ſuch bleſſinges. For if we thanke God w̄ our mouthes,confeſſing ẏ it is he which hath bleſſed vs, & in ẏ meane while make none account of ſuch as he hath ſent to doe vs ſeruice in ẏ increaſe of our liuing, by taking paynes and toyle for vs: all our thanking of him is but liplabor & vtter hypocriſie.Thus ye ſee in effect what we haue to marke vppon this text.

This law is ſet down lykewiſe in ẏ xxi. Chapter of Exodus.Notwithſtanding,although God had ſpoken of it after ẏ faſhiō; yet was ẏ thing ill obſerued which he commaundeth here. And hereby we ſee how malitious,hardhearted , yea and wilfull ſtubborne ẏ Iewes were.For at ſuch times as God puniſhed them,& they were driuē to reſorte vnto him whether they would or no, they pretended a willingneſſe to ſubmit thēſelues to him,& to take ſome good way of amendment , [though they meant it not:]which thing among others he caſteth in their teeth,ſaying: what ? I haue commaūded you cōcerning your brethren ẏ are your ſeruants;ẏ ye ſhould let thē goe frank & free in ẏ ſeuenth yere:but ye haue not done it. Now thē ſeeing ẏ my lawe is ſet in ſtate againe , Let it be kept. In deed when men be pinched & conſtrained by neceſſitie;then they can make ſome faire coūtenance & ſhew well enough. Go to then,let ſeruantes be releaſed:but immediatly after they haue ſhiftes to bring thē vnder coram again,as if a man ſhould make a theefe to creepe vnder his arme,as who would ſay he ſhold make reſtitution of his theft,& whereas he pretended to take it from him with the one hand he ſhoulde conuey it to him again with the other. After the ſame maner was God mocked with his own law, yea euen notwithſtanding that the Iewes were puniſhed extremely at that time, and ſawe wel

Ier.34.11.

that God perſecuted them & did ſet himſelfe againſt them becauſe of their diſobedience. As touching the bondſeruants that would not vſe yͤ freedome that was graunted them, wee ſhall ſee more in the next ſermon. But as touching the common law; the Iewes were ſo full of malice, yͤ they refuſed to giue freedome to their bondſeruaunts.

And here the firſt thing that wee haue to gather, is the ſubſtance of the lawe, which concerneth euen vs at this day. There is no more any ſuch bondage among vs as was then among the Iewes and all the heathen. In deede in ſome countries the ſame bondage remaineth ſtill, as in the Eaſt countries, in Greece, and in Barbarie, but yet for all that it is the better that the vſe of it is aboliſhed, as it is among vs: and that is a very commendable thing. Yet notwithſtanding, it behoueth vs to conſider, how our Lord admoniſheth vs by his lawe, to deale gently with ſuch as do vs ſeruice, ſo as wee beare with them and defraud them not of their hire, ne ſtand vpon rigor towards them to take the vttermoſt of them that we may, but that we deale vprightly with them, & rule our ſelues, as thoſe that haue a ſtay of thē ſelues, & looke not to be compelled by lawe, but euery man rightly to rule himſelfe. That is the thing in effect which we haue to note in this text. As how? A maſter that hath a ſeruaunt wringeth al yͤ euer he can out of him without any regarde to him: therin he ſhewes himſelfe to be cruel. If he ſay, I find him meat & drink, & I pay him his wages: that is true, but he muſt alſo haue reſpect what he is able to do, & what ſeruice he may receiue at his hand. Aboue all things we muſt haue an eye to this natural vprightnes; that we do not any thing to another body, which we would not haue done to our ſelues. If a man haue ſeruants, he ought to think with himſelf, how would I deſire to be delt with, if I were in their ſtead? I wold deſire to be borne with. Trueth it is that we muſt not be at that point when a ſeruant woulde liue ydly & do nothing, but wold be kept like a cockney, neuer to put his hande to the doing of any thing. For it is not ment of ſuch as liue diſorderly, but only of ſuch as we know to be reaſonable. As how? I thinke with my ſelfe, if I were in this fellowes place, what ought I to do? I ſpeake not here of wiſhing, but of yͤ reaſonablenes which euery of vs knoweth. For when the caſe concerneth our own profit or diſprofit, we can very well skill to iudge of it: but when the caſe concerneth other men, then are we blynd. But ſuch as haue ſeruants ought to conſider thus with themſelues: If I were in their roome, what would I reaſonably deſire to be done to mee? Then muſt I not take more vppon mee than my conſcience warranteth mee. For although there were no Iudge to condemne mee, nor lawe to accuſe mee, yet doeth mine owne conſcience ſuffice in that it findeth fault with mee. Thus wee ſee, that although this lawe belonged peculiarly to yͤ ſtate of the Iewiſh common weale, where this kind of bondage was vſed: yet notwithſtanding it containeth a leſſon beneficial to vs at this day: that is to wit, that it behooueth vs to vſe our ſeruants in ſuch wiſe, as they bee not oppreſſed beyonde meaſure, nor cruelly handled; and ſecondly that wee be kindhearted towardes euery of them, to do them good, and to ſhewe in very deede that wee be willing to agree to his good will. For it is not ynough for the mouth to ſpeake vnleſſe the hande be aunſwerable to the ſame. That is the thing in effect, which wee haue to marke vppon this text.

Therewithall let vs wey well the words wherin our Lord maketh an inquiſition of euery mans goods, & let vs conſider howe it ſerueth to ſhewe vs that in the ende wee muſt come to account, ſo as wee may not thinke to ſlip the colar and to ſhift our handes by ſaying, Do what I can, I ſhall not bee well reported of for my labour: after which ſort ſome folkes continually repine when they bee ſpoken to concerning almeſdeedes, to whome it ſeemeth to bee as good as haling of them to the galowes, if ye do but ſpeake to them of the opening of their purſes. To the end therfore that wee ſhoulde not imagine that ſuch ſhiftes can goe for paiment before God: let vs marke well howe hee telleth vs here, that he forgetteth not what hee hath giuen vs, but can very well caſt vs in the teeth with it. And ſeeing he caſteth vs in the teeth with it alreadie in this worlde; what will he do when all things ſhalbee brought to light, & when the bookes of account Dan.7.10.
ſhalbe layd open? Wil there be any excuſe then? 1.Cor.4.5.
No: for then euen the ſecreteſt thinges ſhalbee layde open; and what will become then of the things that are apparantly knowen? Shal a man eſcape the iudgement of God, when he is found to bee a niggard and a churle euen before men? So then let vs beware that we behaue our ſelues well in this behalfe: and for the better doing thereof, let euery of vs mark the forme of ſpeech which the holy Ghoſt vſeth in this text, foraſmuch as it ſerueth to ſearch vs to the bottom, to the intent yͭ wheras euery of vs hides himſelf away when he ſhould do any good, no man ſhould ſhrink backe, but euery man put forth himſelfe according to his abilitie & ſtate.

Now for a concluſion our Lord addeth here, *that the Iewes had beene in bondage in the lande of Egypt*, and therefore he commandeth them to be kindharted & pitifull towards thoſe that are in their ſeruice. And hereby it is ſhewed vs, that if our Lord haue giuen vs experience of aduerſity, we muſt be the readier to ſuccour the diſtreſſed, & not play the proud fooles which cannot abide to heare their former ſtate ſpoken of, when they haue beene in pouertie, but are more ſcornefull and diſdainfull than ſuch as haue liued continually at their eaſe. Nay, if our Lorde haue ſuffered vs to bee pinched, and to ſtande in neede of otherfolks ſeruice; let vs print it throughly in our mindes, & let it bee as a ſpurre to quicken vs vp, that whenſoeuer we ſee any folke in neceſſitie, it may alwayes runne in our mindes, Alas, when I was in their caſe, what deſired I? I could haue founde in my heart that all men ſhould haue opened their heartes and their bowels towardes mee: and ſhall I nowe ſhut vp mine? Lo what the declaration that is ſet down here importeth.

And it is not in this place onely that Moſes vſeth to ſay ſo. For there is not any thing more rife in all his bookes: inſomuch that euer after the peoples deliuerance out of the lande of Egypt, Remember (ſayeth hee) from time to time, that thou thy ſelfe haſt beene in bondage. Therefore let vs marke, that looke what experience euery of vs hath had in his life, Gods will is that the ſame ſhoulde ſerue vs for an inſtruction, and that wee ſhoulde beare it continually in minde. As for example, when a man hath beene a traueller of countryes, he ought to conſider into what diſtreſſes a man might fall: and hee ſhalbee the more inclyned to ſuccour others whome he ſeeth in like daunger. Againe, when a man hath beene pinched for a time with pouertie, and afterwarde commeth to wealth, his former pouertie ought to bee a teacher to him for euer after, to bee the forewarder to put foorth himſelfe where neede requireth. True it is that although a man had liued all the dayes of his life in eaſe, and neuer wiſt what neede or want meant: yet ſhal hee not therefore be helde excuſed before God. But yet foraſmuch as wee bee ſo ſlacke and ſlowe to doe good: wee had neede to take to vs the helpes that may ſerue to quicken vs vp withall. And ſo let euery of vs for his owne parte cheere vp himſelfe to do good. As for the riche which neuer haue taſted any want of the goods of this worlde, if they looke into them ſelues, they ſhall finde that God hath viſited them ſome way or other, ſo as they haue had neede of other folkes helpe. And if they be not ſtarke churles, the ſame muſt needes bee as a ſtroke with a ſpurre, to thruſt them forwarde to weldoing.

To conclude in fewe wordes, the principall purpoſe of this place, is that beſides the vprightneſſe which is of nature, our Lord wil haue euery man to bee inclined to mercie, to do good to ſuch as haue neede. But put the caſe there were none other reſpect why wee ſhoulde ſuccour our neighbours but onely this, that wee be men: is not that reſpect great ynough? Yes, for vnder this worde *Man*, wee comprehend many miſeries. When I ſee a man in diſtreſſe, I finde in my ſelfe that I ſhoulde bee ſubiect to the like thinges, if God had not a ſpeciall regard of mee. There is neither ſickeneſſe, pouertie, nor any other like thing in any body, but that wee our ſelues are ſubiect to the ſame miſeries. And what is the cauſe that wee bee cleare from them? The goodneſſe of our God. And the cauſe why hee ſpareth vs and beareth with vs, is to the ende that wee ſhoulde bee mindfull of ſuch as haue need. For it is a very great proofe of Gods goodneſſe towardes mee, that hee not onely exempteth mee from the aduerſities which I ſee in my neyghbours, but alſo giueth mee wherewith to remedie theirs. And therefore it ought to be a ſufficient prouocation for mee, that they bee of mine owne fleſh, and of mine owne nature, ſo as there is no difference betwixt vs but that God hath aduaunced the one of vs, and put the other backe. For wee be all of one lumpe, and it is not for any man to glorie, as though hee had his riches of him ſelfe. If a man bee not ſo miſerable as a number of others are, hee ought not to bee proude of it, but rather to conſider that he is ſo much the more bounde vnto God. Accordingly therefore as God beſtoweth his benefites vppon vs, let vs beware that wee acknowledge it towardes him, by doing good to our neighbors whome he offereth vnto vs, ſo as wee neither exempt our ſelues from their want, not ſeclude them from our aboundance, but gently make them partakers with vs, as folke that are linked togither in an vnſeparable bond.

And nowe let vs fall down in the preſence of our good God with acknowledgement of our ſinnes, praying him to make vs ſo to feele them, as we may returne to him with true repentance, and miſliking our former life, craue forgiuenes and mercie at his hande, and bee alwayes ready hereafter to yeeld our ſelues to his obedience, ſo as our whole ſeeking may be to glorifie him in all caſes, after ſuch a ſort as our whole life may ſhewe that wee haue well profited in his holy worde. And ſo let vs all ſay, Almightie God heauenly father, &c.

On Munday the iiij. of Nouember. 1555.

The XCvj Sermon, which is the fourth vpon the fifteenth Chapter.

16 And if hee happen to ſay to thee, I will not depart from thee becauſe I loue thee and thy houſe, by reaſon that he findeth himſelfe well with thee:

17 Then ſhalt thou take an Aule, and bore him through the eare to the doore, and hee ſhalbee thy bondman for euer. And likewiſe ſhalt thou do to thy womanſeruaunt.

18 Let it not grieue thee to let him go free from thee: for he hath ſerued thee ſixe yeares as a hyreling of double wages. And the Lorde thy God will bleſſe thee in all thy dooings.

19 All the firſt borne males that breede of thy cattell and of thy flockes, thou ſhalt ſanctifie to the Lord thy God. Thou ſhalt not labour with the firſt borne of thy kyne, nor ſhere the firſt bornē of thy ſheepe.

20 But thou ſhalt eate them, thou and thy houſhold from yere to yere in the preſence of the Lord thy God, in the place which the Lorde will chooſe.

21 But if there be any blemiſh in it, ſo as it be lame or blinde, or haue any euill fault in it: thou ſhalt not offer it to the Lorde thy God:

22 But ſhalt eate it within thy gates, as well the vncleane as the cleane, both alike, as the fallow deere and the Red deere.

23 Only thou ſhalt not eat the bloud of it, but ſhalt powre it vpon the ground as water.

Wee haue ſeene already the lawe which God placed among the Iewes, whereby bondage was not to continue for euer, but ẏ the perſon which had bin ſolde ſhould ſerue ſixe yeres, and afterward be ſet at libertie. And I told you that although the like law be not among vs nowadays; yet notwithſtanding we may gather a very profitable leſſon of that which is therin contained, ẏ is to wit, that he which hath any ſuperioritie ouer others, ought to forbeare all tyranny, & to be kyndharted towardes thoſe whom God hath put in ſubiection to him, ſo as he reigne not ouer them with crueltie, ne inforce them to all that euer he may, but deale gently with them as with his brethren. And although wee bee not nowadays all of one linage as the Iewes were: yet muſt it ſuffice vs that wee haue all one father & one maſter in heauen, as is declared vnto vs. For by meanes of our Lord Ieſus Chriſt, wee be ſo vnited togither, that there is ſuch a brotherhood betwixt vs, as cannot be broken without forſaking the adoption which God hath made of vs. And therfore as many as intend to be taken for Gods children, muſt louingly beare with all thoſe whō they may commaund. Againe, we muſt come to account, ſo as if wee will obtaine mercie at the hand of God, & be borne withall by his gracious fauour; wee muſt looke to doe the like to ſuch as are in ſubiection to vs.

Eph.6.9. & Col.3.10.

But nowe Moſes addeth an exception to the law, wherby he had commanded to ſet ſeruants at libertie after ſixe yeres ſeruice; and he ſayeth *that if any ſeruant be ſo well contented with his ſtate, that when his maſter is readie to ſende him away & to giue him reward, he will ſay vnto his maſter; Nay ſir, I had leuer to tary ſtill in thy houſe becauſe I finde myſelfe well at eaſe. then ſhall his maſter take an Aule, & boare through his ſeruants eare in token that hee is his for euer.* Yet was not this done without conſideration of the caſe, as is written in the xxi. of Exodus. For there it is ſayde expreſſely that the maſter ſhall call to the Iudges, that the matter may bee inquired of by them. For otherwiſe, euery maſter might haue made the worlde beeleeue, that his ſeruaunt was deſirous to bee his for euer. Therefore it behoued the thing to bee prooued; and then was his eare boared through at the doore, to the ende that the matter might bee done openly to the ſight of all men. For in ſuch caſes there might haue beene much colluſion, yea, and alſo compulſion, and a man might haue beene ſo vrged by conſtraint of much beating, that hee woulde haue conſented to haue beene in perpetuall bondage. But when the thing was dóne in open ſight, ſo as the Iudges were called to the matter: then was there no deceite, neither coulde they bee beguyled which did ſo yeelde themſelues into bondage.

Exod.21.6.

And as touching the marking of them, it was a common thing in the Eaſt countryes. And it is ſeene in other Coūtries alſo, that ſuch as were marked, were of worſe ſtate and condition than other bondeſeruauntes were: but in this place there is no meaning of any harder bondage than the reſt. And becauſe God had graunted that priuiledge among his people; he addeth that if any man woulde needes be a bondeſlaue of his own wil, then he ſhould beare ſome marke therof. But yet was this marke made without any wounding, as if the tip of a mans eare ſhould bee boared with a pinne or with an awle that were ſharpe, it coulde put him to no payne, and it was no more but to make the matter knowen. And whereas God ſayth that he ſhould be ſo for euer, we muſt vnderſtand that the yeere of Iubile was excepted, as we may ſee in other places. And in very deede, the compaſſe of fiftie yeeres was called a worlde, and the worde that Moſes vſeth is taken ſometimes for the age of a man; His meaning then is, that he which conſenteth to be a bondeſlaue, ſhall abide in that ſtate for euer, that is to ſay euen vntill the ſtate of the countrie be renewed, as well concerning mens Landes as their perſons: at which time euery man entered againe into his owne heritage; that God might alwayes be knowen to be both ſoueraigne Lord and as it were the onely Lorde of the ſoile, & that the inhabiters were not owners and freeholders, but onely as tennauntes at will, or farmers, for thoſe are the verie termes that our Lorde vſeth. Therefore his will was that the parting of the Lande which was made by his commaundement ſhoulde bee kept: the meane whereof was that euery man ſhoulde returne to his owne inheritaunce & poſſeſſion at the fiftith yeere, at which time the whole ſtate of the Realme was chaunged in all other thinges. Thus ſee we now what was the effect of this Lawe.

Leui.25.39.

Leui.25.23.

And heere wee haue an example that maſters ought to behaue themſelues gently, for wee ought alwayes to beare in minde what hath beene treated of, namely that this law was farre other than yͤ law of seruiceſhip that is among vs. For as now we hyre ſeruants for wages, whereas in theſe dayes they were bought and ſolde, and men vſed them much more hardly than they do nowadayes. If a ſeruant had beene miſintreated at his maſters hande, he coulde not depart from him, nor haue any law againſt him: but hee was faine to obey his maſter in al that euer he would put him to. If his maſter would ſende him to the feelds, or vſe him as a droyle in his houſe to doe whatſoeuer he had to be done; it was not for the ſeruant to hang the groyne at it, or to ſay I cannot do it: for his maſter would vſe him as he liſted; in ſo much as hee woulde marrie him euen ſpyte of his heart, & take his children from him. And though the ſeruant were ſet at libertie at yͤ ſeuenth yere, yet his children were faine to abyde in bondage ſtill. That is one thing which we haue to note. Now then, ſeeing that the ſtate of ſeruants was ſo grieuous: it may wel be ſayde, that there were maſters of ſingular humanitie among the people of Iſrael, ſeeing that a ſeruaunt could find in his heart to ſay, I am contented to dwell with you ſtill. Freedome (as the Heathen themſelues haue ſaide) is an ineſtimable benefit: Horat.1. Epiſt.10. & when lawes ſpeake thereof, it is preferred in fauour before all other things. And ſith it is ſo, what a thing was it that a man ſhould giue ouer his freedome, which ought to be as deere to him as his life? Needs muſt it be ſaid that he was gẽtly delt with. And this ought to make vs greatly aſhamed. For ſeeing a man might ſafely at that time by the lawes of man, vſe his bondſeruaunt as he liſted: muſt not thoſe whom Moſes ſpeaks of here, needes condemne the perſon yͭ vſeth crueltie towards his houſholdfolk, now when we be brydled by the ciuil lawes? Yes: for they had not Ieſus Chriſt as yet reueiled vnto them, who hath gathered vs togither into the ſpiritual kinred, as hāth bin touched heretofore. Eph.3.15. 1.Cor.12.13 Gal.3.28. It was not declared vnto them yͭ God would haue vs to bee members of his only ſonne, yea euen bondſlaues & ſuch as are of the worſt ſtate that is. Sith it is ſo, let vs haue an eye to our ſelues: & let not the example that Moſes ſetteth downe here, bee a witneſſe before God to condemne our exceſſiue crueltie againſt thoſe whom God hath made our vnderlings. Marke that for one point.

Moreouer let vs marke, yͭ the boring of yͤ ſeruants eare yͭ is ſpoken of here, is to auoide yͤ blearing of mens ees, & that the matter ſhould come to open triall. For although there were courteous maſters to be found among the Iewes: yet notwithſtanding the moſt part of them were after yͤ cõmon trade of yͤ world, as alwayes we ſee, ful of malice, ful of fraud, & ful of outrage. For there were of them yͭ woulde haue drawen their ſeruants by naughtie meanes to ſay, thou thinkeſt thy ſelfe nowe ſcaped my handes, but I will make thee come againe after another faſhiõ. Or elſe peraduenture he woulde haue flattered his ſeruant for a time: & vnder pretence of dealing wel with him for a moneth or ſixe weekes, hee would haue drawen him into his nettes & ſnares to bynd himſelf to this perpetual bondage. For this cauſe it was our Lords wil that it ſhold paſſe by order of law, & yͭ the magiſtrates ſhould haue knowledge therof. And hereby we ſee how men had always need to be brydled, & to haue their naughtines preuented: for it were pitie elſe. And although this ſeeme ſomwhat hard, yet was it ordeined in fauor of yͤ ſeruãts rather than of yͤ maſters. If there were any ſuch mark here amõg vs nowadayes: very wel, it were a kind of reproche. And why ſo? for ſuch a one ſhould ſhew himſelfe to haue had no heart: for he ſhould rather haue liued of his hãdie labor, & to haue ſcratched his liuing out of the earth, rather than to haue forgone his libertie whẽ he was to be ſet free. Therfore yͤ world ſees yͭ ſuch a one is but an ydlebelly, & a very blockhead. Thus it ſhould ſeeme at yͤ firſt bluſh, that God here doth puniſh the guiltleſſe. For if a man be in good ſtate, and therfore is cõtented to yeeld himſelf into perpetual bondage; ſhould he be put to ſhame for his labour? Nay, our Lords meaning was to waken vp thoſe that were to enter into ſuch bondage, as if hee ſhould ſay; Beware what ye do: For they come to nayle you to the dore, to ſhewe you that yee ſhoulde bee tyed to this place, to bee his bondſeruauntes for euer to whome yee binde your ſelues, and ſo you do after a ſort renounce that priuiledge which I had giuen you: and therefore looke well about you what you do. We ſee then that this lawe was not made for the maſters ſakes but for the ſeruauntes ſakes, to the intent they ſhould bethinke themſelues throughly whẽ they went about to be bound: and yͭ euen when they came to the deed doing, they might bee at choice ſtill to ſay, I will depart free, I am mine own man, I wil vſe the libertie yͭ God giueth me. Thus wee ſee in fewe wordes, howe Gods intent was not onely to ſhewe to the maiſters that they themſelues alſo were vnder commaundement: but alſo to warne ſuch as had bin miſaduiſed, to beware howe they dyd caſt themſelues into perpetuall bondage. And ſo let vs marke in fewe wordes vpon this text, that the gentleneſſe which we owe to our neighbours, is precious in the ſight of God. For ſeeing he hath ſuch a care of it, and hath inioyned it ſo by his worde: it is a token that it is an acceptable ſacrifice to him. Will wee then pleaſe God? Let vs vſe ſuch gentleneſſe towardes our neighhours, that euen they themſelues which are in ſubiection to vs, may haue cauſe to eſteeme of themſelues and to reioyce and prayſe God, yͭ wee behaue ourſelues as brethren towardes them. And let ſuch as are maiſters thinke alwayes with themſelues, This doth not take away nor aboliſh the ſpirituall kinred which God hath planted and ſtabliſhed betweene the great and the ſmall. But ſeeing hee vouchſafeth them the honour to be their father: it is good reaſon yͭ wee alſo ſhould take them for our brethren, foraſmuch as he hath choſen them as well as vs. That is the thing in effect which we haue to gather vpon this text.

And Dauid ſeemeth to haue had an eie to this Ceremonie in the fortith Pſalm where he ſayth, Pſal.40.7. Sacrifice and oblation for ſinne are not yͤ things that thou Lorde requireſt: but thou haſt boared mine eare. As if hee ſhould ſay that God deſireth not ſacrifices at our handes,but would haue vs to be wholy his, and to bee wholly giuen vnto him,accordingly alſo as yͤ ſcripture exhorteth vs 1.Cor.6.20. not only to offer this thing or that thing to god, but alſo to offer him our bodies and ſoules, that he may poſſeſſe & enioy vs. When S. Paul ſheweth Rom.12.1. vs the ſeruice which he calleth reaſonable, he ſayth not,offer of your goods vnto God: but mortifie your ſelues as true ſacrifices.And therupon hauing mortified our humane reaſon, and all our thoughts and luſtes, let vs offer vp our ſelues (ſaith hee) as liuing ſacrifices to God. Neuertheleſſe Gods meaning is not to haue vs offer vp our ſelues as temporall ſacrifices, ſo as wee ſhoulde be willing to honour him to day, & forget him quite and cleane to morrowe:but he will haue vs to be his both in life and death, ac- Rom.14.9. cordingly as it is ſaide in the xiiij. to the Romanes, that our Lorde Ieſus dyed & roſe again, to the ende that wee ſhould liue and dye to him. It ſeemeth then that Dauids ſpeaking of the boaring of his eare, was to ſhewe that our giuing of our ſelues to our God muſt not bee for a time,& then at the ende thereof to take our leaue of him: but that as wee haue liued in his obedience alreadie, ſo wee be readie to dye in the ſame, following his call vnto the ende, without ceaſſing or altering our purpoſe. We knowe then yͭ God requireth not ſacrifice, for yͤ chiefe thing ought to go before, and that is,to be wholly his.

Againe,when a man dedicateth himſelf vnto God,it is certaine that all that euer he hath doth followe him.But yet the offering vp of our ſelues muſt be all wholly, ſo as hee enioy both our bodies and our ſoules, and be glorified throughout by vs. And as touching this matter which wee treate of nowe preſently, it is to bee noted that god is not contented with our ſeruing of him for a time, as a number doe that make faire ſhewes at fittes,who thinke themſelues well diſcharged when they haue done a thing or twaine in yͤ honour of God, and therefore would exempt them ſelues from euer putting to their hand any more as long as they liue.Let vs beware wee deale not ſo: but rather as I haue tolde you alreadie, let euery of vs make his account, that in as much as God calleth vs to him, we muſt not ſhrink from him in the middes of our way: for this life is as a race wherein God intẽdeth to exerciſe vs.Therfore let vs keepe on our way,and indeuour to go forward to the ende. Let vs ſtraine our ſelues to continue,and let vs liue and dye in the obediẽce of him that hath purchaſed vs ſo deerely: & let vs holde out in his ſeruice vntill hee haue taken vs out of this worlde. After that ſort is it Gods meaning yͭ we ſhould haue our eares boared, yͤ we might be marked to be his ſeruaunts for euer, & not for a time. True it is alſo that God vſeth not any Aule to marke our eares withall: but he boareth vs inwardly. For yͤ bondage that Moſes ſpeakes of here was earthly, and ſerued for the ſtate of this world.But God will haue vs to ſerue him after another faſhion, namely by reducing all our thoughts & affections to the obeying of him. And how may that be done? For when hee ſpeaketh to vs,he ſpeaketh to deafe folke;ſo that the holy Ghoſt muſt be fain to boare our eares: & vntil we be touched after yͤ maner, & that god haue wrought in vs,we neuer wote what the ſeruing of him doth meane. Then let vs marke wel, yͭ God vſeth not ſuch a maner of marking as was vſed among the Iewes:but he will haue vs to bee in ſubiection to him. He taketh no Aule to boare vs through the eare, that yͤ mark might be ſeene to the worldward: but it behooueth vs to be framed by his holy ſpirite to giue our ſelues wholly vnto him,and we muſt feele his power within vs. That is the thing in effect which we haue to remember vpon this place.

Now let vs come to that which Moſes addeth; *That the wages of a Seruaunt is dubble the wages of an hyreling.* This ſentence is not vnderſtood of many men as it ſhould be. For they haue taken it, that the reward which was to be giuen to a bond man at his infraunchiſing, ought to be double yͤ wages of an hyreling,as though the ſeruant that tooke wages, had taken but three yeares wages. But that was nothing to the purpoſe. And the Iewes after their manner, haue inuented yet a more fooliſh gloſe,and vtterly corrupted the holy ſcripture,by mingling their own fancies therwith. For they ſaye, that a man ought not to eſteeme of his life aboue three yeares, and that if he attaine to ſixe yeares, it is as it were a double pay.This is much to the purpoſe,as who ſhould ſay I could warrant my ſelfe life til to morrowe, or as though I had my life in mine owne hand, to ſay,thou ſhalt liue til ſuch a time. Thus yee may ſee their beaſtlineſſe, howe there was neither feare of God, nor any right vnderſtanding in thoſe blinde wretches. And good reaſon is it that they which haue ſo forſaken the light of the worlde, ſhoulde become brutiſh after that faſhion, ſo that for all their reading and for all their hauing of the holy Scripture, yet doe they nothing elſe but bewray their own ignorance. And it is Gods iuſt puniſhment for their deſpiſing of our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt, whereby they haue cut themſelues off from him which is the very ſoule Col.2.17. and guyde of the lawe. But the meaning of Moſes is large: namely, that it muſt not grieue a mã to giue liberally to his bondſeruaunt, when hee hath dwelt with him the ſpace of ſixe yeares. For why? It is double the wages of a hyreling: as if hee ſhoulde ſay, hee deſerueth double wages in compariſon of a hyreling. Wee haue ſeene alreadie howe our Lorde hath forbidden men to ſende away their ſeruauntes emptie when they were ſet at libertie. Thou ſhalt rewarde him (ſayeth hee) according as the Lorde ſhall haue bleſſed thee. Looke into thy preſſes, looke into thy garners, looke into thy ſtalles: and according to thine abilitie giue thy ſeruant ſomewhat, that hee may fall to ſome trade, and not bee put quite and cleane out of heart. This wee haue ſeene alreadie. Now hereagainſt a man might reply: I had leauer then to entertaine a hyred ſeruaunt for wages. For if I take one for wages, hee ſhall ſerue mee but from day to day; and if hee ſerue mee well, I can keepe him ſtill:

or if hee ſerue mee amiſſe, I can ſend him away, and that were more for my profite. And therefore it ſeemeth preiudiciall to my right to giue rewarde nowe to a ſlaue. A man might alleage after that faſhion, as men are alwayes ſuttle in ſeeking of ſtarting holes. If the caſe concerne eyther their profite or their loſſe, they can bee brought to no vprightneſſe or reaſon. For this cauſe our Lorde ſaith here, Howe nowe? Thinke yee not that a ſlaue doeth, yea double the ſeruice of an hyred ſeruaunt? Yes: for if a man hyre a ſeruaunt for wages, if hee finde him not meate and drinke, hee muſt giue him ſo much the more money, that hee may finde himſelfe after his owne liking. And againe, if a man find him, hee will looke for a large pittance; and yet he will grudge at it and ſay; this is no fare meete for a man that takes wages. The man then that is hyred for wages, muſt bee maintained after a more courteous and liberal faſhion, than a ſlaue. Moreouer, when the hyred man hath done his dayes worke, hee is diſpatched, and he goes his way to bed till the next morning that hee come againe to his worke. But the ſlaue is in a harder caſe. For the ſimilitude which our Lord Ieſus maketh in Saint Luke, is taken of the cōmon faſhion that reigned in thoſe dayes. True it is that hee treateth of a farre greater matter, to ſhewe howe wee bee bounde vnto God. But yet doeth hee alleage this ſimilitude, ſaying: Behold, if one of you haue a bondſeruaunt, whome you ſende to labour in your vyneyarde or in your feelde, when this ſeruaunt commeth home at night ſtarke wearie of his labouring to doe you ſeruice; I aske you whether his maſter will ſaye to him, Come ſit thou downe thy turne, & take here my place, and I will ſerue thee. Nay, his maſter will ſay further to him, Sirrha, go fetch mee ſuch a thing, and goe doe ſuch a thing. And the ſeruaunt dares not bee ſo bolde as to replye, why ſo? I haue laboured in the feelde all day, and muſt I nowe take paynes ſtil when I am come home at night? Yee ſee then to what purpoſe it is ſayde nowe that the rewarde of a ſlaue is double.

Luk.17.7.9.

Againe, the ſeruaunt that is hyred by the day hath more eaſe and priuiledge: inſomuch that if hee bee ill delt with, hee may goe his way. But the poore bondſlaue is tyed, ſo as hee muſt bee faine to ſerue his maſter day and night, & there is no regarde had of giuing him any thing for his labour, but ſo hee be founde neuer ſo meanly it is welynough. To bee ſhort it is ſhewed vs heere, that wee ought alwaies to haue conſideration of the profite that redoundeth to vs by ſuch as haue doone vs ſeruice. And although there were no Lawe to compell vs to the diſchardging of our dueties, yet ought it to bee printed in our heartes, and euery man ought to haue a conſcience for the lawes ſake, which telleth vs that wee ought not to deale churliſhly with our ſeruants. For if a man flatter himſelfe, he is neuer the more diſcharged before God, but he muſt be faine to come to account. And thoſe which as now do vaunt themſelues becauſe they haue gotten ſome ſuperioritie aboue others, ſhal in the end finde that Gods will was there ſhould haue bin ſome equalitie betwixt them, as S. Paul ſpeaketh therof. For he vſeth the ſelfſame term when he cōmandeth maſters to beare with their ſeruants, & to ſpare them. Let there be an equalitie betwixt you ſaith he. As how? Is it ment that the ſeruant ſhould be chekmate with his maſter? No, but S. Paul would there ſhould be an anſwerable vprightnes, ſo that as the maſter can well skill to take the labour & trauell of his ſeruaunt vnder pretence that he may ſay, He is mine vnderling, I may command him what I liſt: ſo muſt he alſo conſider the mutuall bonde that ought to be betweene one & another of vs, that he on his own ſide do anſwere & acknowledge, Go to, I am his maſter, but not to vſe tyrannye; I am his maſter, howbeit in ſuch ſort as I am alſo his brother; I am his maſter, but yet is there one cōmon maſter in heauen, which hath authoritie both ouer mee & ouer them that are vnder mee: & in that behalfe we be all but one houſholde. And ſeeing that God hath called vs all into his houſe, it behoueth both great & ſmall to acknowledge one another for their brethren, for as much as God hath done vs ẏ honor to adopt vs to be his children; let not the great ones which haue ſuperioritie vſe any lordlines in reigning after their own will, but let them gouerne their ſubiectes as their houſhold with all gentlenes & curteſie, in ſuch ſort as God who is the father of all, may haue higheſt preheminence, & bee honored as he deſerueth. Thus ye ſee in effect, ẏ the thing which we haue to marke in this ſentence, is that euery of vs ſhould look to himſelf, & yeeld them right which are not able to demaund it, but are after ſuch a ſort in our ſubiection, as they cannot open their mouthes to complaine of vs. Let vs not tarie til their complaint & crye mount vp to heauen; but let vs preuent that, & let vs of our ſelues be inclyned to pitie & gentlenes. That is ẏ thing which our Lord aimed at in this ſentence.

Eph.6.9.&
Col.3.1.

Now he addeth a promiſe vnto it, to the ende we ſhoulde bee the better prouoked to doe that which hee biddeth vs. For although wee feele our ſlackeneſſe in doing our duetie to bee ſuch, as our owne conſcience findeth fault with it: yet doeth ſelfe profite ſo blinde vs and beſot vs, that wee cannot bee wunne to open our purſes, and to giue liberally of the things which ſeeme to belong vnto vs. Now then, God perceiuing vs to be ſo wedded to our owne profit, that a man can not wring any thing from vs, but by maine force: addeth here, that if wee vſe liberalitie towardes thoſe ẏ are vnder vs, he on his ſide wil bleſſe vs, & increaſe vs the more for it. Surely, if there were any faith or rightbeleefe in ẏ world, ſhoulde not this promiſe inflame vs, & moue vs to pitie and compaſſion towardes thoſe that are in diſtreſſe, to ſuccour them and to helpe them? And although that mention bee made here peculiarly of bondſeruauntes; and that God commaund ſome rewarde to bee giuen vnto them: Yet is it a generall lawe of courteous liberalitie. Seeing it is ſo, let vs marke, that if wee ſtraine our ſelues to doe good to ſuch as are in neede, wee ought to hope for Gods bleſſing, and that the more liberall men bee in ſuccouring their neighbours,the more will God ſhewe himſelfe liberall towardes them againe. And ſo farre off are they from diminiſhing thẽſelues by their giuing to the needy; that it is as the opening of a windowe for Gods grace to raine in at, to the greater increaſe of their wealth. That is the cauſe why I ſayd,that if there were but one drop of fayth among vs, wee would be inflamed after another faſhion to do good. But wee be locked vp, and euery man withholdeth that which hee hath, inſomuch ỷ when we ſhould giue, we think the earth muſt needes faile vs. Wherby we ſhew ourſelues to haue no truſt in God. So then,let vs marke well this text, wherein our Lord to ſoften our hard hearts and to induce vs to compaſſion, ſayth that according to our pitying of the poore and needie,by releeuing their neceſſities: he alſo on his ſide will haue regarde thereof, & multiply vs a hunderedfolde more by his bleſſing, than euer we could haue increaſed ourſelues by our owne couetouſnes & nigardſhip. Inſomuch ỷ we ſhall ſet open a windowe(as I ſayd afore) for Gods grace ỷ is offered vs, if we ſuccour thoſe ỷ haue neede of our helpe. That is ỷ thing which wee haue to conſider as in reſpect of the promiſe which God addeth heere.

Nowe afterwarde followeth the Lawe of the firſt borne, wherein it is ſayd, *That all the firſtborn Males ſhalbe offered vnto God,and that they ſhalbe offered euerie yeere, in the place which the Lorde ſhall haue choſen,ſo they be not faulty,nor in any wiſe blemiſhed.* As for example,if a beaſt were goggle eied, or blinde,or lame, or had any other ilfauorednes or blemiſh in it: it might not be offered; but the beaſts ỷ were ſounde,were to be offered in ỷ temple,as God had cõmanded to bring them to the place ỷ he had choſen, according to that which hath bin tolde you heretofore. We know whereof this Lawe of offering vp the firſtborne thinges ſprang,namely of Gods ſleaing of al ỷ firſtborne of the land of Egypt,as well of men as of beaſtes at ſuch time as he was about to deliuer his people out of the bondage of Egypt, & of his ſparing of the children of Iſrael;for the bloud of the paſcall Lamb was dipped vpõ their dores, & ỷ was done for their preſeruation. Now our Lords will was ỷ the firſtborne ſhould be offered vp to him in acknowledgement of ỷ great benefite. For ſeeing ỷ ſo great a miracle had bin wrought for thẽ,it behoued them to honor God for it,& to be alwaies the more moued to magnifie his grace. But wee ſee how forgetfull we are in ỷ behalfe: inſomuch that if God haue done vs any good turn, in deed we can ſpeake of it & tell it forth with voyce loud ynough for a litle while: but by & by it ſlippeth frõ vs, & we thinke no more of it. But gods powring out of his gratious goodnes towards vs,is to the end ỷ we ſhould mind it continually & beare it in remẽbrãce euer after. Therfore is it requiſite ỷ we ſhould be warned & put in mind of ỷ things which we would elſe forget. Euen ſo ſtoode ỷ caſe as in reſpect of the offering of the firſtborne. For Gods will was ỷ it ſhoulde be a memoriall of the ſayd benefite,ſo as it might neuer bee forgotten. And heereby let vs marke, that although wee haue not the like ceremonies among vs:yet doth God ſtill exhorte vs to bee mindefull of the benefites that we haue receiued at his hande. And the excellenter that his gratious dooinges are, the more ought we to be moued by them to exalt them, yea and to deale in ſuch wiſe that euen when wee be dead and gone, our children may continue in doing the like. Thus ye ſee what we haue to remẽber concerning the order that was ſet downe for the offering vp of the firſt borne thinges.

Exod. 12.12 & 13.2.

It had bin ynough to haue ſpoken of it once: and why then doth God repeate it againe, but by reaſon of mens vnthankefulnes? And this concerneth not the Iewes onely,but alſo vs. Wherefore let vs conſider,that whereas God telleth vs that we ought to be mindfull of ỷ benefits which we haue receiued at his hand,yet we ceaſe not to turne our backes,and to ſhut our eyes ỷ we might not ſee;and if we be driuẽ to remẽber them whether we will or no, yet are we too too laſie in doing it. Conſidering then the naughtineſſe ỷ is in vs,inſomuch that God hath no ſooner turned his hande,but that we haue by & by forgotten what he hath done for vs; or at leaſtwiſe whereas hee woulde that the remembraunce of his benefites ſhould be printed in our heartes,we thinke it ynough to haue borne them in minde a day or twayn: Let vs accuſtome our ſelues to the mindfulneſſe of them, and conſider that wee muſt not only blame the Iewes for their vnthankefulneſſe,but alſo remember that we ourſelues are of nature like vnto them.

Moreouer whereas it is ſayde that the firſt borne thinges which are to be offered, muſt bee ſounde and without blemiſh: hereby we ſee how men wold faine beguyle God with their byſhifts. For they would haue picked the faultieſt of their firſtborne thinges to haue offered vnto God,and they would haue thought with themſelues, well, this ſhall be ſet out to doe ſeruice withall in the Temple; for it will doe mee no ſeruice: yonder beaſt doth but pine away, well, he muſt ſerue for ſacrifice. This were a playne mocking of God: and yet was it a common thing among the Iewes. But let vs come to our ſelues: there is none of vs all but he findeth himſelfe ſo ill minded, as to defraude God continually of ſomewhat that belongeth vnto him. For, (to let paſſe the ceremonie of offering the firſtborne thinges) God requireth that euerie of vs ſhould offer vppe our ſelues vnto him; and it is good reaſon that wee ſhoulde doe ſo: for he hath redeemed vs from thebondage of death. Wee were by nature the bondeſlaues of Sathan, and beholde, GOD hath made vs his owne children: therefore is it verie meete, that wee ſhoulde doe him homage with our perſons. And as touching our ſoules, wee knowe that the ſonne of GOD ſpared not himſelfe for the redeeming of them. And as for our bodies wee hope that they ſhall bee rayſed againe to his heauenly glorie. Is it not meete then that GOD ſhoulde haue the whole poſſeſſion of vs? But when it commeth to the offering vp of ourſelues to him, the world ſeeth ỷ wee goe to it like cripples and purblinde folke

Hebr.2.14.

Who is he that commeth freely vnto God, and that ſuffereth himſelfe to be vtterly caſt down & to be ſtripped out of his ſinful nature? Nay, if we goe towards God with the ſight of one eye, with the ſight of the other we are tied to the vanities of the worlde. If we lende him our eares a little while, by and by wee be liſtening to ſome other thing. If we haue any good thought tending towardes him, we be corrupted a thouſande waies. Such are the ſacrifices yͭ we offer vnto God, that is to wit ſinfull ſacrifices & full of corruption. To be ſhort, howſoeuer the world go, God can haue no right at our handes. Cal he neuerſomuch vpon vs, & be he neuer ſo importunate with vs, yet are we ſo hardharted, yͭ we will neuer yeeld him his due. Thus we ſee that although the ceremony of offering yͤ firſt borne as wel of cattell as of men, is taken away: yet this Law is not ſuperfluous among Chriſtians: but vnder the ſhadowes of Moſeſes lawe, God ſheweth vs after what ſort we ſhould come vnto him nowadayes: that is to wit, not limping, nor as purblinde folke ranging here and there: but yͭ we ſhould looke to the purging of the wicked affections that are in vs, ſo as wee may come to him ſounde both in bodie & ſoule. True it is that doe what we can, it is not poſſible for vs to be without a great number of vices in vs: but yet muſt not thoſe vices be nouriſhed, neither muſt we flatter our ſelues. If any of vs feele anie imperfections in himſelfe, he muſt miſlike of it, and being ſorie for it, wee muſt deſire GOD to purge and clenſe vs from our ſinnes, that we may be ridde from all the corruptions that hinder vs to become acceptable ſacrifices vnto him. When we go that way to worke, that is to ſay, when euerie of vs fighteth againſt his owne ſinnes by true repentance; although there be many things 1.Ioh 1.7. amiſſe in vs, yet will our Lorde receiue vs, and not ſhake vs off. For we knowe that the bloud of our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt ſerueth to ſcoure out all our ſpottes. And that is the cauſe why it is ſayd Hebr. 13.15. that our ſacrifices are offered to God the father in his name. Seeing then that Ieſus Chriſte is there aunſwering for vs, although there be ſpots in vs, yet are they not imputed to vs. But yet muſt we on our ſide endeuour to amende them, and by that meane acknowledge the thing that is ſayde heere, that is to wit; wee muſt not offer faultie ſacrifices vnto God, nor reſemble the hypocrites, which come to him for faſhions ſake, but in deede make none account of him: ſo as we ſhould make a faire face of it to the worldewarde, and in the meane while foſter ſome ſecret poyſon within, but that we come right foorth to our God as he commaundeth vs. Thus ye ſee in effect what we haue to remember vpon this ſentence of Moſeſes, where hee ſpeaketh of the firſtborne.

Beſides this, our Lords meaning was that the firſt borne ſhould be valued at a ſumme of mony as well of the cattell as of other things: ſo as the thing that was alwayes aimed at, was the mindefulneſſe of Gods benefites. But as concerning theſe things we will not enter into them as now; for this text requireth it not, neither doth yͤ time ſerue for it. It ſufficeth vs in fewe words to know that our Lordes meaning heere, is that when we haue receiued any gratious good turne, or that he hath beſtowed any benefit vpon vs, the remẽbrance thereof ſhould continue with vs, not for a day or two, but for euer: and that the fathers ſhould tell their children the ſame, to the ende that he may be honored among vs for euermore. Finally let vs not offer beaſtes vnto him in ſacrifice, as they did vnder the Lawe as appeareth by this figure: but let vs aſſure our ſelues that yͤ acceptable ſacrifice which God requireth, is the offering of ourſelues vnto him both in bodie and Rom.12.1.& 1.Cor.6.20. ſoule, ſo as our whole ſeeking may be to be guyded and gouerned altogether by his holy ſpirite, and that all that euer wee haue be dedicated to his ſeruice, and applyed to the vſe which he hath ſhewed vs, that he may be glorified in all points.

Nowe let vs fall downe in the preſence of our good God with acknowledgement of our faultes, praying him to make vs feele them better, and that ſeeing there is nothing in vs but all manner of frowardneſſe & leaudnes, we may ſeeke to be renued in ſuch ſort, that as long as we liue in this mortal life, our whole ſeking may be to be guided to the happie ende which we looke for in heauẽ; and yͭ in the meane time we may liue after ſuch a ſorte in this worlde, as he may be glorified in vs, and that whẽ it ſhall pleaſe him to take vs hence, wee may yeelde our ſelues obediently into his handes, aſſuring ourſelues yͭ ſith he ſheweth him ſelfe ſo gratious and liberall towardes vs, as to gouerne vs in this tranſitorie life, & of his goodnes giueth vs al things behoouefull & neceſſary, wee neede not to doubt but that he will make vs to attaine to the perfection of the thinges which are nowe hidden, & which ſhall not bee opened vnto vs, vntill the comming of our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt. That it may pleaſe him to graunt this grace not onely to vs, but alſo to all people and nations of the earth, &c.

On Tewſday the fifth of Nouember. 1555.

The XCvij. Sermon which is the firſt vpon the ſixteenth Chapter.

THou ſhalt keepe the moneth of new fruites, that thou maieſt keepe Paſſeouer to the Lorde thy God. For in the moneth of new fruites the Lorde thy God brought thee out of the Lande of Egypt.

2 And thou ſhalt ſacrifice the Paſſeouer to the Lorde thy GOD, euen

Sheepe and Oxen, in the place which the Lorde thy GOD will chooſe to put his name therein.

3 Thou ſhalt eate no leauen breade in that feaſt: Seuen dayes ſhalt thou eate vnleauened bread, euen the bread, of ſorowe. For thou cameſt in haſte out of the Lande of Egypt: to the ende thou be mindefull of the day of thy departing out of the Lande of Egypt all the dayes of thy life.

4 And there ſhal no leauen be ſeene in thy houſe, during the ſeuen daies in all thy coaſtes. Alſo ye ſhall not leaue of the fleſhe that is ſacrificed from the euening of the former day till the next morning.

THis preſent chapter treateth of the three feaſts which God ordeined among the Iewes: that is to wit, the feaſt of Eaſter or paſſouer, yͤ feaſt of Pentecoſt or Whitſontide, & the feaſt of Tabernacles or Tentes. Firſt hee treateth of the Paſſeouer, & God ordeineth that it ſhould be diligently obſerued: for it was a memorial of great importance, whereby the people were put in mind, how they had beene redeemed, & put in poſſeſſion of the inheritance that had bin promiſed vnto them. It was behooue full that yͤ ſame ſhould be knowen: for it was the fundation of all the benefits which the Iewes had receiued at Gods hande, & which they looked for afterwarde. Without that, they had bin no people ſeparated & dedicated to god, neither had they had any hope of ſaluation: for the couenãt made with their fathers had bin diſfeated. Therefore is it not without cauſe, that God would haue that day kept holy, & with ſuch ceremonie. In like caſe was it with the feaſt of Tabernacles, as wee ſhall ſee heereafter. For it ſerued to put the Iewes in minde of their going out of Egypt, and that whereas they had dwelt long time in the wilderneſſe, without houſe or home, and yet God had euer preſerued them: it behooued them likewiſe to acknowledge yͤ ſame benefite. But we will treate of euery feaſt in his dewe order.

Preſently we haue to ſpeake of the paſſeouer. But before I go any further, we muſt marke alſo that God reſpected not only what he had done already; but alſo ment therewithall there ſhould be a figure of thinges to come, whereof we haue now the trueth & ſubſtance, ſince the time yͭ our lord Ieſus Chriſt hath bin diſcouered to yͤ world. That is the cauſe why S. Paul telleth yͤ Coloſſians, yͭ theſe thinges were but ſhadowes, yͤ body wherof is in Chriſt Ieſus. Col.2.17. True it is yͭ he ſpeaketh not there expreſly of Eaſterday by name: but yet vnder the name of Sabbat, he comprehendeth all the feaſtes, & likewiſe al the Ceremonies that depended vpon thẽ. To be ſhort, God had a double reſpect in ordeining the day of the Paſſeouer. The one was to do the people of Iſrael to vnderſtand, yͭ they came not into poſſeſſion of yͤ Land of Chanaan by their own power: but yͭ they had bin led in thither by the hande of God. And becauſe they had bin deliuered by miracle out of yͤ land of Egypt; Gods wil was yͭ the ſame ſhould be declared. Againe, foraſmuch as the ſame deliuerance was a figure of the deliueraunce yͭ was to be hoped for by our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt: this feaſt of Paſſeouer extẽded yet further, yͭ is to wit, yͭ whẽ the people ate of the paſcal Lamb (as they called it) they ſhould thinke thus with thẽſelues: This is a ſhadow & figure of the Sacrifice which ſhalbe once offered vp, wherby the world ſhalbe reconciled & ſet free. And although the thing were not yet apparant to the eye. Yet behoueth it the faithfull to inure thẽſelues to the hope of the redeemer whõ God had promiſed them. And in that reſpect ſayth S. Paul in the firſt to yͤ Corinthians, 1.Cor.5.7. yͭ Ieſus Chriſt is our Paſſeouer or Paſcall Lambe, and yͭ he is ſacrificed for vs, and that we muſt now eate of that ſacrifice: howbeit not with the leauen of malice and deceitefulnes, but with righteouſneſſe and ſoundneſſe. That is the one point which we haue to remember.

And that the Paſcall Lamb was not a bare ceremonie without doctrine, it appeareth by that which is written in yͤ twelfth of Exodus; where it Exod.12.26 is ſaid, yͭ when the Lamb is ſacrificed as it is a eating, if their childrẽ aske what it meaneth: their fathers ſhall anſwere, The Lorde brought vs out of the land of Egypt where we were in bondage, & therfore he wil haue this thing done yerely in remẽbrance thereof: not yͭ the doing thereof one only day may diſcharge vs: but yͭ the ſame ſhould continue printed in our hearts, ſo as in inioying the land of Chanaan, we may vnderſtand yͭ wee cõquered it not by our own ſtrẽgth, but through his good pleaſure, becauſe it was his will to harbour vs here, according to yͤ promiſe which hee had made to our forefathers. We ſee then howe the feaſt of Paſſeouer, was not a ceremony without inſtruction: but yͭ it conteined doctrine in it. And it is an article of great importance. For the world would alwaies haue a great number of ceremonies to no purpoſe: & in the meane while it ſeemes ynough to haue ſtore of gay ſhowes. But on yͤ the cõtrary part, God telleth vs, yͭ ceremonies are but toyes & trifles, vnleſſe they leade vs further, & behight vs things cõcerning our ſaluatiõ, ſo as we be taught & cõfirmed in the faith by meanes of them. If yͭ be not in thẽ, they be ſtarke baggage, & nothing worth. Nay, they be nothing els than a corrupting of yͤ ſeruice of God, and the high way to lead vs to ſuperſtition and ydolatry.

As for example, wee ſee howe they make a great number of diſguiſinges in the Popedome: but in the meane while they wote not what any of thoſe things meane. If ye come to their Maſſe, there they play an enterlude, where there are as many fonde toyes as can be. In deede the wretched worlde is rauiſhed at them: but that is becauſe they knowe nothing, but are vtterly ſotted, and yet they beare themſelues in hande that they haue done a dowtie deede, and ẏ God ought to like very well of it, when they haue ſo beſtirred themſelues. But (as I tolde you afore) they be but vaine & fonde Apiſh toyes. And why ſo? For God neuer ment to ordeine any ceremonie among his people, which conteined not ſome good inſtruction, and ſerued not to ſome good ende. And therefore lette vs marke well, that whereas the Iewes had ẏ feaſt of Paſſeouer, they had Gods worde alſo, whereby they were warranted ẏ it was not inuented at the pleaſure of men. For God not onely gaue a prefixed commandement as ſaying: You ſhall obſerue ſuch a day: but alſo a doctrine with it, & willed ẏ the fathers ſhould teach it their children, & put thē in remēbrance of the deliuerance ẏ had bin made, as in deede it was as excellent a deede as might be. That then was of his appointment.

And ſo let vs beare in minde, that if we nowadayes haue ceremonies without inſtruction, they ſhalbe all condemned of God, who vtterly miſliketh them, and we can not alleadge them to be his ſeruice. For he declareth and auoweth it to be but fooliſh ſuperſtition, when men turne away from that marke, and that it is the next way to put vs quite beſides our ſaluation. And heerein we may defie all the houge heape of pompes wherewith the Papiſtes will needes ſerue GOD: for there is nothing in them that God auoweth. Alſo wee be warned to mingle nothing with the pure ſimplicitie of the Sacramentes and Ceremonies which GOD woulde haue to bee obſerued noweadayes. Let vs holde vs contented with that which is ſhewed vs: for if wee adde neuer ſo little to it, ſurely wee ſhall make ſuch a minglemangle as will bee nothing worth, after the manner of the Papiſtes, who (as wee ſee) haue inuented many thinges of their own head. Wee muſt haue this and that, ſay they, Why ſo? To what purpoſe? O (ſay they) it will ſerue for ſuch a thing: but in the meane whyle there is no inſtruction to Godwarde. Is it their part to cauſe a doctrine to bee brought in? It were meete that God ſhould ſpeake. And when men heare him, then euery one ſhall be edified. But when men thruſt themſelues in, and fall to forging of fonde deuotions without authoritie from GOD: all muſt needes be caſt downe. The worlde ſees how the Papiſts haue corrupted the true Sacramentes. In Baptiſme, the water hath beene eſteemed as nothing in the Popedome: for it is no matter if the infantes piſſe in it. But as for the holy creame that is in it, O, it is not for any man to touch that: for that is too heauenly a thing. And yet notwithſtanding the water is the ſubſtance of that Sacramēt, and the whole perfection thereof. But as for the creame, who deuiſed it? It is a ſtinking greace that men haue charmed, and blowed vpon, like ſorcerers. And ſhould that be had in ſuch reuerence, that the Sacrament which proceedeth from the ſonne of God, ſhoulde be had in no eſtimation for it? Moreouer, the water (by their reckening) is not good, vnleſſe it haue beene coniured, and that a number of charmes haue beene made ouer it, to amaze the ignorant. And therefore ſo much the better ought we to beare this leſſon in minde, that wee may be fenced againſt all Satans inuentions; which is, that ſith wee ſee our mindes ſo tickeliſh, that wee woulde faine ſtill inuent ſome newe thing, and we beare ourſelues in hande that wee haue ſpunne a faire threede, when ſome newe Ceremonie is come foorth by our meanes: it ſtandeth vs in hande to thinke thus, yea but GOD diſpiſeth all this geere, yea and he ſheweth vs that we do but peruert his ſeruice, when wee adde any thing after that faſhion, of our owne. Then is it an infallible doctrine that no Ceremonies are behoofeful or to be made account of among the faithful, vnleſſe they carry inſtruction with them. And that inſtruction muſt come of GOD: for it is his office to teach vs, hee reſerueth that authoritie to himſelfe. And therfore it is to be concluded, that the ceremonies which are ſet forth by men, are but trifles & geugawes, howe great a ſhow of wiſedome ſoeuer there ſeeme to be in them.

And hereby we ſee alſo that it was ſuperſtitiouſly done of ſuch as beare the name of Chriſtians, to bring in a feaſt of Paſſeouer vnder pretence that the Iewes had it: for the reſpectes are farre diuers. I meane not that we may not haue one day in the yeere, whereon to celebrate the remembraunce of the reſurrection of our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt: for we muſt not runne ſo rigorouſly into extremities, as that our infirmitie might not haue ſome helpe, to quicken it vppe withall, that we might the better bethink vs all the time of our life, what benefit the ryſing againe of our Lord Ieſus Chriſt hath brought vnto vs. Well then may we haue a day appointed to that purpoſe for orders ſake: but to make a ſeruice of God thereof, or to thinke that we ought to faſhion ourſelues after the example of the Iewes; that as they had their paſſeouers, ſo ought we too: it were an abuſe that tendeth to the turning of all thinges vpſide downe, and a putting of a veyle before the face of Ieſus Chriſt, ẏ men might not know the light of the Goſpell. Theſe things (as I ſaide) were but ſhadowes, whereof we haue as now the body and ſubſtance: and therefore it is a hiding of Ieſus Chriſt, whē men bring in feaſts after the maner of the Iewes.

But nowe let vs come to that which is cōmanded here concerning the Eaſterday of the Iewes *Ye ſhall eate vnleauened breade or cakes* (ſayth he) *by the ſpace of ſix dayes, and there ſhall no leauened bread be founde in your houſes.* This was done becauſe the Iewes departed in haſt out of the Land of Egypt. And it ought to haue made them to think that they went not out with banners diſplayed, as though their enemies had ſtoode ſo in feare of thē ẏ they durſt not quetch againſt thē: for they went a way like a ſort of poore fugitiues. The women caried their children vpon their ſhoulders, the men tooke vp their ſtuffe in their neckes, and fled away priuily, and their enemies would faine haue purſewed them, & they were of ſtrength & power ynough to haue done it. The Iewes on the other ſide were a people yͭ could no skill to handle a ſworde: for they had bin helde in ſuch ſlauerie, yͭ they durſt not once looke vpon a ſworde or any weapon of warre. They had bin vſed like Aſſes and Oxen. Their ſtate had bin as ſlauiſhe as could bee. Well then; when the time came that they ſhould depart, it was ſayde vnto them, Exod.12.39 Get ye hence. And what bread ſhal wee haue to eat? What prouiſion ſhal there be by the way? Grinde your corne, and truſſe it vp quickely in meale vpon your ſhoulders, and as the time will ſerue ye ſhal bake it by the way and eate it. Now when the people had this ſolemnitie yeerely, wherein they ate cakes whithout leauen: it ſerued to put thē in minde, that when their fathers departed out of Egypt, they were a poore fugitiue people, that ranne away like a Lambe that is purſued by wolues. Ye ſee in what plight they were. Needes therefore muſt it bee concluded, that God had preſerued them after a wonderfull faſhion. For what were the Egyptians? A nation full of pride and crueltie. A mightie nation, a nation yͭ truſted to their owne force & power; & moreouer a nation yͭ bare deadly hatred to the poore Iewes, an vtter enemy to thē, & ſuch a one as deſired nothing ſo much as to roote out yͤ remembrance of them, as the tyranny of Pharao had well ſhewed. Now then the Iewes were put in minde yͭ God had made them to ſcape out of their enemies handes, ſo as they coulde not but knowe yͭ they had bin helped by him, & that the prayſe of their life was to bee yeelded vnto him. As if they ſhould ſay, Thou Lord haſt deliuered vs, not only from yͤ ſtate of bondage but alſo as it were by fetching vs out of our graues. For wee were as it were ſtarke dead, and had bin paſt all hope of recouery, if thou haddeſt not reached vs thy mightie arme. That was the thing wherof the Iewes were put in minde, when God commanded them to eate vnleauened bread. And it was his wil yͭ this ſhould be done, not only yͤ ſame night yͭ they ate the paſcall Lambe: but allo that the ſame Ceremony ſhould be continued by the ſpace of ſix dayes together. And why? God ſhewed therein, yͭ men be not throughly framed at yͤ firſt brunt to the doctrine yͭ he ſetteth downe vnto them, though yͤ ſame be cleere ynough. Doth God ſpeake? There is no darkneſſe in his ſpeech. But yet howſoeuer the caſe ſtande, wee can not faſten vpon it. For we be ſo ſlowe minded, yͭ wee can neuer attaine to his meaning, vntill he haue repeated our leſſon to vs diuerſe times. That is the cauſe why hee commaunded expreſly that they ſhould eate vnleauened bread by the ſpace of ſixe dayes together. As if hee ſhoulde ſay, truely the very one nightes eating of the paſcall Lambe with vnleauened breade, ought to bee a ſufficient inſtruction to you what is ment by the ſame. But what? I ſee well yee be ſhortwitted, inſomuch that if yee haue hearde any thing at Gods mouth, yee forget it out of hande. And therefore when I intende to teach you, I muſt deale wͭ you as it were by meaſure and compaſſe. And therefore if ye haue a good long time afore hande to bethinke ye of the eating of the paſcall Lambe, yee will be the better prepared vnto it. Therefore ſhall yee haue a whole weeke, wherein ye ſhall eate no leauened breade; by meanes whereof yee ſhalbe quickened vp to thinke vpon the great and ineſtimable benefit which God beſtowed vpon your fathers in deliuering them out of the Lande of Egypt, ſo as you may beare well in minde that his deliuering of them was after a ſtraunge manner, and that hee was faine to worke after a heauenly faſhion, becauſe ye were in ſo wretched plight, that yee might ſeeme to haue beene already ſwallowed vp of death, and to haue beene already buried in your graues. Nowe we ſee why the Iewes were expreſly commanded to abſteine from the eating of leauened bread.

There were other Ceremonies alſo; that is to wit, the girding vp of their garmentes, the putting on of their ſhooes, and the taking of their walking ſtaues in their handes. Exod.12.11 For in thoſe Eaſt countryes they ware long garmentes after the ſame manner that the Turkes doe at this day. And when they traueiled by the way, they truſſed vp their garments aboue their loynes, as the gray Fryers & Iacobines or white Fryers do, and ſuch other that are ſo greatly combered with clothes. Nowe God did the Iewes to vnderſtande that they ſhoulde bee as wayfarers when they ate the paſcall Lambe, and that they ſhould eate it in haſte, to put them in remembraunce of the ſayde departure out of Egypt. And our Lord did ſet downe this figure as a lookingglaſſe for the Iewes to beholde howe their forefathers ate the paſcall Lambe, euen when they were haſted to go their wayes, that they might acknowledge ſo great a benefit. And herein we ſee how God had a reſpect to the rudeneſſe of his people as in deede all the Ceremonies which wee haue ſerue but for our infirmitie. What doth Baptiſm or the Lordes Supper bring vs? Doe they make the death & paſſion of our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt of more value than it is of it ſelfe? What helpe find we in the bread, or in the wine, or in the water, to that purpoſe? Gods meaning then was not to ad any thing to yͤ which we haue receiued in our Lord Ieſus Chriſt: but to beare with our rudenes becauſe he ſees vs to be vnable to comprehende the thinges that are gotten for vs by our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt. For inaſmuch as they bee too high for vs, God helpeth vs vp to thē by the outwarde & viſible ſignes which we haue in yͤ Sacraments. But it behoued the Iewes to haue mo ſuch helps than we. For they had not ſo plaine a doctrine as is now conteined in yͤ Goſpel. Again, Ieſus Chriſt was not yet come, in whom we ſee all yͭ euer can be wiſhed for our ſaluation. The heauens were then opened vnto vs, when his ſide was opened Col.1.22. to waſhe vs cleane, and his body offered vp for a ſufficient ſacrifice to reconcile vs vnto God his father, and to doe away all our offences and tranſgreſſions. When theſe thinges were done, then had we a full warrant of our ſaluatiō. Therfore wee in theſe dayes neede not to be helped with ſo houge a heape of Ceremonies as the ancient fathers vnder the Lawe were. It is ynough that we be ledde to our Lord Ieſus Chriſt, wherunto fewe ſignes ſuffice, that is to wit Baptiſme and the Lorde his Supper. For ſeeing that the ſonne of God is contented with thoſe two: we alſo ought to reſt there. Neuertheleſſe, wee ſee heere howe God vouchſafed to ſtoope to the infirmitie of his people, by giuing them a liuely repreſentation of their departing out of the Land of Egypt, and by ſetting them downe as it were in a lookingglaſſe or painted table, for them to beholde howe he had deliuered them: that is to wit, like a ſort of poore people, that were taking their iourney to flee away priuily, and were ſo diſtreſſed as it was not for them to turne heade againſt ſo mightie enemies, who were able to haue ſwallowed thē vp at the firſt chop without any reſiſtance. Seeing then that the Iewes had ſuch inſtruction; they ſhoulde haue conſidered thus with themſelues: How commeth it to paſſe that we be aliue at this day, but becauſe our God hath preſerued vs? And how ſhold our ſtate ſtand but onely by his meere mercy? For we had periſhed if he had not reached out his arme to bring vs out of the Land of Egypt. Thus much concerning this point.

Nowe it was commaunded further, that the Exod.12.8. paſcall Lamb ſhould be eaten with bitter herbes. And our Lorde himſelfe ſpeaketh here expreſly of the bread of ſorrow: as if he had ſaid, although ye eate the paſcall Lambe in reſt, and when yee be come to the inioying of the inheritance which I haue promiſed you: yet muſt you haue a memoriall of the anguiſh wherein your forefathers were, and you muſt thinke yͭ without my fauour you ſhould haue had neither paſcall Lambe nor bit of bread to eat at this day: for ye ſhould haue beene vtterly rooted out of the worlde. Conſider it therefore, and that yee may be the better moued thereunto, take bitter herbes, that is to ſay, abſteine from all deintineſſe in your eating of the paſcall Lambe. For the Iewes were not reſtreined from taking their repaſt after their eating of the paſcall Lambe, as wee ſee that our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt in eating of the Paſcall Lamb with his diſciples, inſomuch as they did not only ſit downe at a table, but alſo lye downe after the manner of olde time, which was to eate their meales lying halfe a tone ſide. Certaine it is that Gal.4.4.5. he kept the Lawe to the vttermoſt: for hee ſubmitted himſelfe to it to ſet vs free from it. Then muſt we note that our Lord ate the paſcall Lamb after the ſame maner that was ordeined by Moſes, that is to wit, ſtanding vpon his feete, with his ſtaffe in his hande, and his ſhoes on his feete, and hauing his loynes girded vp like a wayfarer. And after this was done hee tooke his accuſtomed repaſt, for this was a ſolemne ſacrifice, and therefore wee muſt not wonder that it was ſeparated from the common meates: for it behoued all the folke of one houſe to eate thereof, ſo as if there were thirtie or fortie perſons in a houſe, euery man hadde his portion of it. And if the houſholde were not great ynough, two or three houſholdes were called together and they mette in one place, that the ſacrifice might be eaten vp haſtily. A Lambe was roaſted in haſt and eaten vp with a morſell of a ſweete cake: yea and they were forbidden to ſeeth it, to ſhewe that they could haue no leaſure to tarrie till it were halfe boyled, but they were faine to deuour it haſtily, like folke that were to go their waies out of hand. But howſoeuer the caſe ſtoode, it behoued them to eat it with bitter herbs. Whereby we be done to vnderſtande, that deinties doe keepe vs from the dewe conſideration of Gods benefites, to be rauiſhed by them. For although it bee ſayde, Thou ſhalt be merrie before thy God: yet are we Deut.12.12. continually helde backe in this worlde, when we haue ſome allurement to withdrawe vs frō God. For if our fleſhe haue her likinges, then are wee ouertaken in ſuch ſorte, that we ſtye not vp aloft to beholde well the ſpiritual grace of God. Thus yee ſee that the cauſe why the bitter herbes were put to the ſacrifice, was to make men to conſider the better after what manner the people hadde beene deliuered, beeing erſt in ſo extreeme anguiſh as they were not able to endure any more.

Beſides this, they were alſo forebidden to ad- Exod.12.43 44.48. mit any heathen man to it, vnleſſe hee were circumciſed. True it is that God commanded that the bondmen being ſtraungers borne ſhould eate thereof. Yea, but that was not before they were firſt incorporated into his Church by receiuing the ſigne of circumciſion. Hereby it is done vs to vnderſtande, that it was a peculiar token giuen of God to his owne people. For Sacraments are peculiar to the Church. They be no things for men to put to vnholy vſes, nor to leaue at aladuenture. For our Lorde will haue vs to bee gathered together vnder his name. When we vſe the Sacramentes, let vs thinke thus with our ſelues, Beholde here is a treaſure that God hath kept and layde vp for vs as for his children. And in deede, if a man ſhould noweadayes admitte as many to the Lordes Supper as woulde offer to come to it: were it not a defiling of the Sacrament? And yet there are a number to be ſeene, which would haue al men indifferently both tag and ragge to be admitted to it: but ſuch folkes neuer wiſt yet howe to vſe the Sacramentes aright. For (as ſhall be declared hereafter) the Supper of our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt is to vs at this day the ſame that the Paſcall Lambe was, to the people of the Iewes. Wherefore let vs marke in fewe wordes, howe our Lorde hath ſhewed that this Sacrament was a warrant giuen of him to his people, that he took thē to be his Church, and therefore that it ought not to bee ſet foorth at aduenture to all commers. True it is that Circumciſion likewiſe was a Sacrament: but there was diuerſitie of reſpectes betweene the one and the other. For by circumciſion, folke were receiued into the number of Gods people, ſo as it was an enterāce into the Church as Baptiſme is at this day: by meanes whereof ſuch as by nature are not nōbered in yͤ cōpany of Gods children, are receiued and incorporated into thē by Baptiſme. And ſo ſtoode the caſe with yͤ Iewes for circumciſion: But as for the Paſcall Lambe, that was to be kept to the Iewes themſelues.

Now it is alſo ſayde , *that it was not to bee eaten throughout the whole Countrey; but that it was to bee doone in the place which the Lorde had choſen to put his name in* . And truely this was not ſhewed them at the firſt day, inſomuch that they had beene a long time in the land of Chanaan, eare the Arke had any certaine reſting place, there was no ſuch place aſſigned to it. But yet it behoued them alwaies to be obedient to the ceremonie Deut.12.11. of reſorting to yͤ place where the Arke was, vntil mount Sion was marked out. And then were al men bound to repaire thither, euen from the vttermoſt borders of the Countrey: all men were to come to Ieruſalem, except they were letted by ſickneſſe or old age. And why? It was not to giue a preſident for the Pilgrimages which yͤ Papiſts inuented afterward: For in ſo doing they ſhewed themſelues to differ nothing at all from the Iewes. Againe, it is not for them to excuſe themſelues by the example of the Iewes: for yͤ Iewes had a commaundement of God, but the Papiſtes made their vagaries for their own pleaſure: wherin they vtterly renounced Ieſus Chriſt & ouerthrew that which is ſayd in the fourth of Iohn 4.21. S. Iohn, namely that yͤ time was come yͭ god wold no more be worſhipped in any place certain, but would haue his name called vpon euery where throughout yͤ whole world. Beſides this, we muſt marke that there was a ſpeciall reaſon why God would haue the Iewes to reſorte to Ieruſalem to ſacrifice the paſcall Lambe there: namely to the end yͭ no man ſhould attempt to alter any thing in yͤ order which he had ſet by the Law. And (as I haue ſaid) this ancient ceremonie was a thing of great importance, as wherby the people were informed of their Redeemer, euen that he had brought them out of the land of Egypt, & that he would ſend thẽ yet another redeemer, by whom the whole world ſhould be redeemed. Loe heere a ceremonie that imported a wonderfull ſecret, & therfore it was meete yͭ it ſhould be kept purely. For the doing wherof, god called al the Iewes into one body yͭ hauing yͤ Sãctuary & the temple there before their eyes, they might be the better put in mind yͭ it was not lawfull for them to adde any thing at their owne pleaſure, but that it behoued them to follow yͤ cõmõ doctrine, to vnderſtand Exod.25.8. yͭ God repreſented himſelfe there, and dwelt among thẽ by meanes of the Arke. Seeing then that the people were ſo gathered together, they could not but be reſtrained frõ ſtarting out into fooliſh inuentions: and needes muſt the doctrine be retained therwithal, as I haue ſaid afore: for yͤ ceremonie was nothing of it ſelfe, it had bin but as a Maygame or a mockerie. That was yͤ cauſe why yͤ people were drawẽ to Ieruſalẽ, as to yͤ place which God had appointed. And ſo we ſee now why it was ſaid yͭ they ſhoulde not do ſacrifice in any of their cities or townes, but aſſemble al together in the Citie of Ieruſalem.

It is inioyned further, that they ſhoulde not Exod.12.46 breake a bone of the Paſcal Lamb. And why ſo? As if it were ſaid yͭ it was a meate to bee eaten in haſt, (as I haue ſhewed afore,) ſo as they were forbiddẽ to boile any part of it. And hereby God ment to ſhew yet better yͤ haſt which the people made in departing out of yͤ land of Egypt, forſomuch as it was not for them to ſet the pot vpon yͤ fire to boile it: for they could neuer haue had time to do it. Therfore were they faine to make haſt, & to eate this Lamb halfe roſted as people preaſſed vpon by their enemies, & as folke yͭ looked to haue bin ouertaken euery minute of an houre: by reaſon whereof they had no leaſure to ſtand gnawing of yͤ bones, or to breake them to get out yͤ marow, as folk do when they haue time at wil. None of this could they do: but were faine to eate yͤ ſacrifice in haſt, & to caſt away yͤ reſt. We ſee then as nowe, yͭ as concerning yͤ deliuerance yͭ had bin wrought alreadie, things were as it were pointed out with yͤ finger in the Paſcall Lamb: & for this cauſe yͤ very terme it ſelf is expreſſed here, for yͤ Hebrew worde *Paſſah* is the ſame yͭ we call *Paſſing* in Ingliſh. And by yͤ word our Lord confirmed yͤ thing which we haue ſpoken of before, namely yͭ this Ceremonie was not a fond deuiſe to buſie mens heades withall as though they were little babes: but yͭ it importeth inſtruction to edifie folk withall, to the end they ſhould think thus: This day muſt we do homage to our God for our life, bicauſe he preſerued vs of his owne mere infinite goodnes, by bringing vs out of yͤ land of Egypt. So then God ſpake not ſimply of yͤ things yͭ were to be obſerued: but his meaning was to ſhew the end in ſuch wiſe which he intended, as yͤ people might cõſider, we haue made a Paſſage: & what maner of Paſſage? Euen ſuch a one as we had no legs to go it withall, but God did lift vs vp by his power, and made vs to paſſe ouer it as a gulf of death, not onely in paſſing yͤ red ſea, but alſo whẽ we were yet in Egypt. For before we came at the red ſea, there was another ſtraite to paſſe, which wee ſhoulde neuer haue ſcaped out at, if God had not opened vs yͤ way with his owne hand. Yea & his will was that that day ſhould be obſerued, to the intent that the remembrance therof ſhould be yͤ certainer.

And for the ſame cauſe he poynted out the moneth yͭ anſwereth to March or April. Howbeit not to eyther of them, but bicauſe wee cannot make a certaine report of yͤ monethes of the Iewes to cõpare them wͭ ours. The reaſon wherof is, for yͭ they had their moneths intermingled one with another, bicauſe they tooke them according to yͤ Moone, ſo as they were interlaced together. This moneth therefore was ſometime ſooner and ſometime later, & was named in hebrew *Abib*, which ſignifieth an eare of corne, when it beginneth to ſhoote foorth at the firſt. Not when the eares of Corne are full ripe: but when the corne beginneth newly to ſpindle. In deede the time of it ſelfe importeth nothing: but yet did it ſerue greatly to the inſtructing of the people, bicauſe the ſetting of it down made them to behold the matter the more preſently. Gods putting of thẽ in remembrance of it was ſuch as they could not but know yͤ meane wherby their fathers were brought out of the land of Egypt. And the very night it ſelfe was marked, to yͤ end they ſhold cõſider how god had deliuered them from the thraldom of Pharao. On the other ſide, had the moneth been marked at the pleaſure of men: they wold haue thought it might wel haue beene chaunged for the commoditie of the people. But God commaunded it to be kept, to the end they ſhould know he would haue no part of his ordinance chaunged, nor any man attempt to alter it in any wiſe.

And nowe we haue to marke in effect, that by the ordeining of ẏ Paſſeouer day, God ment to ſet downe a memorial of his doinges among his people, that they might acknowledge his grace, in deliuering them out of the Land of Egypt after that faſhion, and that their children myght know that that was the meanes whereby they were come into the inheritance that had beene promiſed them. Neuertheleſſe, it was not Gods intent to be honoured and ſerued with a trifling Ceremonie: but his mind was that there ſhould be teaching, that men might be edified by it, and that the Iewes might know that Gods calling of them to him, was to bee ſerued by them as their redeemer and father. And therefore he would not haue the Paſcall Lamb eaten by vnholy and vnbeleeuing folke: but that it ſhould bee giuen alonly to ſuch as were circumciſed, and were already of the body of the Church. And ſeeing it is ſo, Let vs remember that in all ſignes which God giueth vs, we muſt haue inſtructiõ annexed to lead vs vnto him. And for as much as we haue the true paſſeouer in our Lord Ieſus Chriſt, as ſhall bee declared to morrow: wee muſt nowadayes ſtep further. And although we haue not the old Ceremonie; yet let vs hold faſt the truth therof, which is brought vs by the ſonne of God, as it is declared vnto vs in theſe dayes by his Goſpell.

Now let vs fall downe before the maieſtie of our good God with acknowledgmẽt of our ſins, praying him to make vs to perceiue in what ſtate we were, when he vouchſafed to call vs to him, ſo as he hath plucked vs out of the gulfe of death, in ſuch ſort as we haue now cauſe to glorifie him, and to giue our ſelues ouer to his ſeruice all the time of our life. And for as much as he not only ſheweth himſelfe to be our father and ſauiour in this tranſitory life, but alſo calleth vs to the euerlaſting inheritance of heauen; according as hee had choſen vs thereto before the creation of the world: let vs tend alwayes thitherward, and bee the more prouoked to labour to that end, ſeeing we haue the helpes and Remedies which he giueth vs, and that the badge is kept among vs as he hath commaunded vs by his word. That it may pleaſe him to graunt this grace not only to vs, but alſo to all people & nations of ẏ earth, &c.

On Wedneſday the vj. of Nouember. 1555.

The XCviij. Sermon which is the ſecond vpon the ſixteenth Chapter.

2,3.4 And thou ſhalt ſacrifice &c.

5 Thou maiſt not ſacrifice the Paſſeouer within any of ẏ gates which the Lord thy God giueth thee:

6 But in the place which the Lord thy God wil chooſe to ſet his name in, there ſhalt thou offer the Paſſeouer at euen, about the going downe of the Sunne, iuſt at the time that thou wenteſt out of Egypt.

7 And thou ſhalt roaſt it, and eate it in the place which the Lord thy God ſhall haue choſen for himſelfe. And the next morning thou ſhalt returne from thence and goe home to thy Tentes.

8 Six dayes ſhalt thou eate vnleauened breade: and on the ſeuenth day which is the ſolemne feaſt of the Lord thy God, thou ſhalt doe no manner of worke.

IT was declared yeſterday, how ẏ by keeping ẏ feaſt of the paſſeouer, the Iewes were put in minde of the deliueraunce of their forefathers made by God. And I toulde you howe it was to double ende. For GODS will was to put his people in remembraunce of the fauour which he had ſhewed to them alreadie: and againe, he ment to leade them to the hope of our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt. It was then but a temporall deliuerance, which God had made of them out of the land of Egypt: but when he ſent his onely ſonne, thẽ deliuered he his people out of a farre worſe bondage than that which we haue ſpoken of. And therfore let vs mark ẏ the Paſcall Lamb was a figure of our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt: which thing S. Paule witneſſeth in expreſſe words, ſaying: Chriſt our Paſſeouer is offered vp. Alſo we knowe the ſentence that is alleaged out of the twelfth of Exodus by S. Iohn, where it is ſaid; Ye ſhal not breake a bone of him. For there he declareth how they came to our Lord Ieſus Chriſt to haue broken his bones after the accuſtomed manner, and found him alreadie dead. And that came to paſſe by the wonderfull prouidence of God, whoſe will it was that the thing which had beene figured in the Paſcall Lambe, ſhould bee layde open to mens eyes in Ieſus Chriſt. And ſo Saint Iohn applyeth this ſentence to the

1.Cor. 5.7.

Iohn 19.36 & Exod. 12. 46.

the perſon of our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt, in ſaying, it is written, Yee ſhall not breake a bone of him. Yea, but God ſpeaketh but onely of the Paſcall Lambe which was offered in thoſe dayes. Yet notwithſtanding his intent was to ſhew, yͭ there was an agreement betweene Chriſt & the Paſſeouer, and that in that viſible ſacrament he ment to foreſhewe the redemption that was not yet ſeene, and that all this was fully accompliſhed in our Lord Ieſus Chriſt. True it is that the Iewes haue not profited by this admonition: for they were the more inhardened by it. But let vs on our ſide learne to referre the thinges that were done by our Lord Ieſus Chriſt, to the things that were forefigured in the lawe, & wee ſhall profit greatly by that meane. For it is not ynough for vs to knowe the ſtorie of the death and Paſſion of our Lord Ieſus Chriſt; but the chiefe point is to reſort to the vſe and fruite of it. And that is much the better attayned vnto, by conſidering the auncient figures. Now it is ſayd, yͭ the Paſcall Lambe was offered vp, to the end that the houſes Exod.12.13 which were marked with the bloud thereof, ſhould bee ſpared of God. For an Angel paſſed ſwiftly through the land of Egypt, and ſlew al the firſt borne both of man and beaſt. There was but one reſeruation, namely the ſacrificing of the Lamb, & looke what doore of a houſe was dipped with the bloud thereof, that houſe did the Lords Angel paſſe ouer. The onely ſafetie then which we haue, when God vttereth his wrath and vengeance through the whole world, is to beare the mark of our Lord Ieſus Chriſt. For inaſmuch as he was ſacrificed for vs, & we bee beſprinkled wͭ his bloud, God acknowledgeth vs for his own, & vpon ſpeciall priuiledge withdraweth his hand from vs, ſo as we bee not compriſed nor incloſed vnder the common curſe of yͤ whole world. For yͤ land of Egypt was at that time as an image of all mankind. And in deede, we be al accurſed by nature: Eph.2.3. & good reaſon it is that God as a iuſt Iudge ſhould execute his vengeance vpon vs. But here the faithfull are diſperſed and mingled with the faithleſſe. And how then are they diſcerned aſunder, ſeeing they dwel together? God can well ynough skill to diſcerne the marke of his ſonne. True it is yͭ the ſtate of our life may well be like yͤ ſtate of the faithleſſe and the deſpiſers of God. But yet howſoeuer we fare, our Lord gathereth vs continually to himſelf. Inſomuch that if we be of his flock, he wilbe merciful to vs euẽ to yͤ end, conditionally alſo yͭ wee beare the bloud of our Lord Ieſus Chriſt for our badge. At yͤ time the Exod.12.22 doores of their houſes were ſprinkled wͭ a branch 1.Pet.1.2. of Hyſop: but as now our beſprinkling muſt bee ſpiritual, as S. Peter telleth vs. Would we then yͭ God ſhould take vs to mercie, when his hand is ſtretched out to puniſh all the world? Let vs vnderſtand yͭ there is no other meane for vs to bee marked by our lord Ieſus chriſt, than only yͤ holy Ghoſt. For his blood is not now a ſhedding, that we might make an outward and viſible ſprinkling of our ſelues with it: but hee hath ſhead it for vs in ſpirite (as the Apoſtle ſpeaketh of it in the Hebr.9.14. Epiſtle to the Hebrewes.) That is to ſay, it was not the only paine that he ſuffred in his body, but alſo the matching of the heauenly power with it, that made the bloud of him to bee our waſhing and clenſing. And when wee haue once beene watred with the holy Ghoſt, then will that bloud be euer freſh and neuer drye. For it is not corruptible, in as much as wee be waſhed and clenſed Hebr.10.20 with it before God. Therefore let vs ſo put the thing in vre which is ſpoken of by Saint Peter, as it may beſprinkle our ſoules. As how? Euen by taking holde by fayth, of the ineſtimable benefite which is brought vs by our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt. And although wee bee full of filth and vncleanneſſe: yet doth not God faile to take vs into his fauour, becauſe the bloud that was once ſhedde for our ſaluation, is ſufficient to waſh out all our ſpots at this day. 1.Iohn 1.7. Thus much for one point.

And therefore let vs reſt vpon this point, that although we ſeeme in this world to bee wrapped vp in the curſe of God with the vnbeleeuers; yet notwithſtanding we ſhall bee preſerued from aboue: and that if the Angell could skill to diſcerne the Iewes which had marked their houſes with the corruptible bloud of a brute beaſte; it is much more likely that God will at this day know the blood of his own ſonne, ſo as we may be diſcerned by it, and not haue his wrath to fall vpon vs. True it is yͭ we may well ſuffer ſome chaſtiſement; for it is good for our ſoules health. But the end therof will alwaies be good, and God will neuer ceaſſe to be ſtill mercifull to vs. That is the firſt matter which we haue to mark as in reſpect of the former ſaying, that our Lord Ieſus Chriſt is the fulfilling of the things that were figured in the law, by the offering of the Paſcal Lambe.

But let vs nowe come backe againe to Saint Paules exhortation. Hee ſayth that becauſe 1.Cor.5.8. our Eaſter lambe is offered vp, wee muſt nowe keepe the feaſt in eating it, howbeit not with the Leauen of naughtineſſe or deceite, but in ſimplicitie and vprightneſſe. Whereas he ſayth that our paſſouer is offered vp, he doth vs to vnderſtand that if we wilbe reconciled to God, we muſt reſorte to the death and paſſion of his Sonne, and not ſurmiſe any other Sacrifice than that, which is the euerlaſting, Hebr.7.24. becauſe the vertue thereof can neuer fayle. And it is a point well worth the noting: For it ſerueth to condemne the abhomination of the Maſſe which is brought into the Popedome. They be not contented with yͤ offering vp of Ieſus Chriſt vnto GOD his Father, and with the one ſatiſfaction which hee hath made to indure for euer: but they beare men in hande that hee is yet ſacrificed dayly; whereas Saint Paule telleth vs that wee muſt holde vs to the Redemption that was purchaſed once for all.

Nowe remayneth that wee eate of this Sacrifice, that is to ſay, that wee become partakers thereof. As if hee had ſayde, there are two thinges in the paſcall Lambe: the one was the ſprinkling of the Lambes bloud, and the other was the eating of his fleſhe roaſted. Now in deede it is the ſonne of God that hath offred this ſacrifice, and that office belongeth to him alone. Hebr.7.24. The ſprinkling of his blood is made in our hearts by the holy Ghoſt: for that cannot be attributed to yͤ cunning of men. We muſt now become partakers of this Sacrifice: not by eating Ieſus chriſt after a fleſhly maner; but S.Paul had an Eph.5.30. eye to this partaking that is giuen vs by the Goſpel. Iohn 14.19. 20. For we be members of his body, and he knitteth vs ſo vnto him, yͤ looke whatſoeuer he hath, he cōmunicateth yͤ ſame vnto vs; ſo as we liue in him & he alſo in vs. And for as much as there is no ſeueraltie between yͤ ſonne of God & yͤ faithfull: therfore is he our meate. For we be no leſſe fed wͭ his power & his very ſubſtāce as in reſpect of our ſoules, than our bodies are fed and nouriſhed with bread. Againe, to the intent we ſhould vnderſtand that wee haue not our ſuſtenance by haulfes in Ieſus Chriſt: he addeth wine alſo, to ſhew that hee is our drinke as well as our meate. That is yͤ thing which S.Paule ment to betoken, in ſaying yͤ we muſt now eat of this Eaſter lamb: that is to wit, that as now we ſhould ſo cōmunicate with the ſonne of God, as we might be knit vnto him by the ſecret and maruelous working of his holy ſpirite, and he become our foode and nouriſhment, & we be ſuſteined by the ſame, bicauſe we muſt elſe needs decay through our own feblenes. And this eating is not for once a yeere; but continually during all the time of our life.

Then let vs learne, that as long as we be in this world, we muſt dayly frame our ſelues to the ſpirituall fellowſhip which we haue with our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt, and to the confirming of the vnion more and more: for without that, the crucifying of our Lord Ieſus Chriſt will boote vs nothing at al. He is the redeemer of all the whole world: & yet notwithſtanding, what a nomber is there, which reape nothing elſe by his death but the greater condemnation? And that is bicauſe they refuſe ſo excellent a benefite, wherby they make themſelues vnworthy of it, and exclude themſelues quite and cleane from it. But when wee communicate with him by faith; then doe we ratifie the grace that was purchaced for vs. And therefore let vs marke, that to bee partakers of the fruite and operation of the death and paſſion of our Lord Ieſus Chriſt, we muſt bee linked vnto him from day to day by faith, profiting Eph.4.13. 15.16. and growing ſtill in that holy vnion, vntill wee haue the thing wholly and perfectly, which wee haue as yet but in part. After that maner ought we to eate yͤ ſacrifice, to keepe the paſſeouer wel. And for as much as our faith increaſeth according to our profiting in the holy ſcripture: if we intend to communicate wel wͭ the ſonne of God; euery one of vs muſt exerciſe our ſelues in the doctrine of the Goſpell, and match the ſame wͭ prayer, beſeeching God yͤ ſeeing he hath vouchſafed to call vs once into his ſonnes company, he will maintaine vs therein, & neuer ſuffer vs to be ſeparated or wͭdrawen from it any more. Therefore muſt we ſeeke all yͤ meanes which our Lord hath ordeined, to ſtabliſh the communion which we ought to haue in our Lord Ieſus Chriſt.

1.Cor.5.8. Now S. Paule addeth, that we cannot be partakers of yͤ ſonne of God, nor haue any acquaintance with him, if we bee dubble minded yͤ there be any fraude or malice in vs. Then muſt we be changed if we wil haue Ieſus Chriſt for our ſuſtenance, that is to ſay, if we will haue him to feede vs with his ſubſtance. Certaine it is yͤ malice and hypocriſie are ſo rooted in vs, yͤ we muſt be faine to fight much wͭ them, before we can be rid of thē. S.Paul then ſheweth yͤ faithful there, yͤ they muſt be reformed, or elſe Ieſus Chriſt will cut thē off frō his body. And ſo although yͤ hypocrits pretend to ſeeke Ieſus Chriſt & to ſticke throughly to him: yet notwithſtanding they haue none acquaintance at al wͭ him. For why? They be things vtterly vnpoſſible, yͤ Ieſus Chriſt ſhould dwell in vs, & yet neuertheles that all maner of deceite & naughtineſſe ſhould raigne in vs. And therefore in ſtead of abſteining from leauened bread as the fathers of old time did in eating of yͤ paſcal lamb vnder the law: let vs marke yͤ nowadaies God wil haue vs to diſcharge our ſelues of all naughtines & guile. And how may yͤ be? It will not be doone wͭout great inforcement: for we of our ſelues are not ſteady: but the ſpirit of our Lord Ieſus Chriſt muſt be faine to worke after ſuch a ſorte wͭ vs, as we may be conformable to him in ſimplicitie & vprightnes. Thus ye ſee what we haue to gather of this exhortation which S. Paule maketh in yͤ firſt epiſtle to the Corinthians.

Now afterward heere followeth the thing that was treated of yeſterday, namely the eating of yͤ Exod.12.11 paſcall lamb wͭ their ſtaues in their hands, their ſhooes on their feete, & their loynes girded vp. For we cannot haue the companie of Ieſus chriſt vnleſſe we be as wayfarers in this world, to go on 1.Cor.5.6.8 forward to ſeeke our inheritance elſewhere. And Hebr.11.16 S. Paul in the Epiſtle to yͤ Coloſſians ſaith plain- Col.3.3. ly that our life is hidden wͭ Chriſt, and yͤ we muſt be as dead men, if we wilbe vnited to the ſonne of God. And why? For he is in heauen, & therefore it followeth yͤ our life ought not to be tyed heere to yͤ earth. What is to be doone then? If we will haue Ieſus Chriſt to auow vs to bee members of his body, & to quicken vs by his ſpirite: we muſt get vs out of this world; not yͤ we ſhould not dwel in it, but yͤ we ſhold not be wedded to it. For theſe two things agree very well, yͤ gods children ſhold be cōuerſant in this earthly life, & yet neuertheleſſe be heires & citizens of yͤ kingdom of heauē, accordingly as yͤ Apoſtle ſaith to yͤ Hebrewes, Hebr.11.16. yͤ God can well find in his hart to take vs for his children, if we be not tyed to this world, but paſſe on beyond it. Wherefore let vs marke, yͤ to haue felowſhip wͭ our lord Ieſus chriſt, we muſt depart out of this world: yͤ is to ſay, our earthly affectiōs muſt not raigne in vs, we muſt not be mortized here, we muſt not bee ſnarled here: but wee muſt conſider yͤ ſeeing God hath ſet vs here to make a iourney, yea & ſhort iourney, euery of vs ought to hie himſelfe a pace, & to looke well to the ridding of our ſelues of yͤ things yͤ may hinder vs frō attaining to yͤ heauenly life. And we muſt vnderſtand yͤ if we do ſo, Ieſus Chriſt wil come vnto vs & reach vs his hand to ſtrengthē vs, yͤ we may be able to ouercome all impediments. For it were impoſſible yͤ euer we ſhould compaſſe yͤ matter, vnleſſe we were aided frō aboue. So then, we ſee now yͤ a man cannot be partaker of the Paſcall Lamb, except he haue his loynes girded and his ſtaffe in his hand,ẏ is to ſay, vnleſſe he be like a wayfarer and that he ſtay not in this world.

And for the ſame cauſe alſo doth our Lord Ie- Luke.12.35 ſus Chriſt warne al his Diſciples to haue lampes in their hands,& their garments truſſed vp,& to be alwaies in a readineſſe til he come,& to ſtand waiting continually for his comming. And as he cõmandeth vs to haue our loynes girded vp,euẽ ſo willeth he vs to haue lampes in our hands, to ſhew ẏ there is neither night nor day for ẏ faithfull to make tarience, & therefore ẏ euen in the middes of darknes we muſt haue light, euen the ſpirituall light to guide vs; & that we muſt haue the one foote alwaies lifted vp,to ẏ intent we be not taken vnawares when he commeth, but ẏ we haue minded our way aforehand,to go ſtil foreward to meete ẇ him. Ye ſee then ẏ the way to communicate aright ẇ our Lord Ieſus Chriſt, ẏ we may bee partakers of the ſacrifice which he hath offered:is to make none accoũt of ẏ world, nor to haue any loue vnto it,but to ſeeke ẏ inheritance ẏ is aboue, & to cõmunicate ſo one with another here beneath, as it may bee a meane to make vs draw the neerer vnto God. And ſo wee ſee ẏ although ẏ figures of ẏ law continue not any longer;yet the truth of them abideth with vs, and it behoueth vs to put the ſame in vre.

And hereby we be yet better informed of the thing ẏ I haue touched already:which is that the profit which redoundeth to vs by ẏ death & paſſion of our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt, is much better knowen & beautifullier ſeene of vs, by laying it to the auncient figure, & by conſidering how ẏ things ẏ were ſet forth darkly at ẏ time,are nowe fulfilled to ẏ ſight of the eye.And like as it behoueth vs to communicate with our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt;ſo let vs mark alſo ẏ God giueth vs a help euen at this day in ẏ Sacrament of ẏ Lordes ſupper,bicauſe of our rudenes & infirmitie. True it is(as I haue touched alreadie)ẏ our communicating with our Lord Ieſus Chriſt muſt not bee only a thriſe or foure times a yeere,but continually all our life long.Yet notwithſtãding we haue neede to be quickened vp, bicauſe we come not to it with ſuch ſtrength as were requiſite.Therefore like as ẏ fathers of old time had the Paſcall Lamb: ſo hath ẏ ſonne of God left vs his ſupper to be a helpe to vs to guide vs vnto him. Will we then be partakers of ẏ ſupper of our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt? Let vs vnderſtand ẏ according as I haue auouched before, wee muſt rid our ſelues of all malice & guile, & forſake the world. True it is ẏ the Hypocrits do thruſt thẽmſelues in among ẏ faithfull, & come to defile the table of ẏ ſonne of God:but what carie they thẽce but vtter curſednes?Therefore let vs keepe our ſelues frõ being guiltie of ſuch a treacherie,& conſider that if Exod.12.44 it behoued a man to be circumciſed in olde time ere he might eate of the Paſcal Lamb: it behooueth vs alſo at this day to be ſeparated to the ſeruice of our God,& to be firſt made holy. And we know ẏ we ought to be circumciſed euen at this day;howbeit not by mans hand, but by inwarde Col.2.11. reformation of minde, accordingly as S. Paule ſaith therof in the ſecond Chapter to ẏ Coloſſians,ẏ whatſoeuer is of our fleſh muſt bee cut off: for there is nothing in it but ſinne & corruption. Now thẽ,ẏ we may come to ẏ holy ſupper of our Lord Ieſus Chriſt,& haue there ẏ warrant which he giueth vs ẏ we be members of his body: let vs looke ẏ we circumciſe our hearts. For the figure is aboliſhed : but yet haue wee the accompliſhment of all things in our Lord Ieſus Chriſt.

Moreouer,let vs come to ẏ chief point:which is ẏ our Lord Ieſus Chriſt is named our Paſſouer. For by him muſt we be deliuered, not out of the land of Egypt,but out of the dungeons of death; and we muſt paſſe a paſſage that were vnpoſſible for vs, if God drew vs not with his owne hand,& by his own wonderfull power.For we be al borne the children of wrath, and we ſhould rot in our miſerie,if god pitied vs not,& reached vs not his hand. And that man beguileth himſelfe which thinketh himſelfe able to leape out of the myre wherin he is plunged.It is the office of our Lord Ieſus Chriſt to draw vs out frõ thence,according to this ſaying of S. Iohns in his viii. chapter, If ẏ ſonne of god make you free,thẽ ſhal you be free. Iohn 8.36. Wherby he ſheweth vs,that euen from our very comming out of our mothers wombes,we be in ẏ curſed thraldom of ſin & death,& ſhold continue therin vnto the end,if we were not ſet free from it by him which not without cauſe hath taken vpon him the title of paſſouer, to ſhew ẏ it is his office to ſet vs free,as I ſaid afore. And heereby we muſt learn to preſume nothing of our ſelues, but to conſider that we muſt think our ſelues beholden to the ſonne of god for all things, that he may bee magnified,& all thoſe diueliſh opinions of freewill & of power & ability to prepare our ſelues to doe good, beaten downe;ſo as we may know ẏ as long as God ſuffereth vs to follow our owne ſwindge, we ſhall alwayes abide faſt tyed in the chaines of the diuel & of death. And therfore let vs yeeld our lord Ieſus Chriſt his dew honour,which is ẏ we acknowledge him to bee the partie which hath ſet vs free.

And hereẇall let vs marke further,ẏ when we bee graffed into his body, it is not for vs to ſerue ſin. For,to be graffed into the body of our Lord Rom.6.5.6. Ieſus Chriſt,& yet notwithſtanding to ſerue Satan,are two things as contrary as fire and water. Nowe then if wee intend not to diſſeate the power of the ſonne of God, & to bereaue him of his office:we muſt be in liberty to ſerue god. And let vs not think ẏ he ment to beguile vs,in telling vs that that office belõgeth vnto him. But it becommeth vs on our part to offer our ſelues vnto him,& not to maintain willingly the curſed bondage wherin we be. For the very cauſe why men periſh therin,is that they ſooth themſelues and fall aſleepe in it, and come not frankly to Ieſus Chriſt.Now then let vs note ẏ ẏ true mark of our Chriſtendom;is ẏ we be in freedom to do good,& ẏ we haue a pure & free wil to dedicate our ſelues to god.Not that we can do it perfectly ſo long as we be in this world,(for we ſee how S. Paul,who had profited far aboue a nomber of other men, Rom.7.14. 23. mourneth and confeſſeth that he is ſtil held as a captiue in part:) but for ẏ the grace of our Lord Ieſus Chriſt muſt neuertheleſſe worke ſo farre in vs,as wee may not bee held quite backe by theſe worldly things. But let vs marke alſo yͭ our Lord Ieſus Chriſt hath not only drawẽ vs out of yͤ gulfe of death, but alſo will haue vs dayly to paſſe further. And foraſmuch as we be not quite & cleane rid of this bondage of ſinne: this paſſing on muſt continue ſtill. What is al our life then? It is a continuall holding on to attaine to yͤ full and perfect freedome which God hath promiſed to his children. And yͭ is yͤ cauſe why I ſayd yͭ it behooued vs to eate the Paſcall Lamb euery day. For Ieſus Chriſt is not our euerlaſting Paſſouer, for yͭ he is ſacrificed euery day: but for yͭ we doe daily take benefit by him, & for that he maketh yͤ vertue of his ſacrifice continually auailable by his holy ſpirit. Notwithſtanding, howſoeuer yͤ caſe go, yet muſt we ſtill keepe on foreward, vntill we bee taken out of this world.

This doctrine ought to be very common, yea and when it is preached, euery man will thinke he knowes it wellynough: but in the meane while where is yͤ practiſe thereof? Where is the ſayd freeheartednes to ſhewe by our deedes that our Lord hath broken the bondes of Satan, ſo as we ſerue not ſinne any more? Where is yͤ earneſtnes of minde to proceede more & more vntil we be gone quite & cleane out of the world? And yet muſt we exerciſe this doctrine, & put it in vre, if we wil be acknowledged for mẽbers of our Lord Ieſus Chriſt. But we cannot haue him to bee our Redeemer, except he haue alwayes yͤ ſaide title of Paſſeouer. And that is in reſpect of vs: for he hath made his paſſage, by comming downe into the world & by reconciling men to God his father, & by being receiued vp againe into his glorie and Maieſtie. Therfore there muſt not be any more chaunge in Ieſus Chriſt. But we on our ſide muſt be made perfect in him: and as ſoone as he calleth vs to be of his body, we muſt begin to depart out of yͤ dungeons of ſin, from whence we muſt withdraw our ſelues euer more & more, and ſtill trauell to attaine to the heauenly righteouſnes. To be ſhort, let vs note that a Chriſtian may well perceiue whether hee haue profited in the Goſpell or no, by examining whether hee be withdrawen from the worlde or no, and whether he be ready and weldiſpoſed to depart from it as oft as it ſhall pleaſe God to pull him away from it, ſo as his heart be not tyed to it as long as he is heere beneath (For looke where our treaſure is, there is alſo our heart with it) but that ſeeing Ieſus Chriſt is our full life and felicitie, we alwaies tend to himward, & euer haue our mindes lifted vp on high.

1.Tim,3,16

Matt,6.21.

And let vs marke further, that to keepe the paſſeouer aright at this day, it behoueth vs to be vnited together, accordingly as we ſee how God hath giuen a ſtrait commaundement thereof in this place, where he ſaith it is not Lawfull to eate the paſcall Lambe in any other of the Cities or towns of the contrey, but yͭ they ought to aſſemble together to the Temple. Which thing I haue told you heeretofore, was doone to preſerue the religion in his purenes. Will we then nowadaies be partakers of our Lord Ieſus Chriſt? Let vs agree together that there may be a true brotherhood among vs. For if we bee at ods among our ſelues like dogs & cats, Ieſus Chriſt muſt needes diſclaime & diſauow vs. And therefore let vs not imagine our ſelues to be vnited to Ieſus Chriſt, except there be good agreement and brotherly loue among vs. And wherein muſt that be? We may not conſpire together as the wicked doe; for they make confederacies and ioyne hands together to make warre againſt God. Curſed be ſuch vnion: it behoooueth vs to bee farre off from ſuch dealing. Nay, we muſt reſorte to the temple of God. And although we haue not now a material temple as the Iewes had then in Ieruſalem; (for our meeting togither is for common orders ſake, and not after the manner of the Iewes, who had a place certaine appointed out to thẽ:) although (ſay I) we haue not the like figure; yet muſt we walke as in the preſence of our God, we muſt be ruled by his word, we muſt haue one melody of faith to praiſe God as it were with one mouth, & we muſt ſhew our ſelues truly to be al one in him Thus ye ſee how wee muſt be gathered together to Gods Church, if we will bee partakers of our Lord Ieſus Chriſt.

Eph.4.13 & Iohn 17.12

And herein we ſee, yͭ theſe ſcorners which turn away from yͤ order of yͤ church, exclude thẽſelues from al hope of the heauenly life. They can ſay wel ynough yͭ their intent is to be Chriſtians: but yet for al yͭ, inaſmuch as they forſake yͤ vnitie of faith, yea & euen fight againſt it by deſpiſing all order: is it not to be concluded, yͭ they cannot be partakers of the Paſcall Lambe, at leaſtwiſe after yͤ true maner thereof which we haue nowadaies? Let vs marke well then, yͭ to be partakers of our Lord Ieſus Chriſt, we muſt not be only vnited in yͤ doctrine of yͤ goſpel: but we muſt alſo make confeſſion of our faith, in aſſembling all togither as though God were preſent with vs. And truely we know how it is promiſed vs, yͭ where two or three are gathered togither in yͤ name of Ieſus Chriſt, he will beare rule there, & be preſent among thẽ. And therfore let vs haue a diligent regard of reſorting vnto Sermons. And therwithal, let vs vſe yͤ Sacrament of the Lords ſupper, yͭ we may aske one another what is ment by it. For in the xii. of Exodus our Lord ſheweth vs full well, yͭ wee muſt profit in his ſchoole, to be partakers of yͤ Paſcall Lambe. If thy ſonne aske thee what this act of ours betokeneth: Thou ſhalt anſwere, wee were bondſlaues in yͤ land of Egypt, & God pitied vs. Thus ye ſee what we haue to doe at this day, not for yͤ eating of a roſted Lambe: but to be made partakers of our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt in ſpirit and truth. Wee muſt inquire diligently to know yͤ benefits which our Lord Ieſus Chriſt hath brought vs. And herein is our negligence bewrayed. For it is ynough for vs to heare Ieſus Chriſt ſpoken of: yea & there are a great ſort which haue not the skil to diſcerne the father from the ſonne: They know not whether Ieſus Chriſt were ſent by God his father or no: inſomuch yͭ now & then a man ſhall finde more beaſtlines in thoſe yͭ haue their eares dayly beaten wͭ the Goſpel, than among yͤ Papiſts. Nay it is to bee openly ſeene. Why then come we to Sermõs, but to be taught? Nay, there are a nõber which fulfil yͤ prouerb yͭ ſaith, a foole doubteth of nothing. And they yͭ haue moſt need

Matt,18.20

Exod,12.26

to learne, think themſelues to know moſt, & that they need not to opē their mouths to ask which is Gods truth. But as for vs, let vs inquire. And for yͤ doing thereof let vs marke, yͭ it behoueth vs to liue ſoberly, for if we go to worke proudly & preſumptuouſly as a nūber do which think thēſelues ſo great clerks (as I haue ſaid) yͭ no man cā teach thē any more than they know alreadie: wee ſhall be ful enough, yea euē till we burſt: but it ſhalbe but with wind, & we ſhalbe voyde of all light of life. But if wee can finde in our heartes to bee taught of God: we muſt bee learners, that is to ſay, lowlyminded: and we muſt vnderſtand that we haue neede to proceede further. And truely the verie vſe of the Lordes ſupper ought to put vs in minde, that our cōming thither ought not to be without inſtruction. For (as I declared yeſterday) a ſacrament without teaching & inſtruction, is a deade thing, and a mocking of God, and a defiling of the thing it ſelfe. Therefore as oft as wee come to the ſupper, let it bee a wakening of vs, to make vs inquire of yͤ things that we know not ſufficiently before though we haue had ſome taſt of them. And truely if it be not lawful to admit young children to the Lords ſupper, vntill they knowe what is meant by that Sacrament, and wherefore it was ordeyned: ſhoulde ſuch as haue liued a fortie and threeſcore yeares come to it like dogges or ſwine? And yet we ſee they doe ſo: and woe be to them for it. So then let the viſible ſigne which our lord hath ordeyned be a meane to ſpurre vs forwarde the more, that wee may ſeeke to profite more and more in the knowing of Ieſus Chriſt, ſpecially ſeeing we be no more troubled nowadayes with reſorting to a place which God hath appointed. For wee haue Ieſus Chriſt who is Gods Hebr.9.11. temple, and hee is not ſhut vp within any certaine place, but filleth both heauen and earth, with his power. True it is that in the nature of man wherewith he clothed himſelfe, he is gone vp into heauen: and yet for all that, hee ceaſeth not to dwell here in vs. So then we muſt go to Ieruſalem, we neede not to goe on pilgrimage, but only to make our repaire to the ſon of God, Coloſſ.2.9. and we ſhall finde in him the whole fulneſſe and Act.1.9. perfection of the Godhead. Neuertheleſſe wee Matt.28.20 muſt marke well alſo, that foraſmuch as the fa- Col.2.6. thers of olde time had not the thinges that are giuen vs at this time, it ſhal be to our ſorer condemnation, if they haue beene diligenter than we in exercyſing yͤ figures & ſhadowes, and that we nowadayes be laſie and colde, ſo as the ſubſtance be put into our handes, and yet we make no reckening of it. The Iewes were faine to reſort to the Temple of Ieruſalem, leauing their houſes and houſeholdes. And their wiues and childrē were faine to come trotting thither, with great trauell and not without charges. And why? *You ſhall reſort to the place which the Lorde ſhall haue choſen to ſet his name in.* He ſaith not to dwel there throughout, but to ſhewe his preſence in ſuch wiſe, as it may be knowen that we bee vnited to our God, not onely by figures and ſhadowes, but alſo by his dwelling among vs. As nowe there is not any one place which God hath choſen to put his name in, that hee might bee called vppon alonely there: but wee haue God manifeſted in the fleſh. For what is Ieſus Chriſt? Euen ſo is 1.Tim.3.16. he intitled by Saint Paul. Seeing then that hee calleth vs to himſelfe, and that we neede not to make any long circuites to finde him, but rather that he preuenteth vs, and that all his deſire is to drawe vs to God his father: ſhoulde we nowe be laſie and colde? What excuſe wil there be for vs, when the Iewes tooke ſuch paine hauing but yͤ firſt principles like yong childrens Apſies, and yͭ we nowadayes being brought to the full perfection, doe fare neuer the better by it, or at leaſtwiſe it ſtandeth vs not in ſo much ſteade, as the auncient figures ſtood the Iewes vnder the law. Thus ye ſee what we haue to remember vppon this text, where it is ſaide that they reſorted to the place which the Lord had choſen.

Now finally for a concluſion, Moſes telleth them *that there ſhould bee no leauened breade in all their borders during thoſe dayes: and ſecondly that on the day of the paſſeouer, they ſhould keep as great ſolemnitie as on the Sabboth day.* And hereby he ſheweth that it is not enough for vs to abſteyne from fraude and malice, but that we muſt labor to the vttermoſt we can, to put away al filth frō among vs. For if I alledge, that as for my ſelfe I will bee no hypocrite, and in the meane time doe ſuffer ſtumblingblockes in the Church, yea or mainteyne them: I muſt not thinke my ſelfe therefore diſcharged. It is ſaide, *There ſhall no leauen bee ſeene in thy coaſtes.* As if he had ſaid, Euerie man muſt haue an eye to himſelfe and to his houſe, yͭ ye be not defiled in any thing that may hinder you to eat of the paſcall Lambe in all pureneſſe. Therefore beginne at your ſelues and at your owne houſeholdes. But yet therewithall bee ſo watchfull alſo, as there may be no corruptiō in al yͤ reſt of the people. Wherfore let vs haue an eie nowadaies to the wel practiſing of this doctrine, and let euerie man looke narrowly to himſelfe. And afterwarde let ſuch as haue houſeholdes to gouerne, looke to the purging away of all filth and vncleanneſſe. And then generally, if there be any ſtumbling blockes among vs, which may put thinges out of order: let vs all looke to the reprouing of them out of hande. And aboue all thinges let vs aſſure our ſelues, that to bee partakers of Ieſus Chriſt in true pureneſſe, wee muſt begin at the cleanſing of our ſelues, yͭ God may gouerne vs, and that our paſſeouer may be kept in ſpirit and trueth, by caſting our ſelues vtterly downe, and by yeelding to forbeare all our owne thoughtes and affections, ſo as wee may keepe a ſpirituall Sabboth, not for one day onely (as I ſaid afore,) but yͭ we may continue therein during all the time of our life.

Now let vs kneele downe before the Maieſtie of our good God with acknowledgement of our faults, praying him to make vs to feele thē better than we haue done, that they may ſo miſlike vs from day to day, as euery of vs may inforce himſelfe to repaire vnto him, and to frame our ſelues in ſuch ſort to his righteouſnes, as all our whole life may bee ordered, &c. And ſo let vs all ſay, Almightie God heauenly father, &c.

On Thurſday the vij. of Nouember. 1555.

The XCix. Sermon, which is the third vpon the ſixteenth Chapter.

9 Thou ſhalt recken ſeuen weekes from the time that thou beginneſt to put the ſickle into thy harueſt: thou ſhalt begin to recken ſeuen weekes:

10 Afterward thou ſhalt keepe the feaſt of weekes to the Lord thy God, with a freewill offering of thy handes, which thou ſhalt giue as the Lord thy God ſhall haue bleſſed thee.

11 And thou ſhalt reioyce before the face of the Lorde thy God, both thou and thy ſonne, and thy daughter, thy Manſeruaunt and thy Maidſeruaunt, and the Leuite which is within thy gates, and the ſtraunger, the fatherleſſe, and the widowe which are among you, in the place which the Lord thy God will chooſe to ſet his name in.

12 And thou ſhalt remember that thou waſt a bondſeruant in Egypt: and thou ſhalt keepe and do theſe ordinances.

Moſes teacheth heere of the ſeconde great ſolemnitie which was kepte yearely among the Iewes: and that was to giue God thankes after the gathering of their harueſt. And this day was named Pentecoſt, [that is to ſay fiftie dayes,] becauſe there were ſeuen weekes betweene Eaſter and that, ſo as there were nine and fortie dayes betweene thoſe feaſtes, whereunto one being added for the feaſtday it ſelfe, made fiftie. And the Greeke worde ſignifieth the ſame thing: but the Hebrewes called it the feaſt of weekes, and all commeth to one thing. Thus then we ſee now what this feaſt was whereof Moſes ſpeaketh here, that is to wit a meane to put them in minde to honor God for ſending his benefites to the ſuſtenance of man. And this concerned all manner of fruites of the earth: Howbeit vnder one kinde, all the reſt were cōprehended, as if God had exhorted his people to confeſſe that all good thinges come of him. The ſumme then is, that we muſt acknowledge not onely that God hath ſet vs in this worlde, but alſo that he ſheweth himſelfe continually to be a foſterfather, and that he mainteyneth vs, and that he maketh the earth to yeelde fruite to finde vs withall, and at a worde, that we liue by his meere liberalitie. True it is that this ought to be done at all times of our life; howbeit by reaſon of mens groſſeneſſe, it was requiſite that there ſhoulde bee yearely a feaſt kepte vppon ſome one certaine day of the yeare. Moreouer (as I haue tolde you alreadie) the feaſtes of the Iewes ſerued not only for the benefites that God had beſtowed vppon them alreadie, but alſo for a ſeruice. And ſo, to be ſhort, Gods wil was that the Iewes ſhould giue him thankes one day in the yeare, yͭ therby they might be prouoked to acknowledge all their life after, that they were ſuſteyned at his hande, ſo as they ſhould neuer take anie repaſt, but that they ſhoulde thinke thus with themſelues, wee haue offered ſacrifice to God after harueſt: whereby wee were put in minde that it is hee which hath ſent vs our ſuſtenance. Therefore are we hypocrites, if we thinke not vppon his goodneſſe dayly, or if wee turne not to him as often as we eate or drinke, to acknowledge him to bee the author of al welfare. So then, this ſolemne proteſtation made once a yere was not a diſcharge for men to forget God all the reſt of the time: but rather a meane to make them thinke, Goe too, we haue kept here a ſolemne feaſt for one day, that it might be a ſchooling to vs all the yeare after, that if wee haue any thing wherewith to ſuſteyne our ſelues; it is Gods doeing who hath had pitie on vs.

But nowe the ceremonie of this feaſt is no longer in vſe, and yet the trueth thereof abideth with vs ſtill. And ſo wee receiue good and profitable inſtructiō by yͤ doctrine therof, by reaſon wherof it cannot be thought to be needleſſe and yͭ it was written alonly for the Iewes. For it was Gods will that men ſhoulde bee taught by it euen to the worldes end, and that they ſhould be put in minde not to ſwallowe vp Gods benefites into our paunches without thinking vppon him, but rather that wee ſhoulde bee ledde to giue him thankes, as oft as we either eate or drinke; ſo that whenſoeuer we take any repaſt, we may conſider howe it is hee that giueth it vs, firſt opening the heauen to giue moyſture and foyzon to the earth, and afterward giuing power to the earth to beare fruite, and finallie bleſſeth the Corne when it is ſprung vp, that it may proſper to yeeld foode vnto vs. Seeing then that we perceiue al theſe things, let vs haue regard to benefite our ſelues by them. True it is (as I haue touched afore) that we muſt not haue anie one day certaine in the yeare, as the Iewes had, neither ought wee alſo to bee as young children. If a man alleadge for his excuſe, that if hee doe not his duetie, let him not vſe his reward giuen him as a little childe hath: it will not ſerue to excuſe him. Folke doe not vſe to giue a young childe his breakefaſt till hee haue prayed vnto God, becauſe hee hath not the wit and diſcretion to doe it, vnleſſe he bee compelled to it by ſome certaine order. Nowe then if an olde fellowe of the age of thirtie or fortie yeares eate his meate without praying to God, he deſerueth not to bee beaten with a rodde, but to bee driuen away and to bee abhorred as a ſwine. And if hee alleadge, I haue no rule as is giuen to young children: what is that to the matter? Haſt thou not diſcretion enough to do ſo much of thy ſelfe? Haſt thou liued ſo long in the world and doeſt thou not yet know that thou oughteſt Gal.4.1. to yeelde God thankes for the good which hee doeth vnto thee? Therefore it is ſaide that the Iewes were young children in compariſon of the Chriſtians: for God had giuen them rules according to their infirmities. As now although thoſe thinges bee paſt away in reſpect of vs; yet are wee the more bounde to acknowledge Gods grace in his feeding & maintaining of vs. And why? The perfecter yͤ the doctrine is which is imparted to vs in the Goſpel, the more plainly ought wee to acknowledge the benefites of our God towardes vs. That is the thing which wee haue firſt to remember out of this text.

Nowe it is ſaide, *That the people ſhall reſorte to Ieruſalem to offer freewillofferings*. God pointeth out theſe thinges more particularly in the Leuit.23.17 three and twentith of Leuiticus, where he ſheweth what offeringes were to bee made on the behalfe of the people. Howbeit, hee ſpeaketh there but of euerie particular perſon, and hee ſaith, *Yee ſhall bring offeringes according to your deuotion.* For although there was a lawe certaine; yet behooued it their offeringes to bee made with a free will, and not as by compulſion, accordingly as it is ſaide, 2.Cor.9.7. that God loueth ſuch as offer vnto him willingly and not as of neceſſitie. Yee ſhall ſee manie that will be liberall to Godwarde; howebeit, it is but a thing of conſtraint, which kinde of dealing God vtterlie miſliketh. A man may ſpoyle himſelfe of all his goods, and yet doe God no ſuch ſeruice as hee ſhall like well of, if it bee not matched with his free will, as I ſaide afore. Beſides this, GOD left it to euerie mans owne choyce to offer what hee thought beſt, but yet he addeth *according as the Lord thy God ſhall haue bleſſed thee.* To the intent that men ſhould not withhold through nigardſhippe, as they be commonly wont to doe: God putteth them here in minde of his bleſſing: as if hee had ſaide, be well aduiſed, true it is that in this caſe I lay the bridle on your neckes, offer what you your ſelues thinke good, I meane not to inforce you to any thing, I would haue the offeringes which you bring vnto mee, to be of a free will. But yet for all that, ye muſt come to account for it. Who is hee that bleſſeth you? If yee haue had a good and plentiful harueſt, to whome are you beholden for it? Ought yee not to conſider howe it is I yͤ haue opened my hand wide, to the end that your hearts alſo ſhoulde open themſelues wide on their parte? Know ye therefore that I haue allured you, by multiplying you; wherefore when yee haue a good croppe, looke that yee employe your ſelues ſo much the freelier in doing my ſeruice.

And hereby wee bee warned to looke neerely to our ſelues, that euerie of vs may put forth the good thinges which God hath committed vnto him. Here is mention made but onely of Corne, Wine, and ſuch other thinges. Then if God haue inriched a man, hee muſt ſee that hee ſuppreſſe not Gods bleſſing, by keeping it cloſe. For wee ſee there are Cormorantes which haue no care of otherfolkes pouertie: they thinke they may ſcrape all that they can come by, and that no man ought to haue any parte of their goods. On the contrarie part it is declared here, that accordingly as euerie man hath receiued aboundance at Gods hande, ſo muſt hee impart vnto his neighbours: for that is the ende which God ameth at. And if wee thinke not of it, we muſt come to account for it: and wee ſhall finde at length, that God will impute it to vs for theft, when wee ſhall haue deuoured his goods after yͤ faſhion, without hauing anie pitie vppon the needie to ſuccour them. In like caſe is it with ſpirituall giftes. For according as euerie man is of abilitie and skill to ſuccour his neighbours, ſo is hee bounde to diſcharge himſelfe and to put himſelfe forwarde. Otherwiſe GOD will ſhewe vs to what purpoſe hee had beſtowed his benefites vppon vs, and that wee haue fayled in our duetie. That is the thing which wee haue to beare away in that Moſes alleadgeth Gods bleſſing to ſtirre vp the Iewes to offer ſacrifice yͤ more largely, after as God ſhall haue increaſed them, knowing that hee bindeth them thereby vnto him.

And whereas he ſaith, *That they ſhall reioyce with their children, their menſeruauntes, & their womenſeruants, the fatherleſſe, the widowes, and the ſtrangers*: thereby hee ſheweth that his lawe was not ceremoniall onely, but that it tended alſo to the doing of almeſdeedes: as indeede our Lord hath at all times ſhewed, that thoſe are the very ſacrifices which he requireth. Hebr.13.16. True it is that part of the thinges which were to be offered, were to be brought to the Altar, & there to be burned in ſacrifice: but yet for all that, it was alwayes prouided that of the reſt, the poore ſhould be fedde and maintayned as well as the prieſtes & Leuites: and nowe doeth Moſes ſpeake thereof againe. Wherefore let vs marke, that euen in the time of the Ceremonies and ſhadowes of the lawe, God neuer required ſacrifice, but that he willed men therewithall to haue pitie vppon the needie to ſuccour them, according to this ſaying of his by his Prophet Oſee, I require mercy & not ſacrifice. Oſee.6.9. True it is yͤ he had commanded both of them: but he ſheweth yͤ ſuch as think to diſcharge themſelues by cōming to yͤ church, and by offering their giftes there, doe beguile themſelues, and that all their doinges are but hypocriſie, if they bee not kindehearted in ſuccouring the needie, & in doing of Almeſdeeds. For I pray you, can wee aduaunce GOD anie whyt by offering of our goods vnto him? Can we

inrich

Iob.35.6.
Pſal.16.2.

inrich him? Wanteth he any thing? True it is that hee requireth oblations: howebeit, that was to the end that men ſhoulde acknowledge euen by eyſight, that they were bounde vnto him. It was a kinde of puting of them in minde of it. Yet notwithſtanding it ſtood them alwayes in hand to conſider, that they could not otherwiſe diſcharge themſelues, than by giuing part of their goods to ſuch of their neighbours as had want. Thus ye ſee howe the meaning of Moſes was, that when the Iewes offered their ſacrifices after harueſt, it was not enough for them to acknowledge with mouth and outward geſtures, that they were bound vnto God for his ſending of them wherewith to liue, but that it behooued them alſo to ſhewe towardes men that they intended to be faithfull ſtewardes of the thinges which he had put into their hands, and deſired nothing but to be well diſcharged of them.

And to moue thē more thereunto, he telleth them *That they themſelues had beene bondeſlaues in the Land of Egypt*, which warning peale hath bin ſet downe in other places heretofore. For wee know that when men liue at their owne eaſe and in pleaſure, they bee not greatly touched with compaſſion though other men die for hunger: & euen ſo was it with the Iewes when they were come into the land of Chanaan after they began once to waxe ful. For the land it ſelfe was fat and ſpecially becauſe God had bleſſed it. Therefore doth he bring thē backe to the minding of their former ſtate, and of the cruel bondage wherein they had beene. Conſider (ſaith he) how ye haue beene bondſlaues in the land of Egypt, and that as then ye would faine haue been gently intreated. When ye were too greeuouſly vexed, ye cried out vnto mee. Now therefore know ye that yͤ poore & needy which are among you, do craue likewiſe to be regarded at your handes, and that I for my part do make account of them. This is the effect of the matter conteined in that place.

Matt.9.13. & 12.7.

Now to the end we may make our profit by it, let vs cal to mind the ſaying of the prophet Oſee accordingly alſo as it is alledged by our Lord Ieſus Chriſt, that is to wit, that God requireth the ſacrifice of Almeſdeeds. As if he ſhould ſay, that he is not contented that men ſhoulde vſe ſome Ceremonies towards him, but will haue vs to be kindharted in releeuing ſuch as haue need of our helpe, if we haue abilitie wherewith to do it. And if men play the thankeleſſe churles with vs in forgetting the good which we haue done them: it is enough for vs that God alloweth our dealing, and putteth it into his booke of accountes. Alſo let vs bethinke our ſelues howe glad wee woulde haue beene of releefe, if euer wee were in neceſſitie, that the ſame may mooue vs to pitie, and that we be not blinded with our wealth. I ſay to ſuch as haue abundance, let them not lie weltring in their pleaſures, and withdrawe their hand from ſuccoring the poore: but let them cōſider that if euer they themſelues felt the want of theſe worldly goods, they woulde bee glad that euerie man ſhoulde reach out his hande to releeue them: and therefore let they themſelues doe the like. Yea and although wee had neuer felt any want, yet let vs conſider that want may fall vpon vs hereafter. For what are we? No man can exempt himſelf from the ſtroke of God that he ſhould not be driuen to begge his breade, yea though he had all the goods of the world. Hereof we ſee great ſtore of examples. Seeing it is ſo, let no man be proude of his goods, but let vs al conſider that we be men, and let vs not deſpiſe our owne fleſhe, as is ſaide in the Prophete Eſay. And let vs not ſay, what be the widowes? what be the fatherles children? what be yͤ ſtrangers to vs? But ſeeing that God offereth & commendeth them to vs, let vs aſſure ourſelues that wee cannot haue any folkes more nighe vnto vs to whome to doe good. For when wee weene to bind men vnto vs, to haue recompence at their hande; wee ſhall be diſappointed at all aſſayes, and good right it is that it ſhoulde be ſo. But as for the thing that is put into Gods hand, that cannot periſhe nor bee loſt. Let vs marke then that Gods offering of the Straungers, the widowes, and the fatherles vnto vs, is as if hee ſhoulde ſay, he made them his baylifes to take vp his Rentes and Reuenewes. And when wee bee to doe him homage for the benefites which wee haue receiued at his hande; let vs aſſure our ſelues, that hee accepteth and auoweth al that euer is done to thoſe whome hee ſpeaketh off here by Moſes.

Eſa 58.7.
Matt.6.4.

Act.2.1.4.
Exod.19.1.2.
2.Cor.3.6.7.
Rom.7.10.

Nowe we knowe what was done in the feaſt of Pentecoſt, namely that the holy Ghoſt was ſent down vpon Chriſts diſciples, and that there was a kinde of renewing of the worlde, to exalte the kingdome of our Lord Ieſus Chriſt: for there he vttered his power, yea more than hee did in his reſurrection. For what had we bin the better for Chriſts riſing againe in his own perſon, if he had not powred out the grace of his holy ſpirite vppon his Church, to ſhewe that hee was ſet at the right hande of God his father, to fill all thinges and to dwell in vs, and that he hath ſuch ſoueraigne dominion ouer all thinges, that wee be in ſafetie when we be in his protection? And if wee looke well vppon the matter, we ſhall find that the lawe was giuen the ſame time as after the Paſſeouer. For it is ſaide that the people came to Sinay the thirde moneth after their departure out of Egypte, the ſame day that they departed from Raphidin. Nowe that was the firſt day of the moneth, and the foureteenth day was the day of the Paſſeouer. And according as the moonethes were as then, which went by the courſe of the Moones, there was one whole mooneth added. And ſo in effect there were fiftie dayes from the Paſſeouer to Gods ſetting foorth of his lawe vppon Mount Sinay, ſo as the feaſt of Pentecoſte or Witſontide was referred to that time. Now we know that the lawe coulde do men no good, if it were but onely giuen them: for it is a deade letter. And againe, it killeth vs, becauſe it ſheweth vs our duetie, and wee be all tranſgreſſors of it, ſo as it condemneth and accurſeth vs. What are men the better then for the publiſhing of the Lawe? Nothing at all, but that it ſheweth them howe they bee bereft of all hope of ſaluation, and that they be all damned before God. And that is the cauſe why Saint Paul ſaith, that the Iewes at that time receiued the ſpirite of bondage, in terrour and feare ſaith he. It is ſufficiently ſhewed in the ninteenth of Exodus how the Lawe afrighteth thoſe that receiued it. For they went backewarde and entreated that God would ſpeake to them by the mouth of Moſes, becauſe they could not heare his voyce but they muſt needes die for it. Ye ſee then that the Lawe taught men the will of GOD. But what? Forasmuch as wee be cleane contrarie to his goodneſſe and righteouſneſſe: the lawe of it ſelfe can yeeld nothing but death, accordingly alſo as Saint Paul ſpeaking thereof in the ſeconde to the Corinthians, ſaith, that it is a letter which killeth. Therefore it behooued the lawe to be renewed, and that God ſhoulde publiſhe it after an other faſhion, not writing it in tables of ſtone, but in our heartes by chaunging them. For by nature our harts are as hard as ſtone, as it is ſaid by the Prophet Ezechiel. Therefore muſt God be faine to ſoften them, & to make thẽ plyable, ẏ they may be obedient to his lawe. Ye ſee then howe the lawe was publiſhed after an other faſhion vppon Whitſonday, than it was in olde time by Moſes. For it was not deliuered vs in tables of ſtone, but God wrought ſo in vs by his holy ſpirite, that wee were then renewed, and the ſame continueth ſtill at this day.

Rom.8.15.
Exod.19.16 & 20.19.
2.Cor.3.6.
2.Cor.3.3.
Ezec.11.19. & 37.26.

And therefore let vs marke, that beſides the admoniſhment which the Iewes had to doe homage to God for their harueſt and for their bodily ſuſtenaunce which he gaue them: they had alſo a reſemblaunce of the thinges which were fulfilled at the cõming of our Lord Ieſus Chriſt, at which time GOD made another manner of Whitſontide than had beene in the time of the figures. For at that time he vttered the grace of the holy Ghoſt. Yet for all this, it is not meant ẏ we ſhould keepe a feaſt of Pentecoſt: it is cleane contrarie. Seeing that the thinges which were figured vnder the law, were fulfilled in our Lord Ieſus Chriſt, and that the figures themſelues are ceaſed: if we bring them backe againe, wee doe wrong to him which hath brought the full accompliſhment of all thinges. If the ſhadowes which were vnder the lawe, do come vp againe; Ieſus Chriſt is to no purpoſe. So then let vs mark that the holy Ghoſt was not ſent vnto vs, to the ende that theſe figures ſhould continue ſtill: but to ſhewe that we differ from the people of olde time. True it is (as I ſaide afore) that there is no ill in it for the Chriſtians to haue a certaine daie wherein this hiſtorie ſhoulde bee declared vnto them: For we muſt not tie our ſelues to ſo ſtreit a preciſeneſſe, that it ſhould not be lawfull for vs to vſe that helpe for our infirmitie. But to make a ſeruice of God thereof, and to take example at the Iewes, as though it behoued vs to faſhion our ſelues like vnto them, or as though the feaſt of Whitſontide ought to be obſerued at this day, by reaſon of the ſending of the holy Ghoſt: that were too groſſe a fondneſſe. Let vs vnderſtand then, firſt that the Iewes had but a figure & ſhadowe of the trueth: and on our owne part wee may knowe in Ieſus Chriſt, that God hath not figured anie thing in vaine, but that all the ceremonies of the Law tended to verie good purpoſe becauſe the effect of them is ſhewed vs in him. Therefore let vs holde vs contented therewith, and now let vs learne to reioyce in the preſence of our God, and to make other folks partakers of our mirth.

Col.2.17.
Gal.5.4.
Col.2.17.

The Iewes were commanded to reſort to Ieruſalem as ſoone as harueſt was done, & not only to reioyce there, but alſo to impart of their goods to their neighbors, ſo as there might be a common gladnes among them, and God might be glorified with one accord. And now that theſe things are at this day accompliſhed: what haue we to doe? We muſt not run trotting to Ieruſalẽ to worſhip God there and to doe him homage there. For we muſt lift vp our hands eueriwhere, howbeit ſo as they be cleane. And moreouer forasmuch as GOD hath not only ſent vs a harueſt of corruptible fruits to nouriſh our bodies withal but alſo powred out ẏ infinite riches of his holy ſpirit and ſent vs the liuing waters as is ſaide in Ezechiel: let vs vnderſtand that it is to ẏ end we ſhould haue the mirth whereof S. Paul ſpeaketh in the fourteenth to the Romanes. Let vs now reioyce then ſeeing our Lord hath ſhewed himſelfe ſo bountifull towards vs, that hee hath not withhelde any of the cheefe good thinges which he had, but hath powred vppon vs all the benefites that concerne the endles life and heauenly glorie. Seeing then that we haue receiued the holy Ghoſt, let vs alſo be ioyful in our harts. As how? By withdrawing ourſelues from ẏ vanities of this world, & by holding our ſelues contẽted with the fauor of our God, praiſing him euen in the middes of our afflictions. Albeit that wee haue not all things at wil in this world: yet let vs not ceaſe to hold on ſtill, aſſuring our ſelues that it ought to ſuffice vs that our God is fauourable to vs, & that he ſheweth vs his loue. When wee be at that point once, then ſhall wee haue ſuch peace and contentment in vs, as paſſeth all the ioyes of this world, yea and putteth away all the ſorrowes that may trouble vs. And when wee haue ſuch gladneſſe our ſelues, wee muſt to the vttermoſt of our power make them partakers of it, which haue need. For if the Iewes were commanded to cal the widowes, the fatherles, and the ſtrangers to make merie with them, in ſpending of the goods which God had giuen them: much more reaſon is it, that ſeeing the ſpirituall giftes which God hath beſtowed vppon vs, belong to the common building vp of the Church as ſaith Saint Paul in the twelfth to the Romanes, and alſo in the twelfth of the firſt to ẏ Corinthians, we ſhould take heed ẏ we defraude not our neighbours of the thing which GOD hath appointed for them.

1.Tim.2.8.
Ezech.47.9
Phil.4.7.
Rom.12 6. & 1.Cor.12 7.

Let vs marke alſo that as nowe there is no more any ſtranger as in reſpect of vs. For wheras God had ſeparated the Iewes from the gentiles: nowe it is his will to bee knowen through the whole worlde; there is no more diuiſion of bodies; the wall is broken downe as ſaith Saint Paul in an other place. Seeing then that God

Eph.2.14.

hath knit vs together after this faſhion, and that Ieruſalem extendeth through the whole world as Zach.2.4. the Prophet Zacharie ſpeaketh thereof: wee ought to bee the more mooued and prouoked to make al our brothers partakers of the ioy which wee haue receyued by the ſpirite of God. Thus ye ſee in effect what wee haue to marke vppon that text.

But herewithall wee muſt marke that Moſes in this place leaueth out two feaſtes which Leuit.23.24 27. are ſpoken of in the three & twentith of Leuiticus, the cauſe whereof is for that the people were not ſtreitly bounde to repaire at that time to Ieruſalem to worſhippe there. There was the feaſtes of Trumpets and the feaſt of * Affliction; and although Moſes ſpeake here of no mo than of three ſolemne feaſtes: yet doeth it behoue vs to interlace theſe other two with them. And as touching the feaſt of Affliction, let vs marke that our Lorde ordeyned it not without cauſe; but it wil ſerue vs verie wel to the expounding of the text which is delt with alreadie. For wee be taught that the Iewes had certayne dayes in the yeare, to the ende that the trueth ſhoulde abide vnto vs, and that it ſhoulde beare his full force among vs all the dayes of our life. It behooued the Iewes to humble themſelues both by faſting and otherwiſe in acknowledging their ſinnes: and thereupon to make a ſolemne confeſſion of their miſdeedes, in humbling thẽſelues to God, and in crauing forgiueneſſe for the ſame. I ſaide afore that this was not ordeined without cauſe. For wee ſee howe men do couer their faults as much as they can, and that they bethinke not themſelues of them but by conſtraint. They alwayes drawe backe if they bee not thruſt forwarde: for to their ſeeming it is a matter of melancholie. True it is that we cannot thinke vppon our ſinnes without greefe of minde: but yet is ẏ for our welfare. And therfore in the ſecond to the Corinthians Saint Paul 2.Cor.7.8. ſaith, that this kinde of ſorrowing is not to bee ſhunned, neither ought men to be ſorie for their ſorrowing when they be put in minde of their ſinnes. For why? It is a ſorrowing as pleaſeth Luke 15.17. God greatly, and gladdeth the Angels of Paradiſe, and bringeth vs infinite ioye in the ende. And foraſmuch as men make merrie & reioyce when they haue offended God: their condemnation muſt needes be dubble, and needes muſt this ſentence bee accompliſhed vppon them Luke 6.25. which ſaith; Woe bee to you which laugh, for yee ſhall weepe and bee ſorie. And ſo let vs marke that becauſe men will not willingly know and perceiue their faultes, it was Gods will that there ſhoulde bee a yereminde of them, that the Iewes might bethinke them of the great number of the ſinnes which they hadde committed, and humble themſelues. Not that their ſo doing acquitted them: but to the intent it ſhoulde bee a warning to them all the yeare after.

* Otherwiſe called ẏ feaſt of faſting, or of humbling themſelues.

Nowe then, their faſting and their proteſting of themſelues to be guiltie before God: was to the ende that when they were gone home into their owne houſes, they ſhoulde conſider thus with themſelues: Alas it is not for one day onely that it behoooueth vs to craue forgiueneſſe: for wee ceaſe not to offende our God, euerie minute of an houre we be entring into a newe bonde with death. For although God haue pardoned vs; yet returne we to our ſinne againe, and there is no ende of ſinning: inſomuch that as long as wee bee in this worlde, there are euer ſome vices lurking in vs, and our corruption is ſo great, that it is vnpoſſible for vs altogether to abſteyne from doing of euill. Then behooued it the Iewes to thinke vppon their ſinnes, and meete was it that the ſayde feaſte ſhoulde be an inſtruction to them for all the yeare after. Thus howſoeuer it was, they hadde the figure. But we in theſe dayes muſt haue the truth without any ſuch Ceremonie. And thereby wee ſee what ſuperſtition was among the Papiſtes: for they turned this feaſt of Affliction or humbling into their Lenton faſt, ſaying that in that time they puniſhed themſelues with faſting, that they might acknowledge their ſinnes: and they alledged the example of the Iewes. Yea, but we muſt alwayes come backe to the diuerſitie which S. Paul in the Galathians putteth betweene vs Gal.5.4. and the fathers of olde time, for elſe what are wee the better for the comming of our Lord Ieſus Chriſt? If wee at this day muſt ſtill haue the ſhadowes that were vnder the lawe: where is the freedome that he ſpeaketh of? I meane not ſuch a freedome as ſhall lay the reynes looſe in our neck, to liue as we liſt: No, but ẏ wee ſhould not bee trayned vp any more like litle children: Gal.4.1. for that was continued vntill the comming of our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt, and vntill hee had ſhewed himſelfe to the worlde. But as nowe we muſt let the figures goe, and all that belonged to that rawneſſe; and wee muſt goe to the verie pithe and ſubſtance of them. And therefore whereas the papiſtes haue ordeyned their Lentonfaſt in ſteade of the feaſt of Affliction, which God had ordeined among the Iewes: It is but an Apes toye. I forbeare to ſpeake as nowe of the other abuſes and illuſions conteyned therein: for they vpholde that their faſting of fortie dayes is after the example of our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt. Yea but let them then abſteyne from all meate and drinke, and bee as Angels of Paradiſe. Nay, they cramme themſelues ſo full at their dinners, that at night they bee ſtill cumbered with that which they had receyued before: and yet notwithſtandinding they will needes beare Ieſus Chriſt in hande, that they faſhion themſelues like to him. Hee was exalted farre beyonde all ſtate and nature of man when he faſted fortie dayes and fortie nightes: and hee did it to ſhewe his diuine power, and to magnifie the Maieſtie of his Goſpell: and theſe skorners take vppon them to counterfaite his doinges. And after what ſort? In cramming themſelues, as I ſaide afore. Surely it was euen a deuice of Satan, to deface the heauenly power which was vttered in our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt. Agayne if they will needes reſemble the ſonne of God in faſting fortie dayes, they ſhould do it but once in all their life. For Ieſus Chriſt faſted but once in all his life. And why then will they goe beyonde him? Beholde the ſonne of God diſcharged himſelfe with once faſting; and theſe skorners will needes beare the worlde in hande that they followe the example of Ieſus Chriſt. Beſides this, they will needes frame themſelues to the faſhion of the Iewes alſo: & becauſe there was a feaſt among the Iewes, wherein it behooued them to afflict themſelues: theſe men will alſo needes doe the like. Yea, but that was not Gods intent. For it was a commaundement peculiar to the Iewes, that they ſhoulde obſerue the ſaide feaſt, as whereof the ceremonie was giuen vnto them. Neuertheleſſe the truth thereof remaineth to vs, to ſhewe vs that as the Iewes puniſhed themſelues once a yeare, to take inſtruction thereby according to their ſmall skill: ſo nowadayes wee muſt be ſorie for our faultes as long as we liue.

And herein we ſee further, that the Papiſtes haue not onely played the hypocrites, but alſo moſt ſhamefully and diueliſhly exalted themſelues againſt God. For firſt of all their faſting of the Lent, and their going to ſhrift, is but to haue the freer ſcope to diſpiſe God, and to let him alone, and to turne their backes vpon him all the yeare after. They make a ſorie countenaunce and wring their mouthes, and play the Popeholy hypocrites when they come to the paſſion weeke as they tearme it, and yet afterwarde they ende the matter with belking out this diueliſh byworde, that they ſende it away into Galilee, and ſo like villains they skoffe at God and all religion. The tongues ought to bee plucked out of their heades which dare blaſpheme after yͭ faſhion. And it is not the baſer ſort of the common people, but the wiſer ſort and as will needes bee counted I wote not what, which vſe that kinde of ſpeech. And ſo ye may ſee what confuſion is among them, ſith they deſpiſe God after that faſhion, and fall to kicking againſt him, like wilde oxen, and yet in the meane while wil needes ſhroude themſelues vnder the example of our Lord Ieſus Chriſt. But a man may ſee not onely that the thinges wherewith they woulde pleaſe God are baggagely trifles, but alſo yͭ they bee ſo ſhamefull abhominations as doe well bewray that they rebell againſt the holy Ghoſt, and againſt yͤ Maieſtie of God. And yet are they not contented with that, but they proceede alſo to the murdering and martyring of Gods children, ſhedding their giltles blood euen without any remorſe or ſcruple of conſcience. For when they come to ſhrift, they neuer bethinke them of that. but they confeſſe how they haue not obſerued ſuch an Apes toye, and howe they were not at maſſe ſuch a day, and how they haue omitted yͤ doing of ſuch a flimflam. To be ſhort, they mocke God openly. And if a man ſhewe them their wicked life by Gods worde: they be ſo vtterly paſt hope of amendement, that they ſpitte at all warninges and harden their hearts more and more, becauſe they be forepoſſeſſed with ſuch intollerable pride, that they fall to ſet vp their hornes euen agaynſt GOD. Thus yee ſee what wee haue in effect to remember concerning the feaſt of Affliction.

Alſo there was the feaſt of Trumpets, which ſerued to put the Iewes in mind, that they ought to ſtirre vp themſelues to be vnited in God. For as for them yͭ haue gloſed that it was in reſpect of the offering vp of Iſaac in Sacrifices, (as the Iewiſh Rabbins haue fãtaſtically ſurmiſed) they ſay nothing to the purpoſe. But it is not to bee doubted that God ordeined the feaſt of Trumpets or Cornets, of purpoſe to ſtirre vp his people to returne vnto him. And why? For they ought to conſider thus: Although wee haue not yͤ Trumpets ſoũded dayly to cal vs to the Temple: yet ought we to remember that God calleth vs dayly, to the intent we ſhould yeeld ouer our ſelues wholly vnto him, to worſhip him, & ſerue him, as he requireth: and moreouer bee knit & vnited together, that we may drawe ſtill neerer and neerer vnto him. Thus yee ſee what manner of inſtruction the Iewes had by the feaſt of Trumpets. But what a thing is it that Chriſtians wil needes haue the like guiſe, and reſemblaunce of it once a yeare by ringing of Bels? In deede yͤ Papiſts do their indeuour to follow this commandement. For at euerie of their ſolemne feaſtes, they thinke that God is well paide, when they haue roong their belles luſtily, and wakened the Ghoſtes of ſuch of their friendes as are deade. Lo what witcheries they haue among them, yet ſtil at this day. But is it not apparant that the making of ſuch a feaſt is againſt the intent of God, becauſe it ſerued but for the people of olde time that were vnder the lawe? When the ſaide feaſt was obſerued yearely, ſuch as heard the Trumpets were warned by it all the yeare after to thinke thus: wel, although we be farre from Ieruſalem, and cannot repaire thither dayly to doe ſacrifice in the Temple: yet are ſacrifices offered there in our behalfe, and God is worſhipped there in the name of vs all. Neuerthelater, wee muſt not forget the good that GOD hath doone vnto vs: but euerie of vs muſt ſerue for a Trumpet to ſtirre vp himſelfe, that our liues may be aunſwerable and conformable to the thinges that are done daily in the Temple. Lo what the Iewes had. And what haue we nowe?

The figure (as I haue ſaide afore) is paſſed away and aboliſhed by the comming of our Lord Ieſus Chriſt. Then remaineth it that wee our ſelues ſhoulde be Trumpets, that is to ſay, that wee ſhould waken vp our ſelues, becauſe we be beſotted, yea and euen ſo wedded to the worlde and to the vanities that are here beneath, that it neuer commeth in our mindes to thinke vpon God. Therefore muſt wee not onely feele the ſounde of a Trumpet or of a bell, but rather an inwarde remorſe of good conſcience, ſo as wee repent and bethinke vs thus: How now wretched wight? Beholde, the liuing GOD ſtoopeth ſo lowe, as to ſpeake vnto thee dayly, calling and alluring thee by meanes of his Goſpell, and crying vppon thee without ceaſing, to come vnto him: and yet for all this wilt thou continue deafe ſtill? Then muſt thou returne vnto him, when hee draweth thee ſo carefully: and thou muſt not tarie till there bee a ſolemne holyday to call thee to the Church, there to keepe the feaſt of Trumpets: but it muſt ſerue thee al thy life long for a ſpurre to make thee to return vnto God. That is the thing (ſay I) which we haue to beare in mind. And as much alſo is to be noted concerning ſorrowing: For it is not for one day onely that wee muſt be ſorie in our heartes and bethinke vs of our ſinnes. But foraſmuch as we fal to them inceſſantly, & there paſſeth not any day wherein we offend not GOD: let vs match it with ſorineſſe, and let vs mourne for it, and not play the vnthriftes which make a skorne of all that euer a man can alleadge to them out of the worde of God: but let vs bee afraide of his iudgementes and threats, and yet therewithall let vs not doubt but he will giue vs whereof to reioyce, and that although wee bee faine to paſſe through many ſorrowes and hartbitinges in this worlde, yet in the ende he will deliuer vs from them, to make vs partakers of the heauenly reſt. After this maner (ſay I) muſt wee put this doctrine in vre, concerning the feaſtes which the Iewes had of old time in figure and whereof wee haue nowe the trueth & ſubſtaunce, as it is brought vnto vs by the ſonne of God.

Now let vs kneele downe before the maieſtie of our good God with acknowledgement of our ſinnes, praying him to make vs feele them better than we haue done, ſo as wee may returne vnto him, with true and vnfained repentaunce, and bee ſtirred more and more to amende our faultes, knowing that our good God is ready to receiue them all to mercie which come to him with lowlineſſe. And that for aſmuch as he hath graunted vs the grace to haue nowe ſo full light of his Goſpell, as may wel inlighten vs throughly: it may pleaſe him not to ſuffer our eyes to be blindfolded, that wee ſhould walke any more in darkeneſſe, but to graunt that wee keepe yͤ right way, and indeuer to bring others into the ſame, ſo as God may be glorified with one common accorde of all men. And that for the performance hereof it may pleaſe him to raiſe vp true and faithfull miniſters of his word, &c.

On Fryday the viij. of Nouember. 1555.

The C. Sermon which is the fourth vpon the ſixteenth Chapter.

13 Thou ſhalt keepe the feaſt of Tabernacles ſeuen dayes, after thou haſt gathered in thy corne feeldes and thy vineyardes.

14 And thou ſhalt reioyce in the feaſt, thou, thy ſonne, thy daughter, thy manſeruant, and thy womanſeruant, the Leuite, the ſtraunger, the fatherles, & the widowe which are within thy gates.

15 Seuen dayes ſhalt thou keepe the feaſt to the Lorde thy God, in the place which the Lord ſhall haue choſen: for the Lord thy God, will bleſſe thee in al thy fruites, and in all the workes of thy handes: and therefore ſhalt thou reioyce.

16 Three times a yeare ſhall all thy males appeare before the Lord thy God in the place which the Lord wil chooſe: that is to wit, in the feaſt of vnleauened bread, in the feaſt of Weekes, and in the feaſt of Tabernacles: and none ſhall appeare emptie before the face of the Lord.

17 But euerie man ſhal giue according to his abilitie, euen according to the bleſſing of the Lord thy God, which he ſhall haue giuen thee.

WE haue here to treate of the feaſt of Tabernacles, which was a memoriall of Gods preſeruing of the Iewes in the wilderneſſe, where was no houſe. For he had kept them by the ſpace of fortie yeares vnder Tentes, and ſmall boothes; the cauſe wherof was that he had ſo remoued them from place to place, that they had no leaſure to builde, nor ſtuffe wherewith to builde. Therefore it was meete that they ſhould be put in remembrance of it, that being come into the lande of Chanaan, they ſhould not giue themſelues to iollitie, and forget it when God had ſet them at reſt. For we ſee howe men are giuen to fall aſleepe and to neſtle themſelues when our Lorde remooueth them not. To auoide this danger, it was Gods wil that yͤ Iewes ſhoulde yeare by yeare depart out of their houſes and dwell in Tentes, that is to ſay vnder the open skie in arbers made of boughes, and for ſeauen dayes together minde that benefite. For it was an incredible thing that God ſhoulde haue preſerued ſo great a multitude of people with their yong children, in boothes & tentes ẘout houſes. We knowe yͤ houſes ſerue to keepe off both cold & heat and al other diſcōmodities. Needs therfore muſt it be yͭ god wrought after a wonderfull faſhion, and it was meete that his goodnes ſhould be acknowledged in that behalf. We ſee then nowe wherefore this feaſt was ordeyned vnder the lawe. For the ſeruing of God cōſiſted not in yͤ peoples ſhifting of their places, for it had beene but a ſtage play, to haue come to Ieruſalem, and there to pinch themſelues, & to dwel a while in Cabanes, vnleſſe it had beene to ſome ende, and that they had beene taught ſome thing whereby to magnifie Gods name, & to put their truſt in him : accordingly as I haue declared heretofore that all ceremonies muſt implie ſome learning and inſtruction, or elſe they be but pelting baggage: yea it is but a mocking of God, if the faithfull be not edified, that they may alwayes liue in the feare of God to reſt vppon him and to call vppon him with the better courage. If it bee not ſo, it is but ſuperſtition : and the thinges are not onely vnprofitable, but alſo abhominable before God. Nowe then the feaſt of Tabernacles was a traynment to the people of Iſraell, to ſhew them that if they were at reſt and at their eaſe in the land of Chanaan, they had not alwayes beene ſo, but that God had led them after a ſtraunge faſhion through the wilderneſſe: and that if they were contented with Cabanes and arbers; it behoued them alſo to applie themſelues to the prayſing of God for his deliuering of them out of the Land of Egypt by ſo manie miracles. The Iewes as foolkes that woulde faine diſcharge themſelues to Godwarde by hypocriſie, did indeede keepe the feaſt it ſelfe, but they lefte the meaning of him that had commaunded it. For euen at this day ſtill they keepe the feaſt according to the letter, and they haue a number of pretie apes toyes which they obſerue diligently. As, that their Cabanes be not too cloſe, but made full of holes, nor that the boughes bee not too thicke platted, but ſo as a man may ſee the ſtars through them, and that there bee Loopeholes to looke vpon the skie, ſo as the skie may glimſe vppon their eyes. All of them (I ſay) doe vſe ſuch trifling toyes, but in the meane while they conſider not whereunto God meant to direct them. By which example of theirs wee bee the better warned not to regarde the letter of the lawe: but to ſeeke the ende which God pointeth vs too. And ſeeing that the Iewes had ſuch inſtruction: let vs conſider what fruit we ought to reape nowadayes of the feaſt of Tabernacles. It is not nowe any more in vſe that wee ſhoulde be bounde to the keeping thereof: but yet the doctrine thereof continueth ſtill, and concerneth vs as much or more than the Iewes. And our keeping of the feaſt of Tabernacles muſt not be for a weeke or twayne, but for all our life long. Hebr..11.16 And why? For if wee be not ſtraungers in this worlde, we ſhall haue no part in the kingdome of heauen. Will we haue God to auowe vs for his children? Let vs keepe on our way here beneath, aſſuring our ſelues that this life of ours is but as a iourney, or rather but as a race. And it is not enough for vs to goe, but wee muſt alſo runne a pace, holding on our way ſtill to that ende, and alwayes ſtraining our ſelues to atteyne vnto it. For except we ſtreine and inforce our ſelues we ſhal neuer get one ſteppe forward, but wee ſhall retyre fower backe for it. Agayne we ſee howe ſlow we be, and how manie meanes Satan hath to hinder vs: and therefore we muſt euen fight againſt ſuch impedimentes. And ſo let vs marke, that the thinges which wee reade here in Moſes, declare vnto vs that for aſmuch as it was Gods will that the Iewes in the time of the lawe ſhoulde haue a weeke to put them in minde howe they had beene as pilgrims in the wilderneſſe, and that he had maintayned them there after a ſtraunge faſhion: we in theſe daies (because the figure is aboliſhed) muſt repaire to the trueth, that is to ſay, wee muſt remember that God harboreth vs in ſuch ſort in this world, as that he wil not haue vs to neſtle here, nor to be ſo intangled in it as to make it our euerlaſting reſting place, but to ſtie vpward ſtill, and to bee here as birdes ſitting vppon a bough. True it is that God is ſo fauourable to a great number, that they neuer remooue from home of all the time of their life, and yet they be neuer the leſſe Chriſtians for all that: but yet muſt not any man make him a neſt vppon earth vppon imagination that he will reſt here. Whereas Saint Paul ſaith that he had no reſt; he meant 2.Cor.7.5. it ſpecially of himſelfe and of certaine others of the faithfull, whome God toſſed from poſt to piller. But as for the meaning of the mind, that muſt needes bee common to all the faithfull, namely that they haue no reſtingplace in this worlde. Although then that GOD do beare with ſome mens weakeneſſe, ſo as they neuer remoue out of the place where they were borne, but continue at home ſtill in their owne houſes: yet muſt they conſider that they ought to bee alwayes readie and to haue one foote ſet forwarde, againſt the time that it ſhall pleaſe God to remoue them into ſome ſtraunge countrie ſo as they make not their reckening to be ſo ſetled in any place, that they ſhoulde not departe from it, but rather bee readie to goe, whenſoeuer GOD calleth to fleéte anie whither elſe.

Againe, let thoſe whome God remoueth vnderſtande, that he giueth them the prerogatiue aforehande, to put the thing in vre which the holy ſcripture ſheweth vs : namely, that we bee 2.Cor.5.6. made pilgrims here beneath, to the intent wee Hebr.11.13. ſhoulde haue our reſting place in heauen: and let it confirme them ſo much the more in yͤ hope of yͤ life to come, ſo as they may pluck vp a good hearte when they bee ſo driuen from place to place, and not be too much greeued at it, becauſe it is a warrant to them that God hath reſerued a better reſtingplace for them. After that manner ought all of vs together to obſerue the feaſt of Tabernacles. Let ſuch as remooue not, thinke neuertheleſſe, that they haue not any perpetuall ſtate of abiding in anie place certaine, but muſt offer themſelues to GOD to goe whitherſoeuer it pleaſeth him. And as for them yͭ are fain to remoue out of their countrie, and are drawen a farre off; let them vnderſtande that Gods walking of them after that faſhion in this worlde, is to the ende to drawe them out of it, and that they ſhould not ſet their mindes vppon it. Yee ſee then howe with one common accorde, we ſhall make a good obſeruation of this feaſt, I meane as ſpiritually. For nowadayes we haue not anie more the figures of the lawe: but yet muſt the trueth of the Goſpell needes bee conformable to the figures that were among the fathers of olde time. And herewithall wee muſt alſo be readie to remooue a good pace, ſo as wee muſt not be tyed nor helde backe to this corruptible life, but goe to G O D with a free heart whenſoeuer it pleaſeth him to take vs hence. And indeede, what houſe ſoeuer we dwel in in this world, our bodie is always going away. If a man be asked which is his cheef houſe, he will not goe ſeeke his chamber, nor his kitchen, nor any other of his houſes of eaſe: but hee will ſay it is his bodie. Nowe let vs conſider what our bodies are. Wee may wel build vs houſes of ſquare ſtone. Riche men make them pallaces, and laye all their lande about them thereto. Their building is ſubſtantiall, it is able to indure much, it is not to bee feared that it will rotte ouer haſtily, nor that it will bee marde with winde or wether; neither is there anie thing in it to be altered: And though ſome hanginges of it bee to be remooued, that is all one; the walles are ſo good, that at a hundred yeares ende they bee as ſounde as they were at the firſt day. Well may a man make ſuch a building: but can wee builde our bodies ſo, as they may be of any long continuance? No. Our Lord therefore doeth laughe thoſe foolke to ſkorne, which are ſo blinde that they imagine they ſhal liue euer the longer for their building of their goodly houſes, bearing themſelues in hand that it is a meane to make them tarie yͤ longer time in this worlde. But (as I ſaide afore) all houſes are nothing in compariſon of our cheefe houſe, which is our bodie. If a man paſſe not for hys chamber, nor for his kitchen, nor for his parlour, but woulde go ſeeke ſome corner in his ſtable, and betake himſelfe to that, ſaying, this is the ſureſt and ſubſtancialleſt place, I had leuer tarie here thā in anie other part of al my houſe: folke woulde laugh him to ſkorne as a foole. Likewiſe if a man be proude of his houſe, and haue no regarde of his owne perſon whereof he ought to make much greater account: it is euident, that he is out of his wits, and vtterly voide of reaſon. What is to be doone then? Wee muſt 2.Cor.5.1. come backe to this leſſon of Saint Paules, that if our outwarde man decay, wee haue a building prepared for vs in heauen. For this lodging of ours muſt decay, and fall quite downe, but yet ſhall wee be fully reſtored againe, and then ſhal wee dwell in an vncorruptible houſe. There Saint Paule ſheweth vs the thing that I ſpake of before, namely that our bodies (when we haue neuer ſo great account of them) are but as arbours made of Leaues, which are of no continuaunce: one blaſt of winde will blowe them quite and cleane downe. Seeing it is ſo, let vs walke in lowlineſſe, and lift our mindes aloft: for wee haue promiſe that there we ſhall be immortall & vncorruptible. And we muſt not thinke it ſtrange that our bodies ſhoulde bee compared to Arbors of leaues which are of no continuance: for take mee the ſtrongeſt bodie in the worlde, and yet cannot the force therof continue long time in one ſtate; but that if the ſaying of the Prophet Eſay be founde true as in reſpect of our ſoules, it muſt needes bee verified much more of our bodies: Eſa.40.6. namely that a man is but a flower, and that allbeit he flouriſh for a time, yet is one blaſt of winde enough to make him to wither, and to bring him to nought. Such is our ſtrength euen when it is at the beſt. But beſides this, there is none of vs which feeleth not a great ſort of inconueniences in himſelf, to the intent we ſhould forſake this preſent life, and not bee too much addicted to it. Take me the ſtrongeſt man that is, and hath hee not ſome diſeaſe or other that will not ſuffer him to indure long? Againe if a man be once paſt a certaine age, he falleth by & by to declyning; inſomuch that a man may ſee and perceyue with his eyes, that euen without ſickneſſe he flydeth away like water. Indeede moſt men doe neuer thinke of it: but what booteth it thē to blinde themſelues? Nay it is a monſtruous thing that euerie bodie ſhoulde ſee how a man goeth to naught, and yet bee ſo blinde as not to perceiue it in himſelfe. On the contrarie part, if our Lorde be ſo gratious to the faithfull as to remooue them to and fro, and to put them vnder many diſeaſes: it is to quicken them vp to goe forwarde with earneſter willes to their heauenly inheritaunce, becauſe they doe but hang their winges in this worlde, continually drooping nowe after one ſort and nowe after an other, and liuing as it were halfe deade. Sith it is ſo, let them vnderſtande that God worketh for their benefite and ſaluation. And it is a very profitable leſſon, when wee haue learned to keepe the feaſt of Tabernacles ſpiritually: that is to ſay, when we haue learned to paſſe in ſuch wiſe through this worlde, as wee goe on further.

And if we be demaunded howe ſuch perſons can be Chriſtians, as are ſetled in wealth and at their eaſe: the aunſwere thereunto is that euery man muſt beware firſt of all that hee ſeeke not his owne eaſe too much. For we heare howe S. Paul ſaith, that wee muſt not cocker our fleſh in Rom.13.14 yͤ luſts thereof. And why? Becauſe there is no ho when wee once beginne to followe our owne likinges: they be ſo far out of order, that there is alwayes ſomewhat amiſſe in them. They therefore which will be lodged after their heartes deſire, ſo as there may be nothing amiſſe in their ſtate: doe put themſelues in great hazarde of falling into a ſounde ſleepe, and of intangling themſelues in ſuch wiſe in the worlde, as they may neuer thinke more vppon the heauenly reſt. And therefore a man cannot keepe too good a meaſure nor too ſtayed a hand in that behalfe. Not that wee can bee tyed to any certayne rule, for we muſt vſe Gods creatures freely. If wee ſhoulde be ſcrupulous at euerie thing, what woulde come of it? Either wee ſhoulde neuer be thankefull to God for the benefites that he beſtoweth vppon vs, becauſe we bee not ſure that he hath giuen vs leaue to vſe them freely: or elſe wee ſhall become hardheaɪted and ſtubborne to vſe them as it were in deſpite of GOD, by meanes whereof all thinges ſhoulde bee corrupted. So then, we muſt vſe our houſes as wee doe all other commodities of this preſent life, without making any ſcruple of conſcience in thẽ But yet therewithall, we muſt beware (as I ſaid afore) that we giue not the bridle to our fleſhe, by ſatisfying the deſires thereof: for it is a bottomleſſe pit, and we can neuer come to the bottome of it.

Againe beſides this, let ſuch as are planted commodiouſly, beware that they fal not aſleep. But rather whereas the children of this worlde doe welter in their delightes, and ſo feede themſelues with them, that they vtterly forgette the kingdome of heauen; Let the other ſorte learne to conſider thus: Goe to, albeit I bee planted here to my commoditie, yet muſt I not be tyed too much to this world. Wheras my luſts would holde me backe, I muſt ſo fight againſt them, as all the impediments in the worlde may not reſtraine me frõ looking continually towards heauen. After that manner muſt the faithfull deale. And ſuch as are not planted at their heartes deſire, muſt conſider how our Lorde putteth them in mind, to goe continually forwarde to the reſt of heauen, warning thẽ of it both earely & late, as a thing which is for their benefite, & behoofe to be put in mind of. Inſomuch that if the Iewes had ſuch inſtrũction as was meet for them: ẏ exerciſe that God giueth to his faithful ones nowadayes in planting them not ouer much to their liking, is a far better learning than was the auncient ceremonie of the law. Whoſoeuer then do find any diſcõmoditie, and are not at their eaſe; let them vnderſtande that God by that meanes pricketh & ſpurreth thẽ to ſeeke the reſt of heauen; & ſtrengtheneth them therewithal in ẏ hope which they haue of their ſaluation.

And this concerneth not onely a mans houſing, but alſo all other things as I ſaid afore: ſo as ẏ body with al thing belonging therunto, is the cheefe houſe which we haue. Therefore if we be now & then diſeaſed, ſo as we cãnot take ſo quiet reſt as we faine would, nor haue things ready alwaies at hand: let vs conſider ẏ our lord handleth vs like wayfarers. When a man ſhalbe in his own houſe which is well ruled, they faile not to ſerue him at his own houre, & to haue ſuch meat prepared for him as he beſt liketh: but if he be abrod in the country, he ſhall not haue al ẏ he would: for folk are not acquainted with his complexiõ: & whereas he is wont to dine at ſuch an houre, he muſt be faine to tary an houre or twaine longer. And again, when he hath ſupped peraduenture he ſhal not be ſo well lodged as in his owne houſe. Now muſt wee apply all this to our ſelues: namely ẏ in this world we be as waifarers. Therfore if our Lord do now & then diſappoint vs of things ẏ we deſire, it is to the end wee ſhould run a pace through this world & alwaies keepe on forth ſtil, til we come to ẏ kingdome of heauen, & not be tyed & faſtened to ẏ earth. Thus ye ſee how this leſſon extendeth generally to al things that concerne this tranſitory life.

And yet neuertheles it is ſaid expreſly, *That the Iewes in keeping this feaſt ſhould be merry, & alſo make other men merry with them.* Whereby we ſee ẏ we ought not to be ſad, though our Lord make vs to waſte away by litle & litle. Or rather hee ſheweth vs ẏ he will not haue vs to make anie ouerſũptuous building here below, but ẏ we ſhold be cõtẽted with our lodgings of boughs which wil ſoon rot. Sith it is ſo, we muſt not be ſory, but rather reioyce in our God. And it is a very profitable point and well worthy to bee noted. For it may be ẏ ſome man wil be ſufficiently warned to depart out of this world, in ẏ he ſees himſelf ſick, or in ẏ ſom ſtrange miſhaps befal him: by reaſon whereof he thinkes vpon death oueroften, and doth nothing but mourne, deſiring to be diſpatched at the firſt puſh. Such are to bee ſeene: but yet for al that, their departing is not without ſorowing. For what ioy can they haue, except they know that God draggeth them through ẏ world of purpoſe to lift them vp to heauen to the companie of the Angels? If they know not that, ſurely they ſhal haue their harts alwayes diſtreſſed with anguiſh and greefe, accordingly as we ſee how the vnbeleeuers repine, and neuer commit themſelues to GOD, but murmur and grudge againſt God. And although their mouth ſpeake not, yet haue they no gladnes nor reſt in their harts. Then let vs learne to keepe ẏ feaſt of Tabernacles after ſuch a ſort, as we may be merrie in the Lord: that is to wit, as it may not greeue vs that our bodies ſhould conſume away by litle and litle, vntil they be turned again into rottenneſſe; or that our Lord ſhould cut vs quite off frõ our bodies, & vtterly diſpoſſeſſe & bereaue vs of all ẏ euer we haue in this world. For why? Hee doth it to draw vs vp to heauen. Therefore let vs goe ioyfully, and let our hart be inlarged to giue our ſelues wholy to our God. That (ſay I) is the thing which we haue to doe.

And it is the ſame thing ẏ S. Paul ſpeaketh of, howbeit hee ſheweth vs ẏ meane alſo how to put this leſſon in vre. True it is ẏ by nature we ſeeke 1.Cor.5 4. not to be diſſolued or caſt downe. If yee ſay to a man, my friende, are you willing to die? It were againſt nature for him to ſay yea, vnles it were to ſome better ende: for his deſire is to haue being ſtill. Indede the vnbeleeuers do beſot themſelues in their deſiring to be: for this beeing of theirs is but to cram themſelues, to eat & drinke, to fil their bellies like ſwine, to ſleepe like beaſts, and to looke vppon pleaſaunt thinges, as folkes that are caried altogither with ſenſualitie. Thoſe are the things wherein the vnbeleeuers repoſe themſelues. And in the meane while they be ſo dull, that they conſider not that that beeing of theirs is no being at all, and that the ſtate of this preſẽt life is but a ſhadow which is euer fleeting & neuer at any ſtay. But contrarywiſe when the godly ſay, it is good to liue, thereupon they conclude, that it is not for them to couet death vnleſſe it be to exchaunge for the better. Neuertheleſſe, when they take holde by faith vppon the heritage which God hath promiſed them:

then are they deſirous(and not without iuſt cauſe)to depart out of this mortal body,ẏ it may be renewed againe. We ſee then as nowe, howe we may dwell with ioy in tentes: that is to ſay, by being aſſured that after wee be paſſed out of this worlde, we ſhalbe taken vp into the reſting place which God hath prepared for vs, & which was purchaſed for vs ſo dearely. Therfore let vs go on with a free courage,& let vs not ceaſe to keepe on our pace,vntill we be come to our end. And let vs always conclude with ourſelues,ẏ it is enough for vs to hope continually that the heauenly reſt ſhall not faile vs ,after that God hath exerciſed vs in this world, and toſſed vs to and fro.Thus ye ſee in effect how we ought to keepe this feaſt with gladneſſe.

Now for a concluſion Moſes addeth, *that they muſt reſort thriſe a yeare to Ieruſalem, and there ſhew themſelues before God, as many as were males, & none to come emptie, but euery man to make ſome offering to God, according to the bleſſing that God had giuen him.* This maner of ſpeaking that the Iewes ſhoulde come before the face of God,ſerued for the better expreſſing that the ſanctuary was not a vaine and vnprofitable figure,but that God vttered his power there, to ſhew in very deed ẏ he dwelled among his people. If Moſes had ſaide ſingly,yee ſhall reſort to the Sanctuarie: euery of you ſhall make his offering before the Arke of couenant: the Iewes had not bin ſo wel certified,that their comming to call vpon God in the ſanctuary,was not in vaine.For they might haue ſaid,very wel, indeed wee haue the figures & ceremonies, but yet are we not ſure ẏ God wil heare vs.But when it was ſaid,ye ſhal come ſhew your ſelues to god, it was a greater edifying of them, becauſe they were wel aſſured that the ceremonies of ẏ lawe were not deceiuable.Yet notwithſtanding,it was not to make thē to ſet their minds vpon the viſible ſignes,& ſo to hold themſelues ſtill downe: but they were to conſider,ẏ although God ſtoop to apply himſelfe to our infirmitie, yet is it not his meaning therfore to hold vs downe to theſe earthly thinges: but contrarywiſe his comming downe to vs, is to make vs to ſtie vp & to ſeeke him aboue; ſo ẏ when we haue viſible ſignes, we ſhould conſider ẏ his glorie ſurmounteth ẏ heauens,& is infinite,& therefore that we muſt worſhip him with our minds lifted vp aboue ẏ world, and aboue al things that are corruptible. And ſo yee ſee that this maner of ſpeech where it is ſaid, ye ſhalbe in the preſence of your God when yee be come into his ſanctuarie: was profitable, and imported a very good leſſon to the Iewes. For why? God ſhewed in very deed,that he had not inſtituted thoſe ſignes without cauſe, but that thereby he made his grace and power to be felt of the faithfull, when they came thither to call vpon him. But yet for all that, it behooued the faithfull therewithal to worſhip God ſpiritually. Eſa. 66.1.2. For we ſee howe the Iewes are reproued for this: in ẏ they corrupted his ſeruice ,by reaſon ẏ they ſuppoſed to ſhut him vp within their Temple. Shall I dwell in a houſe made with mans hande ſaith the Lord? If the Iewes had replyed & ſaid, Why not?for it is ſaid,when ye come to the ſanctuarie,ye ſhall bee there before the face of your God. Yea, but that is no excuſe. For Gods ordeining of his ſanctuarie to dwell there, was not in ſuch wiſe that hee woulde forſake his heauenly glorie: but to come ſeeke men here beneath, and to lift them vp aboue. We nowadayes muſt remember the like.

For when God ſendeth vs his word, and addeth ẏ ſacraments for a confirmatiō of the ſame: it is aſmuch as if he ſhewed vs his face, at leaſtwiſe ſo farre as we are able to abide it. For wee be rude and earthly, and cannot beholde God as he is, and therefore he is faine to applie him- 1.Cor.13 12. ſelfe vnto vs. Yet notwithſtanding wee muſt ſo ſeeke him after the maner that he vttereth and declareth himſelfe vnto vs; as we be not tyed to the viſible ſignes, nor intangled with them as we ſee the wretched Idolaters are, which alwayes take occaſion to turne away from GOD, by meanes of the helpes which hee giueth them to bring them to him. Therefore let men beware of ſuch abuſe. Indeede when we ſpeake of the Lords ſupper, wee can well enough ſay that Ieſus Chriſt is there preſent, and that wee poſſeſſe him.When we come to the receyuing of the bread and ẏ wine, we can ſay they be no emptie ſignes,but that we haue there the very ſubſtance, inſomuch that Ieſus Chriſt imparteth himſelfe to vs , ſo as wee bee fedde and nouriſhed with his body and bloode. So then Ieſus Chriſt offereth himſelfe to vs in his ſupper. But is it to bee ſaide therefore, that he commeth downe from heauen, and that he is to bee ſought after a ſuperſtitious manner, as the Papiſtes and ſuch other like doe in theſe dayes? No: but it ſerueth to lift vs vp to heauen, and to make vs vnderſtand that although Chriſt dwelleth there, yet wee ought not to doubt but that his power reacheth vnto vs,and that we be made partakers thereof,and that when we receiue the breade & the wine, they be true warrantes of that which I haue ſaide. Yee ſee then that we be in the preſence of our God, by beeing partakers of Chriſts laſt ſupper. As much is to be ſaide of Baptiſme; namely that in the water of baptiſme we behold the bloude of our Lord Ieſus Chriſt, and the redemption which he hath purchaſed for vs : So as it is to vs as a liuely picture; & not only that, but alſo wee haue the trueth ſo ioyned with the image and portrayture,as the effect muſt needs bee felt and perceiued.Neuertheleſſe it ſtandeth vs alwayes in hande, to beware that wee abuſe not the Sacraments: namely that wee be not ſo fleſhly,as to ſticke to the world: but that ſeeing God is come downe vnto vs,we alſo on our ſide doe mount vp vnto him:and therewithall aſſure our ſelues, that our Lorde in giuing vs his ſacramentes, giueth vs not rittlerattles and childiſhe trifles to buſie our heades withall: but that hee giueth vs the verie trueth, to the end we ſhould be knit vnto him, and that we might feele that his power is euer at hande with vs. Thus much concerning the ſaying where Moſes ſpeaketh againe of Gods preſence,& cōmaundeth ẏ Iewes to reſort to Ieruſalē,whē God ſhould haue choſē ẏ place:& in the meane while to reſort to ẏ place where yͤ arke of yͤ couenāt & yͤ ſanctuary were ſet vp. And finally he ſayth, *That they ſhould not come empty before the lord, but that euery man ſhould bring ſomewhat according as God had bleßed him*. Some haue taken this text to bee a kinde of promiſe, as though God had ſayd that ſuch as reſorted vnto him, ſhould not go their way againe empty. True it is that if wee ſeeke God, wee ſhall finde plenty of all good things in him, according as it is ſayd, Pſal.34.6. Come vnto him and ye ſhall be inlightened, and your faces ſhall not be aſhamed. Therfore let vs not thinke that wee ſhall want any thing if wee ſeeke God, for he will fill vs; as hee is riche, ſo is he liberal, we ſhal be ſatisfied, and haue our fil of al thinges yͭ wee haue neede of for our ſaluation. Then is it very true in it ſelfe, that all ſuch as offer themſelues before God, ſhal not return emptie according as it is written; Pſal.81.11. Open thy mouth and I will fill it. But as in reſpect of this preſent place, it is certaine that Moſes ſpeaketh of Offeringes: and wee muſt not bring in any other gloſes. For hee declareth that euery man ought to offer according to the giſte of his hande, that is to ſay, according to his abilitie. For that kind of ſpeeche were ſtraunge to vs, if wee were not made to vnderſtand it; namely, that euery man ought to conſider what GOD hath giuen him, that hee may doe him homage for it. Therefore looke what wee haue in our hande, that let vs take to offer vnto God, and to make ſacrifice to him withall. In the tyme of the Lawe, the offeringes were applyed to ſuch vſe as wee haue ſeene heeretofore, and wee neede not to rehearſe the Ceremonie any more. As nowe it remaineth that wee doe homage to GOD at all tymes, with the goods that hee hath beſtowed vppon vs. And howe may that bee doone? By Almesdeedes. Iob.35.6. Pſal.16.2. Hebr.13.16. For wee cannot increaſe him by beſtowing any thing vppon him: but yet hee accepteth whatſoeuer wee giue to the poore. Thoſe are the ſacrifices which hee requireth and alloweth nowadayes. Therefore muſt we beſtowe them there. And ſeeing that our Lord offereth himſelfe vnto vs, not thriſe a yeere onely, but manifeſtly in the perſon of his ſonne Ieſus Chriſt, ſo as hee dwelleth with vs continually: let it bee a meane to drawe vs to him euen with an earneſt minde, that wee may haue our hande alwayes open to offer vnto him. If wee had the Sanctuarie, and that it behoued vs to preſent our ſelues thriſe a yeere at Ieruſalem: wee ſhould doe the thing that is commaunded vs heere, and yet ſhould not that ſerue to exempt vs from doing of Almesdeeds al the yeere after. For if there were no more than the Ceremonie, it were a ſmal matter as I haue ſaid afore. But where is Gods Temple now? Beholde Ieſus Chriſt, who filleth yͤ whole world; he is with vs, & dwelleth euen in our ſoules. Sith it is ſo then, let vs ſee yͭ we imploy our ſelues to make our offerings: & ſeeing that our God doeth vs yͤ honour 1.Cor.6.19. 2.Cor.6.16. 1.Pet.2.9. to appoint vs to be his Sanctuaries & Temples; inſomuch yͭ euery Chriſtian man is yͤ Temple of the holy Ghoſt, & euery Chriſtian hath yͤ honorable title of Prieſt: and yͭ otherwiſe we ſhoulde neuer be counted yͤ temple & houſe of God: it is good reaſon yͭ euery man ſhould occupy himſelf inceſſantly wͭout end, in offring him yͤ ſacrifice of praiſe, ſo as he may bee acknowledged in all his benefits & bleſſings which he beſtoweth vpō vs.

And it is not only the doing of Almes deedes, yͭ he accepteth for ſacrifices: but wee muſt alſo ſerue him & worſhip him, wͭ al our thoughts, with all our deſires, with all our affections, and with al our members. So then, that wee may not appeare emptie in the preſence of our God, let vs looke yͭ we bring him good fruites & ſuch as he requireth: & let vs beware yͭ we bee not vpbraided, as Ieremie vpbraided yͤ Iewes when he ſaid, Ier.2.21. & Eſa.5.24. What haue I done for thee my vine? I haue planted thee, I haue dreſſed thee: & thou bringeſt me forth bitter fruite. Therefore let vs bring good fruit to our God, ſeeing it hath pleaſed him to till vs, to the end we ſhould doe good, and not be vnprofitable. And how may that be? True it is that we cānot bring any thing to him, neither can he be inriched: but when we indeuer to glorifie him in our whole life; that is the fruite which he requireth and maketh account of. Seeing then that he graunteth vs the grace: let vs profit continually vnder him, & let not vs on our ſide be emptie. Notwithſtanding, it is certaine that we haue not one drop of goodneſſe, vnleſſe he giue it vs: for we be barrein. In deede we be too fruitful in bringing forth euill: there are too many bryers & brambles to be found in vs: but as for of good corne, there is not one graine to be found in vs, vntill God haue put it in vs. What is to be doone then? We muſt pray our God to bleſſe vs, that is to ſay, to powre out his holy ſpirite ſo vppon vs, as wee may haue good fruite to bring vnto him: that wheras we be nothing, he may giue vs a being; and whereas we be nought woorth, he may make vs ſome what worth by his manuring of vs, ſo as hee may be glorified in vs. For it is not ynough for vs to haue Gods gratious giftes in vs; but he muſt alſo make vs to put them to the vſe whereto he hath ordeined them. And heere let vs call to mind what hath beene declared heeretofore: namely that God will not haue vs all to reioyce our ſelues, but alſo to make our neighbours partakers of our gladneſſe: and alſo to call vnto vs, not onely the husband and his wife, and the father and his children; but alſo euen thoſe that are furtheſt off from vs, and to indeuour to bring them after ſuch a ſorte before the face of our GOD, as the veryeſt ſtraungers and thoſe that are furtheſt off from vs, may bee partakers of our mirth and feele the benefite of it, bicauſe it is made common, according to the ſame ſaying of Moſes in this preſent Text, that the ſtrangers, the widowes, and the fatherles muſt be merrie with thoſe that preſent themſelues after that maner to God, to offer ſacrifice vnto him.

Now let vs fall downe before the Maieſtie of our good God with acknowledgement of our faultes, praying him to make vs feele them better, that being vtterly in miſliking with them, we may ſeeke to be reformed by his worde, and profite therein more and more: And that for as much as he doth chiefely commaund vs to paſſe through the world, and to aſpire to yͤ kingdome of heauen; we by this making of vs to feele our owne wretchedneſſe, may bee ſtirred vp by the ſame meane to ſeeke the ſaluation which he hath promiſed vs, and whereinto our Lord Ieſus Chriſt is entered to guide vs thither by his example: And that in the meane while we may be confirmed by the power of his holy ſpirite in the doctrine ẏ he giueth vs, ſo as we may neuer be turned from it for any impedimentes that can befal vs, but that we may alwaies keepe on our courſe, till he haue rid vs of this mortall body, and clothed vs againe with his owne immortall glory. That it may pleaſe him to graunt this grace, not onely to vs, but alſo to all people and Nations of the earth, &c.

On Saturday the ix. of Nouember. 1555.

The Cj. Sermon, which is the fifth vpon the ſixeteenth Chapter.

18 Iudges and Officers ſhalt thou make thee in all thy Cities which the Lorde thy God giueth thee throughout all thy Tribes, to iudge the people with iuſt Iudgemement.

19 Thou ſhalt not wreſt the Lawe, nor haue regarde of perſons. Thou ſhalt not take any reward. For gifts blinde the eyes of the wiſe, and peruert the woordes of the righteous.

Had wee continued in the ſame ſoundneſſe of nature wherein God created vs: ẏ order of Law (as men terme it) ſhould not be ſo needefull, bicauſe euery man ſhould cary the law in his heart, ſo as no man needed to be compelled to obedience, but euery man ſhould know his rule, & wee ſhould all with one accord followe that which is good & rightful. And therefore law is as a remedie againſt the corruption ẏ is in men. As oft as there is any talk concerning earthly gouernmét, we muſt vnderſtand ẏ therein we haue a mirror of our frowardnes, in ẏ we are faine to bee compelled to ẏ following of vprightnes & reaſon. For Rom.13.4. 1.Pet.2.14. they that are in authoritie, haue the ſworde in their hand: and to what end? To repreſſe ſuch as burſt out into exceſſe and outrage. And wherof commeth that, but that whereas mé ought of themſelues to ſeeke the thing that is good and iuſt, they turne it vpſide downe, and goe about to bring all to confuſion, if they bee not letted? Gen.1.26. Surely it is a great ſhame, (conſidering that God hath created vs after his own image, & giuen vs dominion & ſoueraigntie ouer al his creatures,) ẏ we ſhould be faine to be inforced to it by reaſō of our naughtines. Picke me out the moſt deſpiſed of all men, & yet doeth he carie in himſelfe the image of God, and the ſaide token of ſoueraigntie. Yet for al that, wee bee faine to become vnderlings, and that is bicauſe of our ſinne, as I ſaid afore. Let vs know therefore that God hath not ſtabliſhed the order of earthly gouernment without cauſe: but that he had an eye to ẏ corruption ẏ is in vs. Hereby we be well warned (as I ſaide afore,) to humble our ſelues, ſeeing our ſinnes require ſuch remedie. But yet ought wee to magnifie Gods goodnes, for ẏ he hath prouided aforehand, ẏ all ſhould not go to vnrecouerable confuſion among vs, which thing woulde come to paſſe if we might do what we liſted. For if the ſtrongeſt might goe away with the goale, what would come of it? It were much better for vs to be in ẏ foreſtes among wolues and wilde beaſts, thā to be among mé, if all things were at libertie. For no beaſtes are ſo woode, as are our own luſtes. Therfore let vs acknowledge ẏ wonderful goodnes of our God, in ẏ he hath had ſuch care to preſerue vs, ẏ foraſmuch as he ſawe wee coulde not maintaine our ſelues vnleſſe there were lawes to hold vs in, & Iudges to execute ẏ things ẏ are ſet down in writing: he hath prouided for al. Alſo hereby we are put in mind to loue the ſtate of Iuſtice, foraſmuch as we know it is a ſingular gift of God, & a meane to preſerue mākind. If we loue the light of the Sunne bicauſe we cannot liue without it; and if we loue bread and whatſoeuer elſe belongeth to our ſuſtenance: let vs alſo loue ẏ order of Iuſtice. For it is to no purpoſe to haue meate & drink & all other commodities, ſeeing ẏ without lawes & Magiſtrates wee ſhould bee depriued of all Gods bleſſings; and it were better for vs to be diſpatched out of hand, than to eate vp one another as it would come to paſſe. And therefore we muſt eſteeme ẏ order of Iuſtice, to be a preſident of Gods grace, and wee muſt make account of it as it is worthy, euery of vs indeuouring al ẏ he can to maintaine it: For wee ſhewe our ſelues to bee deadly enemies to peace & to the cōmon weale, if we loue not the ſtate of Iuſtice. And all ſuch as trouble it, & go about to peruert it, are as theeues, and are to bee eſteemed as enemies of mans welfare. In ſo much that all men ought to fight againſt them, when wee ſee them goe about to bring in ſuch horrible confuſion among vs.

Now it is not for nought ſaid here againe, *that when the people were come into the lande which had bin promiſed vnto them, they ſhould make them Iudges and Magiſtrates euerywhere*. This matter hath beene expounded alreadie in the firſt Chapter: but yet is it not without cauſe that GOD Deut.1.13.14

repeateth it heere againe. For he intendeth to ſhewe that it is to no purpoſe to haue good and iuſt Lawes, vnleſſe there be men to ſet them in force and to put them in execution. This hath beene told you afore; neuertheleſſe it is requiſite that you be put in mind therof again. For we ſee how God ſpekeath of one thing oftentimes, to the intent we ſhould ſet ẏ more ſtore by it, and thinke vpon it, and not forget it. Euen ſo doth he now confirme the former ſpeeche which he had concerning Magiſtrates. And indeede, it is not without cauſe ẏ the common prouerb termeth them the ſoule or life of the Lawe. For what are all the lawes and ſtatutes of the world? They be but dead things. They be lapt vp in paper, and are nothing worth, vnleſſe there be men choſen to giue them their force & to make them to bee obeyed. And ſo ye ſee what God meant here in ſaying *that the people ſhold chooſe*. Surely ſuch freedome was a ſingular gift:& we ſee it is not grãted to al men. Where Princes haue ſoueraigntie, they appoint Iudges at their owne pleaſure and liking, and ambition beares all the ſway there. In ſo much that a Courtier which is in credite, ſhall not onely obtaine offices for himſelfe, but alſo cauſe them to bee giuen to others at his appointment. Nay there is yet greater and more ſhameful corruption. For offices are ſet to ſale nowadays aſwel as al other kind of marchãdize. Seeing then that we behold ſuch examples, wee muſt needes thinke it an ineſtimable gift, when God graunteth a people or Nation libertie to chooſe their owne Iudges and Magiſtrates. And verily when God gaue that priuiledge to the Iewes, it was a ratifying of his adoption, and of his chooſing of them to bee his heritage, and that he meant to haue them to bee in better and more excellent ſtate, than any of their neighbours, who had kings and Princes, and no ſuch freedome at all.

Now as this thing deſerueth to be had in great eſtimation: ſo ought they that haue obtained ſuch benefite, to vſe it with a good and pure conſcience. For what is the cauſe that our Lord bereaueth vs of his benefites, but that we marre them by our abuſing of them? We know wel that whatſoeuer God beſtoweth vpon vs is deſirable, for we ſee ẏ commoditie therof: but yet in ſtead of vſing of it holily with thankſgiuing, wee will needes make it to ſerue our luſtes. Nowe when God ſeeth his benefites turned ſo to our bane, & that we draw them cleane contrarie to his meaning: he bereaueth vs of them. Are we diſtitute of them? Wee ſee whereof it commeth: And we thinke it ſtraunge: but wee conſider not howe God hath borne with vs a long time, and that in the end he wil not haue his gifts to be ſcorned & reproched. Therfore whẽſoeuer God hath done vs any good, let vs learne to maintaine ẏ ſame by our good & pure vſing therof. For ẏ next way to make the poſſeſſion thereof to abide with vs, is to beware that we defile not the things which God hath ſanctifyed to our profite. And therefore if we haue libertie to chooſe Iudges & Magiſtrates: foraſmuch as it is an excellent prerogatiue (as I ſaid afore:) let it be maintayned and vſed with good conſcience. When a people hath this prerogatiue, let them looke well to the ſetting vp of their Iudges, that thay may bee as the Lieuetenantes of God. Wherefore let no ſuch men be put in place, as will either be brybed, or haue bin leaudly giuen aforetimes, or as are vnable to beare ſuch a charge: But let ſuch bee ſought and founde out as are meete for it, as though they were marked out by God. And bicauſe we haue not ſufficient diſcretiõ to chooſe aright: let God bee called vpon. For it is not ynough to ſeeke out ſuch as are meete and ſufficient to execute an Office; but for as much as wee may bee beguiled in that caſe, by reaſon of our owne weakeneſſe, and by reaſon of the deepe diſſimulation that is in men, in ſo much that when neuer ſo narrowe ſearch hath beene made, yet the euill will euer ſet it ſelfe foreward: let men deſire GOD to ouerlooke them, and to giue them wiſdome and diſcretion. Thus ye ſee what we haue to marke vppon this ſaying, where commandement is giuẽ to chooſe and ordaine Iudges and Magiſtrates.

And it is ſayde expreſſely, *In euery Citie*. For what a thing were it, if men ſhoulde bee driuen to goe farre to ſeeke Iuſtice, when diſorders are committed euerywhere? Seeing that miſdemeanors are rife and touch vs neere: if the redreſſe ſhould bee delayed too long, it would not boote at all: a hundred faultes would bee committed, before one could bee prouided for. Therefore doth our Lord ſay, ẏ they ſhould bee appointed in euery Citie: as if he ſhould ſay, that men haue alwayes neede of ſome bridle. And that is the thing which I touched afore, when I ſaide that we which are created after the image of God, and ought to raigne ouer al creatures, haue neede to bee held in ſubiection. For as wee haue peruerted the order of nature, ſo is it meete that God ſhould cut vs ſhort, & ſhew vs that wee bee ſo farre vnable to rule, that wee bee not meete to haue freedome, but had neede to bee helde in awe. So then let vs learne, that whereſoeuer vice and corruption is, there ought the remedie to bee applyed out of hande. True it is that there was in deede a ſoueraigne Court of Iuſtice in Iewrie; Exod.18.26 yea and wee haue ſeene in the firſt Chapter, that the hardeſt matters and the caſes of greateſt importaunce, were referred to Moſes. Yet notwithſtanding, it was Gods will that there ſhoulde bee ſome order euerywhere, that if any diſorder were cõmitted, it might bee prouided for out of hand; & men ſhould not neede to run farre to require Iuſtice. For in very deede it behoueth Iudges & Magiſtrates to watch, & not to tarie till they be called vppon & importunately required, but puniſh ẏ euil as ſoone as they ſee it. I ſay as ſoone as they ſee it: for they ought to ſpie & keepe good watch. It is not ynough for a Magiſtrate to puniſh ẏ he knoweth to be wicked: but he muſt alſo make diligent inquiſition, as wee haue ſeene in other places. Deut.13.14. And if men went ẏ way to worke, matters ſhould be in better order. That is ẏ thing which we haue to marke, in ẏ our Lord will haue Iudges and Magiſtrates in euery Citie. For otherwiſe many euils might be committed, before any redreſſe could bee had, ſo as the remedie woulde come too late as I haue touched before.

Furthermore, whereas Moſes addeth *that they muſt giue iuſt iudgement, and gouerne the people after that maner*: it ſerueth to confirme that which wee heard euen nowe, namely (firſt of all) that men can not gouerne themſelues, except they haue ſuperiours to guide them, which thing is plainely expreſſed concerning the Iewes, whom God had preferred before all other nations. Let vs vnderſtand then that of good right wee bee diſpoſſeſſed of the freedome which God had ſet in mankind. For why? We turne the good into euill: and therefore is it meete that we ſhould bee bereft of it. A man in health ſhall haue libertie to eate what he liſteth, and he ſhall not bee dealt with ſo preciſely: he needeth no Phiſition to forbid him ſuch a meate, or to reſtraine him from drinking, otherwiſe than in ſuch meaſure or at ſuch an houre. But if a man bee ſicke, he muſt bee at obedience, he muſt keepe a dyet, he muſt bee helde ſhort like a childe, and he is reſtrayned of all thinges that he lyketh, in ſo much that if he commaund his owne ſeruant to bring him this or that, his ſeruaunt muſt not be ſo bolde as to doe it. Yea and when maiſters bee diſeaſed, they are ſubiect to their ſeruantes, ſo as they cannot inioy their owne goods. And why? Becauſe they be not meete to haue them; by reaſon of their diſeaſe which ouermaiſtreth them: and therefore are they fayne to bee as vnderlinges. Euen after the ſame manner ſtandeth the caſe with vs: inſomuch that if wee were in deede whole and ſounde, God woulde guide vs after another faſhion. But foraſmuch as he knoweth vs to be ſo corrupted, he is fayne to compell vs, yea and to reſtraine vs in ſuch ſort, as wee haue heard of. Thus much concerning the firſt point.

Againe for the ſecond, Moſes declareth and ſetteth forth that which I ſaid cõcerning choiſe making: namely that in the ſeate which GOD hath dedicated to himſelf, no ſuch perſons muſt be put, as turne all thinges vpſide downe. For if ſuch be choſen for publike Magiſtrates, as leade a wicked trade, as in whom there is no feare of God, no honeſtie, no vprightnes, but wildneſſe, wantonneſſe, and diſorder; or in whom there is no more wiſedome than in Aſſes, but to be ſhort are madbrayned or frantike: if ſuch (I ſay) be ſet in place of publike office; it is not a diſhonouring of men, but a working of high treaſon againſt God, bicauſe it is a defiling of his ſeate. So then it behoueth vs to wey well how Moſes ſaith heere, that when it commeth to the choſing of Officers, men muſt not ſet vp Idols, nor iudge of them without tryall. And why? Bicauſe it is a diſhonouring of God, to ſet ſuch perſons in his roome, as are not worthy to haue the ruling of a houſe. Yee ſhall ſee a man that is not able to gouerne his owne houſhould, ſuch a one as is not to bee truſted to for any thing, folke ſhall ſay of him, yonder fellowe is a foole, hee is a dizard, hee hath no reaſon, hee hath no ſtay of himſel[illegible] hee hath neither wit nor diſcretion to guide himſelfe or his houſhould: and yet for all this, ſhall men goe and ſet him in the ſeate of Iuſtice? He is a man that cannot liue quietly with his wife: & ſhal he be able to keepe a whole Citie in quiet? Men preferre him to bee a counſeler. And to what end? To ſee the peace maintained. And how can that be? Hee hath no moe but his wife and houſhould to gouerne, and yet he is not able to weelde them. When he is at home, he is not able to guide his wife and his children. Now when thinges go arſiuerſie after that ſorte, God is openly deſpiſed. So much the more therefore doth it ſtand vs in hand to marke well what Moſes ſaith heere: namely that the chooſing of Iudges & Officers is not a matter of formalitie, or a Ceremonie: but a holy thing wherein men ought to proceed with all reuerence: and that God laieth not ỹ bridle vpon any peoples neck, as if he ſhould ſay, Take whome yee liſt at aduenture without conſideration: but he portrayeth out the perſons, and pointeth them out with his finger. Looke to it (ſaith he) that ye vſe diſcretion in chooſing the perſons that ſhall haue ỹ ruling of the people. For the word: ***To Iudge,*** importeth to gouerne. And ſecondly, let them ***iudge vprightly*** ſayth he. Whereas he ſpeaketh of gouerning, it is not without cauſe. For it is to no purpoſe to chooſe ſuch as haue neede of Tutors. To prefer thoſe to the guiding of others, which ought to be put vnder the direction of others, is too great a ſkorning of God. Again, the caſe here concerneth Iuſtice and vprightneſſe. Therefore ỹ chooſing of officers before they be wel knowen and throughly tryed, is ſurely a marring of all good order. And therof come ſo many changes & turmoyles. We wonder to ſee our Lord ouerthrow Common weales, and to behold how the Nations that were free, are greatly diſtreſſed & ouerwhelmed with tyranny: but wee looke not from whence all thoſe thinges proceede. The ground thereof was the abuſes which were committed, bycauſe there was no regarde had of the mainteining of the ſtate which God had ſtablyſhed, nor care to follow faithfully the order that God had inioyned. So much the more therfore doth it ſtand vs in hand to beare well away the things that are tould vs heere.

Moſes hauing ſayde ſo, addeth nowe, *That men muſt not wreſt the lawe, nor haue reſpect of perſons, nor take rewardes or giftes*. And he addeth the reaſon. *For giftes* (ſaith hee) *doe blind the eyes of the wiſe, and peruert the wordes of the righteous.* Firſt he ſetteth downe heere a generall rule, that men ſhould not wreſt the Lawe. For in deede wee may liken equitie to a right lyne: and if it wrythe to the one ſide or to the other, by and by it is iniquitie. And therefore Moſes ſayeth, thou ſhalt not wreſt the Lawe, that is to ſay, thou ſhalt haue thyne eye vppon the lyne of Iuſtice, and followe it without ſwaruing one way or other. And heerewithall hee ſheweth howe the ſame may bee performed, namely by reſpecting no mans perſon, and by eſchewing to take rewardes. For when we conſider a deede ſimply in it ſelfe; euen nature teacheth vs what to doe. True it is that wee had neede to call vppon GOD continually: for wee ſee howe weake of vnderſtanding and corage wee bee euen in the thinges that are moſt euident: oftentymes wee bee ſtarke blinde in them. Then muſt not men preſume vppon their owne wit, and thinke themſelues wiſe ynough to iudge of all thinges that are ſet before vs: but wee muſt vnderſtand that it is a Eccle. 2. 26. heauenly gifte, as Salomon declareth. And if wee bee combered in the ſmalleſt matters; howe ſhall wee doe when we come to giue ſentence of matters of great weight? Iudges therefore muſt firſt humble themſelues, and conſider that if they bee not gouerned by Gods holy ſpirite, they ſhall not bee able to holde them to true Iuſtice; and therefore they muſt referre themſelues to GOD and aske counſell at his mouth, that they may bee taught by his word; and they muſt giue themſelues ouer to his ſpirit, and ſubmit themſelues thereunto.

But beſides this, Moſes ment to ſhewe heere the cheefe cauſes of all the impeachmentes of Iuſtice. For (as I ſayd afore) if wee haue an eye alonely to the deede, without reſpecting the perſon, ſo as wee bee not poſſeſſed aforehande eyther with fauour or with hatred: it is certaine that wee can skill to giue ſentence aright. And if it coulde bee brought to paſſe that the parties ſhould not come in ſight, that it might not be knowen who were the playntife and who the defendant; ſo as the Iudges might not bee allured and carryed away either with bryberie, or with flatterie, or with lyes and gloſes, or with ſuch other thinges; but that the caſe might bee layde before them ſimply and nakedly as it is: wee ſhould not ſee the thing which all the world now reweth, that is to wit, that men commonly can obteine no right and Iuſtice. For by nature (as I ſayd) we can wellynough skill to ſay, this is good, this is iuſt, this is vpright. But as ſoone as the parties come in our ſight, that we ſee they be our neighbors or friendes; or the one a great man or a rich man, and the other a poore man; and there is bringing of allegations on both ſides, ſo as one ſeekes to win the goale by threatninges and bragges, another by ſweete woordes and preſentes, and bryberie trotteth a pace to make way: all then will be turned vpſidedowne, and they which ſawe cleerely before, become nowe ſtarke blinde. And therefore let vs marke, that it had beene ynough to haue ſayd in one word, that men muſt not peruert the law; but that men are vnable to keepe themſelues from euill, if they be not told how and after what maner they may maintaine themſelues in ſoundneſſe and vprightneſſe: namely by hauing no regard of the perſons, and by ſhunning all couetouſnes, for taking of rewardes.

As for the worde *Perſon*, I haue expoun-
Deut. 1, 17. ded it elſewhere: namely that wee muſt not reſpect whether a man bee riche or poore, great or ſmall, a ſtraunger or a neighbour, and ſuch other like thinges. For the woord perſon ſignifieth another thing heere, than is ment by it in our common ſpeech, when we ſay, There is a perſon, that is to ſay, there is a man or one of mankind. For in this place the worde which Moſes vſeth in Hebrew, ſignifieth a face, viſage, or countenaunce. Wee muſt not then regarde the countenance. And what is ment by that? The things that are ſeene, the ſtates of men, and their outwarde ſhowe. And the worde *Showe* expreſſeth the meaning of Moſes well ynough. Then muſt thou not reſt vppon the outwarde ſhowe. For if I ſee a man poore, I deſpiſe him; if I ſee him riche, I honour him; if I ſee a man of authoritie, I ſtand in feare of him; if I ſee a wretched abiect, I make no accoũt of him, but rather holde skorne of him. See howe the outwarde ſhowe here marreth all. I ſee a man that is able to pleaſure mee; O, I will incline to him, that he may pleaſure mee againe. I ſee another that can doe mee neither good nor harme; O, it skils not howe he ſpeede. Againe, I ſee one by whoſe hurt I may aduauntage my ſelfe: I will doe it. And why? Bicauſe my minde lookes no further but to the outward ſhowe. Nowe wee ſee the meaning of Moſes, and I haue ſpoken of it alreadie in the firſt Chapter of this booke: howbeit it is not for nought that the holy Ghoſt maketh rehearſall of it againe here.

Wherefore let vs learne in fewe wordes, that ſuch as haue an eye to mens perſons, that is to ſay, regarde the outwarde ſhowe, cannot holde their owne to deale vprightly and indifferently; but that they muſt needes bee mooued either with feare or with fauour, to giue the vpper hand alwaies to the wicked perſon that ſtandeth in the wrong. And why? For feare leaſt he ſhould be reuenged: and elſe for hope to be benefited againe at his hand for the fauour that he ſhall haue receiued. And therefore let vs remember, firſt that God requireth a ſtoutneſſe in them that are Iudges. If they ſee a riche man or a man of honour: well, let them take him as he is, and yet neuertheleſſe iudge the caſe as it requireth. But this ſtoutneſſe of minde is ſeldome to be found any where. For although the Iudges doe purpoſe with themſelues to follow yͤ law, yet are they commonly ſeaſed with a kind of fearefulnes, by meanes whereof they be daunted whẽ it cõmeth to yͤ point yͭ they ſhould ſtand to their tackling. And therefore is there good cauſe why ſuch as ſit in the ſeate of Iuſtice, ſhould reſort to God, & carefully pray him to ſtrengthen thẽ in ſuch wiſe, as they may not be like to reedes yͭ are ſhaken wͭ euery winde, but freely follow yͤ courſe that God hath appointed them, without ſwaruing or bowing any maner of way. Let vs marke then firſt of all, that we muſt haue this ſtoutnes of not being afraide at the ſight of any mans greatneſſe or countenaunce, that his authoritie or riches doe not any thing auaile him, but that the caſe may ſtand in firme ſtate, without hauing our eyes dazeled to ſay, This is a great man, and therefore I muſt fauour him.

Againe on the other ſide, I ſaide alſo that wee muſt not deſpiſe ſuch as are had in contempt to the worldwarde. Bicauſe I ſee a man is poore, I beare my ſelfe in hande that it makes no matter though I doe him wrong. For wee bee oftentymes at that poynt. If there bee a man of no reputation, we thinke our ſelues diſcharged if we can ſay; well, I haue doone wrong to a poore creature, which is not taken to bee of the common ſorte: but that is nothing, for no man complaines of it. But God will haue right and equitie to be miniſtred to all perſons. Therefore let ſuch as are aduaunced to degree of honour thinke, that if they deſpiſe the meaner ſorte and ſuch as ſeeme to be the outcaſts of all the world: they ſhall giue account for it. For if God vouchſafe to regard thoſe kind of folke, and to haue a Pſal.116, 6. care of them; yea and (which more is) do name himſelfe their defender: wil he ſuffer them to be ſo troden vnder foote, and to bee borne downe with oppreſſion and tyranny, without reuenging them? So then, Iudges muſt match their ſtoutneſſe with gentleneſſe, and incline themſelues euen to the meaneſt, receiuing them into their protection, and looking to the maintenaunce of their caſes when they be good and rightful. Thus ye ſee what we haue to remẽber in this text.

Were this rule well held, we ſhould not heare ſo many complaintes, neither ſhould thinges be ſo farre out of order. But what? yee ſhall ſee a good iudgement giuen, and a fault or offence puniſhed as it ought to be: and by and by in ẏ turning of an hand, ye ſhall ſee the like caſe goe vnpuniſhed. And why is that? Becauſe the perſons of men doe beare al the ſway: There is a caſe wherin a man is conuicted by the thinges which he himſelf was to ſpeake: it falleth out apparant, and thereupon he is to haue ſome puniſhment, and he hath it in deede. And why then is not the like done in al other like caſes? O becauſe the partie is fauored. In deede men ſeeke many colours and diſguiſings: & it is ſo much the woorſe: but yet cãnot God be deceiued, whatſoeuer ſhifts be made to ſhroude our matters with all. Neuertheleſſe the worlde ſees howe this reſpecting of perſons peruerteth all right, and that it is almoſt an ordinarie thing. Inſomuch that for ſome one nice point, a mã is oftẽtimes graueled in a caſe, which of it ſelfe were plaine & manifeſt ynough, if the parties themſelues came not into the play, that ẏ Iudge might giue ſentence vprightly, without reſpecting the outward ſhowes which I ſpake of afore. But the Iudges being preuented with the regard of the perſons, doe caſt great doubtes where none at all is, to ſay this & that. And what is the cauſe thereof? Alwayes the reſpecting of perſons. And in deede, in ſome caſes a Iudge will goe through with them, and diſpatch them quickly: and in ſome other in all pointes like, he will haue ſo many deuiſes, that he can neuer determine it. Wee ſee then howe great the leawdeneſſe of men is in this behalfe. Yet for all that, our Lord wil not haue the inſtruction which he deliuereth here to his people, to be loſt or vnprofitable. Therefore let vs looke that we make our profit of it.

And let vs marke that as Iudges and Magiſtrates are forbidden to haue any reſpect of perſons: ſo is the ſame warning made to vs all. For what is the cauſe that wee fayle ſo ofte in dooing our dueties, but that wee bee ſo preuented with this reſpecting of parties? Therefore let vs haue ſuch ſtoutnes of corage, as no greatnes, no pompe, no authoritie, no honour of this world may get the vpper hand of vs to peruert vs. And on the other ſide, let vs haue ſuch myldneſſe as wee deſpiſe not the meaner ſorte, but rather bee gentle to receiue them. Thus much in effect concerning the woorde *Perſon.*

Now there is a ſecond point concerning briberie and rewardes. *Thou ſhalt not take them,* ſayth the Lord. He ſaith not, thou ſhalt not ſell Iuſtice: but he ſaith, *thou ſhalt not take*. And why ſo? he addeth the reaſon: *For giftes* (ſaith he) *doe blinde the eyes of the wiſe, and peruert the wordes of the righteous.* Heere is a reaſon well worthy to be weied. For it ſeemeth at the firſt ſight, that to take ſome preſentes is not euil nor to bee condemned, I meane in a Iudge. For he ſpeaketh here of the preſentes and gifts that are giuen in reſpect of ſome caſe that is to bee heard. As for example, a malefactor laboureth to ſcape vnpuniſhed, and hee goeth about to win the Iudge by ſending him ſome preſent. Likewiſe another man puts himſelfe foreward, and to haue fauour againſt his aduerſarie prartie, hee goes and giues the Iudge ſomewhat likewiſe. Now our Lord ſaith not, Beware of it: If thou receiue a preſent to fauour the partie that giueth it thee, it is ill done, and it is a ſetting of Iuſtice to ſale. God ſpeaketh not thoſe preciſe wordes: but he ſaith, Beware of taking: for it is vnpoſſible that he which hath taken, ſhould behaue himſelfe vprightly and not ſwarue aſide. Neuertheleſſe there are a great ſorte to be found which will ſay, As for mee, although I take, yet doth it not therefore follow, that I will ſwarue from myne office: For when I haue taken on both handes, I will giue him the glike which thought he had won me by his giuing. And is that ſo euill a thing? Why then was he ſo fooliſh to bring it me? If he bring, I take: but yet for all that, I ſtep not aſide from my duetie. Such kinde of folkes would make GOD a lyer. For we heare how it is ſayd heere, that gifts doe blinde the eyes of the wiſe. If they thinke themſelues ſo ſharpe ſighted, that the receauing of rewardes cannot dim their eyes: God ſayth the contrary. And if they thinke themſelues ſo conſtant, that they cannot bee bowed; God telleth them that as ſoone as they haue taken any gift, they bee vtterly mard, and there is no more ſoundneſſe in them. Now then it is too groſſe a fondneſſe to ſay, I will take rewardes, & yet for all that, I will keepe my ſelfe well ynough from turning away, or from ſwaruing from the right. But that is vnpoſſible; for then ſhould God haue lyed in this text. Thus ye ſee what we haue to remember in the firſt place, concerning the ſecond point.

Now therfore, they that ſit in ẏ ſeat of Iuſtice ought to thinke thus: doth he that bringes mee preſentes, bring them of good will as one neighbour to another, or as one friend to another? or bringeth hee them rather for ſome matters ſake which he hath before me? Then if a man haue a cauſe before a Iudge, & the Iudge take a preſẽt of him; he offẽdeth god. Who ſo? Bicauſe God hath forbidden him, and he knoweth wherefore. It is not for man to ſay, It makes no matter, I wil take heede well enough for being bridled by it. But it is a tempting of God when we deale ſo, and God will hold ſkorne of our ouerweening, and will ſhewe vs that we bee not of ſuch abilitie as wee tooke our ſelues to be, and that he did not without cauſe tell vs, that when wee be lymefingred to drawe preſents vnto vs, and to hold them faſt when we haue them: then are our eyes blinded, and then are our hartes wreſted, ſo as wee haue no more wiſedome nor vprightneſſe in vs. Seeing that God ſayth ſo, it is not for vs to reply againſt it. And in deede, whoſoeuer they be that boaſt themſelues to be vnable to be corrupted, or to bee made to ſteppe aſide by taking of preſentes: they neede not to bee brought before God to bee conuicted, but euen young children may iudge of them. It is too common a thing, and I could alledge examples thereof that are knowen welinough. For there are ſome which are growē to ſo great vnſhamefaſtneſſe; that they ſticke not to ſay, As for me, I will take on all handes. This hath bin heard, and there are witneſſes enow that can beare me record of the matter. And in the meane ſeaſon what proteſted they? Tuſh, I wil not be corrupted for all that. No: but when little children haue ſeene that Iuſtice hath bin ſet to ſale, and that a leawd man hath gotten the vpper hand in all caſes, what is to bee ſayd of it? As for him, ſo he might play his pranckes, and obteine his ſutes: he had caſt his cardes aforehand. And on the otherſide, thoſe to whome the preſentes were brought, went lyke ſwine caſting vp their groynes, ſo as there was leſſe honeſtie and ſhame among them, than is euen among the heathen men and infidels. This hath bin ſeene: and yet notwithſtanding they pretended in their talke to be holy men. O there were as godly and ſweete wordes as could be: yea, but when the matter commeth to be ſpoken of, little boyes and idiots will giue their verdit of it: for the thing is too much knowen. Seeing then that our Lord telleth vs here, that if mē receiue bribes, their eyes muſt needes be dazeled, and their hearts corrupted: let vs beare wel in mind, that except we will poyſon our ſelues wilfully, we muſt firſt of all keepe this rule, namely that Iudges muſt not take any thing, at leaſtwiſe of any body that hath aught to doe in Lawe before thē, but vtterly abſteine from ſo dooing, vnleſſe they intend to turne away from all good order, right, and equitie.

And herein we ſee how our Lord who knoweth our diſeaſes, or deineth immediatly meete & conuenient remedies for the ſame. What remaineth then but that we on our ſide enter into examination of our ſelues, and euery of vs ſearche himſelfe narrowly? For the thing that maketh vs ſo bolde to tempt God, is that none of vs entereth into himſelfe, to looke neerely to his own vices and infirmities. But if we had the diſcretion to bethinke our ſelues, wee would conſider thus, Alas, I neede not any thing to peruert me, I am as frayle alreadie as may bee: though there were no occaſion at all to ſurpriſe mee, I would ſeeke occaſion of my ſelfe. And what wil I doe then when I meete with any euil occaſion, or any cauſe of miſdealing? I ſhall ſtumble and fall flat downe. So then, if wee aduiſe our ſelues wel of our vices: it is certeine that we would ſeeke al the helpes that could be to preſerue our ſelues. But ſeeing that God preuenteth vs, and on the one ſide ſheweth vs how feeble and weake we be; and that on the other ſide, wheras we might fall into ſuch miſchiefe and inconuenience, he prouideth for it and ſaith, My friendes, true it is that ye be ſubiect to euill, but the way for you to bee preſerued from it, is to abſteine from ſuch a thing, and to take ſuch a remedy: ſeeing (I ſay) that God ſpeaketh ſo familiarly vnto vs, if wee refuſe him, I pray you dooth not our vnthankfulneſſe deſerue, that wee ſhould be caryed away vnto all euill, and that Satan ſhoulde driue vs and beare vs quite away, and that God ſhould forſake vs and ſuffer vs to fall into groſſe offences as all the world might abhorre vs?

Now then, it ſtandeth vs ſo much the more in hand to marke well this ſentence, where it is ſayd that if men withſtand not the temptations that may beguile them; of wiſe and diſcreete, they ſhall become blinde; and of iuſt they ſhall become vniuſt. God ſpeaketh not here of ſuch as haue alwayes bin naughtipackes, in whome neither reaſon nor vprightnes hath borne ſway at any time: but of the wiſe and righteous. And that is ſuch a monſtrous thing as ought to make our hayre to ſtand vp vppon our heades. As how? That giftes and preſentes ſhoulde haue ſuch force to corrupt, as that they ſhould blinde the eyes of thoſe which were of good diſcretiō. Now it is certeine that diſcretion is a ſingular gift of God. When wee ſpeake of wiſedome, we muſt not thinke that it groweth out of mens braynes, but that it is the gift of God. Ye ſhall ſee that God hath indued ſome mā with a good wit, by meanes whereof he behaueth himſelfe in ſuch wiſe, that he dooth good and commendable thinges. And yet if God let him alone, ſo as he giue himſelfe to this corruption of taking rewardes: by and by the light which God had giuen him, not onely becommeth dim, but alſo goeth quite out. Therefore let vs learne to looke to our ſelues, and (as ſaith S. Paul) let ſuch as ſuppoſe they ſtand beware leaſt they fall. For our Lord vſeth here a horrible threate, whē he ſaith that they which ſaw cleerely enough, ſhall bee blinded if they giue thēſelues to taking of giftes: and that they which were well and holily diſpoſed, ſhall be peruerted and turned away vnto euill. When we heare this, ought we not to ſtand vppon our gard and to keepe good watch; leaſt we be ſurpriſed by Satans wilines? So then, let vs preuent ſuch temptations a good way aforehand. And ſith we ſee that our Lorde forewarneth vs: let vs ſtand in feare, and not run ruſhing againſt him wilfully, nor fall to ſtubbornneſſe: but rather conſider with our ſelues how that euen they which haue bin as halfe Angels, may be ouerthrowen and thruſt out of the way, when they haue giuen themſelues to it, & would needes vſe too large diſpenſation. Wherefore let

Iames, 1, 5.

1.Co.10.12.

vs al learn to reine our ſelues ſhort,and to ſubmit our ſelues to the gouernment of our Lorde; and then we need not doubt but that if he haue giuen vs wiſedome and diſcretion,he will ſtrengthen vs more and more therein, and make vs to continue in them vnto the end; ſo wee goe to worke with praying vnto him continually to preſerue vs, as I haue ſayd afore.

Now let vs kneele downe before the maieſtie of our good God with acknowledgement of our faultes,praying him to voutſafe to touch vs in ſuch ſorte, that we returne vnto him with true repentance:& that ſuch as haue publike charge, may behaue thēſelues ſo dutifully, as they may be able to yeeld a faithful reckoning of yͤ charge that is committed to them:and that all priuate perſons may in ſuch wiſe ſuffer themſelues to be gouerned by them,as God may reigne among vs,and haue all ſoueraigntie,ſo as both great & ſmall may be obedient vnto him. And for the bringing hereof to paſſe, it may pleaſe him to ſtir vp true & faithful Miniſters of his word, &c.

On Wednesday the xiii. of Nouember. 1555.

The Cii. Sermon,which is the ſixt vpon the ſixteenth Chapter,and the firſt vpon the ſeuenteenth.

20 In all caſes thou ſhalt follow the thing that is right, that thou maiſt liue and inioy the land which the Lord thy God giueth thee.

21 Thou ſhalt plant no groue of any maner of trees neere vnto the Altar of the Lord thy God, which thou ſhalt make thee.

22 Alſo thou ſhalt not ſet vp any Image:for that doth the Lord thy God hate.

The Seuenteenth Chapter.

THou ſhalt not offer to the Lorde thy God, either Ox or Sheepe that hath any blemiſh therin:I ſay thou ſhalt not offer any euilfauoured thing: for that is abhomination to the Lorde thy God.

HItherto Moſes hath commended equitie & vprightneſſe vnto vs, ſaying that thoſe which are appointed to bee Iudges, ought to mainteine euery mans right without ſwaruing. And thereupon he ſayd, that as many as intend to continue in ſuch ſoundneſſe,muſt beware in any wiſe of taking rewardes:for if they take any, by and by they be corrupted, by & by they be blinded. And it is not to be replyed here,that a man may well receiue a preſent,& yet haue no meaning to fauor any wicked caſe. For yͤ holy ghoſt hath giuen ſentence, that the man which is ſo giuen to taking of preſentes, ſhall bee blinded though he were the ſharpeſt ſighted man in the world. Nay, he hath a towell before his eyes already, and beſides that,whereas he was well & holily diſpoſed before,now hee is quite peruerted. We ſee then how it is a deadly poyſon,for a Iudge to receiue any preſentes in any wiſe.

And now to hold men the better in awe, Moſes addeth Gods promiſe,as if he ſhould ſay,that we muſt not be wedded to our owne profit, whē God on the otherſide offereth vs his bleſſing, & telleth vs that he will proſper vs, ſo we ſtick vnto him. And whether were it better for vs,to inrich our ſelues by vnlawfull meanes which God condemneth, and which ſhall come to an euill end: or to haue Gods fauor preſent with vs,and that the ſame ſhould neuer faile vs? Thus we ſee now to what purpoſe Moſes addeth this ſentēce, *That men ſhould followe vprightneſſe*. Verily euen to the intent they may inioy Gods fauor, *& that thou maiſt poſſeſſe the land*(ſayth he)*which the Lorde thy GOD giueth thee, and that thou maiſt liue long therein*. This is a continuing of the ſame matter ſtill, which I haue declared before: namely that whereas God might commaund vs in one word; yet notwithſtanding to win vs to him, hee is ſo gentle that hee bindeth himſelfe to vs, and maketh a couenant with vs as it were betweene two parties. He hath authoritie enough to commaund vs,and it is not for vs to aske wherefore. Againe,he is not bound to promiſe vs any thing: for we owe him all that we haue,and he is indetted to none of vs. Neuertheleſſe he voutſafeth to yeelde to our infirmitie,accordingly as we haue ſeene heretofore, that after his requeſting of yͤ which is our duetie, he addeth that we ſhall not be diſappointed in ſeruing of him. Yet muſt wee not conclude thereupon, that wee can deſerue aught at his hand: but rather we ſee his infinite goodneſſe, in that hee promiſeth vs his fauor freely after that faſhiō. And therefore we ought to be the forewarder in dooing whatſoeuer hee commaundeth, notwithſtāding any impedimēt that might hinder vs to plucke vs back. Vnexcuſable are we in theſe dayes, if we feele not ſome force of his promiſes,in quickening & ſtirring of vs vp to obey him. Hath God commanded it? That ought to ſuffice vs. Notwithſtāding,becauſe we be ſlowe and negligent,he addeth this help, that he commeth to win vs by gentlenes, as if a father ſhould flatter his child. See we this? Muſt it not needes be yͤ our hearts are too too much hardened,if they relent not at ſuch goodneſſe ? Therefore when we feele that Gods commaundementes touche vs not ſufficiently to the quicke : let vs take theſe promiſes here, to ſtirre vp our ſelues the more,and to ſpurre vs the more forewarde .

Againe, let vs marke well the ſpeach howe he ſaith, *Thou ſhalt followe vprightneſſe in all caſes*. The wordes are; *Vprightnes, vprightnes ſhalt thou follow*.So doth Moſes ſpeake, howbeit that ſome men tranſlate it, *Thou ſhalt follow iuſtice vprightly*. But when all is throughly lookt vnto, he meaneth nothing elſe but that men ſhould beare an euen hand in executing of iuſtice,following the right by ſtreight line, and perſeuering ſtedfaſtly in it without ſwaruing . I ſay it behoueth vs to marke well this ſaying, bycauſe men will needs alwayes diſcharge themſelues to Godwarde by peeces : but as for to go through ſtedfaſtly with all things that he commaundeth; that is a very rare matter, (as the world ſeeth) ſpecially in thoſe which haue the handling of the lawe. True it is ẏ though they be wicked, yet wil they be aſhamed not to haue ſome goodly ſhew : & ſo now and then a man ſhal find ſome vprightneſſe and reaſon in them.But haue they done right to one man? To morowe they will deale contrariewiſe with another. Haue they puniſhed one miſdeede? Three ſhall go vnpuniſhed for it, after as the perſons are fauored and borne out.This partialitie is to be ſeene in maner continually: and it is a token that there is no vprightneſſe . And this is not to ſerue God: inſomuch that when indifferencie is not vſed in the miniſtration of Iuſtice, thoſe that are puniſhed cry out vnto God for vengeance, as though they were wronged. And therefore Moſes thinks it not enough that men ſhould ſimply doe Iuſtice ; but hee will alſo haue them to proceede with it, and to continue it, ſo as there may be Iuſtice vpon Iuſtice:that is to ſay,a continuall holding on,ſo as no vndifferencie may be perceiued, nor any diuerſitie of weightes and ballances,nor any reſpect of perſons : accordingly as hath bin ſayd heretofore, that men muſt not leane to the one ſide for any fauor, nor forſake a good cauſe for any hatred, but be of ſuch ſtoute courage that they bow not one way or other for any thing. That is the way to mainteine Iuſtice.

This leſſon is apparant enough of it ſelf: there remaineth no more for vs but to fall to the practiſing therof. But as I ſayd, it is a very hard thing for men to frame themſelues to keepe an euen hand. So farre off is it, that this was written in vaine: that it is ſayd ẏ if we will proſper through Gods fauor, wee muſt keepe order continually among vs, ſo as euery man may haue his right: and that on the contrary part, without we doe ſo, God threatneth to bereaue vs of his bleſſing though he had giuen vs it before. And thereof it is that we ſee ſo many chaunges and alterations to happen in the worlde : namely for that when God hath bleſſed a people, & ſet them in as good ſtate as were to be wiſhed, by & by they fall to ryoting, ſo as the gouerners abuſe their authoritie, & the people take libertie to doe euill,when they ſee ẏ their Iudges are corrupted, by reaſon wherof God is fain to lift vp his hand, & to take away quite and cleane all that euer he had beſtowed vpon that nation . Wee ſee examples thereof too commonly. Wherefore let vs ſtand in awe, and let vs learne to liue the warelyer in the obedience of God, when he hath ſet vs in any proſperitie. Let euery man according to his abilitie,further the maintenãce of Iuſtice: and let ſuch as haue the ſword in hand, vſe it in ſuch ſorte as God may be honored,& not be driuen to bring vs to our arreignment for breaking of the order which he had ſet among vs:That is the effect of the thinges which we haue to remember in this text.

Now Moſes addeth,*That men ſhould not plant any tree neere vnto the Altar of the Lord, nor ſet vp any maner of image*. Wherby he prouideth ẏ there ſhould be no reſemblance betweene thẽ & the Idolaters & Gentiles:and alſo that there ſhould not be any memoriall of long continuance, for feare leaſt they ſhould learne or accuſtome thẽſelues to doe ſacrifice in diuers places . So are there two reaſons which Moſes hath an eye vnto in this text.The one is,ẏ he would haue ẏ ſeruice of God ſeparated from all ẏ ſuperſtitions of the heathen. The other is,ẏ he would haue folke to accuſtome thẽſelues to the worſhipping of God, and to offer their ſolemne ſacrifices in the place where ẏ Arke of ẏ couenant was, and that there might not be any peculiar religion throughout all ẏ countrie. As touching ẏ firſt,it is a point wel woorth the weying, ẏ God will haue his ſeruice to be ſuch as he himſelf requireth & appointeth, & that he will not in any wiſe haue vs to meddle with thoſe ẏ inuẽt & deuiſe ſuperſtitions on their owne head. In ẏ firſt place;Let vs marke thẽ how it is not ẇout cauſe,ẏ God is ſo charie of ẏ ſeruice ẏ we be to doe vnto him. For in deed,is it reaſon that men ſhould ſtand in defence & maintenance of their own right,and that God ſhould be diſappointed of his?And is there any thing more precious & holy,than ẏ honor which we yeelde vnto him,in proteſting him to be our God & father,of whome we hold all ẏ euer we haue, & at whoſe hand we looke for ſaluation ? Is there any thing more holy than ẏ? Thẽ let vs learne to be attentiue when ẏ holy ſcripture ſpeaketh to vs of the ſeruice of God. For it is a thing ẏ paſſeth all other in dignitie. Marke that for one point.

And it ſtandeth vs ſo much the more in hand to giue our indeuour thereunto,becauſe wee ſee ẏ world holdeth skorne to yeelde God his due obedience. If a man ſpeake to a blaſphemer , or to a deſpiſer of ẏ orders of ẏ church,or(to be ſhort) to one that is no better than a dog : if a man tell ſuch a one of his leawdneſſe: To whom do I any wrong,ſaith he?If he had giuen a man a fillip, or had chaunced to haue ſpoken a croſſe worde, as ſmall as ẏ wrong is,he would haue confeſſed his fault and ſayde,I haue done amiſſe: and yet is this but againſt a mortall man . But when hee ſhal haue ſpit God in the face, tuſh,it is nothing, it is no wrong to any mã. Dayly ſhal a man heare ſuch ſpeeches. Inſomuch ẏ if God bee blaſphemed,and his maieſtie ſo ſhamefully diſhonored as would make a mans hart ake to ſee it: it is all one, there is no account made of it. But let vs mark (as I ſayd afore) that our Lorde will haue his ſeruice to be placed formoſt & in higheſt degree: and when the caſe concerneth the ruling of our lyfe, we muſt begin at that end; To wit; To honor him as he deſerueth.

Moreouer, let vs marke wel that it is not without cauſe, that he will haue his ſeruice ſo farre vnlyke all ẏ ſuperſtitions of ẏ heathen. For euen of our owne nature we be too much giuen to the corrupting & diſguiſing of thinges, by meanes whereof the pureneſſe of the true religion is peruerted. Euery man hath in himſelfe a ſtorehouſe of idolatrie, though hee be not prouoked thereto by others: & in what caſe then are we, when we light vppon ſtumblingblockes and occaſions, yea & euen go to ſeeke them? I ſee idolaters ẏ haue diſguiſed & falſified ẏ whole ſeruice of God, & I ſhall goe borrow of them I wote not what; becauſe this thing or that thing lykes me, I ſhall goe put it to that which our Lorde hath commaunded me. Am not I by and by ſnarled in the ſame folly that they were, which played ẏ naughtipackes before me? Yes ſurely. For although I regard neither ẏ one nor the other; yet haue I many vain fancies in my hart. And if I fal to ſeeking of ſuch thinges of ſet purpoſe: it is all one as if I did caſt my ſelfe into Satans ſnares. And therefore let vs mark, that our Lord meant to preſerue his ſeruantes from a deadly plague, when he ſayd that they ſhould holde them to ẏ pure ſimplicitie of his word, and not reſemble ẏ paynims and infidels in any caſe. In thoſe dayes the heathen for deuotion ſake, made ſhadowes about their Altars, lyke as at this day in ẏ Popedome, if a place be darkeſome, it ſeemeth to thẽ to cary ſome maieſtie in it, and the ſimple ſorte are as it were amazed when they come into a Caue, and where the windowes be dimmed with red or blewe glaſſe, mens eyes dazle at it, and ſillie ſimple ſoules feele a kind of motion in thẽſelues which maketh them afraid & aſtoniſhed: and to their ſeeming, it is good to ſtirre them vp to deuotion, bearing folke in hand that it is a reuerencing of God, whereas in deede it is ſtark fooliſhneſſe. After the ſame maner did the heathen in plaſhing of trees to make places darke, that when men entered into them, they ſeemed to be agaſt, as though a woolfe had bin at their tayle as they ſay, by reaſon whereof they were moued to ſome fearefulneſſe. Now foraſmuch as this cuſtome was among the heathen, our Lord will not haue the faithfull to reſemble thẽ. Thus in fewe wordes, we ſee heere how all maner of reſembling the vnbeleeuers is forbidden vs, if we intend to ſerue God in ſuch wiſe as hee may lyke of it and take it in good woorth.

And this warning is as needefull for vs nowadaies, as it was for ẏ Iewes in the time of Moſes. For what a nũber of deuices are there in ẏ Popedome, which haue bin taken from the ſuperſtitions of the heathẽ? All that euer is termed Gods ſeruice in the Popedome, is but a cõfuſed heape, gathered out of the thinges that are commaunded in the Lawe of Moſes, & the thinges that are ſeene to haue bin obſerued of the Heathen. And to colour the matter wal, they alledge that their ſo dooing, is leaſt the Iewes ſhould vpbraide the Chriſtians ẏ they haue not ſo goodly ceremonies in their Churches, as they haue. And therefore they muſt needes haue this and that, after their example. True it is ẏ they haue not bin ſo bold as to kil brute beaſtes in ſacrifice; for ẏ had bin too deteſtable. But yet they tooke vp their Lampes, their perfumes, their attyrementes, their altars, and a certaine maner of ſacrifycing, though it be not of Calues, Oxen, & Sheepe. Beſides this, the Iewes had their waſhings; & therfore the Papiſtes would needes haue holy water, To be ſhort, the Iewes were ſo throughly counterfeited; that to all ſeeming, they could not boſt that they had mo goodly ceremonies in their tẽples, than ẏ Chriſtians had in theirs. But ẏ was high treaſon againſt God. And if there had bin no more but meere folly in it, it might haue bin ẏ better born ẇ. But it tended to the darkening of the grace of our Lord Ieſus Chriſt, by drawing a new veile ouer him. The veile ẏ God had commaunded to be in ẏ temple, is rent aſunder: and they fal to hanging vp of another ẏ is wrought by ẏ hand of man: by means wherof Ieſus Chriſt is as good as hidden, ſo as men can not behold ẏ maieſtie ẏ ſhould ſhine forth in him. For he is ẏ liuely image of God his father; & in him and in his perſon or face we ſee whatſoeuer belongeth to our ſaluation. Now they fall to making of impedimẽts by ſuch ceremonies, ẏ the world might not looke full vpõ Ieſus Chriſt. And they bee not contented ẇ the intermingling of the thinges ẏ God had ordeined for a time amõg ẏ Iewes: but they haue alſo borrowed of ẏ obſeruances of the heathen. True it is ẏ euen in this caſe alſo they pretended ſome color, as who ſhould ſay that the world could not be drawen frõ thoſe fooliſh ceremonies, & therefore it was better to vſe them ſtil vnder the title of God & his ſaincts, than vnder ẏ title of idols as they haue done before: but by that meanes the ſeruice of God was falſifyed.

2.Cor.3.13
18.

2.Cor.4.4.6

Let vs mark then ẏ all that euer is termed by the name of Gods ſeruice at this day in ẏ Popedome, is but a confuſed hotchpotch of all maner of ſuperſtitions; for they cannot ſhewe that the holy ſcripture hath appointed men to do ſo. And whence haue they fetched their ground, but frõ a deſire to counterfeit the things ẏ were vſed among the Iewes & Infidels? Sith it is ſo, what a thing is it if we ſhall now faſhion our ſelues lyke vnto them, and ſuffer a ſort of pelting bables or ceremonies to bee layd vppon vs, and binde our ſelues to ẏ keeping of thẽ, to ẏ intent wee would not be too far vnlyke thoſe ẏ name themſelues Chriſtians? It is ẏ ſame corruptiõ which God cõdemneth in this ſentence. For it is not Gods will ẏ we ſhould haue any reſemblãce to thoſe which haue ẇdrawen thẽſelues frõ the pure obeying of his word. Therefore let vs be contẽted to haue Gods ſeruice reformed & ſtabliſhed according to his cõmaundement. That is the thing which we haue to obſerue in the firſt place.

As touching the ſecond poynt, it is ſayd that God would haue but onely one Altar whereon to offer their ſacrifices. At this day, this is no more in vſe; we haue no more any materiall altar. For whereas the Papiſtes vſe altars, in ſo dooing they deface the death and paſſion of our Lord Ieſus Chriſt as much as they can. Neuertheleſſe, Gods intent at that time, was to keepe his people in the vnion of faith, by allowing them but one Altar.

And now it is ſayd, *that they ſhould not ſet vp any memoriall of long continuance*, in any certeine place. For by that meanes they might haue accuſtomed themſelues to worſhip God there, or they might haue made ſome chappell for deuotion, and ſo had all bin mard. And therefore not without cauſe were they forbidden to plant any trees in the places where they ſacrificed: for Gods Sanctuarie was to be plāted at length vpō mount Sion. And as many as intended to ſerue God purely, it behooued them to reſort thither, to ſhewe one common accord, and one true vnitie of beliefe. Lykewiſe nowadayes our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt hath left vs his holy ſupper, for a warrant that he dwelleth among vs, and is alwayes preſent with vs by his power: inſomuch that although he be exalted aboue the glory of heauen; yet doe not we faile to be knit vnto him to bee members of his body, to haue one common lyfe with him, and (at one word) to be fed and nouriſhed by his ſubſtance. And becauſe it is a ſecret that paſſeth all vnderſtanding of man; he hath warranted it vnto vs, by yͤ viſible ſigne of his ſupper. Come we then to the table of our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt? The bit of bread and the draught of wine which we receiue there, doe repreſent vnto vs, yͭ Ieſus Chriſt is truely our food, & that we be ſo incorporated into him, yͭ we be partakers of his owne proper life. By meanes whereof Ieſus Chriſt is ſo preſent with vs yͭ we muſt all needes be gathered together vnto him.

1.Tim.3.16.
Eph.5.30.
Ioh.8.56.
57.

But we ſee at this day what hath bin done in the Popedome. Was there a table for the receiuing of the Communion? No, it was turned into an Altar. And that was one corruptiō aforehand For as I haue ſayd already, it is not for any man to ſacrifice Ieſus Chriſt any more. That office belonged peculiarly to himſelfe, and he diſcharged it throughly, & now muſt we receiue yͤ ſacrifice that was offered vp vnto God, & let yͤ worde altar alone. Neuertheleſſe it is not enough with thē that there be but one table; they will needes haue three or foure: euery man buildes me his chappel, & there ſets me vp an altar. Although it were a good thing of it ſelfe to haue one altar among yͤ Chriſtiās: yet doe they breake yͤ vnitie of faith, whē they build ſeuerall chappels after yͭ faſhion. For why? It is yͤ will of Ieſus Chriſt that there ſhould be one common ſupper, & yͭ all his Church ſhould meet together, & that the receiuing thereof ſhould be as a true band to hold the faithful in one with him. But they go to ſay their deuotions in ſuch a place, & to ſing Maſſe in an other place: And yͭ is an open defying of God, & a ſetting vp of idols in his ſtead. It is a turning of Gods tēple, not onely into a Swines ſtye, but alſo into a ſtinking dungeon of all abhomination & idolatrie. And therfore let vs marke, how it is not without cauſe yͭ God teacheth vs in this text yͭ although we haue not yͤ auncient ceremonie of Sacrifycing Oxen & Sheepe: yet notwithſtāding we ought to be vnited in faith, and not ad any thing at al to yͭ which is cōmāded vs, but ſimply keep this rule inuiolable, yͭ we vnderſtand how & after what faſhiō God wil be worſhiped, & agree thereto, ẘout preſuming to put any thing to it.

Heb.9.11.25.

Deut.12.32.

Now alſo Moſes ſayth; *That they muſt not offer vnto God any beaſt that hath any maim or blemiſh in it*. He hath told vs hitherto that men muſt not meddle w̃ idolaters, nor haue any reſemblance to their ſuperſtitions. For the true religion muſt be held in his pure ſingleneſſe. But that is not all. For they that offer vnto God, & turne not away after the fond deuotions of men, muſt moreouer ſerue God ſoundly, that is to ſay, their diſcharging of themſelues towardes him, muſt not bee lightly, as men doe commonly nowadayes. For we ſee howe men defraude God of his right. In deede when we be indetted vnto men, we diſcharge our ſelues one way or other: but whereas we be indetted vnto God, all our ſeeking is how to ſcape from him. True it is yͭ we wil indeuer to defraud men alſo: but yet wil we be aſhamed to vſe libertie towardes them as wee doe towardes God euen in dalying with him. If we owe a man either cuſtome or rent, we will not ſtick to conceale it if wee can, if wee be of euill conſcience: But yet for all that, wee will not be plucked too much by the eare: for wee thinke wee ſhall gaine nothing by ſo dooing. So then, as touching yͤ dettes yͭ men doe owe one to another, they diſcharge thē: but it skils not for God. Although he call vpon vs & threatē vs; yet euen after he hath ſhewed vs our duetie, we ceaſe not to defraud him ſtil, yea & we be quite paſt ſhame in it. Verily we wil not ſticke to ſay, it is good reaſon yͭ he ſhould be honored & ſerued: but yet we wil haue this ſeruing to be after our owne faſhiō. But he requireth a right obedience. And what doe wee to him? Very well ſay we, we muſt diſcharge our ſelues to Godwarde. And after what maner? In mocking of him, Inſomuch yͭ although yͤ doing of ſome ceremonies be nothing worth; yet notwithſtāding men beare thēſelues in hand yͭ God ought to hold himſelf contented therew̃, and that he dealeth too rigorouſly w̃ vs if he require any more of vs. For this cauſe it is ſayd yͭ men ſhall not offer any thing in ſacrifice which hath either blemiſh or ſpot. For vnder one kinde Moſes cōprehendeth yͤ whole; as if he had ſayd, let vs not thinke our ſelues eſcaped when wee haue ſerued God by halues and peeces, but wee muſt go to it ſoundly & roundly, ſo as we doe our duetie towardes him throughly in all pointes. True it is that there was a ſpecial reaſon for the Iewes: for yͤ Iewes were admoniſhed yͭ their ſins coulde not bee wiped out before God, but by meanes of yͤ ſacrifice yͭ was to be offered. For it behoued them to lift vp their mindes aboue the world, vnto yͤ trueth, to ſay, there will bee a payment to diſcharge all our dets: whē Ieſus Chriſt commeth, he wil reconcile vs to God his father, and diſcharge vs of yͤ bond of death, wherein we be bound. Therefore it behoued yͤ Iewes to haue their ſacrifices pure & cleane, yͭ they might bee led by them to our Lord Ieſus Chriſt, and their faith be lifted vp aboue the world, to know that there is not any ſatisfaction nor offering that we can bring on our ſide to pleaſe God withall, but that he muſt be faine to giue vs the thing that we want to offer vnto him.

Notwithſtanding, we muſt generally beare in minde yͭ which I haue declared already; namely how Moſes ſheweth vs yͭ we muſt ſo roundely yeeld vnto god that which he requireth, as he be not diſappointed, as we heare him cōplain therof Mal,1.13.14 by his prophet, that although the Iewes did not vtterly refuſe to pay yͤ tenthes & firſtfruites: yet they did it but by halues. But God cannot away with ſuch partinges, nor to be played with lyke a little childe. And hereby wee may learne yͭ our ſeruing of God muſt not be by pangs and fittes onely, & afterward fall to lazineſſe: but yͭ it muſt be done ſoundly & ſubſtantialy throughout, with obedience to his word. And again, yͭ in our doinges there muſt be no hypocriſie nor cōſtreint: but yͭ we muſt goe to work wͭ a free will, & not ſet a faire countenāce on it to yͤ worldward, & in the meane while haue a back ſhop that diſpleaſeth God: nay we muſt go to work freely, as I ſayd afore. That is the thing in effect, which we haue to remember vpon this text. Wee nowadayes doe not offer any moe Oxen or Sheepe: but yͤ offerings which we make vnto God, are of Rom,12.1. our owne ſelues & of all yͭ euer he hath giuē vnto vs, ſo as all be dedicated vnto him, & applyed to ſuch vſe as he alloweth; or elſe it is but vncleaneſſe. For if God haue giuē me a thing, & I abuſe it: I am a traitor to God, becauſe I vnhallowe yͤ thing which he had dedicated to the cleane cōtrarie vſe. And therefore let vs mark, yͭ to pleaſe God in offering our ſelues vnto him, we muſt do it ſoundly, wͭout blemiſh or ſpot. True it is yͭ there can be no ſuch perfection in vs, but yͭ very great fault may be found in our ſeruice of him: but yet muſt we alwayes holde vs to this principle, yͭ we come to God vnfeinedly, and whereas there are infirmities in vs, we muſt reſort to our Lord Ieſus Chriſt. For al our ſpots & blemiſhes are done 1.Iohn 1.7. quite & clean away by his bloud. And yͭ is yͤ cauſe Hebr.13.15. why it is ſaid, yͭ wee offer our prayſes vnto God by him. If there were any ſacrifice clean on mēs behalfe, it were yͤ ſacrifice of prayſe: for when we fall to yͤ magnifying of Gods name, & confeſſe yͭ we be beholden to him for al good things; our ſo dooing ſeemeth to bee cleane. Howbeit foraſmuch as we haue our lips ſo vncleane, yͭ we cannot yet diſcharge our ſelues in yͭ behalfe: therefore it ſtandeth vs in hand to reſort continually to our Lord Ieſus Chriſt. Our ſacrifices then are ſteyned with ſome ſpot & vice or other; yͭ is true: but yet muſt wee haue this roundneſſe & ſoundneſſe, of tending vnto God wͭout inforcement, neceſſitie, or hypocriſie. When we be at yͭ point, our Lorde will accept our ſacrifices, as though they were offred vp vnto him throughly pure & perfect, & vtterly faultles. In deed it is by means of our Lord Ieſus Chriſt; for there muſt wee be grounded as I ſaid afore. But if we haue yͭ vertue, then doth God accept yͤ ſacrifices which we offer vnto him, ſo we be not ſnarled wͭ hypocriſie, & come not to him as inforced or conſtreined, but with a free will. Therefore if men will ſerue God, they muſt beware yͭ they ſeek not to pleaſe men by it, as it often falleth out yͭ they thinke it enough to make ſome faire ſhew, & therewͭal do content & ſooth thēſelues. We beare our ſelues in hand yͭ we haue done al yͭ can be done; yea but we neuer entred into our ſelues, to giue ouer our ſelues wholy vnto God. Wee neuer ſounded our ſelues to finde whether there were any euill intermingled, that we might be purged of it. And yet is that the ende which wee ſhould haue begunne at, that our comming vnto God might not be as by conſtreint. For if it were poſſible, we would exempt our ſelues from all obedience, and neuer come to reckoning with him for it. But contrariwiſe wee ought to ſerue him with a freediſpoſed minde. Then let vs conſider, that if wee intend to make our lyfe allowable before God, then in all our thoughtes and all our affections we muſt haue this ſubſtantiall ſoundneſſe of dedicating our whole lyfe vnto him, ſo as our ſenſes and deſires be made captiues vnto him, and hee ſo reigne ouer vs, as our cheefe deſire may bee to bee ruled by him and by his holy ſpirit, and to frame our ſelues in ſuch wiſe to his will, that we take nothing in hand but that which lyketh him. When wee goe that way to worke: then ſhall our ſacrifices bee pure and cleane.

Beſides this, let vs marke alſo yͭ we muſt lykewiſe offer vnto God all yͭ euer he hath beſtowed vpon vs. As for exāple, when we do almesdeeds, let euery man apply yͤ giftes which he hath receiued, to yͤ common benefit of yͤ Church. Thoſe are yͤ ſacrifices of good ſent, at leaſtwiſe if they be without blemiſh or ſpot. For a man ſhall well edify yͤ Church when he himſelf is led with ambition & vainglory. And as for ſuch a one, let him not thinke yͭ he hath offred any thing vnto God. For it is but vtter abhominatiō, whē things haue not their right end, by giuing thē ouer again into Gods hande which had committed them to vs, & by putting thē to ſuch vſe as he hath cōmaunded. Again whē a man yͭ doth almesdeeds is led thereto by vaine ambition, to boaſt himſelf before men, & to be eſteemed & honored for it; his dealing after yͭ faſhion is but vncleanes before God. Now then, let vs learn to haue an eye vnto God, that our ſacrifices may bee without blemiſh or ſpot.

Moreouer, as concerning yͤ order of yͤ Church, & of all other gouernment, we muſt vnderſtand lykewiſe yͭ all our ſacrifices muſt be ſo purifyed as God may accept them. As for example, yͤ ordeyning of Miniſters to preach Gods word, and the doctrine of ſaluatiō, the creating of Magiſtrates & the chooſing of Officers, are ſacrifices which we offer vnto God. Now we muſt offer them wͭout ſpot. For if a man bring in any corruption in thoſe caſes, it is high treaſon to God, as I haue ſayd afore. Therefore let vs bethinke our ſelues throughly, & conſider yͭ although theſe thinges according to yͤ letter, were inioyned to the Iewes in yͤ time of ceremonies: yet muſt we apply them to yͤ ſacrifices yͭ are in vſe and force at this day. And for performance thereof, let vs come back to that which S. Iames ſayth, namely yͭ he which Iames.2.11.

commaunded the one, hath alſo commaunded the other; & that he which forbad the one, hath alſo forbidden the other. Will wee then pleaſe God in all the ſeruices which we doe vnto him? Let there be no parting of ſtakes, as if we woulde ſay, I wil do this for the honor of God, & for the reſt he ſhal beare with me & giue me leaue to do as I liſt. For in ſo doing we would be hailfellow wͭ God. And therfore let vs vnderſtand yͭ the righteouſnes of the law is a thing that cannot be deuided, neither is it for vs to rende it in peeces. Wherfore let vs ſubmit our ſelues to the rule yͭ is giuen vs, after ſuch ſort as is conteined in yͤ Law of God. And therwithal let vs mark further, that we muſt not haue dubble or diſſembling hearts, but that wee muſt ſubmit our ſelues wholly vnto God. And if we cannot attaine therto at yͤ firſt as were to be wiſhed: yet notwithſtanding that muſt be the mark that we ſhoote at. Now we ſee what our Lord meant to require in this text.

But to the end wee may bee the more prouoked, to deale ſoundly and ſubſtantially: let vs alſo marke this ſpeech that Moſes addeth here for a concluſion, namely *that it is abhomination before God*. For men do alwayes make themſelues beleeue, that they ceaſe not to ſerue God though there bee nothing but diſſimulation and hypocriſie in all their doings. And we knowe howe hypocrites are puffed vp continually with this fonde preſumption, that although there bee nothing but counterfeiting in all that they do, yet (to their ſeeming) God is neuertheleſſe beholden to them; and all is wellynough ſo there bee ſome gaie painting and ſome faire ſhewe. In deede they dare not vtterly deny that there is any fault at all in them: but yet would they ſtill beare men in hande, that there is much good in them which God accepteth. As for example, when yͤ Popiſh Prieſts ſay their prime & hours, beſides that they doe but biblebable, their minds are elſewhere; one thinks vpon his kitchin, and another vppon his harlot. Well, they will graunt that this is ill done, and that they ought to bee more heedefull in their praying. But yet will they vpholde, that ſo they haue a finall intent to pray vnto God, it is a good and commendable deede; and their comming to Church deſerueth verie much, ſo they haue this final intent to ſerue god there, though their mindes be diſtracted about other things. When they haue once worſhipped a puppet, and taken a little holy water, though they looke vpon a woman after an vnchaſt ſort, although they be caried away with couetouſnes, or although their mindes bee occupied about ſome other wicked, ſhamefull, and helliſh luſt: yet it skilles not, ſo they haue the ſaide finall intent of ſeruing God; all is wellynough, ſo they make a ſhewe of ſeruing God, notwithſtanding that they ſpite him by all the meanes they can. Likewiſe in their faſting, though a man caſt him ſelfe into all manner of leawdnes and ruffianry, yet if he faſt vppon a deuotion, O thats a holy man, there is no more fault to be founde in him. Thus is it not poſſible to ridde the hypocrites of the falſe and diueliſh opinion wherwith they be beſotted, of paying God with this pelting traſh, which is nothing elſe than abhomination before him; and in the meane while, to ſpite him in all the reſidue of their life: ſo as a man can neuer Prou.11,20 winne them to beleeue, that God vtterly miſlyketh all that euer proceedeth not from a ſounde heart. So much yͤ more therfore doth it ſtand vs in hande, to marke well this ſaying which Moſes ſetteth downe for a finall concluſion: namely that ſuch dealings are abhominable before god. Indeede the blinde & ignorant wretches deeme it not ſo to be; nay, their doings are commended of men; behold (ſay they), here is a goodly vertue, here is a good deſert. But we muſt come before the great Iudge, who hath giuen ſentence already, that ſuch things are but traſh, filthines, and vanitie. And he is not contented with ſaying ſo; but he ſaieth alſo that they be vtter abhomination or lothſomnes. For indeede, beſides their dalying wͭ him to make him as an ydoll, they fal to opē defying of him. If mē thought not god to be ſtarke blind, durſt they come before him with a dubble heart, & fraughted ful of hypocriſie? No ſurely: it woulde make them euen agaſt at it. For whē they play yͤ hypocrites after yͤ faſhion, it is al one as if they came to ſtop gods eyes, yͭ he might not diſcerne their diſſimulation and curſed hypocriſie. So then let vs marke well, that we muſt not ſtay our ſelues vpon mens bearing of themſelues in hande, that to their ſeeming they faile not to do well, and to deſerue wel at Gods hand, though they go not to worke with a free corage, nor with hartie and ſubſtantiall ſoundneſſe: Let not ſuch follies runne in our heads. For God not onely reiecteth ſuch thinges as pelting baggage of no value: but alſo auoweth them to be all abhominable before him, and that he will not ſuffer his ſeruice to be ſo ſhamefully diſguiſed, without taking horrible vengeance for it. And therefore let vs know that he will haue euery of vs to examine our ſelues; & ſith we ſee al our thoughts and affections to be corrupted, ſo as there is nothing in them but dung and vncleanneſſe: let vs pray him to reforme vs in ſuch ſort by his holie ſpirite, as he may be ſerued and honored by vs, and wee apply to good and holy vſe the thinges that he giueth vs: and that therewithall he make vs to profite more and more in his obedience, vntill we bee come with a free will, to ſerue him with ſo good a corage, as wee may be wholly dedicated to his honour. And that we may ſo doe, 1.Pet.1.19. let vs repaire vnto our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt, that our ſpotes and ſteines may be ſcowred away by his pureneſſe and perfection, as he hath promiſed vs. If wee ſhall doe ſo, then will our God approue of our life.

Now let vs kneele downe before the maieſtie of our good God with acknowledgment of our faultes, praying him to make vs ſo to feele them, that wee may from henceforth fall to amendement and reſort to his mercie, and that in the meane ſeaſon he reforme vs in ſuch ſort to the obedience of his Law, as it may ſhine forth in all our whole life, and hee alſo beare with vs in our frailties, vntill he haue ridde vs quite and cleane of them. And ſo let vs all ſay, Almightie God heauenly father, &c.

On Munday the xviij. of Nouember. 1555.

The Ciij. Sermon which is the ſecond vpon the ſeuenteenth Chapter.

2 If within any of the Gates which the Lorde thy God giueth thee, there bee found either man or woman that hath wrought wickednes in the ſight of the Lord thy God, by tranſgreſsing his Couenant,

3 And hath gone and ſerued ſtraunge gods, and bowed himſelfe before them, whether it bee the ſunne, or the moone, or any of all the hoſt of heauen, which I haue not commaunded,

4 And it is told thee, and thou haſt heard of it: then ſhalt thou inquire diligently. And if it be true and certaine that ſuch abhomination hath beene committed in Iſrael:

5 Thou ſhalt cauſe that man or that woman which hath committed that wicked deede, to bee brought out of the gates, and thou ſhalt ſtone them with ſtones, till they die.

6 At the mouth of two or three witneſſes, let him that is worthie of death, dye: but at the mouth of one witneſſe, let no man dye.

7 The hands of the witneſſes ſhalbe the firſt vpon him to kill him, and afterward the hands of all the people. And ſo thou ſhalt ridde away that euil from thee.

Deut.13.1.6 WE haue ſeene heretofore, that if there were either man or woman which went about to counſell others to peruert the ſeruice of God: they ſhoulde die for it. Nowe here is a Lawe, yet more ſharpe: that is to wit, *that if there be any ydolater founde among the people, whether the ſame bee man or woman, it muſt coſt the party his head and his life*, yea though hee haue not gone about to corrupt others or to intice them to leawdneſſe. Truely this ſeemeth rough dealing at the firſt bluſh, as we ſee howe they blame God for vſing ſuch ſeueritie againſt ſuch as vppon deuotion did any act contrarie to his trueth. Becauſe wee wey not Gods honour as it is worthy, wee make greater account of a mortall creature than of the liuing God. For if a man haue practiſed againſt his Prince, or gone about to alter the publike ſtate: hee ſhall be condemned to death without any ſticking. Againe, if a man bee vnderſtoode to haue had ſecrete conference with his Princes enemie, to haue ſhewed him fauour, or to haue conſpired with him; no bodie will excuſe ſuch diſloyaltie: and yet for all that, all this dealing is but againſt men. But if a man turne away from the ſeruing of God to gad after ydols: men thinke hee ought to bee borne withall, as though it were a thing of nothing. Whereby wee bewray, that wee paſſe not for the diminiſhing of Gods honour, or for the defacing of his maieſtie. But wee bee no competent Iudges in that caſe. Therefore let vs remember what is ſaide heere, and not thinke that God paſſed meaſure, when hee did ſet ſuch price vppon his honour.

Nowe it is ſaide, ***If there be founde either man or woman***, to the intent that no frailtie ſhould bee a ſhrowding ſheete to any euill doing. For elſe it woulde bee ſaide, it is a womans deede. If a man of wit, courage, and vnderſtanding had done it; it had beene to haue beene regarded: but ſeeing it is done by ſillie ſoules that are eaſie to be deceiued, is it meete that they ſhoulde bee haled to death for it at the firſt daſh? See I pray you howe we bee wont to qualifie thinges. But God on the contrarie parte intended to preuent ſuch ſhiftes, by telling vs that wee muſt not paſſe whether it bee man or woman, but that the deede of it ſelfe is ſo deteſtable; as that it ought not abide vnpuniſhed. Yet notwithſtanding, before wee proceede to puniſhing, he will haue vs to vnderſtande perfectly howe the matter goeth, and hee will haue the truth of the thing tryed out. And therefore hee ſaith, *When it is reported vnto thee, inquire diligently thereof: and if thou find it true, then ſhalt thou take the partie which hath committed ſuch crime, and ſtone him to death.* Hereby our Lorde ſheweth vs (as he hath done Deut.13.14 afore) that wee muſt not bee haſtie to proceede raſhly vnder pretence of any good will or zeale: but vſe aduiſedneſſe that thinges may bee well knowen. And that is well worth the noting. For wee ſee howe vnaduiſed zeale doth often carie men away; and make them to offende GOD. And when it is done, then they ſay, I did it of a good intent. Yea, but GOD telleth vs heere, that in this behalfe wee muſt behaue our ſelues diſcreetely. And in deede, God meaneth not that men ſhoulde ſo falſely abuſe his name: For what a vile thing is this; that I ſhall ſuppoſe that I ſerue GOD and yet in the meane ſeaſon haue no equitie nor vprightneſſe in me? Is it not a foule iniurie, ſo to intermingle Gods holy name with mine owne follie and lewde imagination? Wherefore let vs well weigh yͭ God, by this place hath condẽned that ſame too too violent heate which men haue, when they ſuffer themſelues to bee ſo caried away by their zeale (as they ſay) without any moderation or ſtay at all. Let that ſerue for one point.

And it is ſome what more when he ſaith, *If the thing be reported vnto thee.* For therein wee haue to note, that faultes cannot bee puniſhed among men, vnleſſe they come to knowledge. Inſomuch that a number of offenders eſcape the handes of worldly Iudges, though they haue offended more foully than others, and be worthy of great blame: and that is becauſe God hydeth their vnhoneſt dealings. For there are 1.Tim.5.24 ſinnes which make haſt to come to their condemnation, which God thruſteth forward: and there are otherſome which linger, and God keepeth them as cloſe as if they were buried. And hereby earthly Iudges are warned to be watchfull in ſerching out of thinges. For inaſmuch as they perceiue, that after neuer ſo much paine taken in boulting out of matters, which belong to their office to haue knowledge of, yet a great ſort of thinges doe ſcape vnſeene: they ought to bee ſo much the more diligent. They cannot knowe all thinges: and why? for they be but men. Yet notwithſtanding, for aſmuch as God hath commaunded men to puniſh euill deedes as ſoone as they come to knowledge: we muſt conſider howe his meaning is, that becauſe nothing can be hidden from him; therefore although men require nothing of vs, nor make any inquiſition or ſuite in Lawe againſt vs heere beneath: yet muſt wee euer bee faine to come to account before him. It is ſaide that any ydolater ſhall bee puniſhed, for God hath commaunded him to bee ſtoned to death, vppon knowledge that hee is ſuch a one. Nowe put the caſe that a man turne away from the pureneſſe of Religion, and worſhippe ydolles in ſecret. In deede hee cannot be touched by order of Lawe, neither ſhall hee abide iudgement for it. But yet muſt hee thinke in the meane while, that God will not ſuffer his eyes to be dazeled. And therefore wee may gather vppon this text, that our Lord reſerueth al thoſe faults, to his owne iudgement, which are not puniſhed by ordinarie Iuſtice in this worlde. Not that hee pardoneth not thoſe which returne vnto him by true repentance: but my meaning is of ſuch as harden themſelues in their hypocriſie, and take occaſion to growe worſe and worſe, becauſe they bee not reproued of their wicked deedes. But yet let them not thinke they haue made the better market for all that. For whereas God telleth the iudges of the earth that they ought to make diligent inquirie: becauſe hee himſelfe hath no neede to do ſo: he telleth vs that all faultes ſhall come before his iudgement ſeate, and that the hypocrites may well ſhrowde themſelues for a time, but in the end they ſhalbe rooted out: and not without cauſe. For (as I haue touched afore) thinke wee that God wil leaue his honour in the ſuddes? Seeing it is his wil that euen men ſhould be maintained in good reputation, and that all outrages ſhoulde be puniſhed: what will he doe when the caſe concerneth his owne maieſtie, & that his glorie is diminiſhed by the malice of men? Ought ſuch dealing to ſcape vnpuniſhed? Wil God ſuffer himſelfe to be mocked after that faſhion? It will bee alledged that all of vs haue beene ydolaters, & ſo we are al worthie of death. And their ſaying ſo, is as it were to ſtirre vp all men againſt God. For the folke that make ſuch replies, ſeeke but to poyſon mens heartes, that Gods honour might bee lightly eſteemed, and that we might quarrell with him when wee feele our ſelues touched.

But firſt of al (as I ſaid afore) we muſt mark yͭ our Lord ſpeaketh here of yͤ puniſhing of ydolaters, where order is ſtabliſhed according to his word. If God had not begunne at that ende, his order had beene amiſſe. But ſeeing hee hath ſhewed howe men ought to ſerue him, and giue a ſure rule thereof, telling vs that we muſt ſimplie doe whatſoeuer hee commaundeth; and ſeeing that both great and ſmall are taught what God they ought to worſhippe, and which is the true Religion: if a man or a woman doe afterward turne away, and become forſworn and diſloyal to God by ſtepping aſide into the ſuperſtitions of yͤ heathen: is there any excuſe to be admitted in that caſe? Then let vs marke wel, that this Lawe was made at ſuch time, as God had alreadie ſtabliſhed a Lawfull gouernement, directed according to his owne word. But wee haue all beene ydolaters. As howe? Euen by meanes of the horrible deſolation, yͭ happened through yͤ whole world, as is to be ſeene yet ſtill in the Popedome. Had this lawe bin well obſerued at the firſt; Chriſtendome had not bin ſo ſore decayed. For had they beene puniſhed which were the firſt ydolaters & had falſified the Goſpel, and corrupted the pureneſſe which was at that time: ſurely Gods order had bin maintained and preſerued much better. But what? When hypocrites were once crept in, which would needes ſeeme holier than all other men; then inuented they many corruptions: and the more they were born with, the more did the miſchiefe ſpread it ſelfe abroad, ſo yͭ it became a poyſon that vndoeth al. The cauſe then why the Church of God came to ſuch deſolation: is that men haue not bin held in awe, that the pure ſimplicitie of the Goſpel might be maintained, and God worſhipped according to his word, ſo as mẽ might not aſſay to deuiſe any thing of their own braine, but that al men both great & ſmal, might be made to obey the doctrine which they knew already to be of God. Had this bin done: there had bin no ſuch deſolatiõ as we ſee ſtil at this day And therfore let vs beare in mind, yͭ Gods ſpeaking here, is but of ſuch countries or Cities, as haue had yͤ grace to haue yͤ true religion ſtabliſhed amõg thẽ, ſo as he is worſhiped there, & they haue al conſẽted to admit yͤ order which is ſet by God; & therfore if any of thẽ do afterward turn away, he deſerueth to loſe his life. As for exãple,

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wee haue now the light of the Goſpel, whereby our Lord holdeth vs bound vnto him, to ſerue him & to be his peculiar people. Seeing thẽ yͭ his Religion is knowen vnto vs, and that diſcipline is ſet vp among vs: if any of vs hereafter turne away from it, and giue himſelfe to ydolatrie, ſpiting God wilfully: doeth hee not deſerue puniſhment? Yes. For had a man committed any thing againſt the ſtate, and after his giuing of his othe to the Magiſtrate, had broken it againe by doing ſome deede to the contrarie: ſurely he ſhoulde be puniſhed for his vnfaithfulneſſe. And what ſhalbe doone then, if men daly with God, falſifying the faith which they haue giuen vnto him, ſo as they confederate themſelues with his deadly enemie Satan, and with ydols which ſerue but to deface his glorie, his maieſtie, and all his ſeruice? So then, if the ſkorners of our dayes replie, that if ydolaters ſhoulde bee puniſhed, all of vs ſhoulde die: the aunſwere is eaſie, namely that if the Lawe of God had bin executed, as had bin for our benefite and behoofe, Chriſtianitie had not beene ſo corrupted as it is, neither had Religion beene ſo imbaced as wee ſee it is. For the remedie thereof was good and behouefull: but men haue not vſed it. And that hath cauſed all thinges to come to vtter confuſion. Therefore it ſtandeth vs the more in hand to take warning, that if this Lawe helde vs not in awe, wee ſhoulde alwayes bee in daunger of withdrawing our ſelues from the ſeruing of God: and he ſhold no ſooner haue giuen vs his word, but it ſhoulde by and by vaniſh away againe, through the malyce and vnthankfulneſſe of a great number, which woulde ſoone ouerthrowe the ſtate that is ſtabliſhed at this day among vs. Marke that for one ſpeciall point.

Secondly let vs marke, howe it is not ſaid that all ydolaters in generall ſhould be puniſhed: but onely ſuch ydolaters as liue in ſome Church of God where order is ſet alreadie, and where Religion is certainly ſtabliſhed, and thinges are ſufficiently knowen. For then, if any man do wilfully playe the naughtipacke, and forſake the pure ſeruing of God, and defile himſelfe with ydolatrie and ſuperſtition: that perſon deſerueth death. Beſides this, let vs marke well, that (as I ſaide heretofore) if wee bee not puniſhed before men, we muſt early or late come to account before God: and there we ſhall finde that we haue deſerued, not onely to be ſtoned, but alſo to bee vtterly baniſhed from the euerlaſting ſaluation. And why? Becauſe we were baptiſed in the name of our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt, euen before we knew any thing at all. True it is that wee haue beene miſtaught: but that excuſeth not our diſobedience, but that wee our ſelues to the vttermoſt of our power, haue falſified our baptiſme: for wee haue beene corrupted with ydolatrie. So then, our Lorde might with good right thruſt vs quite out of his kingdome, and hee could doe it well ynough: neuertheleſſe wee ſee howe he hath gathered vs home to him. Nowe therefore let vs bethinke vs of the ſtate wherein we haue beene: & being aſhamed of our ſelues, let vs craue pardon at Gods hand. And as I haue ſaide afore, let vs not be aſhamed to confeſſe our ſelues to bee wretched offenders, that God may vſe no violence againſt vs, nor enter into the rigour of his iudgement towards vs. And that is the cauſe why it is ſayde in Ezechiel, Thou ſhalt remember thine owne wayes, and be aſhamed of them. For there God ſpeaketh of the repentance of ſuch as had beene deceiued for a time by ydolatrie: declaring that when they were brought againe into the right way of ſaluation, they ought to be verie mindfull of the euill which they had committed, yea they ought to thinke vppon it with ſhame and confuſion. That is the thing which wee haue to beare in minde. So that although God drawe not his ſword, to puniſh our bodies: yet faile we not to bee guiltie and damnable before God. Neuertheleſſe, we muſt vnderſtand that hee will alwayes haue pitie vppon vs, if wee preuent his iudgement, & condemne our ſelues aforehand, acknowledging our ſelues to be worthy to ſinke for the ydolatrie and ſuperſtition which we haue followed, but that God haue pitie vpon vs. But (as I ſaide) we haue wherewith to comfort vs, becauſe we knowe yͭ he is readie to receiue vs to mercie, when wee acknowledge our ſinnes, and repaire to him after the foreſaid manner. That is a thing which we haue to mark further, where it is ſaid that if yͤ thing be reported, men muſt inquire of it.

Ezec.16.61.

1.Cor.11.31.

Now he addeth, *that the partie which hath done the miſdeede, ſhalbe conueyed out at the gates:* and why ſo? *For* (ſaith Moſes) *hee hath committed abhomination before the Lorde,* whether it be man or woman as hee had ſaide afore. For it is ſuch a ſinne as is wicked and grieuous in the eyes of the Lord. Wherin he doth vs to vnderſtand, that we muſt not iudge after our own imagination, whether that deede be worthy of death or no. For it is a thing which beguileth many men, & maketh them to ſtriue againſt God and to blaſpheme his Law: that they will needs giue ſentence of them ſelues according to their owne opinion. But contrariwiſe our Lord bringeth vs backe here to his will. It is euill in my ſight (ſaith he) it diſpleaſeth me; I abhorre it. And hee telleth vs moreouer, that we muſt reſt vpon his worde, ſaying: I haue commanded it. Hereby therfore let vs take warning that wee iudge not at all aduenture & with diueliſh boldneſſe as theſe galants do nowadays, which would not haue religiõ to come in iudgement for the puniſhing of blaſphemie and ſuch other like things which are committed againſt yͤ honor of God. To be ſhort, they would not haue the Magiſtrates to ſit in iudgement vppon any fault committed againſt yͤ firſt table. If any fault be committed againſt men, as robbery, ryot, murther, or aduowtry; they be contented that yͭ ſhalbe puniſhed, but if Gods name be blaſphemed; if any abhomination be committed to the putting away of al feare of god; if hereſies ſpring vp to yͤ trouble of the Church, and to the peruerting of all order: they would haue that to be ſuffered & excuſed. And what leadeth them thereto, but the ſaide helliſh pride, that when a thing miſliketh not them, they thinke yͭ God ſhoulde yeeld to their lyking? But therin appeareth their ouerweening matched wͭ vngodlines of making none account of God, foraſmuch as they can finde in their hearts that his maieſtie ſhould be ſo lightly eſteemed at all aſſayes, Howbeit, let vs for our part marke what is ſet down here, namely that if any euill diſpleaſe the eyes of the Lord, it is not to be borne withall: neither muſt wee in that caſe leane to our owne wiſedome, as if wee woulde ſay; O, I will ſhewe my verdit of it. No, no, we muſt thinke it ynough that God holdeth it for abhomination, and that hee cannot away with any ſuch thing.

Furthermore he expreſly ſendeth vs backe to his word, to the intent wee ſhould ſee it proued to our faces, that they which are ſuch ydolaters ought not to bee excuſed: for they make warre againſt God. And is the crime of rebellion a veniall ſinne? Is it a fault that may bee pardoned, without making any countenance of doing any thing to it? If a man doe of wilfull malice rebell againſt his father or his mother, his maſter or his ſuperior: it ſhalbe throughly weyed, and continually aggrauated to double & treble the fault. And ſhall a man be ſo rebellious againſt God as to defie him, and to doe quite contrarie to his will and intent: and ſhoulde we ſtill cocker and flatter them that haue ſo grieuouſly offended? We ſee that our Lord ſpeaketh but onely to ſuch as haue bin dulie taught his wil aforehãd. For he ſayde not to the heathen, or the vnbeleeuers, I haue commanded you this, or I haue forbidden you that. No. And therefore this lawe muſt concerne a people that hath receiued Religion afore, and among whome ſome certaine rule is ſet downe and ſtabliſhed. Nowe then, when God hath once commaunded one thing and forbidden another, and hath tolde vs that his will is ſo: what remaineth more for vs, but to frame our ſelues thereafter? And as for thoſe that refuſe his yoke, can they ſay it is through ignorance, and through ſome fonde deuotion? Indeede it may well bee ſo: but yet there lyeth another crime ſhrowded vnderneath, namely the contempt of Gods worde; yea there lurketh ſecrete malice, hypocriſie, and pride: and all theſe (ſaye I) are mingled together. Therefore muſt all excuſes ceaſe, and we muſt acknowledge that all ſuch as haue beene duely trained in the worde of God, are leſſe excuſable than the ignorant.

And this is not to be applyed alonely to temporall Iuſtice: but foraſmuch as it is God that ſpeaketh, let vs marke that accordingly as wee haue proceeded in his doctrine, and he ſhewed his will vnto vs; our ſinne is the greater if we followe not whatſoeuer he commaundeth vs. To this point muſt we come: it is God that hath ſpoken vnto mee, he hath graunted mee the grace to knowe howe hee will haue me to walke, and therefore ſeeing that hee inlighteneth mee, I muſt not ſtumble, I muſt not play the blinkarde nor the blinde buſſarde: but I muſt take heede to the obeying of his doctrine. If we doe not ſo; we ſee that this foreſaide puniſhment belongeth vnto vs: and if wee be not chaſtiſed by the hand of man; it is readie for vs from aboue. For God can well skill to vpbraide vs with the fauour that he hath ſhewed vs, in that hee hath vouchſafed to teach vs his will. Inſomuch that although the poore ignorant ſoules were halfe to be excuſed; yet ſo it is that on our behalfe the crime is out of all ſquare; when wee ſet our ſelues after that faſhion againſt Gods will which is knowen vnto vs. Thus yee ſee what we haue to remember vpon this place, where it is expreſly ſaide; *that God hath not commaunded thoſe things.* Alſo let vs learne generally to iudge of Gods will according to his teaching of vs. For oftentimes we will needs leſſen mens faults, or aggrauate them; and yet in the meane while we looke not at the thing that is tolde vs. Therefore let vs beare in minde, that Gods will is conteined in yͤ holy ſcripture, and yͤ that is the place where we muſt ſeeke it: & when we ſee that God ſpeaketh ſo or ſo, let vs hold vs to it without any gainſaying.

Nowe Moſes addeth, *that the hande of the firſt witneſſe ſhalbe firſt againſt the partie that is to bee ſtoned, and then the hands of al the people.* Wherein he ment to ſhewe, that witneſſe muſt not be borne, but with feare. But nowadayes, many men make no great conſcience to giue euidence at allauenture againſt their neighbours, becauſe they bee not put to the executing of the ſentence. Herevppon one goes and with his falſe tongue doeth wounde ſome man that is but halfe guiltie, or peraduenture guiltleſſe altogether. And he bears himſelfe in hand, that a iob with his beake is not ſo great a matter; by reaſon whereof he paſſeth not at all to ſpeake againſt all trueth. Yee ſee then the verie cauſe why there is ſo much libertie of forſwearing nowadayes; is, that ſuch as giue euidence againſt their neighbours, are not put to the executing of the Iudges ſentence. But it was Gods will that their ſhoulde bee another order among the people of Iſrael; namely that hee which gaue the euidence, ſhoulde caſt the firſt ſtone at the partie, as who ſhoulde ſay; it is thou that putteſt this man to death. By meanes whereof folke were reſtreined from bearing witneſſe againſt any man, vnleſſe the matter were true and certaine. For he that had giuen the euidence, ſawe himſelfe dubble guiltie both of tongue and hand, in murdering an innocent if hee had not depoſed the trueth. Wee ſee then howe it was not without cauſe, that God commaunded this Ceremonie; namely that the witneſſes ſhould bee the firſt in ſtoning the parties that were condemned to death by yͤ Iudges. And hereby they were all done to vnderſtande, that no offẽder was put to death, but by the witneſſe of ſuch as had proued his offence by their owne knowledge.

Neuertheleſſe God willed alſo that the hands of al the people ſhould ioyne with them, to ſhew that all of vs muſt bee furtherers of the maintenance of his ſeruice, and of the pure Religion. If any treſpaſſe haue beene committed betweene man and man, it ſhalbe purſued by ſuch as haue taken the hurt or loſſe, or by ſuch as haue to do therewith, or elſe ſome common ſollicitor ſhal haue the proſecuting of it for them all. But when Gods honour is defaced, then ought euery man to beſtirre himſelfe: and it is a ſingular fauour that God ſheweth vnto vs, when hee imployeth vs in ſo honorable a thing, as the maintenance of his maieſtie, to be as his Attourneys in that behalfe. For what are we? Now if God doe vs the honour to declare vnto vs, that he wil haue his honour maintained by vs and by our hands: ſhoulde we be negligent in that caſe? So then wee ſee nowe what was Gods meaning, in commaunding all the people to helpe to ſtone the ydolaters. For thereby it is done vs to vnderſtande, that wee ought to haue a care to maintaine Gods ſeruice purely among vs; and that euery man muſt bee earneſt and zealous in this behalfe, that (as much as in vs lyeth) wee ſuffer not religion to bee had in skorne or to bee peruerted: But that if wee beare good will to the common weale, when all thinges are well ordered, and that wee loue to haue equitie and vprightneſſe among vs: there is much more reaſon that we ſhoulde bee verie chare of the worſhipping of God purely, that men turne not away from his woorde, ne wander away wilfully from the Religion that hee hath ſtabliſhed. For although that wee nowadayes, bee not bounde of any neceſſitie to the keeping of this Lawe, as in reſpect of the Ceremonie: yet doeth the ſubſtance thereof abide with vs. Euerie of vs is not to ſtone ydolaters: but yet our Lorde doeth vs to vnderſtande, that wee muſt at leaſtwiſe haue ſo great regarde of his honour, that (ſo farre as lyeth in vs) wee ſuffer not his name to bee ſcorned, and his religion troden downe: but that euerie of vs doe ſet our ſelues there againſt, and make himſelfe an aduerſarie partie in that behalfe. That is the thing which wee haue to note. And ſo, although the Ceremonie of the Lawe be not ſuch amongſt vs: yet doeth the ſubſtance thereof ſtande in force ſtill, and wee ought to obſerue it.

And for the ſame cauſe alſo it is added expreſly, *that they muſt roote out the euill from among them.* Whereby he doth vs to wit, that the ſuffering of ydolatrie and ſuperſtition, is a cankerworme and corruption that infecteth al things. And as I ſaide afore, if men had beene well bridled at the beginning, ſurely they had neuer come to ſuch Apoſtaſie; that is to ſay, they had neuer withdrawen themſelues after that faſhion from the obedience of God. For what elſe is Poperie, but a corruption which hath drawen all men from the obeying of God, ſo as all became backeſliders, all haue gone aſtray, and all haue broken the promiſe of their baptiſme? And whereof came this, but of mens nouriſhing of the euil by their winking at it and their concealing of it, vntil the infection was ſo ſpred abrode, that both great and ſmall were poyſoned therewith? Nowe then, if wee will holde ourſelues in the pure obedience of God, let vs doe our indeuour that the miſchiefe may bee rooted out from among vs, ſpecially being a miſchiefe that bringeth ſo greate an infection with it: For it is not poſſible for vs to ſcape infection, if it abide among vs. And for the ſame cauſe the Apoſtle Hebr.12.15 (in the Epiſtle to the Hebrewes) exhorteth vs to plucke vp the wicked weeds, before they bee full growē: for it wil amaſe vs when they ſhal pick out our eyes; and yet there is no remedie but it muſt be ſo, if we ſuffer them to growe any long time. Therfore as ſoone as we ſee any euil ſprout out, we muſt take it away as much as we can, that we may bee quite and cleane rid of it. Yea and although one man coulde not be intyced to wickedneſſe by the example of another; yet is Gods wrath kindled and increaſed ſtill among vs, whē the euill abideth ſo vnpuniſhed. And therfore S. Paul ſpeaking of the inceſt that was ſuffered among the Corinthians, ſaieth vnto them; 1.Cor.5.13. Put away the euil from among you. As if he had ſaid, yee wretched men, the crime that is among you prouoketh Gods vengeance againſt your whole Nation, if it bee ſo ſuffered: and therefore if yee intende to be exempted from Gods wrath, let not that euill bee ſuffered or nouriſhed any longer. And this is a ſufficient proofe of that which I haue touched; namely that God in commanding al ẏ people to put to their hande to the ſtoning of ydolaters, ſheweth vs that the thing cōcerneth vs all: and that for as much as he maketh vs his attourneys, it is good reaſon that euery of vs ſhould indeuour to diſcharge himſelfe of his duety. And thereunto doth God himſelfe exhort vs, in that hee ſheweth vs that the ſuffering of ſuch euil, is an infection & deadly plague, and that our bearing with the thinges that are cleane contrarie to his maieſtie, is a prouoking of his wrath againſt vs.

Now remaineth, that wee come to this Lawe *that a man ſhall die at the mouth of two or three witneſſes, but not vpon the euidence of any one witneſſe alone.* This Law ſerueth for order of gouernment. And indeede the very Heathen were taught by nature to follow this order, ſo as they could wel ſay it was requiſite that a matter ſhould be proued by a cupple of witneſſes. And this was printed in their mindes, becauſe our Lordes will was to holde mankind continually in ſome kinde of vprightneſſe, and that diſcretion ſhould be vſed. But we haue this doctrine the better confirmed, in that God ſpeaketh it with his owne mouth & ſaieth, that a man ſhall die at the mouth of two or three witneſſes, and not vpon the report of any one. Then let vs beare in minde, that thinges ought not to be iudged at aladuenture without lawfull proofe. Neuertheleſſe, it may bee that euen the Iudge himſelf may ſometimes be a witneſſe in a matter: and yet notwithſtanding hee muſt iudge contrarie to that he knoweth. If a mā ſay, he doth amiſſe: Nay, he could doe no otherwiſe, and hee doeth well. For if I bee a Iudge, and no bodie but my ſelfe doth knowe a man to be faulty, ſo as I cā haue no witnes of his doings: I muſt let him alone, becauſe I cānot remedy it, & he muſt be quit by my ſentence. And this dealing of mine is no preiudice to my cōſciēce: for I cōdemn him before god as he deſerueth: but yet I let his crime alone ſtil cōcealed, vntil God diſcouer it and bring it to light. Nowe then let vs marke that for ciuill orders ſake, wee muſt alwayes obſerue this rule, that we iudge not but vppon good proofe, ſo as the matter be knowen and verified.

Hereupon it is ſaide that there muſt bee two or three witneſſes. But ſometimes men to couer their faultes and miſdeedes, wil needes require an infinite number of proofes, which thing was to be ſeene in thoſe luſtie blouds, which woulde needes be wiſer than God, and had inuented a very ſtrange lawe here in this citie of Geneua, which was that they would not be contented w̄ two witneſſes, vnleſſe there were a Proctor beſides. Thus went they about to controll Gods law, and all vprightnes of nature, and the thing which hath hitherto bin maintained of ẏ whole world. And what was the cauſe thereof, but that they would faine haue committed al manner of lewdnes, & bleared out their tōgues againſt god, and yet there might neuer haue been any ſufficient witneſſe to haue conuicted them thereof? For had there come two witneſſes, yea, three or foure; yet had mens eyes beene bleared, and all that had beene nothing. Therefore let vs note, ẏ this law was ſet downe, to make vs hold ẏ meane betweene the two extremities.

The firſt extremitie is, to iudge of a mater before it be throughly proued, for ſo to do is euil, & in ſo doing men are too haſtie. Therfore is it requiſite, that there ſhould be a two or three witneſſes of it. And whē there be a two or three witneſſes, it is not for men to reply, as who ſhold ſay it were meete that fower or fiue witneſſes ſhould be ſought for, & that the matter were neuer wel prooued, except there bee a ſpokeſman with the witneſſes. And that is a flat mocking of God. Let vs then beare in minde, that ſeeing our Lord hath told vs, that the offender ſhall dye at the mouth of two or three witneſſes; it is to bee ſuppoſed that ẏ knowledge of the matter ought to ſuffice vs, ſo as there ought to bee no wrangling againſt it, but that iuſtice ought to proceede to execution. And we ſee how needefull this admonition is for vs. For men would euer ſhrinke back if it were poſſible: & if there bee any apparant colour to hyde their miſdeedes; they beare themſelues in hand that their hands are cleane washt of them. But here our Lorde ſummoneth vs, ſaying that if there bee two witneſſes, ẏ Iudge muſt not ſhrinke backe: for if he do, he is confederate & companion with the wicked, vnleſſe he put to his hand to the redreſſe of their wickedneſſe. Thus we ſee nowe, that in ſaying that two or three witneſſes are ſufficient, for the conuicting of a man to haue deſerued death: our Lord ment to cut off occaſion of all ſhifts that men deuiſe to cloake their miſdeedes withall.

Now furthermore, let vs apply this doctrine to our ſelues alſo: & let vs vnderſtand that ſeeing God hath ſet ſuch order in temporal iuſtice; hee will keepe it towards vs. But are we not ſufficiently conuicted, that wee haue beene eſtranged from the worde of God? Firſt euery of vs hath his own conſcience to reproue him: and what a number of witneſſes doeth that counteruaile? The Heathen haue ſaide, that it is as good as a thouſand. Then if a man be condemned in himſelfe, what ſhall it boote him to iuſtifie himſelfe, ſeeing that his ſinne gnaweth him and preferreth inditementes continually againſt him? For there is no man (howe blockiſh ſo euer he bee) whoſe owne conſcience doeth not continually ſting him. Therfore let vs learne to plead guiltie before God, ſeeing he ſtirreth vs therto inwardly & ſheweth vs our faults. Beſides this, the prophets and Apoſtles & the verie ſonne of God himſelfe, are faithfull witneſſes of it, as the pro- Eſa.55.4. phet Eſay nameth him. Seeing we haue them to conuict vs; what ſhould we henceforth ſeeke for ſtartingholes? What wil that boote vs? And wee haue not the holy ſcripture onely; but wee haue alſo the thicke clowde (as the Apoſtle tearmeth Hebr.12.1 them in the Epiſtle to the Hebrewes) of all the faithful & of al the holy martyrs which euer ſuffered for the name of God: & ſhall not al thoſe be ſufficient witneſſes to condemne vs before ẏ iudgement ſeat of our Lord Ieſus Chriſt? Nowe if we make no account to benefite our ſelues, by the example which they haue giuen vs: but do wilfully forſake the doctrine after we haue knowen it: what condemnation do we deſerue? And that is the verie cauſe why S. Paul alleageth this text to the Corinthians, that iudgement ſtan- 2.Cor.13.1. deth vppon the mouth of two or three witneſſes. And whereof ſpeaketh he there? Of his own Epiſtle & of his owne comming: for hee ſayth ẏ he will come to the Corinthians. Not that I haue not written vnto you ſufficiently already, ſayeth he; or that I haue not warned you often ynough heretofore, and yet you continue ſtubborne and hardharted ſtill. But thinke you that ye ſhal winne any thing thereby at Gods hand? Know ye (ſaith he) that iudgement ſhalbe taken at the mouth of two or three witneſſes. Sith it is ſo, let vs bethinke our ſelues; and foraſmuch as we ſee that God hath beene ſo gracious to vs, to giue vs ſo many prophets after him, & that Ieſus Chriſt himſelfe & his Apoſtles haue witneſſed vnto vs the trueth of the Goſpel: let them not be witneſſes againſt vs to our condemnation, but rather let them be witneſſes of our faith; and let vs bee ſo confirmed in the grace of ẏ holy ghoſt by our Lord Ieſus Chriſt, as we may continually keepe on our courſe, and followe the vocation wherevnto our Lord hath put vs & called vs.

And now let vs fall downe before the maieſtie of our good God with acknowledgement of our ſinnes, praying him to make vs feele them better; that thereby wee may bee the more inflamed to ſerue him and woorſhippe him; not onely as in reſpect of the ceremonie, but alſo by applying all our whole life to his obedience, and by giuing of our ſelues wholly to the ſoundnes which he ſheweth vs by his holy word: And that we may endeuour to bring other men to the ſame, & not ſuffer thoſe to ſtray which are alreadie in the right way, but with one common accord hold them together in the ſheepefold which are come into it alreadie, and drawe others thither by our good life & conuerſation, preuenting all cauſes of offence & diſorder, whereby the true religion might bee peruerted. That it may pleaſe him to graunt this grace, not onely to vs, but alſo to all people, and Nations of the earth, &c.

On Tewſday the xix. of Nouember. 1555.

The Ciiij Sermon, which is the third vpon the ſeuenteenth Chapter.

8 If a thing be too hard for thee to iudge betweene bloud and bloud, betweeṅ cauſe & cauſe, betweene wound & wound, & there be wordes of ſtrife within thy gates: then ſhalt thou riſe and get thee vp to the place which the Lorde thy God ſhall haue choſen:

9 And go to the Prieſts & Leuites, & to the Iudge which ſhalbe in thoſe days, & aske; and they ſhall ſhewe thee the ſentence of iudgement.

10 And according to the content of the ſentence which ſhalbe declared vnto thee by thoſe of the place which the Lord ſhal haue choſen, ſo ſhalt thou doe: and thou ſhalt take heede to do according to all that they informe thee.

11 According to the ſentence of the law which they teach thee, & according to the right which they tell thee, ſhalt thou do. Thou ſhalt not turne aſide from the thing which they ſhewe thee, neither to the right hand nor to the left.

12 As for the man which through preſumptuouſnes will not obey the high prieſt which is there to miniſter before the Lorde thy God, or the Iudge: that man ſhall dye, and thou ſhalt put away euil from Iſrael,

13 That all the people may heare and be afraid, & do no more preſumptuouſly.

HEre is the order ſhewed vs how to end matters in lawe. Foraſmuchas when men are at controuerſie, we ſee they be ſo wilful & hardharted, yͭ by their good willes they woulde neuer come to any end: God declareth yͭ it was his wil there ſhould bee ſome ſoueraigne court of iuſtice among his people, againſt the ſentence wherof there ſhold lye no appeale. True it is yͭ all people are taught of nature to do ſo. For if it were lawfull to make continual appeales: mens frowardnes is ſuch (as I ſaid afore,) yͭ their controuerſies would neuer come to any end. Therfore is it requiſite yͭ there ſhould be ſome certaine ſtay: & that is it which our Lord hath declared in this text. Againe, as touching worldly gouernement, this order is greatly auailable, foraſmuch as the thing which nature followeth through yͤ whole world, is ratified by the mouth of God: & that is a thing which ought to be well marked. For ſith we ſee yͭ God hath humbled himſelf ſo much as to ſhewe vs the order of ciuil gouernment; we muſt conclude yͭ he alloweth of it. For otherwiſe he would not medle with it: & it were a diſhonoring of his maieſtie. Do we then ſee yͭ our Lorde in his lawe hath treated of yͤ order which wee ought to obſerue among our ſelues? Let vs aſſure our ſelues thereby, that it is a thing which hee well liketh. Marke that for one point.

Againe, ſith we ſee after what faſhion he will haue vs to behaue our ſelues, & hath ſet yͤ ſame down particularly: it is yet a greater confirmation. And as for Iudges which are ſet in authoritie & preheminence: let them vnderſtand that their doings are an acceptable ſacrifice to God, becauſe he beareth record therof in his law, and yͭ the people alſo do conform thẽſelues ſo much the more willingly thereunto. Wherefore wee muſt vnderſtand, yͭ the peruerting therof were a rebelling againſt God, & a deſpiſing of him. Thus we ſee now how needful a doctrine it is for vs, & how greatly to our edifying, yͭ our lord hath declared, yͭ there ſhould be one chiefe court of Iuſtice for men to reſt vpon, that they might not be in continual dout.

Neuertheleſſe we muſt note yͭ our Lord would not admit appeales in all caſes indifferently among his people. For he ſaith, *If there happen any hard caſe, wher of the iudgement is doutfull, & not eaſie to be determined*, becauſe the Iudges (namely yͤ inferior Iudges of euery citie) be graueled in it. Wherfore ſets he down this? Becauſe it had bin too great a toyle for the people to haue bin driuen to repayre to Ierusalem for euery matter of ſixpence, or I wote not what ſuch like. Wee ſee (as I haue ſayde afore) howe there are ſome vnſatiable men, and ſuch as could alwayes be contented to ſindge themſelues ſo they may ſcald others. Nay ye ſhal ſee ſome ſo ſpitefull, yͭ though they ſhould eate their owne fingers, yet they would go forewarde with their ſutes in Law, and whẽ they had waſted away their own ſubſtance, they would euen hazard their liues alſo, to procure trouble to their aduerſaries. Seeing then that it is manifeſt that ſuch folk are caried away with rage, or at leaſtwiſe with deſire of reuenge: it is good to bridle them. And that is the cauſe why God woulde not haue all caſes to come to Ieruſalem. For he had ſet a good order, namely that there ſhoulde be iuſtice in euerie Citie, yea and men of vnderſtanding, to giue iudgement of ſuch matters as were to come to triall before them. Prouided alwayes that the cauſe were not harde and doutfull.

So then let vs marke, how it was Gods wil that the controuerſies ſhould bee ended with ſpeede, without troubling of the parties too much. And ſeeing that his intent was ſuch, wee ought to frame our ſelues thereto as much as is poſſible for vs. And therefore if men intend to ſtabliſh a good order of gouernement, and ſuch as God alloweth: let them followe this rule, that quarels be not mainteyned betweene man and man; but that if there be any controuerſie they may ſoone be ſet at one againe, ſo as the ſute in Law be not prolonged, nor men poſted ouer from one to another; but that things may bee ſo ordered, as the parties may not be ſuffered to followe ſtill their owne inordinate wils. True it is that this vice cannot be ſo corrected, but that ſome remnant of it will abide ſtill. Yet notwithſtanding wee muſt goe as neere the marke as we poſſibly can, ſeeing that our Lord directeth vs therunto.

Againe, if a man intend to prouide for the pacifying of quarels among men, ſo as might may not ouercome right: yee ſee that ordinary Iuſtice cannot be forborne. For inaſmuch as God had choſen the people of Iſrael: it is certain that he prouided the beſt meane that could be deuiſed for the mainteyning of them in peace and concord. And in verie deede they were all of one linage, deſcended of the race of Abraham: and therefore inaſmuch as there was ſuch a brotherhoode among them; it ought to haue beene the eaſier to haue continued them in quietnes. On the other ſide they ſeeing themſelues ſeparated from the reſt of the world, and being there gathered together into one bodie in the name of God: ought to haue born one ẇ another in reuerence of that holy bond. Yet notwithſtanding for their further preſeruation, God ordeyned this meane that there ſhould be Iudges in euery Citie. Then let vs conclude, that as long as men liue here beneath, they cannot forbeare Magiſtrates, by reaſon of their infirmities. Truth it is that euery man ought to carie the Lawe in his heart, and euery man ought to doe al men right of their owne accord: but we be blind and our affections cary vs away; and beſides that, wee ſubdue not our vnderſtanding, neither do we holde our luſts captiues as we ought to doe. Therefore we haue neede of a bridle for them. And that is my meaning, in ſaying ẏ wee ought to loue the ſtate of ciuil gouernement, and to reuerence it; namely becauſe it is a neceſſarie mean to maintain mankind in this world, and ẇout it al things would go to horrible confuſion, inſomuch ẏ wee ſhould not only become as Dogs & Cats; but alſo be worſe than wilde beaſts. Greately therefore ought we to bewaile our ſtate, ſeeing ẏ (as I haue ſhewed afore) wee which beare the Image of God cannot vſe our freedome to behaue our ſelues according to reaſon and equitie. Yet notwithſtanding, ſeeing we be ſo ſore corrupted, we muſt vnderſtand ẏ Gods remedying of our diſeaſes after that faſhion, is a point of his ſingular goodnes towards vs. But howſoeuer ẏ caſe ſtand, if we wil eſchewe ẏ men ſcratch not out one anothers eies, ne eat not vp one another: let vs follow ẏ rule which our lord ſheweth vs here, namely ẏ there be Iuſtice in euery Citie & in euery other place, and ẏ ſuch as beare ẏ ſword do watch ſo as no man oppreſſe another, no man work any outrage or iniurie, nor no man preſume further than is lawfull. Marke that for one point.

Now let vs come to that which is ſet downe here concerning Appeals. *If there riſe any difficult & doutful caſe, betweene cauſe and cauſe, wound and wounde, or bloud and bloud.* As if he ſhould ſay, if there bee any cauſe either criminall or ciuile whereof there riſeth doubt, and men cannot decide it by giuing definitiue ſentence on it: let thē reſort to the high courte. We ſee then that Appeales are ordeined as wel for matters of life & death, as for matters of treſpaſſe. And now let vs ſee whither God woulde haue men to appeale. To Ieruſalem. True it is that he doth not as yet name the place, becauſe it was not appointed out at ẏ time. But he ſayth, *Thou ſhalt go vp.* And Moſeſes ſpeaking after that manner, was after a ſort in way of propheſie, becauſe the cituation of Ieruſalem was higher than all the reſt of Iurie. But vntill the Ark was ſet there, it behooued them to reſort to the place where that was. Againe, here is no ſpeaking of the king. For the time was not yet come that God would ſet vp a kingdome among that people: ẏ was to be ſtabliſhed in the perſon of Dauid. Yet notwithſtanding there were alwaies Iudges, accordingly as wee ſee how Ioſua ſucceeded Moſes, and conſequently the reſt of the Iudges vnto Samuel, at which time ẏ people would needes change their ſtate. Therefore vnto Samuels time, there was this order among them, that God raiſed vp certaine Iudges in Iſrael, which repreſented ẏ ſtate of a king vntil the kingdom was ſtabliſhed. That is ẏ thing which Moſes meant in this ſentence, when he ſaide, ẏ men ſhould reſort to the Iudge which ſhould be at that time in Iſrael.

Alſo it was his will that the high Prieſt with his fellow Prieſts the Leuites, ſhould haue authoritie to giue ſentence of Iudgement. And why? He addeth; *Becauſe they could giue ſentence according to the Lawe of God.* And finally, vpon that ſentence of theirs hee will haue men to reſt: *and that if any man diſobeyed it, he ſhould be puniſhed with death, that by that meane pride might be corrected in Iſrael.* Now wee ſee what God intended to commaund concerning Appeales. There were Iudges in euery Citie: but yet there was one aboue them all as in the degree of a Prince. Not that it went by inheritaunce: but looke whomſoeuer God rayſed vp by his holy ſpirite, him it behooued to gouerne the people. And wee ſee it came ſo to paſſe afterwarde. As oft as the people fel away from God, it was to their owne confuſion: and as ſoone as he had pitie vppon them againe, hee rayſed them vp Iudges newe againe, as the holy hyſtories doe ſhewe vs. Iudges 2. 17 13. There were in deede ſome interruptions at ſuch time as the people were worthy to be puniſhed, inſomuch ẏ all went to hauocke, they were giuen ouer vnto bondage and to the tyranny of the Infidels which were their enemies: but as ſoone as God vouchſafed to gather them home againe, there was a newe Iudge ſet vp againe.

And herein we ſee yet better, that it is a token of Gods preſence, when we haue order of iuſtice among vs, ſo as there are men to gouerne vs which walke in the feare of God, and execute their charge faithfully: it is as much as if God came downe to vs & ſhewed vs his face. Contrariwiſe, when the order of gouernement is peruerted, it is as though God turned his backe to vs. If the magiſtrates be corrupted, & peruert al right & equitie, or if tyrants get dominion ouer vs: let vs vnderſtand that God forſaketh vs, and withdraweth himſelfe from vs, & is mynded to make vs feele his abſence by ſuch ſigne of his wrath: and that then wee haue good cauſe to mourne. But if wee ſee the lawes floriſh, & there be men that feare God, to make them to be executed, it is all one as if God made his face to ſhine vpon vs, and declared his loue towardes vs, and that hee is minded to maintaine vs vnder his protection. And it ſerueth to make vs to loue the ſtate of worldly gouernement the better, ſeeing it is ſuch a token of the goodneſſe of our God, and of his fatherly loue towardes vs.

But as I ſayde afore, the high prieſt and the trybe of Leuy were appointed to bee Iudges in al harde caſes. It may ſeeme ſtrange at the firſt ſight, howe it commeth to paſſe that GOD woulde haue the prieſthood to entermeddle in ciuil gouernement: for they be two things farre differing. Wee knowe that when Aaron was ordeyned to bee the high prieſt, Moſes had the gouernement of the people. Nowe the Prieſthood went by inheritance, and ſo did not ẏ temporall gouernement. In ſo much that Moſes left his own children as priuate perſons in their owne houſes without any publike authoritie, & Ioſhua who was not of any kinne or aliance vnto him, was his ſucceſſour. The ſame order continued afterwarde, in ſo much that God raiſed vp whome hee thought good, nowe one of one trybe, and nowe another of another. Notwithſtanding, it behooued the Prieſtes to hold them ſelues contented with the ſpirituall gouernement of the Church, and they ought not to take vppon them the ciuil gouernement. Why then doth God here ſet them in higheſt degree to iudge? Vndoutedly, it was to ordeyne a Councell for him that was to bee the chiefe Iudge, and to holde the people in the better awe, as if it had beene ſayde that all Appeales ſhould come before God. For (as I haue declared afore) men can very hardly bee brought to giue their conſentes, to obey a ſentence that is againſt them. Therefore, to the ende that no man ſhoulde take leaue to ſtande in contention, God ſayeth there ſhalbee a ſoueraigne Iudge, at leaſtwiſe to beare ſway in Counſell of hard caſes, and ſuch as are giuen in fourme of iudgement. And to the intent that thinges may bee iudged according to my lawe, the high prieſt and the order of the Leuites ſhalbee preſent there. Nowe wee knowe that they were expounders of Gods lawe. For with that condition was the prieſthood giuen vnto them, namely that they ſhoulde bee Gods Angels and meſſengers as the Prophet Malachie ſpeaketh of them. And therefore when men asked counſell at their mouthes, it was not to haue ſom doting dreame of mans deuice, but to haue the certeine vnderſtanding of Gods lawe. That then was the cauſe why the chiefe authoritie of iudgement was committed to the order of the prieſtes with the Iudge whome God had ſet vp.

Exo.28 1.43
Deut.31 7.
Ioſua,1.2.

Mal.2.7.

But before wee goe any further, let vs note that vnder pretence of this text, the Pope lifted vp his hornes, and vſurped ſuch tyranny as wee haue ſeene him vſe in the Church of God. For thus doeth hee reaſon. Seeing that the chiefe authoritie of iudgement was giuen to the Prieſtes, it is to bee concluded that there ought to bee one head ouer all the Church. Againe, for as much as the ſentence of the high prieſt was to bee helde without any gainſaying, the thinges that are determined by the Apoſtolike ſea (as they terme it) ought likewiſe to be held without gainſaying, and it is a deadly and vnpardonable ſinne, to incounter any thing that the Pope ſhall haue pronounced. But here wee haue two thinges to conſider, which are of ſufficiencie to reſolue all ſuch and ſo childiſh argumentes. For firſt, the gouerning of the whole worlde by one man, and the gouerning of ſome one countrey or prouince by one man, are not both one. God hath made here a ciuil lawe for the countrey of Iewrie. And wee knowe that at that time there was but one Temple, & that it was not lawfull for them to worſhip God or to offer ſacrifice vnto him, in euery citie. If a man had buylded any altar, it had beene abhominable, and that citie muſt haue beene razed. And Gods doing hereof, was but to hold ẏ people in one right vnitie of faith. Thẽ like as there was but one temple in the land of Iewry: ſo was there but one high prieſt. But muſt this be extẽded to the whole world? No, not ſo. There needeth many mo: for what one mortal man nowadayes is able to weeld ſo great a charge? Againe, it were meete that there ſhould one temple bee bulded in the mids of the worlde, ẏ men might come rũning to it a foure or fiue thouſãd leagues off to worſhip God. And do ye not ſee what an abſurditie that were? Therfore it were too groſſe a fondneſſe to cõclude thus; There was but one temple & one high prieſt in al Iewrie, ergo there ought to be ẏ like throughout the whole worlde. For then ought there alſo ſome litle nooke to be made, where men might ſo aſſemble togither, as they ſhould not neede to go paſt foure or fiue dayes iourneyes from home: but we ſee that that were vnpoſſible, and; moreouer it were contrarie to nature. Marke that for one poynt.

Deut.12.5. & 16.2.

And ſecondly let vs marke, that the Leuitical Prieſthood is come to an end & quite put down, by the comming of our Lord Ieſus Chriſt into ẏ world. Moreouer the high prieſt was a figure & ſhadow of our Lord Ieſus Chriſt, and therefore it were an aboliſhing or putting away of the trueth, if men ſhoulde haue a high prieſt to bee the vniuerſall head of the Church, as the Pope woulde make men beleeue. It is ſaide that there was one high prieſt, one chiefe Iudge,

1.Tim.3.16. & Hebr.9.11

yea,& one king in Iſrael. Now if a man wil conclude hereupõ,that there ought to be one highprieſt through the whole world; there muſt alſo be but one chiefe king: & ſo ſhould all common weales be caſt downe,& the order which as now is diſtinctly ſet among kingdoms, dukedomes,& free cities,ſhould be but a confuſion accurſed of God. And in what taking were wee then? Nay, wee muſt go to the chiefe point of all, which is Matt.28.18 Phil.2.9. Hebr.1.8.13 that thereby our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt ſhoulde be robbed of his right. For now that he is come,the kingdome is ſtabliſhed euerlaſtingly in his perſon,& he is ſet ouer all the Empires and kingdomes of the worlde. Alſo he hath taken vpon him the euerlaſting prieſthood, ouer all order & gouernement of the Church. Not that there ſhoulde not as now be any mo Biſhops & ſheepheards,as the ſcripture ſpeaketh of them: but ẏ Ieſus Chriſt be the only head, & the reſidue but as inferior members, and that the body be gouerned in ſuch wiſe, as all things may be ſubiect Matt.17.5. to him of whome it is ſaide; This is my welbeloued ſonne, Heare ye him. And ſo wee ſee that ẏ Pope is a traytour that robbeth Ieſus Chriſt of his ſoueraigntie,by making of himſelf highprieſt ouer the Church of God.

And by the way, if it be alledged that it is requiſite there ſhould be ſome meane to end quarels and controuerſies that might riſe for religion: the anſwere is, that ſo there be an order ſet, there needeth not any one man to be ſet ouer al the reſt; but they may aſſemble together wͭ one cõmon accord, as we ſee hath bin done in times paſt. True it is that the men of olde time had a certeine order in the Church for the great Prouinces, namely that there were certaine Patriarkes: but as for to haue any one head ouer the whole Church,that was neuer agreed vppon, ſo long as there was any purenes of the Goſpel or any tolerable gouernement. But as ſoone as all things were confounded after a barbarous or rather brutiſh maner; then did the Pope lift vp his hornes. In deed he ſtroue long time againſt the biſhop of Conſtantinople. But howſoeuer ẏ caſe ſtood, it fell out anon after that all thinges were corrupted & confounded , & men wiſt not any more what the gouernment of the church ment. So then let vs marke,ẏ if it be ſaid, that like as it is requiſite there ſhould be ſome ſtay for the pacifying of ciuil quarels, and for the determining of criminal caſes; ſo it is good reaſon that there ſhould be ſome chiefe court of prerogatiue, for the appeaſing of ſtrife & contention in doctrine: yet it followeth not that one man only ought to haue ſupremacie ouer the whole world: for(as I haue ſhewed afore)that is quite contrarie to nature. What remaineth then? That men aſſemble togither,& that Ieſus Chriſt beare the chiefe ſway among them.

But we muſt wey well the things that are conteined heere. It is ſaid that ẏ Prieſt muſt iudge according to the law of God. Wherein it is ſhewed that our Lorde layeth not the brydle looſe on the necke, eyther of all the prieſtes together, or of the Iudge which was in thoſe dayes in ſtate of a king: but that al of them ought to be ſubiect to the law; and that(as I ſaid afore) God meant to reſerue the ſoueraigne authoritie to himſelfe, ſo as men ſhould receiue definitiue ſentence as at his mouth, & that the perſons which were to giue the ſentence,ſhould be but as inſtrumentes of his holy ſpirite , & expounders of his lawe. Therefore let vs marke wel, that God ment not here that men ſhould do any thing on their own heads, but that his lawe ſhould beare the ſway, ſpecially in Ieruſalem rather than in any other place. But now let vs ſee what the Pope doeth, & what all the baſtardly Councels haue done whereunto he would tye vs. There is nothing amongeſt them but to ſay: that the holy Ghoſt gouerned them;for as for the holy ſcripture they did let that alone. In deede they gaue it the honorable title of Gods word: but when they ment to determine what they thought good,was it according to that which God hath declared? No: but they tooke another rule; which is, that the Church cannot erre becauſe it is gouerned by ẏ holy Ghoſt:& that as touching the holy ſcripture, it leadeth vs into perfection,but we muſt mount vp yet higher: for if we haue not the reuelations of the holy Ghoſt, it is nothing: If a man holde himſelfe to that which is conteined in the holy ſcripture, it is but an vnperfect thing with them; but as for that which is determined by ẏ Church, that muſt be held inuiolable,and no man muſt in any wiſe gainſay it. Againe,the holy ſcripture(ſay they)is a noſe of wax, which a man may wryth euery way,& there is no certeintie in it:but whẽ the church hath once pronounced a thing,there is no more dout in it. After ẏ maner went all the rable of them to worke,ſo as they haue troden ẏ holy ſcripture vnder foote. Although they grant in words that it proceeded from God: yet haue they taken it to be but as an apſie,and as a cõmõ doctrine: affirming that the Reuelations which haue beene giuen vnto them, are much higher doctrine. Theſe blaſphemies they haue not been aſhamed to vtter,& their bookes are ful of them. Inſomuch that they ſay that the holy ſcripture is a pliable thing (as I haue declared afore); ſo as if wee ſhould ſticke to that which is conteyned there,our fayth ſhold neuer be certein. And therupon euery man folowes his owne fancye, Seeing they were come to ſuch extremitie,a mã may wel perceiue ẏ the holy ſcripture bare no ſway amõg thẽ. But on ẏ cõtrarie part it is ſaid,ẏ the highprieſt muſt be a Iudge,not only in matters concerning the ſpiritual gouernment of the church,but alſo in ciuil caſes;& that he muſt follow ẏ law though the caſe concern but the temporal iuriſdiction. If it be ſo; what is to be done whẽ they haue to deale with ẏ law of God? Whẽ the caſe concerneth the ſaluation of mens ſouls, religion,& faith, which are things ẏ paſſe all the whole world: Shal men therein forſake the holy Scriptures? Shall men in thoſe caſes ouerrule matters at their own pleaſure, as if they woulde ſay,This ſeemes good to mee, this hath ẏ holy Ghoſt reuealed vnto mee: See yee not how God is ſhamefully mocked in this behalf? So then,let vs mark wel,firſt that our lord ment not to giue infinit power either to the Prieſts or to ẏ Iudges, but ÿ he hath ſent & referred them backe to his law,ÿ they might iudge according to ÿ ſame. In deede here a man might reply; that euery man might ſay; It is not according to Gods lawe, vnleſſe the expoſition ÿ is giuen thereof be to their own liking. And truely the heretikes are ſo wilful,ÿ they wil neuer be conuicted. Although the holy ſcripture be alledged vnto them,& that the texts be ſet downe neuer ſo cleare & infallible; yet wil they not ceaſſe to contend ſtil, euen whē their own conſciences condemn them,as ſaith S. Tit.3.11. Paul. Al this is true'yet muſt not they which are in autoritie abuſe it,as though it were lawful for them to ſay;This is ÿ law,let it be followed. Neuertheleſſe,the Pope & al his clergie haue left ÿ holy ſcripture:& what ſhould we do then but repaire to this rule; ÿ ſeeing God woulde haue the temporal iuriſdictiō to be gouerned by his word; there is much more reaſon ÿ the Church ſhould not be otherwiſe gouerned than by ÿ holy ſcripture.Whereſoeuer temporal Iudges are,they be lawmakers, neither haue they libertie to make new lawes for the ſpirituall gouernement of the Church.To be ſhort,men muſt hold their peace, all mouthes muſt be ſtopped,men muſt content themſelues with that which is ſet down by Moſes,by the Prophets,& by the Apoſtles,& thereupon muſt men reſt altogether. Seeing it is ſo ÿ God hath not authoriſed men to bee lawmakers as in reſpect of the ſpirituall gouernement of the church: let vs conclude ÿ it is not lawfull for vs to turne away from the law & from ÿ holy ſcripture: but ÿ we muſt hold vs to it. And ſo yee ſee what we haue to marke vpon this text, where it is ſaid,ÿ the Prieſts & the Iudge for ÿ time being ſhall iudge according to the law of God.

And in very deede I haue declared a litle alreadie,that we ought to receiue Ieſus Chriſt, as wel for our Iudge as for our highprieſt. For Ieſus Chriſt hath a double office: in ſomuch ÿ beſides Eſa.7.14. Hebr.1.2.8. & 2,17. that he is our chiefe prophet of whom we ought to hold al our doctrine & to fetch all trueth:he is alſo our ſoueraigne king,& highprieſt. Howbeit foraſmuch as they repreſented his perſon,being as it were his ſhadowes & figures:it behoued thē to follow this law.As now there are no mo ſuch ſhadowes & figures (as I ſaide heretofore) becauſe the ſonne of God is come into the worlde, ÿ old prieſthood is paſſed away, & the old kingdome is aboliſhed.Therfore let vs be contented to haue an inferior order,ÿ is to wit,that ciuil gouernement be ſo maintained as Gods law do alwayes beare chiefe ſtroke , & as all men in the mean while haue a regard what is lawful for thē. When kings, & princes, & magiſtrates are to make lawes , let them vnderſtand that if they make them of their own head, it is a marring & confounding of all things.For God ſaith, it is by Prou.8.15. 16. me that magiſtrates diſcerne what is good and expedient. Therfore let them call vpon the ſpirit of God,that he may giue them wiſdom & diſcretion to make good & conuenient lawes.And let them that ſit in the ſeat of Iuſtice,referre thē ſelues to God,and ſeeke to bee ruled by his holy ſpirite. Let them that haue the ſpirituall iuriſdiction knowe, that it is not lawfull for them to meddle any further than with the preaching of Gods worde, and to ſpeake as out of his mouth, and to deliuer the doctrine faithfully which is contained in the law and ÿ Goſpel , let them holde themſelues within thoſe boundes , and take no further vppon them . Thus yee ſee in effect howe wee ought to put this doctrine in vre.

And it is ſaid expreſly, *That men ſhall ſtand to the ſentence which is giuen by the Iudges and Prieſts: and that the party which diſobeyeth it,ſhal dy the death becauſe of his pryde* . Hereupon the Pope would needs grounde, that it is not lawefull in any wiſe to ſtand againſt the things that haue bin determined by the Councels . What ? Beholde, the Pope hath ſit as cheefe of the Councel, and the Byſhops and prelates haue conſented thereunto, and ſhall a man come and ſet himſelfe againſt it, and ſay ÿ it was il decreed.O that were an intolerable crime in deed, God wil not haue ſuch pride to be borne withall in his people.This(as I haue ſayd afore)may eaſily be ouerthrowen, as thus: that foraſmuch as this text treateth of matters of lawe, it treateth not of doctrine . For God hath deliuered his lawe, and hath ſaid that men muſt not turne aſide neither to the right hand nor to ÿ left. In ſo much that whē Moſes gaue inſtructions vnto Ioſua, he ſaid to him, thou ſhalt Deut.31.18 Ioſue,1.7. follow whatſoeuer is conteined in ÿ law,& not ſwarue aſide one way nor other. Behold , Ioſua is ordeined to be the cheefe Iudge, to hold the people in good order,he is their head,and repreſēteth our Lord Ieſus Chriſt:yet for al ÿ,he ſaith not to him,Thou ſhalt doe whatſoeuer thy mind giueth thee to do,& whatſoeuer is good & right to thine own ſeeming:but thou ſhalt do as ÿ meaneſt of all the people , ſubmitting thy ſelfe to the doctrine which is giuen thee for the guiding of the Church . So then, as touching Gods ſeruice, and religion, wee ſee howe the lawe hath euer borne the ſwaye, and it behoued all men to haue their ears open and redie to receiue whatſoeuer is ſet forth there, and that no man might preſume to ſtand againſt it, or to ouerrule it, for making of the people to murmure.Now therfore foraſmuch as here is no ſpeech concerning any other things than of matter in lawe, how they ought to be ended, and of the pacifying of quarels which elſe would be endleſſe betweene man and man; the ſolution is very eaſie : namely that if a man ſtande againſt a definitiue ſentence, his meaning is to peruert all order, and he is an enemie to mankinde, and woorſe than a theefe. He that robbeth or murthereth , ſhalbee puniſhed, and yet his breaking of the lawe, is but in ſome one point : but as for him that breaketh ÿ ciuil order, he openeth the gap to theft, to murther, and to all confuſion : his meaning is that there ſhould bee no more modeſtie nor humanitie among men. Therefore ought hee to bee taken as an enemie to all goodnes; and (according to Saint Paules ſaying) they that would ſet Rom.13.2. ſuch diſorder among men, ſet not themſelues againſt creatures, but do make warre againſt the liuing GOD , becauſe all ſoueraignetie is of him. Nowe then , it is not to bee marueiled that it ſhould be ſayde, that the partie which diſobeyed the ſentence of the prerogatiue court, ſhould be cut off from among the Iſraelites.

And by this ſentence wee be put in minde of that which hath beene ſpoken before: namely ẏ our Lord maketh ſo great account of the earthly policie, that he will haue it mainteined yea euen with mens liues. Precious is mans bloude vnto him; for men are ſhaped after his image: but yet doeth he not ſo much beare with a man, but that he will haue him ſtoned, & put to death, if he be diſobedient to ciuill order. Therefore we can not by any compariſon iudge how precious and holy a thing in Gods ſight the authority is which he hath giuen to Iudges & Magiſtrates. For if any man ſtep vp againſt it, he ſhall die for it. And why? Is a mans life no more worth than ſo? (for ſo will ſome men alleadge.) Yes: and make ye nothing of the image of God which ſhineth foorth much more in Magiſtrates, becauſe God hath printed his marke in them? Againe, what is the life of one man in compariſon of the liues of a hundred thouſand? For the whole nation periſheth without remedy, where this order is not helde, that there be Magiſtrates, and that men yeelde obedience vnto them. For the men that can not finde in their heartes to bee gouerned, woulde become deuils, if there were no order of gouernement, that they might be helde in awe by their ſuperiours: all would go to hauocke. So then it is not without cauſe ẏ God hath ordeined ẏ the party ſhould dy which is diſobedient to the order of Law. And therefore ſo much ẏ more ought we to yeelde to ẏ which is tolde vs here, & to humble ourſelues in that behalfe, and to bowdowne our neckes willingly & obediently to ſuch as hold the ſword of Iuſtice. For in ſo doing, we offer vnto God ſuch ſacrifice as is acceptable to him, & he receiueth it as we ſee in this text. And if we diſobey the men whō he hath ſet in ẏ degree; we be his enemies and make warre againſt him, (as I ſayd afore) and wee ſhall haue too mightie an aduerſarie for vs to ouercome.

And he ſpeaketh purpoſely of pride. For it is vnpoſſible that a man ſhoulde be ſo ſtubborne as to withſtande the publike magiſtrate, & to ouerthrowe the order of the common weale, if he be not caried away with pride & diueliſh ouerweening. So then, will we amend this rebelliouſnes againſt the Iudges and Magiſtrates? Let euery of vs frame himſelfe to a good lowelineſſe. For if we be not puffed vp with pride, it is certaine that all men will keepe on his courſe, and thinges will be quiet among vs. What is the cauſe then that order is ſo peruerted? It is for that men can not finde in their hearts to yeelde ſo farre vnto reaſō as to ſay, let ẏ Lawes ouerrule vs. And cōſequently let ſuch as are appointed for Magiſtrates looke that they mainteine their ſtate, & do their indeuour to beate downe ſuch pride; and let all men ſubmit themſelues meekely to the order which God hath appointed. And Moſes hath noted this thing, of purpoſe to ſhew that Gods vſing of ſuch ſeueritie & rigor againſt ẏ diſobediēt, is not without cauſe. For in ẏ caſe, we muſt not ſimply looke vpon their diſobedience; but proceed yet higher, namely ẏ they be led with an ouerweening of thēſelues, ẏ they be ful of pride & ſpitefulnes, and ẏ if there were any meekenes in thē, it would be diſcerned by their ſubmitting of thēſelues to ẏ hand of God. But foraſmuch as they be ful of pride & intollerable ſtatelineſſe, ſo as they wil not ſtoope either to God or man, but reiect al ẏ euer is: it is not to be wondred at, though God cōmand ſuch perſons to be put to death.

And he ſayth expreſly; *thou ſhalt rid away euill frō Iſrael.* For (as was touched yeſterday) when wickednes is ſuffred, it is a marring of al thinges & a generall infection followeth vpon it. At the firſt, the greatneſſe of the miſchiefe is not perceiued that commeth of the pardoning of a ſinne. Well, it paſſeth for once. Yea, it ſeemeth but for once. But it turneth to the infecting of all afterwarde, becauſe that by ẏ meanes the euill was foſtered ſtill, and men ſtept not to the redreſſing of it in time: & ſo God is faine to puniſh our negligence. Now then let vs marke well, ẏ for this cauſe Moſes warneth vs heere, ẏ if we ſuffer naughtines to ſettle, it will marre & infect all ẏ is, before it can be redreſſed: and that it is too late to go about it, when men haue tarried till the infectiō hath gotten the vpper hande.

Alſo he ſpeaketh of the example ſaying, *that others hearing thereof ſhalbe afraide and by that meane, pride ſhalbe corrected.* Firſt of all we ſee hereby, ẏ pride is an odious vice before God, ſeeing he vſeth ſo violent remedy ẏ he will haue the party to anſwer it with his life. And ſecondly let vs mark alſo, ẏ the puniſhmentes which we ought to execute belong to example. And ẏ is the cauſe why it is ſayd, ẏ they which ſpare an offender in leauing his fault vnpuniſhed, ſhalbe gilty of ẏ vndoing of the whole nation: for by ẏ meanes, the reſidue do fall to leaudnes as well as he. And when folke ſee a wicked deede cōmitted, & the party is not puniſhed for it; euery man taketh libertie to do ẏ like. Therfore let vs take warning by theſe examples, ẏ we may be able to apply thē to our inſtruction: & when we ſee thē puniſhed which aduance thēſelues; let vs learne thereby to walke in meeknes. And although it were better for euerie man to learn by himſelf, thā by beholding ẏ puniſhmēts of other folks: Yet notwithſtanding it is a great grace of God, whē he teacheth vs by other mens harmes. Let vs mark moreouer, ẏ if we cōtinue without amendment when we ſee ẏ puniſhments ẏ are executed by the authority of God; I ſay if we continue without amendment: our ſinne increaſeth ſo much the more. God warneth vs by a great many of inſtructions, yea & of chaſtiſements alſo which he executeth; and wee make none account of them: nowe is it any wonder if in the ende wee ſee our Lorde ſende ſo great and exceſſiue diſorders, that wee wote not where to become? Then let vs learne to profite in this ſchoole, as oft of GOD lifteth vp his hande to puniſh the wicked: and let vs vnderſtande that he teacheth vs by their example: wherfore let vs ſtoope, & let euery of vs yeelde to obey him with true meekeneſſe.

Now let vs fall downe before the maieſtie of our good God with acknowledgement of our faultes, praying him to make vs feele them more and more, ſo as we may all of vs ſeeke to frame our life according to the rightneſſe which hee ſheweth vs, and not looke to be drawen thereto by compulſion of the earthly ſworde, but rather that the ſworde of Gods worde may haue ſuch power in our heartes, as it may make vs to ſacrifice ourſelues vnto GOD, killing all our fleſhly luſtes, and renewing vs to ſuch a kinde of life, as our whole deſire may bee to haue God reigne ouer vs, and that we may be wholly reformed, according to his holy will: and that therewithall we may followe the orderly policie and ſpirituall gouernement of his Church; and that all the things which he hath ordeined for our benefite, may be ſo mainteined & obſerued, as both great and ſmall may ſubmit thẽſelues therunto. That it may pleaſe him to graunt this grace, not onely to vs, but alſo to al people & nations of the earth: Reducing all poore ignoraunt people out of the bondage of errours and darkeneſſe wherein they are holden: That ſo he he may bring thẽ to the knoweledge of his trueth: And that for this purpoſe it would pleaſe him to raiſe vp true & faithfull miniſters of his worde, &c.

On Wedneſday the xx. of Nouember. 1555.

The Cv. Sermon which is the fourth vpon the ſeuenteenth Chapter.

14 When thou art come into the Lande which the Lord thy God giueth thee, and enioyeſt it and dwelleſt therein, and ſayeſt I will ſet a king ouer mee like as all the nations that are rounde about mee:

15 Then ſhalt thou make him king ouer thee whome the Lorde ſhall chooſe from among thy brethren: him ſhalt thou ſet ouer thee to be king, and thou maieſt not ſet a ſtraunger ouer thee which is not thy brother.

16 But he ſhall not multiply horſes to himſelfe, nor ſende the people againe into Egypt to increaſe the number of horſes, foraſmuch as the Lorde hath ſayd vnto you, yee ſhall neuer hence foorth goe any more againe that way.

17 Neither ſhall he take him many wiues, leaſt his heart turne away. Neither ſhall he gather him much golde and ſiluer.

18 And when he is ſet vpon the Throne of his kingdom, he ſhall copy out this Lawe for himſelfe in a booke, before the Prieſtes the Leuites.

Deut.16.18. HEretofore Moſes hath ſpoken of the Iudges that were ordeined in euery citie to gouern the people, and ſpecially of the cheefe Iudge to whom all thinges were referred. Nowe he addeth that if ẏ people be diſpoſed to chooſe a king, he ſheweth what manner a one he ought to be. And firſt he ordeineth that he muſt be taken of the linage of Abraham: and ſecondly he declareth his duetie to him, to the intent he ſhould not go beyond it, nor play the Tyraunt in ſteede of playing the king. That is the meaning of Moſes generally. But here we muſt conſider what is the cauſe, why God ſetteth not vp a king by his owne authoritie, but rather leaueth it to the likeing of the people. For if he allowed the ſtate of a king, or if it were a thing that he liked wel of; ought he not to haue ſhewed the way, that the people might haue obeyed whatſoeuer he had cõmaunded them? But he ſayeth, *When thou art come into the Lande which thy God giueth thee, and inioyeſt it, if thou wilt chooſe a king as other Natiõs haue.* Hereby it ſhould ſeeme that God was not willing there ſhoulde bee any kingdome in Iewrie: but that if the people were ſo deſirous of a king that they could not be helde from it, then he granted it them by way of ſufferance. Notwithſtanding this, wee heare howe it is ſayde in Geneſis, that the ſcepter ſhould not be Gen.49.10. taken from the tribe of Iuda, nor the gouernour from betweene his legges, vntill the perſon that was to be ſent were come & had appeared. This propheſie was not a curſe that ſhould come vpon the people, nor a vengeance of God: but rather a ſingular and ſpecial fauour aboue all other. For in ſaying ſo, Iacob declareth that God would ſet vp an euerlaſting king, by whom ſaluation ſhould be ſent throughout all the world. And vntill the time of the manifeſting of our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt it behooued the people to be mainteined ſtill in hope of him: and God gaue vnto him the kingdome of Iuda and that whole tribe. We ſee then in fewe wordes, that this kingdome was a figure of our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt, and as a warrant which God gaue to that people, that he himſelfe reigned ouer them, and the kinges of Iuda ſerued alwaies to holde the people vnder Gods protection, as it were in the perſon of our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt. For albeit that all the Princes of the worlde be called Pſal.82.6. Gods children and his lieftenauntes: yet notwithſtanding, the kingdome of Iuda had that title after a more ſpeciall and holy manner. And therefore wee ſee it was Gods will there ſhoulde be a king among his people, euen becauſe it was the full perfection of all felicity, that Ieſus Chriſt ſhould be the head of them.

True it is yͭ if diſputatiō ſhold ariſe cōcerning yͤ gouernmēt of mē; it might be ſaid yͭ a free ſtate is much better thā to be vnder a Prince: but here is no cōtrouerſie of any ſuch mater. And in deed ſuch diſputatiōs are not very profitable. For they yͭ are vnder yͤ gouernment of a Prince, muſt not be fickleminded to make any alteration. And thoſe to whō God hath giuen liberty & freedom, ought to vſe it wͭ thankſgiuing, as a ſingular benefit & treaſure yͭ cannot be priſed ſufficiently. And as for yͤ kingdom of Iuda, there was a ſpeciall reſpect in yͭ, as I haue ſaid afore: namely yͭ it was the image of the truth which was in our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt, in gathering vs to himſelfe to make vs Gods Church & his owne flocke. For yͭ is better than al yͤ gouernment in the whole world. If a mā ſhoulde cōpare a principality, or a free ſtate of a Senate, or whatſoeuer els can be imagined for a cōmonweale, with yͤ grace which God giueth vs in ſhewing himſelf to vs in his own perſon, of purpoſe to reigne ouer vs himſelf, & to take yͤ charge of our welfare, & in eſtabliſhing his only ſon in yͤ office & dignity: I pray you is it not much better to be vnder yͤ obediēce of our Lord Ieſus Chriſt, & to haue him to reigne ouer vs as our ſouereine Lord & King; than to be Kings & Emperors euery one of vs? Yes verily. So then wee muſt conclude, yͭ ſeeing God ordeined Iudges frō yͤ beginning, hee ſheweth therby yͭ it is a deſirable thing for folk to be gouerned in cōmon & to haue laws to reigne among thē, yͭ there be no ſucceſſion by inheritance, but yͭ euen thoſe which are choſē [to beare office] be bound to yeelde account of their doings, & haue not abſolute libertie to doe what they liſt or to ſay: I will haue this thing: It ſhalbe thus done. This did God ſhew, whē he gouerned his owne people by yͤ hand of Iudges. And for the 1.Sam.8.7. ſame cauſe did he vpbrayd & blame yͤ Iewes for requiring a king to be their head & to reign ouer them. It is not thou (ſayth he to Samuell) to whō they haue done this wrong. True it is yͭ thou haſt executed my authority in yͭ thou art of my ſetting vp: but their vnthankefulnes & diſobedience toucheth me, in yͭ they can not abide yͭ I ſhoulde haue the gouerning of thē. And afterward he addeth, wel then let them haue a king. But it ſhalbe to their trouble: for he ſhall ſpoyle their houſes, take away their ſons & daughters, conſume their ſubſtance, lay taxes & tallages vpon them, & (to be ſhort) vſe them like wretched bondſlaues. See what they haue wonne by requiring a king.

And in this text our Lorde ſheweth, yͭ as in reſpect of worldly gouernmēt, he had choſen yͤ beſt ſtate yͭ could be; namely yͭ the Law ſhould reigne ouer the people, & therewithal yͭ there ſhould be Iudges in euery citie, & a chiefe gouernour ouer all, to the intent yͭ matters might be determined and concluded, as was declared yeſterday: howbeit with this moſt noble condition, which God reſerued to himſelfe, namely that our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt ſhould reigne ouer them. For it behoued thē to be vnder one head, howbeit not ſimply of a mortall man, but of yͤ ſonne of God. But foraſmuch as yͤ time was not yet come that ſuch grace ſhold be ſhewed: it behoued the hope thereof to be fedde with ſome figure. And yͭ was the cauſe why it was promiſed by the mouth of Iacob, that the ſcepter ſhould not depart from the Gen. 49. 10. tribe of Iuda. God did purpoſely chooſe out one tribe, & when he ment to ſet vp the king, he ſayd that the reigne of him ſhoulde be durable vntill the comming of his owne ſonne, who was the true heire, and the very partie to whome the crowne belonged, namely our Lord Ieſus Chriſt. Thus haue wee nowe a briefe declaration after what ſorte God ment to ſtabliſhe a kingdome among his people, howbeit, that was in reſpect of our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt. But as in reſpect of worldly gouernement, the beſt and moſt deſirable ſtate, was to haue Iudges, that is to ſay, to be in libertie, and yet notwithſtanding to bee ouerruled by Lawes. Nowe thereby we be doone to vnderſtande, that although all worldely gouernment deſerue to be eſteemed as a holy thing, & behoofefull for the maintenaunce of mans ſtate, yet notwithſtanding, when it pleaſeth GOD to giue vs a meane kinde of gouernement, voyde of tyranny, wherein the Magiſtrates doe rule after ſuch a ſort, that the Lawes haue their due courſe: the ſame is a ſpeciall priuiledge, and wee ought then to perceiue thereby that God is neere at hand to vs, & that he pitieth vs as his houſholdfolke, and as thoſe that are of his flocke, & his owne heritage. Marke that then for one point. But therewithall we muſt marke alſo, that when we ſhall haue knowen Gods grace in his gouerning of vs in this earthly and tranſitorie life; it is nothing in compariſon of the ſpirituall kingdom of our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt, & therefore yͭ we muſt highly exalt or praiſe this benefite yͭ God vouchſafeth to gouerne vs by the hande of his onely ſon, yea and we muſt eſteeme it, not onely more than all the libertie of the worlde, but alſo more than al the kingdomes and Empires of yͤ world. But anon this point ſhalbe touched new againe.

Furthermore let vs marke, that God intending to ſet vp a king, did tarry neuertheleſſe till the people required one. And yͭ was to put them in a deſire, that they might not afterward rebell againſt the king that was to bee ſet vp. For the vnthankefulneſſe and malice of the people bewrayed it ſelfe, in that they coulde not finde in their heartes to holde them to the ſtate which God had ſtabliſhed already. And what a thing had it been, if he had ſet vp a Monarchie among them at the firſt day? For it is a farre more tollerable thing for vs to haue gouernours that goe by choyſe and election, who in executing their office ſhall knowe themſelues to bee ſubiect to the Lawe: than to haue a Prince whoſe worde muſt ſtande for reaſon, and whoſe childe muſt inherite, though he be neuer ſo very a babe, and conſequently obeyed; though hee be the willfulleſt foole or the cruelleſt perſon in the worlde. Therefore it is a farre more tollerable ſtate to haue Iudges and Gouernours. Nowe if the people of Iſrael could not away with this ſtate, but wold needs through a wicked deſire ſeek to haue a king: what would they haue done if God had at yͤ firſt day ſaide vnto thē, I ſet this or yͤ houſe to reigne ouer you, & it behoueth you to obey the king? What murmuring would there haue beene?

What practiſing would there haue bin? Therfore it was Gods wil to make yͤ people willing, to yͤ end there might be no occaſion of rebelling, whē Dauid was to be made king. Verily we ſee what fell out. For ſoothly, their requiring of King Saul, was 1.Sa.1.5.20. through a foliſh ambitiō & ſpyte, which they bare to their neighbours. When they ſawe how there were kings in Egypt, in Edō, in Ammon, in Syria, & in the other Coūtryes: they thought there was no ſuch dignitie & ſtatelines amōg thēſelues becauſe there was no royall ſeate among thē. And therfore they would haue one. But ſee their folly. When they had choſen Saul, although he vexed thē & put them to as much hardnes as could be: yet notwͭſtanding they were ſo wedded to him, yͭ they would needs keepe yͤ croun to his childrē, & not ſuffer Dauid to reigne. Albeit yͭ God had declared yͭ Dauid was the mā whō he had choſē, and yͭ they had not the authoritie to chooſe any other to be their king: yet yͤ people choſe Saules ſon, as who would ſay, we will haue this houſe to continue for euer, yea euē as it were in diſpite of God. And (as we ſee) was Dauid mainteyned in his kingdome, any otherwiſe than by Gods ſtretching out of his hand to preſerue him? The people fel within a while after to rebelling againſt Dauid, & the example of Abſolon ſheweth yͭ the 2.Sam.15.4. inſurrection was ſo great, yͭ Dauid was forſaken of the moſt part of his ſubiectes. So then it appeareth yͭ if yͤ people had not bin as good as daunted aforehand, yͤ kingdom which God had determined on in his own purpoſe, had neuer takē place, neither would they haue ſubmitted thēſelues vnto it but by cōpulſion. But yet behooued it thē to obey it. And ſo by yͭ meane yͤ people were prepared therto by requiring a king of thēſelues; & yet they found thēſelues diſappointed of their expectation. For it was not Gods wil to ſtabliſh the bleſſed-kingdom at yͤ firſt, wherby yͤ whole world was to haue ſaluation: but hee choſe a king of the tribe of Beniamin, & yet it was ſaid yͭ the ſcepter ſhould not depart frō the tribe of Iuda. Wherfore doth God turne away frō yͭ which he had ſpoken by yͤ mouth of Iacob? This was done not yͭ he is variable, not yͭ he repenteth him; not yͭ he intended not to fulfil yͤ propheſie: but for yͭ he was not minded to let his bleſſing appeare ſo ſoone, becauſe of yͤ peoples ſeditiouſneſſe, in reſpect wherof, he hid it, or at leaſtwiſe delayed it til they had acknowledged their fault, & repented thē therof. And this doth ſhew vs ſufficiētly wherfore god in this place reſerueth not to himſelf yͤ choſing of yͤ king which ſhould gouerne his people: but ſayth thou ſhalt require one. It was to the end that his reigning ſhould be of the more authoritie, & he bee yͤ better beloued of his people; ſo as euery mā ſhould ſubmit himſelf to him, & therby know in very deed, yͭ there was no greater happines, than to be vnder yͤ houſe of Dauid, foraſmuch as the ſame was a ſhadow & figure of the ſonne of god, who was to bring ſaluation & full perfection of al good things. In effect we ſee here two things. The one is that our lord blameth the people for their importunitie, in yͭ they would needs be aforehand wͭ him in deſiring a king: as if he ſhould ſay, You wil not ſuffer me to make him: (true it is yͭ I wil neuer forget you, but I wil ſet ſuch order among you, yͭ ye ſhal haue cauſe to thanke me & to reioyce of my goodnes.) But yet will you be ſo malitious & frowarde, yͭ when I ſhall haue giuen you a Iudge, you ſhall deſire a king. And this frowardnes of yours ſhal cauſe me not to ſet vp the kingdom which I haue ordeined, & which I haue reſerued to my ſelfe, that is to wit, of the tribe of Iuda. Yet notwͭſtanding our lord ſheweth yͭ he wil ſet vp yͤ kingdom, but that ſhalbe after the people are made fit to obey, & haue acknowledged their ſin, becauſe they had coueted a change againſt Gods wil, & before yͤ fit time was come. Thus are all theſe places eaſily made to agree. And hereupon we may gather a good leſſon; which is that when God hath promiſed vs any benefite or token of his mercy: we muſt hold our luſtes in awe, and not runne a heade to chalendge him to do that which he hath ſayd, when we liſt, but vſe patience, and be quiet vntill God ſhewe vs by effect that he ment not to diſappoint vs, in promiſing any thing yͭ belongeth to our ſaluation. Here then is a generall rule; which is, yͭ in all Gods promiſes we muſt be patiēt, & not be ſo haſtie as to ſay, how goes this geere? why doeth God make delay? why performeth he not yͤ thing which we hoped for at his hand? Let vs beware of ſuch impatiencie, ſeeing the example of yͤ people is ſuch as we ſee it is in this place. But let vs be ſtil when God hath promiſed vs any thing, vntil yͤ cōuenient time therof be come of it ſelf. And yet ſhal not this hinder vs but yͭ we may pray vnto him for it. For wherfore doth he cal vs to him & cōmand vs to pray, but to yͤ intent we ſhold diſcharge all our care & ſorow vpon him, & receiue cōfort of it? Phil.4.6. Therfore we may wel pray vnto god whē we are ſtirred vp to impatiencie: but yet muſt we euer refer all things vnto him: & good reaſon it is yͭ he ſhold diſpoſe of thinges according as he himſelfe hath determined in his owne purpoſe, & not after our fancie. Alſo let vs beare in minde what I haue touched afore; to wit, yͭ ſeeing God hath giuen vs a cōuenient ſtate, & yͭ we be ſo gouerned by Iudges & magiſtrates, as yͭ the Lawes do reigne ouer vs: we ought to giue God thanks for yͤ benefite, & to take good heed yͭ we prouoke not his wrath by our fonde ficklenes, in deſiring this or yͭ, and in ſaying why is it not thus or thus? For whē we wil nedes alter things after yͤ faſhion at our own pleaſure, we make not war againſt mē, but we defie God, & thruſt him far frō vs to yͤ entent he ſhould not reigne ouer vs. Therfore to be ſhort, ſeeing there is ſome forme of gouernment among vs, let vs learn to thank God, & to hold vs vnder yͤ ſhadow of his wings, & not to craue this or yͭ through fooliſh ambition. For we ſee what happened to yͤ people of Iſraell. True it is yͭ God choſe them a king: howbeit, yͭ was but to puniſh their wicked deſire: & euen ſo will it fall out wͭ others. And in deede, we ſee how he giueth large ſcope to yͤ king which was ſet vp, namely to Saul, 1.Sam.8.11. ſaying, Thou ſhalt not reigne as a Prince, but he ſhal execute al maner of tyranny ouer you, and yee muſt bee faine to abide it, ſpyte of your teeth.

But howſoeuer wee fare, let vs learne to referre all the benefites that GOD giueth vs in this world,to the ſpirituall kingdome of our Lord Ieſus Chriſt: aſſuring our ſelues that though we had all thinges elſe at will, and liued here in neuer ſo great pleaſure and welth,and had ſuch gouerners as demeaned themſelues as gently towardes vs as were poſſible: all this were nothing vnleſſe our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt reigned ouer vs, and bare all the ſwaye. On the contrary parte, though we be tormented according to the fleſh, (as we ſee a number of people extreemely vexed with tyranny) and that we haue not ſo much as bread to eate: Yet notwithſtanding the bleſſedneſſe which God ſendeth vs in that our Lord Ieſus Chriſt reigneth ouer vs,ought to be preferred before all other thinges, and wee ought to take all afflictions patiently, ſo we may haue the comfort of his reigne ouer vs. Nowe the ſcepter of our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt is not a materiall ſcepter, after the manner of the royall ſcepters and crounes which Kinges and Princes haue had at all times: but it is the Goſpell, which is the true token of his preſence. And wee ſee howe he taketh vs for his people, Pſal.110.3. & Eſa.2,3. wherof we haue a ſure warrant, in yͤ he will haue vs to be gathered together into the vnitie of faith by the doctrine of his goſpell, and by that meane be made the heritage of God.

Let vs come now to that which Moſes addeth concerning the office of the King. Hee ſayeth firſt, *That the king muſt be choſen from among the people. Thou ſhalt take one of thine owne brethren* (ſaith he,) *and thou ſhalt not goe ſeeke a ſtranger.* And ſurely by the propheſie of Iacob, the king was to be choſen of the tribe of Iuda. Why then doeth God ſpeake generally of the whole linage of Abraham, and not marke out the kingly houſe by name? For it ſhould ſeeme that hee ment not to darken that propheſie. Let vs marke what hath beene ſayd already: to wit; that the time was not yet come, and that the fauour which God had behighted by the mouth of the Patriarke Iacob, was to be kept cloſe as yet for a time, by reaſon of the peoples vnthankefulneſſe. Behold, wheras God had ſpoken it ſo long time before: nowe at the ende of three hundered yeeres or thereaboutes, he ſayth there ſhalbe a king among you. As how? Shall the propheſie vaniſh away and be of none effect, which had bin vttered threehundered yeeres before, and ſpoken by the mouth of Iacob? Ought it not to haue beene ſetforth much more cleerely at the publiſhing of the Law? Yes, but our Lorde doeth vs to vnderſtande, that the people had drawen as it were a veyle before it, by reaſon wherof, in ſteede of comming to light, it behoued his fauour to be as it were hidden away in the darke. That is the thing which God ment to ſhewe in this text in ſaying, Thou ſhalt chooſe a king from among thy brethren, without appointing out the houſe, as had beene doone afore. But howeſoeuer the caſe ſtande, Gods holding backe of his fauour for a time, was no vtter aboliſhing thereof. Then did hee delay his promiſe of ſetting vppe a king of the tribe of Iuda: but yet hee did not vtterly bereaue his people of that hope. And ſo yee ſee, howe the people of themſelues made an interruption: and yet that God for all his chaſtiſing of them, vſeth gratious goodneſſe and moderateth his rigor: inſomuch that the thing which he had ordeined abideth ſtill, ſauing that the time thereof is prolonged.

Let vs marke therefore, that God to correct the faultes of his people, doeth hide away his fauour for a time, ſo as it is not manifeſtly ſeene: but yet in the ende he wil cauſe it to come again. Thus ouercommeth hee our naughtineſſe with his infinite goodnes, and we ſee it by experience. But yet ſometimes wee feele it not though our Lorde ſhewe vs it. Howeſoeuer the caſe ſtande, let vs learne by the example of the Iewes, that if our Lorde at any time withdrawe himſelfe from vs, and ſeeme not to performe his promiſe to vs; our owne faults are the cauſe thereof, for that we be frowarde and haue pulled backe Gods hande when hee would haue reached it out to haue diſcharged his promiſe towardes vs. For how many times a day prouoke we his wrath? And is not that a kinde of ſhutting of the doore againſt him, that hee might not come at vs to make vs partakers of his goodneſſe? Therefore when we haue thruſt backe his grace after that faſhion, if it appeare not againe vnto vs out of hande, we haue to humble our ſelues, acknowledging that we our ſelues are to blame. But yet for all that, we muſt not be diſcoraged, but we muſt pray God that although he haue deferred the performance of his promiſes for a time, yet wee may not be vtterly bereft of them, howſoeuer the world go, but that after we haue languiſhed for a time and bin chaſtiſed for our offences, we returne again without faile, and inioy yͤ thing which he hath promiſed. Thus ye ſee in effect what wee haue to gather vpon that text.

And whereas God forbiddeth his people *to haue any ſtraunger to be their king*: there are two reaſons which we ought to marke well. The one is yͭ that kingdome was a Sacrament of our Lord Ieſus Chriſt, and therefore it was not meete that it ſhould haue come to the hande of an vnbeleeuer or ydolater: for that had bin a defiling of holy thinges. If heathen kings reigned ouer their like, it was not to be wondred at. For although ſome vnbeleeuing kinges reigned ouer the people of Iſraell by Tyranny, 2.Kin.17.6. & 25.21. as was done by the Babylonians and afterward by the kinges of Aſſyria: yet doth it not followe but that there was alwayes this exemption, that God had ſtill a peculiar kinde of reigning, whereby he ſhewed as in a lookingglaſſe, that yͤ people was gathered together as into his owne houſe. Therefore if a ſtraunger had bin ſet vp in the ſeate of Dauid, it had beene trecherie againſt God, & the reproch had bin offered to God and to his onely ſonne. For when the kingdome was ſtabliſhed in the line of Dauid, this promiſe was added; I will be his father, and hee ſhallbe my ſonne. Pſal.2.7.& Hebr.1,5. And the Apoſtle declareth that it was ſo honorable a title that it belonged not euen to the Angelles. True it is that the Angelles are ſometimes called the ſonnes of God: howebeit, that is not without an addition; whereas Chriſt hath it, becauſe he is preferred before all creatures. Now then,

had

hadde they chooſen an ydolater, and ſet him vp in the ſeate which God had reſerued for his own onely ſonne, who was eſtabliſhed in his infinite grace, who was the marke of his diuine maieſtie, and who was aboue all the principalities of the world, yea and aboue heauen it ſelfe as in reſpect Col.1.16.17 of the creatures; as ẏ Apoſtle ſpeaketh of him, in the firſt chapter of his Epiſtle to the Coloſſians: what a thing had that beene? Had it not beene an vnnaturall confuſion, and too ſhamefull a defiling of the grace of GOD? Then lette vs marke that for the firſt reaſon why GOD woulde not haue a ſtraunger to ſit in the ſeate of Dauid.

And in ſo dooing, God ment alſo to ſhewe a dreadfull diſpleaſure, and to make the people to knowe howe they were vtterly accurſed, in that they were diſappointed of that kingdom, & that Gods Lampe was after a ſort put out. For, that ſimilitude is often ſet downe vnto vs in the holy [illegible] ſcripture, to ſhewe that God maketh his light to ſhine vpon his people, and that although there be not at all times great light, yet there ſhal euer be a Lampe howſoeuer the world goeth. And the ſeconde reaſon was, that if a ſtraunger ſhoulde haue reigned, he would ſoone haue changed the religion, as wee knowe that the heathen will alwayes needes ſette vp their owne ſuperſtitions. And why? For commonly they haue not the feare of God to keepe them in awe: but rather they thinke God to be bounde vnto them if they giue men leaue to worſhippe him and ſerue him after ſome ſort, & yet for all that they wil needes turne all the ſeruice of God to their owne luſtes and liking. If the Turke get the ſoueraignetie in any countrey, although he be contented to abide the Chriſtians (as they call themſelues): Yet doeth he worke them all the ſpite and reproch that can be to diſcourage them. Where the Papiſtes beare ſwaye, they defile al the puritie of Chriſtian doctrine, and they can not abide that the Goſpell ſhoulde be preached, or that the Sacramentes ſhoulde be purely vſed: but they will needes put all to hauocke, and in any wiſe ſet vp their owne ydolatries. Thus yee ſee what would haue come of it, inſomuch ẏ if a ſtranger ſhould haue reigned ouer the people of Iſraell, it hadde bin the next way to haue ouerthrowen the whole Lawe. Not without cauſe therefore did God expreſſely prouide that they ſhoulde not chooſe any other king than of the lynage of Abraham, ſuch a one as were compriſed in the co- Col.2.11.12 uenaunt, and bare the marke of the Church, that is to wit Circumciſion, which was the like Sacrament to the Iewes, that we haue noweadayes of Baptiſme.

But nowe muſt we apply this to our owne vſe, and vnderſtande firſt of all that the kingdome of our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt, muſt bee mainteined in ſuch ſoundeneſſe, as that wee muſt beware of bringing any defilemẽt into it. And what is ẏ kingdom of Chriſt? I haue told you already ẏ it conſiſteth not in any viſible things, or in any things belonging to this preſent life: but it is the gathering of vs together by his holy ſpirite, into the hope of the heauenly life: and the preaching of the Goſpell vnto vs, that it may bee as a rule to holde vs vnder the obedience of God. And although the Sacramentes bee viſible of themſelues: yet are they neuertheleſſe ſpirituall, as in reſpect of their ende, as all other Ceremonies are. We come hither togither; well, it is a viſible thing: we kneele downe to pray vnto God; & that is viſible alſo: but yet it aimeth at a higher ende, and hath a reſpect which is altogether ſpirituall. So then, let vs learne that the kingdom of our Lord Ieſus Chriſt ought to be mainteined in his full ſoundeneſſe; that is to wit; wee muſt beware that wee mingle not any corruption with the things that he hath commaunded in his Churche, ne thruſt in ſuch perſons as may ſerue to ouerthrowe the common weale: For if we ſhould chooſe falſe Sheepheards, and men of wicked doctrine, or of leaude conuerſation: were it not a diſhonoring of Ieſus Chriſtes kingdome and a putting of all thinges to hauocke as much as in vs lieth? Seeing then that the children of Iſraell were forbidden to ſet vp a ſtraunge King in the ſeate that was a figure of our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt: nowe that we haue the ſonne of God to gouerne vs, not in ſhadowe as in the time of the Lawe, but in full trueth; nowe that wee haue our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt who is called the dayſunne of righteouſneſſe as the prophete Malachie ter- Mal.2.4. meth him, who telleth vs that he is neere at hand to vs, and ruleth in the middes of vs: what a trecherie were it if we ſhould deface his roial throne and not maintaine it in ſuch pureneſſe; as that he might alwayes reigne by his worde, and euerie man doe him homage, and both greate and Pſal.2.12.& 110.1. ſmall knowe him, and he haue alwayes his preheminence among vs? Thus yee ſee howe the firſt point is that God commaundeth vs heere to haue a ſpeciall care of his Churche, ſo as there may be no defilement to hinder Chriſtes reigning ouer vs as he ought to doe.

Nowe as touching the ſecond reaſon, let vs marke alſo that if God haue giuen a people the grace to chooſe Kinges, Princes, Magiſtrates or Iudges, they ought to haue great regarde that the ſeate which God hath ordeined for the wellfare of mankinde, be not giuen to a man that is an vnbeleeuer. For the people that chooſeth either king or Iudge, without diſcerning whether he be a man that fearth God or no: doe put the haulter about their owne neckes wilfully. And when they ſhall chooſe, and take Magiſtrates that are either deadly enemies of the Goſpell, or Hypocrites, that ſeeke nothing elſe but to turne all thinges vpſidedowne, or worldelinges that coulde finde in their heartes to treade all religion vnder foote: is not the admitting of ſuch men as an opening of the gate vnto Sathan, that hee might haue place among vs? Is it not a reiecting of Gods grace, to the ende that all abhominations might haue their full ſcope? So then, when ſoeuer wee chooſe Iudges, Magiſtrates, Gouernours and Officers of Iuſtice, let vs take warning by this text, to looke for this marke in them, that they bee men which feare God, and are at leaſtwiſe deſirous that Religion ſhoulde be mainteined in his pureneſſe: For otherwiſe it is all one as if wee woulde driue God from vs, and ſeeke to baniſh him from among vs; which is too curſed a trayterouſneſſe. And thus much concerning earthly gouernement. After wee haue indeuoured that the ſpirituall religion of yͤ church may bee maintayned: let vs likewiſe be ſo minded towardes the ſtate of the temporall ſworde and ordinarie iuſtice, that ſuch as ſit in iudgement may bee all one with vs in brotherly religion, and that the holy bande of faith may knit vs togither in obedience to one ſelfeſame God. And hereof there is a faire confirmation in the thinges that Moſes addeth: for it deſerueth to bee treated of immediatly, and we ſhall ſee it in place conuenient.

But he ſayeth expreſſely, *That the king which ſhall haue beene choſen, muſt cauſe the booke of the lawe to be copied out in the preſence of the high prieſt and of the Leuites.* Nowe let vs ſee why God hath made this ſo ſtrait ordinance, that there ſhould bee a booke of authoritie for the kings vſe. Is it meant that a man ſhoulde bee ignorant and vtterly vnacquainted with the doctrine of God, vntil hee came to the crowne? No. For Gods will is that his lawe ſhould bee knowen both of greate and ſmall, as wee ſhall ſee by his proteſtation hereafter. **Deut. 32.46** The ſecrete thinges belong to your God himſelfe: but yet it hath pleaſed him to ſet his worde here before you; & ye muſt not ſay any more that it is a hidden doctrine, either for your ſelues or for your children. Wee ſee then howe it was Gods will that his lawe ſhoulde bee common both to great and ſmall. And ſhoulde he then that was brought vp in the houſe of the crowne, bee a beaſt? No. Ought he not to bee inſtructed in the Lawe? And if hee ought, was it not requiſite that hee ſhoulde haue a booke of it? Yes for ſooth. And what is yͤ cauſe why God woulde he ſhoulde haue a copie of the booke, at ſuch time as hee were put in poſſeſſion of the kingdome? It was to the ende hee ſhoulde perceiue himſelfe to bee double bounde, & vnderſtande that if priuate perſones bee bounde to profite in Gods ſchoole, & to giue good heede to the doctrine that is preached or written; it is much more reaſon that the perſon which hath the charge of the whole bodie, which is ſet vp in the name of God, and hath God come neere vnto him, ſhoulde bee diligent to profite in the ſame ſchoole. Therefore let vs marke how it behooued a booke to bee appointed out ſpecially for the king, and the ſame to bee written after a ſolemne faſhion, and the Prieſtes and Leuites to bee witneſſes thereof, and the ſame to bee deliuered vnto him as by the hande of God. For it was all one as if God had ſayd vnto him; Go to, I haue giuen my lawe to all my people, & I will haue the remembrance thereof to bee renewed yerely. **Hebr. 9.19. 20.** For the booke was brought foorth, & the bloud of the ſacrifice was ſprinkled firſt vppon the booke and then vppon all the people, to the ende they ſhoulde conſider thus; wee be linked in vnſeparable bonde with the lawe of God. But when this was done, there was a ſeconde booke brought and deliuered into the kings own hãds, as if it had beene ſaide vnto him; God byndeth thee much more than any priuate perſons, to knowe thy duetie: namely that thou ſhouldeſt be better learned than all the reſt, and ſhewe them examples, and behaue thy ſelfe in ſuch wiſe as all the people may take thee for their guyde. That was the thing which our Lorde meant in this text.

And in deed, let vs conſider a little how hard the charge of princes is. Although a Iudge had not paſt one citie or one towne to gouerne; yet ſhoulde he finde himſelfe much cumbered: and what ſhal he do then, hauing a whole realme? It ſtandeth al Magiſtrates and Officers of iuſtice in hãd, to apply this to thẽſelues, & to know yͭ their charge paſſeth all their abilitie, ſo as they ſhall neuer be able to go through with it, except God giue them his holy ſpirite. But yet for all that, he wil not haue them to be negligent in yͤ mean while. What is to be done then? All Magiſtrats and al ſuch as haue publike charge, muſt vnderſtande that if it behooue other men to bee diligent to read the holy ſcripture, to haunt Sermons, to bee confirmed more and more in the doctrine, and to be well edified thereby: they themſelues haue twyce as much neede to be ſo. And foraſmuch as God hath aduaunced them to preheminence; it behoueth them to haue recourſe to him dayly, and to call vppon him, and not to be ſo vainglorious as to thinke; O, I am able ynough to guyde my ſelfe, and to gouerne others. No no: Let them rather conſider them ſelues to bee vnable, vnleſſe God giue them power and ſtrength, with wiſedome and diſcretion to guyde themſelues: Therefore let them deſire to be taught, that others may frame themſelues after their example, and let all reſort vnto God, indeuouring to profit in ſuch ſort in his ſchoole, as the great men may haue wherewith to gouerne well, and the meaner ſort may by that meanes bee allured to obey quietly; ſo as al mẽ may bee guyded vnto God with one common accorde.

Nowe let vs kneele downe in the preſence of our good God with acknowledgement of our faultes, praying him to make vs feele them in ſuch ſort, as wee may ſeeke his mercie with true repentance, and hee graunt vnto vs, not onely to burie our faultes paſt, but alſo to refourme vs, that our whole ſeeking may be to pleaſe him, & to frame our ſelues in all points to his will: and alſo that in the meane whyle hee beare with vs in all our infirmities, vntill he haue rid vs quite and cleane of them. And ſo let vs all ſay; Almightie God heauenly father, &c.

On Thurſday the xxj. of Nouember. 1555.

The Cvj. Sermon which is the fifth vpon the ſeuenteenth Chapter.

16.17.18 But hee ſhall not &c.

19 The which hee ſhall haue with him, and reade it all the dayes of his life, that hee may learne to feare the Lorde his God, and keepe all the wordes of the Lawe, and the Ordinaunces to doe them:

20 That he lift not vp his heart aboue his brethren, nor turne not from the cōmaundement to the right hand or to the left, that he may indure long in his kingdome, both he and his ſonnes in the middes of Iſrael.

WE ſawe yeſterday why GOD commaunded kings to haue a booke of the law. For although they had beene taught afore, yet when they were come to that ſtate, it ſtoode them in hand to thinke that they had more neede than euer they had to rule themſelues by Gods word, conſidering how hard a thing it is to gouerne a people, and that God muſt be faine to worke in that behalfe, and men muſt acknowledge themſelues far too weake, that they may ſeeke yͤ help that is needeful for them; namely to be guyded by God, and for attainment thereof apply their ſtudie to his worde. For it is in vaine for vs to hope that God will giue vs counſel, vnleſſe wee ſeeke it in his lawe. If a man ſay that God will welynough giue him his ſpirite, & yet in yͤ mean while deſpiſe all the helpes, as the reading of yͤ holy ſcripture, & the hearing of Sermons: is it not a mocking of him? And ſo ye ſee wherefore it behoueth the kings to haue a booke of yͤ lawe. Therē is a ſaying of a heathen man which is taken for a common prouerb, namely that yͤ common weale is happie where wiſe men holde the helme, or where ſuch as hold the helme do giue themſelues to wiſedome. And that is a very rare thing. But yet men ſee that al this is very true: For when men are choſen to gouerne a people, it is meete yͭ they ſhould haue wit and reaſon in them. And it is not ynough for a man to bee of ſome courage & diſcretion aforehande ere hee take the gouernment vpon him; but he muſt alſo indeuer to profit continually when he is come to it, and thereunto doth euen experience it ſelf prouoke him: for our true wiſedome is to harken to God when he ſpeaketh to vs, and to obey his doctrine. So then wee ſee how needful it was for kinges to bee exhorted to read Gods worde moſt ſpecially, and to giue themſelues thereto, as wel for ſhewing example vnto others, as alſo for neceſſities ſake, euen becauſe their charge is ouerhard & high, ſurmounting all capacitie of man.

Now it is ſaid expreſſely, *that they may learne to feare the Lord, without turning either to the right hand or to the left*. For it is not ynough for a king to haue a booke in his palace for faſhions ſake. It were to no purpoſe to make a faire ſhewe, as who ſhould ſay, Looke yonder, there is the lawe of God, Gods booke is in the kings palace, as we ſee how the worlde contenteth it ſelfe continually with ceremonies. And in deede, the Iewes being peruerters of all things, and ſo farre poſſeſſed with the diuel that they haue gone about to deface the ſubſtance & whole power of Gods worde, whenſoeuer this booke came in queſtion among them, O ſay they, it muſt be written in ſuch manner of parchement, & it muſt haue this & that done vnto it. But theſe things are more than childiſh, and yet in the meane while they haue let the chiefe thing alone. Let vs marke then that Gods intent was not to make a booke that ſhould be as a relike, to be ſhewed for a brauerie that the king might haue a marke of his dignitie aboue all others: but the reaſon that is ſet downe here, is that he ſhould learne to feare God. Now although this bee ſpoken expreſſely concerning the kings of Iſrael, (as was declared yeſterday:) yet is it verie good reaſon, that they which are magiſtrates at this day, (conſidering that their gouerning is in the name of our Lord Ieſus,) ſhoulde ſet their mindes vppon the doctrine of ſaluation, & indeuer to profit therin, aiming alwayes at the marke which God hath ſet before thē, namely to learn to feare him, knowing wel that vnleſſe they haue the feare of God it is vnpoſſible for them to glorifie him, and al thinges within a while muſt needs goe to hauocke.

2.Tim.3.17.

And by the way, let vs marke alſo, that here the holy Ghoſt meant to ſhewe vs the vſe of the holy ſcripture. For (as ſaith Saint Paul) it is behoofefull to make the man of God perfect in all good workes. Therefore whenſoeuer we read the holy Scripture or heare it preached; let vs haue this regarde of profiting in the feare of God; and let vs not think our ſelues to be ſo far forwarde, that wee ſhoulde not neede to go on ſtill all our life long. A man might thinke it ſtrange that it ſhoulde bee ſayde, that he ſhould learne to feare God. For why? Shoulde a king bee a nouice when hee is once choſen? Ought hee not to bee well knowen aforehande to bee a man of excellent vertue? Yes verily. But yet doeth it ſtande vs in hande to bee learners ſtill:

the feare of God is a thing that is not learned perfectly at the firſt day. And therfore let vs cõtinue in it all the time of our life, and yet wee ſhall finde that when wee haue liued neuer ſo long, wee be but in the middes of our iourney. The thing then which wee haue to marke in Moſeſes words,is that when kings haue yͤ booke of the lawe,they muſt not keepe it ſhut, or ſet it out to ſhewe like a relike; but the king muſt exerciſe himſelfe in it,& his reading of it muſt not bee as it were but for a paſtime, as who ſhoulde ſay, I haue read it, and that is a ſufficient diſcharge for mee: but it muſt bee to the ende that hee which was in good forwardneſſe alreadie, and had ſerued God in his youth, ſhoulde bee the more quickened vp to doo ſo ſtill: knowing well that in as much as God commeth ſo neere vnto him, hee is the more ſtraitly bounde to liue vertuouſly. That is the very thing in effect which wee haue to beare away, and moreouer wee muſt euery one of vs apply the ſame to his owne vſe, as I haue ſaide afore.

Nowe it is ſayde likewiſe, *that they bowe not to the right hande nor to the left*. Wherein it is ſhewed vs that the feare of God is the true rule, which beeing throughly rooted in vs becommeth a good and ſure loadſtarre to vs throughout all our life. For what is the cauſe that wee gadde after our owne likinges, and wander here and there; but that wee haue not our eye vpon God? Therefore wee may conclude that all they which turne aſide eyther one way or other, doe ſhewe ſufficiently by their life, that they bee deſpiſers of GOD. But will we haue a good remedie to inſtruct vs, and to direct our life in ſuch wiſe as it ſhall abyde continually in the right way? Let vs feare God: and this fearing of God preſuppoſeth a willingneſſe and deſire that wee haue to obey him. If a man alleage that hee feareth GOD; and yet in the meane whyle regardeth not to bee taught by him: I pray you doeth hee not ſhewe that all is but hypocriſie, yea, and vtter ſhameleſneſſe in him? As for example yee ſhall ſee many in theſe dayes which pretend to bee verie deuout: but they cannot abyde to heare one worde of admoniſhment for their better inſtruction: it is ynough with them to make ſome faire countenance. But when Moſes ſpeaketh heere of not ſwaruing to the right hand or to the left;he preſuppoſeth that which is true,namely, that if we feared God,we woulde be deſirous to bee taught his will, and to know what things hee liketh of, that wee might frame our liues thereafter. That is one thing more which wee haue to remember vppon this text.

Now let vs come to that which is ſpoken here ſpecially concerning the kings of Iſrael. *They be forbidden to gather great numbers of horſes to returne againe into Egypt.* In deede it wilbee ſaide likewiſe hereafter, that they muſt not multiply the number of their horſes for couetouſneſſe ſake. But here is ſet downe a ſpeciall reaſon,which is, that this couetouſnes of theirs might prouoke them to go downe into Egypt,either vnder pretence to reuenge the wrongs and iniuries that had beene done vnto them, or vnder any other colour. But our Lordes will was, that although the children of Iſrael had beene miſintreated,& tyrãnouſly dealt with; yet notwithſtanding they ſhoulde acknowledge that they had beene harbored in Egypt for a time. True it is that they were forbidden to haue any familiaritie with the Egyptians: his will was to haue them vtterly diuided from them,becauſe hee knewe well that it woulde be their decay: and yet for all that hee woulde not haue them to make warre vppon them,but to abyde ſtill at home. And nowe hee ſayeth that the king muſt not multiply yͤ number of his horſes: For when a prince hath the helme in his hande,hee will take greater enterpriſes vppon him, than a commonaltie will doe. In deede ſome times there may hap to be ſome braynleſſe perſons, which would ſet all thinges in a broyle: but yet a Prince is alwayes boldeſt: and that boldneſſe is a cauſe of much confuſion in the worlde. That then is the cauſe why it is ſaide, that the king ſhall not gather him ouer many horſes to goe into Egypt when hee had made himſelfe ſtrong. And why ſo? For God forbiddeth his people to go that way any more for euer.

Nowe wee haue to note here, that when wee haue receiued any diſpleaſure, if the workers thereof haue done vs any good in times paſt, wee muſt lay them both into the balance, and the good muſt counteruaile the euill. Truely although this commaundement were not, yet were it not lawfull for vs to deſire reuenge: inſomuch that euen this one reaſon ought to ſtaye vs and witholde vs, namely, that if wee bee beholden to a man, and he chaunce afterwarde to doe vs ſome wrong, wee ſhoulde call to mynde the good that wee haue receiued at his hande, and the ſame muſt bee as a brydle to vs. And it is the very ſame thing which God conſidered when hee woulde not haue his people to practiſe any thing againſt the Egyptians. But what ſoeuer came of it,he would not that there ſhold bee any familiaritie betwixt them, & not without cauſe. For it was ſo frowarde a nation, that his people could haue learned nothing but euill among them. Againe, their idolatrie was as exceſſiue and out of all meaſure as could be. Therfore was it good that the children of Iſrael ſhold bee vtterly ſeparated from Egypt, leaſt they might bee wrapped in their ſuperſtitions. And we ſee howe greatly the Prophets ſtoode vpon that poynt: and yet it booted not at all. For it was the place which the children of Iſrael fled vnto for refuge, as oft as they were troubled by other nations. In ſo much that when the two kingdomes of Iſraell and Iuda were at diuiſion, if the one had the helpe of the Aſſyrians, the other reſorted into Egypt, and ſo were the cauſe of their owne deſtruction. And all this miſchief fell out,becauſe they did it againſt this forewarning, for God had forbidden them ſufficiently afore hande. Therefore let vs beare in minde, that when wee ſee corruptions before vs, wee muſt not enter into them wilfully,except we intende to tempt God: but when wee ſee occaſi-

Eſa.30.2.& 31.3.

2.Kin.19.7.& 17.4.

ons of euill, wee ſhunne them not, but rather runne into them, and wee wil needes bee ouerhardie. And therefore let vs learne to abſtaine from all things that may ſeduce vs or make vs ouerſhoote our ſelues.

Nowe it is ſaide afterwarde, *That the kings ſhal not hoord vp much gold and ſiluer*. True it is that 1.Tim.6.10. couetouſneſſe is forbidden to all men as the roote of all miſchiefe, where with when a mans heart is once poſſeſſed, he muſt needs be ſnarled in al the ſnares of Satan: Inſomuch that if a man be giuen to couetouſnes, hee becōmeth cruel, vſing all manner of outrage, violence, & crueltie. Agayne he falleth to pilling and polling, & maketh no conſcience to deuour other mens ſubſtances. Afterwarde he falleth to periurye, couſinage, vntruſtineſſe, trecherie, poyſoning, and whatſoeuer euill he can beſides. And when malice is once ſet on fire, he proceedeth euen to open murder. To be ſhort, if a man ſuffer himſelf to be wonne to couetouſnes, he muſt needes become a verie bondſlaue to Satan. Why then doeth hee forbidde here onely kinges to gather much gold or ſiluer? Surely our Lord giueth not priuate perſons leaue to inriche themſelues, when he forbiddeth kinges to do it: But rather the cleane contrary. For if ſuch as haue a better meane then wee, ought to be clenſed from that vice: what ought we to be? For if any men ſhould haue libertie to gather golde and ſiluer, kinges ought to haue it moſt. But God hath forbidden it them: and therefore let all other men looke to themſelues. But Moſes ſpeaketh expreſſely here of kings, as of thoſe that haue moſt neede of remedy, becauſe they haue greater occaſions of gathering than any other men. For when a king reygneth in a Countrie that is riche and plentifull, it is a temptation vnto him: inſomuch that when he ſees his ſubiects liue at their eaſe, he thinketh thus with himſelfe, it will neuer grieue them to giue me ſuch an impoſt, & when he hath rayſed one tax or tallage, there is neuer any ende or meaſure of his gathering afterward. And ſo ye ſee how kinges haue need of the ſayd reſtreint, by reaſon of the ſaid temptation which is of more force towardes them than towardes other men.

True it is that all men are tempted to gather goods & to inriche themſelues: but foraſmuch as they haue not the like opportunities to bring it to paſſe, it is as it were an abatement & a cooling of their courages. A king hath means to drawe to himſelfe continually, and to inriche himſelfe more and more: for he hath authoritie to leuye taxes & tributes, and by that meane to lay vp much for himſelfe. Therfore it is requi- Pſal.119.36.37. ſite that this euil ſhould be corrected in him. And in that reſpect did Dauid ſay, Lord reforme my heart, that it bee not giuen to couetouſnes: and turne away myne eyes, that they be not intangled, beguyled, and carryed away at the ſight of golde & ſiluer. Why doeth Dauid ſpeake after yͤ manner? For he had much more neede, than if he had liued ſtill in the houſe of his father Ieſſe: hee had beene there but as a poore countrey cloyne or ſheepeheard: and thereuppon he had followed his common trade of liuing. But being once become king, and hauing the riches of the whole lande before his eyes, ſo as no man could let him to gather as much as he would: ſuch opportunitie was a prouocation to his fleſh, & hee might ſoone haue ouerſhot himſelfe as men cōmonly doe. And therefore hee brydleth himſelfe, ſaying, Lorde, keepe mee. And in deede, if he had not beene preſerued miraculouſly by yͤ goodnes of God; hee had ſoone beene corrupted at the ſight of ſuch opportunities. Thus haue wee nowe the reaſon why Moſes forbade the kinges of Iſrael expreſſely to gather much gold and ſiluer.

For (as I haue ſaid afore) accordingly as occaſions are offered vnto vs; ſo muſt wee alſo bee brydled and held in, when our fleſh tempteth vs to any thing: and there is none other remedie than that which I haue tolde you of. Although then that this be ſpoken to kings: yet may wee gather a leſſon thereof that ſhalbe common to all men. And therefore whenſoeuer wee meete with any opportunitie that may drawe vs vnto euill, let vs ſee that wee learne to repreſſe our luſtes, & make a ſhielde and bulwarke of this admonition, leſt wee ſtep aſide to ſome vanitie, becauſe we be ouerfrayle. That is the thing whereof all of vs in generall ought to take warning, when wee ſee that the king was forbidden to gather much gold & ſiluer, becauſe he reigned in a plentifull countrey.

Alſo here is mention made conſequently of wiues: namely, *that the king muſt not take many wiues*. It is certaine that this rule is common to all men. For although ſome of the Patriarkes had many wiues: yet was it not therefore lawful, for we muſt haue recourſe to Gods inſtitution. True it is that mans cuſtome may well peruert the doctrine: but yet can it not change euill into good for all that. It is God that ordeyned marryage: and as he is the author therof, ſo will hee haue men to holde them to his pure inſtitution. Nowe did hee create two wiues for Adam? No: and yet (as ſayeth the Prophet Malachie) hee had abundance of ſpirit in him. Mal.2.15. It had beene no harder a matter to him to haue created two or three women than to haue created one. Was God letted by any vnabilitie? Nay, and yet he created two in one fleſh. Sith the caſe ſtādeth ſo then, it is a changing of the order of nature & a deſpiſing of God, when a man taketh two wiues. O (ſay they) the Patriarkes did ſo. Yea. but thereby it appeareth that the cuſtome of men cannot alter Gods ordinance, how great vertue or holines ſo euer be in them. And it ſerueth alſo to ſhewe yͤ ſuch as ſhielde themſelues vnder the example of other men, offend double. For is it meete yͤ Gods authoritie ſhould bee diminiſhed vnder pretence yͤ men haue done this or yͤ? And therfore let vs vnderſtand, yͤ it was neuer lawfull for any man liuing to take two wiues in mariage at once: for it is a breaking of Gods order. Why then is it forbidden here but onely to kinges? Becauſe there was more libertie. And the thing that I haue touched already is the better confirmed vnto vs in this text.

If a priuate perſon had taken two wiues, hee ſhould haue beene neerely looked vnto. What? Shall I go giue my daughter to him that is marryed alreadie? Shee ſhalbe ſure to haue ſorrowe to her ſoppes: ſhee ſhall liue in continuall ſtryfe and vnquietneſſe. Yet were ſhee better to bee dead out of hande. But men were ſo deſirous of honour, that if a king required a daughter of theirs to his wife, they eaſily condeſcended vnto it. What? I ſhall haue my daughter marryed to a king. And it was a blynding of a womã when ſhee was ſued vnto by ſuch a one. Nowe then, for as much as kinges had larger ſcope in this caſe, and conſequently might more offend God: our Lorde hath ſpecially forbidden them to haue many wiues, and moreouer becauſe the example of ſuch as are in authoritie, is woorſe than the example of priuate perſons. If a common perſon doe any euill, it goeth no further than his owne houſe and his next neighbours: but hee that is in authoritie ſtandeth vppon a ſkaffolde, and is ſeene afarre off: and if he ouerſhoote himſelfe; the corruption of him ſpreadeth throughout the realme. Therefore it was requiſite that God ſhould forbid kinges to haue many wiues, euen becauſe the corruption therof woulde haue ſpread ouer the whole lande. And although it could not be letted altogither: yet came it firſt from the heathen. And if it bee asked from whence the hauing of many wyues Gen.4.19. came, it wilbee founde in the houſe of Cain, & not among the people of God. This leawdneſſe then of hauing many wyues, was brought vp by Satan. And the Patriarkes were intangled in it; as in deede it is harde for a man to keepe him ſelfe from a thing, when it is once growen into a cuſtome, for then it ſeemeth to be permitted. Yet notwithſtanding to the intent it ſhould no more be ſo, becauſe there was occaſion therof, our Lorde forbad kinges to haue many wiues.

But heere it might be demanded, what is to be ſayd of Dauid, and much more of Salomõ, in reſpect of wiues as well as of riches. It cannot be denyed but that Dauid had many wyues, and as for Salomon, he had many moe, and he ſeemeth not to haue bin blamed in that behalfe, for the 1.King.11.4. ſcripture ſpeaketh but of the turning away of his hart after ſtraunge women which infected him with their ſuperſtitions and ydolatryes. And as touching gould and ſiluer, wee knowe how it is ſayd that Dauid gathered ſo great a maſſe of them that Salomons Temple and his palace were builded therwith. Therefore there was a maruelous 1.Kin.10.27 riches. Yea and it is ſaid expreſly, yͤ in the raigne of Salomon, men made no more accompt of gold and ſiluer, than of grauel, yͤ quantity therof was ſo exceeding great. And there ſeemeth to be ſome contrarietie in the ſcripture, in as much as among other thinges our Lord ſayeth that hee Pſal.72.15. will cauſe the gould of Arabye and all the riches of the worlde to bee brought to Ieruſalem. And why ſhould he promiſe that, if he ment not that kinges ſhould be riche and wealthie? Nay, it is a figure of the kingdome of our Lord Ieſus Chriſt. If this bleſſing of God bee ſet downe as ſo worthie a thing; howe are kings forbidden to gather golde and ſiluer? As touching wiues, no doute but both Dauid and Salomon offended in that behalfe, and Salomon moſt. As for Dauid, hee had many wiues: and all the excuſes that can bee alledged, wil not be able to iuſtifie him before God. But howſoeuer the caſe ſtande, he did it not through inordinate luſt. For he had maryed Michol Saules daughter, and hee coulde haue contented himſelfe with that one wife, if ſhee had not beene taken away from him by force. And when ſhe was giuen to another man, it was lawfull for him to take Berſabee.

Againe, there happened other things afterwarde, ſo that if a man conſider wherefore Dauid tooke many wiues: ſurely there wil euer be ſome occaſion to excuſe him to the worldward; but yet for all that, he was blameworthie ſtil before God. And as touching Salomon, he rebelled openly, as a man too much giuen to yͤ fleſh, in that he proceeded euen againſt the prohibition that was giuen both to himſelfe and to all other kinges. And it appeareth what inſued to him for it. For, that hee was ſo abuſed and deceiued by ſtrange women, it was a iuſt puniſhment; and becauſe he had taken ſuch libertie to himſelfe, God ſhewed him that he had caſt him ſelfe into Satans ſnares. When a fiſh thinkes to ſwallowe vp other fiſhes, he himſelfe is caught or choked by that meane. Euen ſo was Salomõ faine to receiue his payment, becauſe hee gaue himſelfe too much to his delightes and pleaſures. And it is a dreadful thing, & a thing that ought to make the hayre to ſtande vp vpon our heades, that ſo excellent a man, indued with ſo great giftes of Gods ſpirit, ſhoulde become an ydolater, and fall away from the pure ſeruing of God, ſpecially being himſelfe a prophet to teach the whole worlde, and a lampe to direct not onely the children of Iſraell, but alſo the verie Infidels, and to draw them to the knowledge of the trueth. O that ſuch a man ſhoulde ouerſhoote himſelfe after that faſhion! And whereof came this? Euen of giuing heade to his owne luſtes: & therefore God payed him his iuſt hyre. Seeing we know this, ought we not to quake at ſuch vẽgeance ſet before our eyes? Yes, and therefore let vs marke wel, that whereas Dauid and Salomon had many wiues, it was not without fault and tranſgreſſion: and thereby wee ſee ſo much the more howe needefull this lawe is. For if God had neuer forbidden kings to haue many wiues, had not their libertie beene yet the more exceſſiue? Yes verily. For they cannot bee withhelde from rebelling againſt God. Their fleſh carryeth them ſo away, that they forget the thing which ought to bee beſt knowen vnto them. This text ought to bee noted aboue all others, ſpecially for kinges: and yet they thinke not of it at all. And therefore wee ſee it was not for nought, that GOD preuented that miſchiefe.

But we muſt vnderſtand by the way, how it is not ynough that the law be ſet downe, vnleſſe God write it in our hearts by his holy ſpirite: 2.Cor.3.6 For elſe it is but a dead letter, and ſo will kill vs, becauſe wee ſhal bee iuſtly condemned by the doctrine therof,which ſerueth to bereaue vs of all excuſe. Therefore whenſoeuer our Lorde commaundeth vs any thing, let vs learne that wee muſt runne vnto him,that he may write the things in our heartes, which we read written in paper or parchment. As touching riches, wee muſt not conclude that there was the like fault. 2.Sam 8,11. & 1.Chron. 22,14.& 1.Kin.12. 4. For why? When Dauid gathered ſuch a maſſe of golde and ſiluer, it was to build the temple of God, and not to make any other enterpriſes,as wee knowe. Againe, wee ſee not that he grieued his people, though there were great complaints after the death of Salomon: but of that wee will treate hereafter both for Dauid and for Salomon. The intent of Dauid then was good and holy, foraſmuch as in gathering all thinges together which were requiſite for the building of the Temple, hee attempted not any thing which was not commaunded him of God. Alſo the meanes were lawfull. For hee layde no tyrannicall charge vppon his people. As for Salomon, hee had the greate riches gathered aforehande by his father. And againe wee muſt marke,that a greate parte of thoſe thinges were Pſa.68.12. 13. ſuch as hee had conquered of the Infidels, and their ſpoyles were as yee woulde ſay, preſentes, which God had giuen him, as is ſpoken thereof in the Pſalme. And therefore Salomon for his parte might lawfully vſe all thoſe goods, ſpecially forſomuch as it was ſayde, that the kinges Pſal.72.10. of Tharſis and of all the yles and farre countryes ſhoulde come and bring golde and ſiluer, and all manner of precious things; and againe, that there ſhoulde bee giuen vnto him of ẏ gold of Arabia, becauſe it was Gods will that the kingdome of Iſraell ſhoulde flouriſh after that manner. It was lawfull for Dauid and Salomon to gather treaſure, ſo it were not vppon ambition and pryde,nor to vndertake fooliſh enterpriſes and to ouerſhoote themſelues into looſeneſſe of life, and alſo, ſo the people were not grieued by it with any impoſitions, but that Dauid did but onely receiue the golde and ſiluer that was brought vnto them. But whether Salomon exceeded meaſure or no, I am not able to affirme. Wee ſee what his diſobedient 1.Kin.12.14 ſonne Roboam ſayde, namely that whereas his father had beaten the people with roddes, hee woulde beate them with whippes, and he would lay vppon them as much as they coulde beare, vntill hee made all the backes of them to bowe. In which ſaying, Roboam vaunteth of his fathers tyrannie. And wee may well gather therby,that there was ſome exceſſe in Salomon. So much the more therefore ought wee to marke, that God hath not for nought forbidden kinges to gather great maſſes of golde and ſiluer. And for the ſame cauſe alſo did Dauid vſe the prayer which I haue rehearſed before: for there was good cauſe for him to doe it. He ſawe the temptations that myght aſſayle him on all ſides, and hee coulde neuer haue withſtoode them,if God had not ſtrengthened him with his power. And in the ſame reſpect hee proteſteth that Gods Pſal.19,11. lawe is deerer to him than golde and ſiluer, and that all the riches of the worlde were nothing to him in compariſon of Gods lawe,becauſe hee ſawe there his true felicitie and glorie.

So then let vs remember in fewe wordes, that whereas our Lorde forbad kings to hoorde vp great treaſures, it was not for that it is not lawfull for them to be riche,ſo their heartes inclyne not to pride, vaynglorie, and couetouſnes, and that they vſe not any tyrannie ouer their ſubiectes, but onely take that which is offered them as it were by the hande of God,& content themſelues therewith, applying the ſame vnto good. For wee ſee in what taking king Ezechias was. Albeit that hee had not Eſa,39.2. 6. the thirde parte of Dauids reuenewe, by reaſon of the cutting away of the kingdome of Iſraell: yet had hee his chambers ſo well furniſhed and ſtored,that hee made a ſhewe and a boaſting of it when Ambaſſadours were ſent vnto him from Babylon, commending and ſetting out himſelfe, to the ende that the king of the Chaldyes ſhoulde bee deſirous of his friendſhip. But wee ſee what befell vnto him. The Prophet Eſay brought him this meſſage: Go too(ſayeth hee) thou haſt made a ſhowe this day of thy gold and ſiluer,and of the precious thinges which thou haſt; but aſſure thy ſelfe thou haſt kindled a fire which ſhall neuer bee quenched, vntill the Babylonians haue fetched away all that thou haſt, ſo as there ſhall not remaine one peece of money in Ieruſalem, but all ſhalbee ſacked and pilled away: and wee ſee howe the ſame puniſhment was executed afterwarde. And this 2.Kin.24.13 example ſheweth vs ſufficiently wherefore God forbad kinges to gather much golde and ſiluer. For when Princes haue ſuch treaſures, they can hardly keepe themſelues from beeing prouoked to vaunt and exalt themſelues continually after ſome manner or other. For aſmuch as it is ſo,let vs learne that in this place God meant to holde the kinges of Iſraell within ſome meaſure and meane degree, that they might not looke too high.

And afterwarde hee ſayeth, *That his heart turne not away*: that is to ſay, leaſt his greatneſſe make him to forget himſelfe, and hee addeth yet further, *That hee exalt not himſelfe aboue his brethren*. Whereas it is ſayde that the king muſt not turne away; that is becauſe that when men bee aduaunced to honour; they commonly forgette themſelues, and thinke not themſelues to bee the ſame they were before. Aboue all thinges the dignitie of a king is a ſtate that will bleare a mannes eyes, yea, and put them quyte and cleane out: in ſo much that Princes thinke not themſelues to bee as mortall creatures, but rather as halfe Gods by reaſon of their high aduauncement, and wee ſee they looke as high as though nothing were vnpoſſible to them, ſo as they will not bee ſubiect any more to right or reaſon. And if men doe not flatter them and honour them as Gods, they thinke they haue the greateſt wrong that can bee. And whereof commeth that? Euen of this, that when a man is great, hee can haue neither mieldneſſe nor lowlineſſe in him, except Gods ſpirite reigne in him. For this cauſe are kinges warned heere, to beware that they forget not themſelues: yea and that is yet better expreſſed in that Moſes addeth, *that they muſt not exalt themſelues aboue their brethren.* Whereof commeth it that kinges & Princes will needes ſet their feete vpon al mens throtes after that faſhion? Euen of this pride which poyſoneth their heartes, that they conſider not themſelues to be men, ne knowe any more what their ſtate is. And when they be ſo blinde to Godward, it is no maruell though the fulneſſe of their pride & preſumption, make them to tread men vnder foote, and to looke that all men ſhould ſtande in feare of them and ſtoope to their yoke. That is the cauſe why Moſes matcheth thoſe two thinges together.

Nowe then, if we intend to refreine from doing wrong or outrage to any man; lette vs looke that we knowe our ſelues. For (as is ſayde in the common prouerb) he that knowes himſelfe beſt, ſettes leaſt by hīmſelfe. And it is the way alſo for vs to behaue ourſelues lowlily and meekely towardes our neighbours. But if a man forget himſelfe, he muſt needes by and by mount vp into al pride and outrage, without making ſpare of any thing. And ſeeing this was forbidden to kinges, what is done to ſuch as are farre their inferiours? Therfore let euery man in his degree apply this matter to his owne inſtruction. Let ſuch as are in authoritie be well ware that they exalt not thē ſelues through pride, if they wil not be caſt down to their ſhame. For the higher that the ſeate is whereon a man ſitteth, the ſorer is his fall, euen to the breaking of his necke perchaunce. Therefore let thoſe whō God hath exalted, haue a care to holde themſelues continually in reſt, and not ſtarte aſide, but ſerue God and his people continually.

And it is ſayde heere expreſly *Againſt thy brethren, or aboue thy brethren.* For Kinges and Princes thinke themſelues to be as it were cut off frō the company of men, and that they ought not any more to be counted of the cōmon aray of thē. But our Lorde skorning ſuch diſdainfulneſſe, ſayeth: Yet are they your brethren. In deede this is ſpoken of the children of Abraham which were deſcended all of one race. But chooſe mee out a king where yee will, is he not a man? And are not they his brethren, ouer whom hee reigneth? And if the caſe ſtande ſo with the greateſt kinges of the earth: what is to be thought of thoſe that are farre their inferiours? Now therefore, when a man is in authoritie or hath wherwith to maintaine himſelfe in credit, if he be tempted to forget himſelfe, let him conſider thus: yet am I not ſeparated from the reſt of the body, I am a member thereof ſtill, and they that are my inferiours ceaſe not to be my brethren. What a thing were it then, if I ſhould vaunt my ſelfe? Were it not a deſpyſing of God? Let ſuch as are aduaunced to any ſtate of great preheminence remember this warning as oft as they be tempted to deſpiſe other men and to ſhake them off. Lette them thinke thus: what, ſhoulde wee be as Lyons towardes Lambes where there is brotherhoode? There is no brotherhoode betweene a Lyon and a Lambe. If I haue a Lyons heart, full of pride, Lordlineſſe, and ouerweening: what a thing is it? Can I liue with them that are committed vnto me? Yea: for we ſee what is ſayde of king Ezechias, when ẏ Prophet Eſay telleth him of the reſtoring of the people to their former ſtate. Eſa. 33.6. And no doubt but he had an eye to this text, to ſhewe howe it was the duetie of Ezechias and of all kinges, to be a ſhadowe for the refreſhing and eaſing of their people, & a foſter father to the poore and fatherleſſe, and a comforte of them that are in diſtreſſe and ſorrowe. Eſa. 49.23. And for a concluſion he ſayeth, that the feare of God ſhall bee a treaſure in his time, according to that which I haue ſhewed already. So that if kinges will behaue themſelues as they ought, they muſt ſette their mindes vpon this leſſon, as it is ſhewed them by the Lawe of God. It was applyed to the perſon of Ezechias: but yet muſt all other men looke to themſelues. And if our Lorde tell this leſſon to ẏ great ones, without ſparing them, what temptations ſoeuer they haue: what will come of it, when the meaner ſort wil needes play the looſe coltes, and not be bridled but kicke and ſpurne againſt God? Doe they not ſhewe themſelues to be very much blinded with pride? And therfore let vs learne to profite ſo by the thinges that our Lorde teacheth vs, as all men both great & ſmall may ſubmit themſelues euery one according to his degree, ſtate & calling; that God may be honored of al men, and ẏ there may be one general obedience from the formoſt to the hindermoſt.

Nowe let vs kneele downe in the preſence of our good God with acknowledgement of our faultes, praying him to make vs feele them better than we haue done, ẏ by meanes thereof wee may be drawen to true repentance to miſlike of all our vices & tranſgreſſions, & to rid ourſelues of thē, till God haue ſo wrought in vs, that we be throughly clothed with his righteouſnes: & that in the meane while hee ſo beare with vs in our weakeneſſe, as wee may not faile to obtaine fauour at his hande, although wee liue not in ſuch perfection as were to be wiſhed. That it may pleaſe him to graunt this grace, not onely to vs but alſo to all people and Nations of the earth, bringing backe all poore ignorant people, out of the captiuitie of errours and darkeneſſe wherein they are helde; that ſo he may leade them to the knowledge of his trueth: And that for this purpoſe it would pleaſe him to raiſe vp true & faithfull miniſters of his worde. &c.

On Fryday the xxij. of Nouember. 1555.

The Cvij. Sermon which is the firſt vpon the eighteenth Chapter.

THe Prieſtes Leuites, and all the tribe of Leuy ſhall haue no part nor inheritaunce with Iſraell: but ſhall eate the ſacrifices of the Lorde made by fire, and his inheritaunce.

2 Therefore they haue no inheritaunce among their brethren, for the Lorde is their inheritaunce as he hath ſayde vnto them.

3 And this ſhalbe the Prieſts duetie at the peoples handes, euen at the handes of as many as offer any ſacrifice, whether it bee Oxe or Sheepe. They ſhall giue the Prieſt the ſhoulder, the Cheekes, and the inwardes.

4 The firſtfruites of thy Corne, of thy Wine, and of thine Oyle, & alſo the firſt fleeces of thy ſheepe ſhalt thou giue him.

5 For the Lord thy God hath chooſen him from among all thy Tribes, to ſtand and miniſter to the Lorde thy God, euen him and his ſonnes for euer.

6 If a Leuite come out of any of the Cities of all Iſraell where he is a ſoiourner, and come with all the deſire of his ſoule to the place which the Lorde thy GOD ſhall haue choſen:

7 Let him miniſter in the name of the Lorde his God, as all the reſt of thy brethren the Leuites do, which ſtand there before the face of the Lorde.

8 They ſhall haue like portions to eate, beſides that which they haue of the ſale of their fathers goods.

Deut 12.19. & 14.22.

Mention hath beene made heeretofore of the right that God reſerued to the Prieſtes, and to al ẏ tribe of Leuy: and it is not for nought that mention is made thereof againe heere. For on the one ſide, it was more than needefull that the Prieſtes ſhould be put in minde of their dueties, ẏ knowing the honour which God had done them, they ſhould giue thẽ ſelues the more faithfully and cheerefully to the ſeruing of him: and alſo ẏ the reſt of the tribes might knowe, ẏ ſith it had pleaſed God to chooſe the ſons of Leuie, it behoued ẏ dignity to remain vnto thẽ, & no man was to beare them any ſpite for it. For in verie deede we ſee howe there were that did riſe vp againſt them, and God was faine by miracle to warrant that prieſthood which he had eſtabliſhed, and namely; in making Aarons rod to bud and bloſſome, the which he willed to be kept for an euerlaſting memoriall. It ſeemed to others ẏ Moſes would haue aduanced them in reſpect that they were of his owne kinred, for he himſelfe was of the tribe of Leuy. And becauſe he ordeined ẏ prieſthoode in the ſame tribe, they murmured at it, thinking ẏ Moſes had delt altogether vpon fleſhly affection: but God ſhewed himſelfe to be the Author thereof. And ſurely there was no cauſe of ſuſpition, if they that made the inſurrection had not bin carried away with great malice. For although Moſes had children of his owne, yet did he not ſet any of thẽ in the honorable degree of the prieſtes: but he beſtowed it away frõ them, and ſet them in the laſt place, as though they had bin of no eſtimation in ẏ tribe. If Moſes had regarded himſelfe & his owne aduantage, ſurely he would haue preferred his owne houſe. But he did not ſo, but contrariwiſe did let his children alone as they were, and held them backe. Wherein he ſhewed ẏ he obeyed God, and did nothing vpon his owne heade. On the other ſide we ſee how in giuing ẏ prieſthood to the tribe of Leuy, he depriueth them of the inheritance ẏ was aſſigned to thẽ among the reſt of their brethren: For the land was not promiſed alonely to thoſe twelue tribes among whõ it was afterward deuided. For at the time ẏ God made Abraham Lord and Maiſter of the Lande of Chanaan, Leuy was compriſed among them that ſhould be the inheriters therof. Why then is he put beſide it? So we ſee ẏ Moſes folowed Gods ordinance, & inuented not any thing of his owne head. We muſt go yet further: for he telleth the Leuites ẏ this ſcattering of them among the reſt of the tribes was a puniſhment of God, though it was afterwarde turned into grace, and ẏ God of his goodnes did wipe away the curſe ẏ he had layde vpon Leuie. But if we haue an eye to the originall grounde, it is ſayde thereof that Iacob denounceth Leuie and Simeon to haue bin wicked, inſomuch as he ſayth ẏ he will in no wiſe be

Numb. 16.1. & 17.5.8.

Gen. 49.6.7.

matched with them, neither in thought nor in worde, becauſe it was not long of them yͤ Iſraell had not bin put to hauocke. Whereupon he addeth, Thou ſhalt be ſcattered abroade. Wheras all the reſt haue their inheritances aſſigned vnto them: thou muſt be as a vagabonde among thy brethren. Seeing yͤ Moſes vttereth ſo harde and reprochfull a ſentence againſt all his owne tribe, who can ſay yͭ he ment to be partiall towardes it? Nay the cleane contrary appeareth. As a man led by Gods ſpirite, he reſpecteth not himſelfe or his, but putteth them to ſhame for euer, and will that if they haue any honour or dignitie, yͤ ſame ſhould be acknowledged to come of Gods meere fauour, and yͭ the ſayde note of reproch ſhoulde make it the more euidēt that Leuy had deſerued to be vtterly bereft of his inheritaunce, if God had not remedied it of his owne goodnes. Therfore there was no cauſe of bearing any enuie to Moſes or any of his. But ſuch is the malitiouſnes of the world, that men take occaſion to grudge & repine at euery thing: and it is the thing yͭ Satan doth chiefly practiſe. When God is to be ſerued no man is willing to goe vnto God in trueth, but all inferiour degrees are waywarde, and woulde faine haue ſuperioritie without the charge. How many ſhall ye finde that are willing to giue themſelues to the ſeruice of God by the preaching of his worde, or which ſeeke it with a right meaning affection, as who would ſay, I offer vp my ſelfe in ſacrifice vnto God? Yet notwithſtanding all are led with a kinde of ſelfeliking, vnleſſe God holde them in awe by his holy ſpirite: in which reſpect this leſſon is giuen vnto them, to the intent that Pſal.65.4. euery man ſhould be contented to be only in the forecourt of the Lord his Temple. We ſee then that men indeuour not to come neere God, and yet could euery man finde in his heart to be aduaunced, ſo it were without charge. Euen ſo was it among the Iewes. For the reſt of the tribes hauing their portions, & being in quiet at home in their houſes, ceaſed not to grudge againſt the Prieſtes and Leuits. And therfore God was faine to authoriſe their prieſthood after ſuch a ſort, as it might be excepted frō al ſlander, & no man might take vpō him to alter any thing therin. And ſo we ſee the cauſe why God repeated this doctrine againe.

Nowe it might ſeeme to be a diſordered kinde of dealing, to make an inheritance of the prieſthood: for the fitteſt ought to haue beene choſen out: and why then ſhould God go choſe one kinred after that faſhion, & make the children what ſoeuer they were to ſucceede their fathers? This ſeemeth to be no good order for the edifying of the Church. God therefore was faine to ſet his owne authoritie as a ſhielde againſt all theſe obiections. If a man be inquiſitiue, what reaſon or Pſal.33.4. what reſpect moued God, to chooſe the trybe of Leuie for his ſeruice: it ought to content vs that God hath done it, and wee ought to thinke well therof though the reaſon therof appeare not vnto vs. He knoweth wherfore, and yͭ ought to ſuffice vs. And yet let vs not dout but yͭ when God ordeined yͤ tribe [to ſerue him in his Sanctuarie] he was able to indewe them with ſuch giftes of grace, as were requiſite for the executing of their office. Seeing that God hath ynough wherewith to inable men; ſhould we fal to ſcanning why or wherefore he chooſeth one man rather than an other? It pleaſeth him. For by the ſame reaſon a man might demaund why God giueth his ſpirite to one man more than to an other. Ye ſhall ſee one man dulwitted, without learning or any other excellent giftes in him; and yee ſhall ſee an other indewed with great excellencie: and what is the cauſe herof? The goodwil of God, & thereupon muſt we reſt; & whoſoeuer grudgeth thereat, he ſhall finde in the end that he hath to deale with too great a maiſter. So then, it ought to be ynough for vs that GOD choſe out that tribe. Howſoeuer the caſe ſtande, he ment here to ſtoppe the mouthes of all the Iewes, and to ſhewe that it behoued them to keepe the order which he had ſet downe, as holy and inuiolable. Marke that for one point.

Heerewithall (as I haue touched afore) hee ment to put the prieſtes in minde of their duety, that they might be the diligenter in doing their ſeruice in the Temple. For had they liued as ydlebellies, it had beene contrarie to Gods meaning, and it had bin a defiling of the order which God had ſet downe and ſtabliſhed among them. So then, God had an eye to both theſe reaſons, and it behooueth vs alſo to marke them on our part. And therefore let vs learne, that ſuch as are called to any charge or office, ought to beare continually in minde and to bethinke them early and late, who it is that hath ſet them in that place, and for what purpoſe; that it may bee as a whetting or ſharpning of them, to indeuour that they become not vnprofitable in their charge, but rather apply themſelues faythfully vnto it, that they may bee able to make their reckening thereof vnto GOD. Let that ſerue for one point.

Againe, let vs learne to be contented with the degree wherein God hath ſet vs; and let none of vs be greeued when wee ſee an other goe before vs. For all the members of a body can not bee 1.Cor.12.19. eyes and eares; all can not be aboue; there muſt be legges and feete as well as eyes and handes. Therefore let vs vnderſtande that, and let euery of vs ſubmit himſelfe, and let it ſuffice vs that it pleaſeth God to accept vs into the companie of his people, to giue vs ſome litle corner in his temple, ſo as wee may bee incorporated into his Church. That is too great an honour for vs, and ſeeing it pleaſed God to place vs there, we ought to couet no further. Thoſe are the things which we haue to remember vpon this text, in applying the doctrine to our ſelues.

It is ſayde further, *The Prieſtes and Leuites and all they of the tribe of Leuie, ſhall haue no portion in the inheritaunce of Iſraell, but ſhall eate the Sacrifices for their inheritaunce. And the Lorde will be their inheritaunce as he hath promiſed them.* Heere Moſes on the one ſide depriueth his brethren and kinsfolk of all inheritance. Wherein wee ſee the execution of Gods ſentence, which was yͭ Leuie ſhould be diſperſed, & yͭ he ſhould not haue any habitatiō or abode in any certaine place. The children of

Leuie then are as a body torne in peeces. And yet doeth God turne their puniſhment into an honour. And therein appeareth his goodneſſe, foraſmuch as he maketh the thinges to redound to our benefite and ſaluation, which ſhould haue beene to our condemnation. Loe howe God worketh towardes thoſe that are his. Inſomuch that although hee puniſh them for their ſinnes, yet doth he make them feele his goodneſſe therwith, by turning the thinges to a contrary ende, which ſhould haue beene to their ſhame. After the ſame manner befell it to all the poſteritie of Leuy. For it is no ſmall thing, that God ſhoulde be their inheritaunce: it was a title of honour aboue all others. Whereas all the reſt of the children of Iſraell, had their portions in the Land of Chanaan: God reſerued himſelfe for Leuy, ſaying, Holde yourſelues to me, I am your inheritance. Ye ſee then how their portion was better than all the reſt, ſauing the tribe of Iuda, which was priuiledged, as whereunto God had already aſſigned the kingdome And whereof came that? If yee haue an eye to the originall, yee ſhall ſee that the ſinne of Leuie made him worthie of baniſhment, that he might haue beene as a vagabonde without any certaine dwellingplace: but yet for all that, God prouided ſo for the matter, that hee turned the euill into good, and the reproch into honour. Therefore let vs learne not to be diſcouraged when GOD puniſheth vs for our ſins, & yet to be ſo aſhamed of our miſdeeds and offences, as we may not dout but that our Lorde pitying vs, wil make his chaſtiſements beneficiall to vs, ſo as we ſhalbe the more honorable before him and his Angelles. If we be faine to abide ſome ſhame and reproch for a time before the world: the thing that ought to be a good cõfort to the faithfull, when they be ſmitten by yͤ hand of God, is not to greeue thẽſelues with the only beholding of their preſent affliction: but to thinke vpon the end and iſſue of it, which is, that God turneth bitterneſſe into ſweeteneſſe.

Furthermore, wheras it is ſaid to yͤ Leuites that God is their heritage; it is to the end they ſhould be the willinger to giue themſelues wholly to his ſeruice. For had they bin buſied in husbandry, traffike of marchandice, & ſuch other like things: they had bin turned away frõ their office, & not had leaſure to doe the thing yͭ God had cõmanded them: yͭ is to wit, that thoſe which were in Ieruſalem ſhould ſerue in yͤ Temple; Mal. 2.7. & thoſe which were diſperſed abroad in yͤ countrey, ſhold maintaine the religion pure, & not ſuffer the people to growe out of order, but teach thẽ euery man in his place, yͭ they might be preſerued in all purenes. For vpon yͭ conditiõ were they choſen. Not without cauſe therefore doth God ſay yͭ hee was the heritage & portion of the Leuites, to the end that ſuch as are called to his ſeruice, ſhold not be pulled away, nor haue excuſe to withdrawe them frõ the full executing of their dutie. Now in deed S. Paul applyeth this to yͤ miniſters of gods word, 1.Cor.9.13. 4. ſaying yͭ if by the law of Moſes they which ſerued at yͤ Altar were found of the Altar; they which at this day haue yͤ charge of preaching Gods word, and of the offring vp of ſpiritual ſacrifices, ought of reaſon to be found and maintained, & to haue that which is neceſſarie for them. Yet notwithſtanding wee muſt learne generally, yͭ God hath done vs the honor to make vs all Leuites, Eſa.66.21. according to this ſaying, yͭ when God ſhall haue reſtored his people, thoſe which were Leuites before ſhal then become Prieſtes, & all the cõmon people ſhall become Leuites. And this belongeth to the kingdome of our Lord Ieſus Chriſt. Seeing then yͭ Ieſus Chriſt hath ſhewed himſelfe to the Eph.2.13. worlde: we which before were ſtraungers & had no acquaintance at al with God, are nowe come into the Church to be of the body of Abrahams children, and are in as good caſe as they yͭ were heires of the promiſe. But we are become Leuites for we preace vnto our God, & haue familiar He.10.19 20 acceſſe to him in the name of his only ſonne, ſo as we may boldly call vpon him as our father. And euen in the ſame reſpect doeth S. Peter call vs a 1.Pet.2.9. kingly prieſthod, becauſe yͭ wheras we were gone backe before, and wiſt not how to come at God, ne had any meane to bring vs to him: now he calleth vs to him, yea euen as though wee were prieſtes, not to enter into a materiall Sanctuarie with yͤ bloud of Goats, ſheepe, or Calues: but with the bloud that was ſhedde to dedicate vs to God & to waſh vs from all vncleanes. And ſo now we go into the ſanctuary of heauen to preſent ourſelues before the face of God.

Nowe then let vs apply this doctrine to ourſelues where it is ſayde that God is our heritage. True it is that ſuch as haue goods & poſſeſſions in this worlde may vſe them, howbeit with the condition which S. Paul ſetteth downe in the ſeuenth Chapter of the firſt Epiſtle to the Corin- 1.Cor.7.30. thians: namely that he which hath poſſeſſions be as he that hath none, that he haue the one foote euer lifted vp, and that he ſticke not faſt in the mire as tyed to the things that are here beneath; but that we remember ourſelues to be but ſtrangers in this world, and therefore looke euer vpwarde to the reſtingplace of heauen. After that maner we may well poſſeſſe whatſoeuer thinges are in this worlde: but yet muſt we euen goe further, and not be ſtayed or tyed heere. For why? Seeing our Lorde hath aduaunced vs to ſuch dignitie, as to haue vs to be prieſtes: let vs goe to his Altar. For wee bee linked to our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt, that hee might dedicate vs to GOD Pſal.16.5. his father. Sith it is ſo, let vs doe as is ſayde in the ſixteenth Pſalme. For although it was ſayd alonely of the Leuites, that GOD was their portion: yet doth Dauid boaſt that hee hadde a faire portion, becauſe God was his. Behold (ſayeth he) I haue a fayre lotte, and henceforth I haue no cauſe to complaine, as though I wanted any thing: for my God hath giuẽ himſelf to me, he is my portion, & I poſſeſſe him. Dauid came not of the tribe of Leuie; and howe falleth it out then, that he boaſteth himſelfe to haue as much as the prieſtes? He knewe well that Gods reſeruing of yͤ tribe for a time was after ſuch a ſort, yͭ yet neuertheles he would haue yͤ whole people partakers of yͤ ſame bleſſing, accordingly alſo as it is ſaide in Exodus, you be a prieſtly kingdome. Exod. 19. 6. And S. Peter hath turned this into another maner of ſpeech, ſaying, Ye be a kingly prieſthood, that is to ſay, ye be all as it were a ſort of litle kinges, becauſe God gouerneth you, and that is for your benefite: for he hath promiſed to giue you a redeemer, which ſhall leade you into al perfection. Neuertheleſſe yee muſt vnderſtande, that this kingdome is not like other kingdoms of yͤ world, but is matched with a prieſthoode, that is to ſay, it is conſecrated and dedicated to God. Dauid therefore acknowledging this, ſayeth that God is his portion. Nowe if this was ſayd in the time of the figures: much more ought wee to doe the ſame now, foraſmuch as the forealleadged propheſie is nowe come to paſſe in our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt and in all his members, ſo as wee bee not kept back any longer as we were before, but may preace vnto God with aſſured hope that hee will receiue vs, and that we ſhall be neere vnto him. Thus yee ſee howe wee ought to benefite our ſelues by this ſpeeche where it is ſayde that the Lorde was their portion, yea euen according as he had promiſed them.

And it was not for Leuy to boaſt of his owne worthineſſe or deſertes. All that euer he could alleadge was no more but this: I ought to haue beene diſherited, and yet notwithſtanding God hath turned it to mine honour. And therefore if we wilbe ſure that God is our heritage, we muſt not looke what we can attaine by our owne trauell, for there is nothing but vtter confuſion in vs: but we muſt reſorte to yͤ promiſe which God hath made vnto vs, in that hee hath vouchſafed to make ſo great account of vs, as to take vs for his children, euen vs which deſerued to be damned. And that is the thing wherupon it behoueth vs to be groũded, to inioy the priuiledge and ineſtimable benefite wherof Moſes ſpeaketh here. Let vs marke well then that he ſendeth vs backe to the promiſe without any reſpect had to vs, to the intent to doe vs to wit that wee haue not anie thing on our owne parte, but that we be beholden to the only freegoodneſſe of our God for that benefite.

Nowe it is ſayde conſequently, that the people alſo muſt diſcharge their duetie towardes the Prieſtes. Ye muſt haue a ſpeciall care (ſayeth he) that the Prieſtes may haue their right which God alloweth vnto them: that is to wit, *The right ſhoulder of euery ſacrifice, the two cheekes, and the Paunch: theſe thinges muſt be reſerued for them, together with the firſt fruites of Corne, Wine, and Oyle, and alſo of the fleeces of your ſheepe.* Here God commaundeth the children of Iſrael expreſly to maintaine the Prieſtes, for they were bounde thereto, and therein they ſhewed thẽſelues to make great account of the ſeruice of God. It behoued them to haue men to miniſter in the Temple: and if theſe were not mainteined, Religion ſhould be, as it were aboliſhed; and therfore it was not without cauſe that God commaunded the people to employ themſelues about that matter. True it is that they ought to haue doone well euen without exhortation: but we ſee the vnthankefulneſſe of the worlde, when any duetie is to bee done towardes God, they muſt bee ſpurred forwarde, and they neuer goe willingly to it, vnleſſe they be vrged. And if it were ſo among yͤ Iewes, much more is it ſo among vs. For we be ſo ſlothfull that we neuer ſeeke to diſcharge ourſelues to Godwarde, and therefore we are faine to be called vpon and to be prepared. Sith we know this vice to be in vs, let euery of vs quicken vp & ſpur foreward our ſelues: & ſith we ſee yͭ our Lord calleth vpon vs, let vs folow him, & make the things effectuall which he telleth vs in his word. That is the thing which we be to marke in this text.

But yet moreouer wee haue to marke yͭ which is ſayde heere: namely that *if any of the Leuites bee diſpoſed to come to the place which the Lorde ſhall haue choſen to be worſhipped there, hee ſhall haue his part and portion of all the offeringes of the Temple as one of their brethren, beſides that which hee hath of his owne houſe*. For if they had houſes from their fathers in the Countrey, (as in deede there were Cities aſſigned them euerywhere:) they were to keepe them to themſelues, and yet they were to haue their part of the offeringes that were made in the Temple, ſo long as they ſerued there. But yet God ſayth expreſly, *with the whole deſire of his heart*, to ſhewe that God ment not heere to giue occaſion of ydleneſſe, to ſuch as ſought but their owne eaſe and commoditie: but to ſpeake of ſuch as came with a rightmeaning mind to ſerue him. I tolde you afore, that the children of Leuie were diſperſed and had no certain portion to inherit; but had certaine Cities heere and there, one in one place and an other in an other, diſperſedly throughout the Lande of Chanaan. And therefore it is ſayde, that if any of them being farre of Ieruſalem, had a deuotion to giue himſelfe wholly to the ſeruice of God: hee might doe ſo, hee might leaue the place where he dwelt, to goe to Ieruſalem, there to giue himſelfe wholely to the ſeruice of God. And this was no breach of the order that God hadde ſet, that is to wit, that the Leuites ſhould be ſcattered abroade as a ſeede, to holde the people continually in the pureneſſe of religion: but it was ſpoken in reſpect of ſome of them. For all of them had not a deſire to reſorte to Ieruſalem: that is ſure. For the moſt part of the Leuites dwelt in places more fruitefull than Ieruſalem: for that part of the countrey was not one of the beſt of all the Lande of Chanaan. But they that dwelt in the coũtries of paſturage, were the welthieſt. And we ſee alſo how the prophets vpbrayde them, ſaying: Ye Bulles of Baſon, becauſe the kingdome of Iſraell was become verie proude by reaſon of their abundance. Amos.4.1. The Leuites then wold haue had no liking to haue abidden in a place yͭ was not very fruitfull, & to haue left all their owne cõmodities & houſes. Againe if any had bin led by deſire of vaineglorie, God ment not to fauour them. Therefore it is ſayde that if any of them woulde come of good will to Ieruſalem to ſerue in yͤ Temple; he ſhould not be refuſed, ſo it might appeare that his intent was to giue himſelfe to yͤ ſeruice of God, and yͭ he did it with a good corage. Now we ſee in effect yͭ gods intent here was to giue a preheminence to ſuch as beſides their common duetie of teaching the people, were alſo deſirous to bee continually at the Sacrifices. That is one point.

But yet for the better vnderſtanding of the whole; we muſt conſider that the ſeruice of the Temple conſiſted not onely in the offering of ſacrifices: but alſo in ſinging of praiſes vnto a God both euening and morning, in ſaying of publike praiers, yea and alſo in watching anightes: and ſo there was ſome hardenes in performing that charge. In reſpect whereof it is ſayde in the Pſal.134.1. Pſalme, Bleſſe the Lorde ye that ſerue him, yea and which doe keepe the watch anightes in his houſe or Temple. It was not enough for the Leuites in their order and according to their turns, to be occupied from morning to night in calling vpon the name of God, and in making of praiers and ſupplications in the name of the people: but it behoued them to holde out all the night alſo: and it was a ſet order among them, that when one ſort of them had beene occupied all the day in ſinging the prayſes of God, it behoued them to be preſent there the next morning when the people came together, to ſhewe yͤ way to others. Likewiſe, when ſolemne ſacrifices were to be offered according to the commaundement of the Law, the Leuites were euer preſent. To be ſhort, the Temple was neuer empty, but it behoued thẽ to watch as well for the keeping of the fire vpon the Altar, as for yͤ mainteyning of the lights and ſuch other like things. Thus ſee we now yͤ cauſe why God vouchſafed to giue a certain priuiledge to thoſe that came after that ſort to Ieruſalem.

And heereby we be done to vnderſtande, firſt that the office of the Leuites was dubble: to wit, that on the one ſide they were to teach the people, & to be as keepers and mainteiners of yͤ law, to the intent that men ſhould not turne away to any ſuperſtitiõ, nor become heatheniſh for want of good looking to, and ſo bring the ſeruice of God in contempt; but that they might alwayes beare in minde to what end he kept them in the worlde, and referre their whole life to the glorifying of him. That was one part of the charge of yͤ Leuites. Alſo they were to teach men the meaning of the Ceremonies, as namely that the ſacrifices ſerued to ſhew euen to eyeſight, yͭ all mẽ are accurſed, & condemned to death, and that they ought not in any wiſe to come in Gods preHebr.10.4. & 11.12. ſence without ſacrifice. And there was not any ſacrifice ſufficient to make attonement betweene God and the worlde, but onely our Lorde Ieſus Chriſtes offering vp of himſelf. Ye ſee then how the duetie of the Leuites was to teach the people, that the Ceremonies guided them to the promiſe which had beene made vnto them concerning the Redeemer. And therewithall it behoued the Leuites moreouer to pray vnto God: and the Hygh prieſt was to goe into the tabernacle in the name of all the people, to ſhewe that they were not worthy to haue acceſſe vnto God, but by meane of a mediatour to goe before them and to enter as it were into Gods preſence in their behalfe. Al theſe thinges were to be done. And therefore the Leuites that ſerued in the Temple, hadde a harder charge than they that were diſperſed abroade in the Countrey. In reſpect whereof it was Gods will that they ſhould haue the ſayde aduauntage of taking their portions of all the ſacrifices and offerings that were made in the Temple.

Whereupon wee haue to note, that Gods eſteeming of the Ceremonies was not without cauſe. In graunting this priuiledge to the Leuites, he doeth vs to vnderſtande that he liketh well of Ceremonies, and will haue them kept, & withal, that he wil haue the meanes mainteined for the ſtrengthening of them: but that is not in reſpect of God himſelfe: for wee muſt alwayes thinke thus: What? Did God require men to offer him the bloud of brute beaſtes? Why? that is nothing but ſtinch. Againe, required hee to haue the fatte burnt, which can ingender nothing but filth and ſtinch likewiſe? Yea: howbeit, that was not for any pleaſure that he tooke in thoſe outwarde things: but for the ſaluation and benefite of the people, to keepe them in continuall hope of the redeemer that was promiſed. Againe, their praying, their ſinging, and all the reſt of their doinges ſerued to inure the faithfull, that they might pray to God with the better courage. True it is that we be cõmaunded to pray euerie man by himſelfe at home in his houſe, in his Chamber, in his bedde, and at his table: but yet our Lorde perceiuing the weakeneſſe and coldeneſſe that is in vs, hath willed vs to aſſemble together and to call vpon him with one common accorde. And ſo was done in the Temple. There was ſinging of Pſalmes, there was giuing of thankes in the name of all the people, there was praying and ſuch other like thinges, and finally there was ſenſing with perfumes, to ſhewe that our callings vpon God after yͤ maner, are ſacrifices of good ſent, & ſtie vp to heauen like the ſmoke of the perfumes. All theſe thinges were done for the better inuring of the people to the ſeruice of God, and that they ſhould faſhion thẽſelues after the Leuites that ſerued in the Temple.

To be ſhort, we ſee howe God did not this in fauour of yͤ one tribe onely: but rather that hee tooke yͤ order for yͤ benefit of the whole Church. For had the Prieſthoode ceaſſed, and the order of the temple beene aboliſhed: at what point had the people beene? All had gone to hauocke. And wee ſee alſo yͭ when they were carried away captiue, and the temple beaten downe: they became as folk forlorne, & could not open their mouthes to ſing vnto God as they had beene wont to doe. Sith it is ſo then, let vs marke yͭ our Lordes intent was not to fauour that one tribe alone; but genePſal.137.4. rally to procure the benefite and ſaluation of his whole Church. And likewiſe when mention is made of the order of the Chriſtian Church, it is not in reſpect of ſome ſmall number of men: but 1.Tim.2.4. Gods intent is to draw both great and ſmall vnto him. And let vs marke that his ordeining of cõmon prayer and of the adminiſtration of the ſacraments, is becauſe he ſeeth that without them our ſaluation could not ſtande, but all would goe to wrecke, & his grace would after a ſort vaniſhe away. And this ought to giue vs the better courage to giue our minds to the doing of the things which our Lord commandeth vs concerning the Ceremonies, concerning the reſorting to his word, concerning our meeting together in ſome place certaine to call vpon him in the company of yͤ faithfull. Let vs conſider, ẏ ſeeing God hath ordained theſe things for our welfare, we muſt not withdraw our ſelues frõ them, but euery of vs muſt reſort to them as much as we poſſibly can.

And it is ſaid expreſly, *that they ſhall be there to miniſter in the name of the Lord, with their brethren which are there before the face of the Lorde.* This *Name of the Lord*, betokeneth nothing elſe but yͤ Maieſtie of God, euen as he manifeſteth ẏ ſame vnto vs. For it was not for the people to conceiue ſo groſſe and brutiſh an imagination, as ẏ God ſhould be incloſed in the Temple: but it behooued thẽ to beare alwaies in mind, ẏ God had verily placed his name there, ẏ is to ſay, that he meant to haue his Maieſtie knowen there as he had giuen aſſured tokens thereof: For the Sanctuary, the Altars, (as well ẏ wheron the whole burnt offeringes were ſacrificed, as the others wheron the ſhewbread was ſet, and whereon the perfumes were burned,) & all yͤ reſt of the things there, ſerued for a warrant to ſhew that God accepted the petitiõs of his people. That then was the cauſe why it is expreſly ſaid, that thoſe which abode in the Temple ſerued the name and Maieſtie of God. And heerewithal mention is made alſo of Gods preſence (as we haue ſeene before,) which is a ratifying of the thinges that hee had taught afore, that the people ſhould not bee diſappointed in reſorting to the temple to call vpon him there, bicauſe the Leuites ſhould alwayes be there ready to ſuccour ſuch as fled to him for ſuccour.

Now this was in the time of the figures. But wee muſt marke that if wee reſorte to our God in the name of our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt, in whome dwelleth the whole fulnes of the Godhead; God will ſhew his face vnto vs: that is to ſay, we ſhall finde by the effect that he regardeth vs, and that the dore is not ſhut againſt vs, but that we may preace into his preſence. And beſides that, to the end we may be guided by our Lord Ieſus Chriſt, we muſt put the thing in vre which he hath told vs: that is to wit, wee muſt come together in his name, to the intent that hee may bee among vs. Then if wee wil bee heard of God, and that our ſeruice ſhould be wel accepted of him: wee muſt meete together without hypocriſie, with a true & pure heart: and then will our Lord Ieſus ſo beare ſway amongſt vs, that God alſo wil therwal reach out his hande to helpe & ſuccour vs. And when we haue ſo offered vp our prayers vnto him, and euery of vs hath put himſelf into his hand: let vs not doubt but ẏ he regardeth our doings. As for example, for as much as we knowe ẏ theſe our preſent doings in meeting together to heare his word and to ſeeke him, are cõmaunded by him: Let vs not doubt but we be before his eyes, and he loketh vpon vs with pitie, and will conſider all our neceſſities to prouide for them, and to ſuccor vs in them. And let vs on our part alſo ſo mount vp vnto him by faith, as wee may bee out of all doubt that he ſheweth vs his face, that is to ſay, that he maketh vs to feele his preſence, ſpecially when we come to him by the way which he ſheweth vs; for thẽ wil he make vs to come in ſuch ſorte, that he wil keepe vs ſtill vnder his protection, vntill he take vs vp into his kingdome.

Col.2.9.

Now let vs kneele down before the Maieſtie of our good God with acknowledgement of our faults, praying him to make vs feele them better, yea & that we may be ſo ſtriken down in our ſelues, as we may ſeeke him with true repentãce, & reſt vpon his promiſes, not doubting but ẏ he accepteth vs, howe wretched ſo euer we bee, bycauſe we come not to him vpon truſt of our own deſerts, but vppon his meere goodneſſe wherethrough he hath elected and choſen vs: and that moreouer he ſuffer vs not to be defiled with any of the corruptions of our fleſh, but that ſeeing he hath called vs to his Prieſthood, hee will alſo graunt vs the grace to dedicate our ſelues to him by offering vp all our thoughts, affections, & deſires, yea & euen our whole bodies & ſoules vnto him, that he may bee honored more & more by them, & that ſuch as are yet farre off from him may be brought vnto him, to the end wee may all together worſhip him in his only ſonne. And for the bringing thereof to paſſe, it may pleaſe him to raiſe vp true and faithfull Miniſters of his word, &c.

On Wedneſday the xxvij. of Nouember. 1555.

The Cviij Sermon, which is the ſecond vpon the eighteenth Chapter.

9 When thou art come into the Land which the Lorde thy God giueth thee: thou ſhalt not learne to doe after the abhominations of thoſe Nations.

10 There ſhall not any bee found among you, which maketh his ſonne or his daughter to go through fire, nor any witch that vſeth Witchcraft, nor any man that is a regarder of times, or that regardeth the flying of foules.

11 Or that is a Sorcerer, or a charmer, or that asketh Counſell at ſpirites that are called familiars, or that is a ſoothſaier, or which asketh Counſell at the dead.

12 For all they that doe ſuch things are an abhomination to the Lord: and for ſuch abhominations ſakes, the Lord thy God driueth them out before thy face.

13 Be perfect therefore before the Lord thy God.

14 For the Nations which thou ſhalt poſſeſſe, giue eare to regarders of tymes: and to witches: but the Lord thy God hath not taught thee to doe ſo.

15 The Lord thy God will rayſe vp a prophet like vnto me, from among thy brethren: him ſhall you obey.

IT is in vaine for God to giue vs many lawes & leſſons, if we determine not with our ſelues to obey him in all pointes. For the firſt point wherat we muſt begin is to know Gods authority, & to learne to ſubmit our ſelues to his word without any gainſaying. If the Law in generall haue not this force; to what purpoſe is it for God to ſpeake of this thing or of that thing? Therefore let vs beare well in mind, that we muſt bee diſpoſed to receiue whatſoeuer God inioyneth vs, before we can benefite our ſelues by any one ſentence of the holy Scripture. As for example, when a man commeth to a ſermon, though he heare the matter, yet ſhal it not touch him to the quick, vnleſſe he know aforehand that Gods truth muſt be receiued, and that it is not to be incountered with diſputing. And ſurely wee ſee many which are ſufficiently conuicted, that the things which are told them are true, and that they be not able to reply againſt them: and yet paſſe not to make a mocke of them. And why is that? Bicauſe they be not touched with yͤ maieſty of God; and therfore they cannot thinke that wee ought to ſubmit our ſelues to him that made vs, & faſhioned vs to be obedient to him & to his commaundement. But on yͤ contrary part, when we be vrged to receiue the things which we knowe to come of God, his truth wil beare ſway with vs. As ſoon as we heare that it is God which ſpeaketh, we tremble at his Eſa.66.5. ſpeech, as is ſaid by the prophet Eſay. And ſo ye ſee now why God giueth this generall rule to his people, that they muſt houlde themſelues to his pure and ſimple wil. But for as much as men are naturally giuen to ſuperſtition, & ſeeme to ſeeke euen wilfully to be beguiled: God here doth firſt withdraw vs from all errours and abuſes, & afterward giueth vs a foundation wheron to ſtay & to be builded, that is to wit by herkning vnto him, & by ſticking to yͭ which he ſaith. Thus are there here two principall reaſons. The one is yͭ God correcteth the vanity that is in men, in that they rather giue ouer themſelues to couſinages & lyings, than to the rightfull truth. And thereupon he ſheweth after what maner they may be directed, giuing them a remedie againſt all the wiles of Satan. For if a husbandman wil haue his ſeede to thriue, he muſt firſt till his ground: & if there come vp any ſhrewd weedes, he muſt pull them vp or cut them off. After the ſame maner doth God deale with vs: to the intent his worde may haue enterance into vs, and be receiued without any let; he riddeth vs from all yͤ euil & vice that is in vs. For all our owne ſeeking is to giue our ſelues to follie: & the diuell is ſo wylie & ſuttle, yͭ hee findeth meanes to attaine to his purpoſe, bicauſe he knoweth that our minds are ſo fickle, that our whole ſeeking is to be beguiled. Therefore let vs marke wel that Gods meaning in this place, was to hold his people in obedience to his word, yͭ was the mark he ſhot at. And moreouer bicauſe we be forepoſſeſſed wͭ the ſaid frowardnes, ſo as none of vs can forbeare to hearken to leaſings, but our wits are ſo ſhettle that we be ſtil hearkening after this & that, delighting in fond curioſities & ſpeculations yͭ are nothing worth; & ſerue to no purpoſe but to trouble our mindes about vaine and vnprofitable things: therefore here our Lorde turneth thoſe yͭ are his from all things that may corrupt them and withdraw thẽ from his truth. In reſpect whereof he ſaieth here in effect, *That if wee will bee his people, wee muſt not bee intangled neither in Sorcerie, nor in Soothſaying, nor in Witchcrafte, nor in coniurings of the dead, nor in calling vp of familiar Spirites*: but all theſe things muſt be rid away from vs, or elſe he will diſclaime vs and vtterly forſake vs. Marke that for one point.

As touching theſe ſeueral ſorts, we wil treate of them another time: for the time will not ſuffer to ſpeake of thẽ al as now. And therfore in yͤ meane ſeaſon, let it ſuffice vs to ſee whereunto God had an eye, & wherat he aimed. Let this then be one point: yͭ if we wil be the true diſciples of our God, and receiue benefit by his word, to be taught as becommeth vs: we muſt put away all wicked ſuperſtitions, & all abuſes whereunto yͤ world is giuen, & wherewith we alſo ſhould be bewitched, if yͤ remedie thereof withdrew vs not therefro. And bicauſe wee be too much giuen to cuſtome, in ſo much yͭ if a thing be once in vſe, we think it to be lawfull: God telleth vs expreſly yͭ wee muſt not ſet our mindes vpon ſuch clokings, for they will ſtand vs in no ſtead. Therfore whereas we ſee the whole world imbrewed wͭ errors, ſo as Satan hath his full ſcope to deceiue both great & ſmal: let vs not run after them. For it wil not ſerue vs for excuſe, to ſhield our ſelues vnder yͤ greatnes of the multitude, or to ſay, Euery man beleeueth ſo: I ſee the wiſeſt folke doe ſo. Well may we alleage ſuch things; but our Lord telleth vs that we muſt not yeeld our ſelues after ſuch maner vnto men, that he ſhoulde not alwayes be preferred before them, and beare chiefe ſway, and be regarded of vs though we were intiſed away by all the examples of the world.

This thing is touched expreſſely by Moſes in that he ſayeth, *True it is that when ye bee come into the Lande which yee ſhall poſſeſſe, yee ſhall finde it to be as a common Law, and that men haue ſo done: but yet muſt ye not think that God aloweth it euer the more, or that he is contented with it*. For the world ſhall be condemned: and though all men were ſteyned with ſome one kinde of cryme; yet will not God forgo his office of Iudge, nor be ouercom by any multitude be it neuer ſo great. And therfore let vs remember firſt of all, that if we wil offer our ſelues to God to be his ſcholers; we muſt not intangle our ſelues in the vanities that raigne in this world, but wee muſt yeeld our ſelues wholly vnto him with a ſimple and right meaning mind, ſo as nothing may ſtop yͤ entring of his word into vs & our receauing therof, but yͭ it may haue full authoritie to the vttermoſt. That is yͤ firſt point.

The ſecond point is, that wee muſt not paſſe what the world doth, or how other men behaue themſelues. For God will haue vs for all that, to frame our ſelues according to his woorde. And although wee ſee nothing but rebellion heere beneath: yet muſt wee doe him the honour to ſubmit our ſelues to him. For it is not ynough for vs to worſhip him Ceremonially: the chiefe point is that his word do ſo raigne, as it be a brydle to hould vs backe, and that our life bee framed altogether thereafter. And although this was ſo ſtraitly commaunded: yet we ſee how the cleane contrary came to paſſe. Wherein we ſee a fayre mirrour of mans wickedneſſe and vnthankfulneſſe. For albeit that God doe ſhewe him the right way; yet doth he go aſtray ſtill. Ye ſee how the Iewes had warning ynough that they ſhould not corrupt themſelues with the abhominations of the heathen; God ſhewed them wherwith they ought to haue contented themſelues and wheron to haue ſtaied; namely yͭ they ought to haue learned at his own mouth: he gaue them his law, and hee raiſed them vp prophetes: and yet for all that they ceaſſed not to go fowly aſtray, & to haue itching eares, and to be inquiſitiue of this & that. And that was the cauſe why ſorceries and inchauntments, Coniurations of the dead, and ſuch other like things reigned among them: inſomuch that in the time of yͤ prophet Eſay, we ſee there were very fewe folke that followed the law of God. Lo heere am I, (ſaith the prophet,) and thoſe whome God hath giuen vnto me. What? had he any great company wͭ him? No. But contrariwiſe he ſaith, that they were hated, and that they were pointed at wͭ mens fingers, as if they had bin monſters againſt nature. And thoſe yͭ did ſo, would needes be counted wiſer than all other men, like as yͤ Papiſts vpbraid vs nowadaies, that we will needs make a new world, & require a reformatiõ alone by our ſelues, by reaſon whereof we be ſciſmatikes: & euen ſo was it in yͤ time of yͤ prophet Eſay, as he declareth in his eight chapter. Yet notwͭſtanding he forbeareth not to vtter this ſentence, & to confirme yͤ ſame, ſaying: If any man go about to turne you away to familiars, and to coniuring of yͤ dead, hold you your ſelues to the things that your God hath deliuered you. Ought not he to reigne both ouer the quick and dead, and to be obeied of all? Yes: and therefore hold you to his law and to his teſtimonies. And if the people ſpeake againſt them; it is bycauſe they haue no light. But let yͤ blind go on into decay & deſtruction, ſeeing they cannot be helde back: & in the meane while hold you your ſelues to yͤ ſimplicitie of the doctrine. And for this cauſe it is ſaid to yͤ Prophet Eſay; Seale vp yͤ Teſtimonie of God, & let it be vnto you as a letter that is cloſed vp, ſeeing there is nothing but vnbeliefe eueriwhere. And yet for all yͭ, ceaſſe not to holde you ſtill to it quietly and obediently.

Eſa.8.18.

Now if this fel out in old time among yͤ Iewes: needs muſt we find yͤ like nowadais, as is ſhewed by yͤ Apoſtle in yͤ Epiſtle to the Hebrewes, who applieth this text to yͤ raigne of our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt, & to yͤ ſtate of yͤ Chriſtian Church. Then if they which were deſirous to haue ſerued God purely were abhorred; & that not of yͤ heathen but of ſuch as named themſelues the Church of God: it becõmeth vs nowadayes to beare it patiently, if yͤ world not only looke awry vpon vs, but alſo hold vs for accurſed. Yet notwͭſtanding, we may wel defie yͤ Papiſts wͭ all their pride and diueliſh ouerweening, ſith we ſee them to be backſliders & to haue forſaken God; & (as much as in thẽ lieth) to haue renoũced their baptiſme. Let vs learn to hold our ſelues to yͤ law. And although Gods trueth be not receiued; yet let vs keepe it ſtil as a letter cloſed vp, & as a treaſure laid vp in ſtore. And when we ſee all other men wander away, ſome after ſuperſtitiõs, & ſome after errors: let vs aſſure our ſelues yͭ the way is infallible, ſo we hearken to our God, and indeuour to behaue our ſelues according to his wil, & we cãnot miſſe the way, it is ſo certain, as Moſes ſaith hereafter: This is yͤ way, walk therin. But for the better vnderſtanding hereof, let vs marke the words yͭ are ſet down here. The people (ſaith he) whoſe land you muſt poſſeſſe, are imbrued wͭ many lyes & abuſes: but you ſhall not do ſo; eſpecially if wee wil be taken for Gods flock, & accounted for his houſhold folke; we muſt be ſeparated from al the reſt of yͤ world. Let vs learn then yͭ our faith muſt not wauer, nor wãder after our eyes: but we muſt ſettle our ſight & al our ſenſes vpon that which God telleth vs. Though we ſaw a thouſãd ſtumblingblocks to dazle our eies wͭall, yea & to put vs to trouble: yet muſt we yeeld ſuch authoritie to Gods word, yͭ it may hold vs ſtill in awe. They then yͭ run gadding at yͤ ſight of this example or that example, do well ſhew that they were neuer throughly grounded vpon yͤ word of God. And therefore this ſaying is of great importance, whẽ God ſetteth the things which he vttereth wͭ his mouth, as a counterpeiſe againſt all things yͭ are to be ſeene in yͤ world. As if he ſhould ſay, Muſt I be laid in yͤ balance againſt men, yͭ when I haue cõmanded them to demeane thẽſelues thus or thus, my authoritie ſhould bee diminiſhed and doubted of, & it might come in queſtion whether my word ought to take place or no? Were it not a turning of all vpſide downe? Can there be any greater or ouglier confuſion, than to compare the creature wͭ me? What are men? There is nothing in them but blindnes & beaſtlines. Yea & when they thinke thẽſelues wiſeſt; then are they yͤ moſt fooles: & their aduancing of thẽſelues againſt me is ſtarke madnes: & yet muſt my word be defaced for their pleaſure? Then let vs marke well, yͭ it is not for vs to followe mens cuſtomes; nor to eſteeme yͤ more of things for yͭ they haue had their free ſcope, when God turneth vs from them & ſaith, Yee ſhal not doe ſo. For why? It is good reaſon yͭ we ſhould ſeparate our ſelues frõ thoſe whom God hath not inlightened. It is no maruel though men trip & ſtumble & go aſtray

Hebr.2.13.

Deut.30.19. & Eſa.30.24.

ouer all the fields like ſilie beaſtes. For it is ſaid yͭ Eph.4.18. in this world we be as in the darke; & therwithal 1.Cor.2.14. it is ſaid alſo, yͭ there is nothing but ſtarke ignorance in vs, and that wee comprehend not the things yͭ concerne God. Therfore when we want Gods word, we be as in an irkſome dungeō. And ſo foraſmuch as God graunteth not yͤ grace and priuiledge to al mē, to haue yͤ lampe of his word & truth lighted vp vnto them to guide thē withal: we ought not to wonder though we ſee them goe aſtray, but rather to make our benefite of yͤ good yͭ God offreth vnto vs, and to hold vs altogether to his word when it is giuen vnto vs.

And now he telleth them the cauſe why they ſhould not do ſo. For *your God* (ſaieth Moſes) *will raiſe you vp a Prophet, and him you ſhall obey.* If wee were but ſimply forbidden to giue our ſelues to ſuperſtition, ſorcerie, and al other abuſes: yͭ were not ynough. For we ſhould be ſtil in vnquietnes, and euery man might iuſtly demaund, yea, but what will God haue vs then to doe? For he forbiddeth vs to haue any ſuperſtition among vs, and yet in the meane while he leaueth vs in vncertaintie, ſo as the ſtate of the heathen & vnbeleeuers is better than ours. After yͤ maner might a man haue replied: But our Lord hath prouided well for it. For he ſaith, whereas I call you backe from al abuſes & errors, it is not to leaue you in perplexitie & trouble, ſo as ye ſhould not knowe on which ſide to turne you: but I giue you my worde, & that is the thing which you muſt take heede vnto. And if Gods trueth content vs not: what an vnthankfulnes is it? We ſee then now yͭ the thing whereby God will put a difference betweene vs and the Infidels, is that we muſt haue his word for our guide, to rule our ſelues therby: & therewall we muſt let the world run at rouers, foraſmuch as they haue no other doctrine to ground vpō, but their owne opinion, or yͤ folly of other men. And ſo when one blind mā leads another, he himſelf ſtumbleth firſt, & al the reſt follow him. As for vs, ſeeing we haue God for our Maiſter and teacher, let vs hold our ſelues con- Matt.15.14. tented therewith.

And let vs marke hereby, yͭ it is vnpoſſible for men to be withdrawen from errors, vnleſſe they haue Gods word. In deede a great ſort can well ynough mocke at the great nomber of follyes which they ſee: as for example, ye ſhall ſee many worldlings nowadayes which will condemne the abuſes & fond toyes yͭ are in the Popedome, & luſtily reiect them: but yet for all yͭ, they ſtand vpon neuer yͤ better ground themſelues, neither haue they any ſetlednes or roote. And if they be not ſtained wͭ the errors which they condemne: they haue others as bad or worſe. For many of them bee ſtarke Atheiſtes, that is to ſay without Religion and without feare of God, whoſe ſhame muſt needes bee diſcouered at length, and God muſt needes giue them vp to a leaud minde, that euen yong children may laugh at their beaſtlines. And whence commeth yͭ? Euen of this (as I ſaid afore) yͭ we ſhall neuer haue any certain rule, vntil God haue taught vs. And yͭ is a point wel worthy to be noted. For firſt, we neede not to be troubled at yͤ impediments which hinder many men to come to the Goſpell in theſe dayes, when they ſee the whole worlde in a maner wilfully bent to ſuperſtition: for ſeeing that Gods word beareth no ſway among them, what ſhal a man ſay, but yͭ blind folke may wel ynough wander in darkenes? Againe, we ſee the ſingular yea & ineſtimable benefite which God vouchſafeth vpon vs, when he giueth vs his word, and applieth it to vs for our ſoule health. For it is the only meane to draw vs out of yͤ bottomleſſe pit. So long as we bee in this world, we bee hemmed in with ſo many temptations of the diuel, as can not be nōbred: & the world it ſelfe may well bee likened to a maze, ſo as we cannot ſtep one pace wͭout dāger of falling down headlong to breake our neckes: from the which there is none other meane to preſerue vs but Gods word. Seeing thē yͭ he vouchſafeth to looke mercifully vpon vs, & to open his holy mouth to ſhewe vs yͤ way of ſaluation: howe may wee excuſe our ſelues, if wee vouchſafe not to come vnto him? So then, let vs learne to imbrace this treaſure which is offered vs, & to yeeld due reuerence to Gods doctrine, after wee haue once knowen what it bringeth vs, and howe much it is for our behoofe. And finally let vs beare in minde that by this texte where our Lord telleth vs that *he will raiſe vs vp a Prophet*, he doeth vs to wit that we ſhalbe deliuered from all errors, if we receiue his worde to frame our ſelues thereafter.

And hereby we be done to vnderſtand, that all ſuch as in theſe daies do make none account of the Goſpel, are wel worthy to erre: of which ſort a man ſhall ſee many nowadayes, which ſhutte their eyes and ſtop their eares when God is ſo gratious as to draw them to him. They haue the meanes wherby to yeelde themſelues into yͤ way of ſaluation, & they play the deafe & blind folks wilfully & wittingly: & therfore is it meete that ſuch folk ſhould periſh. For inaſmuch as they reiect Gods grace whereby they might haue been ſaued, & which could not bee ſufficiently eſteemed of: muſt he not needs be reuenged of their ſpitefulnes, in yͭ they bee ſo froward as to trample the word ſo vnder their feete, which ſerued to haue deliuered them from the gulfes of hell? Marke that for one point.

And therwithall let vs marke on our ſide, that ſeeing God teacheth vs, it ought to be a ſufficient arming of vs againſt all errours and all vaine fanſies; in ſo much that although the diuell lay his ſnares for vs, yet ſhall he not be able to catch vs as long as we hearken to our God, and yeeld him the duetifull obedience which he deſerueth at our hands, & which we owe vnto him. And for yͤ ſame cauſe doeth S. Paul ſay expreſly, that if we haue yͤ doctrine of yͤ Goſpel throughly printed in Eph.4.14. our hearts, we ſhall no more be led to daunce after other mens pipes, nor play the yong chrildrē which are eaſily deceiued. Ye ſee then that Gods trueth is inuincible. And when wee receiue it by true faith, then are we armed with the ſpirituall ſword. Eph.6.17. For it is not for nought that yͤ title is giuē to Gods word. We cannot be exempted frō being aſſailed by the diuel, for euen our Lord Ieſus Chriſt himſelfe paſſed through yͤ battel. Matt.4.3. But yet howſoeuer the world go, we ſhal haue wherewith to reſiſt Satan, & al his wiles, ſo we receiue Gods word and ſticke to it.

And by the way let vs marke, that whereas Moſes ſaith that God will raiſe vp a Prophet: he ſpeaketh of ẏ continual order which God intended to ſtabliſh in his Church, which ſhall indure to the worldes ende. For had there beene no more but the once publiſhing of the Law, truely it had beene ynough to make folke vnexcuſable whenſoeuer they had turned from it: but yet had it not beene a ſufficient meane to hold them to it, ſpecially conſidering the frailtie of men, how they ſlip away like water and vaniſh away out of hand, chiefely when the caſe concerneth the accepting of any goodneſſe. Therfore if God had done no more but publiſhed his Law, truly men ought to haue ſubmitted themſelues to it, and to hold themſelues as in captiuitie thereunto: but yet wee ſee ſuch was mens feebleneſſe and vnconſtancie, that they would haue turned away from it by and by. God therefore vouchſafed to adde a ſecond helpe, as if he ſhould put to a double bond, ſaying ẏ he will raiſe vp Prophets from tyme to time, among the people. As if he ſhould ſay, True it is ẏ I haue declared my will vnto you fully in my law: but yet wil I ſend you expoūders of the doctrine and mainteiners thereof, which ſhall be as keepers thereof, that it periſh not, ne be buried, nor bee corrupted with falſe interpretations. So ſhal there alwayes be Prophets. This doth vs to vnderſtand, that God hath not onely once vttered his will vnto vs, but alſo ẏ he hath ſent vs teachers from time to time to keepe his Church in obedience, and by their meanes to make his word to be vnderſtood. And ſo we haue to gather ẏ the Church cannot ſtand without teaching, and ẏ it is not ynough for mē to reade the holy Scripture: for if God had knowen it to haue bin ſufficient for vs, he would haue gone no further. But it is his will that there ſhould be teachers to ſpeak dayly in his name, as inſtruments of his ſpirit, and (to be ſhort) as his owne mouth. If this be not ſuperfluous; we may conclude therupon, ẏ where no doctrine is preached in Gods name, there is no Church. And therby we ſee the deſolation that is in the Popedome. True it is ẏ their hypocrites preach now and then: but for as much as they diſguiſe themſelues, yea and euen falſifie & corrupt all good doctrine: all that they doe is but abhomination. Againe, we know that thoſe which beare the name of Biſhops & Prelates in the Popedome, are but Idols and dumb pictures. For to what ende hath God ſet this order and policie among his people, but that his woorde ſhould bee heard, and that it ſhould bee ſounded out with a loude and cleare voyce, ſo as both great and ſmall may bee taught by it, and by that meanes ſubmit themſelues thereto, according to this ſaying, that his word is his Kingly Scepter or Mace wherwith he intendeth to gouern vs? So then let vs know that if we will be knowen and reckened to be of Gods church, and haue him to dwell among vs: his word muſt be preached to vs, and wee muſt not thinke it ynough to haue the holy Scripture, vnles we haue teachers alſo to bring vs back to the things ẏ are written, & to giue vs the vnderſtanding of thē, & to apply them to our vſe. That is ẏ thing which is ſhewed vs in this text. Now I tould you that this ſerued not for the people of olde time onely; but that it belongeth to vs alſo; and we ſee it in as much as the ſame text is applyed by the Apoſtles to our Lord Ieſus Chriſt. The Apoſtles intending to ſhewe that Ieſus Chriſt was ſent of God his father with full commiſſion to gouerne vs, and that it is he to whom wee muſt giue eare: ſay it is written that God wil raiſe vp a Prophet. Howbeit I haue told you already, that this place ſpeaketh not of one Prophet alone, but of many, and of their continuall ſucceſſion. Howe will that agree? Very wel. For in as much as God had promiſed his people, not to leaue them deſtitute, nor vnprouided: it is to be conſidered now, whether the ſame hath bin performed or no. True it is that there were Prophets ſometime moe and ſometime fewer. It is ſayde of the time of Samuell that is to wit of his childhood; that Gods word was very precious that is to ſay: very rare. And why? It was a puniſhment of God, according as he threatneth by his Prophet Amos, that hee would ſend a dearth, not of bread and other vittels, but of hearing the truth, and of the doctrine of ſaluation. The Iſraelits then were ſometimes as good as bereft of the thing that had bin promiſed them: but yet not ſo vtterly that God had no Prophetes at all. And after that maner did he incounter the malice and ſtubbornneſſe of that people; in ſo much that although the Prophets were reiected, yea & cruelly murdered: Yet notwithſtanding hee ceaſſed not to maintaine his promiſe ſtill, euen to ẏ comming of Ieſus Chriſt. In deede there was a certaine intermiſſion, to ẏ end that the people ſhould bee moued with the greater deſire to receiue this great and cheefe Prophet ẏ was promiſed them. For we ſee there were no moe Prophets in Iſraell after the time of Zacharie and Aggeus. And had God for all that diſappointed them? What was become of this Propheſie of Moſeſes? It is ſayd expreſly by Malachy, Call to mind the Law that was giuen you on Horeb. As if he ſhould ſay, Sirs, looke to your ſelues, for ye haue the perfect wiſedome, which is conteined in Gods Lawe, and therewal ye haue had prophets alſo, which haue expounded the ſame vnto you faithfully. Hitherto God hath euer performed his promiſe towardes you: & now hencefoorth he ſendeth you back againe to his law. To what end? He addeth the reaſon. Behold (ſaith he) I will ſend mine Angell before my face, (that is to wit, Iohn Baptiſt:) and when he hath made ready the way, then will I come, & therfore loke that ye obey me. For elſe I muſt be faine to ſmite mē, & all ẏ wͭſtand me muſt needs be beaten downe. This text ſheweth how God promiſed Prophets, & yet notwͭſtanding had an eye to our Lord Ieſus Chriſt, at whom the finall concluſion & the perfect working of all the propheſies amed. Yea & this was ſo cōmon a thing among ẏ Iewes, that euen the wretched harlot of Samaria could ſay, that whē Meſſias came, he ſhould teach vs al things. Not onely ẏ Iewes, but alſo ẏ Samaritans who had but a kind of ſhadow

Pſal.110.2.
Eſa.2.3.
Act.3.18.
1.Sam.3.1.
Amos.8.11.
Mal.4.4.
Iohn 4.25.

of the law, & were but as Apes, knew it was yͤ office of yͤ Redeemer to giue full knowledge of the things yͭ were requiſite for yͤ ſaluation of yͤ world. Not wͭout cauſe therfore is this text applyed to yͤ perſon of Gods ſon, forſomuch as yͤ Prophetes tooke their ende in him, & he hath made a perfect concluſion of all. And our Lord Ieſus Chriſt ſpake not three yeeres & a halfe, to yͤ intent to hold his peace after: but he will haue his Goſpel to be preached with a loud & cleare voyce, and yͭ thoſe whom he hath ordeined Miniſters in his Church, ſhould be as trūpets. According whereto we heare how it is ſaid, yͭ his Goſpell muſt bee preached ouer all the world. And he limites no ſhort time to it, but wil haue it done to yͤ worldes end. Sith it is ſo, wee ſee (as I haue touched before) yͭ Gods ſetting of this continuall order in his Church, was not for yͤ Iewes onely, but alſo for vs, ſo yͭ although we heare his worde, & haue it preached vnto vs dayly, & yet we be not diſpoſed to learn as at his mouth: he ſhaketh vs off, & baniſheth vs out of his kingdome, & we be not worthy to be reckoned in the nomber of his ſeruants. Thus ye ſee what we haue to marke.

Matt.11.13.
Luke.16.16.
Matt 28.19.

But now foraſmuch as this text is referred to our Lord Ieſus Chriſt, & the Prophets that were raiſed vp afore, were inferiors to him & but his members: we muſt know alſo yͭ thoſe that beare yͤ office of ſhepheards in his Church nowadayes, are in the ſame degree yͭ the Prophets were, to wit; compared to Ieſus Chriſt, inferior vnto him. True it is yͭ they be preferred far before yͤ Prophets, as in reſpect that the Goſpell is a higher and excellenter matter than any was vnder the ſhadowes of the law. But yet foraſmuch as Ieſus Chriſt is yͤ head of all; he alone is to be acknowledged for Maiſter of the houſhould, as the Apoſtle ſpeaketh of him when he compareth him with Moſes. Seeing it is ſo then, let vs marke that euery doctrine is as it were excommunicated, if it reſpect not Ieſus Chriſt. In deede there are many Prophets and teachers: but yet muſt Ieſus Chriſt ouerrule al; al yͭ is expounded muſt come from him; he muſt haue all preheminence; that the thing which the heauenly father hath ſpokē may be performed, namely, This is my welbeloued ſonne, heare ye him. This is not ſpoken of any man, but only of the onely Son of God himſelfe. And therefore let vs learne, that whereſoeuer there are Paſtors or ſhepheardes, the brydle is not laid looſe in their necks to ſet foorth what they thinke good: but they bee tyed to this condition, that our Lord Ieſus muſt alwaies be their Maiſter, and alonly be heard, ſo as nothing bee ſet foorth but in his name, and that truly. Rightly ſaith Moſes, ye ſhal obey the Prophet. As how? not yͭ they haue the authority to bind yͤ Church & to bring it into bondage: for (as S. Peter ſheweth in his firſt Canonicall Epiſtle,) it behoued yͤ Prophets to ſpeake by the ſpirite of our Lord Ieſus Chriſt. And in the ſame reſpect alſo doth S. Paule ſay, that it was he which led & gouerned the people [in the wildernes.] Although Moſes bare the coūtenance, yet was it Ieſus Chriſt that bare yͤ ſway. Now I pray you, if a man take more authority vpon him than Moſes had, & aduaunce himſelfe aboue him: what ſhould a man ſay to it? Moſes and all the Prophets are but vnderlings, to the end that Ieſus Chriſt might ſpeake: And ſeeing that the Sonne of God is come, is it reaſō that men ſhould put foorth their owne dreames and dotages, & that Ieſus Chriſt ſhould hold his peace? But the Popiſh Religion tendeth to none other end, than to put Ieſus Chriſt to ſilence. The Pope boaſteth himſelfe to be his vicar. But howſoeuer the caſe ſtand, he will needes make lawes at his owne pleaſure: he will needes make newe articles of faith: to be ſhort, the Goſpell is but an Apſie, if we beleeue the Pope: and the dotages yͭ he hath deuiſed, are the ful perfection of all. For behold, they haue not bin aſhamed to ſay, that the thinges which the Popes and their Councels haue decreed, and all their gewgawes, filth, and pelting traſh, (which yet notwͭſtanding are but diueliſh abhominations to peruert the ſeruice of God:) are the thinges which the Apoſtles could not beare away, when Ieſus Chriſt ſaid vnto thē, I haue many things to ſay vnto you, but ye cannot cary them away as now. And what things be they? O they be the high Myſteries which the Pope deuiſed aboue the Goſpell. Lyke as Mahomet ſaith yͭ his Alcoran is yͤ ſoueraine wiſdome: ſo ſaith the Pope of his owne decrees: For they be the two hornes of Antichriſt. Sith it is ſo, doe we not ſee that we cannot in any wiſe cleaue to the Pope but by renouncing Ieſus Chriſt? Then let vs beare well in minde, that ſeeing it is Gods will to exalt his onely ſonne after that faſhion: ſurely he wil haue vs to looke vnto him, and that all doctrine be referred vnto him, and doe concerne him, ſo as wee muſt conclude that all ſuch as will not ſpeake in the Church, muſt vtter nothing but yͭ which they haue learned in yͤ ſchoole of this great ſchoolemaiſter. According whereunto he hath giuen this commiſſion to his Apoſtles, Preache the things which ye haue learned of me. Againe, when he promiſeth them the holy Ghoſt, he ſaith, he ſhall teach ye all the things which ye haue hard of me. He ſendeth them not there to a new doctrine; but ſaith that they ſhall haue vnderſtanding of the thinges which they knew not by reaſon of their rudeneſſe. That is yͤ thing which we haue to remember in that God attributeth the ſoueraine authoritie to his ſonne by name, and will haue all Prophets to be vnder that heade, as well whome he had rayſed vp afore, as thoſe whom he hath ſet vp in theſe daies in his Church, ſo as this order muſt be kept, that he onely doe ſpeake, and that all others which open their mouthes, ſerue but to deale foorth the thinges purely which they ſhall haue receiued at his hand.

Mat.11.11.
Hebr.3.5.6.
Matt.17.5.
1.Pet.1.11.
Iohn 16.12.
Matt.10.27.
Iohn 16.13.

But by yͤ way, let vs alſo wey this ſpeech where it is ſayd, *Ye ſhall hearken vnto him*. For as God ſheweth himſelfe freeharted; not minding to forſake his Church, but to prouide the things which he knoweth to belong to the welfare thereof: ſo is it good reaſon that we on the otherſide ſhould not deſpiſe the benefite that he offereth vs, and imparteth vnto vs. Heere of his own free goodneſſe he bindeth himſelfe to vs in ſaying: *I will raiſe you vp a Prophet*. And on the other part hee exacteth a couenāt, in cōmanding vs to receiue ẏ benefit as it deſerueth, & to make our profit of it. Therefore ſee that you obey. Wherefore let vs marke, that when God hath allured vs to him ſo gently and after ſo fatherly manner, that hee is ready to ſpeake to vs as it were mouth to mouth: he will not haue vs to giue him deafe eare, or to runne gadding away, and to deſpiſe or mocke him. It is not for vs to thinke that God will beare ſuch vnthankefulnes and contempt of his word: for the reuendge thereof will be horrible as ſhal be declared in due place. But in the meane while let vs goe willingly to our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt, who is ſent vnto vs in the name of God his father, & proteſteth that he will reach vs his hand to leade vs to endleſſe ſaluation. Therefore let vs heare him, not onely to ſay, it is true that he ſpeaketh; but alſo to giue our heartes vnto him. For the hearing that he requireth, is that all wiſedome be beaten downe, ſo as men be not puffed vp with vain ſelfweening, as if they would ſay, I will doe what I liſt: but that wee hearken to our maſter which is giuen vs from heauen, and that all our affections be ſubdued to him, and that our luſt be ouercropped when they woulde carie vs here and there; ſo as Ieſus Chriſt may raigne howſoeuer the worlde goeth, and that both great and ſmal may knowe how ẏ to them it is that God ſpeaketh. For as touching the great ones, it is ſayde vnto them in the ſeconde Pſalme, Kiſſe the Sonne ye kings and Princes of Pſal.2.12. the earth: do homage to the ſonne of God whō he hath ſent vnto you. Nowe if our Lorde will haue all highneſſe to ſtoope after that faſhion vnder the ſoueraign dominion of our Lord Ieſus Chriſt: (accordingly alſo as S. Paul ſaith, that 2.Cor.10.5. the preaching of the Goſpel ſerueth to pul down all loftineſſe that will needes be exalted:) what ſhall become of theſe wretched wormes, when they diſdayne to receiue the Goſpell obediently?

Let vs marke then that here is no exception, and that Gods intent is to bring all the world to his lure. For if it bee ſo that the Angels muſt worſhip Ieſus Chriſt, and reuerence his Goſpel: ſeeing then that wee be but creatures, not only mortall, but alſo flightfull, and ſuch as haue nothing in them but corruption: what ſhoulde wee doe when our Lorde is ſo gratious to vs, as not only to raiſe vp men to ſpeake to vs in his name, but alſo to ſende vs his onely ſonne, by whome the doctrine is ſo authoriſed, as it cannot bee doubted of any more. Seeing we bee at ẏ point, what ſhoulde we doe but reſort to our God, forſaking all things that may hinder our obedience towardes him, yea and euen our owne wits, luſts, and affections eueriechone? Hauing laide all thoſe thinges downe and hauing ſubdued them, let vs come to the thing that is tolde vs here: which is, that we muſt obey the Prophets. Alſo let vs not prouoke our god to anger by vſing ſuch ſhameles hypocriſie as to ſay, O, I wil obey God, as wee ſee a number of the Papiſtes doe which ſay, tuſhe, I am a good Catholike. And euen among vs (without going anie further) how manie are there to bee founde which boaſt themſelues like ſhameleſſe harlottes, As for mee I woulde haue the goſpell, and yet for al that, they can finde in their heartes to ſpit at it? But wee muſt not thinke that God accepteth ſuch Proteſtations, vnleſſe we deſire vnfainedly to be gouerned by his hand, For the doing whereof let vs vnderſtand that there is but only one meane, which is to obey Gods word. For he ſeparateth not his maieſtie from ẏ declaration of his righteouſneſſe and iuſtice which he hath ſet forth vnto vs. 2.Cor.3.18. 4.4. The thinges that are conteyned in the law, the Prophetes and the Goſpell, are his liuely Image. Will wee then obey our God and be ſubiect to him? Let vs go to that which he declareth, & there ſhew the obedience which we owe him. And ſith he ſheweth himſelfe ſo gratious and freeharted towardes vs as to call vs to our ſaluation: let vs alſo on our ſide anſwere him againe.

Now let vs fall downe before the maieſtie of our good God with acknowledgement of our faults, praying him to make vs ſo to feele them, as we may with true repentance ſeeke to be reformed by his holy ſpirit, that we may follow his holy commaundements, and alſo that it may pleaſe him to beare with vs & to bury all our offences, vntil hee haue clothed vs with his owne righteouſnes, and rid vs of all the imperfections wherewith we be now inuironed. And ſo let vs all ſay, Almightie God heauenly father, &c.

On Munday the ij. of December. 1555.

The Cix. Sermon which is the third vpon the eighteenth Chapter.

10.11.12.13.14.15 There ſhall not anie bee found among you, &c.

WE haue ſeene howe our Lorde, to make his worde preuaile among the Iewes, hath willed them to put away all ſuperſtitions from among them. For in verie deede the trueth of God cannot be cupled with ſatans lies & corruptiōs: we muſt be either altogether the ones or altogether the others. Alſo I haue declared vnto you, that this order of Preaching Gods word, muſt be obſerued to the worldes ende. In doing whereof I haue reſerued hitherto the declaring of the ſeuerall ſorts of the ſuperſtitions that are ſet down here: Firſt of all it is ſaide *That the Iewes muſt not make their children to paſſe through ẏ fire.* And ẏ may be taken two waies. For we know they were caried away ẇ ſuch rage, ẏ they burnt their childrē in ſacrifice, & ẏ was a terrible thing. But ye may ſee how fooliſh ẏ deuotiō of men is, when they eſtrange thēſelues frō God. Needs muſt they be all humane ſenſe, and needs muſt the deuil poſſeſſe them & driue thē into ſuch furie as is horrible to al men. Yet notwithſtanding, this miſcheefe befell among the Iewes, that they ſacrificed their children to Moloch. But there was yet an other faſhion of making their children to goe through the fire, whereof Moſes doeth rather ſpeake in this place, according to the obſeruing thereof among the heathen. They tearmed it a manner of purging or cleanſing when they vſed ſuch Ceremonies. As for example,* there haue remained ſome remnant thereof in the Popedome, in their Bonfires on Midſommer night. They had ſuch a kinde of witcherie as they did beare themſelues in hande, that it was a kinde of purging to go take the aire of that holy fire (as they eſteemed it) in going about it. But our Lord putteth ſuch ſuperſtitions among the number of inchauntmentes. Likewiſe the Papiſtes haue their holy water: and what elſe is that than a kinde of cleanſing inuented by them ſelues to ſet againſt the bloode of our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt, and againſt Baptiſme, which is the true ſigne thereof? Then let vs marke well that here our Lorde condemneth all manner of purgings or clenſings which mē deuiſe of their own braine, when they will bee clenſed by any other meane than he hath ordeyned, which is, by the onely ſacrifice of our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt, and by receyuing the records and aſſurāces of the ſame by the Sacramentes. True it is that the Sacraments of themſelues haue not this power in thē to make men cleane: it is not the water of baptiſme ẏ waſheth away our ſins before God: but it is a figure that putteth vs in minde of the trueth and ſubſtance, which ſealeth in vs the thing that was brought to paſſe by the death and paſſion of our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt. Thus much concerning this one point, that here our Lordes meaning is that men ſhould not inuent meanes or faſhions of purging themſelues, but bee contented with that which he hath ordeyned in his lawe.

Alſo he ſpeaketh of ſuch as *haue regard of the flying of birdes, and obſerue times.* Although it bee lawfull for vs to marke the courſes of the times according to the ſtarres: yet is it a curſed ſuperſtition well worthie to be condemned, when we goe beyond the order of nature. The meaſuring of the yeare by the courſe of the Sunne is according to Gods rule. So likewiſe is the meaſuring of the monethes by the courſe of the moone, and the obſeruing of the other thinges which God hath ſet in all the planets and ſtarres. For it is not ſaide for nought that God hath ordeyned the Sunne and the Moone to do vs ſeruice: but yet therewithal they haue a kind of gouernment ouer the day and the night: and thereof ſpringeth the difference of times, as is ſaid thereof. Then if men holde themſelues within thoſe bounds, no euil wil come of it: but if they range without them, and fall to inuenting of other thinges beyonde the ordinarie courſe of nature: then it is diueliſh ſuperſtitiō, like as that is which men call iudiciall Aſtrologie. For there are a great ſort of fantaſticall perſons nowadayes, which will take vpon them to tel mens fortunes by the diſpoſition of the Starres. Such a one (ſay they) ſhall come to ſuch an ende: or elſe if hee take his iourney on ſuch a day, ſuch a thing ſhall betide him, becauſe ſuch a planet reigneth and hath his aſpect to the taile of ſuch a one. Againe if a man be borne vnder ſuch an aſpect, then muſt he die after ſuch a ſort. When men inuent thinges after this faſhion beyond Gods limitation, they be but diueliſh deuiſes to corrupt the order of nature. Therefore let vs marke wel that here Moſes forbiddeth all ſuch diuinations as are made vppon the time: not meaning but that we ſhoulde haue reſpect of winter and ſommer, that we ſhoulde ſowe and reape, that wee ſhoulde dreſſe our vines according to the ſeaſon of the Moones, and as we ſee that opportunitie will ſerue beſt: For otherwiſe it were an vtter vndoing of all thinges, and an aboliſhing of the order that God hath ſet. But his meaning is that men ſhoulde not through their fonde and wicked deſires, paſſe the boundes which God hath appointed. So then let vs keepe our ſelues to this playnneſſe that God hath ſet downe.

Moreouer, whereas he ſpeaketh of *Diuinatiō by the flight of birdes*; It was too common a vice among the heathen, as I ſaide afore. When they were to take anie thing in hand, they went gaſing abroad in the aire, and they might not conclude vppon any thing, till they had ſeene ſome birde flying. And there were three or foure of them, or if they came frō the Eaſt or the North, they tooke them by & by for ſignes: and that was a curſed kinde of diuination. For why? we muſt holde it for a generall rule, that wee marre all when wee drawe Gods creatures to anie other vſe than he hath ordeyned them vnto. Let vs marke (ſay I) after what maner God will haue his creatures to be vſed. For as ſoone as we turne from that point, ſuch diſguiſing of his workes is a curſed corruption of them. God hath not created the birdes to ſpeake vnto vs by their flying from one place to another, nor to the end that we ſhoulde make account whether there be foure or fiue of them, or take their flying out of this coaſt or that coaſt to be a token of euil luck. Theſe are ſtarke witcheries, forged by men out of their owne fonde curioſitie, and blowen into their eares by Satan. And therefore let vs not maruell though our Lord haue forbidden vs ſuch thinges: for as ſoone as wee happen to bee imbrewed ẇ ſuch ſuperſtitions and follies, we muſt needes bee turned away from Gods trueth. Yea and there followeth iuſt puniſhment vpon ſuch curious perſons, ſo as they bee euer doubtful & in perplexitie.

For in as much as they reſorte to deade creatures, or to ſuch creatures as haue no reaſon nor vnderſtanding; they muſt needes bee alwayes vncertaine. But if wee feare our God; we ſhallbe ſure of all things. The feare of God is the beſt hold that wee can haue. I meane ſuch Pſal. 33. 1, 2 a reuerende feare of GOD, as therewithall we take him for our father. For if we be agaſt at him, we ſhall ſtil be in neuer the leſſe anguiſh & vnquietnes. But if wee ſubmit our ſelues to God for loue ; ſurelie his protection ſhall auaile vs to reſt vppon,ſo as we may defie Sathan and all that he practiſeth againſt vs. On the contrarie part, when we feare not God, we ſhall be afraid both of the birdes and of the beaſts,of the winde and of the rayne, of the Sun and of the Moone, of the earth and of the heauen; and to be ſhort, euen our owne ſhadowes(as men ſay)ſhal make vs afraide. And as for them which ſubmit them ſelues to the Sunne and Moone,and make Idols of them as though they had dominion ouer vs: all ſuch doe ſhowe in deede that they haue no feare of God in them , and therefore needes muſt they bee caried away anewe. Ier.10.2. And that is the cauſe why the Prophete Ieremie expreſſely forbiddeth vs to be afraide of the ſignes of the heauen, at leaſtwiſe according to the inchauntmentes which the Infidels haue inuented; as is ſaide alreadie. For if wee be afraide of them after yͤ maner,we bereaue God of his dominion, and impart it to the Stars and other dead creatures.But God wil haue the Sunne & the Moone to giue vs light,and to doe vs ſeruice with their natural vſe,(as the Sun to heate the earth,& the Moone and the Stars to giue their influences:) I ſay he will haue all theſe ſo to keepe their natures and proprieties; as that he himſelfe alone be the gouernour notwithſtanding. For when we imagine that the Sunne or the Moone haue ſuch power ouer vs,that we cannot goe one ſtep without they bring vs ſome miſaduenture or proſperitie by their aſpectes towardes vs : is not God himſelfe ſo much debaced? Yes verily. If it be ſaid that God worketh by his creatures: that is true: but yet will he not doe it after that faſhion. We muſt haue an eye to the meane which he hath helde,and we muſt not go beyond that. And therefore as many as rend Gods dominion in peeces and impart it ſo to the liueleſſe creatures, are ſtarke mad, and it is good reaſon that they ſhould alwayes bee as men in a traunce or afrighted,& not know where to become.Wherefore let vs learne to put our ſelues in ſuch wiſe vnder the hand & guiding of our God:as we fall not to paſſing beyond the courſe of nature.That is the thing which wee haue to remember here.

As touching the other kinds, indeede a man might diſtinguiſh thẽ,as many haue laboured to doe: but it is enough for vs to vnderſtande that here is mention made of *Inchaunters, Sorcerers, Calkers, workers with Familiars, and of ſuch as aske counſell at the dead.* As concerning Inchaunters, they be not theſe Iugglers that bleare mens eies with ſlight of hand,and make men beleeue they doe the things which they doe not: but the diuell hath ſuch dominion ouer the vnbeleeuers, that although a thing be not done in very deed; yet the illuſion is ſuch, as makes men beleeue they ſee that which they ſee not. And ſo it is a kinde of Inchauntment,that is to ſay of diueliſh illuſion, when a man ſhall bee made to thinke that one is transformed into a wolfe,or that hee ſees the ſhape of a thing that hath no ſubſtance or trueth indeede. Now it is demaunded whether ſuch thinges can be done or no. Exod.8.7. And why not?we haue an example in Pharaoes ſorcerers, who made frogges to come vp as well as Moſes did: not that the diuell hath any thing in his owne power: for we muſt not imagine that hee can fight againſt God to doe aught whether he will or no: we knowe he is vnder Gods hande,& can doe nothing without leaue or licence. Hee may well attempt much, but yet can he not ſtir one finger, as ye woulde ſay. And hereof wee haue example euident enough in Iob: Iob.1.6. for we ſee yͭ the diuel is there among the Angels,that is to ſay,that he is faine to come yeelde an account before Gods ſeate,and to haue leaue of him,and to be admitted. As much is ſaide when God will haue Achab to bee beguiled for his Idolatrie. 1.Kin.32 21. Ye ſee then howe the ſcripture ſheweth that the diuell hath not a ſeuerall dominion by himſelfe,as though he could attempt any thing againſt God. But yet by permiſſion he may indeede trouble the aire,and alſo do other thinges, after which maner God is ſaide to ſend tempeſtes & hailes. And by whome doeth he it? By the wicked Angels. Pſal.78.49. For he ſpeaketh not there of the heauenly Angels,but of the diuels by name, which execute Gods vengeance vpon men.And therefore let vs marke,that (as experience alſo ſheweth) yͤ diuels may worke many ſuch illuſions by inchauntmentes. And truely ſuch thinges are not done but in the dark.For ſo long as we be inlightened by GOD, we neede not feare that a man ſhall ſeeme a wolfe to vs, or that ſuch triſhtraſh ſhall get the vpper hand of vs.But if we be faithles,it is a iuſt reward for our quenching of yͤ light yͭ ſhould haue ſhone into vs, & of our turning of our backes vnto God. And when we wil not bee ruled by him,then diſcern we no more between white and black, but men ſeeme vnto vs to bee wolues,and al things are out of order,& that iuſtly. Therefore whereas here is mention made of ſuch as miſhape things by their inchantments: Let vs note yͭ the law is not ſuperfluous.For ſith yͤ caſe ſtandeth ſo,it is to be cõcluded yͭ ſuch things may befall,as whereof we haue examples.

But yet for al that, it is abhominable before God:and ſo likewiſe are *Soothſayers*.It is a queſtiõ whether it be poſſible for mã to foretel of things, for it is Gods office to foreknow things to come: and how then may it belong to the diuell? Sure it is(as ſaith yͤ prophet Eſay)that idols can foreſee nothing. Eſa.41.23. And as for Satan, hee muſt alwayes needs be the father of lies,& deceiue al ſuch as aske counſyl of him. Yet notwithſtanding God doth nowe & then ſuffer ſatan to tel of things to come,and yͭ is for the more hardening of ſuch as wil not obey the truth, 2.Theſſ.2.11 12. (as we haue ſeene by example in the thirteenth chapter) Deut.13.3. & it hath been treated of partly already. Yet notwithſtanding it is true alſo,that ſoothſayers do ly moſt cõmonly, and by that meanes our Lorde deludeth them yͭ ſeeke counſel of ſatan after yͤ faſhion. And beſide let vs not thinke it ſtrange,though inchaunters, ſoothſayers,& ſuch other like do now & then tel of things to come:for it is gods iuſt ſufferance,to yͤ intent they ſhould be yͤ deeplier plunged in error.For aſmuch as they wold needs be willingly deceiued,he letteth thẽ be ſo,yͭ they may periſh. Thus ye ſee why the law was made concerning

ſuch as diuine of thinges to come. Alſo hee ſpeaketh of *Sorcerers:* And this ſort conteyneth manie thinges: For what a ſinne is it, that men ſhoulde forſake God, and giue themſelues ouer to Satan? Muſt they not needes fall into horrible confuſion? Yes: For after Satan hath once poſſeſſed vs and ſtopped our eyes, and that God hath withdrawen his light from vs, ſo as we bee deſtitute of his holy ſpirite, and voyde of all reaſon: then follow infinite abuſes without ende or meaſure. And thereof come ſorceries. Manie incredible thinges are reported of Sorcerers. And truely when wee heare them ſpoken of, we ought not onely to miſlike of them, but alſo bee ſorrowfull in our heartes, yea & the very haires of our heades ought to ſtand vp thereat. But yet therewithall we muſt conſider that they bee reuengementes of God caſt vppon ſuch as haue forſaken him. And that the ſame may be a cauſe to holde vs in awe and feare, let vs learne not to tempt our God nor to play with him, ſith we ſee men become ſo brutiſhe after they be once turned away from the right path. Truely if there were no moe but two or three examples hereof; yet might it well ſeeme ſtraunge vnto vs. But we know that in al ages and in al Nations Sorcerie or witchcraft hath borne ſway, yea and yͤ more ſway for yͤ reiecting of Gods truth. Inſomuch yͭ where men haue once fallen to withſtanding yͤ truth & haue diſdained to be taught by the pure worde of God; there haue followed the moe illuſions of Sathan, yea and the more exceſſiue, which haue alſo beene the more manifeſt and greeuous. And whereof commeth this, but of
2.Theſſ.2.11 12. the cauſe which Saint Paul ſheweth vs in his epiſtle to the Theſſalonians? namely that ſuch as will not obey the trueth, are vtterly peruerted by leaſinges: and that thence forth the diuell muſt needes worke with the greater force, bycauſe God giueth him the bridle to carie men ſo away as they become ougly monſters. To be ſhort, wee muſt beare in minde, that whereas God ſpeaketh to vs of inchauntmentes and ſorceries, it is to holde vs ſhorte vnder the obedience of his worde, leaſt wee ſhoulde fall into ſuch a maze as the wretched Infidels are in, yea and proceede ſo farre as to wander quite away, when we haue once forſaken his worde. Therefore let vs abide in this ſimplicity of obeying him and of ſubmitting our ſelues to his mouth.

Alſo here is mention made of workers with Familiars. As touching the which, needes muſt Satans illuſions be horrible. But what? There haue beene of them in all ages, and wee ſee a
1.Sam.28.7. notable example thereof in king Saule when he went to the Witch. He as king had erſt forbidden all inchauntmentes and all kinde of damnable craftes, and hee had behaued himſelfe vertuouſly in executing Gods lawe. And yet in the ende he became ſo wretched, that hee fell to running after a Witch. And what was yͤ cauſe thereof, but that he diſpiſed God? Whereuppon in the ende he fell into deſpaire, and gaue himſelfe ouer altogether to Satan: which thing hee ſhewed full well. For if ye looke aduiſedly into the matter, ye ſhall finde that Satans illuſions doe then get the vpper hand of men, when their wittes bee amaſed by reaſon of ſorrowfulneſſe that gnaweth them inwardly, & for that in ſteede of receiuing ſome comfort of Gods word, they bee ouerwhelmed with ſuch anguiſhe, that they fall into vtter deſpayre. When doeth Sathan meete a man in ſome bodily ſhape, and tangle him in his ſnares? When a man is in ſome greefe of minde, or in ſome hatred againſt his neighbour, or when a woman ſpiteth her husbande. Well then, although ſuch affections beare ſway, yet doeth not God by and by giue Sathan the bridle, to raigne ouer men, vntill they be come to ſuch extremitie that they fall to chawing vppon the bit, and become ſo wilfull in their ſorowe, that they fall into deſpaire and will no more admit anie comforte, but refuſe all remẽbraunce of G O D, and woulde that his name were buried: for there is the gate open to Satan, and he entereth to worke his illuſions, which a man is not able to withſtande. Hereof we haue a faire warning in Saul. For hee had offended God, and therefore was to be bereft of his kingdome, becauſe it was Gods pleaſure it ſhoulde be ſo, and there was none other ſhifte for him but to humble himſelfe. But he would not doe that. And when hee ſawe there was no meane to appeaſe Gods diſpleaſure, but that for 1.Sam.15.
all his flattering of Samuell, yet hee auayled ſo 27,28.
litle thereby, that when hee had rent the Prophetes Cote, the Prophete ſaide vnto him, euen ſo will God rende the kingdome from thee: hee cryed out and flang himſelfe out of his bounds, ſaying thus: What ſhould I doe more? Seeing that God hath forſaken mee, I alſo on my ſide muſt forſake him. And what was the end hereof? He went after Witches. Whereas hee hadde puniſhed inchaunters before; nowe he goeth to ſeeke them. And what came of it? Samuell was ſhewed him in a ſhape, that is to ſay in a ſhadowe and imagination, ſo as he thought the Prophete to haue beene raiſed vp againe by meanes of the Witch. Sith we ſee it befell thus to ſuch a king as God had choſen, and to whom hee had giuen the ſacred authoritie, til the kingdome of Dauid were ſet vp: what ſhall wee ſay to it? Let vs applie it to ſuch inſtruction as I haue touched alreadie, to make vs liue in feare. For when men doe feele themſelues after that ſort in euil, and wilfully ſhrinke away from God: Satan muſt needes take poſſeſſion of them, and then is there not any thing vnpoſſible vnto him. Wee ſhall heare incredible thinges reported of Witches, and wee muſt not maruell though God execute ſo exceeding great vengeaunce. For when men haue once turned their backes vpon him, and forſaken him euen of wilfull malice: they muſt needs become ſtarke beaſtes.

Finally here is mention made of ſuch as *aske counſell of the deade.* For it is not our Lords will that wee ſhoulde haue anie thing to doe with the deade. Therefore they that vſe ſuch coniurations, goe about to peruert the whole order of nature. For doe men what they can, yet can they not bring the liuing and the deade together: but the deuill ſteps in betwixt them and pretendeth the perſons of the dead,ſo as to outward ſeeming,the dead man himſelfe appeareth (as was not long ſince rehearſed) whereas in very deed it is the diuell that worketh ſuch illuſions. And therefore let vs marke wel, that ſeeing our Lord hath forbidden vs to haue to doe with the dead, we cannot be deceiued ſo long as wee keepe within our bounds, and attempt not anie thing which we ſee not to bee compriſed within the order which he hath ſet. And thereby we ſee alſo, that al the things yͭ euer haue bin ſaid of yͤ comming vp againe of dead mens ghoſts, haue bin but ſleights of ſatan: & when men haue bin beguiled by thã,it was al one as if they had wilfully yeelded thẽſelues ſlaues to ſatan. And yet was it held for great deuotion in Poperie. The cauſe why they made pilgrimages, and Maſſes to be ſung, yea and their feaſt of all ſoules to be kept once a yeare, was by reaſon of a Reuelatiõ or dreame of ſome deuout Monke that had an idle head. He heard yͤ crying of deadmens ſoules: and thereupon the Papiſtes concluded, that a ſolemne feaſt was to be kept for the dead,& ſuch and ſuch things were to be done for them. To be ſhort,in that men haue inuented ſeruice for the dead in the Popedome,that was nothing els but meere witcherie, euen ſuch as God diſliketh in this text and vtterly abhorreth. And all they yͭ haue their deuotion after yͤ faſhion to pray for yͤ dead,are witches and ſorcerers:for they beleeue in Satans inchantments in deſpite of God.

And now let vs marke that theſe thinges here are not noted as ſmal & tolerable faults: but it is ſaid expreſly, *that they be abhominable before God, & that the people of Chanaan were to be rooted out for ſuch crimes & miſdeeds.* Wherby we ſee yͭ although other vices were to be pardoned, yet ought this to be puniſhed and vtterly roted out. Therefore if we willbe taken for Gods people,let vs ſee that we vnderſtand what this word *Abhomination* betokeneth: namely yͭ we muſt be very ware of ſorceries, inchauntments,& ſuch other like things. And indeed wee ſee how ſuch things haue euer bin miſliked,euen among yͤ heathen. How much ſoeuer witchcraft had raigned,yet was it a great thing for a man to haue asked,is this well done? For euery man would haue ſaid,How ſo? It is a monſter: it is a ſhamefull & curſed thing. After yͤ maner did the heathen ſpeake thereof. For it was Gods will yͭ it ſhould be ſo ingrauen in mens harts,as it might be reproued euen without yͤ doctrine of the lawe. True it is yͭ in Poperie all are witches in their idolatries:for in yͤ fiftenth of the 1.Sa.15.23. firſt booke of Samuel, God cuppleth thoſe two ſins togither:yea & I haue told you already,yͭ the ſeruice of yͤ dead is a kind of witchcraft. Yet notwithſtanding they alwaies abhorre yͤ terme,and vtterly miſlike thereof. And why? Becauſe God hath ſuffered it to make thẽ yͤ more vnexcuſable. So then let vs marke,yͭ it is not for vs to ſuffer either inchanters or witches amõg vs. And if theſe be forbidden;we muſt vnderſtand therwithall,yͭ all other kinds of Wiſardrie are deadly crimes before God. And if Iudges & Magiſtrats do their duties,it is certain yͭ they wil no more beare with them than with murthers. It ſeemeth a ſmal fault to turne about yͤ ſiue (as we terme it in this coũtry):but it is more worthy to be puniſhed,than yͤ fleaing of a man quicke. For why? It is an ouerthrowing of Gods ſeruice, and a peruerting of yͤ order of nature. Were it not worthy of puniſhment and puniſhment againe, if the order of nature ſhould bee confounded betweene men and bruit beaſts? Were there any reaſon in ſo doing? And ſurely when men begin with ſuch inchauntments,it is certain yͭ they fall into a deeper and dreadfuller dungeon,than if they giue ouer their bodies to companie with the bruit beaſtes. And yet we ſee the ſelfe ſame illuſions to bee wrought by ſatan vpon al witches & ſorcerers. And what is the originall cauſe thereof, but that they bee turned away from Gods truth? Although there were no further euill in it than the attributing of Gods office vnto ſatan: yet were it a matter in no wiſe to be borne with. There is a thing concealed from me,& I wold know it:yea, but God is not minded to diſcouer it vnto thee. Thats no matter, I will find it out by ſome meanes or other though he ſay nay to it, yea I will haue vnderſtanding of it by diueliſh illuſion. Is it not a making of warre againſt God, if this be ſuffered? So then let vs marke,that if we will be taken for Chriſtians;Witchcraftes,inchantments,& ſuch other like thinges muſt bee leſſe borne with among vs,than Robberies and murthers.

Alſo it ought to make indeede the hayres to ſtand vpvpon our heads,when it is ſaid yͭ *the heathen which were neuer trayned vp in the law,were roted out becauſe of ſuch things.* For if God pardoned not yͤ infidels which neuer had any knowledge of his truth: what ſhal become of vs yͭ are ſo wel warned, to whome God crieth aloude, that hee will not ſuffer it, and that ſuch abhominations ſtinke before him,and that we muſt be cleanſed from them, or elſe he vtterly diſclaimeth vs? I pray you ſhall we hope to bee ſpared, when wee lie ſtill aſleepe, hauing ſuch warning from heauen? God muſt firſt giue ouer his office. Againe, whereas it is ſet downe here, firſt that God cannot away with ſuch abhominations, & ſecondly hath ſhewed in effect what puniſhment ſhall inſue vpõ it, by rooting out thoſe that rebelled not wilfully againſt him, but had euer bin hardened in their ſuperſtitions, and neuer knew ne taſted of the good doctrine: ſeeing that ſuch are rooted out for hauing to doe with ſatan: it ſtandeth vs in hande to take the better heede, and to learne to withholde our ſelues in ſuch wiſe from all illuſions and wiles,that if there be either ſorcerer,witch,or wiſarde among vs,they be liuely repreſſed. If there be a poyſoner or a theefe; euery man runnes vppon him. For it is knowen that they be the common enemies of mankinde which do ſo peruert al lawe, and indeuour to aboliſh all policie and order of nature. But theſe are much worſe. For God hath commaunded that his worde ſhoulde raigne among vs: and ought not euery one of vs to be diligent in preuenting the miſcheefe when the diuell goeth about to ouerthrowe all and to bring all thinges Eſa.2.3.4. to horrible confuſion? Verily it is not to be douted but that becauſe manie ſuperſtitions are ſuffered, God alſo doeth giue Satan head, to ouerwhelme vs altogether. Wo worth them that haue plaide the blinde buſſardes, and woulde ſee nothing, but haue ſuffered the miſcheefe to ſettle among vs. For it muſt needes increaſe more and more, vntill it come to the top, and that wee be ſo far and ſo deepely plunged in it, as it is vnpoſſible for vs to get out againe. That is yͤ thing which wee haue to remember vpon this Text.

And further let vs marke well, that whereas Moſes ſaith here, *that the Iewes muſt not doe ſo; but that they muſt giue eare to Gods Prophet:* it is according to that which I haue expounded alreadie: namely that foraſmuch as God hath giuen vs ſo good a remedie by being taught at his mouth, it is good reaſon that wee ſhould hearken vnto him. If we had no witnes of Gods will it were halfe an excuſe for vs to alledge, yea but ſhould wee knowe nothing? The Infidels haue meanes to finde out thinges by their illuſions. True it is that they ſerue idols: but yet are they in better caſe than we bee. After this maner might we ſpeake. But our Lorde telleth vs, that wee ſhall haue teaching enough, if we liſt to hearken to his worde. He addeth that he will raiſe vp Prophets from among vs. As if hee ſhoulde ſay vnto vs, Wretched men, ſeeing that I am ſo gratious to you as to condeſcende to your rudeneſſe and infirmitie, and to ſpeake to you by the mouthes of men: are ye not too too vnthankefull and malicious in turning away for my doctrine, to ſatans traſhe, ſo as ye can not finde in your heartes to acquaint your ſelues with the manner of teaching which I haue choſen as fitteſt and conuenienteſt for you? Then is it not ſuperfluous that God ſaith here, that hee will raiſe vp a Prophet from among vs which ſhal be one of our brethrē. Indeede we coulde well finde in our heartes that the Angels ſhoulde come downe from heauen to ſpeake vnto vs: but our deſiring thereof, ſpringeth of a fooliſh luſt. For as ſhal be ſhewed more fully hereafter) yͤ people of Iſrael hauing founde by experiēce what it was to heare Gods voice in his heauenly maieſtie: were ſo afraide, that they beſought God to ſpeake to them by the mouth of Moſes. Now then, if the choice were put vnto vs, it is certaine that wee ſhould euer finde it beſt for vs that God ſhould ſpeak vnto vs by the mouthes of mē. And it was knowē to be ſo: as we haue ſeene heretofore, and as God himſelfe auoweth there againe, ſaying: I like wel of the peoples requeſt, that there ſhoulde bee a meane betwixt them and me, and that there ſhould be a man to bring them worde from me in my name. And ſo here our Lord vpbraideth men with their vnthankfulnes, in that they wil not receiue his worde when it is brought them by the Prophets and teachers whom he hath appointed & placed in his Church. If he had ſaid, I wil ſend mine Angels; it had bin much. But we ſee how men abuſe euen the heauenly reuelations alſo. God therefore applieth himſelfe ſo much yͤ more vnto vs, & commeth downe one ſtep lower vnto vs, in yͭ hee ſaith, I wil raiſe you vp a Prophet frō amōg your brethrē. Sith we ſee that God cōmeth ſo familiarly vnto vs, & ſpeaketh with vs as it were mouth to mouth: were wee not worſe than mad, if wee ſhould ſay I would that God would ſend mee his Angels, I would he would worke ſome miracles, I would hee would ſend mee ſome reuelations, or raiſe me vp the dead, & tel me ſome newes of the things that are done in the other world? Needs muſt it be yͭ we be driuen by the diuell, when we haue ſo inordinate deſires. For behold our God intendeth to teach vs familiarly. After what maner? I will raiſe vp men. Now ſeeing we bee wont to be fellowlike one wͭ an other: what a prerogatiue doth he giue vs in applying himſelfe ſo vnto vs? We be lyers by nature, we be full of vanitie: & yet doth God appoint vs to be preachers of his word, and meſſagers of his vnfallible trueth: he appointeth men as his inſtruments to ſpeake in his name.

And ſo let vs beare in minde, that when God graunteth vs the grace to haue his word faithfully expounded vnto vs, and to haue ſhepeheards to teach vs: it is ſuch a priuiledge as ought well to holde vs in ſuch ſingleneſſe of faith, that all curioſitie be laide away among vs, and none of vs be led with fond deſires, as they be which are euer ſeeking and neuer attaine to the knowledge 2.Tim.3.7. of the trueth.. Let vs beware (I ſay) yͭ we be not ſuch queſtioners, and diſputers of this and that: and let it ſuffice vs to heare our God ſpeake, aſſuring our ſelues that he hath ſo ratified that order as we neede not to doubt but that it is the verie way to be taught by him. For (as ſhall bee declared more fully hereafter) let vs marke that whereas our God hath ratified his lawe: yet to yͤ ende it ſhoulde be helde for the more certaine, he hath alſo left vs the Prophetes, and that the Goſpell hath yet had a more full approbation when it was publiſhed. For at that time (as is ſaide by the Prophet Haggeus) God ſhooke, not Agge.2.7. onely the earth, but alſo the heauen. And therfore when we come to heare the doctrine that is drawen out of the lawe as out of the verie fountaine, and out of the Prophets, and out of the Goſpell which is the perfection of all our wiſedome: when we take that touchſtone to trie the things that are ſet afore vs, and are deſirous to be taught of God: Let vs not doubt but we ſtand vppon a ſure grounde, and ſhall haue whatſoeuer is needfull for our ſaluation, and therefore let vs leaue al vnprofitable ſpeculations; to ſuch as can not find in their heartes to bee taught in Gods ſchoole; and let it ſuffice vs that our Lord ſpeaketh not to vs by halues, nor as it were to leaue vs hanging in the aire that we might know neuer the more what to doe: but that he giueth vs ſuch a knowledge as we may be throughly aſſured, and ſafely reſt vpon the ſaluation of our ſoules. Thus ye ſee howe we ſhould put this text in vre, tarying till the reſt may bee laide foorth more fully.

Nowe let vs fall downe before the maieſtie of our good God with acknowledgment of our ſins, praying him to make vs feele thē better than we haue don, & yͭ we may more & more be drawē to him wͭ ſuch repētāce, yͭ forſaking al our own luſts our whole deſire may be to be gouerned by him, & to be held in ſuch awe to him, as we may not ſwarue ex-either to the right hande or to the left, by withdrawing our ſelues from his obedience;but that ſeeing he hath once ſhewed vs the way of ſaluation,wee may neuer turne away from it for any practiſe of ſatan,howſoeuer he ſeeke to blind our eyes with his illuſions & inchantments, nor bee ſuffered by our good God to fall into his ſnares, to be trapped by him,& in ỷ end to be ſwallowed vp and drowned; but ỷ we be ſo inlightened by ỷ holy Ghoſt,as we may ſhunne and eſchew all ſatans allurements, which tende but to our ruine. That it may pleaſe him to grant this grace, not onely to vs,but alſo to all people and Nations of the earth &c.

On Tewſday the iij. of December. 1555

The Cx. Sermon which is the fourth vpon the eighteenth Chapter.

16 According to all that thou deſiredſt of the Lord thy God at Horeb, in the day of the aſſemblie, when thou ſaiedſt, Let mee henceforth heare the voice of the Lord my God no more, nor ſee this great fire any more,leaſt I die.

17 And the Lord ſaid vnto me,they haue done well,to ſay ſo:

18 I will raiſe them vp a Prophet from among their brethren,like vnto thee: and I will put my words in his mouth,and he ſhall ſpeake vnto them,all that I commaund him to ſay.

19 And it ſhall come to paſſe, that whoſoeuer obeyeth not my words that hee ſhall ſpeake in my name,I will call him to account for it.

20 But the Prophet that ſhall preſume to ſpeake words in my name, which I haue not commanded him to ſpeake,or which ſpeaketh in the name of other gods: that Prophet ſhall die for it.

AFter that God hath declared that he wil gouern his church by meanes of his word preached by men: he addeth that the ſame is done at ỷ requeſt of the people themſelues. As who ſhoulde ſay, that they which will not obey the doctrine of the law,are dubble guiltie. For they deſpiſe the maieſtie of God:and that is too outragious a rebellion. And beſides that,they be alſo thankleſſe, in that God vſeth them after their owne deſire. For how was the Lawe publiſhed? Did not God giue ſignes of his preſence as though he had come down from heauen, and ſpoken viſiblie to the Iewes? But they perceiuing that Gods glorie amaſed them and made them at their wittes ende, deſired to haue ſome Prophet to ſpeake to them, and to bring his meſſages to them: which thing was graunted vnto them. Nowe if they cannot like of the condition that they themſelues required: what excuſe is there for them? Wee ſee then what the meaning of Moſes was, in ſaying that GOD woulde raiſe vp Prophetes from time to time among the Iewes, yea euen according to their owne requeſt, as who ſhould ſay that nothing coulde be better for them. Sith it is ſo, it was for them to holde them to that order. For if they coulde not abide the thing that was graunted them at their owne requeſt; what a thing were that? Should they not ſhewe themſelues vtterly vntractable and vnruly?

Exod.20.18.19.

Moreouer it behoueth vs to wey yet better the circumſtances that are ſet downe heere, namely *according to all that thou deſiredſt at Horeb.* God thinkes it not ynough to ſay that it came of the Iewes themſelues to deſire a Prophet:but he doth alſo ſhew that he condeſcended in al points to their deſire. For the Gentler that God ſheweth himſelfe towards vs, and the more he faſhioneth himſelfe to our nature: the more are wee bounde vnto him:and if wee drawe not nigh vnto him,ſurely we bee dubble to blame. We heare how S. Paul ſaith; Brethrē,be ye as I am;for I deſire not but to be as you are. If a mā ſpeake after ỷ maner,ſhal he not be heard? If God thē ſhal appeare in his glorie,and ſhal ſay: That hauing pitie of vs, he will for our ſake ſtoope downe & debaſe himſelfe; and we hereupon remaine hardharted,& can at no hand bow our ſelues to obey him: muſt it not needs follow,that we are vtterly void of all ſenſe, and ỷ the diuell hath ſo blinded vs,that there is no more natural vnderſtanding in vs? Yes: For it muſt needes be a horrour to vs, not to followe our God when he ſheweth vs ſuch example. Who are we that our GOD ſhoulde as it were transforme himſelfe (as wee ſee hee maketh himſelfe both a father and a mother,and a nource towards vs,) and that wee on our ſide ſhoulde holde skorne to bowe any whit vnto him? Thus yee ſee what we haue to marke vppon this ſaying, where Moſes telleth vs that God gaue his people all that they had deſired of him.

Gal.4.12.

But therewithall we muſt alſo remember the fearefulneſſe of the people. It is ſaide, *Let vs not heare the voyce of our God any more,nor ſee this great fire any more, for feare leaſt we die.* I haue tolde you

Exod.20.20

you already howe it was Gods will to authoriſe his Lawe by doing the myracles that were ſeene at mount Horeb. And it was meete that the Lawe ſhoulde be ratified after that faſhion, to the intent men might knowe that Moſes deuiſed it not of his owne heade, nor added any thing to it of his owne: but that God was the author thereof. When the trumpettes ſounded in the aire, when the skie was on a fire, when the greate thunders were hearde, and when the order of nature was chaunged: the Iewes ought well to haue vnderſtoode, that God ſhewed himſelfe to bee their gouernour, and that the Law came of him, and that he auowed it to be his. Yee ſee then that that was as a ſeale to make the Law of God to bee of authoritie. But there was yet another reaſon; which was that God meant to make the Iewes perceiue that the Law could do them no good, but onely make them at their wits ends, I meane the Lawe ſo farre foorth as it ſheweth vs the rule to liue well. For whereas God commandeth vs to do the thinges that hee alloweth; indeed it is the way of life and welfare. But what are wee? Wee haue a frowarde nature: and in ſteede of obeying and of behauing our ſelues as becommeth vs; wee ceaſe not to offende God. Nowe hee pronounceth his curſe vpon all ſuch as tranſgreſſe his commaundements. All of vs therefore are condemned by the Law, and there is no remedie but God muſt be our Iudge. And therefore it was meete that all the tokens which God gaue at yͤ ſetting forth of his Lawe, ſhould be terrible, and that the people ſhould be made afraide with them. And in the ſame reſpect doth S. Paul ſay that we receiue not the ſpirite of fearefulneſſe in the Goſpel; & after the ſame maner alſo is it ſpoken of in the Epiſtle to the Hebrewes.

Deut.27.26.
Rom.8.15.
Hebr.7.25.

Alſo heere is a thirde reaſon alledged by Moſes, which is, *that God ment to ſhew howe it was good for the maintenance of the Church, that men ſhoulde be the bringers of the doctrine of ſaluation*. For ſurely, God knowing that the beſt way to gouerne vs, was by ſending vs Prophets and teachers to ſpeake vnto vs in his name: would that the people alſo ſhoulde knowe the profite thereof. True it is, that whenſoeuer God ſpeaketh wee ought to bowe downe our neckes and yeelde him ſuch reuerence, as none of vs refuſe to obey him, though hee ſpeake to vs by the mouthes of mortall men. Yet notwithſtanding, his meaning is not that his worde ſhould but onely haue ſuch maieſtie among vs as to make vs afraide: but that it ſhould be ſweete and amiable to vs, and that wee ſhoulde receiue it with a free heart, and take pleaſure in it, and knowe that to reſt vppon it is our ſoueraigne welfare. So then, Gods intent was to make men deſirous to bee taught by the Prophets and preachers whom he woulde ſende vnto them. And that is the thing which Moſes toucheth in this preſent place.

Now then, we muſt vnderſtand firſt of al, that our Lorde will not come downe from heauen viſiblie to ſpeake vnto vs: for that were not for our benefite. In deede many men are of that minde that they would faine haue God to ſende them his Angels: and they thinke it a matter of no great authoritie that a man which is but a fraile creature and but an earthen pot, ſhoulde goe vp into the pulpet: but yet doth God know it to bee for our behoofe. And therefore wee muſt vnderſtand, that foraſmuch as the Iewes found by experience that it was a dreadfull thing to them to heare God ſpeake: it behoued God to alter that manner of declaring himſelfe, and to ſend Moſes vnto them. Therewithall let vs marke alſo that Gods authoriſing of the Lawe was not for the Iewes onely; but to the ende that wee alſo at this day ſhoulde receiue the ſame with all humbleneſſe, and vnderſtande that whoſoeuer deſpiſeth it, aduaunceth himſelfe againſt the maieſtie of the liuing God, and maketh warre againſt him. That is the thing which wee haue to remember where mention is made of the terribleneſſe of Gods voyce, and of the fire that filled the aire. And thereuppon let vs marke (as hath beene treated of alreadie), that God promiſed a Prophet, not onely to the Iewes, but alſo to vs; and that it is a continuall order in his Church. So then, will wee bee reckened for the children of God? Let vs ſuffer our ſelues to bee gouerned by his word. Yea, and let vs not hold ſkorne to heare men that ſpeake to vs in his name. But although they bee from among vs and of our owne companie, ſo as wee might alledge that we owe them no ſuch duetie as in reſpect of their perſons: yet notwithſtāding ſeeing they be ſet in Gods ſteed, and by his will; let that ſuffice vs. And if we intend to honour God, and to haue him to reigne ouer vs: it behoueth vs to ſhew it in this caſe, by yeelding ſuch obedience to his worde, as thoſe whom he ſendeth to vs be heard of vs. And hereof wee ſee what is ſaide by the Prophet Eſay. For like as Moſes had foretold yͤ God would raiſe vp a Prophet: ſo yͤ Prophet Eſay ſaieth that at the comming of our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt, and in the time of his reigne, God would put his worde into his mouth, & into the mouth of his ſeed, and of his childrēs children. This thing then ceaſed not when yͤ Goſpel was publiſhed throw yͤ world: but rather it was newly confirmed, as I haue alſo ſhewed before. For who was this Prophet, but our Lord Ieſus Chriſt? True it is that in that ſaying are comprehended all the Prophetes from Moſes to Zacharie and his fellowes. But yet did GOD reſtore all the propheſies in our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt, which had beene as it were broken off for a time. For the Iewes had beene berefte of that benefite a long time together, and GOD had not appeared to them any more as hee had beene woont to doe before. And the reaſon was, to the ende they ſhoulde with the earneſter deſire looke for the Meſſias that had beene promiſed them, and vnderſtande that hee ſhoulde bring them the full perfection of all wiſedome. Our Lorde Ieſus therefore is nowe come to performe all Propheſies, and to make ſuch a reſtitution as men might perceiue that God had then laide foorth the treaſure moſt bountifully: which he had ſpokē of afore by Moſes. And this was not done alonely for our Lord Ieſus Chriſt himſelfe,

Eſa.59.21.

Eph.4.8 11.

himſelfe as S.Paul ſheweth in the fourth to the Epheſians, where he ſaieth that Ieſus Chriſt being gone vp into heauen, hath prouided for the ſtate of his Church to the end that it might bee mainteined by the foreſaide meane, ordeining ſome to be Apoſtles,ſome Prophets,ſome ſhepherds, and ſome teachers. To be ſhort, it is the will of Ieſus Chriſt,to execute his office by the mouthes of thoſe whom he ordeineth to be miniſters among his faithful.And herein is accompliſhed the forealledged text of Eſay, that the ſeede of Ieſus Chriſt and his childrens children ſhall haue the worde in their mouth at this day. God ſaieth not, I will ſende you my worde from heauen, or, I will cauſe it to bee preached vnto you by mine Angels: What ſaith he then? I wil put my word into thy mouth. In deede our Lord Ieſus is ſet there in higheſt degree: but yet there followeth; and into the mouth of thy ſeede,and of thy childrens children.Then let vs conclude, that euen to the worlds ende, if we wilbe members of our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt,and (to be ſhort) if we wilbe taken for Chriſtians: wee muſt hearken to the worde which God putteth into mens mouthes,whenſoeuer it is preached vnto vs.

Iams.1.21.1

And in that reſpect is it ſaide, *that the man which will not heare the Prophet, ſhall die without releaſe.* Here God thinkes it not ynough to haue exhorted the Iewes to receiue his woorde with meeke and lowly mindes: but alſo threateneth them, becauſe thinges are neuer ſo well ordered among men, but that there is ſome incountering and rebelling. Our Lord therefore is faine to vſe heere ſome rigor. Which thing he doth, ſaying: Looke to your ſelues, for my ſending of Prophetes vnto you is to your benefite, and it were as much eaſe for mee to make my voice ring from heauen: but I know what is meeteſt for you, and you yourſelues haue found by experience that it is moſt for your behoofe. Therefore ſee that ye heare my woorde,and receiue it meekely, and ſubmit your ſelues to mee with all mieldneſſe. And hereunto alſo doeth S. Iames leade vs, ſaying that if wee wilbee edified by Gods word,we muſt be meeke. And as the earth that ſhal receiue ſeede to yeeld fruite,muſt firſt be well tilled: euen ſo the true preparation that God requireth of vs,is to humble ourſelues: for our Lorde Ieſus began at the ſame ende. Howbeit foraſmuchas there are ſome ſo blockiſh,that they cannot be moued by gentleneſſe: therfore is this threatening added, wherein our Lorde declareth that if wee deſpiſe his worde when it is brought vs ſo by men, ſuch a fault ſhall not ſcape vnpuniſhed: for I will require a reckoning thereof, ſaith hee, As if he ſhould ſay,Indeede it may well bee that ſuch contempt ſhall bee let alone, and not once thought vpon in the worlde: but yet ſhall I continue ſtill to warrant my worde, and yee muſt come to account before mee though yee bee ſcaped the handes of men. And this is to bee well marked. For when our Lorde will haue men to obey him, hee ſaieth not ſingly,hee that will not obey my worde; but he that will not heare the Prophetes whom I ſende. For wee ſee many nowadayes which proteſt that they bee readie to ſubmit themſelues to God; but yet in the meane while they cannot finde in their heartes to yeelde him obedience in reſpect of his Lawe, or in reſpect of the holy ſcripture, or alſo in reſpect of the order of the Church. Yee ſhall ſee a ſort of skoffers which will needes bee taken for good Catholikes, but as for ſermons, they let them alone, and they thinke them to bee ſuperfluous.And if they chaunce to come to any,it is but in a ceremonie,and for faſhions ſake,as men terme it: ſo as if it were not for ſhame of men, they woulde neuer come at the Church.Ye ſhal neuer heare that they be deſirous to be taught: And what Chriſtianitie is that?Contrariwiſe we heare howe it is ſaide heere, that God will haue vs to hearken to him. As howe? They can ſay wellynough that they bee willing to obey. But he addeth whoſoeuer heareth not the Prophets whom I ſende. I haue ſhewed already that ſeeing God hath ſet this order in his Church: it ought to be helde as vnuiolable. Therfore whoſoeuer hee bee that maketh none account of Sermons,ne reſorteth to them; doeth ſhew him ſelfe to be a rebell againſt God. Who ſayes ſo? Euen he himſelfe.We neede not go to reaſoning thereupon.For our Lorde telleth vs that all ſuch as will not quietly ſubmit themſelues to the order which hee hath appointed, are rebelles againſt him. Yee ſee then that the thing which we haue to marke here in the firſt place, is that we muſt not ſeeke ſtarting holes to deceiue God withall; for if wee deſire that he ſhould reigne ouer vs,the men that haue the charge and office to ſpeake to vs in his name, muſt be receiued,& all of vs both great and ſmall muſt frame themſelues thereafter.

Hebr.3.5.6. & 10.28.29.

Gal.3.19.

Moreouer let vs proceed to yͤ cõpariſon which yͤ Apoſtle maketh in the Epiſtle to yͤ Hebrewes. For he ſheweth (as trueth is)that Moſes and his fellow Prophets were but ſeruaunts.The maſter himſelfe is come: and that is the onely ſonne of GOD, who hath ſuperioritie ouer the whole Church,and he ſpeakes by his Goſpel:which if a man deſpiſe he is not to be borne withal.He that tranſgreſſed the Lawe of Moſes, was ſtoned to death as we haue ſeene before. But nowe our Lorde Ieſus ſpeaketh more liuely in the Goſpell: and ſhall men make no account of hearing him? Let vs marke then that all ſuch as ſtriue nowadayes againſt the doctrine of our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt, offend much more greeuouſly,and ſhalbe puniſhed more rigorouſly, becauſe they ſpite God openly, as though they proteſted in effect, that they paſſed not to prouoke him to battell, and to deface his maieſtie vtterly. Therefore let vs beare in minde, that as oft as the Goſpell is preached vnto vs, it is all one as if the ſonne of God ſpeake to vs himſelfe: and therefore that hee ought much rather to bee hearde than Moſes. True it is that the Lawe is of God likewiſe, and it was giuen by the verie ſpirite of our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt. But as nowe we ſtand vpon the meanes that God hath vſed in the Lawe and the Goſpell. For the more that our Lord hath vttered his glorie, the more ought wee to be prouoked to ſubmit our ſelues vnto him: and that is done in the Goſpell. Wherefore let vs conclude, that as nowe we muſt haue a greater regard to harken to the things that are brought vs and ſet forth vnto vs in the name of our God, than our forefathers had in the time of the law. And that is the thing which our Lorde Ieſus ment by this ſaying, that Iohn Baptiſt excelled Matt.11.11. al the prophets, ſo as there was neuer any man that had ſo excellent an office as he had, and yet that the leaſt of them which preach the Goſpell nowadayes, excelleth Iohn Baptiſt. Ieſus Chriſt ſpeaketh not there of the holineſſe of mens perſons: but magnifieth the doctrine of ſaluation which is preached to vs at this day, inſomuch that Iohn Baptiſt was preferred before all the Prophetes, as in reſpect that he brought the tydings that the Redeemer was come.

But wee proceede yet further; for wee ſhewe 2.Cor.5.19. & Heb.9.27 1.Iohn.1.7. & 2.1. that our Lorde Ieſus hath performed his mediatorſhip in reconcyling vs to God his father; that his death and paſſion are the euerlaſting ſacrifice whereby perfect righteouſneſſe is purchaſed to vs; that all our ſinnes are waſhed away Rom.5.19. Eph.1.5. by his bloude; that he continueth ſtill our aduocate and ſpokeſman at this day, to procure vs fauour in Gods ſight: that his obedience is imputed to vs for righteouſneſſe: and that God adopteth vs in him to make vs heires of his kingdome. All theſe thinges then are at this day declared vnto vs largely in the Goſpell. And ſeeing that God is ſo gracious to vs in preferring vs before all the kings and Patriarks that liued vnder the olde teſtament: Wo worth vs if we cannot fare the better by ſuch a prerogatiue. Seeing that the kings (I ſay) which were deſirous to haue Luke.10.24 hearde the thinges which wee heare, and to haue ſeene the thinges which wee ſee, obtained not their deſire; and nowe GOD hauing giuen vs more than them, can winne nothing at our hands by ſo doing but ſkorne and deſpite: what will our rewarde bee? Hee may well vpbraide vs as hee did the Iewes in olde time, ſaying: Eſa.5.4. My people what haue I done to you? My vyneyard, I haue planted thee, I haue husbanded thee, and I haue taken great paines about thee: and thou bringeſt foorth bitter grapes that are able to choke their maſter. If GOD blamed the vnthankfulneſſe of his people after that faſhion in olde time: howe much more may hee blame vs in theſe dayes? Are not wee worthie to receiue a hundred folde more damnation than they? Yes certainely. So then let vs marke well, that if God coulde not beare the deſpiſing of his Lawe: he will much leſſe nowe ſuffer the ſkorning of his Goſpell, or that men ſhoulde make none account of the order which hee hath ſet for them to reſort to ſermons, there to bee taught by the mouthes of thoſe that are in that degree and office. For as I haue declared, it is not ynough for vs to ſay, Gods worde is worthie to bee hearde: but wee muſt alſo ſhewe the ſame by proofe. Whenſoeuer our Lorde ſpeaketh, although it bee by the meane of creatures: yet let vs receiue him quietly and obey him.

Let vs note further, that where as it is ſaide hee will require an account of it: the meaning thereof is: that wee ſhall haue gained nothing by ſcaping the handes of men. For why? God will maintaine his owne honour. And this is notable in many reſpectes. For oftentimes yee ſhall ſee, that they which ſhoulde holde the ſterne to make Gods worde to bee receiued with reuerence, haue no regarde of it at all. The Princes, Magiſtrates, and Iudges of this worlde, doe puniſh thinges which they knowe to bee to their owne domage: ſuch offences are ſtraitely looked to. And why? For if they ſhoulde goe vnpuniſhed, great diſorder woulde inſue thereof. This reſpect were not amiſſe, ſo they did not ſet the cart before the horſe. For if God be offended, they let that ſlippe. And why? Becauſe they thinke there growes no inconuenience of it. And in verie deede it is growen to a cōmon byword to ſay, Who is hee that accuſeth mee? Whome haue I wronged? The partie that ſhall haue ſpited God openly, and therefore deſerueth to bee rooted out of the worlde, ſhall but wring his mouth or rather his groyne, and ſteppe forth with a ſhameleſſe foreheade to aſke who accuſeth him. The verie Angels of heauen, yea and all other creatures crie out againſt him; and yet hee hath not offended. And why ſo? Becauſe no bodie is againſt him heere among men: for it may chaunce that no man will ſtande in Gods defence. Euerie man will wellynough pleade for themſelues: but they be not ſo zealous as to ſet themſelues againſt ſuch as offende God. And yet in the meane whyle the Iudges are aſleepe, and let all ſuch manner of vngodly dealings ſlip. Yea there are ſome which are worſe than Iewes and Saraſins, ſhewing no token of Chriſtianitie, but openly deſpiſing both Sermons and vſe of Sacramentes. Otherſome are not contented with ſuch contempt, but they doe alſo make warre againſt God, and play the venemous beaſts in ſpewing out their vileneſſe to make all religion to bee ſet light by. Theſe thinges are to bee ſeene: and yet men winke at them. Therfore doeth God tell vs that hee will call them to account for it. Verie wel (ſaieth hee) let men bee as negligent as they will: yet wil not I forget theſe things, whatſoeuer come of it.

Heereby wee bee warned to receiue Gods worde when it is ſet forth vnto vs, and to inure our ſelues to the hearing thereof, not for feare of men onely, but to eſchew the wrath of the heauenly Iudge, ſeeing hee is minded to defende the authoritie of his worde. Were this well marked, men woulde bee better diſpoſed to ſuffer themſelues to be taught by Gods worde than they be. Men woulde make more ſpeede when they heare the bel tol, than they doe. But what? We can ſcarce finde in our heartes to goe three ſteppes to a Sermon. And why? For feare leaſt wee ſhoulde afterwarde be cenſured. If I go continually to ſermons, men will point at me with their fingers, and I ſhalbe called afterwarde into the Conſiſtorie for it: and in the end I ſhalbe cēſured. After ẏ maner do theſe Saraſins ſpeake that dwell among vs here, who haue neither faith nor Chriſtianitie in them more than dogs. Their comming hither commonly is but to ſcrape the ground with their pantoples in mockage of God. But it were better for them to breake their neckes, than to come to vnhalowe Gods temple after that ſort. Others come with gay Ceremonies and outwarde ſhewes: and in the meane while haue no affection at all. But let vs bethinke vs howe it is ſaide here, that our Lord wil not let men alone ſo: for although no mã maintain his glorie, but preſume malapertly to deſpiſe him: yet ſhall not their ſo doing boote them. For why? He telleth vs that he will doe his office, & not bury things in forgetfulnes. Then if men winke at the deſpiſing of Gods worde: God himſelfe muſt in the end ſhewe, that he ſetteth ſuch ſtore by it, that hee will be auenged of them for it. Thus yee ſee what we haue to mark, in Gods vttering of ſuch threatnings againſt all the deſpiſers of his Law.

Beſides this, it is his minde alſo to prouide ẏ wee be not deceiued nor abuſed vnder pretence of this honourable title of Prophet. For as it becommeth vs to obey God by being taught by ſuch men as he hath ſet in the office of teachers: ſo on the other ſide it is not for any man to take that charge vppon him, thereby to deceiue the plaine and ignorant people. God then hath prouided here for both twain. Firſt he ſheweth how there is no cauſe why the people ſhould grudge ſeeing there was no want of teaching: and therfore that they which turne away after Witches, Soothſayers, and Inchanters, are leawd and vnthankfull. For why? God commeth to vs, and requireth no more but to teach vs familiarly. Therefore when men ſtep aſide after that maner to ſuperſtitions, and cannot bee contented with Gods trueth which is the perfection of all wiſedome: muſt it not needes bee that they are poſſeſſed of Satan, and worſe than ſtarke madde or out of their wits? Yes truely. And therefore ſeeing our Lord proteſteth that he hath ſo prouided for his Church, as men may well holde themſelues to that which he hath done: Let euerie man bee readie to heare and receiue the doctrine which he ſetteth forth.

Nowe he commeth to thoſe that are appointed to be teachers. *Let no man* (ſaith he) *Preſume to ſpeake in my name. For I muſt put my worde in the mouth of the Prophetes.* Eſa.59.21. Hee ſaieth expreſly, I will put my word in their mouthes: and therunto anſwereth the text of Eſay which I cyted afore. Whereby it is ſhewed vs that God raiſeth not Prophets vp to lay the bridle in their necks, and to giue them full libertie to preach what they liſt: but hee raiſeth them vp to be as his inſtrumentes to deliuer the thinges faithfully which they haue heard of him. Yee ſee then with what condition God hath raiſed vp prophets in all ages, namely ẏ he put his word in their mouthes. And whereas we preach nowadayes; it is not for that Chriſt hath giuen vp his office. Matt 17.5. Eph.5.23. For he is alwayes a teacher, he is the heade of the Church, yea & the only head, not to be as an ydoll, but to rule vs with his doctrine. Therfore we muſt not preſume to alledge any thing which we receiue not of the only ſonne of God. Wherefore let vs marke well, that as it was Gods will heere to ſubdue folk to humble themſelues, ſo as they ſhould not refuſe to bee taught by his worde when it is preached: ſo on the otherſide he hath prouided that ſuch as haue commiſſion to ſpeake, muſt not bring their owne dotages and dreames, nor deuiſe any newe doctrine, but onely firſt learne of their maſter, and afterwarde deliuer the ſame faithfully to others, without adding any thing at all of their owne. For whatſoeuer men inuent of their owne heades, is vtter corruption: there needs no more Leauen to ſower the whole lump of paſte. 1.Cor.5.6. And if a man take heade neuer ſo little, he ſhall vtterly peruert Gods truth, and turne it into vntruth. And this ſerueth alſo to put al men in mind vpon what condition they ſhould heare the Prophetes. For here are two extremities, as in deede wee neuer keepe any meane, vnleſſe our Lorde drawe vs to it by force. If wee keepe it not, wee become heatheniſh, and his worde is skorned of thoſe to whom hee ſendeth vs: which contempt wee ſee in the moſt part of the worlde. Howe deale wee when wee come to framing of our ſelues? We vſe a kinde of fond and beaſtly deuotion, without putting any difference betweene good and euill, and God will none of that. Indeede hee will haue our faith matched with humilitie, but not that we ſhould be ſtarke blockes without diſcretion. For cleane contrariwiſe hee willeth vs to trie mens ſpirites. 1.Iohn 4.1. Then muſt wee haue skill to examine thinges whether they be true or no, when men ſpeake to vs in the name of God. The way therefore which wee muſt holde, is that when Gods name is alledged, wee muſt bee touched with reuerence to hearken earneſtly to the thinges that are ſpoken, and howſoeuer the world go, wee muſt bee prepared to receiue them. And when wee haue this modeſtie of yeelding our ſelues teachable by the thinges that are ſet forth in the name of God: Wee muſt alſo pray him to giue vs his holy ſpirite, that wee bee able to diſcerne aright and not be beguiled, nor imbrewed with lyes vnder falſe pretence of his name, but that although Satan transforme himſelfe into an Angell of light, 2.Cor.11.14. yet he may not ſo blind our eyes, but that wee may perceiue what is good. That is the way which wee muſt holde. And it is the thing whereto God intendeth to leade vs, ſaying that although he will haue vs to hearken to the Prophets, and addeth this threat that the deſpiſing of them ſhall not abide vnpuniſhed: yet notwithſtanding hee meaneth not therefore to bereaue vs of all diſcretion, and to ſtop our eyes that we ſhould not knowe what to followe. No: but he wil haue vs to examine mens doctrine, & to ſift the Prophetes whether they teach aright or no. We muſt not be ſo doltiſh as to admit al that euer is tolde vs without exception: but (as I ſaide,) when men ſpeake to vs in the name of God, we muſt ſerch whether it be truth or falſehood. And now muſt we lay forth the things particularly which are conteined here.

Firſt of all let vs marke, that God meant not to exempt the preachers of his woorde from all examination, but will haue the faithfull to conſider what is ſet foorth vnto them, according to the generall rule that is giuen vs thereof. It is 1.Cor.14.29 ſaide that they which haue the gift of Propheſying muſt ſpeake in order, and that the reſidue muſt iudge. It is not ſaide, whatſoeuer they ſay, let it bee receiued: but, let men iudge and diſcerne of it. Lo howe the holy Ghoſt ſheweth vs howe to meaſure our faith, and after what manner we may keepe a meane betweene the contempt and rebellion which we ſee in the heatheniſh ſort, and the beaſtly blockiſhnes of ſuch as ſay, as for mee, I am ſo well minded that I receiue whatſoeuer is tolde me. Yea, and thou art a good gooſe for thy labour. But God will haue ſuch children as be of diſcretion & knowledge. And although our faith be not a worldly ſcience: Yet doth it require skill to be taught vs at Gods Eſa.54.13. hande as the Prophet ſaieth. One point then is this, that when we preach Gods word, it is not for vs to ſay that men ſhoulde not iudge of our doctrine, or that we ſhoulde not yeelde any account thereof. For that were in vaine to be ſpoken, and not onely needeleſſe, but alſo vnreaſonable, that a falſe Prophet ſhould be puniſhed and no examination had of him, nor any means to try him and to take knowledge of his caſe. We ſee heere in fewe words then, that God hath giuen his Church leaue to inquire of mens doctrines, and that hee woulde haue his prophetes accountable, ſo as they ſhoulde bee bounde to yeelde a reaſon of their doctrine, and to ſhewe that it is of God. And this condition was neuer refuſed, neither of the Prophets nor of the Apoſtles, who at all times when they were accuſed of falſe doctrine, were readie to ſhewe openly that they were ſent of God, and that they had behaued themſelues faithfully. And eue͂ ſo muſt we do at this day. And thereby will all tyranny be ſhut out. If a man woulde nowadayes examine the doctrine of the Pope: he ſaieth it is not lawfull. And why ſo? Becauſe I ſit in the Apoſtolike ſea, ſaith he. And ment not God to prouide for his Church? He ſaith expreſly that the Prophet which is ſent of him, ſhall haue his woorde in his mouth. To whom doeth God ſpeake? He ſpeaketh generally of all that euer were ſent by him. For I haue prooued alreadie that this text is not meant of Moſes alone, and of them that liued vnder the olde Teſtament: but that it extendeth euen vnto vs alſo, and comprehends in it the whole reigne of our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt. Seeing then that God hath not excepted either Pope or any man elſe: it is to be concluded, that their doctrine may, yea and ought to be examined. And ſo wee ſee that the Papiſts in theſe dayes haue but a buckler of ſnowe, in that they beare men in hande that they bee exempted from yeelding any account. For our Lord hath declared the cleane contrarie as we ſee.

And we muſt marke further, that it is not ynough to haue the title of a Prophet, but the effect muſt be had alſo. And wherein doth that conſiſt? In this, that they which ſpeake in Gods name, haue his worde in their mouth. He ſaith not, they muſt but onely haue his ſpirite, howbeit that hee addeth that alſo. And euen in this text of Eſay hee ſaieth, My ſpirite ſhall reſt vpon him. Eſa.59.21. But doth that ſerue to exclude the worde? No: they bee thinges linked together with vnſeparable bonde. It is ſaide, my ſpirite ſhall bee vppon thee, and my worde ſhall bee in thy mouth. But what ſaieth the Pope to aduaunce himſelfe? I haue Gods ſpirite. And where is his worde? O: let that come behinde for I haue a greater and farre excellenter reuelation of mine owne. As for Gods worde, it is but an Apſie: the greate myſteries haue beene reuealed to mee by the holy Ghoſt. See how this diuell will needes ſet vp himſelfe aboue all order of the Church, and aboue all direction that God hath ſet downe to rule his Church by, in that hee will haue the Goſpell to bee preached nowadayes in his name, and his worde to bee in the mouthes of thoſe whom hee hath ſet in that office. Is it not a helliſh kinde of diuorcement, to breake the thinges ſo aſunder, which God hath ioyned together? It is all one as if a man woulde clyue the skies, and plucke downe one halfe of the ſtarres, and more too. For neither Sunne, nor Moone, nor any other creatures are comparable to Gods Maieſtie, which vttereth it ſelfe both by his ſpirite and by his word.

Nowe he hath cuppled them two together, and it is not lawfull to take the one of them and to leaue the other. And therefore let vs learne that as many as will nowadayes bee taken for teachers in the Church, muſt haue the charge to bring Gods worde with them, and alſo muſt haue his ſpirite: that is to ſaye, they muſt haue the gift of expounding the holy ſcripture, they muſt haue ſuch vnderſtanding as belongeth thereto, and they muſt bee faithfull ſo as they put forth nothing of their owne, but onely follow the trade that is appointed them, ſo as they may euer proteſt in the ende, that God hath ſpoken vnto vs. And that if any man doe ſteppe vp againſt them, they may ſay with Moſes, Who am I? As for mee, I haue brought you Exod.16.7. the meſſage that was committed to mee of God: nowe goe your wayes and ſtriue with him for it. All they then that will bee knowen to bee teachers of the Chriſtian Church, muſt haue the ſaide modeſtie: and then may wee boldly (as ſhalbe ſhewed more at large to morrowe) deſpiſe all ſuch as preſume to ſpeake in Gods name, & in the meane while go beyond their bounds, and will not ſubmit themſelues to the condition which God will haue to be common to all his Prophets.

Nowe let vs kneele downe before the Maieſtie of our good God with acknowledgment of our faultes, praying him to make vs feele them better than wee haue done, and to leade vs to ſuch amendment, as we may be willing to be ouermaſtred of him, and perceiue that all our affections are frowarde, and that all the ſenſe and wit which wee haue in vs, is vtter confuſion. Wherefore let vs be willing to ſubmit our ſelues wholy to his will, deſiring him to cauſe the ſame to be ſo vttered vnto vs, as wee may not walke wanderingly and at alauenture, but be throughly certifyed and aſſured by his ſpeaking vnto vs, that we ſhall be guided to him, becauſe the doctrine of his Goſpell is the right way to ſaluation, wherein we cannot goe aſtray: and yͭ we may be confirmed more and more in the ſame, vntil we haue no more need to be taught by yͤ meanes of men, but are come to the ſinging of eternall prayſes vnto him in the company of the Angels. That it may pleaſe him to graunt this grace not onely to vs, but alſo to all people and nations of the earth, &c.

On Wednesday the iiii. of December. 1555.

The Cxi. Sermon which is the fifth vpon the eighteenth Chapter.

21 And if thou ſay in thy heart, howe ſhall wee knowe the woorde which the Lord hath not ſpoken vnto him:

22 When a Prophet ſpeaketh in the name of the Lorde, and the thing that hee hath ſpoken commeth not to paſſe: that is a woorde which the Lorde hath not ſpoken vnto him, but the Prophet hath ſpoken it preſumptuouſly; and therefore be not afraide of him.

Yeſterday was ſhewed why Moſes ſetteth downe here a Lawe for falſe Prophets, to the ende they ſhoulde bee puniſhed for ſeeking to corrupt Gods truth, and for abuſing their office. For he had declared before, that as many as wil be knowen to be of Gods houſe and ſheepfolde, muſt ſubmit themſelues to the common order, which is to heare the Prophets whom hee hath ſent. But yet muſt there be a meane in ſo doing. For were the bridle layd in their neckes which ſpeake, and were there an abſolute authoritie giuen them: what a thing were that? Great confuſion would inſue thereof. Therefore like as our Lorde bindeth the whole body of his Church to the hearing of his word and doctrine when it is preached: ſo wil he haue thoſe to bee ruled, which haue the charge to teach others, to the intent they preſume not to put forth any doctrine of their deuiſing, but faithfully deliuer the things that are commanded them of God, and which they haue receiued as it were from his owne mouth. That was the meaning of Moſes, to the end that ſuch as haue preheminence ſhoulde not abuſe it, and that the people alſo ſhould al of them yeeld themſelues teachable, and ſo there might bee no tyranny in Gods Church, but good order in all poynts. For if it might bee Lawfull for euery man to refuſe the doctrine, as who would ſay, I am wiſe ynough, I know how to behaue my ſelfe, I am able to teach others: and againe, I can reade it at home in mine owne houſe: if ſuch libertie were giuen; all woulde goe to hauocke. And on the contrarie parte, if the partie that hath commiſſion to beare abroade the word of God, ſhould ſay, I am not to yeeld account to any body, it is not for any man to examine my doctrine whether it bee good and true or otherwiſe: it were a tyrannous Lordlyneſſe, whereby God ſhould be excluded from hauing any preheminenc or audience among vs. So then, we muſt keepe the meane that is ſhewed here by Moſes, which is, that al ſuch as diſobey the common order muſt bee puniſhed and cut off from Gods people: and therewithall, that they which are in office to ſpeake, doe take good heede that it is not for thē to ſet foorth their owne dreames and dotages, but to behaue themſelues as Gods meſſengers, faithfully and without adding any thing of their owne.

Now let vs come to that which Moſes addeth here: *If thou ſay in thy hart, how ſhall I know when a Propheſie is not of God?* It is ſayd, *If the Prophet tel thee a thing which commeth not to paſſe, aſſure thy ſelfe he is not ſent, but he doth it altogether of pride: and therefore he ſhall be puniſhable.* Here wee haue to marke, that in this place God hath not ſet downe al the tokens whereby the falſe Prophets may be diſcerned from the true. And for proofe hereof, the office of Prophets was not onely to tell of thinges to come, but alſo to giue folke good inſtruction, to exhort them to amendment of lyfe, and to edify them in faith. As for example, wee ſee that the Prophets did not onely ſay ſuch a thing ſhall befall: but alſo confirmed the couenant whereby God had adopted the people of Iſraell, and tolde them of the comming of the redeemer on whom the hope of all Gods children was grounded. Moreouer they comforted the ſorrowfull, by preaching the promiſes of Gods fauour vnto them; therewithall they threatened the people when they became diſordered; they diſcouered their faultes, and tranſgreſſions; they cyted ſinners to Gods iudgement to make them humble themſelues. All theſe thinges belonged to the office of the Prophet. So then there were other tokens beſides that which Moſes ſetteth downe here, whereby to diſcerne falſe Prophets aright. And in very deed if we will know whether a Prophet ſerueth God

Rom.12.6.

faithfully or no; wee muſt compare the thinges that are cleane contrarie. We knowe that the true touchſtone whereby to try the goodneſſe of any doctrine, is the referring of all thinges vnto faith, (as Saint Paul ſaith thereof,) and to the gloryfying of God, that men be taught to put their whole truſt in the grace of our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt, to miſlyke of themſelues and to be aſhamed of their own doings, & to frame themſelues to a true amendment. Thus is it a true tryall of good doctrine, when we ſee ẏ preacher indeuour that God may be purely honored and ſerued, and that the prayſe of all power, wiſedome, and righteouſneſſe be yeelded vnto him. That doctrine is alwayes good, and that is an infallible rule. When men are condemned in themſelues; when they be ſhewed that there is nothing but corruption in their nature, and that they be accurſed of God; when they be ſo beaten downe as they wote not what to doe, but onely to craue forgiueneſſe lyke wretched ſinners: that is a ſure doctrine. For faith leadeth vs thereunto, and compaſſeth it as a certeine rule. Againe, when ſinnes are condemned by Gods lawe, and men are ſhewed what true repentance is, to wit, a miſlyking of their ſinnes & a deſiring to be gouerned by Gods ſpirit, and to bee altogether chaunged: that is a ſure doctrine. Moreouer, when men are tolde that they muſt flee to God for refuge, and call vppon him onely, and not be vnthankfull to him for his helping and ſuccoring of them: the doctrine alſo is of the holy ſcripture, and men cannot faile in embracing of it. If it be ſayd that the very vſe of the Sacraments is to leade vs to our Lord Ieſus Chriſt, and to aſſure vs the better of the benefites which he bringeth vs that we may be partakers of them, and that God alſo putteth vs in poſſeſſion of thẽ: that alſo is a trueth which ought not to be reuoked nor doubted of. And hereof there is no diſputing to be made: for men knowe that in thoſe pointes is nothing but good doctrine. On the contrarie part, a man may iudge that a doctrine is falſe, when it darkeneth or diminiſheth the glorie of God. If the thing that belongeth to God bee plucked away from him to be beſtowed vpon creatures: it is a practiſe of Satans to turne vs out of the right way. Againe, if one doe puffe vp men with pride and ouerweening; and make them beleeue that they be able folke, & ſo rock them aſleepe in their ſinnes: or if he teach them to ſerue God with pelting toyes, and to forget his Lawe, and in the meane while to giue mens inuentions their ful ſcope: or if the Sacraments be vſed but as light or fond paſtimes: a man may eaſily ſee that ſuch doctrine is leawd and curſed, and that it was forged in Satans ſhop.

Furthermore, whereas nowadayes men are inquiring whereon to ſtay in ẏ middeſt of theſe troubles and diuerſities of opinions that are in the world: it is no very hard thing to doe, ſo they be attentiue and diſcreete in diſcerning after the maner that our Lord hath ſhewed vs. For all the whole doctrine of poperie tẽdeth to none other end, but to aduaunce men, and to puffe them vp in ſuch wiſe with their owne deſerts, as they may be halfe at defiance with God, as though they could accuſe him. Againe, it ſendeth men too and fro. In ſtead of putting their truſt in the onely freegoodneſſe of God, and in ſtead of imbracing our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt: men are taught other infinite meanes to ſaue themſelues. Moreouer, in ſteed of hauing the only Lawe of God for their onely rule in all thinges, and for their onely holyneſſe and perfection: men haue ſet out their owne trifling traditions. Thus may ye eaſily iudge of theſe thinges. And what is to be ſayd of their Sacraments? It is euident that they be meere witcheries in the Popedome, ſo as Ieſus Chriſt is driuen a great way off by them. and men make idols of the viſible ſignes & liueleſſe creatures, and Satan hath ſo imbrued the wretched world with his illuſions, that men are become ſtarke beaſtes. Now then, if a man intend to make trial of a good doctrine; he ſhal find the thinges which I ſpake of afore, to be ſure & infallible markes thereof. But in this text our Lord meant onely to tel vs that he will diſcouer the falſe prophet, at leaſtwiſe one way or other, whereof hee ſetteth downe one kinde here.

I haue told you alreadie that there are diuers other meanes to diſcerne the true doctrine from the falſe: but none of thoſe come in queſtion here. Our Lorde hath tolde vs, No no, yee ſhall not be beguiled ſo long as ye indeuour to follow the trueth that proceedeth from me. If a deceiuer haue any countenance among you; I will make his leawdnes to be layd open: I will giue you ſome ſuch token thereof, as ye may always keepe your ſelues vndefiled, ſo ye haue the mind and zeale to ſticke to my pure worde. Thus much concerning this text, which importeth a kinde of promiſe, as if our Lord ſhould tell his people that he would diſcouer the hypocriſie of deceiuers, and not ſuffer them to reigne euer. but that in the end they ſhall in ſome reſpect or other come to confuſion. Now we ſee the principall drift of Moſeſes wordes.

Deut.13.2.

But here a queſtion might be moued. For heretofore in the thirteenth Chapter, it was ſaid that if a Prophet tolde a thing to come, and the ſame came to paſſe in deede: yet was he not to be beleeued, becauſe God would ſuffer ſuch thinges to try his people withall. And here it is ſayd that a falſe Prophet ſhall be knowen and iudged by the not falling out of the things which he propheſieth. Now here ſeemeth to be ſome contrarietie. But the ſolution is eaſie, in marking that though a falſe prophet be knowen by his lying: yet it followeth not that he ſhould be takẽ and deemed a true Prophet becauſe it falleth out that he ſpeaketh ſome trueth. Truely if he ſpake the trueth at all times and in all caſes, then were he a true Prophet. But hee may well ſay the trueth in ſome reſpect, (which may be done for ſome iuſt puniſhment from God, as is declared in this ſame text:) and yet he ſhall be but a deceiuer neuertheleſſe. As how? Put the caſe that folke ſeeke to bee ſoothed in their vices, and are loth to be waked and quickened vp as they ſhould be, and had rather to be borne with: (for ſuch hath the faſhion of ẏ world euer bin:)

Well, God ſeeing ſuch leawdneſſe, ſuffereth deceiuers to plaſter them, and to beare the folke in hand (which are ſo deſirous to ſleepe in their wilfulneſſe) that their faultes are nothing. Here ye ſee how thoſe men are beguiled, becauſe of the deſire which they had before. And God addeth the ſame thing moreouer, namely that thoſe falſe Prophetes and deceiuers ſhall haue wherewith to confirme their doctrine, that they which were imbrued wͭ lyes before, may become more wilful. For they will thinke then, yͭ there is no more daunger in beleeuing them. And what is the cauſe hereof? Euen Gods iuſt vengeance. Foraſmuch as men ſhut their eyes at the light, & wil needs dwel in darkneſſe: God giueth Satan the bridle. By meanes whereof it commeth to paſſe, yͭ the falſe prophets doe ſometimes ſpeake yͤ trueth; as is to be ſeene euen at this day. For what a number are there to be found, which ſeek after witchcraft to aboliſh yͤ authoritie of Gods word? Ye ſhall ſee on yͤ one ſide a ſorte of curious heads, & on yͤ other ſide another ſorte yͭ haue no feare of God: & yet yͤ mark which they all ſhoote at, is to put away Gods word, yͭ they might not be ruled by it. And in yͤ meane while they wil needs haue ſome Wizard to tel them of their good fortunes: & our Lord ſuffereth thẽ to be drawen by ſuch meanes into al yͤ deceites of Satan, notwithſtanding yͭ ſome trueth bee mingled therewͭall. Now thẽ, though a falſe Prophet ſpeake yͤ truth, yet is not that a warrãt that his doctrine is true: our Lord will not haue men to credit him a whit yͤ more for yͭ: for we ſee for what cauſe he putteth the trueth oftẽtimes into the mouthes of deceiuers. And ſo, notwithſtanding the thinges that are ſet downe here, yet doth it abide true ſtill, yͭ when our Lord is minded to haue pitie vppon his people, and not to ſuffer them to bee abuſed by falſe doctrine: he giueth them ſome token whereby to find the deceiuer: and whereas earſt he was in eſtimation, and might haue amazed the wretched world: God bewrayeth his leawdneſſe, & ſo he is found to be a lyer. Thus wee ſee now the whole meaning of Moſes, concerning the thinges that are conteyned in this text.

Theſe thinges were performed among the people of olde time, and the examples thereof which we ſee, ought to ſhewe vs the vſe of them and what fruit we ſhould gather of this warning which Moſes giueth. When the Prophets meant to proue that they were ſent of God: they would ſay, I am no prophet if this come not to paſſe. See how Ieremie ſubmitteth himſelf to the Law,
Ier.28,9. ſaying: I tell ye, ye ſhall be led captiue to Babylon, and thinke not your ſelues to be diſcharged by yͭ which hath hapned vnto you already: (for the citie had bin taken once before, and therefore they thought themſelues diſcharged by being become tributaries after that faſhion to the king of Babylon: and ſo they thought themſelues eſcaped:) No no, ye muſt indure yet more. This chaſtiſement, which hath not amended you at al, ſeemeth ouer hard and too ſharp a rod vnto you. But foraſmuch as god hath called you, and you continue ſtill vnamended: he is feine to deale now more roughly with you: the temple muſt be beaten downe, the citie muſt be razed, you your ſelues muſt be no more a people, there muſt be no more ſacrifice, all thinges muſt be ſo cleane taken away, as ye may ſeeme to bee vtterly periſhed. To this extremitie muſt yee come, becauſe ye haue abuſed Gods patience euen vnto this houre. And if it come not ſo to paſſe, take me no more for a Prophet, but let me bee ſtoned to death, for I am well worthie of it. But I am well aſſured of that which I haue foretold you, for God himſelf hath told it me. We ſee how the Prophets ſubmitted themſelues to the Lawe, & alſo did ſet themſelues againſt the falſe-prophets; as we ſee by the example of Ieremie, when Ananias came and ſayd, No, the veſſels of the Temple ſhall be brought again from Babylon, and the kingdome of Dauid ſhal be ſet vp againe in our time, and we ſhall floriſh more thã euer we did: and thereupon did breake the chain of Ieremie, who walked about the ſtreetes as it were with a with about his necke. For it behoued him to repreſẽt the captiuitie, becauſe men were ſo blind in their ſinnes, that they tooke all Gods threatnings to be but a ieſt, and thereupon did make euen a mocke of them. And therefore it behoued the Prophet to goe about the citie after that faſhion with a with about his neck, as who ſhould ſay, Euen thus ſhall you be miſerably haled into captiuitie, yee make a goodly ſhewe, nowe yee triumph, ye thinke it a goodly thing to beſot your ſelues in your pleaſures and delightes; but this yoke that I weare, ſerueth to ſhewe that you your ſelues ſhalbe put vnder the yoke of ſubiectiõ. Behold, Ananias breaks me this yoke aſunder, ſaying: no, we ſhall liue ſtill at libertie, and be deliuered from that bondage. It is a wonder. Yea, but how did theſe wretched and wicked folkes afterward behaue themſelues? How did God ratify the thing that Ananias had ſpoken? I wiſhe it might be ſo, (ſayd Ieremie:) but yet muſt I goe further and tell him his condemnation, ſeeing the Lord hath commaunded mee ſo to doe. So then, we ſee that Ieremie ratifyed the thing which hee had vttered in the name of God, and that maner of dealing was common among all the Prophets. Wherefore let vs marke that our Lordes intent here was to declare that he wil not ſuffer vs to be beguiled, ſo wee be willing to receiue his worde, and to bee taught thereby, and be diligent in diſcerning betweene trueth and falſhood. Although there be neuer ſo many falſe Prophets, and that Satan ſtriue continually to turne vs away from goodnes: yet ſhall we euer haue ſome diſcretion; that is to ſay, God wil giue vs ſome token whereby to keepe ourſelues from being deceiued. It is a promiſe that can neuer faile vs. And therefore let vs holde vs thereto, and ſeeke to obey our God. His reaching out of his hand is enough for vs: and though there be neuer ſo many meanes to deceiue vs; yet will he not ſuffer them to preuaile, according to that that is promiſed here. Wherefore let vs looke to our ſelues. Whereas we haue no Prophets nowadayes to foretell vs thinges to come, or yͭ haue reuelations aforehãd of warre, peſtilence, and famine: it is becauſe we

haue greater perfection of doctrine, than the people had in old time. We therefore muſt hold our ſelues contented with the Goſpell, for it is yͤ fulnes of light. But yet therewithall let vs alſo haue an eye to the thinges which are written, and let vs examine the doctrines that are preached vnto vs: and if we finde them to be drawen out of the Lawe, the Prophetes, and the Goſpel: let vs be aſſured of them that they are certein. And if we vſe that touchſtone continually to try things by: ſurely God wil preſerue vs frõ all Satans falſhoods. Thus ye ſee what we haue to remember vppon that text.

Now it is ſayd expreſly that *ſuch a Prophet ſhal dye the death*. And that is a cauſe alſo why our Lord ſayth, that he wil giue the ſayd marke. For it were foule treacherie to iudge & condemne a Prophet without knowing why or wherefore. If a guiltleſſe perſon ſhould bee condemned vnder colour of ſome euill deed not vttered: it were too great wrong & vniuſtice to be done to a mortall man. But if a bringer of Gods word be condemned, euen as though he had done amiſſe in his office, without being found faultie: that toucheth not the creature only, neither is the wrong done to a mortal man alone: but it is an outrage done vnto God alſo, & that is high treaſon to his perſon. Ye ſee then that the cauſe why Moſes ſaith here, that God will diſcouer the falſe Prophets, is to the end they ſhould bee iudged, and alſo to warne folk that they ſhould not couet to be foaded with vaine hope, as I haue tolde you that yͤ maner of the world is cõtinualy to doe. The prophets had hard hold from time to time with the moſt part of yͤ Iewes, becauſe they brought nothing but threatnings. Theſe Prophets (quoth yͤ Iewes) doe trouble vs, & are too importunate vpon vs, they ſpeak of nothing but of Gods wrath & curſings: & ſhould they not as well tell vs of gladſome and pleaſant things? Thoſe are the thinges which the world requireth. Yea but in ſo dooing we prouoke Gods wrath. We would haue him to be our friend: & wee on our ſide are enemies to him. If we came to God wͭ true repentãce & ſought him as our father: wee ſhould haue no tydings but of peace & proſperitie to delight in. But what? We ſuffer not God to be fauorable to vs, nor to ſhew his loue towards vs. For we make war againſt him as I ſaid afore. Therefore let vs learn yͭ god wil turn yͤ ſayings of yͤ falſe Prophets to the contrarie, ſo as when they promiſe folke welfare and peace, miſchief ſhall inſue, whereby they ſhall be found to haue vſed vaine flatterie. Wherfore let vs not deſire to be rocked aſleepe with mens deceitfull ſpeeches. For what ſhall it boote vs to be acquit by them yͭ haue no power at all: when we ſhall be condemned before God? And let vs not tary till God to our coſt doe bewray yͤ leawdneſſe of the falſe Prophets, & ſo we be caught in ſome calamitie. But let vs preuent Gods wrath as ſoon as we ſee our ſins, & let vs be touched with them. And if there be any yͭ flatter vs, let vs not giue eare to them to bee ſeduced to our confuſion.

Now our Lord ſetteth downe here two ſortes of falſe Prophets. *The one is of thẽ that ſpeake falſely in his name: and the other, is of them that ſpeake in the name of ſtraunge Gods*. Then is it not enough for a Prophet to ſhroud himſelfe vnder yͤ name of the liuing God: but he muſt alſo execute his office faithfully. Neither is it enough for him to be put in commiſſion by God, except he execute it with a pure and vpright conſciẽce. For we ſee yͭ the deceiuers haue ſometimes obiected thus againſt Gods ſeruãts: what? Am not I a Prophet as well as thou? Yes verily, thou art in office: but ſee how thou diſchargeſt thy ſelfe of it. Let vs marke then, yͭ all the matter lyeth not in ſpeaking in Gods name: and yͭ doth experience well ſhewe vs. For the Pope at this day will ſpeake in Gods name; and yet we ſhall finde nothing but ſtarke abhominations in his doctrine: there is nothing there but a gulfe of hell to ſwallowe vp mens ſoules into deſtruction. And therefore let vs marke well, that when a Prophet ſpeakes in Gods name, we muſt examin whether it be truly or no. For if Gods name bee abuſed, yͤ expreſſing thereof is dubble wickedneſſe. And yͭ is yͤ cauſe why Moſes declareth here, firſt that if a Prophet bring vs word in yͤ name of yͤ liuing god, we muſt conſider whether the word be committed vnto him or no. That is one point which wee haue to marke here. And becauſe the wretched worlde hath bin beguiled vnder falſe pretence of Gods name: let vs learne to make narrower ſearch, and not ſuffer our ſelues to be ſeduced at alauẽture, and ſo to be led by the noſes lyke brute beaſts. True it is that Gods name ought to haue ſuch reuerence among vs, yͭ we ſhould all hũble our ſelues to hearkẽ to yͤ things yͭ are ſet foorth or ſpokẽ of him. But yet muſt we hold yͤ meane, as was declared yeſterday; which is, yͭ wee muſt not receiue all things indifferently yͭ are ſpoken; but yͭ our faith muſt be the tryer of them. For our Lorde hath not left vs his holy Scripture for naught. It is yͤ true touchſtone whereby we muſt try all doctrines, yͭ we may iudge of them aright.

The ſecond ſort of falſe Prophets which Moſes hath ſet downe heere, is *of thoſe which ſpeake in the name of Idols*; which abuſe crept in at length euen among the Iewes. For after that thinges were once growen out of kinde; All tooke vpon them to be Soothſayers and Prophets: but that was altogether in the name of idols, according to the cities wherein they dwelt. Whereſoeuer there was a Temple: there was a Iewe that ſaid, we haue the foreknowledge of thinges to come, euen by byrth: and yet in the meane while they ſolde their Propheſies, as theſe deciuers doe which trot vp and down the world, and ſay they can tell folkes their fortunes. And it was a common practiſe of all the Iewes, as appeareth euen by the prophane hiſtories, when they were once become idolaters. Surely it is a great vnſhamefaſtneſſe of them, to make ſuch boaſt of the gift of Propheſie. And why ſo? They haue that gift becauſe they be the linage of Abraham, becauſe they be circumciſed, becauſe they bee Gods owne people and heritage, and becauſe they haue the Lawe, and looke for their promiſed redeemer: and yet for all this, they giue ouer themſelues to ſuch abhominatiõs, that they will needes borrowe the meanes of idolaters. And we ſee in maner the lyke altogether nowadayes in the Popedome: For the Prieſtes and Monkes boaſt themſelues to haue the office of praying for yͤ whole Church and yet in yͤ mean while they will ſing a Maſſe of our Lady, and a Maſſe of ſuch a Saint & ſuch a Saint: and ſo idols are intermingled with the maieſtie of the liuing God. For although yͤ Saints as in reſpect of thẽſelues, be no idols: yet doe they make them ſo, which doe ſo abuſe their names. And therefore let vs learne to keepe our ſelues from both theſe ſorts of falſhoodes, by hearing no man ſpeake but in the name of God. For wee know there is nothing but vanitie in mans minde, and that we ſhall be deceiued if we giue our ſelues to any mortall creature: and therefore onely God is to be heard. Againe, when Gods name is pretended, let vs try whether it be in trueth or no: we haue his word, we cannot lye: and hee will giue vs the vnderſtanding thereof, if we be lowly and meeke. And if we ſubmit our ſelues wholy vnto him; it is certeine that he will neuer ſuffer vs to be deceiued. Well may we be tẽpted, as we haue ſeene in the thirteenth Chapter, yͭ God wil try vs whether we loue him or no. But if there be ſuch an vpright minde to be found in vs yͭ we wil ſeeke to ſerue him purely, & to obey him: ſurely hee will deliuer vs frõ all deceit. Thus ye ſee in effect what we haue to remember vpon this text.

Now in the end it is ſayd, that when a falſe prophet is found out by tryall, *then it ſhall appeare that he ſpake vppon preſumption, and therefore be not afraid of him.* Here are two ſayings which import two good and profitable warninges. The one is, yͭ he which aduanceth himſelfe beyond meaſure, ſpeaketh proudly. For is there a more diueliſhe pride, than for a mortal man to thruſt forth him ſelf as if he were an inſtrument of Gods ſpirit, as though he were an Angel frõ heauen, whẽ in very deed he is but a lyer, and hath nothing but winde in him? If I take vpon me another mans name, & ſay, ſuch a one hath giuen me commiſſion: is it not too leawd a falſhood? The partie to whom I haue done yͤ wrong may come and ſay, Ah thou lyar, how durſt thou abuſe my name? Such dealing (I ſay) would bee counted great iniurie. Then if a mortal man auaunce himſelfe in the name of God, (as for example, if I ſtep vp into yͤ pulpit & require audiẽce in yͤ name of God, & yet notwͭſtanding doe fal to ſeducing of yͤ people:) yͭ is a pride which paſſeth al others, as I ſaid afore. For it is not ſimple lying, it is not ſingle deceit, it is not a ſimple falſifying of this or yͭ: but a turning of Gods trueth into vntruth, & a wrapping of God in our falſhoods, & an vnhallowing of his holy & ſacred name. Therfore let vs mark wel, how it is not for naught yͭ Moſes ſayth yͭ the falſe Prophets ſhall be condemned, yea euen becauſe of their proud & preſũptuous dealing, and for their vntollerable raſhnes. And hereby as many as haue yͤ charge to beare abroad Gods word are warned to walke warely & circumſpectly, & to take heed yͭ in their preaching of yͤ word, they intermingle nothing of their owne: but yͭ they haue a ſpeciall care, yͭ all their ſayinges be referred to the true & pure expounding of yͭ which is written, & that they doe nothing elſe but apply Gods word to yͤ vſe of the people: As for exãple, I ſtand not here to make newe Lawes, nor to forge new articles of faith. What then? Our Lord hath vttered his whole will vnto vs in the holy ſcripture, & it is not lawful to ad any thing thereto. What am I to do thẽ? wherfore do we preach yea & that continually day by day? To the ende yͭ the ſcripture ſhould be well vnderſtood, that it ſhould be applyed to our vſe, & that men might know how to benefit thẽſelues therby; as how to imbrace Gods promiſes, how to order their lyfe aright, & how to liue quietly euery man after his owne calling. The ſhewing of theſe thinges is to miniſter force to yͤ holy ſcripture yͭ wee may vnderſtand it and fare the better by it, and bee edifyed therewith. Such (ſay I) as haue yͤ charge of preaching Gods word, ought to haue a ſpecial regard of theſe thinges.

Deut.12.32

Howbeit foraſmuch as no creature no not euen yͤ Angels of heauen, are able to execute ſo high & noble a cõmiſſion: we muſt pray God to guide & gouern vs, bearing in minde therewithall (as S. Paul ſayth) yͭ no man could ſay yͭ Ieſus is yͤ Lord, (yͭ is to ſay, no man can giue glory to yͤ ſonne of God,) but by the holy Ghoſt: & to bee ſhort, yͭ he which is aduanced higheſt to teach others, ought to abace himſelf loweſt, for feare leaſt any thing may ſcape him which hee hath not receiued of God, ſo as he may ſafely proteſt yͭ he hath not amed at any other end, than the worſhipping & ſeruing of God, euen according to yͤ doctrine which hee hath deliuered heretofore in his holy ſcripture. Againe the people are to be exhorted to take heede yͭ Gods glory bee not defaced. For yͤ Papiſtes think it an humilitie allowable before God, & a very good & commẽdable deuotion, to be ſo brutiſh as to receiue all yͭ euer is put vnto thẽ. O ſay they, we muſt ſubmit our ſelues to our mother holy Church, yea but in ſo doing they be guiltie of yͤ defacing of God himſelf & of yͤ bereauing & robbing of him of his authoritie. For why? The Pope & his cleargie are ſo full of ſtinking pride & ſtatelyneſſe, that they make Lawes & ſubdue mens conſciences to thẽ at their pleaſure. Ye ſee thẽ yͭ that is an vſurping of tyrannie ouer Gods people. They excommunicate all good doctrine, to ſet forth their owne corruptions, & ſo they defile the pure ſimplicitie of Gods worde. Well, they be ſuffered in theſe thinges, yea & mainteined & defended in their malitiouſneſſe. And in the meane while God is halfe ſhaken off, & no account is made of him: for men doe ouermaiſter him. For as for all them that hearken to falſe prophets after that faſhion, doe they not ſet vp their diueliſh pride to the intent to thruſt downe God thereby?

1.Cor.12.3.

Let vs mark well then, yͭ whereas Moſes ſpeaketh here of yͤ pride or ouerheaddineſſe of yͤ deceiuers: it is not onely to make them to bee miſlyked, puniſhed, and cut off from among yͤ people: but alſo to warne vs that if a man preſume to mingle any of his inuentions with Gods word or goe about to alter any part of the order yͭ he hath ſet: wee muſt bee no fauorers of ſuch raſhneſſe. For in ſo dooing wee diminiſhe Gods honor, and become guiltie of the vtter defacing of him as much as in vs lyeth. And therefore all of vs in general, as well the preacher as the hearer, are warned to conſider what the plaine reuerence is which God requireth at our hand. It conſiſteth not in ceremonies, nor in vaine bablinges as men ſay: but in this, that he onely doe ſpeake and all mens mouthes be kept ſhut. Not ẏ there ſhould be no Shepheardes, to preach the doctrine vnto vs: but that all ſhould be fetched from him, and he be held as chiefe Maiſter. The way then to beate down all pride and raſhneſſe, is that the holy ſcripture haue his full force, ſo as men vnderſtand that that is the ſtandard vnder which we muſt gather our ſelues, and that God will be obeyed by mens ſubmitting of themſelues therunto. For without that, there will be nothing but pride and ouerſtatelyneſſe among vs. And ſo ye ſee that the deuotion of the Papiſtes is diueliſh, becauſe they haue left God to ſubmit themſelues to creatures, and ſuffer thēſelues to be led lyke beaſtes without any diſcretion.

And in the ſame reſpect is it ſayd in the end, *Thou ſhalt not be afraid of ſuch a Prophet*. He ſaith not, thou ſhalt not feare ſuch a prophet: but word for worde it is, thou ſhalt not be afraid *of ſuch a Prophet*. For here God meant to arme his faithfull ones with conſtancie, that they might not be put out of countenance by any faire diſguiſement: but that when they are once inſtructed in the faith, they ſhould defy all ſuch as vaunt thēſelues and come to make gay ſhewes vnder the name of God, as I haue tolde you afore, that ſometimes men are too fearefull. In deed there are that mocke at God and haue no feeling of conſcience at all, but ſet as light by the trueth as they doe by leaſings: & euen at this day, there are that make as much account of the Goſpell, as of ẏ abuſes of the Popedome: Ieſus Chriſt & the Pope are all one to them. What a ſorte of mockers are to be ſeene, which will needes bee coūted good Chriſtians becauſe they hold ſkorn of the popiſh ſuperſtitions; and yet in the meane while are deſpiſers of God and his word? Surely they be but dogges and hogs, without any feare of God or ciuil honeſtie. And yet is the worlde too ful of ſuch corruption and infection. Againe there are otherſome very tenderharted. Not ẏ it is not a vertue to ſtand in ſome feare: but becauſe they be ouerfearefull: when they be vexed with any ſcruple of conſcience, they wote not which way to turne them. For if an error be put vnto them, they dare not receiue it for feare: againe on the other ſide, if the trueth be put vnto them, their agreeing to it (if they doe agree) is not with any certeintie. Ye ſhall ſee a number ẏ are euer wauering, lyke reedes ſhaken with the winde. The Maſſe is holy with them, & the Goſpell is holy with them alſo, and yet they be certeine of none of both. Now our Lord will not haue vs to ſtand in any ſuch feare. He will haue vs to be ſure of his worde; & when his trueth is throughly proued vnto vs, he will haue vs to defy the world; & all the diuels of hell; Inſomuch ẏ if the very Angels of heauen ſhould ſet themſelues againſt the Goſpell, wee ſee how S. Paul ſayth that we muſt hold them for accurſed and excommunicate. God then will haue his worde honored ſo highly, that whē we once knowe it & are ſure of it, we muſt not be any more afrayd.

Gal.1.8.

It ſtandeth vs in hand to put this leſſon in vre nowadayes, becauſe the Popes thundring were able to make all the world to quake, if men were not armed aforehand againſt him, with ẏ thinges that are told vs here by Moſes. The Pope names himſelf Chriſtes vicar, ẏ head of the Church, S. Peters ſucceſſor, & the mainteiner of the Apoſtolike ſea, ſo as there is no Church of God but ẏ Church of Rome: nor any Shepheard, or Prelate, if the Pope be not head of all: nor any kingdome of Ieſus Chriſt, otherwiſe than in ẏ Popes perſon, who hath the keyes of the kingdome of heauen. Woulde not the alledging of all theſe thinges make the ſtouteſt of all to ſhrinke, if we were not armed againſt them? Yes: but when al theſe thinges are pretended, wee muſt conſider whether the reporter of thē do diſcharge his dutie faithfully. For if he ſpeake in Gods name, and yet be found to be a falſe harlot; hee is ẏ more to blame for abuſing ſo honorable a title. And the more he was eſteemed before, ẏ leſſe is he to bee regarded afterward. Let him thunder his belly full; yet ſhall all his excōmunications paſſe into ſmoke, and all his threatninges ſhall be but mere vanitie. The effect therefore of ẏ thinges which our Lord ment to ſay in this text, is ẏ being well aſſured of Gods word, and hauing examined all doctrine, (howbeit with humilitie,) & hauing vſed ẏ foreſayd touchſtone of the holy ſcripture: we may wel defye all thē ẏ cloke thēſelues vnder ẏ gay mantle of Gods name, abuſing their commiſſion & executing tyranny in ſtead of ſeruing the Church of God. I ſay we may defy all ẏ rable of them, & cry out againſt ẏ Pope & his abhominable wickedneſſe, & not be afraid of any thing ẏ he can doe vnto vs. For ſo lōg as we haue God on our ſide, wee may boldly hold ſkorne of the whole Popedome, how proude & ſtately ſoeuer they be there. That is the thing in effect which we haue to marke, ẏ wee bee not fearefull where God will haue vs to be ſtout. But ẏ when we haue his doctrine & truth, we muſt ſo profit our ſelues by thē, that whatſoeuer ẏ diuell doe practiſe, he may not turne vs aſide from ẏ way of ſaluation: but wee muſt hold on our courſe, according to this ſaying which we ſhall ſee hereafter, This is the way, walke ye therein: and alſo according to the Prophet Eſayes account who ſaith, This is the reſt. Therefore let vs continue therein, and holde on to the marke whereunto God calleth vs: and then can we not doe amiſſe.

Deut.30.19. Eſa.30.21.& 28.12.

Now let vs kneele downe before the Maieſtie of our good God with acknowledgement of our faults, praying him to make vs feele them better thā we haue done, & to ſtrengthen vs more and more by his word, ẏ his kingdome may be aduaunced among vs, & we indeuour ſo to ſerue & honor him, as we may be vnder his protection, and he mainteine vs in ſuch wiſe, that we knowing him to be our good father & Sauiour, may take the more courage to giue our ſelues wholy to him, all our lyfe long. And ſo let vs all ſay. Almightie God heauenly father, &c.

On Thurſday the v. of December. 1555.

The (Cxij Sermon which is the firſt vppon the nineteenth Chapter

WHen the Lord thy God ſhal haue rooted out the nations, whoſe lande the Lorde thy God giueth thee, ſo as thou arte owner of them and dwelleſt in their Cities and houſes:

2 Then ſhalt thou ſet thee out three Cities in the middeſt of the lande which the Lorde thy God wil giue thee to poſſeſſe.

3 Thou ſhalt prepare a way to them, and diuide the bounds of the land (which the Lorde thy God will giue thee to inherite) into three parts, that whoſoeuer hath committed manſlaughter may flee thither.

4 They ſhal ſerue for the manſleaer to flee thither, that he may liue: namely if he haue ſtriken his neighbour ignorantly, and haue not hated him aforetimes.

5 [As for example] if a man goe with his neighbour to the wood to fel timber, and he caſteth backe his hande with the axe in hewing the wood, and the head flieth off of the helue, and hitteth his neighbour that he dieth: he ſhall flee to one of thoſe Cities and liue:

6 To the intent that the next of his kinne followe not the manſleaer, while his heart is chafed, and ouertake him if the way be ouerlong, and put him to death though he bee guiltleſſe of the other mans death, foraſmuch as he hated him not before.

7 Therefore commaund I thee to appoint out three Cities.

ALthough yͤ Lawe that is ſet down here, ſerued for yͤ commõ weale of Iſrael: yet may we alſo fare the better for it at this day. For therby god meant to declare what puniſhment ought to be executed vppon ſuch as commit wilfull murder thorow malice and of ſet purpoſe. Alſo it ſheweth that we muſt not take yͤ for a crime, which a man dooth not willingly, but by chauncemedly as they terme it. True it is that ſuch thinges are not ſo caſuall but that God gouerneth them frõ aboue, as is ſhewed in another place, where it is ſayd, that if a man be lopping of a tree, and
Exod.21.13 a bough thereof doe hitte one vppon the head that he dye, it is God that had determined it ſo. And the holy ſcripture will not haue vs to attribute the falling out of thinges to fortune, but that wee ſhould knowe that God directeth all thinges, to the intent that although we ſee not his hande, yet wee ſhould vnderſtand by faith, that he ſetteth ſuch ſtore by our lyfe, that hee
Luke.12.7. hath numbred all the hayres of our heades, as is ſayd in another text. Moreouer, to come againe to the matter, it is ſhewed here that all faultes are willing, that is to ſay, that men doe them wittingly and of ſet purpoſe. But let vs goe foreward with the text that is ſet downe here. *God commaundeth the people of Iſraell to chooſe out three Cities, vntill he haue inlarged their boundes further.* For it behooued them to haue ſixe in al as wee ſhall ſee in the next lecture, and as is declared Iosu.20.1.7.
in the twentith chapter of Ioſua. Neuertheleſſe, vntill ſuch time as the people were in full and peaceable poſſeſſion of the land, Gods will was that they ſhould appoint out but three Cities of refuge, for all ſuch to flee vnto as had committed any manſlaughter by chaunce meddely (as they call it.) Notwithſtanding, leaſt any man ſhould abuſe that priuiledge, hee addeth what maner of manſleaers ſhoulde haue protection thereby. Such (ſayth he) as haue killed their neighbours vnwittingly: and thereof hee alledgeth an example. *If a man goe to fell timber, and the Axe ſlippeth out of his hand, and hitteth one ſo as hee dye, foraſmuch as the man purpoſed not to doe any ſuch deede, hee may flee and haue himſelfe in one of thoſe Cities.* Now wee muſt marke that it was not enough for a man to proteſt that he had done it but by miſchance: but it behooued him to haue it well proued, ſo as the partie that Luk.22.35.
was to inioy the priuiledge ſhould bee worthie of it, and the matter well knowen and the trueth of al thinges tryed out how the caſe ſtood by iuſt

examination:and ſpecially that there had bin no hatred betweene the parties aforetimes, ſo as it might appeare that there was none other cauſe of the committing of the ſlaughter, than Gods only determination,without any act done on mans behalfe otherwiſe than of minde to doe well. And the manſleaer that was able to prooue this, ſhould flee to one of thoſe Cities, and there tary till the death of the high Prieſt: and then hee was to returne home againe, becauſe in that while the heartburning of the deadmans kinſemen might bee appeaſed.

And hereby God ſheweth, firſt how greatly he would haue vs to abhorre the ſhedding of mans bloud: and it is a point which we ought to marke well. For thereby we perceiue what loue he beareth vs, in that our lyfe is ſo deare vnto him, and that he is ſo charie of it. If God made no more account of vs thā he doth of the brute beaſtes, hee would not ſet ſo much ſtore by our lyues. Therefore muſt wee needes conclude that he loueth vs with a fatherly loue,ſeeing our lyfe is ſo pretious to him. Beſides this, euery of vs ought to take knowledge hereby of his own duetie: for wee cannot doe any outrage or violence to our neighbor, but we muſt offend God deadly. And not without cauſe. For in ſo doing wee deface his image, as is ſayd in the ninth of Geneſis. Foraſmuch as God hath printed his image in men; whoſoeuer hurteth his neighbor maliciouſly, ſpiteth God to the vttermoſt of his power. And ſo are wee warned to abſteine from all euill dooing, and to liue in ſuch ſorte among men as no man bee hurt by vs. And in deede we ſee that the manſlaughters which are committed euen of neceſſitie, cary with them neuertheleſſe a kinde of defiling. As for example, when enemies are ſlayne in battel,although the thing bee lawefull, yet doth God ſay that it is a defiling of mens handes. Not that hee imputeth it for a crime, but to the intent that the man which is conſtreined to fight againſt his enemies, ſhould bee ſory to ſee the order of nature ſo troubled by reaſon of mens ſinnes, that whereas wee ought to bee as brethren, and to acknowledge our owne fleſhe in euery man that is made after our owne lykeneſſe: yet notwithſtanding wee be driuen to deſtroy them after that faſhion. Yee ſee then how that euen in the time of warre, he ẏ putteth on armour againſt his enemies ought to doe it, being ſorie in his heart, and to bethinke himſelfe that ſuch outrage happeneth not but through the great leawdneſſe of men. The meaning of all this, is that wee ſhould liue quietly, and euery man indeuour to maintein peace and concord, and haue our handes tyed for committing of any euill deedes.

Gen.9.6.

1.Chron.22 8,& 28,3.

And wheras God declareth how greatly manſlaughter diſpleaſeth him: let vs marke that(as ſaith Saint Iohn) before him all maner of hatred is accounted for murther. Then ought we to eſchewe all wrong dealing that may be done againſt men, for if wee haue any rancor or enmitie towardes them in our hartes, wee be guiltie of murther alreadie afore GOD. Marke that for one point. But here our Lorde acquitteth the partie that ſhall haue ſlayne a man vnwittingly. Behold (ſaith hee,) there ſhall no iudgement of death paſſe vppon ſuch a man: for there is none offence in him. Seeing that the heauenly Iudge hath pronounced ſuch ſentence: what creature dareth reply againſt it? Yee ſee then that ſuch a one is guitleſſe, and ſo declared to bee before God. Yet notwithſtanding hee muſt bee faine to forſake his owne houſe and inheritance,and go dwell in a ſtrange place, and ſuffer many incommodities. And why doth God vexe him ſo, ſith he findeth him guiltleſſe? Hee ſheweth vs that although the partie be faultleſſe, yet is it done for examples ſake, to the ende wee ſhoulde not admit any murderers among vs, but puniſh them as grieuouſly as may bee, and vtterly abhorre them. That is the cauſe why the partie that offendeth vnwittingly, ſhall neuertheleſſe abide ſome puniſhment, and become as a man that is put to his penance, to the intent that hee may humble himſelf and acknowledge in this wiſe: Truely, I meant not to doe any harme; and this miſchaunce is befalne mee vnwittingly: whereby God warneth mee that I haue great neede to pray him to rule both my handes and my feete. And moreouer foraſmuch as mans bloude hath bin ſhed by me; although there were none euil meant on my part: yet muſt I bee ſorie for it, and beare in minde that our Lorde maketh ſuch account of mans lyfe: as he wil haue it alwayes to bee had in eſtimation of vs. Let that ſerue for one point, concerning this lawe.

1.Iohn.3.15

And nowe for the ſecond poynt, Our Lord ſheweth vs that wee ought to preuent all daungers and occaſions, in reſpect whereof hee addeth that the manſleaer ſhal flee to one of thoſe Cities. And why? *For feare leaſt any of the deadmans kinſemen being moued to wrath, ſhoulde reuenge his neighbors death*, and ſo ſhoulde the miſchiefe bee dubbled. Now then, to auoyd this inconuenience, There muſt be Townes appointed for refuge. And hereby wee ſee that (as I ſayd afore) the Lorde will not haue vs to tary till the miſchiefe light vpon vs, but hee will haue vs to take the remedie of it. It might ſo fall out that ſome kinſeman of the deadmans being angrie with the matter would ſay; hee hath ſlayne my couſin, or my brother, and thereupon come running vppon the innocent partie in his rage, and kill him; whereby the land ſhould haue bin defiled with bloud. Therefore Gods will is that the partie which hath committed manſlaughter, ſhould get him out of the ſight of thoſe that might bee ſtirred vp to anger againſt him. But it is certeine that hee coulde not excuſe himſelfe, which ſhoulde ſo beare malice to the guiltleſſe partie. For what could he require of him? Lyeth it in man to ouerrule the things that come to paſſe by Gods prouidence, which is hidden to vs? Are wee able to withſtande it? Needs then muſt it be too ſpitefull hartburning and malice, that ſhould ſo moue a man to wrath againſt the partie that neither intended nor thought any euil . But although this commeth of infirmitie and of ſinne, yet hath our Lorde voutſafed to remedie that inconuenience. And ſo wee ſee that the lawes ſerue not to bring men to perfection, I meane the politike lawes that are made for ciuill gouernement. They ſerue not to ſtabliſhe perfect holineſſe among vs, but to remedie the vices whereunto we be inclined. Becauſe wee bee not throughly clenſed, our Lorde is faine to ſet barres about vs, to the intent that if our hearts incline to naughtineſſe, our handes may bee withhelde from performing the naughtie deſires that we haue conceiued in our mindes. Gods lawe is giuen vs to rule our hearts and minds by. For our Lorde not only commaundeth vs to abſteine Rom.7.7. from all euill, but alſo will haue our ſoules ruled altogether by his wil, I meane the moral lawe or ten commaundementes which I haue expounded heretofore. But as touching the earthly policie or outwarde gouernement, we muſt vnderſtand that Gods intent was to bring his people to honeſtie, that there might be good order among them; and yet for all that, he reſtreined their affections that they might not come to effect. As for example, in this place, if we were required to ſhew what were euery mans dutie and what he ought to do: it might be ſaid that when a man hath giuen a blowe with his hand vnwittingly, ſo as the ſame be ſufficiently verified: thē the next friend or kinſman muſt not ſteppe to reuenge it: for in ſo doing he offendeth God in two ſorts: firſt in ſetting vppon the partie that hath not done him any harme by his will, and ſecondly in fathering that thing vppon a mortall man which God had ordeined by his owne ſecret prouidence. After that maner would God ſpeake, if hee ment to bring vs to a perfect doctrine. But when he maketh a poſitiue lawe, he thinks it ynough to ſay that men ſhould haue an eye to the inconueniences that may inſue, and preuent them, and not tarie till the harme be done, but eſchew it aforehand, and ſhut the doore againſt all occaſions. In like caſe is it whē a manſlaughter is committed: the offender muſt get him out of the way, and ſaue himſelfe in one of yͤ Cities of refuge that the next kinſmā which is deſirous of reuenge, haue none occaſion to do it; but that all further ſtryking may bee layde aſide, and the purſuer preace not into the citie, to followe the rage of his choler; but that the offender may be pardoned, ſo as if there bee any fault in him, the ſame may bee borne withal, and furthermore that the partie which is ſo dealt with may liue in ſafetie, according as it is ſayd in another place that thoſe cities of refuge ſhould belong to the Leuites, thereby to ſhew that God had appointed them there, to bee as protectors of ſuch as came thither for Num. 35.6. ſuccor: ſo as if any body came to purſue the quarel againſt the offender, the Prieſts and the Leuites ſhould ſet themſelues againſt him, and take vpon them yͤ protection of the partie. Thus much concerning that text.

Now to bee ſhorte wee haue to gather hereof, that God meant not to make ſuch Fraunchiſes as are deuiſed in the Popedome. For (to their ſeeming) God is well honored, when a murtherer, a theefe, or a robber taketh ſanctuarie in a Church, ſo as the officer of Iuſtice may not bee bolde to lay handes vppon him. In deede it is an auntient ſuperſtition; but yet it ceaſeth not for all that, to be euill. For God neuer meant to hallowe his temple after that faſhion. True it is that ſuch as were in daunger, were woont to flee for ſuccor to his Temple: but yet it booted not the parties that were guiltie. It ſerued for ſuch as being wrongfully purſued by their enemies, thought that the reuerence of God might appeaſe the wrath of their purſuers: and therefore they fled into the Temple. But yet for all that the offenders eſcaped not vnpuniſhed, neither was it any let that they receiued not a puniſhment according to their deſertes. As for example, Salomon ſware that although Adonias had caught holde of the hornes of the altar of the Temple; yet ſhould hee be taken thence 1.Kin.1.51. and put to death. Salomon was not ſo blind, that the reuerence of the Temple coulde make him to let the partie ſcape vnpuniſhed that had deſerued it. For why? It is a mocking and ſcorning of God, when his Iuſtice is diſplaced or diſappoynted vnder pretence of his name and Maieſtie. Beholde, God commaundeth vs to puniſh murthers and robberies: and yet we will make him a bolſterer of them, in ſo much that if a cutthroate get him into a Church, hee muſt bee preſerued there from the hand of Iuſtice for the honor of God: and ſo God ſhould be contrarie to himſelfe. Nowe then the bringing vp of ſuch Fraunchiſes in the Popedome was a fondneſſe, I meane before ſuch time as the tyrannie thereof confounded thinges in ſuch ſorte as wee ſee they be nowe: and it was done of wicked ſuperſtitiō. True it is that in old time there were certaine kinds of priuiledges: but they were but for the poorer ſort that were vexed out of meaſure. As for example, if a bondman were cruelly handled by his maiſter; hee might flee for refuge to ſome image. To ſay the trueth, the Emperors made themſelues idols in ſo dooing: but yet the end whereunto it was done was not euil. For thereby their caſe came to examination. If a maiſter would needes cut his bondſeruants throate, or miſuſe him without cauſe: he was compelled to ſell him away, and to take mony for him: and ſo the innocent was deliuered from death. But the ſanctuaries that were deuiſed among Chriſtians, was a peruerting of all ciuill order and equitie among men. And in very deede our Lorde helde skorne of that fond kinde of deuotion, and ſhewed by the effect that hee miſlyked it. For in olde time, they that tooke Sanctuarie in Churches were thoſe that neuer came at Sermons. Wee ſee howe complayntes haue bin made thereof by the auntient doctors that haue written thirteene hundred yeeres ago. For thus doe they ſay, As for them that take ſanctuarie here among vs;

they bee none of thoſe whome wee knowe, they bee none of thoſe whome wee ſee dayly, they bee none of thoſe whome wee take for our diſciples, and which come hither to receiue Gods Doctrine: none of that ſort do euer take ſanctuarie among vs. Who bee they then that are deſirous to inioy the priuiledges of the Church? Vnthriftes, deſpiſers of God, and dayly haunters of Tauernes and brothelhouſes. When they haue committed any faulte or offence, by and by they take ſanctuarie and flee to vs for refuge. And how happeneth that? No doubt but our Lord hath declared that hee cannot abide any ſuch diſorder, that men ſhould Ier.7.11. make his Church a denne of theeues, as is ſpoken of it by the Prophet Ieremie. In deede it is otherwiſe meant: but yet is this a generall ground, that God will not haue his temple to ſerue for a couert for any euill dooers. And therefore let vs note that although the Churches of the Popedome had bin dedicated to God; yet were they vnhalowed againe by that meanes, foraſmuch as they ſerued to priuiledge offenders, and beſide to greeue the creditors, and for ſuch other wicked thinges. Howbeit foraſmuch as at this day they be Satans brothelhouſes and nothing elſe but dennes of idols: they may wel haue ſuch priuiledges, & we ſhould not hate them for it. But in the meane while wee ſee how all manner of diſorder reigneth there.

And now for our part let vs marke, that Gods wil was not to giue protection to miſdemeanors. For on the contrary ſide it is ſayd, *That the partie which committeth ſuch a manſlaughter ſhall offer himſelfe:* (That ſaying is ſet downe expreſly:) and againe, *that the Iuſtices ſhall make diligent inquirie of the matter, to knowe whether the partie that hath committed the manſlaughter did hate his neighbor aforetimes, or whether he had any quarell againſt him or no.* Herein our Lord ſheweth that no excuſe may bee admitted. And this diſcretion ought to bee in all Iudges to beware that they admit not the anſwere of a man that would couer his owne misbehauiour. For the deed muſt bee looked into, and the trueth boulted out. Oftentimes Iudges are contented to bee beguiled and to ſee and not ſee when ſome color is ſet vppon the matter, and to admit the excuſe though it bee neuer ſo trifling, Tuſh (ſay they) hee excuſeth himſelfe of ſuch a matter. Yea and if the offender may bee beleeued, hee will excuſe himſelfe euer. Therefore muſt wee make inquirie as God commaundeth vs, and wee muſt doe it throughly. So then let vs marke that when God gaue protection to ſuch as commit manſlaughter vnwittingly, he meant not yͭ the ſame ſhould ſerue for wilfull offenders; and therfore he hath ſhewed the meane how yͤ thing being good of it ſelf, might be kept from turning into abuſe. And hereby wee bee done to vnderſtand that if priuiledges bee good and vpright, they ſerue not for the wicked: and the graunters of them ought to conſider that thing well: and they muſt haue an eye aforehande to all other reſpectes, whereby men may from time to time drawe their dooinges to euill libertie to the ouergreeuing of ſuch as are worthie to be mainteined. But now whereas hee hath made a lawe of vprightneſſe, for pitie of ſuch as deſerue to bee regarded at his hand: by and by the wicked ſorte being ſuttle, doe take the aduauntage thereof to themſelues. Men therefore had neede of diſcretion in that behalfe, to diſappoint ſuch as would abuſe priuiledges, which are grãted for none but for ſuch as are worthy of them & deſerue them. That is the thing which we haue to beare in minde concerning the inquirie which God commaundeth to be made when manſlaughter is committed.

And heere wee haue a dubble leſſon to gather of this text. The one is for ſuch as ſit in the ſeate of Iuſtice. They (as I haue ſayd afore) muſt take good heede that they admit no trifling excuſes: but that when any open offence is committed, they trye out who is faultie thereof, that hee may be puniſhed for it. For wee ſee Deut.21.1. how God hath commaunded that if a mans body were found dead, the Iuſtice ſhoulde make diligent inquiſition of it out of hand without any forſlowing or partialitie: and that if the murtherer could not bee found, yet if it were neere the boundes of any Towne or Citie, inquiſition ſhould be made for it round about, and ſolemne proteſtation ſhould bee made by thoſe Cities that they were guiltles of the bloudſhed before God, and that if they knewe the dooer thereof, they would bewray him: and after all this, it behoued them alſo to offer a ſacrifice. And there is not any thing that can better ſhewe vs how greatly God abhorreth the ſhedding of mans bloud, than this that wee ſee that hee willeth the magiſtrates to come together after that faſhion, to doe Iuſtice for dueties ſake of their owne accord, though no man require it at their hand: and alſo to offer themſelues before God in the open face of the world, with proteſtation that their intent is not to conceale the miſdeed, but that they would to the vttermoſt of their power auenge it, if it came to their knowledge, without cloaking of it. And yet is not that enough: but they muſt moreouer adde a ſacrifice, to craue pardon at Gods hand, foraſmuch as it was his will to humble them, by ſuffering a manſlaughter to be committed within their iuriſdiction, and in that they were not able to cleare the land thereof. So then let vs learne, that ſuch as ſit in the ſeate of Iuſtice muſt bee watchful, to ſee that no miſdemeanor bee foſtered. And if it bee concealed, they muſt looke diligẽtly to it that it may be brought to light. And when they haue proofe of the matter, they muſt not bee ſlacke in puniſhing of it, vnleſſe they will be taken for acceſſaries before God to yͤ deed doers. Mark yͭ for one point.

And further, in all examinations of matters let Iudges and Iuſtices haue their eyes open, to ſee whether folke deale craftily and couertly or no. And if they did ſo, there ſhould bee better regard had to proofes than there is. But they let many thinges ſlippe, and are contented that they ſhoulde not come to knowledge. And yet doth God ſhewe here how men ought to behaue themſelues in the examination of offences. Wherein we haue a generall leſſon that concerneth vs all. For although all of vs bee not ordeined to bee Iuſtices to beare the ſworde for the punishing of offenders: yet doth God graunt vs the honor to bee our owne Iudges. Therefore let vs examine our ſelues diligently, when any matter befalleth vs, that wee flatter not our ſelues in our offences and miſdealinges. And if we ought to be ſo diligent in examining our ſelues, that although wee feele no remorſe or heartbyting of conſcience, yet notwithſtanding wee ſhould ſift our ſelues whether wee bee worthie of blame or no: what ought we to do whẽ we be conuicted by the witneſſe of our owne conſciences, ſo as we perceiue there was ſome euill diſpoſition in vs? Let vs beware that wee can well iuſtifie our ſelues then. And ſo yee ſee how wee may proceede from one thing to another: namely that inaſmuch as wee perceiue that Magiſtrates are here warned to doe their ductie diligently; wee may gather vppon that particular poynt, that God hath inioyned euery of vs to preferre inditementes againſt our ſelues, and to take good heede that wee flatter not our ſelues in any wiſe.

1.Cor.11.31.

But now by the way, to come againe to the examinations which our Lord hath ſet downe here: it is ſayd that *conſideration muſt be had whether there haue bin any hatred betweene the partie that is ſo ſtriken that hee dyeth of it, and the other that gaue the ſtroke:* Let it be conſidered (ſaith he) whether there was any hatred betwixt them or no. Here we ſee yet better the thing that I touched afore, that is to wit, that all crimes are willing, and that wee muſt repaire to that fountaine to know whether it bee a crime or no. As for example, if a man haue committed a manſlaughter, how may it bee knowen that hee is guiltie of crime or no? By knowing whether hee bare any hatred or malice to the partie or no, ſaith the Lord. And here we haue to marke firſt of all, that forasmuch as hatred or malice is the welſpring of murther, it is not to bee wondered at, or to be thought ſtraunge, that God ſhould denounce all them to bee murtherers, which hate men in their hartes, and that he ſhould condemne the rancor though it lye hidden within. For why? when a murtherer commeth to examination, is the hand to blame? is the ſwoorde to blame? or is the ſtroke to blame that was giuen? No. But the blame is in the malice that was conceiued afore, which led the hand and prouoked the man to commit the murther. Therefore marke it for a point, that it is not without cauſe that our Lorde deemeth all thoſe to be murtherers, which doe ſo hate their neighbors. And the ſame muſt warne vs to preuent all daungers, that the ſunne go not downe vppon our malice; for in ſo dooing wee giue Satan poſſeſſion of vs. Beware my brethren (ſayth S. Paul) that ye giue not place to Satan. And how doe wee giue him place? It is (ſayth hee) by ſuffering the Sunne to goe downe vppon our wrath; for when we feede any hartburning within vs, and multiply rancor in our mindes; although wee perceiue it not at the firſt, yet are we caught with ſo curſed affection, as we cãnot ouercome it afterward. Seeing then that hatred procureth ſuch wickedneſſe; let euery man looke to himſelfe, and when wee be moued to any ill will, although ſome diſpleaſure be done vnto vs, and it may ſeeme that we haue iuſt cauſe of reuenge as in reſpect of men: yet notwithſtanding let all ſuch thinges be layd aſide, and let vs ſtriue earneſtly to ouermaiſter our ſelues, that our hearts be not hardened for feare leaſt the diuel doe ſo worke in vs, that the hatred which we haue cõceiued to day, do make vs ready to ſlea & kil to morrow, ſo as yͤ hart being inuenimed doe cary yͤ hande away wͭ it. Yee ſee then how it is a thing worthie to be marked.

Eph.4.26, 27.

And generally let vs learne, that to examine our faultes well, we muſt not onely haue an eye to the thinges that are done by our hands, feete, eyes, & eares: but we muſt alſo goe to the inward parts & ſearch our thoughts, our wicked deſires, and all the thinges that doe tempt and prouoke vs: for there lyeth the right examination of our ſins. When a man goeth about to Iuſtify himſelf becauſe he hath committed no murther, theft, or whoredome in actuall deede, & yet is infected with wicked luſts in his hart: his laboring to acquit himſelfe after that ſort, is in vaine before God. And therefore let vs beare in minde, that to ſearch our ſelues duely of all our offences and miſdooinges, we muſt enter into our owne conſciences, & not only cõdemne our wicked luſtes, but alſo euen our thoughts wherby we were prouoked & induced to euill, and we muſt vnderſtãd that euen that is a damnable ſin already before God. Thus ye ſee what we be taught in this text where it is ſayd that inquirie muſt be made whether the man hated his neighbour before or no.

And here is expreſſe mention made of the time that went before. In deede in the Hebrewe it is, *yeſterday or before yeſterday:* but it is but their common phraſe of ſpeach, whereby they doe betoken all time that is paſt. And hereby our Lord meant to declare, that men muſt not looke onely at the preſent deede, but that they muſt proceede further, and ſee whether any miſchief lay lurking afore. For if a man alledge circumſtances to cleere himſelfe, and bee not found faultie out of hand; that is not yet enough: an eye muſt be had what went before: the thing may be found out in a moneth which can not be found in a day: and the thing will bee found in a yeere, which is not to be found in a moneth. Now if this ought to be done in earthly Iuſtice: let euery of vs practiſe it lykewiſe in our owne behalfe. When wee enter into the conſideration of our owne faultes, let vs not looke onely vppon the thinges that are preſently falne out; but let vs goe yet further and ſay; How is this befalne me? It is becauſe I haue nouriſhed this vice long time in me, whereas if I had cut it off at the firſt, God would not haue left me ſo much to my ſelfe. But what? I haue ſoothed my ſelfe in mine euill dooinges, and ſuffered this curſed ſeede to take roote in my heart, without regarding to repreſſe it, ſo as it may ſeeme that I haue bin minded to tempt God wilfully. And therefore it is good reaſon that I ſhould fall ſo groſly, ſith I my ſelfe am the cauſe thereof. Such examination ſhould we make of all our faultes, and not onely condemne our ſelues for the preſent deede done, but alſo proceede further and ſay; Alas, if I had armed my ſelfe againſt Satan or if I had not of long time ſet open the way for him, or if I had not wrought the meanes for him to beguile me: God had preſerued me. But mine owne negligence is to blame for it, thereof it commeth that I haue yeelded my ſelfe to this wicked luſt, againſt the which I ſhould haue ſtriued at the firſt. And ſo yee ſee yet againe what we haue to marke when wee be to examine our ſelues well; and what doctrine wee haue to gather of this ſaying, yͤ inqurie muſt be made whether there haue bin any former hatred betwixt the parties that are ſpoken of in this place.

Now finally, whereas it is ſayd, *That there is no iudgement of death vppon ſuch a man*, it ſerueth to proue the thing better, which I haue ſpoken already: namely that if a man be not guiltie by his own purpoſe, intẽt, or wil; he ought not to be taken for an offender. God acquitteth him, and therefore he ought not to bee condemned by men or by any creature. This ought to ſerue vs for a further confirmation of the doctrine which I take in hand to expound. Men can alwayes wel grant yͤ faults are willing. Whẽ yͤ Heathen wrate of yͤ matter, they ſpake after this maner: the Lawe puniſheth not the euentes of thinges, but the intentes of them. And when the Philoſophers wrate thereof, they could wel skill to ſay, there is neither vice nor vertue which proceedeth not of the will. Yet for all this, we ceaſe not to bleare our owne eyes, neither doe we thinke our ſelues to haue offended, vnleſſe our handes bee bloudy, or that there appeare ſome euident token to the worldward, or (to be ſhort,) yͤ we be conuicted of the doing of ſome wicked deed. But yͤ is againſt my former ſaying, yͤ is to wit, that all ſinnes proceede of the wil. Therefore when wee intend to examine our ſelues throughly, let vs learn to begin at our wils And if we finde no euil deed in our ſelues, yͤ is to ſay neither malice, nor euil wil; thẽ is it no crime. And whereas I ſay that euill affection is willing, yet for all that I exclude not mens inquiries: for it is not for naught that God hath diſtinguiſhed ſinnes and miſdeedes into two ſortes; whereof the one ſorte are called crimes, and the other ſorte are called ignorances. Although then that men haue no intent or meaning to doe amiſſe, yet is it not to bee ſayd that therefore they bee righteous. But my meaning now is that there be no wicked affection or deſire in vs, ſo as wee bee not diſpoſed to it of any will, but that the whole matter ſtandeth vppon miſchaunce that inſueth. And I call it miſchaunce after the cuſtome of common ſpeach. For it behooueth vs to referre all thinges to Gods prouidence, and not to thinke that any thing can fal out through fortune. Neuertheleſſe it is a common manner of ſpeach among vs, to ſay that a thing happeneth by chaunce or fortune, when it commeth to paſſe on our ſide. That then is the thing in effect, which we haue to note, in that our Lorde ſayth that there ſhall no iudgement of death paſſe vppon a man that ſhall haue giuen his neighbour a deadly blowe, without any malice borne to him before: but that hee ſhall bee quitte, if his ſtryking of him were without forepurpoſe or intent of will.

And furthermore wee ſee here in few words, how our Lorde meant to forbid vs to be moued to anger one againſt another, and hath voutſafed to beare with our imperfections ſo farre, that to eſchew greater inconueniences, hee will haue the guiltleſſe perſon to get him out of the way for a time. True it is (as I haue declared heretofore) that his intent is alſo to ſhewe how greatly wee ought to abhorre murther. But howſoeuer the caſe ſtand, yet it doth behooue vs to marke well Gods gratious goodneſſe, in mainteining peace and concorde by all meanes poſſible. Were wee ſuch as wee ought to bee, there ſhoulde bee as it were but one common league of fellowſhip among vs: but now are wee faine to be ſeparated aſunder; ſo as euery man getteth himſelfe alone, euery man hath his goods by himſelfe, euery man hath his poſſeſſions ſeuerall, and euery man hath as it were a proprietie alone: and that is becauſe of our infirmitie. And true it is that this Lawe might bee generall: but there are many other meanes whereby God ſheweth vs how he beareth with our infirmities. Is it not a pitious caſe that two brethren cannot liue quietly together, without contention and ſtrife; and that euen the father and the ſonne alſo ſhould be at the ſame point? Theſe are ſhamefull thinges and vtterly againſt nature, ſo as it may well bee ſayd that we be worſe than wilde beaſtes, ſeeing that euen they which are linked together in ſo neere and holy bond, cannot beare one with another that they might liue together in friendſhip. But what? The vices of men are ſo great, that to eſchewe greater miſchiefes, ſometime the parties that ought to be neereſt together, are faine to be ſet furtheſt aſunder. And the ſame maner of dealing doth God vſe in this place. Hee will haue a man to forſake his owne houſe and poſſeſſions, and to goe into a ſtraunge place. And wherfore? To the end that the partie which was mooued to wrath for loue of his neighbour, ſhould haue no occaſion to doe worſe, nor bee prouoked by ſeeing him before his eyes. Now then ſith wee ſee this, let vs briefly marke the goodnes which God vſeth towardes vs, which is more than the loue of a father, in that hee beareth with vs in our vices, and findeth fit meanes to keepe vs from flinging out at randon, and moreouer giueth vs warning by his owne example to preuent or cut off all occaſions of euill. Therefore let vs beware: for the diuell is alwayes watching & will ſoone take vs in a trip, if we admit neuer ſo ſmall an occaſion of dooing euill. So then let vs bridle our ſelues ſhort, and be well aduiſed,ſaying thus to our ſelues : O, if I commit ſuch a thing I may bee tempted with ſuch an euill, and therefore I had need to labour to keepe my ſelfe from it. For why ? The diuell ,is ouer wylie for me , and if I caſt my ſelfe once into his nettes , what will become of mee ? For God ſheweth vs howe we ought to liue, and howe to cut off all occaſions of euill, and that if there bee any thing that may leade vs to any euil,we muſt ſhunne it aforehande . Seeing then that God hath ſung vs ſuch a leſſon , let vs take heede not onely that wee abſteine from all euill deedes, whereby wee may corrupt and defile our whole life and vtterly caſt our ſelues into all diſorder; but alſo that wee eſchewe all thinges that may leade vs to euill by any indirect wayes.

Nowe let vs kneele downe before the Maieſtie of our good God , with acknowledgement of our faultes,praying him to make vs feele them more and more , that euerie of vs may ſo bethinke vs of our ſinnes,as wee become our owne Iudges and learne to condemne our ſelues, that wee may obtaine forgiueneſſe of the heauenly Iudge , ſo as hee may pitie vs and bury all our tranſgreſſiōs by which we be guiltie before him : and that wee may examine our ſinnes narrowly dayly more and more , to the ende that being mortified vnto them , wee may dayly draw neere to his righteouſneſſe , whereunto hee calleth vs by his worde . That it may pleaſe him to graunt this grace , not onely to vs but alſo to all people and Nations of the earth &c.

On Friday the vj. of December. 1555

The Cxij. Sermon which is the ſecond vpon the nineteenth Chapter.

8 And when the Lorde thy God ſhall haue inlarged thy borders , as hee hath ſworne to thy fathers, and hath giuen thee all the lande which he promiſed to giue to thy fathers:

9 (Condicionally that thou haue an eye to all his commaundementes, to doe them , which I commaunde thee this day , and that thou loue the Lorde thy God, and walke continually in his wayes:) then thou ſhalt adde three other townes to thoſe three,

10 To the intent that innocent bloude be not ſhedde in the midſt of the Lande which the Lorde thy God giueth thee to inherite, and that bloude bee not vppon thee.

11 But if a man haue hated his neighbour, and haue lyen in waite for him, and riſen vp againſt him,and ſmitten him that he die , and thereupon be fled into one of thoſe Cities:

12 Then the Elders of that Citie ſhall ſende and take him thence , and deliuer him into the hand of the next kinſman,and he ſhall die.

13 Thine eye ſhall not ſpare him:but thou ſhalt take away the guiltleſſe bloude from Iſrael,that it may go well with thee.

WE ſawe yeſterday howe it was Gods will to haue the inconueniences preuented , which are wont to be ſeene when men ſuffer occaſions of euill vncut off. And that is ſomwhat better expreſſed in this ſaying which Moſes addeth : *Beware*(ſaith he) *that guiltleſſe bloud bee not ſhed in thy lande.* Then it is not ynough to puniſh murthers after they be committed, but we muſt alſo haue the wiſedome to preuent them aforehande and to take ſuch order as they may not bee committed . And foraſmuch as Satan needes but a ſmall gap to thruſt vs out at , let vs be watchfull in this caſe of preuenting occaſions of euill as hath bin ſaid afore. Moreouer let vs alſo marke this ſaying, *that the bloud ſhalbe vppon thoſe that ſuffer things to ſlip ſo.* For though a man can proteſt that hee conſented not to the doing of an euill deede,yet notwithſtanding if he ſuffered it ſo as it came to paſſe through his negligence: he ſhalbe taken as acceſſary. The olde prouerbe is true,ẏ he which ſuffereth a thing to be done and may let it,is the doer of it. And therefore if a Iudge that hath the ſword in his hand do ſuffer euil deeds to be done and puniſh them not: it is al one as if he committed them himſelf. It is not ynough for him to ſay I would it were otherwiſe: but he muſt ſhew it by his doings. To bee ſhort, when men beare with ſuch as trouble the order of the common weale; it is al one as if they bolſtered them in it. Again, by ſuch examples thinges are ſet at a generall libertie , ſo as cuſtome is taken for lawe. And therefore looke what miſchiefe or inconuenience inſueth afterwarde , the blame of it is to bee imputed to thoſe that remedyed it not when time was . That is the cauſe why it is ſaide that the bloude ſhall bee vppon a whole Nation , when men haue not beene held ſhort that they might not commit murthers.

For that maner of ſpeech is verie rife in the Hebrue toung. And in the ſame reſpect alſo did the Iewes ſay, his bloude be vpon vs and vppon our Matt.27.25. children: that is to ſay, let the blame lyght vpon vs. We muſt not bring here fantaſtical imaginations as the Rabbines (that is to ſay the Iewiſh doctors) doo, who alledging alwaies their owne dreames, do ſay that the ſoules of the murthered doo aske vengeance continually at Gods hande, vntill they haue had Iuſtice done vnto them. All ſuch ſayinges are but dotages. For although their bloud cry not atall, yet doth God heare them, as he himſelfe declareth; and there needeth neither ſollicitor nor attourney to require iuſtice at his hande; hee can tell well ynough howe to doe his office, without any importunate calling vppon him. The very Gen.4.10. cauſe why it is ſaide that bloude crieth, is for that God hath an eye to the euill that is committed, and it is all one with him as if the caſe were followed with neuer ſo great ſuite. Worldly Iudges make no greate force of a crime when it is committed, vnleſſe they bee called vppon verie earneſtly, and that the matter bee ſtoutly purſewed. But God declareth himſelfe to be no ſuch, and that his owne ſeeing of the miſdeede is ynough, for nothing can ſcape him, and therefore it is all one with him as if the whole worlde tooke the quarell in hande, and euerie man followed the ſuite of it with tooth and nayle. God then taryeth not for our ſpeaking, but as one ẏ knoweth his office welinough, hee can skill to put to his hande when neede is: and therefore let vs tarie his leaſure. And ſurely it is a doctrine of great comfort. For although wee holde our peace when men miſuſe vs; yet doeth not God faile to haue his hande lifted vp to ſuccour vs. Therefore let vs bee patient in our afflictions and wrongs, and whatſoeuer come of it God will not foreſlowe: it is ynough that he ſeeth mē perſecute vs wrongfully: let vs content our ſelues with that: the leſſe that wee ſpeake of it, the readier will he be to releeue vs: yea though wee ſpeake not one worde of it: Not that it is not meete for vs to call vppon him, that hee may vouchſafe to pitie vs: but that wee ſhoulde not bee deſirous of reuenge, nor beare any malice to our enemies. If wee holde our peace in that reſpect, and tary Gods leaſure for the ſuccour which it ſhall pleaſe him to ſende vs: let vs not doubt but he will doe his office, and therfore let vs comfort our ſelues with that hope.

Moreouer foraſmuch as it is ſaide that the bloude ſhall be vppon vs; let vs bee afraide of it: and although wee bee not purſued nor complaind of by men, yet let vs aſſure our ſelues our market is neuer a whit amended by it, for God ſleepeth not, but marketh all the miſdeedes that are done, and they muſt all needes come to account. Therefore let vs bee pure before him: and let vs not onely abſtaine from euill deedes, but alſo beware that wee conſent not to any euill, for then ſhall wee bee helde as acceſſaries, and wrappe our ſelues in the ſame condemnation with the deede dooers, as it is witneſſed vnto vs heere. For God ſpeaketh not onely to the murtherers themſelues, but alſo to all the people. When this Lawe is broken and murthers are freely committed for want of good execution of Iuſtice, God ſaieth not that hee will require it at the hande of two or three, but at the handes of all in generall. Nowe then ſeeing the caſe ſtandeth ſo, what ſhall become of thoſe that are in authoritie and reigne in the ſeate of Iuſtice, when they themſelues are acceſſaries? Shall not they bee the firſt that ſhall anſwere for it? To bee ſhort, wee haue to gather vppon this text, that when an outrage or wrong is done to any man, not onely the principall ſhall bee puniſhed, but alſo the whole Nation in common ſhall haue the curſe lye vppon them, and muſt come to reckening for it before God. To our ſeeming it is ynough when wee can ſay, that wee woulde faine that men ſhould liue in peace, and yet in the meane while wee ſee men grieued and vexed before our eyes, and wee vouchſafe not to open our mouthes to ſuccour the innocent, but though wee haue both opportunitie and abilitie, yet we let al ſlippe, & we beare our ſelues in hande that God ought not to require it at our handes: but heere wee ſee the contrarie. Let vs marke well then, that to the vttermoſt of our power, wee muſt ſet our ſelues in defence of the innocents ſo as they may not bee vexed, fleeced or troubled, nor might bee ſuffered to ouercome right, as they ſay. Let euery of vs in his degree looke to the remedying hereof. Let ſuch as haue the ſworde of iuſtice ſhewe themſelues ſtout in this caſe and not ſuffer diſorder to haue full ſcope. And as for thoſe that are not of abilitie, let them yet at leaſtwiſe doe the beſt they can to comfort ſuch as haue no bodye to vpholde them. And when wee ſee theſe luſtie gallantes ſteppe vp and take more vppon them than is lawfull; let vs become their enemies, let vs hinder their miſdealings, and let vs withſtand them. That is the thing which we be bounde vnto by Gods worde; otherwiſe wee ſhall bee helde as acceſſaries to their miſdoings. If wee haue not preuented them, it is a conſenting to them, and God muſt demaund an account of it at our hands.

Heere it is to be noted further, that whereas God ſaieth *that the people of Iſrael ſhall adde three other Cities of refuge, after that their boundes are inlarged*: thereby wee bee done to vnderſtande, that the more power and abilitie that GOD giueth vs, the more are wee bounde to imploy it, to comfort innocentes, and to ſuccour them at their neede. And this ought to be put in vre generally by all men of authoritie and gouernours. The more power then that a Magiſtrate hath, the more ought hee to thinke himſelfe bounde to maintaine the good and guiltleſſe vnder his protection, and to bee a help to them that they be not trobled. Oftimes hee that woulde releeue good men, is not able: yea and peraduenture he himſelf alſo ſhalbe oppreſſed. In ſuch caſes we muſt haue recourſe vnto God, & bow down our ſholders, tarying till he haue pitie vppon vs, and in the meane while we muſt arme our ſelues with patience. But when a man is armed with Gods power; then it ſhall not be ynough for him to miſlike of thinges, and to bee ſomewhat ſorie for them; but hee muſt alſo imploy the authoritie that God giueth him, and the ſame rule ought to be obſerued of euery of vs particularly. To be ſhort, foraſmuch as God giueth power to Kings, Princes, and all other Magiſtrates; they ought to imploy all that euer they haue, to the defence of thoſe whome God hath committed to their charge, and to deale in ſuch ſort as their ſubiects be not wrongfully moleſted. Lo heere a rule that concerneth ſuch as haue the ſworde of iuſtice in their hand. Neuertheleſſe, it behoueth euery of vs to follow the ſame order. And although we be not armed with the ſworde of Iuſtice; yet notwithſtanding if God giue vs any abilitie or opportunitie, let vs looke to it that we help the good and ſuccour them in their neede. Therefore if a rich man ſee a poore man ſuffer wrong; let him helpe him and releeue him. If a man of diſcretion ſee a poore man deſtitute of counſell, ſo as he knoweth not what to doe: let him giue him his aduiſe as the caſe ſerueth. If a man haue credit whereby he may deliuer them that are in diſtreſſe: let him likewiſe imploy it for his part. Thus yee ſee howe wee ought to put this ſaying in vre, *When God ſhall haue inlarged thy bounds, then ſhalt thou adde three Cities moe.* Yee ſee heere howe our Lorde meaſureth his ordinance for the releef of good men, and of ſuch as were in daunger without deſeruing it or without any gilt. Therefore his will is to haue the thing doubled which he had ordeined for their reliefe. And why ſo? It is to doe vs to vnderſtande, that the mo benefites we haue receiued at Gods hande, the more are wee bound and indetted both to God and to our neighbours.

But nowe let vs come to that which Moſes interlaceth heere, *inſomuch as thou ſhalt obſerue all theſe thinges which I commaunde thee, to loue the Lorde thy God, to keepe all his commaundements, and to walke in his feare.* Heere hee maketh (as yee would ſay) a kinde of coniuratiõ, as if he ſhould adiure the people after this manner; Looke wel to this commaundement that yee deſpiſe it not, if yee loue the Lorde your God and ſeeke to obey him. As if hee ſhoulde ſay, In deede a man woulde thinke at the firſt ſight that this were nothing: but be you ſure that your God wil haue you to obſerue ſuch humanitie diligently. And therein hee trieth whether yee bee louing and obedient vnto him or no. To bee ſhort, Moſes meant to ſhewe heere, that this commaundement is of greate importance before God, to the intent that men ſhoulde not deſpiſe it. And heerewithall wee haue to marke, that wee cannot omitte any of the thinges that God commaundeth, without doing wrong to the Lawmaker: for it is an imbaſing of his authoritie. And for that cauſe is it ſaide that hee Matt.5.19. which deſpiſeth any of the leaſt thinges that are conteined in the Lawe, and imbreweth men with the like contempt, ſhal be called the leaſt in the kingdome of heauen; that is to ſay, ſhall be vtterly ſhaken off. Our Lorde then wil haue vs to reuerence his Lawe, and to obſerue it without reſpect of this or that, ſo as wee muſt not alledge, This is a ſmall matter, this a veniall ſinne, there is no greate conſcience to bee made of it. When GOD hath opened his holy mouth, and vouchſafed to ordeyne one thing or other; becommeth it vs to make ſmall account of it? If a Lorde Great maſter ſpeake a thing, men ſay not; is the matter greate or ſmall? but thus they ſay, the king ſpake it. And if that that may ſuffice in mortall creatures; ſhall wee replie to the contrarie, and make it an occaſion of euill doing and of rebelling againſt the liuing God, when he declareth his will vnto vs? Shall wee ſay it is a thing of no great importance, and that it is not ſo grieuous and heynous an offence? Indeede there are ſome commaundementes which our Lorde vrgeth more than otherſome, but yet muſt wee in all caſes and all reſpectes obſerue that which our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt ſaieth: Thoſe things ought to bee done, and the other not to bee left vndone: Matt.23.23 ſo that foraſmuch as God hath giuen vs his Lawe, it behoooueth vs to keepe it, and not to diuide it; as who ſhoulde ſay, I will keepe this point, and let that point alone. Nay, if wee beleeue God, wee muſt looke that wee ſubmit our ſelues to him, yea euen to the vttermoſt title. But nowe let vs conſider howe it is ſaide here, *inaſmuch as thou obſerueſt theſe thinges.* Here Moſes driueth men to the obſeruing of the Lawe, when any particular thing is to bee done which God hath ordeined. And it is as much as if hee ſhoulde ſay, Haue an eye to the Lawmaker which ruleth you. Therefore when wee haue any thing to doe; we muſt alwayes haue this conſideration with vs, to thinke that God declareth his will therein: and that muſt ſuffice vs. Why ſo? For there is but one rule of weldoing; and to call the thinges in queſtion which are conteined in his Lawe, is al one as if we refuſed to bee ruled by the mouth and worde of God. Therefore the Lawe muſt haue his full courſe, and we muſt not go about to ſeparate the thinges which God hath ſo knit and vnited together.

But heerewithall Moſes bringeth vs backe againe to the thing that hee had treated of afore; that is to wit, which is the true keeping of the Lawe, and to what ende it tendeth. The true keeping of the Lawe is to giue eare vnto God in all that hee ſaieth. Keepe all the commaundementes (ſaieth hee), as if hee Deut.6.24.25. ſhoulde ſay, wee muſt not ſerue God after our owne liking, when thinges come to paſſe according to our heartes deſire: neither muſt wee take leaue to diſpence with our ſelues, when wee meete with any thing that is harde. It is not for vs to parte ſtakes with GOD after that manner: but wee muſt call to minde howe Sainct Iames ſaieth, that he which breaketh any one point is guiltie of the whole law. Iames.2.10. The reaſon is the ſame which I haue alledged afore, namely that when wee incounter Gods ordinaunce, wee deface his maieſtie as much

much as in vs lieth.

True it is that wee can neuer fulfil Gods law, I ſay there was neuer yet ſo perfect a man in the worlde, but hee came farre ſhort of the perfection that God ſheweth vs. But yet muſt wee tende towardes it: though wee bee farre off from the marke, and but halfe way onwarde of our iourney; yet muſt wee goe forwarde ſtill, and not thinke to content God by doing ſome little peece of it for the loue of him, and in the reſt take leaue to behaue our ſelues as wee liſt. Let vs not thinke that God admitteth ſuch compoſitions: but that wee muſt in all pointes conforme our whole life to his will. And although wee attaine not to the full performance;yet our deſire muſt bee to doe ſo as I haue declared afore.

And nowe let vs come to that which hee addeth, namely to what end the keeping of Gods Lawe tendeth,that is to wit that we ſhould loue him. Whereby wee bee done to vnderſtande, that our Lordes intent is not to drawe vs to a ſlauiſh fearefulneſſe, but to haue vs to take pleaſure and delight in honouring him, and in doing his commaundementes: for it is certaine that without this loue, all our ſeruice ſhalbee refuſed as vnprofitable. In deede this matter hath beene expounded alreadie heeretofore: neuertheleſſe it is good reaſon that wee ſhoulde bee put in rememberance of it, as oft as the holy Ghoſt ſpeaketh thereof: for heere is no ſuperfluitie. And it is a doctrine that wee cannot be perſwaded of at the firſt,that it behoueth vs to ſerue God freely and with a willing loue. Truely wee muſt not loue God as our fellowe or mate: but wee muſt ſtande in awe of him, not as inforced by neceſſitie, ſo as we ſhoulde grinde our teeth in grudging againſt him; but as yeelding our heartes to him, by ſetting all our delight in his Lawe, as Dauid Pſal. 19.11. proteſteth himſelfe to haue done, by which example of his hee ſheweth vs alſo our dewtie. Yee ſee then howe GOD requireth that wee ſhoulde ſerue him of free will, yea and that wee ſhoulde alſo loue him. And indeede whence proceedeth true obedience, but of the knowledge of the will of our GOD, and that wee take him for our father, to the ende that wee on our ſide might behaue our ſelues like childrē towardes him? Vntill wee be come to that point, it is vnpoſſible for vs to goe about to ſerue our GOD with a good will: wee ſhall haue nothing but ſtubborneneſſe in vs, ſo as (if it were poſſible) wee coulde finde in our hearts neuer to come at him. But when wee haue once taſted of his goodneſſe; then are wee allured to loue him out of hand.

Seeing then that men haue felt God a father towardes them; it becommeth them to anſwere him in like ſort againe, and to bee as children towardes him. And ſo wee ſee heere againe, howe the Lawe may bee duely kept by vs: that is to witte, by louing our GOD. For thereuppon it will come to paſſe that wee ſhall walke in all his wayes, for God cannot bee diuided from his worde. If we loue him,it is certaine that wee will indeuour to pleaſe and obey him. And this is ſeene euen among mortall men: but yet there is a peculiar cauſe thereof in God. For (as I ſaide afore) God is neuer ſeparated from his righteouſneſſe, which hee declareth vnto vs in his Lawe. Then if wee loue him, we muſt needes like well of his Lawe, and take pleaſure in obſeruing the ſame. And therefore if a man ſay, I loue GOD, I feare him, I honour him, and in the meane while deſpiſe his worde, and make no reckening of it: it is but hypocriſie matched with ſhameleſneſſe. For as I haue ſaide already, it is vnpoſſible that God ſhoulde transforme himſelfe, to become as an ydoll by ſurceaſing from his righteouſneſſe which in verie deede is his owne proper being. So then it is to be concluded, that we cannot otherwiſe loue our God, than by giuing our ſelues ouer vnto him, by indeuoring to ſerue and pleaſe him.

But nowe let vs come to that which is ſaide concerning ſuch as woulde needes abuſe the priuiledge by withdrawing themſelues to the Sanctuarie when they had committed a murther. *If it happen that a man which hated his neighbour and killed him, doe flee to the place of priuiledge: let the Elders of that place*, that is to ſay the Rulers or Gouernours, (for it is a name of office): *let the Gouernours and Iudges and Magiſtrates, take him and fetch him thence*, that is to ſay,let thē fetch him from the priuiledged place by ſtrong hand, *and put him into the handes of him that ought to reuenge the bloudſhed*, or of him ẏ demaundeth Iuſtice, *that he may be put to death, and let not thine eye ſpare him*,that is to ſay,haue no pitie nor compaſſion on him. Bycauſe we be moued when we ſee a man lament, and our eyes relent at it: that is to ſay, if wee ſee a man in extreame heauineſſe of minde, by and by wee bee mooued to pitie his caſe: our Lorde ſaieth that hee will not haue him to bee pitifull, nor in any wiſe to relent, which ought to execute Iuſtice. Goe to worke ſtoutly (ſaieth hee), and let the offender bee puniſhed, notwithſtanding his miſclaiming of the priuiledge which GOD had graunted for ſuch as are guiltleſſe and not for ſuch as are faultie. This was declared partly yeſterday: but it is well worthie to bee laide foorth more at large. To bee ſhorte, let vs haue an eye to the expounding of Moſeſes wordes, and it will ſuffice vs: for thereuppon wee eaſily gather a leſſon greatly to our behoofe. The wordes are, *If a man that hath ſlaine his neighbour of prepenſed malice and lying in waite for him, doe get him into one of thoſe fraunchiſed Cities*. Wherein wee ſee that the wicked doe alwayes ſeeke to abuſe the thinges that are ordeyned for the ſuccour of good men, and are boldeſt in taking the benefite of them. The Magiſtrats therefore muſt haue an eye thereunto,and beware that the wicked abuſe not the things that are graunted for the releefe of Gods children: for that is too great a skorning of Lawes. And it is not without cauſe that our Lorde ſpeaketh of it heere: for it ſheweth that the like kinde of corrupt dealing hath beene in all ages: and we muſt not maruell at it, ſeeing that the world is not amended ſince, but rather appaired. Let vs looke well about vs therefore, that if a man which hath committed any miſdeede doe go about to hide himſelfe or to ſcape away by ſome vndirect meanes, it may not auaile him. That is the thing which wee haue to marke in the firſt place.

And whereas it is ſaid that the *Iudges ſhall pull him away*: it ſerueth to ſhewe that it is not ynough for men to make good Lawes & ſtatutes, but there muſt alſo be corage to execute them; there muſt bee a ſtoute and conſtant minde in thoſe that beare authoritie. For although that Lawes be proclaimed by the ſound of the trumpet, and written of recorde with neuer ſo great ſolemnitie: yet are they but deade and all is nothing worth, except that they which ſit in the ſeate of Iuſtice, haue the conſtancie that our Lorde inioyneth heere, and be ſtout in maintaining the things that are inacted, that men may not laugh them to skorne as we ſee that the wicked ſort do, which make but a mocke at them. If a Lawe haue once beene proclaimed, they beare themſelues in hande that it will be buried within three or foure dayes after. Yee ſee then howe it is a good and profitable warning for all ſuch as haue the ſworde of iuſtice in hande, to haue this ſtoutneſſe of minde and conſtancie. And for as much as it is not to be founde in men, (for it is a ſpeciall vertue attributed to the ſpirite of God): let ſuch as are in office beſeech God to ſtrengthen them, ſo as they may vſe force of hande when neede requireth, and not be afraide when they ſee ſuch troubles as might abaſh them, but ſtoutly withſtande them, yea and alſo outſtande them. That is one thing further which wee haue to marke vpon this place.

Now this thing is to be applyed likewiſe to yͤ inſtructing of euery of vs. I ſay let priuate perſons alſo looke well to the repreſſing of euill doings, and that with ſuch ſtoutneſſe that although they be threatned to put them in feare, yet it may not turne them away from doing their dutie. For what a thing were it if we ſhould bee afraide at euery turne? The lifting vp of a mans litle finger would ſcarre vs; and though we were neuer ſo willing to doe our duetie, yet if any mã ſtepped afore vs to turne vs from our purpoſe, euery word of his mouth (as I ſaide) would bee ynough to put vs out of hart. But the caſe concerneth the ſeruing of our God, wherein we muſt ouercome all the aſſaults of Satan, and all the impediments that the world can deuiſe. Nowe if it behooue vs to fight ſo valiantly againſt Satan & all his indeuors: ſhould we be afraide of men, or ſtand in dreade of them? Should they ſo ſcarre vs that we ſhould leaue our God behind? So thẽ, to the intent we may do our duetie, let vs learne to ſtrengthen our ſelues. And at one word, it ſtãdeth vs in hande to marke wel, that no man ſhal euer diſcharge his duetie towardes God, except he inforce himſelfe and haue ſuch a couragious conſtancie, as may ſurmount al temptations: and that is a thing greatly for our behoofe to marke. For a hundred times a day ſhall we haue occaſions to thruſt vs out of the way; & we reſiſt them full coldly. Againe, if we be to do any good, wee make excuſes and ſay, I would faine do my duetie, but I ſee ſuch an impediment, and by that meanes I am helde backe. Becauſe that they which are vnder the tyranny of the Pope in theſe dayes, cannot haue leaue to doe well and to ſerue God purely, without putting of their liues in hazard: they beare themſelues in hande that they bee diſcharged, when they can make this excuſe to ſay, I woulde faine doe otherwiſe, but I am not ſuffered to do it, it ſhall neuer come to account before God. And we neede not to go farre for proofe of the matter. Euen here where there is no perſecution to hinder the ſeruing of God, but rather incoragement to men to do wel, yet neuertheleſſe wee haue many diſtreſſes. For Satan is ſuttle ynough to finde euerie day newe inuentions to turne vs from the right way. What remaineth then, but to go to it with force, and to doe our indeuour to ſerue our God in ſuch wiſe, that if we meete with any lets to turne vs aſide, they may bee ouercome by the conſtancie and corage that I ſpake of, which it behoueth vs to require of the holy Ghoſt.

Furthermore let vs marke, *that the offender muſt bee deliuered into the hande of him that is to reuenge the bloudſhedde, or elſe of him that demaundeth iuſtice:* Whereby we may perceiue that God alloweth no [priuate] reuenges. For wee knowe what rule is giuen vs in the holy ſcripture: My brethren, (ſaith S. Paul) forbeare reuenge, yea, Rom.12.19. deſire it not: but put it altogether into the handes of the heauenly Iudge, to whome it belongeth. Nay (which more is) wee bee commaunded Matt.5.44. to render good for euill, to pray for them that curſe vs, to doe good to our enemies and to ſuch as perſecute vs. Sith it is ſo then, wee muſt aſſure our ſelues, and be fully reſolued of it, that our Lorde will haue our affections bridled, ſo as we deſire not any reuenge though cauſe thereof bee miniſtred; but rather ſtriue to ouercome the euill by doing good. Lo whereunto God calleth vs. And why then is it ſaide heere, that the offender ſhall bee put into the hande of him that requireth Iuſtice? Let vs note that the Lawes which are made for ciuill or outwarde gouernement, ſerue not to ouerrule mens affections: they be things that go aſunder. Trueth it is that they bee not repugnant, neither is there any contrarietie in them: but we muſt haue the diſcretion to conſider, that when God ſpake as king of Iſrael and made ſtatutes but for cõmon policie, he reſpected not the ſpirituall perfection that is contained in the law which is our rule to all holineſſe and righteouſneſſe. A Iudge therefore may well agree to one that requireth Iuſtice at his hande; and although he bee ledde with wicked affection, yet ought the Iudge to graunt him his right. And that is for our profite. For many men beare thẽſelues in hand, that ſo they vſe the ordinary way of Iuſtice, it is lawfull for them to doe what they can, & they ſhall not be condemned for it before

God, if their quarell bee iuſt. But it may fall out many a time, that a quarell ſhalbe iuſt, and a man ſhall purſue it by good meanes; and yet in the meane while hee ſhall not faile to be worthie of blame before God. For there are three thinges required. The quarell muſt firſt bee iuſt and good: ſecondly the meane muſt be lawfull: and thirdly the affection muſt bee pure and well ruled. Nowe this thirde point wanteth in moſt men. As howe? Some man perchaunce is miſuſed, and hee hath iuſt cauſe to require redreſſe at the Iudges hand: hee intendeth neither to ſtrike nor to practiſe any thing againſt his aduetſarie by treacherie, but reſorteth to the Iuſtice: this is a lawfull remedie, it is ordeined of God, wee may ſafely vſe it with good conſcience. So are there two of the pointes to bee founde heere. But yet this man that hath the iuſt cauſe, and ſeeketh no remedie but by order of Iuſtice, faileth not ſomtimes to doe amiſſe. As howe? If he haue a deſire of reuenge in his heart, if hee conceiue ſuch rancour that hee ſeeketh to bee ſo reuenged as the partie may perceiue he hath done euill; and cannot bee contented and ſatisfied till hee ſee himſelfe to haue requited like for like to him yͤ hath offended him: ſuch a man is blameable before God. For he taketh couert vnder the name of Iuſtice, to be reuenged of his enemie. It is in vaine for him to alledge the goodneſſe of his quarell; for hee doeth but abuſe the remedie that God had ordeined. What is to be done then? When wee bee deſirous to demaunde Iuſtice, let euery of vs enter into our ſelues and examine what our affections are, and ſee that wee bee cleare from all ill will. When there is ſuch ſoundneſſe in vs; then is it Lawfull for vs to purſue offences done againſt vs, and to require that they may be puniſhed, namely ſo there be no rancour nor malice in our heartes. Nowe then if a man haue none other reſpect than the puniſhing of the miſdeede, and that he hate not the partie ne bee ledde by any wicked deſire: then ſhal he bee allowed of God, and not otherwiſe. But ſuch examples are verie rare. For as ſoone as men begin to go to Lawe, by and by enmitie bewrayeth it ſelfe, and ſuch a fire is kindled as cannot be quenched, ſo as this prouerbe is verie true, that ſuit in Lawe and friendſhippe are two thinges that can hardly ioyne to together. Nowe then let vs bethinke our ſelues, and not imagine that the hauing of good right, and our ſeeking of it by order of Law, can vtterly excuſe vs before God: for our hearts muſt be clenſed from all euill will, and from all wicked affection as I ſaide before. Moreouer let vs marke wel the concluſion which is added in this place: When Moſes ſaith thine eye ſhall not ſpare the man that hath ſo treacherouſly murthered his neighbour of ſet purpoſe; if a murther bee committed in heate of choler as they ſay, it ſhall not bee helde excuſed, but the lande ſhall abide ſtill defiled, vntill it be puniſhed. This was declared ſufficiently yeſterday. Now he treateth here of a more heynous murther: which is, that a man hauing conceiued hatred and rancour againſt his neighbour, lyeth in waite for him, and killeth him wilfully: for that is the terme that is proper to the murthers that are committed of ſet purpoſe and prepenſed malice. And that kinde of murther is vnpardonable: to graunt fauour in ſuch a caſe, is to ouerthrowe the whole order of nature, and al lawes written. So then, it is not without cauſe yͤ God ſaith here, thine eye ſhall not ſpare him. For ſometime wee make our market of other mens welfare, of their profite, or of their harmes, according to the common prouerbe, which ſaith that wee cut large thongs of other mens lether. When a man hath offended, the Iudge, who was not hurt by it, ne ſuffered any harme, will eaſily pardon it. What, ſaith hee? It was a ſmall matter. But if a man had done the like to him: he could finde in his heart that God ſhoulde thunder downe from heauen for the puniſhing thereof: and yet [in another mans caſe] hee doeth make a mowe at it. Tuſh (ſaies he) this may well be let ſlippe, this will vaniſh away of it ſelfe. See howe a man ſhall oftentimes be moued to pitie and compaſſion towards ſome one, and deale cruelly with ſome other: yea he wil become cruel to a whole realme to ſpare one man. This is dayly ſeene: O ſay they, this poore man is to bee pitied. Yea, but in the meane time, if a wicked deede do paſſe vnpuniſhed, all yͤ whole realme is defiled and corrupted by it, and it is a prouoking of Gods wrath againſt the whole Nation. Againe, others take example by it to giue themſelues to all leawdneſſe, when they bee in hope that crimes ſhall ſcape vnpuniſhed. Men conſider not that ſuch kinde of mercie is the cauſe of innumerable cruelties, and that it turneth to the common confuſion of all men. And therefore whereas our Lord ſaith that we muſt not ſpare him that hath done ſuch euill deedes; it is to ſhewe that wee muſt not be mercifull after our owne manner, to ouerthrowe a great number for the ſparing of one man; but that we muſt haue an eye to right and indifferencie.

And herewithall he ſheweth vs againe, howe deare our liues are to him, in that hee will not ſuffer a murther to be committed, without vengeance for it. Herein wee ſee (ſay I) his fatherly care ouer vs. Now if he ſet ſuch ſtore by this trãſitorie life, and ſhewe himſelfe to be the defender thereof· what will he do touching the life of our ſoules? Well hath hee ſhewed by one gage howe greatly he loueth it, and what ſtore he ſetteth by it, in that he hath not ſpared his onely ſonne for it. Then let vs bethinke vs heere, that ſeeing our Lorde telleth vs howe he hath a care of this tranſitorie life, and vouchſafeth to take it into his cuſtodie, whereby hee ſheweth his fauour and goodnes towards vs in that behalfe, in ſo much yͤ although our bodies bee but wormes and rottenneſſe, yet notwithſtanding he vouchſafeth to ſtoope ſo lowe as to haue regarde of it. We ought to conſider well ſuch goodneſſe, and to beare in minde that ſeeing God loueth vs ſo much, we ought not to bite one another, nor to be as cats and dogs, ſith our God wil haue vs to be knit ſo together in yͤ bonde of brotherly loue.

Therefore inaſmuch as we knowe Gods goodneſſe and fatherly loue towards vs; let vs learne to reſtraine our ſelues from doing any harme or wrong to our neighbours. And afterwarde let the ſame leade vs yet further: that is to witte, that for aſmuch as God holdeth vs vnder his protection, and holdeth out his hand to ſuccor vs: we in the mean ſeaſon muſt looke vp higher; namely to the heauenly life which he hath prepared for vs; not douting but that hee will preſerue our ſoules much more then our bodies. Let vs be fully reſolued of that, to the intent that wee may call vppon him with full boldneſſe. And although wee bee beſet with infinite dangers; yet let vs go forwarde ſtill, aſſuring our ſelues that our God wil ſtrengthen vs, ſeeing hee hath a care of vs. And moreouer, that although no man require reuenge for vs; yet he himſelfe will require it. Therefore let vs be contented to bee in ſuch wiſe vnder his protection, that if any man do vs any outrage, hee will haue his hande lifted vp to ſuccour vs at our neede. Let vs content our ſelues therewith, ſay I; and let vs walke on in ſimplicitie and vprightneſſe being patient in all our aduerſities, waiting Gods leaſure til he prouide conuenient remedie for vs. And as for thoſe that ſit in the ſeate of Iuſtice, and haue authoritie in their hand; let them alſo doe their office duly, ſo as they may yeeld a good & faithfull account of their doings at the laſt day.

Nowe let vs kneele downe before the maieſtie of our good God with acknowledgement of our faultes, praying him to make vs feele them better thã we haue done, that we may be drawen more and more to true repentance, and be ſo caſt downe in our ſelues, as wee may riſe vp againe in him & ſeeke him, and ſo reſt vppon his promiſes, that through his inuincible power we may fight valiantly both againſt Satan and all his champions, and alſo againſt the worlde: and that although wee bee ſometimes hindered to ſerue him, yet we may go through with our race, vntil wee be come to the marke whereunto hee calleth vs. That it may pleaſe him to graunt this grace, not only to vs, but alſo to all people & nations of the earth, &c.

On Saturday the vij. of December. 1555.

The Cxiiij. Sermon which is the third vpon the nineteenth Chapter.

14 Thou ſhalt not remoue thy neighbours boundes which bounded thy predeceſſours in thine heritage that thou ſhalt poſſeſſe in the lande which the Lord thy God giueth thee to poſſeſſe.

15 Let not one witneſſe alone riſe vp againſt a man for any matter of treſpaſſe or ſinne, or for any fault that he offendeth in: but at the worde of two or three witneſſes ſhall the matter be ſtabliſhed.

For the better vnderſtanding of that which is commaunded and forbidden heere concerning bounds or limits; we haue to marke firſt of all, that God in giuing the land of Chanaan to his people, had ordeined that partitions ſhould bee made, and his intent was the ſame ſhoulde cõtinue for euer. For although ſales were made; yet behooued it that in the yeare of Iubily, all thinges ſhould returne to their former ſtate againe. (Leui. 25. 28.) And Eleazer the highprieſt & Ioſua were to make thoſe partitions, which ſhoulde indure to the end. Nowe there was moreouer aſſigned to euery houſe an inheritance. For the trybes hauing parted the lande after that manner, agreed afterward as touching the heads of their houſes: but yet for al that, it behooued the former partition to continue ſtill, and that ỹ others neuertheleſſe ſhould inioy their goods; and that if any ſale were made, it ſhould bee vnder ſuch condition, as euery man might afterwarde returne to his owne inheritance, at the time that God had appointed. Now let vs come to that which is ſaid here. Gods wil is that the *boundes* (which we in this countrey call *limites*) *ſhoulde remaine faſt, ſo as no man might alter any of them*: and this ſerued as well for the vniuerſall inheritance of the whole body of the nation, as for the peculiar poſſeſſions of euery ſeueral perſon. And although there was a ſpecial reaſon for the people of Iſrael (as I haue touched heretofore:) yet did the heathen know well ynough, ỹ if the ſame thing were not obſerued otherwhere alſo, there woulde bee no vprightneſſe among men, but all would go to confuſion. And therefore they held it for a crime, when any man altered the landmarks, & it was counted a kind of falſhood euen among the Heathen. And to the intent it ſhould be taken for a holy matter, they made a God of it, according to their cõmon maner, which was to mingle ſome ſuperſtition with their matters to hold folke in awe, when they intended to bridle them. Now it was a diueliſh inuention to ſet vp an ydol for the maintenance of equitie betweeen men. Yet notwithſtãding, we ſee how nature hath alwayes taught vs this principle, that if bounds & limits were not kept and maintayned, there would be a horrible confuſion among men, and no lawes would be any longer kept. Therefore to benefite our ſelues by this text, we muſt marke two things. The one is not onely that the children of Iſrael had the poſſeſſion of the lande of Chanaan of Gods gifts; but alſo that the partitions therof were made by his apoyntment & authoritie. The other is, yͤ if the like order be not kept among other men; there wilbee neither equitie nor vpright dealing, but al wilbe full of theeuerie & quareling.

Now as touching Gods bounding of the land in that wiſe; wee may vnderſtande thereby what care he had of his people, how yͤ in ſo doing hee ſhewed himſelſe a father. Againe it was to yͤ end that the trybes ſhould alwayes be ſeuered, ſo as there might be no confuſion, becauſe the trybe of Leuie was to haue the prieſthood, & the redeemer was to come of yͤ tribe of Iuda. In theſe reſpects it was Gods will that this order ſhould be kept among his people: the mainteining of yͤ bounds was not for their poſſeſſions ſake, but for the reſpects afore mentioned. And wee in theſe days muſt aboue all things marke yͤ aforetouched thing, that is to wit, the ſaide equitie, which cannot be continued betweene man and man, vnleſſe their grounds be bounded out, ſo as euery man may knowe his own poſſeſſions. And this ſerueth as wel for kingdoms & lordſhips, as for priuate poſſeſſions. It is ſaid in the Pſalme yͤ our Lord pitched the bounds of kingdomes, at ſuch time as it pleaſed him that the natious ſhould be diuided aſunder. But we ſee howe the couetouſneſſe, ambition, and vnſatiable greedineſſe of princes hath put all out of order, & there is not ſo holy a thing that can ſtay them from incroching vppon the bounds of their neighbors & next borderers. For when they ſeeke ſo to inlarge their own dominions, it is a breaking of yͤ order of nature. Behold, God hath ſeparated one nation from another: and it is to the ende that all ſhould liue, and communicate one with another, and that there might bee no confuſed diſorder. Ye ſee then how all men ought to hold themſelues contented with their own boundes. But men play the looſe colts; their couetouſnes carryeth them away; al their ſeeking is to make themſelues ſtil greater. We ſee then yͤ the wars which are taken in hand vpon ambition, or couetouſnes, are as a ſpiting of God, by peruerting the order which he hath ſet in nature, & which he would haue kept as moſt holy. Now then ſith we ſee ſuch confuſion, we haue good cauſe to be ſorie; & to think it no wonder though ſo great a miſchiefe drawe a long taile after it. For when God is ſo deſpiſed, by the peruerting of his order; needes muſt horrible curſes inſue vppon it. Thus much concerning the firſt point.

Gen.49,10.

Deut,32,8.

And herewithal let vs marke, that when men go about to inriche themſelues by wicked and vnlawful meanes, it is a plucking vp of yͤ bounds and limits as men terme them: and that is a plaine falſhood. What is to be done then? Like as weights and meaſures ought to bee maintained iuſtly, & likewiſe coynes, becauſe that if faithfulnes be not obſerued in them, there can be no more dealing between mã & man: ſo are boũds and landmarks to be kept & mainteined alſo. If weights and meaſures be falſe, there wilbee no more merchandiſe: there can bee neither bying nor ſelling: men ſhall become as wilde beaſtes among themſelues. If coyne bee not lawfull, all muſt needs turne to theeuerie & ſtelth. The like reaſon is in bounds & limits. And therefore let vs marke that Gods commaunding of vs to maintaine them is not without cauſe: but that vnder that one particular kind, he comprehendeth all other things: ſhewing thereby, that wee muſt be careful to keepe the thinges which wee know to be neceſſarie for the maintenance of yͤ cõmon weale, & of louing kindnes between man & man. That is the thing which wee haue to remember vpon this part of the text.

Alſo it is expounded allegorically by ſuch as wold haue men to hold themſelues in al things & in al reſpects to antiquitie. They be of opinion yͤ God would haue men to direct themſelues by the lawes & ordinances of their aunceſters, & that nothing ſhould be changed which had ſeemed to be good aforetimes. Yea, but we know, yͤ though a thing be ancient, if it be not alſo good, antiquitie doth but increaſe the euilneſſe of it. And therefore what a thing were it, if we ſhould be bound to obſerue al things without exceptiõ which our auncetors haue done or ſaid? In deed changes are always to be feared, & we muſt eſchue them as much as we can: but yet are yͤ Papiſts ſo much the more fond & fooliſh to ſay, O, we may not alter the bounds which our aunceſters haue ſet: & therfore wee muſt not nowe receiue any new thing. Truely they miſunderſtand the caſe, in taking vs to bring any noueltie into the world. For what require we, but yͤ gods word which hath bin at all times, ſhould bee ſet vp againe? Whereas it hath bin troden vnder foote heretofore, & vtterly forgotten; wee ſeeke to ſet it in yͤ former ſtate & authoritie. That is all yͤ we deſire. But vnder pretence of the ancient boũds the meaning of yͤ Papiſts is to maintaine themſelues in poſſeſſion of all their errors, ydolatries, & abhominations, which are ſo groſſe as it would pitie a mans hart to think on them, & euẽ blind folks may feele them. Seeing thẽ that they be ſo wilful; it is a flat mockerie to allcage thoſe things in defence of their ſo long continued errors, which our Lorde hath ordeined heere for worldly policie, & to the end yͤ equitie & vpright dealing might be maintained among men.

Let vs marke then, yͤ as touching Gods word, & as touching the doctrine of ſaluation, we had neede of another maner of antiquitie than the antiquitie of men. In this caſe it is not for vs to ſtand vpon the decrees of our forefathers: but God muſt be he by whom our faith muſt bee directed. Ye ſee then how we muſt reſort to Gods euerlaſtingnes, if we wil make a ſure foundatiõ. Neuertheleſſe, as concerning mennes lawes, antiquitie is to be honoured, ſo as thinges bee not changed vpon fooliſh curioſitie and raſhnes: for that were to bee euer newe to begin. Therefore let men hold them to the anciẽt lawes as much as is poſſible. But when neceſſitie requireth alteration; there our Lorde wil haue vs to vſe the means yͤ he ſheweth & putteth into our hands: & thẽ to be wilfully addicted to antiquity, is vtter beſtlines. As touching equity, (as Moſes ſaith here) let men beware of remouing their bounds, & let euery man content himſelf wͨ his owne, &

not incroche vpon his neighbor or next dweller by. Thus ye ſee in effect what we haue to mark vpon this place.

Now here is another lawe, *That one witneſſe alone ſhal not be belieued in any criminal caſe, whether it be treſpaſſe, offence, or forfeit, but that the caſe ſhall ſtand in the mouth of two or three witneſſes.* This law hath beene admitted by men, without knowing that euer Moſes ſpake it. For in very deede our Lord hath printed the things in mens heartes, which he did ſet forth in writing to his people. Surely it was a ſpeciall grace that he vouchſafed to take vppon him the office of a lawgiuer to the people of Iſrael. Yet notwithſtanding he woulde not haue men ſo brutiſh, as to bee without theſe groundes of equitie, euen as they are conteined in the law of Moſes. Seeing then that there is ſuch agreeablenes, let vs note that God neuer left mankinde without ſome ſeede of vprightneſſe remaining in them. True it is that men are ſore blynded by reaſon of Adams ſinne: but yet hath our Lorde left ſtil a certaine diſcretion ingrauen in their hearts, and that is but only to make them vnexcuſable, as ſaith S. Paul Rom.1.20. in the firſt chapter to the Romanes. Howbeit, there was this further regard alſo, that mankind might be maintained, & that there might bee ſome difference betweene men & beaſts. That is the thing which we haue to learn by the agreeablenes yͭ is found to be betweene the law of Moſes & al the ſtates of gouernment that haue bin among all the Heathen in the world.

Moreouer wee muſt vnderſtande howe it was Gods intent to ratifie the thing among his own people, which was alreadie knowen & obſerued of all men, to yͤ intent that it might be of yͤ more authoritie. For not only the conſciences of the people of Iſrael did prooue it vnto them yͭ there could be no order among men, without yͤ things yͭ are contained here: but alſo they were taught it by Gods own mouth, & therfore it behooued them to condeſcend to his ſaying with all feare & reuerence. Yee ſee then that the people of Iſrael had a great aduantage, & ſo haue wee at this day, inaſmuchas wee be ſucceeded in their roome. But nowe let vs come to that which is ſaid here.

Our Lord wil not haue any one witneſſe to be beleeued in any caſe: that is to ſay, hee will not haue his euidence credited, to giue ſentence vpon it. In deede witneſſes muſt needs be admitted: for vntill they haue beene heard, a man can not tell what they wil ſay. Sometimes it falleth out, yͭ foure or fiue witneſſes are brought forth in one caſe, & none of them all depoſeth according to yͤ parties intent. And men beare themſelues in hand, yͭ they haue witnes in their ſleeue: & yet when they haue brought men forth, all is found to be but ſmoke. A man thẽ may wel take one witneſſe alone: but yet muſt not iudgement be giuen vpon yͤ hearing of him onely. What a thing were it, if one perſon ſhould be ſo credited that vpon his bare word a man ſhould be put to death, & be puniſhed by law? Ye ſee it were too rigorous a thing. So then, it is not without cauſe yͭ God hath ordained yͭ there ſhould be two witneſſes before a caſe were iudged, yͭ is to ſay, that a man ſhould be conuicted by two or three witneſſes before ſentence were giuen vpon him as guiltie, or before he were cõdemned to any puniſhment. For his ſpeaking of three, is ment of any number aboue two. But by this expreſſe number, God ment to ſhew how it were no reaſon yͭ any one witnes alone ſhould be beleeued, & his ſaying ſo ſtoode vppon, yͭ a body ſhould be condemned for it: but that it is meete there ſhould be a larger & more ſufficient proof of the matter. The third witneſſe then is not of neceſſitie, but as it were of ouerplus. It is all one as if he ſhould ſay, If there bee three witneſſes, they bee mo than neede; but at the leaſt there muſt needes be two. In deed here is no mention yͭ the witneſſes ſhould be vnblameable: but our Lord hath ſhewed alreadie in other places, Deut.19.11 that inquiſition muſt be made of the hatred & rancour yͭ is among men; which ought to extend to witneſſes as wel as to other men: for although it bee not ſpoken of them, yet doth Moſes preſuppoſe yͭ the witneſſes muſt be worthie of credit, & ſuch as haue no ſufficient cauſe in them why they ſhould bee reiected. That in effect is the thing that is contained here.

Now we be taught firſt & formoſt by this text, yͭ if any of vs know of any euil, we muſt beare wͭ it patiently vntill our Lorde do bring it to light. For we ſee a number of men led with ſo vnaduiſed zeale, that they thinke themſelues to haue wrong, if iudgement bee not giuen vppon their bare word. O ſay they, I know a man yͭ hath cõmitted ſuch a wicked deede, I would therfore yͭ he ſhould be condemned for it. Yea, but he is not yet conuicted of it. I know it, ſaith he, yea, but we muſt not peruert yͤ order of nature. Let vs keep our ſelues therfore from running headlong to be both witneſſes & iudges in any caſe: & let vs tarry til our Lorde bring things to light. And very needeful it is yͭ we ſhould ſo do. For we ſee daily exãples of great numbers yͭ are ſtraight in a chafe if a man beleeue them not. Yea, but yet for all yͭ, was not our Lorde wiſer than wee? Then let vs learne to reſtraine our ſelues, & remember how S. Paul ſayes, yͭ there are ſome ſins 1.Tim.5.24. which make haſt to come to their condemnatiõ, as though God did thruſt the men forth by the ſhoulders, yͭ they might come of themſelues to diſcouer their own ſhame: & that there be ſome other ſinnes which God reſerueth to himſelf, & thoſe lye lurking a long time. And in deed if wee conſidered how God gouerneth the worlde; this thing were apparant ynough. But what? Wee iudge at alauenture, without conſideration of our Lords doing. We be not worthie to reape yͤ benefite of his workes, ſeeing we haue not yͤ modeſtie to refraine our ſelues, & to wait patiently & quietly til God haue performed his worke, at which time we ſhould perceiue yͭ hee was not a ſleepe when we were grieued that things came not forward. Ye ſee then yͭ ſinnes may bee committed, & ſome ſignes & tokens therof ſhal com to ſight, yea & it may hap that many men ſhall know of it. Behold there is a wicked man, & his faults are knowen: but yet it is not poſſible that he ſhould be conuicted of them by order of law. This is a ſin that lyeth ſtil in couert. Now of all Gen.4.7. this while (as it is ſaid in Geneſis) the party may go forth where he wil, & wander in his own affection; but his ſin is ſtil at his doore, & watcheth him ſurely for going out. God then letteth men take their pleaſure after that faſhiō for a time: & afterward bewrayeth thē when it pleaſeth him. And we ſee examples hereof as I ſaide afore. There are ſome other ſinnes which come to knowledge at the firſt puſh, as though God had ſifted them out. Therefore we muſt marke this rule, that we may brydle our ſelues, and not bee too haſtie to iudge, but tarrie patiently for the conuenient time. Alſo we haue to follow ẏ rule Mat.18.15.16 which our Lord Ieſus Chriſt giueth vs; namely that if any man haue done amiſſe towardes vs, wee warne him ſecretely; & that if hee receiue not our warning wee take two or three witneſſes to vs, that in their mouth the thing may be the better ſtabliſhed. Nowe it is certaine that in ẏ place our Lord ſpeaketh of ẏ faults that are vnknowen: for if there be an open offence giuen, ſo as the partie may be openly conuicted: it is not meant that I ſhould ſay to him ſecretely in his eare, Sir you haue done amiſſe. We ſee that our Lord Ieſus Chriſts meaning was nothing ſo. As for thoſe that alleage that text nowadays when they haue offended in the open face of ẏ world, and ſay, Why do ye not warne me of it ſecretely betweene you & me? [We anſwer them,] & why did not you hide your ſelf to doe your naughtines out of ſight? Thou cōmeſt hither to poyſon a whole ſtreete; & thou wouldeſt haue mee to draw thee aſide into ſome corner to tell thee of thy fault. Wee ſee a number of theſe nyce perſōs which know not one word of ẏ goſpel more than this text; & yet they do falſifie that too. Our Lord ſpeaketh there of ẏ ſins that are vnknowē, & wherof they haue no witneſſes. Therfore it behooueth vs to follow the order which we heare in that behalf. When a man hath done amiſſe & there is none to beare witneſſe of it, he muſt be admoniſhed ſecretly, & haue his faulte layd afore him: & if hee bee wilfull, then muſt I take two or three witneſſes with me, & proue it to his face: for otherwiſe it cannot be done. If we were ſo delt with, we ſhould not be ſo luſtie as we be, at leaſtwiſe as a number of vs are: but wee would vnderſtand ẏ it is our Lordes wil to keepe vs in vre, & that wheras our faults come not to light at the firſt committing of them, but God ſeemeth willing to conceale them: the ſame is not without cauſe. And although it be a temptation that is hard for vs to beare, yet doth God do it to our benefite, to the intent that we ſhould inure our ſelues to patience, & ſtriue againſt the euill, though wee cannot diſcouer it when wee would.

Moreouer let vs marke alſo, that wheras our Lorde puniſheth not a number of faultes in the ſight of men, ne ſuffereth thē to come to knowledge: therby it is his wil to ſhew vs, that we muſt walke before him, & that wee muſt content our ſelues with his record, although men knowe not what wee be. It is ſaide in the common prouerb, that a mans owne conſcience is as good as a thouſand witneſſes: and they that haue ſaide ſo, knew neither why nor wherefore. Yet notwithſtanding God wreſted that ſaying out of their mouthes, as if a man ſhould drawe an offender to execution. On our part we muſt vnderſtande, ẏ the reaſon is, that inaſmuch as God inlighteneth our conſciences & is the Iudge of them; we haue mo than a thouſand witneſſes. For our ſinnes muſt be layd open, not only before ẏ Angels of heauen, but alſo before al creatures. Seeing then that our conſciences are inlightened by God, & muſt aunſwere before him: let vs not thinke it ſtrange that it ſhoulde counteruaile a thouſand witneſſes. But now let vs come to that which I ſpake of. It may bee that I liue honeſtly & vprightly, ſo as my deſire is to ſerue God, and to diſcharge my ſelfe towardes my neighbours alſo, & al this ſhalbe ill taken, & no man wil cun me thanke for my labour. If it greeue mee that men perceiue not the ſoundneſſe that is in me, & therupon do ſeeke the more to bee knowen; I receiue my reward in this worlde, as ſayeth our Lord Ieſus Chriſt. Neuertheleſſe let vs marke, Matt.6.5. that God to draw vs to him, will oftentimes not ſuffer vs to be knowen of men, but will haue vs to be taken for other than we be. And that is (as I ſaid afore) to the end we ſhould hold our ſelues contented with his only record, & that ẏ ſame ſhould wey ſo much with vs, as wee might defye the whole worlde, ſo God allowe of vs. Marke that for one poynt. Againe, when men grudge againſt vs, wee muſt haue the courage and conſtancie to appeale continually vnto God, and to take him for our ſufficient warrant. Thus ye ſee on the one ſide what we haue to beare in mind.

But in the meane whyle wee ſee howe the wicked doe mocke both God and the worlde, & harden themſelues in their leaudneſſe, becauſe they bee not called foorth to Iuſtice for it, nor are puniſhed for it. For ſometimes they be born with, and ſomtimes alſo our Lord holdeth them at that ſtay to encreaſe their condemnation. Yet notwithſtanding let not vs bee tempted to reſemble them, neither let vs be grieued at their eſcaping ſo from the handes of men, and that they be not condemned out of hand by order of iuſtice. For what ſhall they gaine by it? So litle is their market mended by it, that it ſhall ſerue to increaſe their confuſion before God, as hath beene ſaide alreadie. If our Lorde bring a mans ſinne to knowledge, it will ſurely grieue him at the firſt, and when hee ſhalbe driuen to his ſhiftes, it will make him to looke about him and to think thus with himſelfe: What though I am falne and haue committed this fault? Is it reaſon that men ſhoulde come and rebuke mee thus roughly at the firſt daſh? I ſee ſuch a one haunt theſe things more than I, and I ſee ſuch a one offende more groſſely than I, and yet they ſcape vnpuniſhed. I in the meane whyle haue chanced to make a ſcape, rather of ouerſight than of any euill purpoſe; and muſt men bee ſo rough and fierce vppon mee? Such complaintes and murmurings ſhal a man heare; or if the partie that is greeued make not complaint after that manner before men , yet ſayeth he not to repine in his heart. But we regard not the foreſaid things as we ought to do. And therefore our Lord perceiuing vs to bee in danger of falling aſleepe,if our miſdoings ſhould be ſuffered and let ſlip at the firſt : putteth vs into the handes of men to bee corrected by Iuſtice. And his ſo dooing is for our benefite. For wee muſt alwayes come backe to this ſaying, that God chaſtiſeth thoſe whome he loueth, ſhewing thereby that hee hath his eye vpon them as vpon his children,& that therefore hee holdeth them the neerer to him.That is the thing wherunto it would behoue vs to haue an eye.Neuertheleſſe if our Lord giue the wicked the brydle, ſo as they heape ſin vpon ſin before it come to ỹ knowledge of men, & no countenance is made towards them of puniſhing them.it is an increaſing of their condemnation,by rancling in their owne poyſon, & the diuel wholly driueth them into a reprobate ſenſe, vntill they bee come to Gen.15.16. their ful meaſure.Let vs ſee what the inhabiters of the land of Chanaan fared ỹ better by Gods bearing with them by the ſpace of foure hundred yeres. They were alreadie malicious and froward, there was no faithfulneſſe nor loyaltie among them,they were extremely cruel: moreouer, whoredome, extortion,& ſuch other like things raigned among them:& for all that, God maketh as though he ſaw it not. But what came of it? It was tolde Abraham that their iniquities were not yet come to the full. That ſaying is ſet down to vs for a general rule. And therfore whē our Lord forbeareth to condemne the wicked at the firſt puſh, let vs aſſure our ſelues that their iniquitie is not yet ful rype. And how ſo? Is the ſinne of Gods children come to ful rypeneſſe at the firſt day as ſoone as they haue done amiſſe? No: but our Lords intent is to chaſtice his children in ſuch wiſe as amendment may inſue of it, that his correcting of thē may ſerue for a ſalue to heale them: wheras his ſuffering of the wicked folks ſinnes to come to full rypeneſſe, is for that he puniſheth them not but deadly.Thus ye ſee what wee haue to beare in minde, where mention is made of two or three witneſſes.

Furthermore , hereby we bee warned not to make delay till wee bee conuicted by witneſſes before men. Let the remorſe of our owne conſcience be a ſufficient rebuke vnto vs: for it is as much as if God cyted vs before him, & made vs to be indyted,& impanelled a queſt vppon vs, & condemned vs. Doth our own conſcience ſpeak to vs? It is as much as if God had made great Regiſters of our ſinnes , & wee ſawe witneſſes brought in againſt vs,not one or two,but a hundred. For(as I haue ſayd alreadie)our own conſcience is of more force than a hundred witneſſes. Ye ſee how euery man ought to looke neerly to himſelfe, ſo as wee wrye not our mouthes when wee haue done amiſſe, vnder colour that no man hath perceiued vs, & that there bee no witneſſes that can ſhame vs for it before men. Alſo let vs marke, ỹ inaſmuch as our Lord hath ſent vs his Prophets and Apoſtles, they be ſuch ſufficient witneſſes as ſhalbe heard before all ỹ priuate perſons that can bee brought foorth at this day againſt vs. S. Paul ſpeaking to the Corinthians 2.Cor.13.1. ſayeth,that ſeeing hee had written to them alreadie, & told them of their faultes,and doth likewiſe againe the ſecond time: if they amend not , it was all one as if they were conuicted by two or three witneſſes. Yea & he vſeth this ſelfeſame text,ye know (ſayth he)that God hath ordeyned that two or three witneſſes ſhold be credited. Now,I come to you againe;& looke how many times I ſpeake,ſo many recordes will it be againſt you before the heauenly Iudge. I ſummon you not here before men: neither will God forget the things that I doe towardes you: for his ſtirring of mee vp to giue you warning,is to hold you the more conuicted.

Now let vs apply theſe thinges to our ſelues; & let vs vnderſtand (as I ſayd afore)that ſeeing we haue Moſes & the Prophets, wee haue witneſſes ynow . True it is, that they ſpeake not as now before men, they let vs alone and trouble vs not:but yet for all that let not vs fal aſleepe, for our flattering of our ſelues will ſtande vs in no ſteede, but to plunge vs the deeper in Gods curſe. But foraſmuch as our Lorde ſetteth vs theſe witneſſes before our faces : let euery of vs bethink himſelfe; & ſeeing wee haue here our Lord Ieſus Chriſt and his Apoſtles,let vs be the more moued to make our own inditements and to preuent Gods iudgements. For if wee condemne our ſelues, it wilbee a meane to obtaine 1.Cor.11.31. fauour at his hand: and our faults ſhalbee forgiuen vs; if we craue pardon wͭ vnfained miſliking of them,deſiring to depart quite & cleane from them.And not only ỹ Prophets & Apoſtles ſhal be our witneſſes before God;but alſo all ỹ faithfull that euer haue beene in the worlde ſhall reproue our vnbeliefe & diſobedience , if wee become not the better by the doctrine that hath been preached vnto vs. And for that cauſe doth the Apoſtle in the twelfth to the Hebrues ſay, ỹ we muſt haue a good eye to the great and thick Hebr.12.1. clowd of witneſſes . Hee vſeth this ſimilitude there,which at the firſt may ſeeme fond; neuertheleſſe it is not without cauſe that hee ſaieth there is a great & thick clowd of witneſſes, after he hath made mention of the Martyrs that had ſuffered. For we ſee that the faithful were conſtant to death,& held out to the vttermoſt when men went about to turne them away from the lawe of God,ſo as they could not bee made to ſwarue or ſtep aſide for any torments that were put vnto them.All they(ſaith he) are witneſſes: As if he ſhould ſay , there needeth none other proces againſt vs before god,for our negligence in theſe dayes : in ſo much that if wee faint for feare,& forſake God & his worde; our proces is ſufficiently concluded,& information is already giuen againſt vs ſaith he.And why ſo? For it is not a two or three witneſſes onely , but a great cloud of witneſſes that ſtand vp againſt vs,which are able euen to ſtop our eyes. Seeing then that the caſe ſtandeth ſo with vs : let vs note that it behoueth vs to ſet our eyes more aduiſedly vpō God, & to better our ſelues in ſuch wiſe by the thinges wherewith hee enlighteneth vs in his worde, & by the doctrine which he will haue to bee confirmed vnto vs by ſuch witneſſes as hee raiſeth vp, & daily bringeth foorth, as wee tary not til he ſhame vs & confound vs before men: but let euery of vs condemne himſelfe. Thus ye ſee what we haue to marke in making compariſons betwixt the iudgementes of men and the iudgements of God. Namely that although mē do let vs alone, we muſt not think we haue ſped the better, for our inditement is throughly framed afore the heauenly Iudge, though our faults were hidden & buried before men, ſo as neuer any mention or incling were made of them.

Now to make a concluſion of this text, wheras he ſaith *that all caſes ſhalbe ſtabliſhed in the mouthes of two or three witneſſes*: it was our Lords will to ſpeake here generally, doing vs to vnderſtand that if that were not, there woulde bee no more order among men. For if men will not be contented with two witneſſes, offences muſt needes be foſtered, & there wilbe euery day greater diſorder than other, whereby Gods wrath ſhalbee prouoked againſt the whole countrey, as hath bin ſaid before. Therefore is it requiſite that all matters ſhoulde bee ſtayed & concluded at the mouth of two or three witneſſes. That is yͤ drift of Moſes in ſpeaking ſo. Howbeit, men wil allege thus: It is a dangerous matter; for falſe witneſſes may be ſuborned, & if they be belieued, a mā may ſoone be oppreſſed, & he might be wronged in a rightful caſe. It is true yͤ ſuch allegation may be made, & examples therof are to be ſeene. But yet doth it not follow yͤ there ſhould not be ſome certeine rule for men to direct themſelues by, & to hold themſelues vnto, whatſoeuer inconueniences may be alleaged. For we ſee that when mē be minded to do euil, they ſeeke the darke by all the meanes they can, they ſounde no trumpet, they call no witneſſes to their doings. If it bee a thing that is for their aduantage & profite, they can skill welynough to call witneſſes: but when they do euil, they hyde themſelues: & though they be ſpyed, yet they go about to bleare mens eyes. And what woulde come of it then, ſeeing there are ſo many ſhiftes vſed to conceale euill doings, if two witneſſes might not bee admitted in a matter? Neuer could any thing be condemned, but all iuſtice muſt needs go to wreck, & we ſhould liue together like brute beaſts. Not without cauſe therfore doth our Lord tel vs heere, yͤ two or three witneſſes muſt be credited, yea euē in all caſes: though it concerned a mans life an hundred times, yet ought it to ſtande for good. But wee ſee how the diuel hath practiſed continually to ouerthrow this order. And why? For he knoweth that hee coulde not deuiſe a better way to win vs, than by couering our faultes, becauſe that by that meanes Gods wrath is kindled daily more & more, & euery man taketh yͤ greater & more exceſſiue libertie to do what he liſteth: inſomuch that the nonpuniſhing of his leawdnes, maketh him to think it lawful, & ſo he goeth on from one wickednes to another. Yea, it becommeth a cōmon infection like yͤ plague: if it be not remedied in time, it will poyſon all. In like caſe is it with euil deedes. That is yͤ cauſe why the diuel hath alwayes practiſed that there might be no proofe of things, or elſe that there might be ſo many ſtartingholes, as mens offences might not come to knowledge, to be cōdemned. And therfore our Lord ſaith expreſſely, that the matter muſt be tryed at the mouth of two or three witneſſes. It is not Gods wil yͤ there ſhold be any exemption in that behalf. For they that be in high degree, ought to giue yͤ greater light: & if they offend, the fault is double, & deſerueth to be the grieuouſlyer puniſhed. Therfore they muſt hold themſelues to that, & there ought to be as great rigor at the leaſt vſed towards them, as towards thoſe yͤ may better be bornwithall. And ſo let vs marke, yͤ ſeeing our Lord hath told vs that two witneſſes ought to be beleeued in all caſes; it is an ouerthrowing of that good lawe, to alleage that inconueniences may inſew of it, as ſome always do, caſting this dout & that dout to bring al things to confuſion. O ſay they, ſuch a thing may come of it. A man may alleage that yͤ clouds wil fal out of the aire. And we haue ſeene examples therof. For without going any further, when one [was to be puniſhed which] went about here to ouerthrow Gods order, & yͤ things that our Lord Ieſus hath ordained by his word: O we will none of that, ſaid ſome: And why? For ſuch an inconuenience might inſue of it. And was that incōuenience ſeene? No. But a man can not tel what might come. And their meaning was, that Ieſus Chriſt ſhoulde not reigne by his word. After that maner did they greeue God. And vnder what pretence? For ſooth that ſome inconuenience might enſue of it. Lo here a diueliſh wiſedome. Nowe then if wee ſee neceſſitie pinch vs & hold vs ſhort; whatſoeuer impediment or quarel doe ſet it ſelfe againſt vs, let vs learne neuertheleſſe to follow Gods cōmandement without diſobedience in word or deede. And that is a thing which we haue to gather vpon this text, ouer & beſide the things that haue beene declared.

Nowe let vs caſt our ſelues downe before the maieſtie of our good God with acknowledgement of our faults, praying him to vouchſafe to hold vs ſo within our bounds by his word, as that the great number of our vices & imperfections hinder vs not from obeying his holy wil, & from abyding within the liſtes which hee hath ſet vs, but that we may be quickened vp by yͤ witneſſes which he giueth vs; And ſeeing hee draweth vs to him by ſo many means, we may not be ſo vnthankful as to drag backe when he calleth vs, & to ſeeke ſtarting holes to hyde our ſinnes, & to bury them before men, but rather giue him glorie by confeſſing them, & conceiue not any other hope of ſaluation than through his meere mercie: & that euery of vs may ſo looke to himſelfe, as we may be witneſſes and Iudges to our ſelues, yͤ he may receiue vs to mercie, when hee ſhall ſee that the euill diſlyketh vs, and that we haue not gone about to ſhrinke away from yeelding obedience vnto him. That it may pleaſe him to graunt this grace not onely to vs, but alſo to all people and nations of the earth, &c.

On Munday the xvj. of December. 1555.

The Cxv. Sermon which is the fourth vpon the nineteenth Chapter.

16 If a falſewitneſſe riſe vp againſt any man, to beare witneſſe againſt him for any tranſgreſſion:

17 Then the two men that are at variance ſhall ſtande before the Lorde in the preſence of the high Prieſtes and Iudges that ſhalbe in thoſe dayes.

18 And the Iudges ſhall make good inquirie, and if it be founde that the falſe witneſſe hath giuen falſewitneſſe againſt his brother:

19 Then ſhalt thou do vnto him, as he ment to haue done to his brother. And ſo thou ſhalt rid away euil from among you.

20 And others hearing thereof ſhall be afraide, and not doe any ſuch wicked deede among you from thencefoorth.

21 Thine eye ſhall not ſpare him: but life for life, eye for eye, tooth for tooth, hande for hande, and foote for foote.

WE haue ſeene heeretofore after what maner God wold haue all thinges brought to end: namely by prouing the truth by good record: and yet that no infinite number of witneſſes ſhould be required, but ȳ men ſhould hold themſelues contented with twain that could beare record of the deede. For as I ſayd, offences ſhould abide vnpuniſhed, if men ſhould not ſtand vpon the recorde of two witneſſes. Yea and we ſee how a number of men conceale the truth and foreſweare themſelues, inſomuch that when the proofe of a crime committed commeth to triall, a man ſhall haue much ado to finde one faithfull witneſſe among three or foure. Therefore if the nūber were not determinate, what a thing were it? Notwithſtanding foraſmuch as ȳ witneſſes doe more in a caſe than the Iudge himſelfe as the common prouerb ſaith: it behooueth them for their part to be held in awe, and that they haue no libertie giuen thē nor gap opened to them to oppreſſe giltleſſe perſons. For if ȳ might be ſuffered, it were better for men to be in the woods among theeues, than to be in a citie where law is to be executed: for falſe witneſſes woulde murther ſuch men with their tongues, as could defend thēſelues from the robbers. And therfore our Lord addeth, ȳ if an vnfaithfull witneſſe be falſly depoſed; and that the defendant feeling himſelfe greeued alledge that the record is falſe and wicked: he ſhalbe heard. Now a man may miſlike of the witneſſes before they giue their euidence, if there be iuſt cauſe, or at leaſtwiſe if there be ſome colour: but here it is for the defendant to ſhewe that the witneſſing was falſe.

And it is ſayde, *that both of them ſhall come before the Highprieſt and the Iudges that ſhalbe in that time, and the Iudges ſhall inquire diligently of the matter. And if they find that the guiltleſſe perſon is greeued, the falſedealer muſt be puniſhed, yea euen without any ſparing: inſomuch that if he appeached his neighbour of a matter of life, his owne life ſhall aunſwere for it: or if he intended any hurt to him, he ſhall forgoe eye for eye, foote for foote, hande for hande:* that is to ſay, hee ſhalbe ſerued of the ſame ſauce himſelfe. That is the very effect of our Lorde his meaning in this text. And let vs marke that here our Lord ſheweth vs that witnesbearing is a holy thing: and in deede, when witneſſes are brought foorth, they ought to thinke that it is God whome they come to ſerue in ȳ deede: True it is that men may well bring thē forth; but yet in the meane while, who is the founder of that order? Is not God the author thereof? Then muſt men haue an eye to him aboue all. Againe, he that bringeth foorth a witneſſe, can not ſay that he is to be examined in his name: But God is there to receiue the oth: & when a man is made to lift vp his hand when he ſhould giue euidence, he is called as it were before God. Therefore to be ſhort, let vs marke, that whenſoeuer we beare witneſſe in any matter of Lawe, we do as it were a holy deede; in reſpect whereof we ought to goe to it with the more reuerence and care. For periurie carrieth with it high treaſon againſt God: inſomuch as we blaſpheme againſt the name and maieſtie of God; And it is he, againſt whom the trecherie is committed, and not againſt a creature. And that is the cauſe why ſo greeuous puniſhment is heere expreſly appointed vnto it, inſomuch that God will not haue that witneſſe to be ſpared. True it is that hee hath an eye to the wrong and wicked dealing which hee offered to the guiltleſſe perſon. Neuertheleſſe his intent is alſo that there ſhoulde be a reuerence hadde to the order which he had ſet downe for the common benefite of all men. And moreouer foraſmuch as he himſelfe beareth chiefe ſtroake there, hee will haue men to honour his maieſtie, and not to dally with him after that faſhion. And in deede, we ſee how men take more libertie in forſwearing thẽſelues, thã in any other miſdoings. And why is that? Becauſe they beare themſelues in hande, that God will eaſily forgiue it. Yea forſooth, as who ſhoulde ſay hee made not more account of his owne glorie than of all that euer concerneth vs. Againe in all other faultes men haue ſome ſhame to holde them backe, they be afrayde leaſt it ſhould be prooued by them, or that it ſhoulde be perceiued. But the wicked ſort make but a mouth at it when they forſweare themſelues; Tuſh (ſay they) who ſhal aske vengeance of it? Who ſhall followe the ſuite of it? Yea, as who ſhould ſay there were no GOD in heauen. Nowe then let vs marke, that foraſmuch as men take leaue & diſpenſe with themſelues ſo eaſily in committing of periurie; and that it is not looked vnto of men, but it is let ſlip without puniſhing: that therefore God muſt bee faine to reſerue it wholly to his owne examination, and the crime muſt be ſo much the more accountable before his iudgement ſeate, where it ſhall be puniſhed dubble. Marke well therefore what we haue to beare in minde, that euery man may looke to himſelfe, and that we may be fully reſolued, that we be bounde to yeelde recorde to the trueth, as oft and whenſoeuer wee be called thereto: and that wee defraude both God and our neighbours of that which is due vnto them, when we can help them in any good caſe and doe not; which is all one as if we robbed them of that which belongeth vnto them. That is an Item to them that conceale and diſſemble the trueth when they be required to ſpeake it.

Furthermore let vs beare in minde that our comming to doe that, muſt be as though GOD called vs before his owne face, and did ſet downe his name there before vs ſaying, as ye haue any eſtimation of my name, ſee that ye beare faithfull recorde, without fauour or hatred: bee not led by any affection, but onely doe what yee can to report what ye knowe, without reſpect of any perſon. Were this well obſerued, wee ſhould ſee another manner of feare of God in all giuing of euidence than we doo. How great libertie ſoeuer the world take, & although moſt men paſſe their boundes without any awe of God: yet muſt not this leſſon be loſt: but we muſt learne to practiſe it, euen with horrour to beholde the great blockiſhnes which reigneth euery where, in that men do ſo mocke God, and ruſh againſt him with ſuch boldeneſſe and preſumption.

And nowe it is ſayde expreſly, *that the partyes muſt come both into the preſence of the Lorde, before the Prieſtes and Iudges.* Whereby Moſes doeth vs to vnderſtande, that God is preſent at the executing of Iuſtice, becauſe all is done by his authoritie and in his name. And this text is yet verie well worthie to be noted. For when men come before a Iudge, they thinke they haue hyed them well, if they may deceiue him: but there are very fewe that conſider the Iudge to be Gods lieutenaunt. In deede men can finde in their hearts to confeſſe that Iuſtice is a diuine thing, and that God beareth chiefe ſway therin, it coſteth them nothing to ſay ſo: but as for to be touched with it to the quicke, and to beare well in minde that when we appeare before a Iudge, God doth preſently beholde vs, ſo as we can not conceale any thing from him, but he writes vp all thinges in his regiſters, inſomuch that although wee be ſpared by men, yet we muſt come to account for it before God: wee neuer thinke of that. But yet doth this text warne vs, yͭ we muſt neuer goe to law, but wͭ intẽt to demeane ourſelues as in Gods preſence: aſſuring ourſelues yͭ although nothing in the worlde be hidden from him; yet hee will haue men to acknowledge a certain ſpeciall preſence of his maieſtie in the order of Iuſtice. True it is that euen when men be in their chambers or in their beddes, they ought to thinke ſtill that they be continually in the ſight of God: and although it be his propertie to ſearch all things & to examine euen the bottom of mens thoughts: Pſal.7.10. yet notwithſtanding, it is his will to haue a notable marke of his maieſtie and glorie to appeare Heb.4,12.13 in the order of gouernment which he hath ſet in the worlde, by appointing Iudges to bee as his liuetenauntes and officers, and he will haue men to knowe that he himſelfe is there, and that hee guideth and gouerneth the whole action. In the Popedome, becauſe men knowe not that God is preſent at the executing of Iuſtice, they haue Puppets and Paintinges, and Crucifixes, and I wote not what elſe. For thoſe beaſtes beare thẽ ſelues in hande, that images are laymens bookes as they terme them. But it ought to ſuffice vs that God telleth vs here with his owne mouth, yͭ he himſelfe ſitteth in the ſeate of Iuſtice where earthly men be ordeined in his name; and that whereas there be Prieſts and Iudges, he wil haue men to know that that is not done without him, but that he mainteineth that order becauſe hee hath once eſtabliſhed it among vs. When wee heare ſuch doctrine proceeding out of Gods own mouth, muſt it not needes be that we be too too dull, and yͭ the deuill hath made vs ſtarke beaſts, if wee be not touched with it? Nowe then let vs not looke to haue ſtockes and puppets ſet before our eyes to gaze vpon: but let vs haue Gods liuely image printed in our heartes, and let vs conſider that ſeeing it is his will to haue mankind gouerned by that meane: he doth alſo aſſiſt it, and is at hande vnto it, ſo as the thinges yͭ are doone there, are guided by him, & ought alſo to be referred vnto him: And that whẽ we come thither, it is to appeare as it were before his maieſtie, as I haue declared already.

And this ſerueth, not only for earthly Iuſtice, but alſo much more for the meetings yͭ are made to the ende yͭ God ſhould teach vs by his worde. For when we come hither to heare the doctrine of the Goſpel; God is much more apparãtly preſent with vs therein than in the order of Iuſtice. True it is (as I haue ſayd already) that when we come before a Iudge, we come before God: but here is the ſpirituall doctrine whereby we ſhould be lifted vp to heauen, & mens lawes are of no account here; becauſe there is none yͭ ſpeaketh but God. Therefore let vs marke, that when we come to the Church to be taught, or when any of vs openeth the byble at home in his owne houſe; Ieſus chriſt muſt needs be there as though we ſawe him before our eyes. Not that wee muſt haue any fleſhely conceite of him: but that we muſt approch vnto him by fayth, and conſider howe it is not in vaine that he hath tolde vs, Matt.18.20. that wheresoeuer two or three meete together in his name, there is he in the middes of them. Then let vs conſider that not onely we be heere before the Angelles of heauen, but alſo that the ſonne of God beholdeth vs. And as hee liketh wel of the confeſſion of the faith which we make vnto him; and of our obedient reſorting hyther to knowe the will of GOD his father, and to ſuffer ourſelues to bee gouerned by him and by his doctrine: ſo likewiſe when we come hyther fayn edly, ſo as wee make none account of his worde, or beare ourſelues in hande that wee be diſcharged for tarrying heere an houre or twaine: wee muſt come to a reckening for it; for we vnhallowe the thing which our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt had made holy for our ſaluation. Wherefore is the doctrine preached vnto vs? Is it that God hath any profite by it? No, but for our benefite. Nowe if the ſame be diſappointed through our vnthankefulneſſe; is it not a trampling of the precious ſtones vnder our feete which were offered vnto vs? It is the foode of our ſoules, and wee will not eate of it, but will needes faſt ſtill: or rather wee bee filled with winde, there is no true ſuſtenaunce in vs. Of whome is it long but of our owne leaudeneſſe, that wee thruſt away the grace which God did put into our handes? And therefore, that wee may bee the better diſpoſed to receiue the Goſpell, let vs vnderſtande that wee muſt neuer repayre to the Church, but we muſt thinke that our comming thyther is to offer ourſelues into Gods preſence, ſo as our Lorde Ieſus Chriſte may beare ſuch ſway there, yea and bee ſo preſent, as it may appeare that the grace and power of his holy ſpirite accompanie him, that his worde may haue ſuch force as to enter into our heartes, to touch vs to the quicke, and to edifie vs. But if wee haue our eares beaten with the thinges that are preached vnto vs, and in the meane while our liues bee nothing aunſwerable to the ſame; but wee continue as colde as wee were before: that commeth to paſſe becauſe we conſider not that our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt is preſent to make his worde auaylable, which is vttered to vs by the meanes of men. That is the thing which we haue to gather vppon this text, where it is ſayd that the parties which are at variance muſt appeare in the preſence of the Lord.

And it is added, that they muſt alſo appeare *before the Prieſtes and Iudges for the time beeing*. It is an expoſition of theſe wordes of God. And to what ende ſerueth that? That folke ſhoulde not haue an eye to mennes perſons; but rather conſider what ſtate they repreſented there? Were the prieſtes made at their owne pleaſure? No. No more were the Iudges. GOD was the author of them both. Nowe then foraſmuch as he hath ſette them in that office, and gouerneth them by his power: hee will haue men to knowe that he himſelfe is there. And Moſes will in any wiſe haue the prieſtes to be there: not that the ciuill iuriſdiction is allotted vnto them, (as I haue declared heeretofore): but to ſtrike the greater reuerence into ſuch as hadde to deale or to doe in matters of ſo greate importaunce. For if a man be anoyed by falſewitneſſes, hee is as good as halfe dead already. And therefore he was to be ſuccoured by an extraordinary means. That is the cauſe why God ioyneth the Prieſtes and the Iudges together.

Yet notwithſtanding it is ſayde *that the Iudges ſhall make good inquirie of the matter*. Wherein he ſheweth that which wee haue ſeene heeretofore: namely that to comforte one man, wee muſt not greeue an other. For it is no ſmall thing to ouerthrowe an euidence: I haue tolde you heeretofore howe it is a holy thing. Nowe if any man abuſe it, he muſt be puniſhed for his labour. But yet on the other ſide, it muſt alſo be well knowen and verified that ſuch an abuſe is committed. Therefore is it ſayde expreſly, that diligent inquirie is to be made. For it is a ſore matter to alter or reuerſe a thing that hath paſſed by order of Lawe. And for the ſame cauſe it is ſayde, *If hee be founde to haue giuen falſe euidence, and to haue practiſed to doe his neighbour wrong: let him be puniſhed with the ſelfeſame puniſhment, and let not thine eye ſpare him, but ridde away the euill from among you: to the ende that they which heare thereof may be afrayd, and no moe ſuch deedes be committed afterwarde*. Heere Moſes noteth the circumſtances, which euen the heathen themſelues knewe. For we muſt alwayes come backe to that which is ſpoken in the eight Chapter of Salomons prouerbes, where it is ſayde, that Prou.8.15. it is through Gods wiſedome that kinges reigne and that Lawes and ſtatutes are made thereby. Therefore when as the heathen made Lawes, it came not firſt of all of their own brayn: for whereas they made fonde and blockiſh Lawes, therein God gaue them the brydle, and it was to the ende that men ſhoulde knowe that when men followe their owne wit, they ouerſhoote themſelues pitifully, yea euen in the thinges that concerne this preſent life. And what muſt they needes doe then, when they be to paſſe beyond the worlde? In that caſe men are vtterly blinde. God then ment to ſhewe by ſome thinges, that mens wits are too weake to iudge well of equitie and vprightneſſe; and yet notwithſtanding, that foraſmuch as he was minded to ſhewe his prouidence ouer all mankinde; he inſpired thoſe with equitie and vprightneſſe, whoſe duetie it was to make Lawes & ſtatutes. And it is the very ſame thing which I was about to tell vnto you out of Salomons prouerbes, that the wiſedome of God chalendgeth this to be her office. The heathen knewe that thing well ynough, affirming ỹ Lawes were Gods gifte, and not the inuention of man. And God wreſted out that confeſſion frõ them, to the intent that their vnthankfulnes ſhould be the leſſe excuſable, as we ſee here.

For whereas Moſes ſayeth, that the partie ſhall bee puniſhed which *hath but euen practiſed againſt his neighbour*: hee ſayeth not ſimply, againſt the trueth. And thereby he excludeth ouerſight, ſo that if there were any error he wold not haue the puniſhment to bee ſo greeuous. Againe whereas he ſetteth downe *that the offender ſhould not be ſpared*: his meaning is that if a man ſpare one that hath procured the death of the guiltleſſe, hee is dubble cruell to him that was in danger of his life.

Whereas he ſayeth that *others hearing thereof ſhall commit no more any ſuch act*: hee ſheweth the principall ende, which is alſo ſet downe by ciuill Lawes, namely that puniſhmentes ſhoulde be executed for examples ſake. The puniſhing of a theefe is not onely for his miſdeedes ſake or for the crimes ſake: but alſo to teach others by it, and to holde them in awe, ſo as they may be aſhamed of ſuch dealing and abhorre it. In like caſe is it with murthers when bloudſhed is reuendged. And why is that? Is it onely for the faultes ſake that is doone and paſt? No, but to prouide for afterwarde that murthering and all maner of ſhedding of mans bloud may be eſchued. Ye ſee then howe puniſhmentes doe ſerue for example. And that is a thing well worthie to be marked: for we may gather a dubble leſſon thereof. Firſt that ſuch as occupie the roome of Iuſtice, ought to thinke themſelues worthie of blame before God and the worlde, for all yͤ faults which they let ſlip vnpuniſhed. And why? For it is an opening of the gate and a giuing of libertie to all others to do the like. Beholde, one that is founde to be a theefe, a murtherer or a whoremonger, is winked at and let ſlip. And why? becauſe he is pityed. And by that meanes the offender ſcapeth ſcotfree. By reaſon whereof other become the bolder to doe the like. For why? It is an increaſing of the miſchiefe, when men ſee offences ſcape vnpuniſhed; and the bridle is let looſe which otherwiſe had bin reſtreined, if euill doinges had bin puniſhed without reſpect of perſõs. Behold, one aduoutry is cõmitted after an other, two or three murthers are cõmitted together, and three or foure robberies are done one in an others necke. And who is the cauſe of all this? Euen the Iudge himſelf; he is the principall theefe, he is the principall adulterer, he is yͤ principall murtherer. It is he that hath robbed God of his glory and men of the right which he would haue to be obſerued, it is he that hath as it were made open proclamation that offenders ſhould make their hand and ſcape ſcotfree for it. Now then let vs marke well, that whereas Moſes hath declared that wicked witneſſes muſt be puniſhed, that other men may beware by them, and be afraide when they heare of it, and doe no ſuche deede any more: hee ſheweth thereby, that if Iudges haue not the ſternneſſe to puniſh miſſedeedes without relenting, when they come to their knowledge; they be the cauſe of all the miſcheefes that are committed afterwarde. For they did as it were giue leaue to them, in that they puniſhed not the partie as they ought to haue done, whome they ſawe to haue offended. And therefore let them looke wel to their charge vnleſſe they will bee blamed as procurers of horrible confuſion aboue all other men, for want of executing of Iuſtice as they ſhoulde haue done. Let that ſerue for one point.

And herewithall we be taught further, that wee muſt learne to make our gaine of other mennes harmes. The puniſhmentes of other men for their offences muſt be a brydle to vs, or elſe wee bee verie blinde, for they bee as lookingglaſſes vnto vs. When we ſee a theefe puniſhed, it is as a warning giuen vnto vs by our Lorde, to put vs in minde that robberie is condemned before him. The ſame is to be ſayde of murthers, of adulteries, and of other like things. True it is that euen without thoſe examples wee ought to be wiſe ynough to reſtreine ourſelues: but yet if we be ſo harde hearted and negligent, as not to haue ſufficient regarde of the brydling of our ſelues without warning by ſuch viſible examples: at leaſtwiſe lette vs learne to fare the better by thoſe thinges, when they be added for our help. But when a theefe is whipped or hanged, or when a murtherer is beheaded, if the ſight therof wey no further with vs than to make vs refraine for feare of men or for feare of puniſhment by order of Lawe: it is a ſmall matter, and we be neuer the better by it. Nay, we muſt ſteppe one ſteppe further: which is, to conſider that GOD who reigneth ouer vs in heauen, will haue the puniſhmentes of offenders to be as liuely pictures to ſhewe vs that murtherers, & theeues, and al ſuch like, ſhal not ſcape his hande, but that although they be not puniſhed here beneath, yet they muſt come at length before the heauenly Iudge. Let vs then conſider that: and let vs take ſuch warning by it, as euery of vs may brydle ourſelues. For that is the ſeconde point whereto wee muſt come, if we intende to receiue good inſtruction by any of the puniſhmentes that are executed vpon mens crimes and miſdeedes. Yea and lette vs not tarrie till men ſet to their handes: but whenſoeuer GOD executeth his iudgementes, let vs awake to thinke vppon them more aduiſedly, as Saint Paule exhorteth vs. Beware (ſayeth he) that no man deceiue you: for by reaſon of ſuch thinges doeth Gods wrath come vpon the diſobedient. Eph.5.6. He ſayeth not that the diſobedient ſhall bee puniſhed by earthly Iuſtice, for manie times Iuſtice ſleepeth vpon earth, and is not executed with ſuch force and liuelineſſe as were requiſite. But Saint Paul ſayeth, that Gods wrath is wont to come vppon the diſobedient; and therefore take heede (ſayeth hee) that vaine wordes deceiue you not. And in that place hee ſpeaketh of Theft, Murder, Whooredome. O, will ſome ſay, It is lawful for a man to reuenge himſelfe: and if a man haue done mee a diſpleaſure, I may requite him with the like. Likewiſe concerning Lecherie, the deſpiſers of GOD and theſe leaude perſons which are not worthie to goe vppon the grounde, ſay it is but a naturall ſinne. But Saint Paul ſayeth, Looke well about you, and although euill deedes ſcape vnpuniſhed in this worlde, thinke not that GOD will therefore omitte his dewtie: all thinges muſt come to account before him. Neuertheleſſe, when yee ſee that he layeth his hande vpon an offender; lette it be as a ſommoning to euery of you, and let it doe you to wit, that his graunting of you the fauour to ſee otherfolkes puniſhed before your faces, is to the ende you benefite your ſelues by his correction. And ſo yee ſee what wee haue to marke in that Moſes ſayeth that the puniſhing of crimes muſt ſerue for common example and inſtruction, yea euen when they bee but heard of.

Nowe beſides our Lordes chaſtiſing of ſuch as haue offended; hee doeth alſo make vs to heare of his Iuſtice by his worde, in that the threates of his Lawe be dayly rehearſed vnto vs, and in that we be tolde of the examples which are ſette downe in the holy ſcripture, concerning ſuch as haue beene puniſhed at Gods hande: and are not we too too dulwitted if we take no heede by them? Albeit that GOD ſpake not at all, but onely wrought in the puniſhing of murtherers, theeues, blaſphemers, periurers, aduouterers, and whoremongers: yet ought wee not to be ſo blockiſhe as to take no heede by it. But nowe ſeeing that God by ſtretching out his arme after that faſhion againſt the tranſgreſſers of his Lawe and ordinaunce, doeth put vs in minde that his ſo doing is not for nought, but rather to call vs to amendment: muſt it not needes bee that we be too too harde hearted, if we continue ſtill in our former ſtate? Nay let vs followe that which Moſes telleth vs heere, and learne to open our eares when God ſpeaketh vnto vs, and to marke well not onely the examples of the puniſhmentes which we ſee preſently executed vpon the wicked: but alſo all the examples that haue beene ſince the beginning of the worlde, ſo as we may apply them to our owne vſe, & learne by them to liue in awe, that no ſuch act may bee committed among vs. For hee ſayeth not heere that the puniſhing of miſdeedes ſhall be to the ende that men ſhould onely condemne them in wordes: but to the ende that all men ſhould be afraide and doe no more ſo. And that is a thing very worthy to be well noted. For we beare our ſelues in hande that it is ynough for vs to haue condemned a crime, and to haue liked well of the Iuſtice that is executed for it. O (ſay wee) he deſerued it right well. We condemne an other man, and in the meane while wee ourſelues are oftentimes more faultie than he. But God will haue euery man to be his owne Iudge. Therfore when we ſee offences puniſhed, let vs be afraide, and let vs reſtraine ourſelues, that no ſuch thinges be done among vs any more. Ye ſee then that that was one thing more which wee had to remember vpon this text.

And let vs marke, that whereas here is mention made of feare, although Moſes treate but of outwarde gouernment, yet muſt we conceiue a better kinde of feare, that is to wit a reuerende awe of God. To ſay the trueth, the onely feare which we haue of puniſhment would not ſuffice. It were too ſlender a thing, and God ſhoulde be too ill ſerued at our hands, if there were none other ende: yet neuertheleſſe, becauſe of our infirmitie, the puniſhmentes that are executed ought to bee as prouocations vnto vs, to liue in the more awe. Good reaſon woulde that the loue of GOD ſhould goe before, and that the reuerence which wee beare vnto him, ſhoulde breed an earneſt deſire in vs to faſhion ourſelues all wholly to his righteouſneſſe; but foraſmuch as we be ſlouthfull and ſlowe: God vouchſafeth vs this helpe for our weakeneſſe, that wee may take warning to amende, by all the puniſhments which he executeth. Alas that I ſhoulde bee ſo madde as to goe make warre wilfully againſt GOD. I knowe by ſuch an example which hee hath giuen me, that hee abhorreth ſuch a crime: and ſhall I nowe runne headlong into it? Were it not an open fighting againſt him, if I ſhoulde deale ſo againſt all wit and reaſon? Yee ſee then howe we ought to be reſtreined by the chaſtiſementes which GOD executeth, and that the feare of him ought to beare ſuch ſway in vs, as to make vs indeuour to faſhion ourſelues according to his righteouſneſſe, and to ſubmit ourſelues to his good will.

But nowe let vs come to the puniſhment that Moſes addeth. His ſaying is that there ſhalbee *Life for life, Eye for eye, Tooth for tooth, Foote for foote, and Hande for hande.* As if he ſhould ſaye, that hee which hath gone about to do his neighbour harme, ſhall be ſerued of the ſame ſawce himſelfe. For when one man practiſeth an others death, if he ſhoulde be but put to his fine, and ſo diſcharged of it for a peece of money without aunſwering any further: what a thing were it? Is all the goods of any man able to counteruaile the life of an other? Peraduenture the partie whoſe life is ſought is but a poore man that hath nothing: but yet is hee ſuch a creature as is faſhioned after the image of God. There commeth a riche man to oppreſſe him, and in deede, the poore ſoule is as good as halfe dead aforehande, if hee bee oppreſſed by falſe witneſſe.

Nowe if it be ſayde, yea, but his aduerſarie is a rich man, hee may well make him good recompence: what recompence I pray you, can be made for a mans life? Therefore our Lorde minding to take away all ſuch ſhiftes, ſayeth, that if any man haue practiſed the death of his neighbour, he himſelfe ſhall dye for for it without any pitie or compaſſion. If hee haue gone about to hurt him in his eye, or in his arme, or in his foote, he himſelfe muſt abide the like puniſhment in himſelfe: that is to ſaye, if I haue gone about to doe any reproche, or diſhoneſtie to my neighbour; the ſhame thereof muſte light vppon my ſelfe. We ſee as nowe whereat GOD aimed. Like as when hee ſetteth downe the Lawe concerning women with child in the xxj. of Exodus, he ſayeth that if a man Exod. 21, 22 23. haue hurt them, and any miſchaunce followe thereof, the partie that hath doone the hurte ſhall be puniſhed for it: ſo alſo doeth hee adde heere, eye for eye, tooth for toothe, foote for foote, and hande for hande. As if hee ſhould ſaye, no recompence is to be admitted in that behalfe: the purſe muſt not bee pinched, but the life it ſelfe muſte aunſwere for it, at leaſtwiſe if the deede concerne life. And ſo wee ſee nowe in effecte, howe it hath euer beene Goddes will, to ſhewe that hee ſetteth great ſtore by mans life, as he will declare it, yet better hereafter: but yet we haue here a good recorde thereof in the meane while.

Moreouer he ſheweth that wee muſt haue no reſpect of perſons: but that although a man bee neuer ſo wel able to forbeare money to ſaue himſelfe withall; yet muſt not that bee admitted in matters of Iuſtice. Let ranſoming be let alone for warre matters: But in caſes of Lawe, faultes muſt be regarded as they bee in deede. If the fault bee ſuch as may be puniſhed by fyne or amercement, and that the Lawe will beare it; very well, it is good reaſon it ſhoulde be ſo. But if it be a crime that deſerueth death, and that the Lawe it ſelfe doe iudge a man to death for it: if the puniſhment of death bee turned into a fine, vnder colour that the partie offended ſhall become wealthy, or for that it ſeemeth better that it ſhould be ſo; yͤ law is by that meane peruerted, and the common order is altered by hauing reſpect of perſons: and ſo all goeth to confuſion. And therefore let vs marke well, that whereas our Lorde hath ſayd, life for life, eye for eye, and ſo foorth: hee hath ſhewed vs that in iudging, there muſt no regarde bee hadde of the perſons that are to be condemned. But if it be not a matter of life and death, but a ſingle miſdeed or treſpaſſe (as they terme it) that is to ſay, a light fault and ſuch a one as deſerueth not the puniſhment of death: it is to be puniſhed according to yͤ qualitie of the offence, and according to the Lawe prouided in that behalfe. But if it bee a deadly crime, the Iudge muſt ſhut his eyes as in reſpect of the perſon, and deeme ſimply of the crime and deede it ſelfe: accordingly alſo as it is ſayd here, that no pitie muſt be ſhewed in that behalfe. For the alleadging of mercie and pitie towarde offenders, is a thing that alwayes deceiueth many men. What, ſay they? Should we not bee pitifull? Would not God that wee ſhould reſemble him? Seeing it is ſayde, that if we be his children wee muſt be kinde hearted and inclined to pitie and compaſſion; is it not a barre to all rigour? Yes, but though it be ſayde that wee muſt pitie the partie, yet is it not ment that the fault ſhould be vnpuniſhed. If a malefactor be brought afore a Iudge ſitting vppon the bench, the Iudge may well be ſorrie to ſee a poore creature that is ſhaped after the image of God, to go to deſtruction. Yea, he muſt be moued therewith, and haue pitie and compaſſion of him. But yet for all that, he muſt alſo looke to his cōmiſſion, what charge he hath receiued, and he muſt doe Iuſtice. Hee ſitteth vpon the bench to puniſh offenders, it is not now for him to ſhewe pitie, or to alleadge any ſuch thing. Nowe then it is Gods will here to cutte off all by ſhiftes of pitie and compaſſion that can be alleadged; and to ſhewe that Iuſtice ought to haue his courſe, ſo as in examining of crimes and miſdeedes, the Iudge muſt be blinde as in reſpect of perſons, and haue both his eyes ſette faſt vppon the deede, and vpon the deſerte of the caſe. Yea and to the ende there ſhoulde be no gaineſaying; let vs marke that heere God hath vſed a worde wherein there is ſome ſhewe of vertue, ſaying: *Thine eye ſhall not ſpare him, neither ſhalt thou haue any pitie on him.* Howe ſo? It is ſayde that our eye ought not to ſpare him, nor our heart to pitie him. And what is to followe then, but ſuch extreeme rigour as is next couſen to crueltie? In deede ſo will men thinke. But yet is this rigour acceptable to GOD. For we muſt call to minde howe Salomon ſayth, that Prou.17.15 he which iuſtifieth the wicked is as faultie before GOD, as he that condemneth the innocent. Is it not a great and ougly abhomination, that a ſillie innocent ſhoulde be condemned to death? Yes: and yet if an offender be let goe, God miſliketh it as much as the ſheading of guiltleſſe bloud. So then, let vs not deceiue our ſelues any more, vnder the ſhadowe and colour of any of theſe faire pretences that are made at aladuenture. There are that abuſe the holy ſcriptures by wreſting them euerie way; and this pitie is alleadged continually though they wote not why nor wherefore. Nowe then let vs vnderſtande, that as GOD commaundeth vs to be mercifull, ſo he ſheweth vs after what maner and howe farreforth hee alloweth our mercie: that is to wit, ſo farreforth as the courſe of Iuſtice be not letted. Yea and let vs looke vppon ourſelues. Is it gentleneſſe to be cruell to one man for the ſparing of an other? Beholde, there are two men, both of them be my neighbours, we be all three created after the image of God, wee bee all of one nature, they bee my fleſhe and my bone as wel the one as the other: one of theſe playes the falſe witneſſe of purpoſe to haue his neighbour put to death, and it is not long of him that his neighbour is not dead already: Hereupon one comes vnto me and ſayes, O ſir, ye muſt haue pitie vppon him. Very well: I ſhall be pitifull to the one and cruell to the other. Yee ſee howe the poore man which was at deathes doore is preſerued by miracle, and ſhall I nowe goe ſell away his life ſo good cheape? Is it not an horrible matter that mercie ſhould be pretended after that ſort? Yes. But if wee were well aduiſed and had good ſtay of our affections: ſurely wee woulde neuer pitie any ſuch crime, for any mans vpbrayding of vs with crueltie. But it is yet farre worſe when a falſe witneſſe ſteppeth vp againſt his neighbour: for that is much more than the oppreſſing of ſome one man priuily, that is falne in his daunger. For if the ſillie ſoule beeing ſo falſely accuſed, had beene executed: by whoſe hande had he beene puniſhed? The Iudges had beene halfe acceſſarie, Gods wrath had beene prouoked againſt the whole countrey, and moreouer a gappe had beene opened for the like inconueniences euer after. A falſe witneſſe therefore ſinneth not againſt one or two, nor againſt two or three: but firſt againſt his aduerſarie, ſecondely againſt the Lawe, and thirdely againſt his whole Countrey, in that hee prouoketh Gods wrath againſt it. For his intent is to deface Iuſtice, and (as much as in him lyeth) to put all thinges to hauocke. Nowe then if the Iudge haue pitie vppon him; hee ſheweth himſelfe to beare neither loue nor feare vnto GOD; nor reuerence vnto Iuſtice. For hee ought to thinke thus with himſelfe: Of whome had it beene long that I had not beene guiltie of manſlaughter, if I had iudged an innocent to death? Indeede I had not done it wittingly: but yet had I not bin excuſable for al that. Then was I in danger to haue beene guiltie of murther, and in what caſe were I then, if I ſhoulde ſuffer ſuch a fault to ſcape vnpuniſhed? Now then if a Iudge bethinke him not of theſe thinges: it is a token that he hath no feare of God in him. Therefore it behooueth vs ſo much the more to marke well this ſaying of Moſes, that yͤ Iudges eye muſt not ſpare the partie that hath done a fault worthie of puniſhment. For it is but crueltie to vſe ſuch wrongfull mercie, as maketh vs to runne headlong to the breaking of al order ſet by God, and of all vprightneſſe among men.

Now let vs kneele downe before the maieſtie of our good God with acknowlement of our ſins, praying him to make vs ſo to feele them, as we may be drawen to true repentaunce, and learne more and more to repaire vnto him, not tarying till hee hale vs thither by force, but ſeeing hee vouchſafeth to allure vs ſo gently by his worde, let vs come willingly vnto him, and prouoking our ſelues forward, become our owne iudges, yͭ in condemning ourſelues we may ſeeke to be acquit by his mercie: And that it may pleaſe him to guide vs in the meane time, as that being rid of our wicked affections, & cares that holde vs backe from comming to him, we may ſhewe by our deedes that we be his true children, and that we beare the marke of his holy ſpirit. That it may pleaſe him to graunt this grace, not onely to vs, but alſo to all people and nations of the earth, &c.

On Tewſday the xvii. of December. 1555.

The Cxvj. Sermon which is the fifth vppon the nineteenth Chapter, and the firſt vpon the twentith Chapter.

19 Thou ſhalt doe vnto him as he meant to haue done to his brother: and ſo thou ſhalt rid away euill from among you.

20 And others hearing thereof ſhalbe afraid, and not doe any ſuch wicked deede among you from thenceforth.

21 Thine eye ſhal not ſpare him, but life for life, eye for eye, tooth for tooth, hand for hand, foote for foote.

The twentith Chapter.

VVHen thou goeſt forth to warre againſt thine enimies, and thou ſeeſt horſes and Chariots, and a greater multitude of people than thy ſelfe, be not afraid of them. For the Lorde thy God which hath brought thee vp out of the lande of Egypt, is with thee.

2 And when yee come neere to giue battell: then ſhal the Prieſt come forth and ſpeake to the people,

3 And ſay vnto them: Hearken ô Iſrael, now that ye be come hither this day to giue battell to your enimies, let not your heartes faint, be not afraid, neither be ye diſcouraged or abaſhed at the ſight of them.

4 For the Lorde your God goeth with you, to fight for you againſt your enimies, and to preſerue you.

WE ſaw yeſter day what puniſhment God ordeined for ſuch as practiſe miſchefe againſt their neighbours And that concerneth Iudges and ſuch as haue the ſword of Iuſtice in their hande. But as for vs, we for our parte ought to ſuffer the wronges patiently that are done vnto vs. Or elſe if we purſue them that they may be puniſhed, it muſt not be done of malicious ſpite, nor with deſire of reuendge: but to the intent that the partie which is to be puniſhed, may bee kept from offending any more afterwarde; and alſo that no outrages or violent dealinges may bee ſuffered, leaſt others ſhoulde growe bolde to doe ſo too; but that all men may bee made to ſtande in feare, by beholding the example of him that is puniſhed. And by this meanes wee ſee howe the doctrine of our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt, agreeth verie well with the doctrine of the Lawe. For hee telleth vs that wee muſt not reſiſt euill.

The Lawe commaundeth that hee which procureth the death of his Neighbour, ſhall bee put to death, and not bee ſpared. Nowe at the firſt ſight heere ſeemeth to be ſome contrarietie. But wee muſt conſider to whome our Lorde ſpeaketh, when hee ſayth that the offender muſt bee puniſhed: namely that hee ſpeaketh to thoſe whome he hath put in authoritie, When hee ſaith, reſiſt not euill with euill: hys meaning is that euerie of vs ſhoulde liue quietly, and put vp wronges patiently, rather than require like for like. And that is the cauſe why hee ſayth in the fifth of Matthewe, yee haue Matt.5.38. hearde howe it hath beene ſaide to the men of olde time, An eye for an eye, and a hande for a hande: but I ſay vnto you, if a man ſtrike you on the one cheeke, turne him the other alſo: and if a man take awaie thy Cloake bee willing to giue him thy Coate too: or if hee take awaye thy Coate giue him thy Cloake too. We ſee howe the Iewes abuſed the ſaide Lawe. For vnder pretence that GOD woulde haue no iniuries to ſcape vnpuniſhed, they bare themſelues in hande that euerie man might ſeeke to bee reuenged of his enemies. But wee muſt in aniewiſe put a difference betweene the lawes of policie, and the Lawes of GOD, which require a perfection, and ſerue to rule our heartes and affections by, ſo as it is not Lawfull to procure harme to anie man, though hee haue deſerued it. The ciuill Lawe and earthly policie giue men leaue to ſeeke amendes of the wronges doone vnto them; and the Iudge is bounde to ſatisfie their demaunde: but yet for all that, if the partie that is wronged haue a malicious hearte, and his accuſing of his enemies is to bee reuenged of him; hee is not excuſed before God. Although hee haue right miniſtred vnto him before men, and they ſay that his cauſe is good and lawefull; yet for all that doeth GOD condemne him. And why ſo? Becauſe (as I tolde you before) wee muſt bee patient. For what vertue is it, to bee friendlie to ſuch as loue vs, and to wiſhe no euill to ſuch Matt.5.46. as doe vs pleaſure and ſeruice? Doe not the heathen as much? But if men vexe vs and put vs to ſhame and trouble, and wee beare with it; indeuouring to ouercome their euill by doeing good: then doe wee ſhewe our ſelues to be Gods children, and followers of his example who cauſeth his day ſunne to ſhine both vppon good and badde. Therefore let vs firſt marke this foretouched difference betweene the Lawes of policie and the Lawe of GOD, which is ſpirituall, and ſerueth to rule all the affections of a mannes hearte. Nowe in policie, there is no more to bee looked for, but that no man attempt anie thing agaynſt his neighbour, that men doe one an other no harme, that men worke no diſpleaſure one to an other, neither in goods, nor in perſon, nor in name, and that whoſoeuer offendeth, bee puniſhed. But when GOD ſheweth vs howe wee ſhoulde liue, hee ſaith not onely refrayne your ſelues from euill, and let him that offendeth bee puniſhed: but hee telleth vs alſo, that it is not lawfull for vs to looke vppon a woman with Matt.5.28. fleſhely luſt of deſiring to committe vncleanneſſe with her: nor to hate our Neighbour any more than to murder him. Yee ſee then howe the Lawe of GOD mounteth higher than the earthlie policie. God will haue vs to walke before him in all pureneſſe. In ſo much that, beſides that it is not lawfull for vs to aſſaulte our Neighbour, or to hate him without cauſe: Nay not then, when wee haue iuſt cauſe and couerture for the ſame to the worldewarde. For wee muſt euen then not onely forgiue the wronges that are doone vs, and not requite like for like; but alſo pray for our enemies: and Matt.5.44. although they ſpeake euil of vs, and coulde find in their heartes that wee periſhed a hundred times; Yet muſt wee worke their welfare to the vttermoſt of our powers. Marke that for one point.

Indeede it is a verie harde thing to bridle our affections after ſuch a ſorte, as to deſire the welfare of our enemie when hee hath goone about to doe vs harme: but yet muſt wee ſtrayne our ſelues to doe it. For though wee feele a gainſtriuing in vs, yet will not that ſerue vs for an excuſe: neyther muſt wee doe as the Papiſtes doe, who perceyuing this to be cleane contrarie to mans nature, haue gone aboute to ſalue it with this gloſe, that it was a counſell, and not a plaine and expreſſe commaundement: and that is a manifeſt blaſpheming of God. For hee ſaith, that if wee will bee taken for his children, wee muſt faſhion our ſelues after his goodnes in pardoning thoſe that haue offended him. Therefore let vs not haue an eye to our owne ſtrengthes, nor to the inclynation of our owne nature: but if wee feele anie heartburning in our ſelues; or bee deſirous of reuenge through heate of impatiencie when a man hath vexed vs: Let vs reſort to our GOD, praying him to ouermaſter the exceſſiue paſſions that are in vs; and to giue vs the ſpirite of meekeneſſe when wee bee in ſuch heates, that wee may become patient, ſo as the harme or iniurie bee not too harde and cumberſome for vs to beare, but that wee may paſſe it ouer mieldelie.. After that manner ought we to deale. And therfore let vs learne to beware that wee beguile not our ſelues with vaine colours.

Seeing that our Lorde hath giuen vs a good Lawe; Let vs not turne it vpſide downe by pretending our owne wicked and corrupt affections for an excuſe: Yea and let vs marke, that mannes nature is ſo frowardlie diſpoſed, that if they looke not verie narrowlie to themſelues, they ſhal alwayes abuſe the name of GOD. The Lawe which I expounded Yeſterday, namely that the partie which ſhall haue practiſed the death of anie innocent perſon, is not to bee borne withall, is verie rightfull. But yet for all that, is it meete that wee ſhoulde haue leaue to auenge our ſelues? Shoulde the bridle be layde looſe in our neckes to requite euill for euill? No ſurely. And yet doe men make it their excuſe. Wee ſee then that naturally we ſhould be euer inclined to abuſe Gods name: and therefore wee haue ſo much the more neede to be watchfull, and to conſider at what ende God aymed in ſaying this or that, that is, that wee ſhoulde not be blinde therein. For it will not auaile vs at all, if wee make as though wee ſawe it not. And therefore let vs firſt and formoſt correct our vices, and lay aſide all our wicked affections: and then may we vſe the lawes that are good and holy. As for example: If a man deale by order of lawe, and in the meane while haue his heart full of rancour, ſo as he ſeeke to ouerthrowe his enemie by crooked meanes: It is a wicked manner of proceeding, and condemned of God. Yet notwithſtanding, it is almoſt an ordinarie cuſtome. For there are few that goe to lawe, which are not enemies one to an other, according to this cõmon ſaid ſawe, that ſuite in lawe and friendſhippe doe ſeldome match together. And yet for all that, if a man haue anie ſuch hartburning, he offendeth God. Yea, but hee vſeth the meane of Iuſtice; and is not that lawfull? Is not that manner of dealing permitted? Yes: but it woulde behooue vs firſt of all to haue our wicked affections ſubdued according to this ſaying, that all Gods creatures are good to ſuch as are of a pure and cleane hearte. Tit.1,15. Saint Paul ſpeaketh there of meates; but wee may applie the ſame ſaying to all other thinges, namely that whenſoeuer God appointeth any thing to our vſe, the ſame is good and behoouefull; yea verily, ſo wee on our ſide defile it not by our wicked affections. If wee haue any filth in vs, by and by all that euer wee touch becommeth filthie out of hande. Ye ſee that the order of Iuſtice is a holy thing, appointed of GOD to our vſe and benefite: and yet if I haue a ſpitefull hearte, and beare anie malice to mine aduerſarie; then do I defile ẏ thing which God had dedicated to a holy vſe, and which was pure and cleane of it ſelfe. And therefore let vs learne to reforme our wicked affections. When wee haue done ſo, then may wee ſay that the thing which GOD hath ordeyned, is good and profitable to vs: For wee turne it not contrarie to his meaning and will. That is the thing which wee haue to remember in effect concerning the Text that was treated of yeſterday.

Nowe let vs come to that which GOD addeth concerning matters of warre. *When thou goeſt out agaynſt thine enemies* (ſaith hee) *bee not afraide nor diſmayed at them, though thou ſee them more ſtrong than thy ſelfe*, though the number of their people bee farre greater than thine, and though they haue both chariotes and horſes: that is to ſay, Although they bee better furniſhed and ſtored of all things than thou art; yet *let not thine hearte ſhrinke for all that.* And hee addeth the reaſon: *For thy God* (ſayth hee) *goeth with thee, and it is hee which brought thee out of the Lande of Egypte.* Therefore put thou thy truſt in his goodneſſe and might. Nowe, wee muſt preſuppoſe, that in ſo ſaying GOD giueth not leaue & libertie to his people to make warre when they liſt at their owne pleaſure: but onely vppon iuſt cauſe. As for example, when the Iewes entered into the Lande of Chanaan, they made no warre but by the expreſſe commaundement of God: in ſo much that they were forbidden to ſaue anie of the people of that countrie aliue, and it behooued them to put all to the ſwoorde ſauing the young infantes and women which were reſerued to make ſlaues of: but as for the men, they were all appointed to the ſworde; for God had giuen that iudgement vppon them, and not without cauſe. For it was a great matter that he had borne with them ſo long a time; and yet that they continued ſtubborne and vnreformable ſtill. Beſides this, when the people of Iſraell had once made a full conqueſt of the lande of Chanaan which was giuen them to inherite: then might they ſitte at reſt; and they might not make any inuaſion vppon their neighbours vnleſſe they were troubled by them, as in deede it fell out afterwarde: yet is it true that the people of Iſraell neuer poſſeſſed the whole Lande that was giuen them. And that was through their owne faulte and vnthankfulneſſe, ſo as they were euer in trouble and vexation vnto the time of Dauid. Did Dauid ſubdue all his enemies? Did he ſet the people in full poſſeſſion of the heritage that had beene promiſed them? 2.Sam.7.10. If hee had done ſo, then was he to make warre by and by vpon his neighbours: howebeit not by picking any quarels to them, nor to ſeeke to inlarge his kingdome by conqueſt. But he was prouoked vnto it; and therefore hee was to maintaine the ſtate of his owne people. And ſo let vs marke that this text treateth of ſuch warres as GOD alloweth, as when a Prince is vniuſtly aſſayled, then may hee withſtande his enemie by force. For why? The man that enterpriſeth to trouble an other bodies poſſeſſion, or the territorie of a Citie, or the prouinces of a countrie; is no better than a robber. True it is, that men indeede call them Kinges and Princes, but yet are they but honourable theeues in deede, which doe ſo abuſe the power that GOD hath giuen them, and are not contented with their owne bounds, but will needes inlarge them without iuſt cauſe or title. Such then are but Robbers. And as a Iudge ought to puniſhe a theefe or a robber: ſo likewiſe they that haue the power ordeyned of God, may enter into armes againſt all ſuch as fall to troubling and vexing of their ſubiectes; and ſuch manner of warres are not onely lawfull but alſo of neceſſitie to bee vndertaken by them. It is not without cauſe then that God doeth incourage his people, ſaying that they muſt not bee faint hearted and cowardly when they goe to warre againſt their enemies.

That is the thing which wee haue to marke firſt of all, leaſt wee might ſurmiſe that Gods will is to helpe ſuch as maintaine an euil cauſe:

for then ſhoulde he renounce himſelfe. And therefore whenſoeuer he promiſeth to bee with his people; his meaning is that their quarel muſt be iuſt and reaſonable. And hereupon wee may gather by the way, that it is lawefull to make warre vppon neceſſitie, conditionally that the war be to none other end than to procure peace & to obtain it. There are ſome fantaſtical perſons which imagine that this ſerues but for the olde teſtament, and that the caſe ſtandeth not alike in theſe dayes. But we muſt make this a general rule, that whereas God graunteth to ſuccour his people againſt their enemies; his promiſing to do ſo, is not for once only, but for euer. Indeed Mich.4.3. it is promiſed that vnder the reigne of our lord Ieſus Chriſt, ſwordes and ſpeares ſhall be turned into Plowſhares and Coulters, and that there ſhall be no more anoyance nor violence. That is verie true as in reſpect of ſuch as ſhall be truely conuerted and reformed by the ſpirit of God. For if we will be Chriſtians, we muſt become as Eſa.11.6. Lambs. Inſomuchas it is ſaid expreſly, that the Beare and the Lion ſhall dwell together, & that a litle babe ſhall rule them both. This muſt bee vnderſtoode of ſuch as God ſhal haue chaunged and renewed by his holy ſpirit. But we ſee that ſo farre off is it that the worlde is conuerted to God, when the goſpell is preached, or that all of them chaunge their maners: that many of thē become worſe and worſe, and otherſome more and more inuenimed, hauing heard Gods word: and therefore worthie are they to bee deliuered vp to Satan through a reprobate ſenſe, becauſe they haue hardened their hartes againſt God, & haue manifeſtly deſpiſed him, by refuſing the grace that is offred them. Is it not reaſon (ẏ premiſſes conſidered) that God alſo ſhoulde turne away from them, and ẏ Satan ſhould drawe them and carie them away into all euill? Marke I pray you how a number of people become worſe and worſe after they haue heard the preaching of ẏ Goſpel. All then are not ſo conuerted as to become Lambes: but rather their rage is inflamed more & more. And therefore foraſmuchas there are wicked men continually in this world, yea & the Princes themſelues are ſo caried away by their own ambition, couetouſnes, and other wicked luſtes, that they keepe no meaſure in their doings, but wil needs turn al things vpſide down, and make hauocke of all, for ẏ ſatisfying of their owne wicked wils: God hath left the vſe of the ſword to men of authoritie, & ordeyned ẏ they ſhould bee ſtronghanded, as S. Paul declareth. Rom.13.4. Whereupon it is to be concluded, that if a war be lawfull, this promiſe of Gods ſtandeth in force ſtil. For otherwiſe what a thing were it? True it is that we ought to poſſeſſe our ſoules in patience, as our Lord Ieſus Chriſt ſaith: but yet doth it not follow, ẏ therefore the office of the magiſtrates ſhould ceaſe, & that his arming of them is to no purpoſe, & that they ſhould be but as idols. Nay rather they ought to hazard their liues ſo far as God inableth them, whenſoeuer their ſubiectes are aſſaulted & tormented. And for this cauſe I haue ſtood the longer vpon this text, to the end we might know that faithful Princes haue Gods promiſe ſtil at this day, that he wilbe their guide in the time of war, and take their part when they be to fight with their enemies, & giue thē victory to the intent they ſhould aſſure thēſelues of his helpe, and alwaies flee to him for refuge. And ſo ye ſee how that is one point which wee haue to marke vpon this text.

Neuerthelater we muſt vnderſtand alſo, that there is no war iuſt, vnleſſe God be the author of it. For if we intend to be armed with ẏ ſtrength of his hand, we muſt alſo aske counſel at his mouth: & his ſpirit muſt be the ouerruler of the aduiſe which we haue taken: for we ſee that al interpriſes are accurſed, which men do take in hand vpō their owne head, without inquiring of his wil. As for example, when the Iewes made leagues with the Realme of Egypt, or entered anie other familiaritie with them, Curſed be thoſe (ſaith he) Eſa.30.1. which weaue a webbe, but not by mine aduiſe. And by and by hee addeth the expoſition, yea (ſaith hee,) for yee determine vppon matters without taking counſell at my mouth; that is to ſay, without conſidering by my worde whether the thing be lawfull or no. Ye will not hold your ſelues to my will, nor ſuffer my ſpirit to be your gouernour, or to haue the ouerruling of you: Wo to you therefore, ſaith he. And the Realme of Egypt ſhall be as a Reed ẏ wil breake vnder you if yee leane vnto it, it ſhall ſerue but to breake your neckes; yea and it ſhall pricke yee like a ſharpe reede that runnes into the hande of him that leaneth vppon it. Then let vs marke, that if we intende to be ſuccored by our God, we muſt faſhion our ſelues wholy to his will, and not attempt any thing which is not permitted by his worde, or which we be not ſure that he alloweth. And then may wee throughly aſſure our ſelues, that he will bee on our ſide, and that wee ſhall be ſo fenced with his power, that we ſhal get the vpper hand of al our enemies.

But it behooueth vs to wey well the words ẏ are ſet downe here. *Although thou ſee that thine enemies are ſtronger than thou* (ſaith hee) *and farre better furniſhed with horſes and Chariotes, and that they haue a greater number of people: yet bee not afraide.* Hereby hee ſheweth (as king Ioſaphat declared) that we muſt not meaſure Gods power 2.Chron.20.6.12.15.20. by the thinges that are ſeene with our eyes, for it is no harder matter with him to diſcomfite an hoſt of an hundred thouſand men, than to diſcōfit an handful, or to giue victory to a doſen perſōs as wel as if they were a great army. The thing ẏ moueth vs is this: If we be wel furniſhed of worldly ſtrength, then we think ẏ God helpeth vs and fauoureth vs: but if we be bare & naked, and our enemies too ſtrong for vs; then are we diſmayed. And why? Becauſe we bind God to theſe inferiour meanes, and we beare our ſelues in hande that he can do nothing, vnleſſe he tel aforehand how and wherewͭ he wil doe it, and that he giue vs a good pawne of it as they ſay. But that is too great an imbacing of his mightines, and a turning of al order vpſidedowne. For how ſhal God be honored at our handes? Euen by continuing vndyſmayed, though our enemyes bee too ſtrong and mightie; for God needs no more but to blowe vppon them, and by and by all their power is daſht. The thing wherein God ſheweth himſelfe almightie, is that the creatures which ſeeme to be of moſt power are able to do nothing at all, but God maketh euerie whitte of it to vaniſhe away. If God coulde doe no more but ſay, I wilbe a let to men that they ſhal not aduaunce themſelues, I will take away their courage and ſcatter them: it were a ſmall thing: but he hath diuerſe wayes to ſuccour thoſe that are his. Sometime he ſetteth our enemies on ſuch a fire, that they be as madde folkes againſt vs, or elſe they haue all thinges in a readineſſe againſt vs: and ſometime when they haue practiſed to ouerthrowe vs, hee letteth them haue heartes like Lions, by meanes whereof they be inraged with ſuch furie, that by all likelihoode they muſt needes beare downe all things before them like thunder. Hath hee permitted all this? Yet when it commeth to ÿ verie puſh: then ſhal they haue no ſtrength at all, inſomuch that the thinges which they had purpoſed, ſhall vaniſh away. Although they come onwarde ſo terribly at the firſt, as that they make al things to quake againe: yet will he ſtrike the ſworde out of their hand, ſo as they ſhal not be able to put any thing in execution: to be ſhort, they ſhall ſlide away like water. Therefore let vs marke here, that in ſuch caſes wee muſt wey well the power of God, not doubting but that when hee ſhall haue ſuffered men to aduaunce themſelues, and all thinges to bee fully furniſhed according to their deſire; he will daſhe it all vnder foote. Marke that for one point. True it is that when wee fall to the conſidering of our owne ſtate and condition, we muſt not imagine that God is not mercifull towardes vs, ſo wee haue our recourſe to him. Yet notwithſtanding, nowe and then to giue the greater gloſſe to his owne goodnes and power, he will ſuffer vs to bee in ſome diſtreſſe: inſomuch that when we looke about vs, we ſhall crie out alas, howe ſhall I doe, what will become of mee? We ſhal not knowe to whome wee may betake our ſelues: and when wee haue made all the ſhiftes we can, we ſhall bee as folke halfe vanquiſhed afore hande. But our God hath wherewith to ſupplie all our wantes: onely let vs tarie his leaſure and ſay with Ioſaphat, It is as eaſie for our God to giue victorie to a ſmal number againſt an infinite number, as to giue victorie to a great armie againſt a fewe folke: all is one with him. So then, let vs truſt in him, let vs ſtay our ſelues vppon his ſtrength, and let vs not doubt but hee will giue vs wherewith to withſtande all temptations that ſhall bee laide afore vs. And ſpecially when Satan goeth about to weaken our courages, and to caſt vs into deſpaire: let vs reſiſt that. Thus ye ſee what wee haue to remember vppon this ſaying here, that although our enemies be neuer ſo ſtrong, and neuer ſo able to ouercome vs: yet wee muſt not be diſmayed at it.

And indeede, wee muſt take this for a generall rule, that the welfare of the Church conſiſteth neither in horſes, nor in Chariotes, nor in Speares, nor in any manner of armour or artillerie; but in the power of God, as is oftentimes auouched by the Prophetes. And Eſa.31.3.
it is a leſſon which is more than neceſſarie for vs: For if we ſhoulde tryumph to the worldward, and were of ſuch power as were glorious to ſee too: what a thing were it? Gods glorie ſhoulde bee diminiſhed among vs, and wee woulde ſurmiſe our ſelues to bee preſerued by our owne meanes, ſo as wee woulde not call earneſtly vppon God as were requiſite we ſhoulde, but our calling vppon him woulde be but in way of Ceremonie, or rather our heartes would be puffed vp with pride and ouerweening. Nowe becauſe we bee ſo giuen to this ouerloftineſſe, God bringeth vs lowe. And for the bringing thereof to paſſe, his will is to haue vs to bee as ſheepe among wolues, deſtitute of all force and furniture, and hemmed in on all ſides with ſuch enemies, as are armed, furniſhed, and fenced in all points: ſo as by al likelihoode we bee as ſheepe that are dragged eueriday to ÿ ſlaughterhouſe, and haue the knife ſetted continually to our throate to kill vs. Sith we be in ſuch ſtate, let vs vnderſtande that our Lorde will be glorified by vs, and that hee calleth vs to him, to the ende that we reſting wholy vppon him, and putting all our truſt in his goodneſſe and protection, ſhould cal vpon him, when we ſee the neceſſitie pinch vs, as they that ſhoulde not know where to become, if he ſhoulde not reache out his arme to helpe vs. Thus yee ſee after what manner wee ought to put this leſſon in vre, where it is ſaide that in conſidering the power of our enemies, we muſt not bee diſcouraged at it, be it neuer ſo great.

And let vs marke howe Moſes vſeth manie wordes here; the cauſe whereof is, that we can not by and by ouercome the feare wherewith we be caught when any perill ſeemeth to bee towardes vs. *Thou ſhalt not feare it ſaith hee; thy heart ſhall not quayle, nor ſhrinke; thou ſhalt not bee diſmayed at it; thou ſhalt not be afraide of it.* See howe hee vſeth foure ſundrie tearmes, to betoken one onely thing. And yet is it no ſuperfluitie of ſpeech. Whereat then did he looke? Let euerie of vs examine our owne heartes, and we ſhall find ÿ God doth not without cauſe ſtand ſo much vpon this point, namely ÿ we muſt not be afraid, nor aſtoniſhed, nor diſmaid, nor out of heart, nor diſcouraged, when we ſee the force & puiſſaunce of our enemies. Trueth it is that as long as wee are farre from blowes, we can ſleepe ſoundely enough, and a man would wonder to ſee howe blockiſhe we bee: and we beare our ſelues in hande that neuer anie daunger can come neere vs. But if it come to good earneſt, and that wee bee once pinched: then it woulde pitie ones hearte to ſee howe farre wee be out of countenaunce. Let GOD comforte vs, and let him incourage vs neuer ſo much, and all will not cheere vp our hearts. For why? we be forepoſſeſſed with fearefulneſſe which beareth ſuch ſway in vs, as wee cannot bee releeued of our diſcouragement. Wee ſee Eſa.7.12.
in what taking Achaz was, when he ſawe the Citie Ieruſalem at the point to bee beſieged.

Albeit that the Prophete Eſay beeing ſent vnto him, promiſed him deliuerance in ẏ name of God · yet was he ſtill like the leafe of a tree, as the ſimilitude likeneth him in the ſame place, inſomuch that he was in vnquietneſſe and vexation of minde, yea and quite beſides himſelfe for feare. True it is that hee went about to repaire the bulwarkes of the citie: but yet neuertheleſſe he quaked ſtill for feare. Be of good courage (ſaith the Prophet to him) and feare not. Indeede thou haſt two mightie Kinges againſt thee: for the king of Syria had alied himſelfe with the king of Iſraell. Well, well, in deede it is their meaning to burne vp all: but yet for al that they bee no better than a cupple of ſmoking fire brandes that doe nothing elſe but ſmoke. There is ſome likelihoode that they ſhoulde make hauocke of all thinges: but all this is nothing, God will ſet a ſtoppe in their way, bee thou quiet and ſtill. Yet notwithſtanding, this wretched man was ſo ſore afrayde, ẏ he could not take any cõfort. True it is that he did ſet a good face vpon the matter, and he played the hypocrite ſo ſtoutly, that hee woulde not aske a myracle when GOD offered it him. Demaunde ſome token of thy God, ſaide the Prophete. What, ſaide hee, ſhall I tempte my GOD? And yet neuertheleſſe, hee tempted him through his vnbeleefe. And the Prophete Eſay ſaide vnto him, Is it not enough for you to tempt the Lorde, but yee muſt alſo greeue thoſe whome he ſendeth vnto you, O you houſe of Dauid? Ye royall and holy houſe, ought there to bee ſuch hypocriſie among you? Nowe ſith wee ſee ſuch an example in the ſucceſſor of Dauid who was a figure of our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt, let vs bethinke our ſelues well, and vnderſtande that when we bee ſo aſtoniſhed, there is no way nor remedie to cheere vp our heartes agayne, but by Gods owne working after a maruellous faſhion. And the caſe ſtandeth ſo with vs, that wee haue ſuch a roote of vnbeleefe in vs, that vntill ſuch tyme as we bee grounded in GOD and in his promiſes, euerie fiſking of a flie before our eyes wil make vs by and by afraid, accordingly as it is ſaide that the wicked ſhall tremble for feare when no man purſueth him. And wee ſee that among other curſes of the lawe, God threateneth ſuch as leane not vnto him, that they ſhall bee euer in a maze, not knowing where to become. Seeing then that this infirmitie is ſo rooted in vs by nature, let vs learne to arme our ſelues againſt it.

And moreouer, let no feare ſo ouermaiſter vs when wee come in daunger, but that we may wade out of it agayne. And that wee may ſo do, let vs marke howe it is ſayde here, *Bee not diſmayed, let not your heartes faint, bee not diſcouraged.* When as our Lorde vſeth ſuch maner of ſpeech, it is all one as if hee ſaide, Goe to, If I ſaide no more to you but bee not afraide: it ought to ſuffice you. But I ſee well that yee will not ceaſe to bee afraide, euen when ye bee aſſured on my behalfe. Nowe therefore plucke vp a good heart, and gather newe ſtrength to you, and ſtande to your tackeling ſo ſtoutly, as yee may in the ende get the vpper hand of all temptations that come before you. And hereby wee be doone to vnderſtande in fewe wordes, what we haue to doe when wee feele ſuch trouble of minde in our ſelues, that wee cannot bee comforted againe out of hande. If one promiſe of God be not enough for vs; let vs goe to another: and ſo foorth to a thirde: yea and let vs inforce our ſelues to get the vpper hande of all diſtreſſes, ſo as the ſeede of vnbeleefe may bee vtterly rooted out of our heartes. After that manner muſt wee deale. When a man hath heard one of Gods promiſes, if his minde bee ſtill out of quiet, let him ſtriue with himſelfe, and bethinke himſelfe thus: Although I be weake, yet muſt I not feede mine owne follie, but I muſt ſtrengthen my ſelfe in God. And howe may I doe that? Indeede I am too vnthankefull if I quiet not my ſelfe with any one promiſe of his. Is not the very opening of Gods mouth enough for mee? Am I not too too froward, if I beleeue not his ſaying? Yes: but for aſmuch as this curſed vnbeleefe raigneth in mee, I muſt fight againſt it: and the harder that the battell is, the more muſt we inforce our ſelues. Then muſt God be honoured at my hande, euen in deſpite of the miſbeleefe that is in me; ſo as his promiſe may preuaile and I perceiue the fruite thereof in me. And howe ſo? [If one promiſe will not ſerue,] we muſt take a ſeconde. It is not once only that my God hath ſaide, I will helpe thee: but all the whole ſcripture is full of ſuch promiſes. Againe, when wee ſee that that doeth not yet ſufficiently auaile vs: we muſt proceede further and take holde of an other of Gods promiſes, and reſolue our ſelues by that. To be ſhort, we muſt heape them vp one vppon another, ſo as Satan may bee beaten backe. And if we be not able to wreſtle with him hande to hande, let vs make vs a foretreſſe, or bulwarke of Gods promiſes, yea let vs make a Rampyre and a double Ditch of them, ſo as the enemie may by no meanes come at vs, but that we may boldely defie him. Thus yee ſee that the thing which wee haue to gather vppon this texte, where Moſes doeth ſo oft repeate, that wee muſt not bee afrayde of our enemies; is, that wee muſt firſt conſider the diſeaſe that is in our nature, namely that we be afraide as ſoone as anie daunger appeareth: and ſecondly that wee muſt ſeeke the remedie thereof, not by taking ſome ſmall taſt of Gods promiſes as it were at a glaunce onely; but by ſetting our mindes vppon them, and by exerciſing our ſelues dayly in them.

After this here followeth the reaſon. *Becauſe thy GOD goeth with thee: yea euen thy GOD which brought thee out of the Lande of Egypt.* Here Moſes ſheweth vs ẏ there is none other meane wherby we may ouercome the feare of our enemies: but only by hauing recourſe vnto God. For as long as we ſtand weying of our own ſtrength, and ſtande gaſing about vs: alas in what taking be we? Needes muſt we be continually turmoyled with a number of terrours and carefull thoughtes. Therefore if we will haue good aſſurance & ſtoutnes of courage, let vs learne to reſort ſimply vnto God, and to keepe our ſelues cloſe vnder the ſhadow of his wings. And heereby we be warned, that all the hardineſſe which men do build vppon themſelues, is accurſed. If wee put our truſt in this or that, becauſe wee haue maintenance and aide to ouercome our enemyes: if wee tie our truſt to that; woe to vs. True it is that for a time wee may bee puffed vp with winde, and we may beare our ſelues in hand that nothing can daunt vs: but in the end God will laugh ſuch malapeartneſſe to ſkorne, & ſhew howe it was no better than ſmoke. And that is the cauſe why I ſaid that the foundation of true ſtoutneſſe, courage, and conſtancie, is to haue our eye vpon God, and to aſſure our ſelues that he is on our ſide. Notwithſtanding, it is not in vs to ſend it; but we muſt imbrace ẏ promiſe which he maketh to vs. Thy God (ſayth he) will goe with thee. Yea verily, ſo wee attempt not any thing without the warrant of his word, as I haue ſayd afore; and ẏ we runne not a head: For God will not be our tennis ball to trotte whereſoeuer we will ſend him. But when we doe him the honour to take him for our Captaine and king, ſo as we fight vnder him, and enterpriſe not any thing which is not permitted vs by his woord; but yeeld him the whole ſoueraintie ouer vs: we ſhall neuer be deſtitute of his helpe. Now then, whenſoeuer we be ſcarred, and there is any occaſion to make vs afrayde: let vs learne to caſt our eye vppon God, and imbrace the warrant that is giuen vs heere, which is that he will be euer at hand to ſuccour vs at our neede. Yea verily: for he hath not only taken vpon him ẏ tuition of vs; but alſo telleth vs ẏ he wil be an enemie to our enemies. Is it not a ſingular priuiledge, that beſides that our God auoweth himſelfe to be the mainteiner of our welfare, he telleth vs alſo that if men vex vs and goe about to doe vs any harme, they ſet themſelues againſt him, and he putteth himſelfe as a ſhield betwixt them and vs? The holy ſcripture is ful of ſuch ſimilitudes. Sometime God is called our Rampyre, ſometime our high tower, ſometime our bulwarke, and ſometimes our ſhield. Againe, when he will ſhew how greatly he loueth vs: he that toucheth you (ſaith he) toucheth the apple of mine eye, which feeleth or perceiueth all the harme that can bee purpoſed againſt vs. Deut.32.10 Seeing it is ſo then, that wee haue this warrant that God watcheth for vs; let vs not doubt but he is ſtrong ynough to confound all our enimies. And therefore let vs yeeld him his deſerued honour, in making no account of all the force of the worlde, foraſmuch as wee knowe that all that euer men can bring of their owne, is but vtter vanitie and leaſing in compariſon of Gods arme. So then, it is a ſpeeche of great importance when as Moſes ſendeth folke vnto God, ſaying, My friendes, Neuer ſtand muſing what ye bee of your ſelues, but know for a certaintie that yee be able to doe nothing. Though yee had neuer ſo great furniture for the warres, yet haue your recourſe ſtill to your God, and be ſtrong in him, and take courage there.

And he addeth *that it is God which brought them out of the Land of Egypt.* Whereby he meaneth that they had found already by experience, that God was ynough for them, and that they ought not to be aſtoniſhed at the power of men. So long as God is on your ſide and maintaine your parte, neuer be afraid. For when the people came out of Egypt, what lykelyhood was there of their ſafetie? When they were come to ẏ red ſea, was it not like that they ſhould haue bin vtterly vndoone? The ſea was on the one ſide of them, and on the other ſide was Pharao with ſuch a power, as it was vnpoſſible for them to haue ſcaped his hand. Exod.14.10 True it is that the Iſralites themſelues were a great multitude of people. But what? Were they inured to feates of armes? No verily, they were as a flocke of ſheepe, which had a rout of wolues harde at hande. There it appeared howe God wrought for them. And therefore Moſes putteth them in mind of the things which they had felt and knowen before. As if hee ſhould ſay, your God hath ſhewed you ſufficiently already by his doinges, that yee ſhall not bee diſappointed if you hang vppon him. And his power is no whit abated. For aſmuch then as ye knowe that it is ynough for you to bee vnder his protection, hold your ſelues ſtill thereunto. Now the remouing of the Iſralites out of Egypt, was a putting of them in minde that God had giuen them a preſident after what maner he would maintaine the ſtate of his Church: that is to wit, after ſuch a maner as paſſeth the reache of mans capacitie. And let vs marke that euen at this day we muſt haue the ſame rule ſtill. For (as I haue alleaged already out of the Prophetes) the welfare of the faithfull conſiſteth not in the multitude of horſes or of Chariots, or in the ſtrength of armour or men of warre; but in the goodneſſe and helpe of God. And this is to be referred moſt peculiarly to our ſtate vnder the raigne of our Lord Ieſus Chriſt. For it is the Chriſtian Church which the Prophets ſpeake of, when they vſe ſuch kind of ſpeeches. 1.Pet.1.10.12. Sith it is ſo, let vs aſſure our ſelues that the wonders which God wrought in bringing his people out of Egypt, are a ſure warrant vnto vs that hee will maintaine vs. So that, although it ſeeme vnpoſſible to men, and although we bee diſmayed when wee behold the power of our enimies and the weakeneſſe that is in our ſelues: yet will God woorke aboue our capacitie and vnderſtanding. That is one thing which we haue to beare in minde.

Againe, let vs alſo marke therewithall, that all the experiences which God hath giuen vs afore, muſt aſſure vs the better of our ſaluation, and make vs to truſt the more vnto him, for his former ſuccouring of vs. And let vs gather thereuppon, that he can wel find other meanes which we neuer thought of: and moreouer, that his goodnes diminiſheth not, and that he is alwaies alike ſtrong. Let vs conclude that he is able to ſaue vs, ſo we reſorte vnto him. And therefore let vs bethinke vs of the gratious goodneſſe that God hath extended towardes vs aforetimes, and of the ſuccour that hee hath giuen vs. And in conſidering thoſe thinges, let vs not onely giue him thankes for his ſhewing of himſelfe to bee our preſeruer heretofore: but alſo let vs take further matter and occaſion to truſt to him afterward, and to reſort boldly vnto him, and not to doubt but that he will continue as he began, vntill he haue brought our ſaluation to full perfection. Nowe if this bee ſpoken concerning our bodily enemyes: much more reaſon haue we to apply the ſame to Satan, to ſinne, and to al other things that fight againſt the endleſſe ſaluation of our ſoules. But I cannot as nowe make any larger diſcourſe of this matter. Let it ſuffice vs for this time to make our benefite of this doctrine: which is, that if we reſort vnto our God, he hath promiſed to preſerue vs, ſo as euen whē wee bee hemmed in on all ſides, and wee ſeeme to be out of al hope, and men ſeeme to haue the vpper hand of vs, yea euen yͤ vnbeleeuers whoſe onely deſire is to ouerthrowe vs: yet euen then we may boldly and ſafely keepe on our way. For why? We paſſe not what wee ourſelues bee, nor what wee can doe: but foraſmuch as God telleth vs that he will be at hand with vs, and haue pitie vpon vs, and that he loueth vs in ſuch wiſe that he will vtter his wrath againſt our enemies, and bee ſo inflamed at them as if their dealing were immediately with himſelfe, and take the quarell vpon him as though the diſhonour were offered to himſelf, and that defiance were made to his owne perſon: foraſmuch (ſay I) as we haue ſuch promiſe at his hand, let vs truſt boldly vnto it, and walk on ſtill in feare and reuerence, praying him to vouchſafe to giue vs peace, and to maintaine good agreement among vs. And although it bee his will to giue bridle to the wicked, ſo as they doe what they can againſt vs: yet let not vs ceaſſe to reſorte to him, foraſmuch as wee bee ſure that if wee put our life into his handes, he will ſhewe himſelfe a good and faithfull keeper of it.

But now let vs kneele downe before yͤ Maieſtie of our good God with acknowledgement of our faults, praying him to make vs feele them better than we haue done; and that when we once know the wicked affections that are in vs, it may cauſe vs not only to miſlike of them and to condemne them, but alſo to reſort to the remedie of them, and to pray him to reforme vs ſo according to his own image, as our whole deſire may bee to ſhewe our ſelues louing and gentle to all men, and to ſeeke peace and to procure it as much as we can, remouing all occaſion that any man may haue to doe vs any harme. And moreouer, that it may pleaſe him to receiue vs ſo into his protection, as we may be bold to proceede in our conuerſation: and that ſeeing he ſheweth himſelfe to bee our defender aforehand euen in this bodily and tranſitorie life, we may not doubt but yͤ he watcheth ouer vs to defend vs againſt Satan and all manner of ſinne, and that wee may be more and more confirmed with aſſurance of his goodneſſe, in ſuch ſort as wee may not liue any more in our ſelues, but to him, as good reaſon woulde that our life ſhoulde bee dedicated vnto him, ſeeing that hee vouchſafeth to take the care of it. That it may pleaſe him to graunt this grace, not onely to vs but alſo to all people and Nations of the earth, &c.

On Wedneſday the xviij. of December. 1555.

The Cxvij Sermon, which is the ſecond vpon the twentith Chapter.

2.3.4. And when yee come neere, &c.

5 And the Officers ſhall ſpeake vnto the people and ſay, Is there any man here which hath builded a new houſe, and not dedicated it? Let him goe hence and tarry at home, leaſt he dye in the battell, and another man dedicate it.

6 What man is there that hath planted a vineyard, and hath not gathered of the grapes? Let him goe hence, and returne home, leaſt he dye in the battell, and another man gather the grapes.

7 And what man is he that hath betrothed a wife, and hath not taken her? Let him depart hence, and goe home againe to his houſe, leaſt he dye in the battell and another man take her.

8 Moreouer the Officers ſhal ſpeake to the people and ſay: What man is he that is afraid and faint hearted? Let him get him hence, and goe home to his owne houſe, that he make not his brothers faint hearted as well as himſelfe.

9 When the Officers haue made an ende of ſpeaking to the people, they ſhall ſet Captaines of the Armie ouer the people.

WEe ſawe yeſterday what exhortation God commanded to bee made to his people when they came in danger, and I told you ſhortly that forſomuch as vnbeleefe is hard to be corrected in vs by reaſon of the deepe roote which it hath taken in vs, our Lorde would that a much more vehement kinde of ſpeache ſhoulde bee vſed towardes vs. And thereupon I ſayd that wee haue greatly profited, when we haue once ouercome the fearefulneſſe which turneth vs away from our truſt in God, and from abilitie to call vppon him with aſſured faith. Now remaineth the applying hereof to our ſpirituall battels. If we haue any enemies that trouble vs, and ſeeke to deſtroy vs; wee muſt reſort vnto God, and aſſure our ſelues that ſeeing he hath taken vs into his protection, he will not faile vs at our neede. And if this perſwaſion take place in the daungers of this preſent life which are nothing; what muſt we doe in caſes concerning the ſaluation of our ſoules which are much more precious before God? Thinke we that he will fayle vs in that behalfe? And therfore let vs ſo apply this promiſe where it is ſayd that our Lorde will goe with his people to helpe them in their neede, as our ſoules may be gouerned by our God. And if the diuell aſſault vs roughly, and we fall into ſo great perplexities that we wote not where to become, ſo as to our ſeeming we be vtterly ſonke: Let vs hope ſtill that our GOD hath not forgotten vs, but that he goeth ſtill with vs, that is to ſay, that he is ſo neere at hand, that his fauour and power ſhall ſtill ſuccour vs. And this is a thing more than needefull. For we ſee how feeble wee bee to incounter againſt Satan, and againſt all the aſſaultes which he maketh againſt vs: If wee bee not afraid, we be too blockiſh: for there is none other remedy for vs, but to flye to our God for refuge, and to depend vppon the ſuccour that hee hath promiſed vs. For if wee ſeeke our helpe in our ſelues for the withſtanding of Satan and of his ſpirituall battels: we ſhall be diſappointed of our hope, and God (as good reaſon is) will laugh our ouerweening to skorne. Therefore there is none other way for vs, but to ſeeke in God that which wanteth in our ſelues; and vpon the knowing of our owne weakneſſe, to looke for ſtrength at his hand. And when he hath once ſtrengthened vs, let vs not doubt of our deliuerance, but let vs extend the ſame deliuerance to our whole lyfe, yea euen to our death. For it is not ynough for me to hope ẏ God wil helpe mee for the preſent tyme: I muſt be throughly perſwaded both for to day and for euer after. Thus yee ſee what we haue to remember vpō this text, where God comforteth his people, and forbiddeth them to be aſtoniſhed, faintharted, fearefull, or diſmaied. His vſing of ſo many words ſheweth that although wee haue neuer ſo much cauſe to miſdoubt, to be afraid, to be agaſt, or to be diſmayed; yet muſt Gods promiſes come alwayes to our mind, that wee may make a buckler, yea and a rampyre of them to reſolue vs throughly that our Lord will helpe vs howſoeuer the world goe, ſo as we ſhall be ſuccoured by him, and be ſure of victorie in the ende, and bee recouered by his mightie and inuincible hand, how great extremities ſo euer we be falen into.

And now we haue to note, how it is not without cauſe that God would haue this doctrine vttered by the mouth of the Prieſt. It may ſeeme that it was ynough to haue the Law written and proclaimed, and that euery man ought to haue minded this leſſon by himſelfe. But yet it was Gods wil expreſly that the Prieſt ſhould be there preſent, to ſpeake in his name and by his authoritie. True it is that our eſteeming of Gods word muſt not depende vppon the perſons that bring it: for then ſhoulde it bee of verye ſmall authoritie among vs. As for the Preachers of GODS will vnto vs, what are they but frayle veſſelles of earth? 2.Cor.4.7. To bee ſhort, all that euer they coulde ſaye vnto vs were to no purpoſe, if wee ſhoulde haue an eye but to their perſons. But when wee once knowe their office or Commiſſion, then is it not for vs to gaſe vppon the creatures, but wee bee to looke vnto GOD himſelfe, who hath commaunded his woorde to bee preached to vs by perſons choſen and pycked out for that purpoſe. Therefore when wee heare them, it is a meane to wake vs that wee may be the readyer to heare GODS woorde, aſſuring our ſelues that he which ſpeaketh is not brought in by himſelfe, ne thruſteth himſelfe in on his owne heade: but that GOD hath ſet downe that order, and will haue it to be obſerued in his Churche. Nowe then, if any man preache vnto vs the thing that is for our ſoule health, although the partie that ſpeaketh were a little Babe; yet doeth it behooue vs to receiue with all reuerence, the thinges that wee knowe to come of GOD. The trueth muſt neuer bee euill intertayned, neither muſt wee make an excuſe of the partie that ſpeaketh. For whoſoeuer hee bee that commeth and bringeth vs the trueth: hee is as a Meſſenger of GOD. And if wee deſpiſe him, it is a diſhonouring of his Maiſter, and wee doe him wrong when wee will not receyue that which is brought from him. Notwithſtanding, bycauſe wee bee ſo colde and ſlowe to bee edifyed in the doctrine of our ſaluation: GOD hath giuen vs this helpe, that there ſhoulde bee men appoynted to repreſent his perſon and to ſpeake in his name. Therefore whenſoeuer a Miniſter of GODS woorde that is choſen in the Church ſpeaketh: let vs knowe that GOD wakeneth vs, and giueth vs as it were a preparatiue, to the ende wee ſhoulde giue the better eare to the thinges that are tould vs. Wee will take yet a more particular Example. When a poore man is in anguiſh of mynde, thinking himſelfe to bee as good as forlorne by reaſon of the ſinnes which hee knoweth in himſelfe, ſo as hee is caſt downe and woteth not where to become, bycauſe of the vnquietneſſe that vexeth him through remorſe of conſcience: if a faithfull man come vnto him and ſet the mercie of GOD before him, and tell him that in the holy ſcripture, ſillie ſinners are called to mercie, and that GOD neuer refuſeth them when they ſeeke him in fayth and with repentaunce; it is a rayſing of him vp agayne, and hee hath cauſe already to taſte of GODS goodneſſe and to thinke thus with himſelfe; Alas, I haue beene as it were in hell, and GOD is come to ſeeke me heere, by ſending me this man which ſpeakes not as of himſelf, but bringeth me things which God himſelf hath giuen me. Thus the poore ſinner hath cauſe to reioyce, and to be diſcharged of the ſorrow that ouerwhelmed him before. But if the doctrine be vttered by one that is a Shepheard, and hath publike charge: therein we haue yet a better aſſurance. For it is ſayd 2.Cor.5.19. that they be ſent to preache the forgiueneſſe of Eſa.61.1.2. ſinnes. The Prophet Eſay ſpeaking of the raigne of our Lord Ieſus Chriſt, and of the ſtate of the Chriſtian Church, ſayth that the office both of Ieſus Chriſt and of all thoſe that preache the Goſpell in his name, is to hearten the feareful, to heale the diſeaſed, to aſſwage the ſorrowes of them that are in anguiſhe of minde, and to let out them that are in priſon. And this is declared yet more plainly by the mouth of Gods own ſonne where he ſaith, Go your waies, whatſoeuer Matt.18.18. ye binde vppon earth ſhall be bound in heauen. To whome ſpeaketh he? To his Apoſtles. And he preſuppoſeth that they will preache the promiſes of ſaluation in his name. For hee ment not to ſet vp heere a tyrannie as the Pope beareth vs in hand, who taketh couert vnder that text, and wickedly defyleth the holy Scripture. And that (as ye ſee) is a diueliſh ſhameleſneſſe. But our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt will ſurely authoriſe the meſſage of his Goſpell, ſpecially when it is brought by the mouth of his Shepheardes, and of ſuch as he hath called to the like ſtate. Therfore when wee ſee a man that is choſen of God, to preache the forgiueneſſe of ſinnes: it is as if a bargaine were paſſed by a publike and ſworne Notarie. That then is the cauſe why God in this text hath expreſſely commaunded the Prieſt to come into the Armie and to ſpeake thoſe words. Why ſo? To the ende they ſhould bee receiued with the greater reuerence.

Hereupon let vs gather, that we haue neede to haue the Goſpell preached vnto vs, to confirme vs in the ſtrength of our GOD, and to giue vs full aſſurance of his ſuccour, ſo as he can neuer fayle vs. And let vs not bee as theſe fantaſticall folke are, which thinke it ynough for them to reade the word at home in their houſes, and abſent themſelues eaſily from the common doctrine which God wil haue publiſhed to al his people: aſſuring our ſelues ẏ the ſame is no ſuperfluous order. And ſeeing that our Lorde woulde haue the Prieſt to open his mouth to ſpeake to the people, that they might not bee afrayde of the daungers of this preſent life: much more reaſon is it that wee ſhould neede to bee taught that our Lorde Ieſus is alwayes readie to ſuccour vs, and that wee ſhall bee deliuered by his ſtrong hand as in reſpect of our ſoules, and therfore that wee muſt leane vnto him. Wee haue neede (ſay I) that theſe things ſhould bee pronounced by the mouth of thoſe whom God calleth, and vnto whom he committeth the charge of teaching in his Church: ſo as our faith muſt thereby growe double, and wee muſt gather our wittes the better about vs, as if wee ſhould ſay, Truely it is God that ſpeaketh, though it be but a childe that vttereth the wordes vnto vs. For he hath an eye to our rudeneſſe, and beareth with it, in that he ſo qualifieth the perſons of them that beare the name and tytle of Shepheards, and that they be as his Angels. Nowe then let vs ſo much the more receiue his woord, and giue the better heede to it, and be the more touched with it, knowing that our Lord offereth himſelfe the more liuely vnto vs, and therefore let vs not pretend any moe excuſes. For he ſheweth himſelfe the more expreſly, in that hee vouchſafeth to haue a man choſen thereunto. Wherfore let that man ſpeake; and let vs receiue his ſayings as though God himſelfe ſpake them to vs after a viſible maner, as we haue ſeene already heeretofore in the eyghteenth chapter. Deut.18.7. Thus ye ſee what we haue to remember as touching this ſentence.

Nowe let vs proceede to that which Moſes addeth. Hee ſayth, *that before they goe to battell, the Gouernours of the people ſhall giue leaue to depart, to ſuch as had builded newe houſes and had not yet dwelt in them; to ſuch as had planted vineyardes, and had not yet gathered of the fruite; and to ſuch as had betrothed themſelues to wiues, and had not yet maryed them to take them home into their houſes*. Heere are three kind of men to whom God giueth leaue to depart, whome hee will not haue compelled to goe to warre againſt their enimies. And afterward in the end he ſayth, *that if there bee any fearfull or fainthearted men, thoſe alſo muſt bee ſent home againe to their owne houſes*: not hauing like lybertie as the other ſortes, but as men caſt off in way of reproche. And hee ſetteth downe the reaſon; namely *leaſt they ſhoulde diſcourage the heartes of their brethren, and make them lyke themſelues*. This being doone, *His will is to haue Captaines ſet ouer them*: not as though they ſhould then demaund truce or reſpite of their enimies for the appointing of their Captaines: but his meaning is, that when warre is to bee made, the cheefe point is not to haue men of great experience and skill: What then? Aboue all thinges to truſt in God, and to reſorte vnto him firſt; and then to proceede according to the order which hee alloweth. When all this is done, then may Captaines and officers of ſkill be choſen. But if men think to ſtrengthen themſelues with worldly ayde, and in the meane while forget God; ſo as they reſorte not to him; it is an abuſe and they ſhall find themſelues beguiled. That in effect was the meaning of Moſes.

Nowe as touching that hee giueth libertie *to ſuch as had newly taken wiues, and had not yet maryed them: to ſuch as had planted vineyards, and had not yet gathered the fruite of them: and to ſuch as had builded houſes, and had not dwelt in them*: it is to ſhew that there is a kinde of vpright dealing to be vſed, to the ende that thoſe of whome any regard was to be had, ſhould not bee conſtreyned out of meaſure. Therefore vnder theſe three ſortes God ment to ſhewe, that albeit there bee great neede, yet ought ſuch to bee ſpared as are worthy thereof. For it were a kind of crueltie to hale out a man to death, before he had taken the benefite of dwelling in his owne houſe, and of gathering the fruit of his vineyard, ſpecially whē there were other men ynow beſides him to goe to battell. Againe they bee euen naturall greefes alſo. For this cauſe Moſes exempted ſuch perſons from the warres by Gods commaundement. But yet muſt wee cheefely come backe to this point (as I ſayd,) that although neceſſitie pinch vs and conſtraine vs: yet muſt we vſe ſome gentleneſſe in bearing with ſuch as are meete to haue ſome priuiledge and freedome more than other men.

Moreouer whereas hee ſpeaketh of *dedicating of houſes:* although it ſignifie to dwell in them: yet was it not Lawefull for the Iewes to ſettle themſelues in their houſes, before they had made a kinde of dedicating of them, that is to ſay, till they had vſed ſome kinde of Ceremonie of bleſſing the houſe in the name of GOD. That Ceremonie was obſerued vnder the Lawe: howebeit that as nowe it is not any more in vſe among vs. But yet the inſtruction thereof abideth vnto vs, that is to ſay, that it is not Lawefull for vs to vſe any thing without thankes giuing, and without praying vnto GOD that all may be pure and cleane vnto vs. Saint Paule ſayth that our meate and 1.Tim.4.5. our eating and drinking are ſanctified: And howe? By prayer and by the woorde. The bread (as yee ſee) is a creature whereunto GOD hath giuen vertue to nouriſhe vs: and yet if wee eate thereof without regarding him that feedeth and ſuſteyneth vs by it, wee defile it. When the thing that GOD had created for our ſuſtenanee, is peruerted by our defiling of it, it is treaſon agaynſt GOD. And therefore there is none other meane for our foode to become pure vnto vs, than to acknowledge GOD to bee the giuer of them, and to yeeld him thankes for the ſame, praying him to guide vs as his children, that wee may Lawfully receiue the benefites which hee beſtoweth vppon vs. For although the wicked and the faythleſſe be fedde in this world as well as wee, and haue the ſame Sunne ſhyning vpon them which we haue, and eate of the ſame bread that wee doe: Yet notwithſtanding, all deſpyſers of GOD, all vnbeleeuers, all Cormorauntes that fall to their meate like ſwine and Aſſes, without praying vnto GOD or without lifting vp their heartes vnto him, are all theeues; and they eate not one bitte of bread whereof they ſhall not yeeld an account. And why ſo? For there is none but Ieſus Chriſt that Hebr.1.2. is vniuerſall heire of this world, as he is named. And wee muſt bee his members, or elſe wee can haue no parte in any of GODS benefites. And howe may wee bee members of our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt, except wee bee graffed into his bodie by fayth? Wee ſee then howe all our meates are vncleane, and that wee on our part doe defile them, vnleſſe we yeeld thankes for them vnto GOD, and pray him to gouerne vs as his children, that we may receiue ſuſtenance for our lyfe at his hande as at the hand of our father. In lyke caſe is it with apparell and with all other thinges: GOD muſt be faine to bleſſe them to our vſe. For to that condition is our apparell, ſuſtenance, and dwelling tyed. Now then, when a houſe is to bee dwelt in; we muſt not vſe the olde figure of the Lawe in dedicating it: but yet muſt the partie that is to dwel in it, acknowledge that it is GOD which lodgeth him there, euen as hee hath lodged vs alreadie vppon the earth, making the waters to withdraw by themſelues, that wee might haue ſome roome to dwel on heere beneath. Alſo let euerie of vs thinke thus with himſelfe: although I haue but a little cottage, yet notwithſtanding ſeeing that our Lorde hath placed mee heere, it becommeth mee to acknowledge it: and although my houſe bee of myne owne purchaſing, or that I haue it by inheritaunce, or by leaſe, or by any other tytle whatſoeuer; yet am I alwayes the tenant of the Lorde my God. Let vs haue an eye to that, and let vs call vppon the name of God: for that is the right hallowing of thinges, and ſo ſhall Gods fauour dwell with vs, bycauſe wee defyle not our houſes at our comming into them, but acknowledge that GOD hath had pitie vppon vs, and that it is hee which hath giuen vs the commodities of this lyfe. Thus ye ſee to what ende this Ceremonie of the Lawe tended, and what wee haue to gather thereof at this day.

Nowe it is ſayde on the contrary part, *that a vine is vnhallowed or made common, when the fruite thereof is gathered*, bycauſe it was not lawefull Leu.19.23.24.25. to gather the fruite of their vines vntill the fourth yeere. It behoued the firſt croppe thereof to bee common, and then the Owner thereof was to take the benefite thereof afterwarde: In that reſpect therfore it is ſaid that the Vyneyard was to be made common. But we haue no ſuch cuſtome nowadayes. For we be not bound to the yoke of the Lawe, ſince the tyme that our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt deliuered vs from it. But howeſoeuer the caſe ſtande, although the bondage bee paſt away: yet muſt wee holde faſt the inſtruction that commeth by it, that is: That wee muſt enter into an account of the benefites that GOD beſtoweth vppon vs, and giue parte of them to ſuch as want. The riche muſt vnderſtand that hee is a detter to ſuch as haue neede: and although hee be not taxed and ſeſſed, as who ſhoulde ſay thou ſhalt giue thus much of thy goods: yet ought it to ſuffice vs, that GOD putteth them into our handes with condition to bee as his receiuers, and that our inioying of the goods which wee poſſeſſe through his goodneſſe, is in ſuch wiſe, that wee bee bounde to ſuccour them that haue neede. Thus yee ſee how the old figures are profitable to vs ſtill at this day; not that we be bound to obſerue them, but for that the truth of them belongeth vnto vs. To be ſhort, we ſee how in al the commodities of this preſent lyfe, we be taught firſt of all to magnifie the goodneſſe of our GOD, for that hee hath a fatherly care of vs, and prouideth vs all things that are requiſite for vs. And we muſt alſo haue a regard of our neighbours, & of the Communion or fellowſhip which our lord commandeth. Not that there ſhould not be any ciuill order, or that no man myght keepe that which is his own: but that euery man ſhold ſtrain himſelfe to be liberal of the things yͤ God giueth ſo as the needy may be ſuccoured by vs. Thus yee ſee in effect what wee haue to remember as touching the exemption that was giuen to the three ſortes of men ſpoken of before.

Nowe let vs come to that which Moſes addeth. He ſaith *that if there be any fearfull and fainthearted fellows, they muſt be ſent home to their houſes, leaſt they diſcourage their brethren lykewiſe.* Here our Lord declareth yͤ he would haue the wars which yͤ Iewes were to make, to be made in his name. And therefore hee woulde haue ſouldyours that ſhould goe to it with a franke courage. For if a man bee afrayd, it is a token that he hath no truſt in GOD: for faith hath power to ouercome and to kill all fearefullneſſe. Not that wee ſhoulde bee without feeling; for although wee reſt vppon the fauour of GOD, and call vpon him not doubting but that hee heareth vs: yet are wee not ſenſeleſſe ſo as wee ſhoulde ſhewe no token of infirmitie at all, but wee ſhall alwayes get the vpper hande of it. Then if wee bee ouertaken with fearefulneſſe, it is a ſigne that wee haue no truſt in GOD. And howe ſhoulde hee helpe vs, when we do him not the honour to truſt vnto him? And if we be not hardy hauing his promiſe; whom may we blame but our ſelues, that wee obtaine not the victorie? Nowe then if wee truſt not to that which our Lord hath promiſed; then is it meete that hee ſhould withdrawe himſelfe from vs and giue vs ouer. Thus ye ſee why expreſſe commaundement is giuen to Gouernours in this text, to ſend home faintharted and couwardly ſouldiours. I haue tould you already howe it was not lawful for the Iſraelites to enterpriſe warres vpon ambition or couetouſneſſe, as wee ſee men doe noweadayes, who vppon an eager deſire of bearing rule in the worlde, become vnſatiable gulfes in making warres and in ſhedding of mans bloud: but the warres which the people of Iſraell made, were vppon neceſſitie, and GOD auowed them and bleſſed them in ſo dooing. And bycauſe it was ſo, hee woulde haue the ſouldiours to looke vnto him, and thereby to aſſure themſelues of his helpe. Therefore ſuch as were weakehearted were not worthy to bee in the hoſte of GOD: for they ſhould but haue bred confuſion, and that two wayes. Moſes noteth the one heere to bee that they ſhould haue diſcouraged their brethren. But there was this more, that it was as a nouriſhing of GODS curſe, when ſuch men were mingled with thoſe that ought to haue their eye vppon the banner or ſtandard of GOD diſplayed before them. And this reaſon is to bee well weyed, where Moſes ſayth that they might diſcourage the heartes of their brethren; and that as their owne heartes faynted, ſo they might make the reſt of the people afrayde and diſmaied too. And (as I ſayde) this reaſon is to be marked well: for we haue experience of it in all things. Let vs looke vpon any other buſineſſe: if there be but one loytering lubber, he is a diſcomfort to all the reſt of the company. For one giueth courage to another: and when men goe luſtily to their worke, there is no labour nor occupation ſo harde, but it is gone through with: and it not halfe ſo much payne to them, when they doe their indeuour with a good will. Contrarywiſe when any one falles to loytering, hee makes al the reſt of the company to droope. But that is not all the ill yet. For beſides that ſuch a ſlouthfull body will not ſtraine himſelfe to doe his duetie: he will euer finde ſome occaſion to cloake his ſhame, and he will fall to murmuring and grudging, ſo as a man were better to haue but two or three luſtie fellowes that are well diſpoſed to take paines; than to haue two doſen of lither loyterers, of whome one is ynough to marre all his fellowes. This is manifeſtly ſeene. If there bee any trouble, what is commonly the cauſe of it? It is, that if ſome diſordered perſon thruſt himſelfe into a companie of men, hee is as a firebrand to kindle ſuch a fire as cannot eaſily be quenched. He falleth to ſowing of his Darnell, which ſpreadeth ſo farre from one to another, that at length the trubble and diſquietneſſe growe ſo great, as they cannot bee appeaſed agayne. This is to bee ſeene in all our lyfe throughout. And when yee come to publyke offices, if there bee ſix ſkoore perſones moe or leſſe well diſpoſed to gouerne the people, and there bee but a two or three that drawe backe: thoſe feaw ſhall bee able to doe a hundred fould more harme, than all the reſt to doe good. As for example, in drawing of a cart; wee ſee howe one reſtie Iade ſhall hinder foure or fiue good horſes, which woulde haue gone away roundely with the loade, if that naughtie beaſt had not bin among them. Likewiſe if in a common Councel or in a great companie there bee but one or two ill diſpoſed perſons, which ſhall goe about to ouerthrowe all good order: You would wonder to ſee howe vntowardly thinges will fall out. And although a man woulde make an account of the contrarie bycauſe the greater parte ſeeme willing to doe good: yet thoſe two or three are ynough to ouerthrowe all, and to put al to hauocke. So then it is not for nought that GOD woulde haue all ſuch to bee cutte off from his armie, and that if men intended to haue GOD to beare ſway among them and to ſhewe his power in giuing them victorie, they ſhoulde at their going to warre, ſhake off al that rabble, which are good for nothing but to marre the reſt by their miſtruſtfulneſſe and leaud behauiour. Wee ſee howe Gedeon went to woorke: and Iud.7.3.5.6 his example is notable aboue all others, bycauſe that then GOD ſhewed himſelfe after a moſt viſible manner, and by myracle more woorthie to bee had in rememberaunce than euer before. And in deede, it is not without cauſe that the Prophet Eſay ſpeaking of the deliueraunce which GOD woulde woorke by the hande of the Redeemer: ſayeth that it Eſa.9.4. ſhall bee as in the day of Madian, that is to ſay in the victorie that was giuen againſt the Madianites by the hande of Gedeon. For when hee had aſſembled a great multitude of men: in the ende hee was commaunded to ſend home the moſt part of them againe, bycauſe GOD intending to giue the greater glorie to his owne power, woulde haue but a ſmall nomber of men to doe it withall. And who were they whome Gedeon reſerued for that purpoſe? GOD gaue him a token to know them by, which was that when they came to drinke, as many of them as lapped the water or kneeled downe to drinke, ſhould be ſent away; and that thoſe which tooke vp water in their hands to drinke as they paſſed by without ſtaying, ſhould goe on agaynſt the enimies. GOD gaue that marke. And to what end? To doe them to vnderſtand, that he would haue none to bee of his Crewe, but ſuch as were throughly diſpoſed and well willing to go to battell againſt their enimies. For that thing could not proceede but of an aſſured truſt that GOD was with them. For howe coulde three hundred men haue fought againſt a great armie, ſpecially with pitchers, Lanternes, and Lampes, (as though they had caryed bladders full of peaſe made for little children) to ſcarre their enimies withall? Woulde they euer haue gone that way to worke, if they had not all of them beene certainly perſwaded in their heartes after this manner? It is GOD that gouerneth and directeth vs, and therefore if wee goe foreward according to his wil; ſhal we doubt ỹ he is not able to ſuccour vs at our neede, and to diſcomfite the infinite multitude of the Madianites when they ſhall ſet themſelues againſt vs? So then let vs marke howe our Lordes intent was to ſhewe hereby, that all ſuch as goe a warfare, muſt marche as it were vnder his ſtandard, and put their truſt in him; and that the ſtoutneſſe which he requireth in them, muſt bee as a record of their faith.

Nowe let vs apply this to our owne vſe. In deede this doctrine ought to be put in vre nowadaies by the princes that cal themſelues Chriſtians. And when they goe a warfare, they ſhould conſider firſt what reaſon mooues them theretoo, whether their warres bee rightfull or no: and then ought they to followe the order which GOD ſheweth them heere. But they ſeeke no further noweadayes than to blynde themſelues with vaine ouerweening. In deede when they goe to their warres, they make proceſſions to their Idolles. But all is but flat mockerie, I meane euen of their ſuperſtitions, wherin they bee as deuoute as they that knowe no diuinitie at all. For wee ſee howe they bee blynded in their couetous deſires, and all their truſt is in their owne force and furniture. They haue thus many footemen, thus many horſemen, thus much artillerie, ſuch and ſuch intelligence, ſuch and ſuch alyances, and ſuch and ſuch I wote not what. True it is that all theſe things are neceſſarie for the warres: but yet ought they to begin at another ende, which is, to walke in the feare of God, and to reſt vppon that poynt, and to referre themſelues to him that hath all power in him, and not to ſtay vppon their owne ſtrengthes, but to waite altogether vppon God who giueth the victorie. But there is none of all this.

Nowe haue wee a more generall doctrine, in that wee bee all ſouldiers of our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt, and that our ſtate is ſuch, that we muſt fight, not for one day onely, but all the tyme of our lyfe. Wee cannot ſerue our GOD otherwyſe than by fighting. Sith it is ſo, let vs apply this doctrine to our inſtruction. As how? Let vs take an expoſition of it out of the hundred and tenth Pſalme. It is ſayde there, that Pſal. 110, 3. in the day of the Muſters which the King ſhall make whom GOD hath ſet ouer vs, (that is to ſay our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt) the people ſhall come vnto him willingly and with a free courage. The marke then which Dauid attributeth to all Chriſtians, whereby they may be knowen to bee Chriſtes good ſouldyers, and bee auowed to bee of his armie and company; is that they muſt preſent and offer themſelues to him, with a pure and free heart, not as folke that come by conſtraynt, or inforced as ſlaues; but as they that offer vp and dedicate themſelues wholly to him. That is the true practiſing of this doctrine, I meane as in reſpect of all priuate perſons. In deede this doctrine ought to beare ſway among the faithfull in the neceſſitie of warre: and without that, it were better for them to ſuffer their throates to be cut a hundred tymes, than once to drawe a ſworde in their owne defence, vnleſſe they goe to it with a pure conſcience, acknowledging after this manner: God alloweth and admitteth vs, and for as much as we fight vnder his guydance, hee will ſurely bee on our ſide. If a man haue not this: it were better for him a hundred thouſand times to periſh, than to ſtirre one finger towardes the ſauing of his lyfe, as it were in deſpite of GOD, hauing no leaue nor licence of him to doe it. Therefore in neceſſitie of warre, the faythfull ſhoulde bee armed with this doctrine, of ſtrengthening themſelues in GOD, and of calling vppon his name without doubt or feare. But wee (as I ſayde afore) 1.Pet.5.8. Rom.8.7. haue a continuall warfare all our lyfe long, bycauſe Satan neuer ceaſſeth, and wee haue ſinne fighting againſt vs, yea and euen within vs. We neede not goe farre to incounter with our enemyes: for looke howe many thoughtes and affections wee haue in our nature; ſo many enemyes haue we againſt GOD, which procure the deſtruction of our ſoules. Then ſtandeth vs it in hande to bee diſpoſed to fight. And how may that bee doone? If wee knowe not the ſuccour that GOD vouchſafeth to giue vs, ſurely wee ſhall bee put to the foyle at euery turne. For why? How great is our weakeneſſe, as I ſaide afore? Needes muſt wee bee aſtraught or rather vtterly blockiſh; for wee are not able to make any reſiſtaunce. Beſides this, our enemie is Prince of the world, Eph.6.12. & Rom.7.14. ſinne holdeth vs as it were in his bondes and cordes, and wee cannot ſcape from him except GOD ſet vs free. So then let vs learne that our Lorde calleth vs to himſelfe, to the ende wee ſhould bee confirmed, and fight valiauntly vppon aſſurance of his helpe. But doe wee ſo? Can wee call vppon our GOD? Can wee aſſure our ſelues that hee will aſſiſt vs? Wee ought to reſort vnto him with a pure and free heart, and to chooſe to be beſeeged with infinite perilles, and to indure ſore aſſaultes: rather than to bee at reſt and to haue him farre from vs, ſo as hee ſhould not bee our head, nor our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt be our King. Therefore although it bee a hard and painfull ſtate to the fleſhe, yet let vs chooſe this condition, namely: to fight vnder Chriſtes Standard, and to appeare at the day of his muſters rather than to ſit idle at home and to doe him no ſeruice. Nowe this day of muſters is all the tyme of our life, yea and alſo of our death. For looke howe oft we be exerciſed by diuers temptations; ſo oft doth Ieſus Chriſt make his muſters in vs. It is not for naught that Saint Paule ſayth hee was ſet as vppon a ſcaffould, 1.Cor.4.9. to bee ſeene by the Angels of paradiſe. Hee ſpeaketh of himſelfe and of his companions. But yet doth the ſame concerne euery one of vs, namely that GOD will haue vs to bee heere as it were to make our muſters before the Angels of heauen, that we might knowe that his looking ſo narrowly to vs after that manner, is to the end wee ſhould ſhew good example one to another. Seeing it is ſo, let vs learne to offer our ſelues to God with ſuch obedience, as wee may bee accounted of the number and company which Dauid ſpeaketh of in the forealleaged text, that is to wit, of ſuch as offer themſelues to their King with a free courage, vnconſtrained and not forced.

Nowe then foraſmuch as the ſtate of the Church is a warfare: we know that firſt of all it ſtandeth vs in hand to gather ſuch as are of a good courage, and that if we ſee any weakelings, wee muſt bee well ware that wee match not our ſelues with them: for there is infirmitie ynough in euerychone of vs, without procuring any more frõ elſewhere. Though no other body intice me to naughtineſſe, or make me cold in goodneſſe: I am Lazie and colde ynough of my ſelfe, vntill God doe heate mee and ſtrengthen mee. And therefore what a thing is it when I ſhall bee furthered in euill by my companion, and bee made the weaker by him? Seeing then that wee be to liue in this world, yee ſee howe it ſtandeth vs in hand, to take heede that wee meddle not with ſuch as may diſcourage vs. Why ſo? Becauſe we be ſubiect ynough of our ſelues to our owne luſtes, and foreward ynough to all vanities and delightes, and ready ynough to ſhrinke away from the ſeruing of God: al of vs (ſay I) are too much inclined to euill of our ſelues, without further prouocation. But now if I match my ſelfe with drunkards and gluttons, with whoremongers and ſwearers: what ſhall become of mee? Whereas I haue the ſeede of vice and ſin in mee already: will it not bee an increaſing of it, if I ſeeke occaſions of euill? Is it not a tempting of God, and a caſting of my ſelfe away? And yet ye ſee we doe it ordinarily, inſomuch as we may ſeeme to ſeeke occaſions to miſcheefe our ſelues, and if any body goe about to drawe vs from wicked companie: wee grate our teeth at him as though he did vs great wrong. But contrariwiſe wee ought to put this leſſon in vre, by thinking thus with our ſelues: God hath graunted me the grace to be of his campe, & will haue me to fight againſt ſinne, againſt the world, againſt all mine own luſtes, yea and euen againſt Satan himſelfe. In deede it is a very harde incounter: and when I haue gotten the vpper hand one day, I muſt enter into new battels againe the next day. What wil become of mee therefore, if I be not minded to play the valiant champion? Seeing I not onely find ſuch a number of impediments in mee as is pitie to thinke on, but alſo doe vtterly faint afore hand: what ſhall become of me, if my God ſtrengthen me not? But hee hath promiſed mee to doe it, and therefore I will call vpon him. Againe, when I ſee great numbers of ſtumbling blockes, and impediments that may hinder me or put mee to trouble: I will looke to the helpe which God giueth me, and that will bee ynough to make me ouercome all diſtreſſes: ſpecially if I bee guided by his holy ſpirite, that will ſuffice to repulſe all feare, and all diſtruſt that myght diſcourage mee. Were wee then wiſe and well aduiſed, wee would thinke better vppon theſe thinges than wee haue beene woont to doe: and euerie of vs woulde followe ſuch as are of good courage, and ſhewe vs good example by marching on before vs, and haue beene tryed afore in the ſeruice of GOD. With ſuch would wee keepe companie, and with ſuch would wee haue familiaritie, knowing that nothing is better than to linke in together one with another, and to keepe our ſelues occupyed in that exerciſe, ſeeing wee haue ſuch neede thereof. Thus yee ſee howe wee ought to put this ſentence in vre.

But yet it is then to bee doone moſt ſpecially, when the caſe concerneth them that ſhould ſhewe the way howe to fight, as thoſe that are in publike office, whether it bee of gouernment and execution of Iuſtice, or of preaching Gods woorde: for if faynthearted and cowardly men be put in thoſe places; what ſhall they doe but ouerthrowe all? And therefore men ought to make better choyce than they doe, when officers are to be appointed in the houſe of God, ſo as they muſt not goe and chooſe at aladuenture without conſidering who bee meete and fitte for the purpoſe, or without regarde whether they haue a good will and bee rightminded to ſerue God and to imploy themſelues as they ought to doe or no. And no maruell though oftentimes thinges be out of ſquare in the world, and that all thinges are ſeene to be out of order: for men refuſe the meanes that God offereth them. And when they ſo forſake him: it is good reaſon that they alſo ſhould bee forſaken of him, and that they ſhould finde themſelues to bee forlorne. But yet muſt wee aduiſe our ſelues the better to followe the rule that is giuen vs heere, and euery of vs muſt haue a regarde of himſelfe to gather courage: and if we be faintharted, we may bee ſure that it is not for vs to bee of the armie and companie of GOD. What is to bee doone then? The Miniſters muſt doe as the Prophet Eſay commaundeth them, that is to ſay, they muſt ſtrengthen the weake kneees, and Eſa.35.3.

incourage the weake heartes. For the right vſe of Gods woord is, that when wee ſee mens handes quake and their knees ſhake, wee muſt rayſe them vp and ſtrengthen them againe by our liuely incouragements. And haue the Miniſters once doone their dewtie; euery other man alſo muſt do the lyke, as the Apoſtle ſayth Hebr.13.12. in the Epiſtle to the Hebrewes. For this text of Eſayes is alleaged there, to ſhew that not onely ſuch as haue the charge to preach Gods word muſt ſtrengthen the weake: but alſo that euery man muſt doe the lyke towardes himſelfe. Therefore let vs examine our owne weakeneſſe. And where as wee ſee our ſelues ſo feeble: let vs knowe that God hath giuen vs a good helpe by his woord. Let vs applye his promiſes to our vſe, that when we feele our knees ſhake wee muſt quicken them vp; and when our handes quake we muſt ſtrengthen them, and our hearts muſt be ſo fenced with conſtancie and courage, as wee may not bee afrayde to offer our ſelues to the incounter, as they that are ſure that our Lorde goeth before vs, ſo as wee ſhall be backed by him, and his grace ſhal neuer fayle vs: and that moreouer our neighbours bee led to him by our example, ſo as wee may with one common accorde bee ſtrengthened to fight againſt Satan, hauing Chriſt for our head, who guideth and gouerneth vs in all incounters and aſſaultes which we haue to indure; vntill he haue taken vs vp into his heauenly reſt.

Nowe let vs fall downe before the Maieſtie of our good God with acknowledgement of our faults, praying him to make vs feele them better, & to forgiue vs them, and to gouerne vs henceforth in ſuch wiſe, as wee may bee the better diſpoſed to fight vnder him and vnder his hande, vntill wee haue gotten the victorie againſt all our enimies, and haue inioyed the fruite of our victorie, being gathered all togither vnto him. And ſo let vs al ſay. Almighty God heauenly father, &c.

On Thurſday the xix. of December. 1555.

The Cxviij. Sermon, which is the third vpon the twentith Chapter.

10 When thou commeſt neere any Citie to fight againſt it, thou ſhalt offer it peace.

11 And if they aunſwere thee peaceably, and open vnto thee, al the people that is in it ſhall bee tributarie vnto thee and ſerue thee.

12 But if they will not make peace with thee, but make warre with thee: then ſhalt thou lay ſeege to it.

13 And the Lord thy God will giue it into thy handes. Thou ſhalt ſlea all the males in it with the edge of the ſword.

14 But the women, the children, and the cattel, and al that is in the Citie beſides, and all the ſpoile thereof thou ſhalt take to thy ſelfe: and thou ſhalt eat the ſpoyle of thine enimies which the Lord thy God giueth thee.

15 After that manner ſhalt thou doe to all the Cities that are farre off from thee, which are not of the Cities of this nation.

16 But of the Cities of the nations which the Lord thy God giueth thee to inherite, thou ſhalt not leaue any ſoule aliue.

17 But thou ſhalt vtterly deſtroy thẽ: namely the Hethites, the Amorrhites, the Chananites, the Phereſites, the Hiuites and the Iebuſites, as the Lord thy God hath commaunded thee:

18 Leaſt they teach you to doe according to all the abhominations which they haue done to their gods, and ſo you ſinne againſt the Lord your God.

IT might well ſeeme at the firſt bluſhe, that wee haue no great need to haue ẏ doctrine expounded to vs which is conteyned heere; bycauſe it declareth howe men ought to beehaue themſelues in warfare. But when all is well looked vppon, wee ſhall finde that wee may gather good and profitable fruite to our inſtruction, of the thinges that GOD hath commaunded his people heere. For firſt wee ſee what a care hee had to teach thoſe of whome hee had taken charge, that they myght knowe howe to behaue themſelues in all thinges. Nowe ſeeing that GOD hath ſuch a care: let vs learne to walke in his obedience, not doubting but wee ſhall finde ſufficient inſtruction in his worde, whereby to rule our whole lyfe well. I ſay that all they which yeeld themſelues teachable vnto GOD, and are ready to faſhion themſelues after his will, ſhall finde ſufficient in his worde wherewith to guide themſelues aright without any want at all; inſomuch that whereas men are diſordered in their dealinges, and knowe not what to doe: the cauſe thereof is, that they ſubmit not themſelues wholly to GOD, but take counſell by themſelues, and runne gadding heere and there, whereas all they that ſeeke to be taught by Gods worde, as well in matters of ſtate as in priuate matters, and as well in time of warre as in tyme of peace, ſhall finde a perfect doctrine and ſuch as is fitte for them. The thing then which wee haue to marke vpon this text, is that GOD woulde not faile them in any one point, whom he had taken into his tuition.

But there is yet more. For it may well ſeeme that where open warre is, there all thinges ſhould bee put to hauocke. But our Lorde ment to ſhewe, that all his ſeruauntes muſt alwayes brydle themſelues, yea euen where they ſeeme to haue moſt exceſſiue lybertie, to breake the bondes of all humanitie and vprightneſſe. GOD ſheweth that ſuch as belong to him muſt euen in thoſe caſes keepe and mayntayne themſelues vndefiled; ſo as howeſoeuer the worlde goe, they muſt ſtande in continuall awe, that no extremitie may driue them beyond their bondes, but that they holde them ſtill to this ground; Wee muſt obey GOD. True it is that euen the heathen coulde skill to ſay, that euen in tyme of warre it was not Lawefull to aſſault or beſeege a Towne, vntill they had offered it conditions of peace. But yet wee ſee there was nothing but furie and crueltie: for as ſoone as they were entered into armes, they bare themſelues in hand that it was Lawfull for them to beare all thinges downe before them without ſparing. GOD then ment to ſhewe heere, that his people ought to bee ſo courteous as to ſpare their enemies, euen in tyme of warre. That is the thing which is conteyned heere. A man ſhall finde in the bookes of the heathen, that they alſo commended this vprightneſſe, that although there was iuſt cauſe of warre; yet the ſhedding mans bloode was to bee forborne; but this rule was not well kept. And howeſoeuer the caſe ſtande, our Lorde hath heere ſeparated his people from all the reſt of the worlde, ſhewing that they which are led by his worde, muſt looke more ſtraitely and narrowly to themſelues, than they that followe their naturall inclination, and are not taught as they ſhould be.

And nowe let vs come to the doctrine that is conteyned heere. It is ſayde, *When thou commeſt to a Citie to beſeege it, thou ſhalt offer them peace: and if they yeeld or bee willing to fall to compoſition, thou ſhalt receiue them to mercie, ſo as no bloud ſhall bee ſhedde. The inhabitants ſhall but onely bee ſubiect to thee and pay thee Tribute.* In ſo ſaying GOD ſheweth that although there bee iuſt cauſe of warre, yet muſt not men bee ſo whot and fierie at the firſt daſhe, as to put all to the ſwoord and ſlaughter: For howeſoeuer the worlde goe, men are created Gen.9.6. after the Image of GOD: and there muſt we beholde our nature. Wherefore it muſt needes bee that wee are caryed away from all reaſon, if the ſame withholde vs not, and that wee haue no pitie of thoſe which are our owne fleſhe and bones, and which beare Eſa.58.7. the marke of our GOD, euen of the ſame GOD which hath faſhioned vs after his own lykeneſſe. If this (ſay I) bee not able to aſſwage our paſſions, which myght carie vs away to crueltie: it muſt needes be ſayde that wee bee bereft of all reaſon, and woorſe than the brute beaſts, which knowe their owne kinde, and doe not ſo deadly purſue one another. That is the thing which wee haue to marke in the firſt place. And hereof we may gather a good leſſon expedient for vs all. For heere God ſpeaketh of thoſe againſt whom he armeth his people. But we cannot ſay the like of our enemies. If a man haue done me all the wrong that is poſſible, yea and haue euen ſought my death: yet doeth not that arme me to be auenged of him: God doeth not giue mee leaue to requite like for like, but I am commanded to render good for euill. Howbeit the caſe ſtandeth otherwiſe with Princes and Magiſtrates which haue the ſword: for God Rom.12.19. hath ſet them in his owne ſtead to execute vengeance. Ye ſee then that heere is a people armed with Gods authoritie, as if God had ſayde, draw your ſwords, for I diſpence with you at this tyme, ſo as ye may ſlea your enimies, and it ſhall not be layde to your charge for a cryme. When a warre is rightfull, and God giueth men leaue: it is a permiſſion or priuilege which he granteth them. And yet for all that he will not haue men to goe to it at alauenture, but that they ſhoulde ſeeke peace, and abſtayn from ſhedding of bloud if it be poſſible, ſo as no man may be hurt or wounded in his perſon. Seeing that God wil haue men to brydle themſelues after that manner in the tyme of warre, I pray you what is to bee doone where our handes are ſo tyed vp, as it is not lawfull to giue our enimie a philluppe, but to loue them rather, that haue grieued vs or wrought vs Matt.5.44. any wrong or iniury? Ought we not to offer them peace, & to be al ready to receiue them to mercy when we ſee them willing to be reconciled to vs? So then, ſeeing that euen in the tyme of warre, when all thinges ſeeme to be lawfull, our Lorde will haue vs to offer peace to them that haue dealt amiſſe with vs and haue deſerued to be puniſhed in their bodies: Seeing (I ſay) that God will haue vs to ſeeke meanes to ſaue them, and that wee ſhould not deale rigorouſly with them:

much more ought euery of vs in our owne priuat caſes, to be inclined to beare with our aduerſaries. If we be troubled and moleſted, ſo as we haue iuſt cauſe to the worldwarde, to purſue the iniurie doone vs: yet ought wee rather to fall to compoſition, if it be poſſible: And if we doe not, what excuſe will there bee for vs? If thoſe whom God hath armed againſt their enemies, may not ſtrike one ſtroke at them vntill they haue aſſaied to make peace with them: what ſhall become of vs who ought to be men of peace, and to loue our enemies; if we be vnreconcilable, fierce as Lyons, harde as ſteele, and ſuch as can bee brought to none attonement? Muſt it not needes be ſaid that we haue ſhaken off all feare of God? Yes: and yet we ſee howe men doe ſooth themſelues in this caſe. Inſomuch that if a man bee grieued; he is ſo far off from warning ẏ offender of his fault quietly, to bring him to good attonement againe; that (to all lykelyhoode) he will rather turne the whole world vpſide downe, than he will by any meanes be reconciled. Wee ſee that this wilfull ſtubbornneſſe is vtterly paſt amendment in moſt men. And ſo wee perceiue now what fruite wee ought to reape of this text: namely that although he ſpeake of warre, yet he giueth good inſtruction to his people and to euery of vs.

And therefore let vs remember, that whenſoeuer any man hath offended vs, wee muſt as much as in vs lyeth indeuour to fall to agreement with our enemyes. As howe? By warning them of their faultes. For reconciliation preſuppoſeth that the offender ſhoulde vnderſtande his offence and miſlike thereof, and that wee ſhoulde bee ready to receiue ſuch as are ſo minded, ſo as wee ſhoulde bee deſirous to bee at one with them as with our brethren, notwithſtanding that they had beene as enemyes to vs before ſo much as in them lay. And if wee ought to yeelde this courteſie towardes them that haue broken the bond of all peace and brotherly vnitie: howe much more ſhould wee maintayne peace and concorde with our neighbours that haue not doone vs any wrong? And ſo wee muſt come by degrees, euen to Rom.12.18 the procuring of our peace with all men as much as wee can poſſibly, bicauſe it is Gods will that all men ſhoulde bee linked together in one bonde; as in very deede the nature ẏ is common to vs all, ought to bee as a common kinred to vs all. Nowe then, ſeeing it is ſo that wee ought to maintayne peace and brotherly loue among vs: let vs ſee that we offer peace to all men, not onely in wordes, but alſo in ſuch wiſe as our life may beare record that we be deſirous of nothing more than to be friendes to all men. Inſomuch that if there happen any quarel, wee muſt not miniſter occaſion thereunto, nor kindle the fire on our behalfe, but ſo refraine our ſelues, as wee prouoke not our neyghbour to enmitie. Thus yee ſee howe after the order aforementioned, wee muſt come to the doctrine which the holy Scripture ſheweth vs in other places: That is to wit, that it muſt not bee long of vs that wee bee not as brothers to al men, and that wee communicate not together, without any iarring or diſagreement. That (ſay I) is the meane and maner to offer peace accordingly as GOD commaundeth. And nowe let vs proceede to that which followeth.

When a Citie will not receiue peace, God giueth his people leaue to deſtroy all the men, reſeruing onely the young Children, the women, and the Cattell. True it is that although a Citie fall to compoſition, yet will hee haue it to become tributarie. For (as I ſayde afore) hee preſuppoſeth that the warre muſt bee rightfull, and allowed by him, as made in his name and by his authoritie. And therefore it is not to bee wondered at though he lay trybute vpon thoſe that ſubmit themſelues. For why? It is as a penaltie. Lyke as in Miniſtration of Iuſtice, men puniſhe offenders according to the Lawe; and when the caſe requireth not the puniſhment of death, there is ſome other chaſtiſement or amercement layde vppon them for a penaltie: Euen ſo our Lorde giueth leaue to ſuch as haue iuſt tytle of warre, to lay ſome correction vppon thoſe whom they ſhall haue vanquiſhed and ſubdewed. And heerein wee ſee howe we ought to take good heede, that wee giue no cauſe of warre. For whereas wee ſee our Lorde hath giuen his people leaue to lay trybute vppon others, it is all one as if hee ſhoulde ſay that all ſuch as miniſter occaſion of trouble, are to bee puniſhed, and that if they bee borne with, it is but of fauour and courteſie: but yet are they woorthy to haue ſome correction for all that.

Therefore let vs learne heereby to bee ſo peaceable, as wee moue not any trouble or diſcord on our ſide. For by ſetting downe ſuch a Lawe, GOD hath ſhewed that whoſoeuer ſoweth any diſcord among men, or procureth any trouble, deſerueth alwayes to bee puniſhed; and that although hee bee ſpared, yet hee is to bee chaſtiſed after ſome ſorte neuertheleſſe. And although warre bee not made againſt vs, nor any tribute bee layde vppon vs: yet notwithſtanding wee muſt not therefore omitte to acknowledge our ſelues faultie before GOD. For if a whole Nation bee not ſpared: what ſhall a priuate perſon bee? I ſee that GOD condemneth a whole Citie or a Countrie: and what will become of mee, when I ſhall haue kindled the fire of diſcorde, and giuen occaſion of enmitie? Am not I much more worthy to bee condemned? Is it meete that I which am but one man, ſhoulde bee more borne with than a whole Nation? This therefore ought to bee a good warning to vs, to liue in peace and to maintaine myeldeneſſe, ſo as no man bee troubled or vexed by vs. For ſith wee ſee ſo ſharpe execution, that God giueth leaue to put the men to death, and to reſerue ẏ women to bondage and ſlauerie: is it not a thing that ought to make vs afraide? Yes: and this doeth vs to vnderſtande, that when ſwoordes are once drawen, there muſt needs be horrible confuſion, and it is not poſſible to remedie it. For it is GOD that ſpeaketh heere, and hee ſetteth downe the beſt order of gouernment among his people, that is poſſible to bee founde: and yet ſo horrible is that kynde of dealing, that when a Citie is aſſaulted and taken by force, all the men muſt bee deſtroyed. Surely ſuch ſhedding of bloud ought to make the hayre to ſtande vp vppon our heades. And yet for all that it is GOD that ſpeaketh it, and (as I ſayde afore) hee intendeth to ſet downe heere the perfecteſt Lawe of armes that can bee among men. Then let vs conclude, that if warre bee once kindled, there is no remedye to appeaſe it. And therefore it behooueth men to haue the more ſtaye of themſelues beforehande, and to conſider thus: What a thing is it to come to battell, wherein ſo manie murders are to bee committed, and ſo manie ſlaughters are to bee doone, as though the whole world ſhoulde goe to confuſion, and all bondes of nature were to bee forgotten, and men ſhoulde ſhutte their eyes wilfully to the intent they myght not ſee whether the folke whome they ſo murther bee men or no? Ought it not to bee a good brydle to vs, when wee ſee ſo great enormities inſue thereof? Let ſuch as take warres in hande looke well to themſelues, and bethinke them thus: What? Peraduenture I muſt come to the ſacking of a Citie: and ſo from one to another, and battell vppon battell ſhall bee fought. What a nomber of poore widowes and fatherleſſe children ſhall bee made thereby? What a heape of confuſions wil inſue thereof, ſo as ye woulde thinke that the worlde ſhould bee turned vpſide downe? And ſhall I bee the cauſe of all this? If Princes conſidered that they ſhoulde fall into ſuch extremities by taking warres in hande, ſurely they would deale much more myldly than they doe.

But if they benefite not themſelues thereby, yet let vs looke to our ſelues, and conſider that the miſchiefe which our Lord ſheweth vs to bee in warre, may alſo befall to priuate perſons. For when two men fall at variaunce, and runne out into heates of euill ſpeeches, ſtrypes will enſue of it, and when ſwoordes bee once drawen, bloudſhed doeth lyghtly followe after. And in this caſe there is no lawfulneſſe at all: it is not as when God giueth men leaue to kill their enemyes in battell: for whoſoeuer ſleaeth a man for any priuate quarell, is a murtherer. So then, wee muſt looke neerelyer to our ſelues, and eſchewe quarels and debates the more, knowing that it is a giuing way and an opening of a gappe to Satan, that hee may raygne among vs, whenſoeuer wee ſeeke occaſions of quarelling, or when wee ſhunne them not as we ought to doe.

Yee ſee then howe the warning which wee haue to gather vppon this text, is that ſeeing GOD hath giuen leaue (as it were of force and neceſſitie) to kill ſuch as reſiſt the aſſault of a Towne: it behooueth vs to take good heede, that quarelles, troubles, and contentions proceede not ſo farre through our faulte, as there is none other remedie but the ſhedding of bloud. For if wee be ſlaine in any ſuch fray, vnhappie bee wee; and if wee chaunce to ſlea our aduerſarie, vnhappie bee we ſo too. For wee ſee that GODS ſpirit beareth not the ſway in that caſe. True it is, that if a man that is aſſaulted, doe ſlea him that aſſaulteth him, hee ſhall not bee puniſhed for it, neyther ought hee to bee: but yet is hee not excuſable before GOD. For why? Who is hee that can ſo brydle himſelfe, that hee is not inflamed with choler, or with ſome exceſſiue and inordinate paſſion? Seeing then that ſuch thinges doe raigne in vs, wee bee blame woorthie though wee haue iuſt cauſe to doe it. For it is not ynough for vs to haue a good caſe; but it muſt alſo bee well ordered, that is to ſay, it muſt bee done with a quiet minde, ſo as wee proceede not into ſuch extremitie as to commit manſlaughter. And therefore let vs learne to preuent Sathan, and to ſeeke meanes of attonement, that our quarelles may not proceede into ſhedding of bloud.

Beſides this, wee haue alſo one other leſſon to gather, namely that if there bee any agreement among vs, or any meane of reconcilement whereas wee were deadly enemyes before: the cauſe thereof is, that God ſtabliſheth a holy brotherhood among vs, by calling vs to him, and by adopting vs to bee his children. And in that reſpect is the Goſpell called the meſſage of peace. For why? Eph.6.15. Whereas we bee at warre with GOD, and he muſt needes hate vs in as much as wee be corrupted, and there is nothing in vs but vtter curſedneſſe: hee vouchſafeth to become our friend, and receiuing vs as his owne children, promiſeth to forget and to burie all our faults. The Goſpell beareth vs recorde hereof. And therefore not without cauſe is it called the doctrine of peace, ſeeing it vniteth vs againe to our GOD. Sith it is ſo, wee ought in deede likewiſe to bee at one among our ſelues. For howe is it poſſible that GOD ſhould acknowledge vs for his children, if there bee not vnitie and agreement among vs? And if wee receyue not the ſayde meſſage, then muſt greater warre bee proclaymed againſt vs than euer there was afore. And therefore our Lord Ieſus Chriſt ſayde to his Diſciples, Into whatſoeuer houſe yee enter, greete the ſame with peace. For (as I ſayde afore) it is the propertie of the doctrine of ſaluation, to ſhewe that God is minded to come vnto vs and to receiue vs to mercie though wee bee not woorthie thereof. Therfore all the Miniſters of his word are commaunded to beare witneſſe thereof: and to tell men that if they refuſe it, caſt it off, and make none account of it; there is a harder battel towards than this is. For the caſe concer-

neth not the deſtruction of their bodies onely, but alſo of their ſoules. It is not onelie the males that ſhall bee ſlaine for it; but both males and females muſt paſſe vnſpared. Not the greate ones onely ſhall beare the puniſhment, but both great and ſmall ſhall feele the whole weight of Gods vengeaunce. Nowe then, if men accept not your peace, gette you out from among
Matt.10.14 them, and ſhake the duſt off your feete. As if
hee ſhoulde ſay, Such folk are ſo accurſed, that yee muſt not haue anie thing at all to doe with them. But for aſmuch as they carrie nothing about them but infection; yee muſt ſhewe by outwarde tokens, that yee woulde faine bee ſeparated from them, euen as it were into another world. Thus ye ſee how the things that are ſpoken here concerning the law of armes, ought to be applied in way of ſimilitude to the peace which our Lorde ſendeth vs by the preaching of
Rom.8.7. his Goſpell. For there was enmitie betweene
Eph.2.3.12 him and vs before: by nature (as I haue ſaid al-
2.Cor.5.20. readie) we be all ſtranngers to our God, and we
cannot but ſet our ſelues againſt him. Yet for all this, hee ſeeketh attonement with vs. Vppon what condition? Not that we ſhoulde pay him tribute, as though hee were minded to inrich himſelfe with our goods. True it is that hee liketh wel to haue vs to ſerue him: but ẏ is for our benefite and welfare, and not for anie aduauntage to himſelfe. For hee hath no want of anie thing, neither needeth he to be inriched: but by poſſeſſing vs, he would that wee likewiſe ſhould inherite him. And that is as amiable a condition as can be. Nowe what is to bee doone, but to receiue his peace? Yea verily: and therefore let vs not tarie til God inforce vs; but let vs preuent him, by imbracing the ineſtimable prerogatiue which he offereth vs in vouchſafing to forgiue vs all our ſinnes. But if wee be ſo wretched as to refuſe ſo great a benefite: let vs mark that wee bee not onely caſt vp as it were to the ſpoile, and that GOD ſhaketh vs quite & cleane off: but alſo that his wrath muſt needes bee vttered vppon vs, becauſe of ſuch vnthankfulnes and churliſhneſſe, in deſpiſing our GOD ſo wilfully and ſtubbornely, that wee had leuer to haue him our deadly enemy than our protector. Seeing then that his intent is not to haue vs as ſubiects that are conquered by right of warre, nor to raiſe tributes vpon vs to increaſe himſelfe withall; but to reigne ouer vs for our welfare; and yet wee will not abide it, but ſhake him off vtterly and purſue him ſtill with a venemous heart to prouoke him to anger: is not our deſeruing ſuch as hee may iuſtlie bee ſo rigorous vnto vs, as to commaunde his ſeruauntes to withdrawe themſelues from vs, and to ſhake off the duſt of their feete? As who ſhoulde ſay, wee bee not worthie to treade vppon the earth, becauſe wee defile it. The verie thing therefore which wee haue to marke, is that wee cannot prouoke Gods wrath any way more, than by refuſing the peace that is offered vs by the Goſpell, ſo as wee vouchſafe not to hearken to it. For then, becauſe God findeth vs paſt grace, God alſo is faine to arme himſelfe with terrible and dreadfull vengeaunce againſt vs, and not onely to puniſh vs in our bodies, but alſo to extende his vengeaunce vnto our ſoules, and ſo to roote vs out quite and cleane, in which behalfe women are no more to bee ſpared than men. For when as God calleth vs all in Chriſt Ieſus, there is no difference of male and female
(as ſaith Saint Paul,) but faith reconcileth vs Gal.3.28.
all vnto God. Likewiſe vnbeleefe and ſtubbornneſſe make vs enemies to God, both men and women, the puniſhment whereof extendeth both to great and ſmall. For ſeeing wee are become traitours and rebels to our God, it is good reaſon that all our whole ofſpring ſhould periſh with vs: becauſe Gods curſe lies vppon the wic-
ked euen vnto the third and fourth generation, Deut.5.9.
as the law auoweth & we haue ſeene heretofore. Thus ye ſee in effect what wee haue to remember vpon this text.

And let vs marke herewithall, that ſeeing God doeth ſo preuent vs aforehand to ſeeke attonement and to ſende vs tydings of peace: we alſo ought to ſeeke meanes to bee friends with ſuch as haue offended vs, and to followe the example of our heauenly father, as if wee ſhoulde ſay, What ſhal become of mee who am but a worme and rottenneſſe, if I continue wilfull, and holde ſkorne to come to attonement with mine enemie when he hath once offended mee, ſo as I chawe vppon my bridle ſtill and will not by anie meanes bee pacified, when in the meane time my God ſeeketh mee? Beholde, my GOD is wel contented to ſtoope vnto mee which am but rottenneſſe: and ſhall I not withſtanding refuſe to be reconciled to him that is my fellowe and brother? Although he haue offended mee, yet can I not renounce mine one nature: yet can I not bring to paſſe but that he is ſtill a humane creature ſhaped after the image of God as well as my ſelfe. So then let vs learne to meeken our ſtomackes though they bee neuer ſo ſtout, and let this example of God induce vs to greater gentleneſſe and compaſſion than wee bee woont to haue.

Hereuppon Moſes addeth, *That this lawe ſerueth but onely for the Nations that were farre off. For as for thoſe nations* (ſaith he) *whom God giueth you now preſently, as the Chananites, the Hethites, the Amorrhites the Phereſites, the Heuites, and the Iebuſites; all thoſe you muſt vtterlie roote out, and inherite their lande, howbeit hauing firſt purged it cleane from all abuſes.* Here wee ſee howe the lawe which I haue expounded alreadie, ſerued for the time then to come when the Iſraelites ſhoulde haue any newe warre againſt ſuch as had not beene their enemies before. But as for the people of the Lande of Chanaan which God had promiſed for an inheritaunce to the Iewes: it was his wil that they ſhoulde bee vtterly rooted out, which thing at the firſt ſight might ſeeme ouerharde as I haue ſaide thereof heerebefore, [but it was not ſo indeede.] For to the intent that men ſhoulde not accuſe God of crueltie, it was ſhewed why hee vſed ſo great rigour. But foraſmuch as all of you [perchaunce] vnderſtood it not; it is requiſite to declare againe wherefore

fore our Lorde commaunded all thoſe Nations to bee rooted out and to bee put to ſworde and hauocke without any mercie at all. For they were no ſuch enemies as had doone any ſpeciall wrong to the children of Iſraell, but they were enemies to God, yea and enemies alrea- Gen.15.16. die condemned euen by the ſpace of fourehundred yeares afore. True it it that the children of Iſraell had iuſt cauſe of warre againſt them, becauſe Abraham came into that coũtrie by Gods appointment to dwell there. And although GOD did not yet put him in poſſeſſion of the ſoueraigntie thereof which he had giuen vnto him: yet was it his will that hee ſhoulde bee an inhabiter of that lande. But they draue him from place to place: ſo did they alſo to his ſonne Gen.12.19. & 26.16.19. 20. Iſaac, and likewiſe to Iacob, inſomuch as they euen denied them water. Not that they went about to borrow water at their neighbours pits: but that their neighbours ſtopped vp the pittes which they had digged, and draue them from them without al humanitie. Howbeit there was yet a much higher reſpect: which was that God knowing the exceſſiue wickedneſſe of all thoſe nations to be vtterly vnreclaimable, determined to take them quite and cleane out of the world, and yet woulde not that their lande ſhoulde lie waſt without inhabitauntes: and therefore hee appointed it for an inheritaunce to his owne people. Here therefore wee muſt behold Gods ſpeciall iudgement, to the ende wee accuſe him not as I ſaide afore, ne diſpute as a number doe, which preſume to replie and to ſay, why was GOD ſo ſeuere? What cauſe had he ſo to do? To the intent therefore that wee may honour God in his iudgementes, acknowledging him to bee vpright, and iuſt, yea without fault in all thinges: let vs marke that the condemning of this people here is not without cauſe. Might not God (if he liſted) wipe vs out of the worlde euen at the firſt? And what ſhoulde we gayne by pleading agaynſt him or by going to Law with him? Nowe if hee may ſo deſtroy vs at the firſt daſh, and yet we may not complaine thereof or goe to Law with him therefore, but that he ſhall continue righteous ſtill in his puniſhing of vs: what may hee doe to vs when we be paſt grace, when he hath borne with vs long time, and patiently taried for vs, and yet wee growe euer worſe and worſe, and ceaſe not to increaſe his wrath ſtill againſt vs? If God finde vs ſo hardhearted, is not our wickedneſſe then ripe? Is it not come to the full growth, as hee ſpeaketh of theſe Nations here? Yes verily is it. For we ſee how theſe people were ſo wicked long aforehand euen in the time of Abraham, that it woulde greeue ones hearte to thinke on it, ſo as they were not to bee borne with anie longer. They ſawe what befell to Sodome and Gomor, which Gen.19.24. were their Neighbour cities; and yet they became neuer the better for it, but continued ſtill in all manner of outrageous wickedneſſe. Yet notwithſtanding, it was Gods will to holde his hand, and not to puniſhe them at the firſt. And howe long a time did hee waite for them? Not a tenne or twentie yeares onelie: but he ſaith, I haue condemned them, and giuen diffinitiue ſentence vppon them, and yet will I giue them, fourehundred yeares reſpite, ſo as Gen.15.16. I will not execute my iudgement til then. God (I ſay) deferred the execution of his iudgement againſt thoſe that were worthie to haue beene rooted out of the worlde at the verie firſt. And yet for all his long delay what commeth of it? Did they amende? Did they bethinke them of their faultes to miſlike of them and to craue forgiueneſſe at Gods hande? No: But they grewe ſtill worſe and worſe; inſomuch that the thing which God had foretolde to Abraham fell out to bee true: namely that the wickedneſſe of the Chananites was not yet as then growen to the full. As if hee ſhoulde ſay, Indeed the meaſure is full enough alreadie: but yet there muſt be ſuch an ouermeaſure, as they may come to deſtruction of themſelues, and their owne wickedneſſe may be their ouerthrow.

Sith we ſee that God did ſo refrayne himſelfe and vſe ſo mielde a kinde of proceeding towardes theſe Nations: what ſhall wee ſay, but that wee haue good cauſe to glorifie him, and to confeſſe him to bee ſo kindehearted towards mankinde, as yet notwithſtanding wee muſt not dallie with him, but liue in his feare? But if God beare with vs, wee take occaſion to mocke him for his labour, and we thinke our ſelues eſcaped when hee hath delayed his puniſhing of vs. But beholde, GOD on the one ſide is loth to giue vs anie cauſe to complaine of ouergreat rigour: and therefore hee is patient and longſuffering, as hee termeth himſelfe in the holie Scripture. Howbeit foraſmuch as wee abuſe his goodneſſe, and become the bolder to doe euill: hee ſheweth vs that wee muſt come to a reckening for it in the ende, and that hee will pay the moſt vnrulie ſorte of vs for the arrearages that he is behinde hande with vs. The thing then which wee haue to remember at the ſight of this fayre lookingglaſſe which wee haue in the Amorrhites, Hethites, Chananites, Pheresites, Iebuſites, and their like; is to conſider with our ſelues, that if GOD anie time do let men alone as though hee had layde the reines in their necke, and do wincke at them, and make no countenance at all of puniſhing them: it is no conſequent that therefore hee acquiteth them, and that nothing is regiſtred vp before him, and that their ſinnes ſhall ſcape quite and cleane vnpuniſhed. No no: but hee waiteth for them with patience, and in the ende they muſt come to their account. And therefore let it not trouble vs when we ſee ẏ our Lord puniſheth not the wicked at ẏ firſt daſh; neither let it ſpite vs to ſee them ruffle it out in the meane while, & to make good cheere: for their triumphing ſhall coſt thẽ right deare, becauſe they haue deſpiſed God; yea & euen falſely abuſed his grace, in making it a ſhrowdingſheete of their noughtineſſe. Therefore let it not be a meane to drawe vs to follow their example: but let vs patiently abide Gods leaſure til he worke, & vntill the conuenient time bee come for him to execute his wrath: and that wil ſerue vs for a double leſſon.

For on the one ſide, when wee ſee that G O D puniſheth not the wicked: we woulde by and by take part with them, if we bethought vs not of this threate. Well though G O D ſhewe not his arme to day, yet doeth it not follow but that hem ay doe it to morrowe. If wee were not reſtreyned by this feare, wee woulde ſoone be out of all order, and the verie Angels woulde be corrupted by the example of the diuelles. Marke that for one point. Againe, wee muſt bridle our affections and luſtes that carrie vs away becauſe wee bee amaſed yea and aſtoniſhed, to thinke howe G O D leaueth thoſe vnpuniſhed which haue offended him ſo ſore: and that on the contrarie part, whereas he letteth them alone, yea and giueth them full ſcope to doe what they liſt in this worlde: in the meane time hee ſeemeth to forget vs as though hee had no regarde of vs at al. [Wherupon we think thus with our ſelues:] If wee be his children, where is the pitie that he hath promiſed vs? Such complaint doe they make, which haue not an eye to Gods longſufferance. And ſo the ſeconde leſſon which he ſhoulde receiue, is that ſeeing wee perceiue that our Lorde taried ſo long a time for thoſe nations which had offended him as highlie as could be, and we ſee him delay their puniſhment ſo long a time, that their ſins ſeemed to lie buryed by the ſpace of fourehundred yeares, and that yet neuertheleſſe God executeth his ſentence at the ende of thoſe fower hundred yeares, which was foure times beyonde the remembrance of men: Let the beholding hereof make vs to feare the rigour of our God afarre off: and though no tokens of his wrath appeare; yet let not vs fayle to foreſee them by faith. As for example; when Hebr.11.7. yͤ Apoſtle ſpeaketh of Noe, he ſaith that he foreſawe the flud by faith. While men were ſotted in their delightes, and gaue themſelues to feaſting; Noe behelde the fludde. And howe behelde he it? For it was yet faire weather, and euerie man tooke his pleaſure and paſtime. Yet did hee ſee all the worlde drowned and deſtroyed: For hee ſawe it by faith, becauſe God had threatened that it ſhoulde bee ſo. Nowe, the ſame threate haue we, and therewithall wee haue the proofe of it alſo, euen in this, that our Lorde puniſhed theſe nations that are ſpoken of here, at the end of fourehundred yeares, when they thought not of it, ne tooke anie heed of it, inſomuch that if a man had then threatened them any ſuch thing, they woulde haue blurted out their tongues and ſhaken their heads at him. But their inditement was framed in heauen, iudgement was giuen vpon them alreadie, and the Iudge had power & might to put it in execution in ſpite of their wilfull ſtubborneſſe. And therefore let the ſight hereof make vs to ſtand in awe of our God. And when he letteth vs alone in quiet, and ſpareth vs, let vs not thinke our ſelues to bee ſcaped his hande: but let vs enter into account, and euerie man quicken vp himſelfe, and looke into his owne faults, and that in ſuch wiſe as we may preuent his wrath, and let vs not tarie till he be armed againſt vs to proclayme war againſt vs, but let vs preuent the rigor of his iudgement, that by comming vnto him, whereas we ſhoulde elſe finde him our Iudge in the end, wee may finde him to bee our pitifull and kinde hearted father.

Nowe let vs kneele downe before the maieſtie of our good God with acknowledgement of our faultes, praying him to make vs feele them continually more and more. And for aſmuch as there is none of vs which hath not prouoked his wrath exceedingly, ſo as we be all guiltie before him; let vs ſeeke to returne to the refuge of his mercie. And ſeeing there is no meanes to come at him except he reach vs out his hande and drawe vs by his holy ſpirit: let vs not refuſe to goe to him when he calleth vs, nor tarie till yͤ gate be ſhut againſt vs: but let vs vſe the opportunitie of the time when he cauſeth his Goſpell to be preached vnto vs, and let vs imbrace our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt with the peace which he offereth vs, reſorting to his death and paſſion, that we may haue him for the gage of our righteouſneſſe, and the verie raunſome whereby to come in fauor with our God againe, ſo as all our ſinnes may be buried through his mercie, and we labour to drawe others alſo vnto him, that all of vs with one common accord may tend vnto our God, and he be ſerued and worſhipped of al mē. And for the bringing hereof to paſſe, it may pleaſe him to raiſe vp true and faithfull miniſters of his worde, &c.

On Fryday the xx. of December. 1555.

The Cxix. Sermon, which is the fourth vpon the twentith Chapter.

16.17.18 But of the Cities of &c.

19 When thou ſhalt haue beſeeged a Citie a long time, in fighting againſt it to take it, thou ſhalt not marre the trees therof by putting an Axe vnto them: for thou maiſt eate of them, and therefore cut them not downe: for the life of man is the tree of the feelde to come with thee to the ſeege.

20 Onely thou maiſt deſtroy and cut downe the trees which thou knoweſt to be no trees to eate of,and thereof thou maiſt make bulwarkes againſt the Citie which holdeth warre againſt thee,vntil thou haue wonne it.

Yeſterday was ſhewed why God gaue ſo rigorous ſentence againſt the Nations that had dwelte in the Lande of Chanaan: It was tolde you that hee had borne with them ere that time, and ſuffered them till ſuch time as they were condemned: and thereupon that we muſt benefite our ſelues by ſuch examples, partlie that wee abuſe not Gods patience when hee ſpareth vs and delayeth the execution of his iudgements; giuing vs leaſure in the meane while to returne to repentaunce: and [partly] Rom.2.4. that when wee ſee him execute ſo extreeme rigour vppon men, we ſhoulde aſſure our ſelues it is becauſe hee knoweth them to bee vtterly paſt grace, and haue heaped vp ſuch condemnation vppon their heades a long time afore hande. Now remaineth to note that GOD appointed the Iewes to bee the executers of the ſaide ſentence, ſo as the Chananites and ſuch like were to bee rooted out by the hande of the Iewes. And why? It is ſaide expreſſely in the Text, *As the Lorde thy God hath commaunded thee*. Then was it not for the Iewes to enterpriſe it on their owne heade, except they had had Gods worde for their warrant: for it is not lawfull for vs to attempt anie thing, vnleſſe it bee our duetie, and that God haue commaunded it. And it is a generall rule for vs to beare in minde and to obſerue all our life long. For men may doe goodly and commendable thinges, which notwithſtanding ſhall not bee reputed for vertues before God, when they paſſe their boundes, that is to ſay, when they holde not themſelues within the liſtes of that which God hath vttered vnto them. For if a man ſhoulde ſay, It were good to doe thus,and therefore I will applie my ſelfe thereto; and yet in the meane while God calleth him not to it,neither hath he anie word yͭ commands him to deale ſo:his vnaduiſed aduēturing vpon things after that ſort, ſhall alwayes be condemned at Gods hand. If we alledge that the deede is good and excellent of it ſelfe, that is not enough:for god wilbe obeied at our hands whatſoeuer come thereof. And therfore let euery man haue an eye to himſelfe & conſider how farre his duety wil beare him. If a man that hath but a little houſehold to gouerne ſhould take vpon him the office of a magiſtrate: what were to bee ſaide vnto it? There would be verie great confuſion in that. Likewiſe if he that is a ſeruant in a houſe ſhould take more vppon him than belonges to him, yee ſee that all were out of order. Againe if the wife ſhoulde ouermaſter her huſband, and make him her vnderling; yͤ honeſtie of nature were quite goone. So then, it behooueth all men to holde themſelues warely within their boundes, and to followe what way ſoeuer God calleth them. And when we haue Gods commādement, we muſt not be helde back nor letted by men. If God bid vs goe, we muſt goe, & though all the worlde ſhould ſet themſelues againſt vs, yet muſt wee not turne head, but goe on ſtill. As for example, in theſe dayes the Magiſtrates & miniſters of Iuſtice haue the ſworde in their hand, and that not in vaine (as ſaith Saint Paul) Rom.13.4. for God wil haue them to puniſh offenders. Now if they do nothing therein, and yet in the meane ſeaſon will needes alledge ſome excuſe to God: they deceiue themſelues. For in aſmuch as our Lorde hath ſet them in office, he hath tolde thē alſo that hee will haue them to be ſtout and full of courage in maintaining their ſtate. And ſo looke what commaundement was giuen to all the Iewes in olde time for the rooting out of the Phereſites, Amorrhites, Chananites, Iebuſites, and their like, the ſame is giuen to all miniſters of Iuſtice at this day: namely that they muſt rid the earth of all ſuch as do nothing elſe but bring vp all maner of infection. As for vs, it is not ſaide to vs that wee ſhall roote out and put to death ſuch as may put vs to any plunge: and therefore let euerie of vs looke to the rooting out of our owne vices, for we ſhall haue an incounter hard enough there.

And beſides this, let vs beware alſo that wee haue not to doe with ſuch as may corrupte and marre vs: for we be but too forward of our owne nature. For like as it was ſaide to the Iewes, you ſhall put the Chananites to death: ſo let vs ſhun the companie of ſuch as wil intice vs to nothing but euill, nor can doe aught elſe than prouoke vs to naughtineſſe. For wee bee as frayle as is poſſible, and the leaſt occaſion in the world will thruſt vs out of the way, and make vs to leaue God behinde vs, as hath bin declared not long ſince afore. And moreouer, let vs to the vttermoſt of our power indeuour to rid Gods Church of all ſuch as could finde in their hearts to ouerthrowe the order of the Church and Gods ſeruice, and all honeſtie. As for example, when S. Paul ſaith, rid away the euil from among you, he 1.Cor.5.13. commaundeth not the Corinthians to vſe the material ſword for the puniſhing of ſuch as haue committed anie crime: for they were not in eſtate of Magiſtrates: but he meaneth excommunication, ſo as if a man be found to be a whoremaſter, a drunkerde, or a ſwearer, he ſhould not be borne with all. For why? It were a corrupting of Gods church which ought to be his holy temple, & it is a making therof a ſwineſtie. Shold filthines lie there? & what a dealing were that? Therefore wee muſt cut off all ſuch folke as leade a wicked and laweleſſe life. And that is the leſſon which wee haue to gather vppon that Text. For wee haue not the ſworde in our handes to kill the deſpiſers of GOD and ſuch as leade an vnrulie and diſordered life. But yet muſt we caſt them out from among vs, and therewithall remember the warning that is giuen vs in the Epiſtle to the Hebrewes. Take Hebr.12.15 good heede (ſaith the Apoſtle) that there growe vp no roote of bitterneſſe among you, leaſt it be a meane to infect all the reſt. Experience ſheweth that there needeth but a verie little corruption to marre all, by reaſon of the infirmitie that is in men. And therefore let vs learne to remedie the matter, that wee bee not an occaſion to feede vice ſtill. The way then for vs to bring to paſſe that the Church of God may be mainteyned in all pureneſſe of his ſeruice, is that ſtumblingblockes bee not nouriſhed and mainteyned, and alſo that euerie of vs indeuour to roote out vice in all men, ſparing the perſons themſelues, and doing the beſt we can to drawe them to ſaluation. Whereas the Iewes were commanded to kill the Chananites: what ought wee to doe inſteede thereof? I ſee a leawde man running into deſtruction; & yet notwithſtanding he woulde bee borne withall, and flattered, and haue neuer a worde ſpoken to him. Againſt ſuch a one I muſt vſe rigor. And how ſo? To bring him to ſhame? No, not if it may otherwiſe bee. Truely if hee holde on, and continue ſtubborne againſt God, hee muſt needs become the more vnexcuſable, and wee muſt procure his ſoulehealth euen by rebuking him ſharpely, as it were by letting of him bloud, or by miniſtring ſome loothſome medicine vnto him. Thus yee ſee howe wee muſt ſpare mens perſons and yet kill their vices to yͤ vttermoſt of our power. And in that reſpect doth Saint Paul liken yͤ doctrine Pſal,2.17. of the Goſpell to a ſworde wherewith wee bee ſacrificed to God. For the mortifying of our wicked affections is an offering of ſacrifice vnto God: and whereas wee were vnholy before, thenceforth we be dedicated vnto him when we be ſo brought downe, that we liue no more after our owne luſtes, but doe vtterly renounce our ſelues. Yee ſee then that that is one kinde of death, which is not wrought vppon our perſons, but vpon al the vices that reigne in vs. And after that maner ought we to deale for the rooting out of ſinne.

Nowe if it bee demaunded heere, whether it bee not lawefull to bee conuerſant with the wicked and frowarde to winne them: I aunſwere, yes verilie, vntill a man finde them to bee paſt remedie. For to giue ouer a man at the firſt daſh when hee hath doone amiſſe, or when hee is as it were in the high way to deſtruction: is a furthering of the deſtruction of the wretched ſoule that was redeemed by the bloudſhed of our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt. So then, a man may well labour to bring them backe agayne which are ſtrayed out of the right way: but yet muſt wee not hazard ourſelues. If I knowing my ſelfe to bee weake, doe ouerthrowe my ſelfe with him vnder pretence of winning my neighbour that is miſaduiſed: what winne I by that? And yet wee ſee it fall out ſo continually. And therefore let vs beware how we tempt God in that behalfe, and let euery of vs look narrowly to himſelfe, and not deale after his owne imagination.

Notwithſtanding let vs herewithall put in vre the ſaying of the Pſalme concerning the hating Pſal.139.20 of all ſuch as deſpiſe GOD, yea and of hating them in ſuch wiſe as we cannot by any meanes abide them, but that foraſmuch as we ſee them deſpiſe God after that faſhion, wee bee ſo ſorie and greeued at it, that wee ſeparate our ſelues from them, and vtterly ſhunne their companie, refuſing euen in good earneſt to haue anie conference with them: according whereunto it is ſaide in the next verſe of the ſame Pſalme, that Pſal.139.21 wee muſt beare a perfect hatred againſt all ſuch as doe ſo make warre againſt God, ſo as we become their deadlie enemies to the vttermoſt of our power, not in reſpect of their perſons, but in reſpect of their vnrecouerable wickedneſſe.

Beſides this wee muſt alſo maintaine the order of the Church. For if anie one bee caſt off as a rotten member, and wee goe and keepe him companie ſtill: is it not a ſeparating of our ſelues from the bodie of our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt, and of all the faithfull? Haue wee not made a Rent (as much as in vs lay) to ſhewe that wee liſt not to be members of the Church? When we bee ſo familiar with thoſe that are ſo caſt off, and wee fall to rubbing of our ſelues with them: is it not a ſkorning of all Gods children, and a letting of them goe, as though we had nothing to doe with them? True it is that (as Paul ſaith in an other place) wee muſt not take euen thoſe 2.Theſſ.3.15 for enemies, which are caſt off by the Church, but wee ought to warne them ſtill as brethren. Yea verily. Notwithſtanding, when men doe haunt their companies familiarly, and to enter ſo farre into friendſhippe with them as to bee partakers of their naughtineſſe: it is a token that they bee willing to intangle themſelues with them, and they bee woorthie to receiue like condemnation with them. Thus ye ſee in effect howe wee ought to put this leſſon in vre nowadayes, namely that the Magiſtrates ought to bee verie carefull to rid their Landes from all corruptions, and to vſe the ſword which is committed vnto them, in the puniſhing of all crimes, euil deedes, and diſorders: And moreouer, that euery man in his owne behalfe doe looke to the keeping of the ſame order, and yet neuertheleſſe that euery of vs doe learne to keepe this rule among vs, that if there bee any ſtumblingblockes in the Church, they bee not borne with, but that ſuch as ſerue to infect the reſt of the flocke like ſcabbed ſheepe, bee thruſt out; and that although they bee not killed with the materiall ſwoorde, yet they bee caſt out of the companie of the faithfull, ſo as they may bee aſhamed of themſelues, and other men may beware leaſt they defile themſelues with them, that they may bee made after ſuch a ſorte to knowe themſelues to bee deſpiſers of GOD, as that men can not away with them, nor abide their acquayntance, but that they be to be ſhunned as deadly plagues. That is the ſecond point.

The third point is, that we muſt labor to root out the vices, and yet to ſaue the parties themſelues:and yͤ when we ſee wretched men miſaduiſed we muſt bring them back againe into yͤ way of ſaluation if it be poſſible. But yet in the mean while wee muſt ſacrifice all their affections vnto God; that is to ſay, wee muſt mortifie all euill in them, for the bringing whereof to paſſe, wee muſt vſe the ſworde of Gods worde, as indeede the preaching of the Goſpell ought to haue that power, as I haue ſaide afore. And afterwarde, let euerie man enter into himſelfe; for it is not enough for vs to haue rooted out the vices that are in our neighbours, but the cheefe point is to amende and reforme our ſelues, and to beware that the miſcheefe ſettle not in vs: for it will be no time to remedie it, when we bee once hardened in it. Therefore wee muſt preuent it.

And here it is to bee noted alſo, that ſeeing God ſpeaketh here of Idolatrie, wee may ſee thereby howe greatly hee miſliketh the corrupting of his ſeruice. Truly this point hath beene expounded alreadie heretofore: but yet we haue neede to bee put in minde thereof oftentimes. For manie of vs will neuer ſticke throughly to the ſoundeſſe of Gods ſeruice, that is to ſay, to the Religion that is well ordered according to his worde. Wee haue alwayes ſome fonde deuotions of our owne, which carie vs away: and whatſoeuer wee thinke well doone doeth like vs ſo wel, that to our ſeeming, God doth vs wrong if hee allowe it not too: and that is a deueliſh ouerweening. For it becommeth vs, if wee will ſerue God well, alwayes to beginne at obedience, that is to ſay, wee muſt not attempt anie thing which is not according to his wil & agreeable to his worde. Nowe then as God hath declared heretofore that hee abhorreth all ſuperſtition and Idolatrie: ſo he confirmeth it againe
Deut.18.9. in this place, euen in the worde *Abhominations*, which is as much to ſay, as thinges loothſome, yrkeſome, deteſtable, and ſuch as hee reiecteth and cannot away with. When wee ſee God ſo ſtirred, and his wrath ſo prouoked by our ſuperſtitions; alas what thinke we to doe? Therefore let vs holde vs to the pure doctrine that GOD hath giuen vs, and whenſoeuer he is to bee ſerued, let vs not ſwarue aſide one way nor other, as I haue ſaide herebefore: but let vs hearken to that which God hath ſaide, and imbrace it with all ſingleneſſe of minde. Let that ſerue for one point.

Again let vs mark on the otherſide, that whē God ſaith, *Leaſt they ſeduce thee, and teach thee the abhominations which they haue doone to their gods.* Hereby hee ſheweth that naturally we be eaſily miſſeledde in this behalfe. True it is (as I haue declared not long ſince) that as touching vices, wee will ſoone be ouerthrowen if the bridle bee ſlacked neuer ſo little. Whoredome will raigne to the vttermoſt, and ſo will theft, and ſo will drunkenneſſe and all manner of looſeneſſe, and ſo will blaſphemie. For as it is harde to bring vs into the right way; ſo on the contrarie part we bee ſoone turned from it, inſomuch that the whisking of a flye will make vs ſtreightwayes to runne aſtray, ſo as wee can no more skill of ſeruing GOD though wee were well entered therein before. And that is the cauſe why wee ſee ſo fewe holde out in weldoing. Many make faire wether for a time, ſo as yee woulde thinke them to bee maruellous good men: but in the turning of a hande all is marde. Otherſome are not ſo ſoone peruerted, but yet in proceſſe of time yee would wonder to ſee how they bee chaunged, and howe they haue turned their backes againſt God: And what is the cauſe thereof? Euen for that (as I haue ſaide afore) wee take not heede to our ſelues, ne conſider howe frayle wee bee, ne therewithall watch in praying vnto God, ne ſeeke to preuent the occaſions of wickedneſſe. And becauſe men truſt ſo much to their owne ſteadineſſe, and thinke themſelues well able to withſtande euill: they ouerthrowe themſelues headlong, and God puniſheth ſuch preſumption, becauſe it is not without a kinde of ſelfeweening, and conſequently is the cauſe that wee liue not in the feare of God, ne reſorte for refuge to the grace of his holy ſpirite. Let vs learne therefore that wee be ſo eaſie to be led to all vices, but ſpecially to Idolatrie, as is pitifull to ſee. And why? For euerie man keepes a ſchoole of it. Although wee haue no example of ſuperſtition, yet can euerie one of vs forge it in our ſelues. If the little children, which neuer wiſt what the filth of poperie meant, were let alone and not held in awe by Gods worde; when they came to age euerie of them woulde haue his deuotion by himſelfe, with, ſuch a thing and ſuch a thing were good. Our mindes are ſo tickliſhe, as is pitie, and our wittes are verie ſuttle to inuent ſuperſtitions & Idolatries. And what wil become of vs then, whē we ſhall haue ſowers of Darnel among vs, which ſhall ſay, I haue ſeene ſuch a thing, and ſuch a thing was wont to bee doone? The miſcheefe ſhall be nouriſhed continually. Without going any further, ye ſhall ſee that theſe olde panyers of Idolatrie which are among vs, doe alwayes keepe ſtill ſome of their olde filth, and they haue euer ſome wicked roote of their former ſuperſtitions remayning within them. And if they might haue their ſcope, wee ſhoulde ſoone bee caried back againe into the dungeons that wee bee come out of. Not without cauſe therefore doeth our Lord ſay that the faithful muſt keepe good watch, that they bee not miſſetaught by ſuch as haue beene vſed to ſuperſtition. For our nature will bee ouercome by and by, if the miſcheefe be not preuented. The meane [of redreſſe] that was appointed to the Iewes, hath no place as in reſpect of vs, noweadayes. For the ſworde is not put into our hands to put Idolaters to death, I meane of vs which are priuate perſons: but we muſt eſchewe the companie of all ſuch as ſeeke to intangle vs in their diueliſhneſſe. And the remedie thereof is (as I ſaide afore) to acknowledge but one GOD, and to knowe his will, and (for aſmuch as hee ſeparateth vs from all the defilements that men forge to themſelues:) Let vs holde our ſelues to the pure doctrine of his worde. That is the vnfallible rule, let vs follow it.

And now let vs go on with yͤ which Moſes addeth.

deth.He ſaith *that when a Citie is beſieged long time, men may cutte downe ſome ſortes of trees to beſiege it withall,if neede be*; for men of warre haue their Artillerie. And in ſtead of our Gunnes, they had in thoſe dayes certaine engines to breake the walles. Therefore if they had neede of timber,they ſhould not cut down the fruittrees,but the trees that bare no fruite, and ſerue their turne with them. *As for trees that beare fruite, and whereof foode may bee gathered, thoſe were to bee preſerued*. Yee ſee then howe heere is a commaundement ſet downe. Howbeit the meaning of the ſentence is ſomewhat darke, and therefore it is expounded diuerſly. And indeede I will ſomewhat ſtay vpon it, howbeit but as in paſſing ouer it. Word for word it is thus: *Man is not the tree of the fielde, to come to the ſeege before thy face*. Nowe, ſome take it that heere God ment to ſkorne ſuch as deſtroy the trees after that faſhion.[As who ſhould ſay.] What? Are ẏ trees as enemies to thee, to come againſt thee and to reſiſt thee? Then if men heawe downe the trees and waſte the Countrie: it ſeemeth to be a childiſh kinde of reuenge. Yee ſee then how ſome men haue vnderſtood this text, that it was our Lordes meaning to make thoſe men aſhamed which make ſuch waſte, and deſtroy the foode of the inhabiters. They bee not your enemies. Againſt whome make yee your warre? Againſt the trees and thinges that haue no life? Surely yee bee valyaunt men. Some perceiuing that this conſtruction is ſomwhat ſtreyned,ſay:The tree of the field is mans, that is to ſaie, is for man. Whereas GOD hath giuen fruitfulneſſe to a tree, hee hath appointed it for the nouriſhment of men and of the inhabiters of the Countrie. For if the people bee ouercome, they haue whereof to liue when they bee brought in ſubiection, and wherewith to pay tribute to their conquerours. Otherſome vnderſtande theſe wordes,(*to come to the ſiege before thy face*) thus:to helpe them that beſeege the Citie: for what can they doe if they want foode? When a Citie is beſeeged, they muſt needes depart thence, if there bee not wherewith to ſuſteine their armie, which turne the trees will ſerue. Our Lorde then (as they vnderſtande it) reprocheth it as a great folly to goe and diſappoint themſelues of their owne ſuſtenance. Howebeit foraſmuch as the Hebrewes doe commonly ſupplie the ſimilitude, it may bee taken thus: Man ſhall bee in ſteede of the tree of the fielde to come againſt thee in the ſeege. And this conſtruction is verie fit and naturall, and I will make no long ſcanning of it, becauſe it were but loſt time: but I will holde that ſenſe which may ſerue for all men, and whereof all men may take profite. G O D then hauing forbidden to heawe downe fruitetrees yea euen in time of warre, addeth the reaſon: namely that ſeeing the men ought to be in ſtead of the trees of the fielde, therefore they ought rather to ſet themſelues againſt them and to vtter their rage there, as againſt thoſe that are profeſſed enemies. For why? The men may come to the ſeege, yea and to the ſhocke of the battell againſt thee. To bee ſhort, our Lorde (as I ſaide afore,howbeit that I ſpeake heere of another literall expoſition, though all comes to one end) meant to declare that in time of warre men muſt not wreake their teene vppon the trees but vppon their enemies,becauſe their enemies ſeeke to anoy them, and therefore thoſe are they that are to be reſiſted.

Nowe let vs come to conſider what this Lawe profiteth vs. It is ſaide in time of warre wee muſt not cut downe the fruitetrees. Heere wee haue to note, that although our ſwordes bee drawen, yet it is not lawfull for vs to vſe all manner of crueltie at our owne pleaſure: and yet notwithſtanding G O D ſpeaketh heere of rightfull warres, ſuch as hee himſelfe alloweth, where hee giueth leaue to ſlea men, and yet hee will haue vs to keepe ſome kinde of humanitie, that we lay not the Countrie vtterly waſte. Let vs marke then that warres are not lawefull in ſuch ſorte, as to beare downe all before vs and to make vtter hauocke of all thinges. But wee muſt beare in minde, that although men bridle themſelues as much as is poſſible, yet there will bee too much euill committed. If there ſhoulde bee but one man ſlaine; alas, yet doe wee ſee that an image of G O D were defaced. But when it commeth to the killing of a greate multitude whereby are made ſo many widdowes and fatherleſſe children; what a thing is that? Beſides, though the goods and poſſeſſions of men bee ſpared, yet are many men thruſt out of their houſes, and being ill handled die ſome for colde and ſome for want and penurie: And what a pitifull thing is that? Therefore although men deale as indifferently as is poſſible in time of warre:yet muſt there needes bee manie diſorders, in reſpect whereof men ought to ſtreine themſelues the more to abſtaine from all manner of crueltie and euill dealing. For if our Lorde woulde haue ſuch euen hande kept among enemies, euen when hee had giuen leaue before to kill: what is to bee done among vs which ſhoulde bee friendes, for whom it is not lawfull to lifte vp a finger, no nor the tippe of our tongue to ſpeake amiſſe of them that haue offended vs? For although a man ſpyte vs and vexe vs; yet doeth not our Lorde giue vs leaue to bee at warre with him, but will haue vs to poſſeſſe our ſoules in patience, and to ſtriue to ouercome the euill by doing good. Luk. 21.19. Rom.12.21.

Nowe if it behooue vs to maintaine friendſhippe with thoſe that doe vs wrong and iniurie, and to procure their welfare, ſo as it is not lawfull for vs to greeue them in any manner of wiſe: I pray you is it to bee borne with, when wee practiſe to annoy thoſe which neuer did vs wrong or harme, nor neuer procured vs any loſſe? So then, yee ſee howe this Lawe concerneth not onely men of warre: but alſo that our Lorde will haue it to bee a common leſſon to vs all, to keepe ſo euen a hande to the vttermoſt of our power, as no man may complaine that hee was indomaged by vs. And ſo yee ſee howe wee ought to applie this Lawe to our inſtruction. Againe, if it behooue vs to ſpare the fruite trees, which notwithſtanding are thinges without life: howe much more ought wee to ſpare mens perſons? Truely this is not ſpoken in fauour of the trees themſelues, but in reſpect of men which are fedde and ſuſtained by them: and ſurely trees are not to bee priuiledged any thing at all in compariſon of men. What a thing then is it, when men ſhalbe put all to the ſworde without ſparing? Is it not as good as a defying of God? That is a ſeconde point which we haue to beare in mind. Now let vs proceede.

Whereas it is ſaide heere, *that there muſt no waſt bee made*: it is to ſhewe, that men ought alwayes to maintaine the ordinance of GOD: ſpecially ſith wee knowe his goodneſſe and fatherly loue towardes men. Behold, God hath giuen the earth to men to dwell and reſt vppon. Nowe when wee fall to making of hauocke, and thruſt out the poore indwellers thereof, ſo as euen in the time of peace when euerie man may returne home againe to his owne houſe, yet they finde all thinges waſted and the land made barren, and whereas heere to fore it had beene well husbanded, it is nowe become as a wildernes, ſo as there is not one tree left to gather an apple of: is it not as good as a defeating of Gods goodneſſe which hee had vttered towards mankinde? Muſt it not needes bee that wee be ſtarke blind in our rage, when we fight ſo againſt Gods grace, yea and againſt ſuch a grace as ought to ſoften our hearts though they were harder than ſtone? Ye ſee then how here is a general rule for vs to marke well, namely that as oft as wee bee tempted to make any waſte or ſpoyle, we ought to bethinke vs thus: Goe to, our Lord hath placed vs all in this worlde, and prouided vs of the thinges which hee knewe to bee neceſſarie for this life: nowe if I will needes ſpoyle the ground of the thinges which God hath giuen it for the ſuſtenance of man, I doe the beſt I can to defeate Gods goodneſſe which he hath vttered to mankinde, that it might no more appeare. And am I worthie to bee ſuſtained on the earth when I doe ſo aboliſh Gods gracious goodneſſe which ſerued as well for my neighbours as for my ſelfe, not ſuffering it to haue his courſe and to reigne any longer? Am I not as a very monſter? This is a thing (ſay I) which ought wel to reſtraine vs. When wee bee caried with any malice, and are become ſo miſcheeuouſly minded as to waſte the trees, Houſes, and ſuch other thinges, let vs bridle our ſelues with this conſideration: yea, but who is it againſt whome wee make the warre? It is not the creatures, but the partie himſelfe who euen there doeth ſhewe forth his goodneſſe, and that not towards any one man alone, but towards all men, in the which number euen we our ſelues alſo are comprehended. Were this well conſidered, warres ſhoulde not be vndertaken ſo vnaduiſedly nowadayes as we ſee they bee, neither ſhoulde countries be waſted euery where without ſparing. But nowadayes this kinde of crueltie is farre greater among them that beare the name of Chriſtians, than it hath bene in times paſt euen among the Infidels. For nowe there is nothing but burning of Countries; and that is worſe than the cutting of mens throates. For what ſhall the poore inhabiters doe, when their Countrie is burnt vp a tenne leagues round about? They muſt needs go die vnder the hedges and buſhes, or lye pining away vpon the plaine grounde: but it were a greater point of mercie to diſpatch thē by death out of hand. And yet notwithſtanding it is a lawfull thing nowadayes, becauſe it is a cuſtome ſo to doe. And whence commeth this cuſtome, but that men haue not regarded Gods word, by reaſon wherof they haue vtterly alienated from him, and in the ende are become ſtarke beaſtes? And ſo it is an horrible thing to ſee, that they which name themſelues Chriſtians, and Catholikes, and the vpholders of Chriſtianitie, are nowadayes ſo farre out of order, yͤ barbarouſnes reigneth moſt fully among them. Inſomuch as they hold not themſelues contented with the waſting of their enemies landes, but they doe alſo flea euen their owne ſubiectes without ſparing. Nowadayes the lawe of the Turkes reigneth among the Chriſtians: which is, to make no conſcience of the waſting of their own countrie, ſo men may keepe the ſoueraigntie of the ſame. For if they doubt that the enemie is like to haue the forehande, they burne vp all before his comming. And what doe they burne? The poore ſubiectes whom the Prince himſelfe hath vnder his protection. It is ſaid, Thou ſhalt bee a couert in the ſtorme accordingly as is ſpoken of the office of a good king in the perſon of Ezechias. The Prophet Eſay ſaieth hee ſhalbe a place of harbrough and refuge for his ſubiectes. Eſa,25.4. When a ſtorme commeth, ſo as all thinges ſeeme likely to goe to wrecke; the king ſhall haue his winges ſtretched out to couer his ſubiectes, and to defende them, inſomuch that he ought euen to hazarde his life for them. After that manner ought a prince to maintaine his ſubiectes. Contrariwiſe yee ſhall ſee a prince ſo blinded, that hee commaundeth all to be burnt and waſted, that there may not ſo much as one graine of corne be lefte. Yea, but thereby the poore people are ſtarued. There is no remedie, nothing muſt bee ſpared, but all thinges muſt be borne down, to the intent I may reigne like a conquerour. Needes muſt God bee forgotten, when men proceede ſo farre. Wee neede not to go ſeeke examples of threeſcore yeares hence, neither neede wee to heare our auncetors ſpeake. For we haue ſeene as much within theſe laſt twentie yeares, and not farre hence. And the miſchiefe not onely continueth but alſo increaſeth ſtill. For why? they bee the fruits of the contempt of Gods worde. So a Prince doe ſhriue himſelfe, and bee aſſoyled and make a Croſſe vpon his backe, it is ynough: Hee ſhall haue Ceremonies ynowe. When hee hath performed a ſort of counterfaite ſeruices, hee is quite and cleane aſſoyled. But if a man ſhoulde come and ſhewe him his dutie by Gods worde: hee cannot abide to heare of it. To be tolde what he oweth firſt vnto God and then vnto men, hee can abide much leſſe. To bee tolde after what manner he ought to take warres in hand, and howe hee ſhould holde himſelfe within his bounds and liſtes, without attempting any further than God giueth him leaue: he can no skil at all; it were a derogation to his maieſtie; it is ynough for him to mocke GOD with a ſort of pelting trifles, as though hee were to pleaſe a young babie. But let vs on our ſide conſider what is Lawfull for vs, and not meddle with thoſe which prouoke Gods wrath and curſe vppon their heades after that faſhion. And ſeeing that God hath ridde vs from ſo great cōfuſions, let vs yeelde him thankes, and not followe them any more, leaſt we prouoke his vēgeance to bee the more horrible againſt vs.

Nowe, howſoeuer the worlde goe, although wee bee priuate perſons yet muſt wee put this leſſon in vre, of not making any waſte, forſomuch as wee knowe that our Lorde hath appointed the earth to bee as our foſtermother. And ſeeing ſhee openeth her bowels after that ſort to ſuſtaine vs; wee muſt vnderſtande that it is all one as if God ſhoulde reach vs his hand and offer vs the teſtimonies of his goodneſſe. If wee bee of that minde; then will this doctrine auaile vs, not onely in time of warre, but alſo in time of peace. And would God that it were well regarded. But nowadayes men are ſet altogether vppon euill doing. Inſomuch that although wee haue our eares beaten dayly with ſuch matters, yet wee minde them not: whereof the examples are too euident. Yea and there are which had leuer that their corne ſhoulde bee marde in their Garners, and bee eaten with vermine, and rotte where it lyeth, rather than to ſell it in time of neede. For they coulde finde in their heartes to hungerſtarue the poore people. And is not that all one with cutting vp the fruitetrees? Behold, the corne is gathered in, and our Lorde hath powred out his goodneſſe and bleſſing to the ende that the poore folke ſhoulde bee ſuſteyned. Nowe, it is hoorded vp in Garners, and it is kept faſt vnder locke and kay, till it riſe to ſo great a price that folke crie out for hunger, and are no longer able to abide it. And what becomes of the Corne in the meane whyle? It foyſteth and rotteth. Indeede our Lord doth nowe and then mocke them that thought themſelues to haue gained much, and ſhewe them that that is not the way to doe it. But yet for all that, they to the vttermoſt of their power doe burie Gods grace, as though they fought againſt the goodneſſe and fatherly loue which hee vttered towards all the people. And in ſo doing they peruert the whole order of nature, as if they went to cut downe and to deſtroy the fruitebearing trees. What is to bee done then? Seeing that our Lorde woulde haue a certaine humanitie to bee obſerued euen among enemies: foraſmuch as it behooueth vs to liue fellowlike together in peace and brotherly loue: let vs looke that wee endeuour to liue in concorde and friendſhippe as much as in vs lyeth. And when God ſhall haue beſtowed his ſpirituall giftes vppon vs, (which are much preciouſer than all the worldly thinges which wee can receiue) let vs indeuour to make our neighbours parteners with vs, and not through our malice diſappoint them of the good which God doeth vnto them. For if wee ought to behaue our ſelues with ſuch diſcretion in the vſe of temporall benefites: what ought wee to doe in the ſpirituall bleſſings, which concerne the ſaluation of our ſoules? Then let vs learne not to ſtubbe vp the fruitetrees. But rather ſeeing that Gods worde is the ſeede of life; let vs indeuour to ſpreade it abroade euerie where, that it may take good roote: And that when it hath taken roote, it may not bring foorth a barren tree, but a tree that beareth good fruite. Thus yee ſee what wee haue to gather of this text, if wee intende to profite our ſelues duly thereby, yea euen in ſuch wiſe, that although wee be not in warres, yet notwithſtanding foraſmuch as GOD hath choſen vs for his people, hee hath ſhewed vs heere ſuch a point of vprightneſſe, as ought to continue with vs all our life long.

Nowe let vs kneele downe before the Maieſtie of our good God, with acknowledgement of our faultes, praying him to make vs feele them more and more, ſo as we may be ẏ better ſetled in true repentaunce: and that therewithall wee may mourne and miſlike of ourſelues when wee ſee the infirmities that are in vs, and pray our good GOD to vouchſafe to holde vs in awe, that although wee ſee the worlde nowadayes to bee vtterly out of order, and our ſelues horriblie beſet rounde about with al manner of ſtumblingblockes, yet wee may bee helde ſtill vnder his banner, to followe him whitherſoeuer hee liſteth to call vs, that by that meanes hee may bee glorified in vs, and wee alſo rightly glory in him for that wee be his people, and hee hath ſhouled vs out to doe him ſeruice. That it may pleaſe him to graunt this grace not onely to vs but alſo to all people and Nations of the earth, bringing backe all poore ignorant people from the ſuperſtitions and ydolatries wherein they are helde: that ſo hee may leade them to the knowledge of his trueth: And that for this purpoſe it would pleaſe him &c.

On Saturday the xxj. of December. 1555

The Cxx.Sermon which is the firſt vpon the one and twentith Chapter.

WHen a bodie is found ſlaine lying vpon the ground in the Land which the Lord thy GOD giueth thee to poſſeſſe,and it is not knowen who killed him:

2 Then ſhall thine Elders and Iudges come foorth, and meaſure the Townes that lye rounde about the ſlaine man.

3 And when they perceiue which of the Townes is neareſt to the ſlaine man, then ſhall the Elders of that towne take a young Hekfar from the droue, which hath not beene labored nor hath drawen in the yoke:

4 And the Elders of that Towne ſhall driue the young bullocke downe into a harde valley,which hath neither beene plowed nor ſowed,and they ſhal ſtrike off the bullocks neck there in the valley.

5 Alſo the Prieſtes the children of Leuie ſhall come forth, for the Lorde thy God hath choſen them to miniſter vnto him, and to bleſſe in the Lords name:And at their worde ſhall all caſes and euery plague be determined.

6 And all the Elders of that towne ſhall come to the deade man,and waſh their hands ouer the bullocke that is beheaded in the valley:

7 And proteſt and ſay,Our handes haue not ſhed this bloude,neither haue our eyes ſeene it.

8 O Lord, be mercifull to thy people Iſrael whom thou haſt purchaſed, and lay not the guiltleſſe bloud among thy people Iſrael.And the manſlaughter ſhalbe forgiuen them.

9 And ſo ſhalt thou take guiltles bloud from among you:for thou ſhalt do that which is acceptable in the eyes of the Lord.

I Haue ſpoken of this Law alreadie heretofore,and declared briefly what god ment in the ordeining of that Ceremony:namely that wee ſhoulde abhorre the ſhedding of bloud, and murthers,and outrages. He had ſpoken heretofore of the law of armes. And nowe hee addeth that the killing euen of one man is a defiling of the whole countrey,vnleſſe the remedie bee ſought by praying vnto God to forgiue the fault, and by proteſting that none of them is guiltie thereof. Wee ſee then that mens liues are deare vnto God, ſith hee will haue ſo ſolemne a redreſſe to bee made of a murther committed,yea euen when the doer thereof is not knowen,nor the trueth can bee founde out. If a man had heene murdered, and the doer thereof knowen: then woulde not this ceremonie haue ſufficed.For God commandeth the crime to bee puniſhed: and if a murtherer be ſuffered to ſcape, the Iudges and all the people become guiltie of the fact. But when it is vnknowen by whom a man is ſlaine, then GOD thinketh it not ynough for euery man to proteſt for himſelfe ẏ hee is neither partie nor priuie to the matter; but he will alſo that the town where the deede was done,or which was neereſt to the place where the deede was done, ſhoulde bee examined for it. For wee knowe that a partition of the townes & villages was made to euerie tribe. Inſomuch that euerie Citie had the Countrie about it, and the townes and villages in it were called as it were the daughters of that Citie. Yet notwithſtanding, in this caſe our Lorde will haue them to make a newe ſuruey and meaſuring of the diſtance of places againe, and that the Citie which is found to bee neereſt to the dead bodie,ſhalbe at the charges to make a ſolemne ſacrifice, whereat hee will haue the Elders,Iudges,and Prieſtes,to be preſent. And he ſetteth downe the Prieſts by name, as wel for ſacrificing as alſo becauſe it was their Office to make the purgations: whenſoeuer there befell any blotte, ſo as the people were defiled before God; it was the duetie of the Prieſtes to make them cleane againe towards God. And that was the cauſe why that order was required in this caſe.

And therefore Moſes addeth, that God hath appointed them to ſerue him, and to bleſſe in his name, and that it belongeth to them to iudge of Leproſies and all other like thinges, and of all other kindes of vncleanneſſe wherewith the people might be defiled. In attributing this office vnto them, he declareth to what purpoſe their preſence ought to ſerue in this act. Alſo there was prayer to bee made, and the prieſtes were inioyned thereunto. And becauſe the whole order of them was a figure of our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt: they bleſſed in Gods name, as I haue declared heeretofore, and as I ſhall ſhewe ſomewhat more hereafter as I paſſe ouer it. And therefore our Lorde appointed them to make the ſolemne prayer that is ſet downe heere. Nowe wee ſee whereto this Lawe tended: Namely that our Lorde hath ſhewed howe precious mens liues are vnto him, that wee on our part might bee the more prouoked to take him for our father. For what an vnthankfulneſſe is it, that God ſhoulde haue ſo great and ſo fatherly a care of vs, of vs I ſay which are but Caryons: and yet notwithſtanding that hee ſhoulde not bee honoured of vs as of his children, nor finde any obedience at our handes? So then, foraſmuch as we ſee our Lord vouchſafeth to haue a regarde of our life; let vs be the more moued to honor him, and to yeeld him all reuerence.

Heerewithall it is ſhewed vs alſo, that wee muſt maintaine our neighbours as much as in vs lyeth, and abſtaine from all violence. For if murder bee ſo hatefull to GOD, that although the doer thereof bee vnknowen, yet it behoued a ſolemne clearing thereof to be made: what will become of vs if wee ſpare not our neighbors? Is it not a ſetting of our ſelues vtterly againſt God? Here then is a bridle to reſtraine vs from all violence and outrage, ſo as vnleſſe wee will bee hatefull to our God, wee muſt liue in concorde and brotherly loue with all our neighbours. Nowe I haue tolde you heretofore, that whereas murder is forbidden vs, it is not meant thereby that wee ſhoulde but onely forbeare the drawing of our ſwords to ſlea men, but alſo that foraſmuch as all they which hate their brethren euen in ſecrete, are murderers; we ſhould beware to haue our heartes as cleane as our handes, and abſtaine from all hatred and enmitie. Thus yee ſee what wee haue to remember in the ſeconde place of this Lawe which is ſet downe heere. For it's not ynough for vs to loue our neighbours and not to haue ſtepped out into any iniurie or violence: but wee muſt alſo (to the vttermoſt of our power) bee a let to the anoyance that is done to others. Indeede it is a great thing to be peaceable: but God requireth yet more of his children, namely that they ſhoulde procure peace towardes others. Therefore whenſoeuer any man fals to quareling or offereth wrong to his neighbour, let vs looke that wee ſet our ſelues againſt him as much as wee can. I knowe that euerie man is not armed with the ſworde, neither may euerie of vs take vppon him to redreſſe wrongs: but yet let vs haue an eye to that which GOD permitteth, ſo farre as our duetie will beare, and as occaſion is miniſtred to deale: And therein wee ſhall ſhewe our ſelues not to conſent to any outrage, but rather that wee bee willing to ſuccour the innocent that is oppreſſed and wronged, whom let vs looke that we help to our power and abilitie. That is the third point which we haue to gather vpon this text.

Moreouer let vs marke, that Iudges and Miniſters of iuſtice are warned heere to doe their dueties. For it is not ynough for them to proteſt that they haue not ſupported nor fauored any euill: neither is it ynough for them to bee able to ſay, yͤ they haue yeelded euerie man his right when they were complained vnto: but they muſt alſo inquire diligently of miſorders, and although no man ſpeake to them or mooue them, yet muſt they of their owne ſelues bee vigilant in making ſerch. And if they finde any fault committed: they themſelues muſt followe the ſuite of it. But this is ill obſerued of moſt Iudges. For they thinke themſelues to bee come to the full perfection of vertue, and that they be greatly to bee commended, when they haue not refuſed to giue men the hearing. If a man that is grieued doe come to complaine to them, and they heare him and make countenance to helpe him: they thinke they haue acquitte themſelues verie well. But our Lorde is not contented with that. Although then that the partie which is hurt doe holde his peace, and patiently put vp the wrong: yet notwithſtanding the Iudge or the Magiſtrate that is in office muſt not forbeare to doe his duetie for all that. And therefore it is a fonde allegation to ſay, there is no information, no man complains of it. Yea: but yet neuertheleſſe the euill is committed, and God ſeeth it, and hee hath commaunded that it ſhoulde bee puniſhed; hee will haue all miſdeedes redreſſed, and that no libertie bee giuen to the ſtronger to beare downe the weaker. And ſhall the Iudge in the meane while holde his peace? Let vs marke then, that God will not haue the miniſters of iuſtice to winke at mens miſdeedes: no not euen though there be no informer, protector, aduocat, attourney, or plaintife to moue thē therunto. For they bee bound to puniſh crimes euen of themſelues, though no man proſecute any ſuite in Law. And what ought they then to do, when they be ſued vnto, and when the partie that is miſuſed commeth ſorowing and declaring his griefe? If hee bee not hearde, or if hee bee ſkorned for his complaining, or let alone, or peraduenture ſo vexed that hee is inforced to giue ouer his right, and in the meane while the offender goeth vnpuniſhed: ſhall ſuch trecherie be excuſable before God? Yet notwithſtanding, we ſee oftentimes, that if a man which hath bin wronged do come to demaund Iuſtice; he ſhalbe trayned on. In deede hee ſhall not bee driuen away with a kudgell, it ſhall not bee ſaide vnto him that hee doeth but loſe his labour: but he ſhal bee ſo driuen off with ſhifts and delayes, that the poore ſoule is ſorie that euer hee attempted any ſuite, and is faine to leaue off to his great griefe. That is the common courſe which is kept in executing of iuſtice on the earth. But wee ſee heere that ſuch perſons as haue ſo abuſed their authoritie, muſt come to account for it. For the heauenly Iudge will haue them not onely to heare mens complaints and to releeue them: but alſo to make inquiſitions, and to ſearch out matters to the verie bottome, though it be not knowen that any fault is committed, or that any man is wronged, yea and euen though no man open his mouth to complaine. And when men haue done the beſt they can, yet will he haue them to offer Sacrifice, as though ſome blame lay vppon the countrie it ſelfe, vntil forgiueneſſe of the offence were deſired.

So then, let vs learne on our part, that our Lord watcheth ouer vs, ſo that although we be oppreſſed and haue all the outrages in the world done vnto vs, yet our Lord ceaſeth not to haue a care of vs. True it is (as I haue ſaid afore) that Iudges and Magiſtrates haue heere a good leſſon, and that they ought to conſider that they ſhal not ſcape the hands of the Heauenly Iudge, when they haue bin negligent in mainteining good men that are troden vnder foote. If they paſſe not to defende them, they muſt make a reckening for that looſe dealing of theirs. For it is al one as if they themſelues were confederate with them. And therefore we muſt vnderſtande, that ſeeing God hath ſuch a care of thoſe that are deade, it is much more of conſequence, that our Lorde beholding all things would we ſhould reſort boldly vnto him for refuge, when we pine away in this worlde, ſuffering many troubles & vexations, though we ſpeake neuer a worde, ne finde any defence or helpe at all among men, in how great extremitie ſo euer we be. For although he ſhew not himſelfe by and by neere at hand: yet muſt we not thinke that he hath turned his backe vpon vs: for hee marketh all the wrongs that are done vnto vs, and our teares (as Pſal,56.7. it is ſaide in the Pſalme) ſhall come vp before him. For Dauid ſaith that the tears of the faithfull are put vp as it were into bottels, as men put vp ſweete waters into glaſſes, and oyntmentes into vyols. And ſo our Lorde keepeth the treares of ſuch as make their moane to him, and reſort to him for refuge. He keepeth all thoſe teares of theirs, to be reuenged for them in time conuenient. But we muſt paſſe yet further. For if God ſuccour them that are departed; it is a token that we be not as the brute beaſtes. For (as is Luk.20,38. ſhewed in S. Luke) hee is not the God of the deade, but of the liuing. Therefore let vs conclude, that when wee be gone out of this world, we ſhall haue a better life and be in the hand of God. Loe what a recorde of the immortall life here is vttered in the marke that God giueth vs here, namely in that if a man be found murthered, ſolemne ſacrifice muſt bee made to clenſe the Lande from the defiling whereto it was ſubiect. For thereby hee witneſſeth that after our deceaſe we liue with him, and that wee muſt not thinke our ſelues to bee vtterly done away and come to nothing, when God taketh vs out of this worlde; but rather that it is but a paſſage whereby to goe into the ſeconde life which hee promiſeth vs. Seeing that this was ſpoken in the Law, we ought the more to aſſure our ſelues thereof nowadayes. For we haue the holy ſcripture more at large. Wee haue the heauenly life ſhewed vnto vs much more apparantly in the newe Teſtament, than it was ſhewed to the fathers of olde time before the comming of our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt. And therefore wee ought to bee ſo much the more aſſured of it, and not bee like the vnbelieuers, who quake when they heare death ſpoken of, as though all were fordone with them, and as though they ſhoulde vtterly periſh. But wee muſt vnderſtand, that when God gathereth vs to him by death, wee ceaſe not to liue ſtill to himwardes. Although a mans bodie rot away, and become a Carion like the bodies of brute beaſtes: yet is God a faithfull keeper of our ſoules, ſo as they be preſerued in his hand & by his power, wherein he giueth vs hope of the laſt reſurrection, in the which we ſhalbe wholly reſtored againe. For wheras we be nowe corruptible, and tende to corruption by death: we ſhall then be clothed again with ſuch a newe nature, that ỹ thing which is now corruptible and tranſitorie in vs, ſhall become newe and vncorruptible, when we be renewed after ỹ likeneſſe of our Lord Ieſus Chriſt. Thus ye ſee what we haue to remember yet further, in that God ſheweth him ſelfe to haue ſuch care of them that are deade.

As touching the things that are ſpoken here concerning the prieſts, we neede not as nowe to ſtande verie long vppon them: but it will ſuffice to ſpeake a word or twaine thereof. Moſes ſaith that *they were ordeined to bleſſe in Gods name*, that is to ſay, to make publike prayers. True it is, that wee at this day haue the ſame office of making praiers in the name of ỹ whole church, and that the people muſt ſay Amen, (as S Paul ſaith in the xiiii. of the firſt Epiſtle to the Corinthians): but there was a ſpeciall conſideration of this matter in the tribe of Leuie, & in the prieſts of the Lawe: namely, that they bare the figure of our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt who is our aduocate, and our mouth, as it were. Foraſmuch then as it belõgeth to our Lord Ieſus Chriſt to offer vp our requeſts to God our father, bicauſe they can neuer bee acceptable to God but for his ſake, neither are we worthie to preace vnto God, except hee leade vs and make way and meanes for vs: Therefore in the time of the Lawe, the Prieſtes bleſſed the people, that is to ſay, they made the publike prayers for them. Againe there is another thing, namely, that their bleſſing of ỹ people was a witneſſing of Gods fauour and loue towardes them. And that alſo belongeth to our Lord Ieſus Chriſt, howbeit that the ſame pertaineth not to himſelf alone, but alſo to al the preachers of the Goſpel. Whẽ we preach Gods mercie, the bleſſing of God is vpon al them that harken to vs. For it is all one as if God himſelfe came to declare his fauour towards vs, and ỹ for aſmuch as wee be reconciled vnto him, hee intendeth to take vs into his keeping. Seeing then that the doctrine of the Goſpell importeth ſuch thinges, wee ſee that all the Shepheardes of the Chriſtian Church, doe bleſſe the people. But this is not becauſe they are figures of our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt, but becauſe of the charge that is committed vnto them. They doe in deede repreſent his perſon as his officers; but in the time of the Lawe, this was of force that the Prieſt during the continuance of thoſe ſhadowes, did after a ſorte ſupply the roome of our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt vntill hee was come. That then was meant by *bleſſing the people in the name of God*, as we ſee our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt Luk.24.50. & Act.1.4. himſelfe hath declared. For hee bleſſed his diſciples by laying his handes vppon them. Therefore let vs reſorte to him as oft as wee thinke vppon our owne curſedneſſe: that is to ſay, foraſmuch as wee knowe our ſelues worthie to bee reiected of God, and to bee as it were accurſed, becauſe there is nothing but vtter wickednes in vs: Let vs flee to our Lord Ieſus Chriſt. For if God gaue that remedie to his people vnder the Lawe, of being bleſſed by the prieſtes who were but mortall men: ſhall wee miſtruſt that our Lord Ieſus Chriſt hath not ſufficient power to doe away all our accurſedneſſe, ſo as God ſhall looke fauorable vppon vs, and receiue vs as his children? Then let vs hardily giue eare hereunto, and reſt vppon it with full truſt. And when wee bee about to pray, let vs aſſure our ſelues that wee haue an aduocate, who will make vs to finde fauor. And let vs not alledge as the Papiſtes doe, I am not worthie to pray to God; but let vs bee ſure that our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt calleth vs to him. Trueth it is that wee ought to perceiue our owne vnworthineſſe: howbeit not to make vs to raunge away when wee pray vnto God, or to cauſe vs to ſeeke long windlaſſes, as who ſhoulde ſay, Such a Saint ſhall bee mine aduocate, or ſuch a Sheeſaint ſhall bee my patroneſſe: but to direct vs to him which is giuen vs of God his father, namely to our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt. Thus much concerning the bleſſing.

Now the ſeruing of God imported the ſacrifices and all the reſt of the ceremonies. And at this day, they that are appointed miniſters of Gods woorde, haue the adminiſtration of Sacramentes, becauſe it is an appurtenance to Gods worde and doctrine which they bring: but our Lorde Ieſus is hee that hath made the onely and euerlaſting ſacrifice whereupon wee muſt reſt. And herein wee ſee the fooliſhneſſe that is in the Popedome: for the Prieſtes will needes counterfeit his ſacrifice, ſaying thus: O beholde the tribe of Leuie was appointed to ſerue God. Yea, but we muſt conſider what maner of Sacrifice God requireth and alloweth at this day. Will hee haue vs to flea Bullockes, Sheepe, Lambes, and ſuch other thinges? No verily. But Saint Paul ſayth that the ſacrifices which the Shepheardes of the Phil.2 17. Church muſt offer to God, are mens ſoules Rom.15.16 whome they winne by the preaching of his worde. Thoſe doe they dedicate vnto God, and that is the ſeruice which hee lyketh of. This is a part of that ſeruice of God, which is ſpirituall. And therefore let vs marke that wee muſt let Ieſus Chriſt alone with that which the holy ſcripture reſerueth vnto him: Namely the offering vp of himſelfe once for all, to purchaſe Act.13.38. vs euerlaſting forgiueneſſe of all our ſinnes, and the making of vs cleane and pure yet ſtill before God. Now then, there remaineth nothing but this onely, that wee be confirmed in the power that is brought vnto vs by his death and paſſion. And howe may that bee? By the vſe of the ſacramentes. When we receiue the Supper, wee make not a newe ſacrifice, as the Papiſtes were woont to doe in that diueliſh abhomination of their Maſſe: but we proteſt that God is at one with vs, when we be grounded in the death and paſſion of his onely ſonne, and that we be partakers thereof: and our preſent receiuing of the bread and wine that are giuen vs, is all one as if we were fed with his body and bloud as with meate and drinke. Thus ye ſee how we ought to apply the thinges to our inſtruction, which are ſpoken here concerning the ſacrifices that were to bee offered to GOD by the prieſtes of the Lawe.

Now let vs proceede with that which Moſes addeth here. He ſaith that *the Prieſtes ſhall reſort thither with the gouerners and Iudges of the Citie, and take a young Heckfar* (or Bullocke as they terme it here;) *and cut off the necke of it*, yea and that *in a valley* (ſaith he) as in a ſecret place, *and namely in a valley that is barreine, and vntilled*, as in a deſert *place*. This circumſtance is ſet downe to moue the ſtanders by to the more terror, when they ſaw the cutting off, of the Heckfars neck, and that they were come as into a ſecrete place. For it is certeine ẏ God paſſed not for the bloud of the Heckfar. Hath God a care of Oxen or 1.Cor.9.9. kine (ſayth Saint Paul,) as though he regarded them? His ſpeaking of them is for mens ſakes. And therefore let vs marke how God poynted out a valley, yea and a barraine valley, to the end that they which were there preſent, ſhould conceiue a certeine terror in themſelues. Wherat? At the ſmiting off of the bullockes head, as who ſhould ſay; Muſt wee come to this deſerte place for ſuch a matter? And what a thing is it thē that a man which is ſhaped after the image of God ſhould be ſlayne, and that ſuch a crime ſhould be committed? Shal not the Sunne, and the Moone, and all the ſtarres of the skye cry out for vengeāce to God? Shal not the largeneſſe of the earth frame an inditemēt as though it were written in paper or parchment? Thus yee ſee what we haue to conſider, in Gods appointing out of the place ſo with ſuch circumſtance.

Nowe afterward followeth the proteſtation. *Our handes haue not doone this deede, neither haue our eyes ſeene it.* When the Iudges & gouerners ſay, *Our handes haue not done this deede;* they meane the whole people as well as themſelues. For it is not enough that the rulers themſelues bee cleere of the murder: but they ſpeake in the name or behalfe of the whole bodie of the people whome they repreſent. And hereby it appeareth, that if the Magiſtrates ſuffer any wickedneſſe to lie lurking in any citie or countrie, they themſelues are guiltie thereof, and it is as much before God, as if they had giuen their conſentes to the dooing of it. Therefore let men marke well this ſaying, *Our handes haue not done this deede:* namely that ſuch as are in authoritie muſt aunſwere for the whole bodie of the people, ſo farre as lyeth in them: that is to ſay, that wicked dooinges haue not bin ſuffered to neſtle by their ſlouth and negligence: but that they haue ſearched them out diligently, and done their dutie in that behalfe: otherwiſe it will be in vaine for them to ſay, I was not the dooer of the deed. No, but thou diddeſt repreſent the whole people, thou waſt put in commiſſion by Gods appointment, and therefore ſith thou haſt ſuffred leawdneſſe to be committed within thy Iurisdiction, it is at thy hand that God wil require the account. And in very deede, wee ſee how it is Gods will, not onely in this place but alſo throughout the whole holy ſcripture, that when any treſpaſſe was committed in any trybe, the Elders ſhould ſtand forth as it were to confeſſe the peoples offences in their perſons. For inaſmuch as they were ſet in authoritie and place of honor, it behooued them to know that their charge was ſo much the more hard and weightie. That is the point which is to bee noted here.

And he addeth *Our eyes haue not ſeene it*. And hereby we may knowe (as I ſayd afore) that it is not enough for vs to haue our handes cleere: but it is required alſo that we ſhould not be priuie to any euill: For if we cloke it knowing of it, to whom is it to bee imputed? Truely we may well Matt. 27.24 waſhe our hands of it (as Pilate did) before men, as who ſhould ſay, I did it not, I am guiltleſſe of it: but God admitteth no ſuch mockerie. Therfore whenſoeuer we bee examined or depoſed vpon any matter, let vs not imagin that we ſhall ſcape ſkotfree before God becauſe we haue not done the actuall deede: Fot we muſt to the vttermoſt of our power find meanes that the miſchiefe may be redreſſed, ſo as one man may not be trodden vnder foote, and another be bolſtered and borne out, and conſequently common robberie be ſuffred to reigne diſorderly among men; but that right and euen dealing may bee mainteined among men: and let euery man further the ſame on his owne behalfe. And as concerning Iudges and Magiſtrates, let them alſo learne to haue eyes, that they play not the blinckardes and blindefolkes when euill is committed, ne thinke to eſcape when they can ſay, As for me, I haue no ſuch thing. Yes, but ſuch as are in authoritie of Iuſtice, muſt know that God hath ſet them aloft as it were in a watchtower to diſcouer thinges afarre off. If the Magiſtrates themſelues doe ſet a watchman in a high tower, and he excuſe himſelfe ſaying, I ſawe nothing: will they hold him excuſed? No, For hee was ſet there to looke about him, and that was his charge. Euen ſo our Lord ordeineth Magiſtrates to keepe good watch. And if they notwithſtanding doe ſhut their eyes, and make as though they ſawe nothing at all: ſhall it ſerue to acquit them? What an excuſe were that? Were it not too fond and trifling? So then, let vs marke well, that Magiſtrates muſt open their eyes and bee watchfull, that they may ſee what their duetie is. And if they wil be taken for guiltleſſe, they muſt looke to it that they may bee able to vſe this preſent proteſtation in trueth, *Our eyes haue not ſeene it, neither haue our handes done this deede*.

But yet beſides this, Moſes ſheweth that the citie or towne where a murder is committed, is not altogether cleere of it, and therefore that they muſt bee faine to craue pardon at Gods hand. Surely this ſeemeth to be with the extremeſt. What? Seeing we haue not conſented to the euill, but woulde haue puniſhed it, if it had bin done in our preſence, and wee proteſt that wee our ſelues did not the deede, neither doe wee knowe the dooer of the deed that wee might puniſhe him: ought not God to bee contented with all this? Nay, there is yet a further thing, namely that the committing of ſuch a fault, is as a defiling of the whole countrie, and a warning giuen vs of God to looke narrowlyer to our ſelues. True it is that he will not take vs for murderers: but yet for al that, his ſuffering of ſuch an offence to be committed, is as though he ſhold ſhew vs with his finger, yͤ he is gone frõ vs. For when God bleſſeth a countrie, he preſerueth it from all defilement. And the falling out of any defilement, is as a turning of Gods backe vppon vs, as if hee ſhould ſay, I haue no more care of you, I let you alone, I giue you ouer. The nation therefore that perceiueth God to giue any ſigne of his diſpleaſure, haue good cauſe to humble themſelues. And that is the cauſe why hee commaunded the Iudges and gouernours of the citie where a murder was committed, to thinke earneſtly vppon it, as if they ſhould ſay, Lorde haue pitie vppon thy people Iſrael, and take away this guiltleſſe bloud from among vs, and let not this deed bee imputed vnto vs.

Now if it be ſo, and yͭ there be no remedie to be found but only to flee to Gods mercie, and to craue forgiueneſſe not only for yͤ fault, but alſo becauſe men ought to feele yͭ he is angrie with the whole Citie: What is to be done when the miſdeede is apparant? Ought not men much more to make ſupplication to God, and to flee to his mercie, at leaſtwiſe if they were well aduiſed? Yes; but wee ſee what hardneſſe or rather blockiſhneſſe is nowadayes in moſt men, yea and well neere in all men. For when a miſdeede is committed, who is hee that regardeth it? True it is that if an outragious wickedneſſe be committed, men will perchaunce ſay, hee is a wicked man. But they conſider not that God warneth all folkes generally to ſay euery man in himſelfe, Alas how happeneth it that ſuch an enormitie is committed among vs, that all of vs ſhoulde bee defiled with it before GOD? For that this is come to paſſe and wee neuer wiſt it, is a token that wee haue euill profited in Gods worde. For wee thinke not that his giuing of ſuch examples vnto vs, is for our inſtruction. But although wee ſleepe, yet dooth not GOD ceaſe to doe his office. Wee heare what hee ſayth when there is no Iuſtice nor vpright dealing in a citie. They bee princes of Sodome, they be theeues Eſa.6.20. and murtherers. Hee ſayth this to Iudges. Not for that they had cut mens throates that were traueling: No; but becauſe they had not mainteined the good and guiltleſſe. Therefore he ſaith, Beholde, it is a citie of bloud. The very citie of Ieruſalem it ſelfe, which God had choſen to bee his royall pallace and Temple, is called a citie of bloud and a denne of theeues. And why? Becauſe many outrages and diſorders were there committed, and many poore ſoules were trodden vnder foote without ſuccor, and Iuſtice was become as an open robberie. So then, let vs learne to reſorte to our God when any offence is committed, and let euery of vs thinke with himſelfe, Alas, our Lorde doeth vs to vnderſtande that he is angrie with vs, in that ſuch things are hapned, and that ſuch enormities are committed among vs. And therefore let euery of vs craue pardon of them, and alſo thinke thus with our ſelues: Of whom is it long that I am not lyke one of them, but onely of Gods preſeruing of me? And let vs alſo beware for the time to come. Thus yee ſee in effect what wee haue to beare in minde, as in the reſpect of the things that are ſpoken here concerning murder.

There was alſo the ſtriking off of the Hekfers heade, to make men the more afraid: as who ſhould ſay, that the beholding of a poore beaſt ſlayne after that ſorte, doth moue men the more. And what is to bee ſayd then of a man, which is ſhaped after the image of God? Wee ſee then, how our Lord meant to teach the Elders and Iudges that were preſent at the ſacrifice, that they might the better learne the horribleneſſe of all murders. For if wee bee afraid of a beaſt: it is good reaſon that wee ſhould bee touched much more to the quicke without all compariſon, for a humaine creature. As touching the waſhing of their handes, it is added to doe the people to vnderſtand, that they were after a ſorte defiled, or rather that they ſhould declare both before the Angels and before all creatures, that they might waſhe themſelues from it. And this ſerued for the time of the ceremonies of the Lawe. But wee muſt vnderſtand that it was not our Lordes meaning to foade his people by ſuch ſignes in counterfeiting and hypocriſie. What gayned Pilate by his waſhing of his handes? Was hee cleared from the death of Ieſus Chriſt? No, that waſhing of his was a token of his defiling. Wherefore waſhed he his handes, but becauſe hee knewe himſelfe guiltie of the death of Ieſus Chriſt? Whereof hee thought to cleere himſelfe by a drop of water: and that was too great a dalying with God. And that is the cauſe why I ſayd that his waſhing ingraued his ſinne the deeper before GOD, and made him the more vnexcuſable. And therefore had the people come diſſemblingly to waſhe their handes; it had bin but a further charging of themſelues, and a making of themſelues the more faultie. But Gods will was that the Elders ſhould vſe ſuch ceremonies, to doe vs the better to vnderſtand; that wee be fleſhly, and conſider not our ſinnes vnleſſe they bee as it were pointed out with the finger. Wee conceiue not Gods wrath, except wee haue ſome ſigne of it before vs. God then meant to declare, that when there is any ſuch offence, wee bee defiled, ſo as there is nothing but filthineſſe in vs, but God miſlyketh of vs, & we cannot preace vnto him without prouoking him to wrath. Marke that for one point.

And therewithall hee meant to ſhewe vs, how we ought to apply our indeuour to cleaneſſe. And this cleaneſſe is not compaſſed with corruptible water; but it muſt bee firſt in our conſciences, and afterwardes in all our members. Wherefore let vs learne to looke to it, that our handes bee not bloudy, as the Eſa.1.15. Prophet Eſay termeth the hands of thoſe which did wrong to their neighbours: and let not our feete runne after bloud, neither let our members bee defiled, nor made inſtrumentes of vnrighteouſneſſe, as Saint Paule ſpeaketh of them in the ſixt to the Romans. When we indeuour after that ſort to keepe our ſelues vndefiled to Godward; then do wee obſerue the waſhing that was vnder the Lawe, to reteine the trueth and ſubſtance thereof. And at this day whereas we haue baptiſme, the water betokeneth the lyke; not that it is ſufficient of it ſelfe, nor that it is of force to waſhe away our ſinnes, for what ſhould then become of our Lord Ieſus Chriſtes bloud? It were too groſſe a blaſphemie for a man to put his truſt in a viſible ſigne: we muſt lift vp our mindes higher. In lyke caſe is it with the Lordes ſupper; Inſomuch that when wee come to the table of our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt, if wee thinke to finde our ſoulehealth in a bit of bread or in a droppe of wine; wee bee very brutiſh, and there is neither reaſon nor vnderſtanding in vs. But when we bee led further, ſo as by eating of the bread we conceiue that Chriſt is our very ſuſtenance, and that although wee bee ſpiritually dead in our ſelues, yet we ceaſe not to liue in him: then doth the ſacrament turne to our benefite. And to that vſe muſt we apply the doctrine that is ſet downe here.

And for a concluſion let vs marke further, that although the men that are murthered doe no more ſpeake vnto vs, becauſe they be dead: yet the bloud of them cryeth out for vengeance againſt vs. See wee not what proceeded from the bloud of Abell? Hee needed no man of lawe to pleade his caſe: for his very bloud cryed vnto God as is reported thereof. Whereby wee bee done to vnderſtand, that although the parties whom we haue miſuſed doe forgiue vs, yet will God euer be a Iudge to vs, vntill we haue acknowledged our faults, and indeuour to amend thē. Inſomuch that although his wrath appeare not towardes vs, & that our wrong dealing haue lyen long concealed, ſo as it ſeeme to bee ſtarke dead & quite forgotten: yet notwithſtanding, the remembera̅nce thereof is alwayes freſh before God.Let vs conſider this,and let euery of vs in true repentance rebuke himſelfe and amende his miſdoings,indeuoring to liue quietly & without doing any harme. And for the doing thereof,let vs thinke vpon the outcrie whereof the Apoſtle ſpeaketh in the Epiſtle to the Hebrues, ſaying that the bloud of our Lord Ieſus Chriſt Heb.12.25. cryeth much better than did the bloud of Abell; Not to aske vengeance of God againſt vs, ſo we receiue him in ſuch wiſe as our ſins bee waſhed & clenſed away. For to that purpoſe was that holy bloud of his ſhed. True it is that the bloud of our Lord Ieſus Chriſt ſhall cry out for vengeance againſt all the faithleſſe and froward ſorte, & againſt ſuch as haue refuſed the doctrine of yͤ Goſpel & troden it vnder foot, & made a skorn of it,& al prophane folk;for al ſuch ſhal be guilty of the bloudſhed of our Lord Ieſus Chriſt. But when we receiue his bloud by faith, & know yͭ it ought to ſerue vs as a purgatiõ to make vs righteous and innocent before God:let vs aſſure our ſelues yͭ the ſame bloud hath his cry.And in deed we ſee how the Goſpell ſoundeth and ringeth in our eares to yͤ intent we ſhould know the vertue of yͤ bloud of our Lord Ieſus Chriſt. For it is no dead thing:but it is euer freſh, as the Apoſtle Heb.10.20. ſpeketh of it in another place.Yea & it is ſo freſh yͭ it hath his liuely force continually, to reconcile vs vnto God. Therefore let vs rightly weigh this ineſtimable benefit,& receiue the peace of the Goſpell, whereby God witneſſeth vnto vs, that he admitteth the bloud of his ſonne for our waſhing, that we may appeare before his maieſtie with full hope.

Now let vs caſt our ſelues downe in the preſence of our good God with acknowledgemẽt of our faults,praying him to make vs perceiue thẽ more and more. Yea and let vs confeſſe,not only the faultes which we know by our ſelues, and which we perceiue,& whereof we ought to be aſhamed before men: but alſo our ignorances & our ſecret ſinnes whereof we be now guiltie.And foraſmuch as we know how there be many vices and infirmities in vs,let vs mourne for them before God, and let it make vs to proceede more and more in true repentance. And in the meane while let vs not continue wilfull; but let vs take courage to turne vnto him; and let vs not looke to haue a bullock or a brute beaſt to anſwere for vs nowadayes, as though the bloud thereof ſhould ſerue vs for a ſacrifice:but let vs reſorte to our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt, that ſeeing hee hath offered vp the onely and euerlaſting ſacrifice, in his death and paſſion once for all, to ſet vs free from all our debtes,and that hee calleth vs dayly vnto him by his Goſpell: wee ſeeke not any other meane to ſerue God withall,but proceede in all pureneſſe vnder his hand & guiding. That it may pleaſe him to graunt this grace, not onely to vs but alſo to all people and nations of the earth, &c.

On Wedneſday the xxv. of December. 1555.

The Cxxi. Sermon which is the ſecond vpon the one and twentith Chapter.

10 When thou goeſt to battell againſt thine enemies,and the Lord thy God hath giuen them into thy hand, and thou haſt led them into captiuitie:

11 Then if thou ſee a woman among the priſoners that is faire to looke vpon,and thou fall in loue with her,and canſt finde in thy heart to take her to thy wife:

12 Thou ſhalt cary her home to thine houſe, and there ſhee ſhall ſhaue her head and pare her nayles:

13 And thou ſhalt ſtrippe her out of the apparell wherein ſhee was taken priſoner, and keepe her cloſe in thine houſe, and let her bewayle her father and her mother by the ſpace of a moneth. And after this thou ſhalt goe in vnto her, and ſo be maried vnto her,and ſhee ſhalbe thy wife.

14 And if it fall out that ſhee like thee not, thou ſhalt let her goe where ſhe liſteth: but thou maiſt not ſell her for money,nor make marchandiſe of her,becauſe thou haſt humbled her.

HAd the Iewes held thẽſelues within the rule which God gaue them, they ſhould rather haue taken them wiues of their owne tribes, that they might not in any wiſe haue intermingled thẽſelues with the idolaters. But foraſmuch as mens luſts can hardly be bridled, God graunteth heere a toleration, that when a man which hath taken a heathen woman priſoner by the law of armes, and is minded to take her to his wife: ere he ſo doe, hee ſhall cauſe her to mourne for her father and her mother,as though they were dead, to the intent ſhee may forget both her countrie & kinred whereof ſhe came, as though ſhe were made new againe, and graffed into the body of the people of Iſraell.

Therefore let vs marke that in this text GOD meant to reſtreyne the luſtes of ſuch as had no hold of themſelues in the time of war, but would needes take ſtraunge women, that had ſerued idols afore. Now the meane was (as I haue ſayd afore) that the women ſhould bee as it were chaunged, ſo as they might no more remember their former lyfe. And that is the cauſe why hee ſayth *that they ſhould ſhaue their heades, and pare their nayles.* Some tranſlate it, *and make their nayles*, (for ſo is it word for word,) that is to ſay, let them growe that they might become greate, to diſfigure them. And they thinke that by that meanes God meant to bring their huſbandes in miſlyking of them. But it is cleane contrarie. For lyke as in French, they ſay commonly to *make heare*, and *to make a beard*, [when they meane the powling or rounding of the hayre, and the ſhauing, clipping, or trimming of the beard:] ſo doe the Hebrewes vſe the ſelfeſame phraſe of ſpeach. And Gods appointing of this ceremonie to be vſed, was to take away all vncleanes: as who ſhould ſay, that if it were poſſible for them to ſcrape off their very skins, they ſhould doe it, to the intẽt they might no more be the ſame that they were before, but rather vtterly renounce their own byrthright, & become Iewes to ſerue ẏ god which gaue his law by ẏ hãd of Moſes. To the ſame end alſo tended the ſorrow which they were to make in mourning for their fathers and mothers. Thus we ſee now to what end this Lawe was giuen.

Now remaineth to gather the inſtruction that is conteined therein. For we ſee what libertie mẽ take. When they haue any worldly proſperitie, then their luſtes increaſe and boyle more and more, ſo as they cannot eaſily be quieted. When men haue taken a Citie, or made any conqueſt, they cannot ſtay thẽſelues frõ taking too much ſcope. If the Iewes had taryed quietly at home in their owne houſes, and euery man followed Gods ordinance in taking a wife of his owne kinred; (not the brother the Siſter, for that was forbidden by the Lawe: but I meane of the lyne of Abraham, which was the lynage that God had choſen out of the whole worlde): they had bin preſerued from defiling themſelues with the Infidels. For it was a kind of defilement whẽ a Iewe maried a Heathenwoman, which had bin nuſſeled in ſuperſtition all her life long. They ſhould not then haue ranged abroade. But had they once any warre, and ẏ God gaue them the victorie ouer any people, then their licentiouſnes braſt out beyond his bounds. Wherby we ſee howe it is not alwayes for our profite, that our Lord ſhould giue vs too much aduantage. For if we growe too ſtrong: our headines becommeth vntollerable. If wee think ourſelues able to make our part good: by and by we ſet vp our briſtles & our combes, as the common ſaying is: and it is ſeene by experience. Therfore if God deale not with vs after our owne lyking, let vs aſſure our ſelues that his humbling of vs is for our benefit, to the end we ſhould alwayes continue in ſome ſobrietie and mildeneſſe. Yea and euen when he increaſeth vs, we muſt learne to hũble ourſelues willingly. For whẽſoeuer we aduaunce our ſelues our pride ſhal euer be puniſhed & beaten down. And if we be ſtifnecked, God muſt needes ſtrike vpon vs with maine blowes. Such as ſubmit thẽſelues of their own good will, and paſſe not their boundes, are comforted of God. But as for thoſe which wil needs win him by ſtoutnes; they muſt needs feele his hand the ſorer and heauier vpon their heades.

The thing then which we haue to note in the firſt place, is ẏ men abuſe Gods bleſſinges & gratious giftes. Inſomuch ẏ if he ſend them worldly proſperitie, they take occaſion to glory too much therein, hardening their hearts and following their luſtes ſo licẽtiouſly, as though (to their ſeeming) all thinges were lawful for them. We ſee it too much: ſo that if men haue obteined a victorie, they beare thẽſelues in hand ẏ they may vſe all maner of pillage & rauiſhing, ſo as nothing is ſpared. When we haue any ſuperioritie aboue others; at what point be we? We could finde in our hearts to make thẽ our vnderlinges, & to ſet our feete vpon their throtes. Sith we ſee it is ſo, let vs vnderſtãd ẏ our Lord hath good cauſe to hold vs at a low ſtay, to the end he may ẏ better weald vs, and make vs to beare his yoke quietly. And therefore let ſuch as haue any worldly proſperitie, looke wel to thẽſelues, ẏ they be not puffed vp with too much pride, knowing for a certeintie ẏ our nature is diſpoſed thereunto, and that it ſwayeth too much that way. Wherfore let euery man ſuſpect himſelf in the time of proſperitie, and be weladuiſed to hold himſelfe within the boundes of modeſtie.

And now we haue to treate of mariage: & to ſhew why our Lord did ſo ſtraitly will and commaund ẏ Iewes, ẏ they ſhould not marry with ẏ heathen & infidels. S. Paul not ẘout cauſe lykeneth our matches in marriage to yokes. For like as when a cupple of Oxen are yoked together, if ẏ one goe, ẏ other muſt needes follow; & if the one draw awry, ẏ other cãnot but ſway aſide too: euen ſo fareth it in ẏ familiaritie betweene man & man. True it is ẏ we may be cõuerſant among ẏ heathen, ẘout matching with thẽ: for elſe (as ſaith S. Paul) we ſhould be faine to get vs out of ẏ world, if we would come in cõpanie of none but good men & Gods childrẽ. But there are meanes to trafique man with man, & yet ẏ muſt be done but in maner of wayfaring. He ẏ buieth of a mã, would not inquire of his good behauiour, except he feared ẏ he ſhould be deceiued by him: Only he buieth his ware & goes his way, & yet for all ẏ he is not in any couenant ẘ him with whome he bargained. But if he once enter into familiar cõuerſation, and fall to eating and drinking with him; and there groweth ſuch acquaintance betwixt them, that they liue commonly together: then becommeth it a yoke ſaith S. Paul. Now we knowe that mariage is the holyeſt kind of companie in all the world: inſomuch that a man ſhal leaue both father and mother to keepe companie with his wife. Therefore it is vnpoſſible for a man to contract mariage, without coupling himſelfe with his wife, ſo as eache bee made priuie to others minde, will, and purpoſe in all things. For we ſee what hath happened; how the parties that haue giuen themſelues ouer in that wiſe, haue in the end bin vtterly mard, & God did as it were cut thẽ off from

Deut.17.17. & 2.Cor. 6.14.

1.Cor.5.10.

Gen.2.21. & Ma.t.19.5.

his

Numb.25.1 & 31.15. his people,ſo as they became as rottē members, and all through the counſell of Balaam.For whē he ſawe that God opened not his mouth to curſe the Iſraelites, but rather that when as hee had conſpired to vtter curſes, hee was inforced to ſpeake the cleane contrarie : for his laſt ſhift hee gaue counſell, that they ſhoulde let the Iewes enter communication with the heathen women, that they might deceiue the Iewes' hearts,& corrupt them with Idolatrie, whereby they ſhould prouoke Gods vengeance againſt them,& that ſhould turn to their confuſion.Nay 1.Kings.11. if there were no mo but Salomon, his example were enough to make their hayre ſtand vp vpon their heades,which did well conſider whereinto he fell. Surely he was an excellent man : It was Gods wil to ſet him forth as a lookingglaſſe, or as a peereles pearle,& he was indued wͭ ſo excellent wiſedome, that all men wondered at him, yea & he was euen a Prophet of God. Yet for all this,the heathen women deceiued his hart, inſomuch that hee ſuffered idolatrie to haue full ſcope,& to reigne in the countrie which GOD had reſerued & dedicated to himſelfe, ſo that he builded Temples vnto idols. When we ſee that ſuch a man (who was an Angel of heauen) did fall downe to hell,& that God gaue him ouer to a wicked minde; by meanes whereof he became ſo beaſtly that he ouerthrew yͤ ſeruice & religion of God:how ſhal they doe which are far off from profiting ſo much as he?So then we ſee it is not without cauſe that God ſo ſtreitely forbade the Iewes to take wyues of forraine nations, & ſpecially of the countrie of Chanaan. But generally his meaning was, that they ſhould not match themſelues with idolaters. For why?It is a making of an entrie & an opening of a gap to Satan that he may put all to hauock,& bring all things to diſorder & confuſion.God therefore ment to preuent that.True it is yͭ at this day now that yͤ Goſpell hath bin preached ouer all the world, there is neither Gentile nor Iew any more: wee haue no more any ſuch diſtinction as was vnder Gal.3.28. the Lawe. For the ſeparation wall(ſaith S. Paul) is brokē downe,ſo as we muſt now link together Eph.2.14. in brotherly concord,foraſmuch as God will be called vpon of all nations,& that all men ſhould call him father: and therefore we muſt knit our ſelues together.Yea,but there are which ſeparat themſelues through vnbeleefe, & wil not be of yͤ bodie of the Church, but refuſe yͤ God which is declared to vs by Ieſus Chriſt,& will not be partakers of the adoption which hee offereth to all men both great & ſmall.Vnto ſuch we muſt not cleaue,at leaſtwiſe if we intend not to alienate our ſelues from God & from the way of ſaluation. Whoſoeuer thē matcheth himſelf wittingly & wilfully with the vnbeleeuers:dooth as much as in him lyeth to baniſh himſelf from the kingdome of God. And for that cauſe doth S. Paul vſe this exhortation, that wee ſhould not beare the yoke with vnbeleeuers, telling vs that the thinges which were ſpoken in olde time to the Iewes,belong alſo vnto vs, ſo as it behoooueth vs to flee far from all ſuperſtition, & frō all ſuch as intangle vs therein.And why?For we not only beare the materiall veſſels of the Lordes Temple,but alſo are his very Temples wherein hee dwelleth by his holy ſpirit: and therefore wee muſt offer both our bodies and ſoules in ſacrifice to him,that we may be wholy dedicated vnto him. For ſeeing he hath choſen vs to be his childrē,ought we not to be clenſed frō al corruption both of bodie & mind,as hath bin declared? 1.Cor.6.19 20.

Seeing it is ſo then, let vs learne that when a man is to marrie,he muſt (as neere as hee can) chooſe him ſuch a wife as may further him in the ſeruing of God purely.For why?We be fraile enough of our ſelues, without being corrupted of other folkes. And if a man be in a good way, and be neuer ſo wel minded and deſirous to doe well: he ſhal ſoone be marred by euil companie. And the world ſees it. If a man doe but fall to drinking with a leawd fellow or a naughtipacke: he is in daunger to turne backe and to become euery day worſe than other; ſo that yee woulde wonder to ſee him become a very diuel. Now if a little tippling doe this; what will inſue when a man ſhall be faine to keepe companie with his wife as long as they liue? Truely it is a manifeſt tempting of God,when a man throwes himſelfe headlong downe after that faſhiō, and ſtoppeth his eyes at the taking of a wife,hauing no regard of his choyce yͭ he might be helped by her,ſo as they might behaue themſelues holily & according to Gods will with one common conſent. That(I tell you) is a poynt which it behooueth vs to marke wel.And what is the cauſe that nowadayes ſo many mariages come to ill end, but that men haue not an eye to God, but mens mindes are ſet vppon their luſtes and pleaſure, or elſe they ſeeke for wealth? God then is not accounted of,& therefore he is faine to reuenge ſuch contempt, and ſo doth hee as experience ſheweth.So much the more ought wee to marke well how it is ſayd in this text, that if a man will marrie a ſtraunge woman,(that is to ſay an Infidel)which hath not bin brought vp in the feare of God,nor bin inſtructed in his word,) he muſt looke that ſhee be cleane chaunged, before hee euer come at her. For a wife is as a deadly poyſon, vnleſſe ſhe haue firſt forſaken her former conuerſation, and profeſſed to liue thenceforth to Godward, and to ſticke purely to his word, & haue put her old bringing vp quite out of her minde, yea & euen caſt her ſlough as they ſay.

And furthermore, whereas it is ſayd here, *that the woman muſt ſhaue her head, pare her nayles, put away her [old] apparell,and mourne as though ſhe had forgone her father and mother:* in deed thoſe ceremonies ſerued for the Iewes, and wee be not to vſe thoſe figures nowadayes. But yet muſt wee haue an eye whereunto the ſame tended: namely that the women (as I haue ſayd afore) ſhould be as it were chaunged, yͤ they might bee brought into yͤ body of Gods Church. This is a ground therfore, yͭ when a man intēdeth to take a wife,he muſt looke yͭ ſhe be reformed aforehād & that ſhe know God & his word,ſo as ſhe ioyne herſelf thereto,& be ready to giue ouer al idolatrie.Vntil a woman be at yͭ point, it is not lawful for a Chriſtian man to take her to his wife.

And if he take her before, and graunt him the grace to reclaime her afterwarde; yet muſt hee vnderſtand that he hath done amiſſe. And looke what is ſaide of men, concerneth women likewiſe. For as women haue their inticementes to allure the hearts of men: ſo men may eaſily tẽpt women to turne them from the right way of ſaluation, and to ouerthrowe them as the world ſeeth. And therefore when a woman doeth of her owne will go take a husbande that is a deſpiſer of God, a wicked and looſeliuer, a lawleſſe perſon, a drunkarde or a ſwearer: it is all one as if ſhee forſooke God, and baniſhed her ſelfe out of his Church, and ſhee deſerueth to haue all manner of curſedneſſe to light vppon her head.

And where as this is tolde vs concerning wedlocke; let vs vnderſtande it likewiſe of al other things that may thruſt vs out of our way: and let vs learne to bee conuerſant with ſuch companions, that wee may euer bee edified ſtill to the better. For wee haue neede of ſuch folke as may amende vs, becauſe that euery of vs is frayle of himſelfe. And therefore let vs ſeeke to match our ſelues with ſuch as haue the feare of God, and leade a holy & honeſt life: & let vs ſhunne ſuch as go about to intangle vs in their abhominations. When wee ſee a malicious and frowarde perſon, a deſpyſer of God, or a luſtie Gallant that paſſeth not to bee an offence to all men: let vs eſteeme him as a plague, and let vs vtterly eſchue him. For why? whoſoeuer comes nye him, ſhall ſurely be infected by him out of hande. And that is apparant. So then, let vs beare well in mynde, that here our Lorde intended to ſhewe, that wee muſt haunt ſuch companie as is fit to teache vs to doe well, and that on the contrarie parte, wee muſt ſhunne all occaſions of euill, becauſe of the infirmitie that is in vs, and wee neede not much to turne vs away from weldooing.

Alſo it is to bee noted, that ſeeing God hath ordayned ſo many ceremonies *for the women which were to renounce their owne kinred*: therein hee meant to doe vs to wit, that wee muſt forget our owne nature, if wee will ſerue him purely and as hee commaundeth vs. Therfore when wee haue had any wicked trayning, and haue beene nuſled in any euill cuſtome; it is not ynough for vs to bee tolde that ſuch a thing is euill. For although wee ſee it is ſo, and haue it throughly prooued vnto vs: yet do we not ceaſſe to bee ſteyned with it ſtill. It is ſo deepely rooted in vs, as it cannot bee plucked vp at the firſt daſh. And this ought to bee throughly knowen vnto vs, that when a man hath beene naughtily brought vp from his childhood, and hath dwelled in a houſe of diſorder till hee come to twentie yeares of age: although hee take paynes all the time of his life after, to forget the corruptions which hee had ſeene, and wherewith hee had beene imbrewed before: yet can hee neuer bring it to paſſe, but that hee ſhall alwayes retayne ſtill ſome ſpot or blemiſh. And hereby wee ſee howe gracious God is to ſuch as are ſo well brought vp, that they haue ſeene none other but good and honeſt examples, whereby they haue learned to ſerue God and to honour him. It is an ineſtimable priuilege, when God graunteth vs to haue ſuch bringing vp: and vnhappie bee they which abuſe it. And this ought to bee ſo much the greater prouocation to fathers and mothers to nurture well their children, and to take paynes in the good bringing of them vp, becauſe there is ſuch corruption in men, that when they haue once beene imbrewed and infected with vices, they can hardly refrayne them with great payne. This then is that which in effect wee haue to remember vppon this text, to the ende that all men ſhoulde be vigilant in bringing vp their children in true religion and vertue.

Again, on the other ſide let children on their parte be well ware that they diſappoint not the grace of God, but rather that they make it auaylable, that by their good bringing vp, they may fare the better all their life after. Alſo fathers and mothers muſt take good heede, that they ſuffer not their children to runne at rouers: for wee ſee howe it is ynough to marre them out of hand, and to bring the poore ſoule to vtter vndooing. Specially when wee our ſelues haue beene euil brought vp, that is to ſay euill taught; let vs doe the beſt wee can to weede out the infections that are in vs. And let vs not thinke it an eaſie thing to do, ſo as wee ſhoulde neede no more but to ſhake our eares at it, as a number doe, who when they haue played the naughtie packes, thinke themſelues to bee the beſt reformed men in the worlde, ſo long as they ruſh not out into all extremities, when yet notwithſtanding they faile not to retaine ſtill ſome parte of their former corruptions, and all the worlde may ſee ſtill the markes of their euill bringing vp in them. For why? They conſider not howe harde it is for a man to refourme himſelfe, which hath beene naughtily brought vp. And aboue all things, let this bee obſerued in religion. For as for thoſe that haue beene brought vp in poperie, I meane which haue beene nuſled in it, that is to ſay, made beaſtes, (for one of the holyeſt poyntes of doctrine that is taught and eſteemed among the Papiſtes, is that men ſhould be without wit and without reaſon, and not diſcerne any thing themſelues, but rather ſuffer themſelues to bee led by the noſes like brute beaſts;) when, I ſay they haue beene nuſled in ſuch ignorance, although they come afterwarde to the pureneſſe of the Goſpell, yet notwithſtanding they keepe ſtill ſome dregges, vnleſſe they take marueylous great payne to ridde away all their former corruption, as euery of vs fyndeth by experience in himſelfe.

True it is that many ſillie ſoules perceiue it not in themſelues. For when it is tolde them that the Maſſe is an abhomination, that diuerſe things in it are of Satans deuyſing, & that they muſt holde themſelues to Gods worde: very well ſay they, all is one to mee, I will forbeare the Maſſe, and ſhrift, and all the thinges that I haue ſeene in times paſt, I giue them ouer. And why? Becauſe they bee no longer in vſe. Therefore they bee nowe layde aſleepe. But if an altar were ſet vp againe, a man coulde not ſo ſoone turne his hande, but they woulde by & by bee gadding to Maſſe, as faſt as they flocke nowe to Sermons. And their comming to ſermons is not to bee edified; but rather the word of God ſerues to condemne them, and to make them vnexcuſable. And as for ſuch, they wote not what it is to fight againſt popiſh ſuperſtitions. But ſuch as are well wakened and touched to the quicke with the feare of God, when they examine themſelues, will thinke thus: Go to, I haue yet ſtill this ſmatch of my wicked bringing vp in my chyldehood remayning in mee. A man which is duely touched with the feare of God, and deſirous to profite in Gods worde, ſhall finde at tenne or twentie yeares ende that there remayneth ſtill ſome roote thereof behynde, and muſt bee fayne to fight againſt it. Euery man ſees this in his owne caſe. For looke howe much one man hath bin deeper plunged than another in thoſe curſed meetinges or aſſemblies, ſo much the more nouriſhment of them doeth hee retayne ſtill euer after. In ſo much that euen thoſe which haue profited beſt in Gods ſchoole, if they haue once beene drowned in theſe Munkeries, or in the helliſh dungeons of Poperie, do feele in themſelues I wote not what dregges thereof remayning in them euer after. And our Lorde holdeth them downe, and by meanes thereof giueth them as it were a Whetſtone to ſharpen them to the incounter, that they may the better knowe their owne vyces, and bee the fitter to teache others. But howſoeuer the caſe ſtande, wee may well aſſure our ſelues that wee ſhall not by and by haue rooted out the corruptions which wee haue receyued by our euill bringing vp in our chyldhood. And that is it which our Lorde meant by the figure which hee ſetteth downe heere, namely, *that the women muſt ſhaue off their hayre, pare their nayles, put away their accuſtomed apparell, and bee quite and cleane chaunged, if they will dwell among the people of God: ſo as they muſt after a ſorte bee made newe againe, and haue vtterly renounced their owne kinred.* Wee ſee nowe howe ſuch as haue beene trayned vp in euill, and plunged in ſuperſtition, muſt fight all their life long againſt their vices, that they may reclayme themſelues fully vnto God.

But wee muſt goe yet one ſteppe further, and put the thing in vre which is ſayde in the fiue and fortith Pſalme, agreeing vnto that which is ſayde heere: Hearken my daughter, forget thine owne people, and thy kinred, and thy fathers houſe. There it is ſpoken concerning Salomons wife: but vnder that figure it is ſhewed vnto vs howe Gods Church is marryed ſpiritually to our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt: namely vpon condition that ſhee forget her father and her kinred, and all her former trade of life, and all the cuſtomes of her countrey. And I tolde you that this text concerneth the thinges that are contayned heere. For why? Shee was a woman of a ſtraunge countrye, and had beene an ydolater all the tyme of her life: and therefore it was ſayde vnto her that ſhee muſt forget all the tyme paſt, and put her bringing vp out of her remembrance, to the end ſhee might dedicate her ſelfe to GOD, and then the king woulde loue her beautie. As if it were ſayde, that king Salomon ought not to take any pleaſure in his wife, nor haue any delight or liking in her, vntill ſhee had proteſted herſelfe to bee deſirous to bee wholly vnited to Gods people, and had ſeparated herſelfe from all the abhominations of Egypt. And I haue tolde you, that herein wee haue a general rule for all men, of what kinred or countrey ſo euer wee bee. For why? It is the ſonne of God that is our true Salomon, who contracteth holye wedlocke with his Church, and will haue vs to bee as a wife vnto him. And to the ſame ende ſerueth the preaching of the Goſpell, as ſayeth Saint Paul in the eleuenth Chapter of the ſeconde Epiſtle to the Corinthians. I muſt marrye you (ſayeth hee) as chaſte virgines vnto Ieſus Chriſt. And therefore let vs marke, that whenſoeuer the Goſpell is preached vnto vs, it is all one as if Chriſt wooed vs to marrye with him, after the ſame manner that men ſue vnto women when they woulde match with them in wedlocke. And ſo our Lorde thinkes it not ynough to take vs as his ſouldiers and ſeruants: but hee will alſo haue vs to bee incorporated into him, and to bee as neere vnto him as the wife is to her husbande. But vppon what condition? So long as wee continue in our own nature, we cannot be ioyned vnto him, neither can he take any pleaſure in vs: and therfore we muſt forget our owne ſtocke, & our kinsfolkes; that is to ſay, we muſt become new creatures. For what haue wee ſo long as we hold of our father Adã, or any thing at all that is of man? what haue we (ſay I) but vtter frowardneſſe? Wherefore let vs marke well, that this figure muſt ſerue vs for an inſtruction at this day: namely, that whereas vnder the lawe, our Lorde willed heathen women to pare their nayles, to ſhaue off the hayre of their heads, & to put away their former apparell & attyre; it is all one as if hee ſhewed vs in a liuely picture, that we cannot bee of the body of his Church, nor of the houſholde of faith, nor admitted into his fauour, except we bee ſtripped out of our accuſtomed apparel, that is to ſay, except wee forſake our olde maners & trade of life, and bee ſo chaunged, as wee may ſhewe openly that our deſire is not to bee wedded any more to our ſelues, but to be gouerned by him, & to forſake all that we haue of our own nature, & al yͭ euer we haue learned by euill cuſtom. Now we ſee how beneficial this leſſō is for vs, & that God ſpake it not for yͤ Iewes only, but yͭ he ment to giue vs alſo a profitable inſtruction if we can skill to put it wel in vre.

Now whereas it is ſayde, *that the woman ſhall* *bewayle her father and her mother*: it is not meant that women ſhoulde be ſorie to come to liue after Gods worde: but here our Lorde hath done vs to vnderſtande that the naturall affections cannot bee mortified at the firſt chop, without ſome ſtriuing againſt them, as we ſee too much by experience: inſomuch that euen after a man hath beene trayned vp in Gods worde, although hee bee deſirous to behaue him ſelfe as becommeth him; yet ſhall hee finde great gaynſtryuings and contrarieties in himſelfe, ſo as hee muſt be faine to inforce himſelf. And it is not for one day, but for all our life long, that our luſtes and fleſhly affections ſtriue againſt Gods ſpirite which dwelleth in vs and ſtirreth vs vp and prouoketh vs vnto good. Wherefore let vs marke that whereas our Lorde ſpeaketh heere of ſorrowing, it is all one as if hee had ſayde, that although a woman mourne for her kinred and be greeued with her ſinfull and corrupt affections: yet notwithſtanding, her lamenting muſt be after ſuch a ſort, that in the ende ſhee thruſt them vnder foote and forget them. And hereby wee haue to note, that our ſeruing of God, muſt not bee alonely when thinges fall out after our lyking and after our heartes deſire, ſo as wee bee nothing pinched in the dooing thereof; but alſo euen when wee bee vexed and ſtoong with our wicked luſtes; In ſo much that although it bee harde for vs to frame our ſelues to the obeying of Gods commaundementes, and wee feele it as a bitter medicine: yet muſt wee not therefore bee out of heart. For it is much better for vs to weepe in ſorrowing for our ſinnes and offences, and to forſake them; than to bee merry and to laugh, and in the meane whyle to haue this threat ſounding in our ears, that our laughter ſhalbee turned into weeping and gnaſhing of teeth. Matth.8.12.

And therefore let vs marke well, that heerein our Lorde ment to put vs ſtil in minde, that whatſoeuer infirmities bee in vs, yet muſt they not make our heartes to quayle, but wee muſt ſtill ſo inforce our ſelues to amendement, as wee may alwayes goe on forwarde, howſoeuer wee fare. And if Satan caſt ſtoppes in our wayes, to make vs retyre or turne head; wee muſt thruſt them backe, and ſtrayne our ſelues to ouercome them. Although then that we be driuen to mourne as though wee bewayled our kinsfolkes and friends; yet muſt wee ſtill holde out in renouncing worldly things, that we may giue ouer our ſelues vnto our GOD, and that Chriſt may haue the poſſeſſion of vs quietly, and wee faithfully keepe the promiſe of the ſacred & ſpirituall mariage which he contracteth with vs by the Goſpel.

And it is ſayde, *that this muſt bee done by the ſpace of a moneth, during which time the man ſhall keepe her in his houſe without touching her, yea, or without comming at her.* Hereby wee ſee, that (as was ſayde at the beginning) God in this place did ſomwhat beare and diſpence with the Iewes, becauſe they were too greatly giuen to their owne lykings: howbeit that was but with a moderation. And thereby wee bee taught (as I haue touched alreadie at the beginning) to eſchewe the occaſions that might deceiue vs by their intycementes. For wee can no ſooner open our eyes, but Satan hath ſome meane or other to daſle them in ſuch ſorte, that hee will drawe them to him by and by. And hee hath his ſnares ſo layde aforehande, that wee ſhalbee caught ere wee bee aware. What will become of vs then, when wee ſeeke occaſions afarre off? Wee had neede to betake our ſelues to God both earely and late, as the holy Ghoſte him ſelfe doeth vs to vnderſtande where hee ſayeth [in our behalfe:] Lorde, turne away Pſal.119.31. mine eyes from all temptations. As much is Pſal.141.3. ſayde of our eares and of all our other ſenſes. For all of them are but as meſſengers of lecherie and leawdneſſe, vnleſſe our Lorde put to his hande, and rule vs by his holy ſpirite. Therefore let vs learne to ſhunne the temptations that might ſerue to intyce vs to further naughtineſſe; and let vs ſo eſchewe them, as GOD may quietly haue the fruition of vs. And whenſoeuer any temptation happeneth vnto vs, let vs ſeeke to cut it off out of hande, and not to feede it: neyther let vs be too haſtie to followe our owne lykings, which is the laſt poynt that wee haue to marke here.

To conclude, whereas it is ſayde, *that the woman whome a man intendeth to marrie, muſt bee kept cloſe by him at home in his houſe, a whole moneth before hee come neere her*: therein our Lorde hath ſhewed vs a remedie that is more than requiſite and needefull for all ſuch as haue ſo whotte and headie luſtes. Wee ſee that when any luſt is once entered into a mannes heart, it ſetteth him on fire at the firſt brunt, and carryeth him away after ſuch a ſorte, as hee can take no reſt. In reſpect whereof our Lorde giueth men heere a brydle, telling them that he which will take a wife after that manner, ſhall not goe in vnto her, vntil hee haue firſt giuen her a monethes reſpite to mourne and to forſake her owne natiue people.

True it is (as I haue ſaide afore) that this ceremonie continueth not nowe any longer as in reſpect of the vſe thereof, but yet it muſt ſerue vs ſtill for our learning: That is to witte, that for as much as the diuell driueth vs after our luſtes, and that as ſoone as any toye takes vs in the head, by and by wee runne gadding after it, ſo as wee breake all bondes and brydles; wee muſt conſider thus with our ſelues: But yet muſt thou brydle thy ſelfe in this caſe ſpite of thy teeth; and if thou beeſt a woode beaſt, thou muſt bee ſubdued by ſtrong hande to the obeying of thy GOD. After that manner ought euery man to fight againſt him ſelfe, and wee ſhoulde put this leſſon in practiſe daily. For when ſo euer wee bee tempted to euill, if wee indeuour not to reprooue our ſelues, wee bee ouercome immediately, and the diuel hauing once caught holde, will not let vs goe againe, for hee hath ſeiſed vppon the pray that is his owne alreadie.

But if wee through Gods grace, and by the power of his holy Spirite, doe ſtriue to beat backe temptations, and take pleaſure in mynding the things that God commaundeth vs; and whereas Satan ſeeketh to ſurpriſe vs, and indeuoureth to make vs turne our backes to al good doctrine and admonitions, wee on the other ſide conclude with our ſelues, ſaying, Nowe muſt I gather my wittes to mee and bethinke mee of that which I haue learned, and whereunto God calleth mee: If we (I ſaye) take ſuch aduiſement to ſubdue our luſtes: Satan ſhalbee ouercome, and our Lorde wilbee ſo gracious vnto vs as to turne the euill into good, and to inable vs to vſe his benefites in ſuch wiſe, as they ſhall not bee marred by our taking of any inordinate libertie. The thing then which wee haue to remember yet further vppon this text, is that although Moſes ſpeake here of none but women; yet wee muſt applye the doctrine to all other temptations which befall vs, that wee bee not wonne by them at the firſt brunt, but that wee behaue our ſelues ſo ſtayedly, as God may in the ende reigne ouer vs, and wee not attempt any thing which is not permitted vs by his worde.

Nowe let vs kneele downe before the maieſtie of our good God with acknowledgement of our faultes, praying him to make vs ſo to feele them, that beeing ſory for them wee may bee ſo caſt downe and grieued in our ſelues, as wee may bee readie to renounce all that euer is of the worlde and of our owne nature, and to giue ouer and conſecrate our ſelues more and more to him that hath called vs to this ſtate, that wee bee a holy people to him, according to his adopting of vs by Ieſus Chriſt, the members of whoſe body hee woulde haue vs to bee. And ſo let vs all ſay, Almightie God, heauenly father, &c.

On Munday the xxx. of December. 1555.

The Cxxij. Sermon which is the third vpon the one and twentith Chapter.

15 If a man haue two wiues, the one beloued and the other hated, and they haue brought him foorth children, as well the hated as the beloued, and the firſt childe is the childe of the hated:

16 And the time is come that hee will diuide his goods among his children to inherite: he may not giue the title of elderſhip to the ſonne of the beloued, in derogation of the hated womans ſonne which is the firſt borne.

17 But he ſhall acknowledge the hated womans ſonne for his eldeſt, in giuing him double portion of all things that he hath. For he is the beginning of his ſtrength, to whome the right of the firſtbegotten belongeth.

HEre wee may ſee howe harde it is to keepe men in good order, by reaſon of the naughtineſſe and rebellion that is in them. For the luſtes of our fleſh are like madde beaſtes that cannot bee tamed. And therefore the lawes which Moſes ſetteth downe heere, ſerue as it were to fetter men when they will not bee ruled quietly. If any thing bee to bee counted holy and inuiolable among men, it is marryage. For it hath a teſtimonie that God would haue it ſtabliſhed in his name, euen to liue and dye therein. And yet men ſticke not to breake ſo great a bonde. And ſo wee ſee that the brute beaſtes are eaſier to rule than men bee, for all the reaſon and vnderſtanding that God hath giuen vnto them: for they ſet all their wittes vpon euill.

It is not for vs to finde faulte with the Iewes in this behalfe, as though they were a hardehearted people, and wee were not the like: but wee ought rather to beholde our ſelues in their perſons, and to conſider that wee bee no better than they. The text ſpeaketh heere of a woman that was taken priſoner, howe that when a man had marryed her, hee ought thence foorth to keepe the ſame rule with her which our Lorde hath ſet downe for all others: namely, that hee forſake both father and mother, and cleaue to his wife. God ſayeth that if he be wearie of her, he ſhal let her goe franke and free; and not ſel her as a ſlaue. Surely God meant not to giue a marryed man leaue to put away his wife: for that is againſt the order of nature, and againſt the firſt inſtitu- Gen.2. tion or ordinance of mariage, which ought to continue to the worlds end. But it is all one as if God tolde vs, that men cannot behaue themſelues euenly & vprightly, & that they preſume vpō many things which are not permitted to thē. And therfore like as men put ſhackles vpon euill conditioned horſes; euen ſo to the intent ẏ men alſo ſhould not ouerſhoot thēſelues too far, God ſetteth them a barre to ſtop at: not that he correcteth their vyces altogether, but that hee maketh ſome reſtraint of them. If wee haue an eye to the perfection which God requyreth, whoſo- Matt.19.6. euer hath once marryed a wife, muſt keepe his faith and troth towardes her to the vttermoſt, that is to ſay, euen vnto the death. And although there bee faultes to bee founde in her, yet muſt hee beare with her as with the weaker veſſel. Likewiſe the wife muſt behaue herſelf ſo quietly towardes her husbande, that to the 1.Pet.3.5.6. vttermoſt of her power ſhee muſt frame herſelfe to his diſpoſition. The thing then which marryage requireth, is that the two parties liue togither with one conſent in the obedience of God, and that neyther of them drawe aſide by themſelues, but that if there bee any faultes in Eph.5.21.22 the one or in the other, they beare with them & paſſe them ouer as I ſayde afore. If a man put away his wife whome hee tooke as a priſoner among his enemies, although hee doe not hold her ſtill in bondage, yet is the marriage broken thereby. Yea verily: and yet is not that putting away made lawfull by God, as who ſhoulde ſay hee had ſet men free at their owne choyce. Neither muſt men ſoothe themſelues or thinke themſelues acquit, becauſe they bee not blamed by earthly iuſtice: but Gods intent was onely to ſhew, that although a man be ſo leawd as to breake his faith, yet muſt hee not preſume ſo farre as to play the tyrant too, and to ſel his wife as though ſhee were his bondſlaue ſtill for euer. *For he hath diſhonored her.*

Wee ſee then (as I haue touched afore) howe mannes wickedneſſe is ſo great, that it cannot bee reformed, and that it is much if hee can bee brought to ſome meaſure. And therefore wee muſt put a difference betweene humane policie and the lawe of God which ſerueth to rule our life, to the intent wee may walke as before him. Humane policie keepeth a certaine meane. It is no ſuch perfectneſſe as can acquit vs before God, though wee haue not tranſgreſſed the lawes thereof. But our Lorde draweth vs yet further in ſhewing vs the way to liue wel. Hee reſteth not vppon the thing that is poſſible in mannes ſight; but ſheweth vs what is due to himſelfe, and wherein wee bee bounde vnto him. Why bee not mennes lawes perfect in all poyntes? Becauſe that in them reſpect is had what is poſſible to bee obtained. Lawes are not made in reſpect that it is good that men ſhould do ſo: but to the ende that men might liue togither one with another. But when our Lorde giueth vs his doctrine, ſhewing vs the way to liue well and holily: hee reſpecteth not our abilitie [to perfourme it.] For can wee loue him with all our heartes, with all our ſtrength, with all our ſoule, and with all our reaſon? Alas, it is much if wee did take paines about it, and enter into the way, and indeuour to ſet foreward. Although wee were ſtill farre from the marke, yet had wee profited very much. But yet doth not this barre God from demaunding his right. You muſt loue mee (ſayeth hee) with all your heart. If a man reply, that it lyeth not in vs to doe it; it is nothing to the purpoſe. Wee muſt tende thereunto whatſoeuer come of it. He will haue vs to bee cleere from all euil affections, & from all wicked luſtes of our fleſh: and is that poſſible? No. And yet are wee bounde vnto it, and the lawe requireth it. And for that cauſe did I ſay (according to my treating of the ſame matter heretofore) that it ſtandeth vs in hande to diſcerne well the ſpirituall law whereby God gouerneth our ſoules, from all that euer is ſet downe in the lawes of this worlde for the ciuile ordering of this preſent life. And hereof wee haue examples in this preſent place. For (as I haue declared before) what meaneth mariage, but that a man ſhoulde holde himſelfe to the companie of his wife euen vnto the death, quietly maintaining her and bearing with her?

But God ſeemeth here to giue a man leaue to put away his wife. It is no giuing of leaue, as I ſayde afore. For the bonde ſtandeth ſtill in force, that hee which putteth away his wife is Mal.2.15. accurſed, becauſe hee hath broken the order which God hath ſet, and ſanctified. But yet as in reſpect of worldly gouernement, ſuch a man was not puniſhed among the Iewes. As for nowadayes, that libertie is not permitted. For it is good reaſon that Chriſtians ſhoulde vſe a more perfect kinde of gouernement than the Iewes had, conſidering that our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt hath ſhewed himſelfe in the worlde, and vttered the will of God his father vnto vs more fully. Therefore wee muſt not take ſuch libertie nowadayes, as the Iewes did in old time.

Nowe let vs come to the ſeconde lawe that is ſet downe here. It is ſayde, *If a man haue two wiues.* What? Is this agreeable to the order of marryage? Nay, it is cleane contrarie to it. A man cannot breake wedlocke more, than by taking two wyues. It is ſayde that they ſhalbee Gen.3.24. two in one fleſh. It is not ſayde there, that they ſhalbee three or foure. But our Lorde created Mal.2.15. onely one woman, to the intent ſhee ſhould bee the mannes companion. And before he created her, hee ſayth not, it were good for a man 1.Cor.7.2. to haue many helpes. Let vs make him one helper (quoth hee) to bee with him. Now ſeeing that God thinketh one helper to be ynough for a man; ſurely whoſoeuer goeth beyonde that rule, turneth all thinges vpſide downe, & it is al one as if hee would diſanul the ordinance of God. Yea verily. For who is the author of maryage? Hath not God ſpoken the thing that ought to ſtande inuiolable, namely ẏ they ſhalbe two in one fleſh, and that a man ſhall haue but one helper? Now if notwithſtanding this,a man will needes take two wiues,is it not an open defying of God? Yes verily. And therefore our Mal.2.15. & Matt.19,8. Lorde ſayeth by his Prophet, that it were more tolerable for a man to put away his wife by giuing her the leaue that was permitted vnder yͤ lawe,than to haue two wiues at once. And there he ſendeth ſuch vnruly perſons backe againe to the creation. Behold (ſayeth hee,) God created but one man. And the very ſame thing doth our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt meane in ſaying that at the beginning it was not ſo. For God created but one man: namely male and female created he them. Nowe the Prophet Malachie in alleaging this, ſayeth further that God had ſufficient aboundance of ſpirite in himſelfe. And therefore what ſhoulde haue letted him to haue created two wiues for Adam, if he had thought it good? But God thought one to bee ynough. Therefore it is to bee concluded, that he which coueteth to haue two wyues, marreth all, and regardeth not the keeping of wedlocke in ſuch ſorte as God hath ordeyned it. Then is it whordome and not wedlocke for a man to deſire a ſeconde wife after that faſhion. Yet notwithſtanding, this vyce hath beene of olde tyme,& thereby a man may ſee & iudge what certeintie there is in grounding our ſelues vpon cuſtome. Tuſh ſay wee,it hath beene ſo in all ages,it hath euer beene wont to bee ſo. Yea, but that will not ſerue to diſcharge vs before God. For this Polygamie as they terme it, that is to ſay, this hauing of many wyues at once, ſhoulde haue a very goodly couer for it, if it might reſt vppon cuſtome and antiquitie. But what? Gods inſtitution or ordinance went afore cuſtome, and ought to continue vnto the laſt ende. Wee ſee then that it was too diſordered and vnruly dealing, when men tooke ſuch ſcope and libertie to haue many wiues at once. And yet the thing fell out euen in the Patriarkes themſelues. Whereby it appeareth that men doe but deceiue themſelues when they ground themſelues vppon men, though they bee the holyeſt that euer were. Yee ſee that Abraham who is the father of the faithfull, had mo wiues than one. Yea, but hee fayled not to bee condemned for it. In all the reſidue of his life hee was a mirrour of Angelicall perfection: but in this caſe he ouerſhot himſelfe. Therefore let vs holde our ſelues to Gods pure worde, and not pretende that any thing is lawfull for vs, except it be ruled after the ſame. Thus much concerning the hauing of many wyues at once, which is ſpoken of heere. In ſo much that if any man haue two wyues,hee doeth contrary to the order which God hath ſet. By reaſon whereof the men that doe ſo paſſe their boundes are neuerthemore acquit, though they bee not puniſhed for it by the lawes of men: but they muſt alwayes come backe to this poynt, that God hauing an eye what might bee obtayned of mennes infirmities, ordeyned it as a lawe of policie. And this is no impedimẽt at al to the perfection that is conteyned in Gods worde, whereto it behoueth vs to aſpire. And if wee ſwarue neuer ſo litle from it, wee bee guiltie before him by and by. And well may wee alleage this or that; As for example,men require nothing at our hands; yet muſt wee come to account for it before the heauenly Iudge.

It is ſayde heere expreſſely, *If a man hate the one and loue the other.* Whereby it is ſhewed vnto vs,that the hauing of many wyues at once,proceedeth of a corrupt affection, in that a man beareth not ſuch loue to his wife as he ought to do. For if a man loued his wife chaſtely, as hee is commaunded; his heart will neuer bee withdrawen from her to deſire a newe marriage. Then muſt a man needes bee corrupted and infected in his heart, and conceiue a miſlyking of his wife, ſo as hee is loth to yeeld his duetie vnto her, before hee can long for a ſeconde mariage. It is ſayde; Yee husbands,loue your wiues: Ep.5.28.29 for no man hath euer hated his owne fleſh. The ſame matter is alleaged concerning all men by the Prophet Eſay,becauſe wee haue one reſemblance Eſa.58.7. of nature common to vs all. It is ſayde there, thou ſhalt not deſpiſe thine owne fleſh, and it is meant euen of the furtheſt ſtraungers in the worlde. But betweene man and wife, there is another reſpect: for (to ſpeake properly) they bee both but one man. And ſo doeth the Scripture terme them, ſaying: They ſhalbee two in one fleſh; that is to ſaye, in one perſon. Nowe if any man hate his owne body, muſt it not needes bee that he is worſe than mad? Hereupon Saint Paul concludeth, that if a man loue not his owne wife, hee is as a monſter. True it is that wyues will oftentimes giue their husbandes cauſe to hate them, and that there bee ſome of them ſuch feendes as were able to vexe euen the Angels of heauen, and to put them out of patience. That is true. But yet muſt a man fight againſt ſuch temptations, and ouercome them howſoeuer hee fare,by the power of Gods ſpirite. When he is once matched with a wife, hee muſt not thinke it to bee by haphazarde, but that it was by Gods will. And therefore hee muſt brydle himſelfe, in ſo much that although it bee right harde and grieuous to do, yet muſt hee take paynes to reforme the vyces of his wife that is ſo euill diſpoſed, and yet in the meane while beare with her and vſe her as gently as is poſſible for him. To that poynt muſt a man come. Hereunto Saint Paul addeth the example of our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt, beſides the inward vnderſtanding which we haue of nature. Marke (ſayeth hee) howe Ieſus Eph.5.25. Chriſt loueth his Church. For hee hath giuen him ſelfe to death, to make vs cleane from all ſpottes, euen vs that are fowle and full of vncleanneſſe. If our Lorde Ieſus haue not ſpared his owne bloud for the waſhing of vs; what ought a mortall man to doe for his wife? But wee knowe that wedlocke is as a liuely picture of the ſacred vnion which our Lorde Ieſus vouchesafeth to haue with vs. Therefore when ſo euer the husbande is diſpleaſed or greeued at his wife, though hee bee neuer ſo angry with her, let him haue an eye to this example. Beholde, the ſonne of God offereth me his owne bloud to waſh me withal, ſhewing mee thereby that I muſt brydle my ſelfe in this behalfe, and performe my duetie throughly towardes my wife, howeſoeuer the worlde goe. So then let vs marke, that a man will neuer couet a ſeconde wife, except hee haue firſt falſified his faith and troth towardes her whome he putteth away. For if he loued her truely, ſoundely, and rightly, hee woulde leuer dy than let his minde runne vpon any ſeconde mariage. Let vs marke well (I ſay) that heere our Lorde ment to bring vs backe to the wels head of the miſchiefe, to the intent that euery of vs ſhould examine his owne vices, and ſpecially the vices that are hid from men vnder this wicked roote that is within vs. He that forſaketh his wife to marrie another, ſhall perhaps bee condemned by the common iudgement of men: but to iudge thereof as is meete, we muſt goe to the welſpring thereof, and then ſhall wee finde that the greateſt euill is euer inwarde. Now then, if the hauing of many wiues at once be a wicked thing, and that God finde fault with it, inſomuch as he had leuer that a man ſhould put his wife away, than ẏ mariage ſhould be broken and the order thereof ouerthrowen: let vs aſſure our ſelues there is yet a greater miſchiefe, namely ſecret hatred, when a man loueth not his wife, but is inflamed with a wicked deſire to haue an other beſide her. And ſo ye ſee that the greateſt wickedneſſe that can be, is this vnfaithfulnes wherethrough mariage is corrupted, and men haue no more care to followe the order of GOD and nature, and to frame themſelues thereafter.

Furthermore, as touching the worde Hate, let vs note that it is taken heere for *ouer colde louing*. For inaſmuch as the Lawe puniſhed not a man for putting of his wife away, if he had hated her in deede, he would ſurely haue thruſt her out of his houſe and companie. Therefore in keeping her ſtill, he ſhewed plainely that hee hated her not as we meane by hating in our common ſpeech, and yet doeth God account it for hatred and not without cauſe, which is a text well worthy to be noted. For if a man hate not his wife deadly, ſo as hee woulde kill her with beating, or wiſh her in her graue: he will beare the world in hande that although he loue her not, yet he doth not vtterly hate her. But heere ye ſee how God ſpeaketh farre otherwiſe. For he ſayeth and auoweth, that if a mans heart be not whole and ſounde towardes his wife, it is to be taken for hatred. Therefore let vs imbrace this ſaying, That Eph.5.28. a husbande muſt loue his wife as himſelfe, euen as his owne perſon. If hee doe not ſo, yet ſhall this ſentence of God alwayes take place. And this leſſon ought to ſerue, not onely for the mutuall loue betweene man and wife, but alſo generally for the loue towards our neighbours. When a man hath an offence committed againſt him, if he ſeeke no reuendge, if he practiſe no wicked wayes, if he intende not to murder him by ſword or by poyſoning, if he goe about no wicked conſpiracie againſt him: he will ſay, As for mee, If I would him any euill, let it light vpon my ſelfe, I wiſh him nothing but his benefite and welfare. That is true: but yet in the meane while there is a ſecret rancour lurking within. And wee muſt not thinke that God acquitteth vs when we haue ſuch heartburning in vs, bearing in minde the offence that hath beene committed againſt vs, ſo as we be loth to pleaſure the partie, and could rather finde in our heartes that euill mought befall him. On the other ſide, ſome man is ſo far reconciled, as hee can not finde in his heart to commit any wicked dede by trecherie or vnfaithfulneſſe, nor by any maner of violence: and yet he thinkes with himſelfe, ſuch a one is mine enemie, he hath gone about to vndoe me, yet will I forgiue him ſo farre, that I will doe nothing againſt him. But yet if ſome miſchaunce might befall him, he would be glad of it and ſay, O, it is well beſtowed, for what had he purpoſed againſt me? When we keepe ſuch backe ſhops, it is a token that our heart is not rid quite & cleane. The hatred appeareth not openly, but yet it abideth lurking ſtill within. And he ẏ hateth his neighbour in his heart (ſayeth Saint Iohn) that is to ſay in ſecret, is a murtherer before God. So then let vs marke, that loue conſiſteth not onely in wiſhing none euill to our neighbours, but alſo in ſeeking their welfare as much as we can, and in reioycing at the welfare of our enemies. And ſpecially, if a man intende to diſcharge his duety towardes his wife, he muſt not loue her ſlenderly, but he muſt accept her as his wife, that is to ſay, as the partie whom God hath linked to him, and therefore he muſt beare with her and maintaine peace and concorde with her as much as he can poſſibly. That is the thing that Moſes meant in ſaying, *If a man hate his wife*. For elſe a man might ſay, as for mee if I hadde hated her, I woulde haue beene diuorced from her, and not haue kept her ſtill. For what a thing had it beene for me to haue kept her ſtill in my houſe? Yea, but wherefore haſt thou taken an other wife to her, but becauſe thou diddeſt miſlike of the firſt? All the pretences which thou canſt alleadge are to no purpoſe; vaine are ſuch excuſes. For God who is ẏ Iudge of mens hearts, telleth thee that if thou beare her not a right and pure loue, thou hateſt her.

Now Moſes addeth, *When he hateth the one and loueth the other*, if he haue children by them both, he may not make the childe of the beloued, his heire by giuing him the prerogatiue of dubble portion aboue the reſt of his children. But the birthright muſt remaine to him to whome it belongeth by nature, though the mother of him was not ſo well liked of her husbande as the other. That is the thing in effect, which Moſes commaundeth in this text. And as touching the birthright of the firſtborne: it was verie auntient euen before the Lawe, yea euen before the going of the people into Egypt, there was a regard had of the birthright. For although Iacob was in Egypt when hee dyed: yet ſpake hee as of a thing growen already into cuſtome and helde for a common rule, that is to witte, that there ſhoulde alwayes bee a kinde of preheminence in elderſhip, ſo as ẏ eldeſt brother ſhould beare chiefe ſway in the houſe ouer his brethrẽ. And we ſee it in very deede in the bleſſing ẏ Iſaac gaue vnto Iacob, taking him neuertheleſſe to haue beene Eſaw. For he maketh him his eldeſt ſonne, with prerogatiue of Lordſhippe and ſoueraigntie ouer all his brethren, that is to ſay, ouer all his kinred. Yee ſee then howe it is an auntient prerogatiue, inſomuch as a man may ſay, it came as it were by inſpiration, & that it was not of mens inuenting, but of Gods owne appointing, though we haue no recorde thereof, ne can proue the thing otherwiſe than by ſingle coniecture. Yet notwithſtanding, this ſerueth not to excuſe the ambition of ſuch as will needes giue al that they haue to their eldeſt ſonne, to the intent to maintaine their houſes in greate eſtate, which we ſee is the marke that men haue ſhot at. Whereof comes it that in many countryes, the elder brother hath all, and the younger brothers as good as nothing, and that men doe giue them a morſell of breade as though their fathers had layde the wallet vppon their neckes to bid them ſhift for themſelues? Whereof comes this, but of a pride, that they will needes haue their houſes to continue in their name, and not be diminiſhed? Yea, but our Lorde telleth vs that we muſt paſſe through this worlde as wayfarers. And wee knowe how the prophet ſkorneth thoſe that will needes plant their names vpon earth after that Pſal.49.12. faſhion. In the nine and fortith Pſalme he declareth that they muſt needes be very dulwitted ſith they ſee that they muſt goe to the graue like ſheepe, and that their life is as fickle as can bee, and yet notwithſtanding will needes (as it were in diſpite of God) haue an euerlaſting monumẽt here belowe, where all thinges are tranſitorie. But yet doeth this madneſſe continue alwayes, as he ſheweth anon after. Wee ſee with our eies how God mocketh ſuch beaſtlineſſe of men, and yet their aftercommers continue ſtill hard hearted and wilfull, following the madneſſe of their fathers. And when there be Lawes that giue al the ſubſtaunce after that faſhion to the eldeſt brother, and leaue the reſt of the children vnprouided: let vs aſſure our ſelues that thoſe Lawes are vnrightfull and wicked. And why? For (as I haue ſayde afore) we muſt goe to the roote; and when we will iudge of thinges aright, wee muſt haue an eye to the originall from whence the ſame proceedeth. For although God put men neuer ſo much in minde of their frailtie, yet is there ſuch an ouerweening in them, that they will needes be abiding ſtill in this worlde, and leaue an euerlaſting remembrãce behind them. Againe we ſee that this kinde of dealing is contrarie to all naturall affection. For ought not a father to loue all his children? Yea, but this is my firſtborne. And what are the reſt? Wilt thou leaue them to the wide worlde? Wilt thou haue no regard of them? He that careth not for thoſe which are of his owne houſholde, is worſe than 1.Tim.5.8. an Infidell (ſayeth Saint Paul) and hath forſaken the faith. Euen the very heathen had this grauen alwayes in their hearts, that howſoeuer they themſelues fared, they had eſpeciall care of their children. Although a mannes children be not worthie to be beloued, yet ought nature to ouerrule in that caſe whatſoeuer come thereof. Nay, although you yourſelues be euill (ſayth our Lord Ieſus Chriſt) yet do ye not faile to procure good to your children. Therefore as for thẽ that haue Matt.7.11. vtterly done away all naturall affection, they ſhewe themſelues to bee woorſe than the heathen, and more corrupted than they. So then, we muſt alwayes holde vs to this rule, that a father is bound to prouide for all his children, and that the eldeſt muſt not be as a gulfe. Againe, the birthright which was allowed of before the Lawe, and alſo put in vre afore the Law, allowed but dubble portion to the eldeſt. And that was reaſonable, becauſe the eldeſt is commonly put to the greateſt charges: and when his brothers are left fatherleſſe, hee muſt be faine to be their guyde, and to be as a head and a father to them all. Moreouer, he is as it were the ſtrength of his father aboue all the reſt. And it is the reaſon that is ſet downe here, which reaſon we ſee that Iacob alſo vſeth, ſaying he is the beginning of my Gen.49.3. ſtrength. God beſtoweth a kinde of dignitie vpon men, when he maketh them fathers: for hee imparteth his owne name vnto them. All kinred proceedeth from him, and to ſpeake properly, there is no father but he, I meane as well of the body as of the ſoule. And yet notwithſtanding, the ſame title is attributed to men, euen becauſe God vouchſafeth to yeelde them that honour. Nowe when God honoreth a man ſo much, as to make him a firſtbegottẽ, and to giue him preheminence aboue his brothers: if he abuſe it, he caſteth away the grace that God beſtoweth vpon him.

Neuertheleſſe, we ſee it is not ſo perpetuall a rule, but that an elder brother may be diſpoſſeſſed of his roome, as we ſee befell to Ruben, who Gen.49.4. was Iacobs eldeſt ſonne. And the Teſtament that Iacob made was not after the common maner of men, as though the matter had beene to haue bin ordered after his owne liking: but God ſpake by his mouth, ſo as there ſcaped him not any one worde, which was not a propheſie. And therefore he ſayth, Thou Ruben my firſtbegottẽ which waſt ẏ flower & beginning of my ſtrength, thou oughteſt to haue bin innobled in my houſe, but nowe thou haſt beene ſorrowe and heauines to me: Thou muſt then vaniſh away and be bereft of the honour that belonged to thee by nature. Thus was Ruben diſpoſſeſſed and after a ſort baniſhed from his birthright. For he hadde committed too too wicked a deede, & too deadly a crime. And although God forgaue him, ſo as he dyed not for it: yet was he noted with endleſſe infamie, both he & all his ofſpring, becauſe of the inceſt which hee had committed. The right then of the elderſhip is not a thing ſo peremptorily aſſured, but that a child may be diſpoſſeſſed of it for his misbehauiour, or for ſome other lawefull cauſe. But that a man ſhoulde bee ſuffered to peruert the order of nature for one wiues ſake whõ hee loueth better than an other, that were no reaſon. Nowe then let vs marke in fewe wordes, that God ment to make a brydle to reſtraine men withall, leaſt they might be won by their wiues allurementes to conuey away the right of their children from one to another:God (I ſay) ment to prouide a remedy for it aforehande.

And firſt of all let vs marke, that the affections which we bring naturally with vs from our mothers wombe, are vtterly corrupted in vs by, I wote not what a kinde of luſtes. And if it be ſo in them, what is it in the reſt? As I ſayde afore, ye ſee howe the loue of a father is common to all men by nature. It is not a vertue peculiar to the faithfull, as it were for that they be willing to obey God, and haue an eye to his commaundements:but although a man were neuer taught it, ne euer wiſt what the ſeruice of GOD ment; yet ſhall he well vnderſtande that it is but ambition and pride, to defraude the reſt of his children of the portion of his goods, for the aduancing of his eldeſt ſonne. True it is that he is the beginning of his ſtrength: but what for that? ſhould a man be ſo bewitched with the liking of a woman, that he ſhould vtterly forget what nature it ſelfe teacheth vs, and which ought to be printed in all men euen from their mothers wombes? Therefore we haue heere a good and profitable leſſon, to put vs in mind that we muſt fight againſt our luſtes, as though they were enemies inflamed againſt vs with all rage, and that we muſt inforce ourſelues in this caſe, for we ſhal neuer bring it to paſſe with eaſe. And the hardneſſe therof muſt not diſcorage vs, but although we ſee it to be a verie difficult and troubleſome thing to be able to ouermaiſter our luſtes; Yet let vs goe forewarde with it ſtill. In deede wee muſt not preſume vpon our owne ſtrength; but we muſt acknowledge our owne weakenes & flee vnto God, who in the ende will giue vs a happie victorie.

Furthermore, to knit vp this matter, let vs mind the thing that I haue touched afore:which is, that although we be not puniſhed before men for our faultes and miſdeedes, yet muſt not that ſerue to lull vs a ſleepe. For why? God keepeth ſtill his iudgement in ſtore: and before him wee ſhall not be quit. Nowadayes if a man can ſay that the Lawe can finde no fault in him, he thinketh himſelfe to be an Angell. Yea, but if a man do cocker himſelfe vnder that pretence, ſhould God alſo ceaſe to doe his office therefore? Then let vs learne to order our liues after ſuch a ſorte, as our eye may not be alonely vpon men. For the ciuil Lawes(as I haue told you already)ſerue but to deale with vs according to our power and abilitie: but the righteouſneſſe which God commaundeth vs in his ſpirituall Lawe is a perfection whereunto we are tyed and bounde. And although we be not able to performe it: yet muſt wee holde on ſtill towardes it, by ſetting our mindes therupon, & by ſtreyning all our powers to the vttermoſt. And when we finde any thing amiſſe: we muſt bee ſorie for it, and condemne ourſelues. For although men require nothing at our handes; yet ſhal we be euer guiltie before God. Thus ye ſee what we haue to remember, to the intent we be not ſo blinded as to beare ourſelues in hande, that becauſe wee be ſcaped the handes of men, therefore we be alſo acquit and diſcharged before God. Let that ſerue for one point.

And thereupon let vs learne further, that wee muſt not imagine as a number of fantaſtical perſons do, that all the thinges are allowed of God, which were not puniſhed in the commonweale of the Iewes: For our Lorde executed a dubble office among that people. Hee gaue them an earthly order of gouernement, after the maner of the Lawes which we haue: and alſo he deliuered them a rule whereafter hee will haue vs to behaue ourſelues as his children. For if we intende to haue a ſure recorde of Gods will, wee muſt reſort to the tenne cōmandementes, wherin is comprehended the ſũme of all holines and righteouſneſſe. He that frameth his life according to the tenne commaundementes, may wel ſay that he hath the perfect righteouſneſſe. But foraſmuch as we come farre ſhort of it, and can by no meanes come neere it ſo long as wee bee clothed with our fleſh: let vs acknowledge ourſelues to be wretched ſinners, and reſort for refuge to the mercy of our God, fighting manfully in the meane ſeaſon againſt our owne vices, and indeuouring continually to cutte off all impediments, vntil we feele ourſelues to haue profited: and there muſt be none ende of this battell, vntill our Lorde haue throughly reclaimed vs to him, which will not be before he haue taken vs out of this world. Thus much for the firſt point.

Secondly let vs note, that whereas God diſcouereth the frailtie of ſuch as forget themſelues, as of husbandes that loue not their wiues: the ſame ought to ſerue vs for a brydle, to make vs to bethinke ourſelues the better. For if a man put away his wife, the bonde which God hadde made is broken. And to whō is the wrong done? Not to a mortal creature, but to God the author of mariage, who is offended thereat. And wherof commeth it but of this, that the husbande is not rightly minded towardes his wife, to thinke with himſelfe, God hath giuen her to me to be as a part of mine owne fleſh, and therefore it becōmeth me to maintaine her as mine owne perſon. When men haue not this conſideration with them, they be blinded with beaſtly luſt to put away their wiues. Foraſmuch therfore as we ſee that Gods order is in ſo dooing confounded and ouerthrowen: let vs bee aſhamed to ſuffer ourſelues to be toſſed to & fro after ẏ faſhion by our leaud affections, ſpecially when we fal to the conſidering of ẏ which is ſayd here, namely *that if a man haue two wiues*. As how? God hath created but one wife for one man: hee hath ſayde it with his owne mouth, that it was ynough for a man to haue one helper. He had ſpirite ſufficient ynough to haue created a hundred women if he had liſted: but hee gaue vs to vnderſtande that a man ought to holde himſelfe contented with one wife, and that it is the order which hee made at the beginning. Nowe then it ought to make vs to quake, when wee ſee men fall to puſhing with their hornes after that faſhion againſt God, breaking the bonde which ought to be holy and inuiolable. Againe, when wee ſee

Mal.2,15.

that a man hath ſo vnhallowed wedlocke by his toſſing to and fro: it is a meane to make vs bethinke ourſelues. If a man haue a wife, be ſhee once dead, it is lawefull for him to marrie again: but yet the worlde ſees that the ſecond wife will be gathering for her owne children, yea euen with filching & ſtealing from her husband. And that is a token of Gods curſe, & of the wretchedneſſe that is in vs by reaſon of ſinne. But if a man haue two wiues at once in one houſe, what a braule will there be? He ſhall finde himſelfe to be as it were drawen in peeces, doe the beſt hee can. Wee ſee what befell to our father Iacob. Now then, ſeeing we knowe all theſe thinges, let vs learn to ſubmit ourſelues to God, truſting that his bleſſing ſhalbe vppon vs, if wee liue ſoberly, mildly, and chaſtly, as he commandeth. If a huſbande liue in peace & concorde with his wife, & loue her as God commandeth him to doe: God will ſurely bleſſe him and all his iſſue after him. We may well hope (ſay I) that God will make vs to proſper after that manner, if we liue ſo in awe vnder his brydle. But contrariwiſe let vs looke to be curſed of him and to haue all maner of cōfuſion come vpon vs, if wee will not obey Gods ordinance, as we ſee that men are hardly ſubdued, but that their wicked luſtes and affections do carry them away continually. Neuertheleſſe let vs be afraid, and let vs learne to beholde ourſelues in the examples that are ſhewed vs heere. The way (ſay I) to preſerue mariage vnuiolated, to mainteine loue and concorde betweene man and wife, is to beare in mind that God hath knit them together in one, and that he hath therewithall promiſed to be the gouernour of mariages, and to powre out his bleſſing vpon thē; and if we alſo do put our truſt in him, & haue an eye to him; it is certaine that he wil rule vs, and ſubdue all our wicked affections. Let vs be diligent in doing our duetie, euery man in his calling, & then ſhall we not only liue in peace and concord during this preſent life, but alſo our temporall mariage ſhall leade vs further both men and women, that is to wit to the holy vnion betweene the ſonne of GOD and vs, not onely which he hath ſtabliſhed already by his bloudſhed, but alſo which ſhall then come to perfection, when wee be vnited to him in the kingdome of heauen.

Nowe let vs kneele downe in the preſence of our good God and father, praying him to rid vs dayly more and more of our fleſh and of all the corruptions thereof, and to make vs ſo to feele our ſinnes, as wee may at leaſtwiſe bee ſory that we haue offended him, and deſire to be ridde of them continually more and more, proceeding ſtill forewarde in the doctrine of repentance, vntill we be fully brought home vnto him, and that he will vouchſafe ſo to beare with vs, as in the meane while we may by his holy ſpirit, be drawen vnto him, euen vntill we be come altogether home vnto him. That it may pleaſe him to graunt this grace, not only vnto vs, but alſo to all people and Nations of the earth, &c.

On Tewſday the laſt of December. 1555.

The Cxxiij. Sermon which is the fourth vpon the one and twentith Chapter.

18 If a man haue a ſonne that is ſtubborne & diſobedient, ſo as he will not harken to the voice of his father, nor to the voyce of his mother, and they haue chaſtiſed him, and he will not obey them:

19 Then ſhall his father and mother take him, and bring him to the Elders of their Citie, and vnto the gate of their place,

20 And ſhall ſay to the Elders of their Citie: This ſonne of ours is ſtubborne and diſobedient, and will not harken to our voyce, he is a ryottour and a drunkard.

21 And all the men of that Citie ſhall ſtone him with ſtones vnto death. And ſo ſhalt thou rid away the euill from thee, that all Iſraell may be afrayde when they heare thereof.

HEere firſt of all is ſhewed what their charge & duetie is which haue children: and ſecondely that when children growe paſt amendment by their fathers & mothers, they muſt be rooted out, bycauſe their doing is againſt nature, and it is ſuch an infection as prouoketh Gods wrath vpon the whole Countrey. Nowe as touching the firſt point, it is ſayde *that if a man haue a frowarde and ſtubborne ſonne, and that he haue done his indeuour to reforme him.* Here God preſuppoſeth that the father and mother doe performe their duetie; for their children are giuen them with condition that they muſt yeelde account of them. If a man haue layde the brydle vppon his childes necke, and let him playe the looſe colte: he is worthy to haue his eyes picke out by him, and all the euill that the childe doeth is to be imputed to his father, becauſe he was negligent in correcting him. Therefore wee ſee heere (as I ſayde afore) that Moſes doeth here warne fathers and mothers to bee diligent in nurturing their children. And if chaſtiſement will not preuaile, their children are to be taken for vtterly vnrecouerable. Wherefore, that wee may benefite ourſelues by this text, let vs marke well, that he to whome GOD giueth children, muſt haue a ſpeciall care to bring them vppe well: for, that is a ſingular treaſure, which ought to be preferred before al the goods in the worlde. Then if a man be ſlothfull, and ſuffer his children to runne at randone: is it not an vnthankefulneſſe that offendeth GOD greeuouſly, ſeeing hee deſpiſeth the benefite and honour which hee had vouchſafed vppon him? Muſt it not needes be that men are ſtarke blinde, when they make more account of ſome other thing in their houſe, than of their owne children? Some haue more care of their kine, Oxen, or Horſes, than of their children. Euery man makes account of his wares, of his Lands, and of his Medowes: and in the meane while they let the chiefe thing alone. Worthy be they to bee ſent to ſchoole to a certaine Heathen man, who beeing in a houſe where all thinges were as finely furniſhed and dreſſed as could be deuiſed, & finding the good mās ſonne to bee a ranke ſlouin and euilnurtured, did ſpit in his face, ſaying: I muſt needes ſpitte vppon this filth that is left heere. As for thoſe which are ſo diligent and watchfull about their marchandiſe, their reuenewes, their poſſeſſions, yea and their Cattell, inſomuch as they take more care for their dogges and horſes than for their children; accordingly as wee ſee howe greate Lordes ſette more ſtore by their haukes and houndes than by their children: Doe not ſuch blinde wretches bewraye their beaſtlineſſe, that men may abhorre them as folke too too farre voide of all witte and reaſon? Yet notwithſtanding our Lorde telleth vs heere, that if men or women haue children, they muſt looke to the bringing vppe of them. True it is, that chiefly it is the fathers duetie: but yet muſt not the mother alſo be barred of her right. If a childe be ſo luſtie as to ſay, my mother is a woman; he muſt goe and finde fault with GOD. For wee ſee heere howe the authoritie is giuen as well to the one as to the other, ſo as God will not haue the father alone to haue the gouerning of the childe, but that the mother alſo ſhoulde haue part of the honour and preheminence, and that yͤ child which will not obey his mother, ſhall be taken for paſt grace, & be condemned to death. And therefore both of them ought to do their endeuour to the vttermoſt of their power. For ſeeing that GOD hath honoured the mother, it is good reaſon that ſhee on her ſide ſhoulde ſtreyne her ſelfe to doe her duetie. And it is not ynough for fathers and mothers not to giue their children leaue to doe euill, or not to traine them thereunto: but they muſt alſo nurture them and inſtruct them in goodneſſe, as nature it ſelfe ſheweth. If a father ſay, As for mee, I vpholde not my ſonne in this euill, I miſlike of it; but I can not doe withall: it is a very ſimple excuſe, and it is not meete to be admitted or to be taken in account. For it may be ſayde vnto him; thou art a very blocke; for ſeeing thou art ſet in that place, and he will haue thee to bee the maiſter of thy childe: thou art but a dolt in that thou makeſt no countenaunce when thou ſeeſt him doe amiſſe. So then, lette vs learne that heere GOD requireth a carefulneſſe in fathers and mothers, that they ſhoulde take paines to teach their children, and haue an eye to their behauiour and diſpoſitions: and that if there be any fault in them, they correct it, and be very diligent in that behalfe.

Nowe if onely negligence be ſo condemned though fathers and mothers allowe not of their childrens faultes: what will become of them when they bolſter them in their euilldooinges, and cloke them as much as they can, and are offended when any other bodie goes about to bring them into the right way from their vnthriftineſſe? And yet we ſee that parentes doe ſo. Truely, negligence is too common a thing: for fathers & mothers haue no further regard of their children, than to receiue ſome ſeruice at their hands. In deede they coulde well finde in their heartes that their children were taught: what to doe? To thinke vpon their houſhould buſineſſe and dealinges, or to occupy ſome trade that they might put them to no coſt when they came to age, but rather that they might reape ſome profite by them. For theſe wayes there is commonly care ynough. But as for the feare of GOD, honeſtie of conuerſation, and all other vertues: they neuer thinke vppon them. For (as the prouerbe ſayes,) there is no likelihoode that thoſe thinges will bring gryſt to the mill, and therefore a father can finde in his hart to winke at yͤ vices of his child, ſo long as he ſees no diſaduantage to inſue of it. But there is malice alſo matched with it: inſomuch that if a man goe about to reforme their children, they will ſteppe vp againſt him, and fauour their children, and maintaine them euen againſt GOD. And our Lorde payeth them the wages which they haue deſerued. Wee ſee howe the verieſt pinchpennies in a whole Citie or countrey, and the verieſt niggardes and vilanes, which would gnawe off their fingers endes for a pennie, or for a dodkinne to white their teeth withall: haue whoremongers to their children, who can not but picke their fathers purſes: for a harlotte will alwayes be crauing. The child therefore becomes a robber of his father, and yet the father is contented to maintaine him, and will be angry that any body ſhould chaſtiſe him for it, ſpewing foorth his poyſon like a diuell as hee is. In deede this is no newe thing, for it falles out ſo in all caſes; and likewiſe alſo in this behalfe. Nowe when ſuch thinges are to be

ſeene, ought we not to beholde Gods vengeance alſo? Thou art a pinchpenny, thou art ſo giuen to couetouſneſſe ẏ thou pineſt vpon the ground, thou dareſt not eate one bit of breade but with greefe: and yet in the meane while thou haſt a Sonne that filcheth and ſtealeth from thee to maintaine his whoredome. Becauſe thou art a deſpiſer of God, and a wicked keytiſe, and wilt needes haue thy ſonne to reſemble thee, and thy mainteyning of him after that faſhion, is a furtherance of his ſinne and wickedneſſe: Therfore doeth God recompence thee according to thy deſert. For thou art worthy to haue thy goods deuoured, and to be mocked at of the whole worlde, ſo as all men may beholde thy ſhame, & thou thy ſelfe neuer perceiue it. Herein we ſee Gods manifeſt iudgement. Whatſoeuer it be let vs beare in minde this leſſon, that if fathers and mothers be negligent, they be as blameworthy before God, as if they had giuen their children leaue to doe all maner of wickedneſſe. But if they be offended at other men for correcting them, & for indeuoring to bring thẽ backe into the right way: they ſhew thẽſelues to be become ſtarke diuels, and ẏ God hath giuen them vp to a reprobate ſenſe. Therefore let euery of vs for his owne part take warning, to diſcharge ourſelues of his duetie. And let ſuch as haue children take pains to teach them, howbeit not for the reaping of any earthly profite by them. Truly, that may well be an acceſſarie to it: but it ought not to be the chiefe point. Wherunto then muſt they haue regarde? Foraſmuch as God hath done them the honour to ſet them in the degree of fathers: they muſt do their beſt to yeelde vnto him their children whom he hath put into their handes, & to make true ſacrifices of them vnto him, that there may alwayes remaine ſome good ſeede to honour him withall. For we ſee howe ẏ ſcripture telleth vs oftentimes that Gods name muſt floriſh from generation to generation. And that is to the end ẏ hauing ſerued him all the time of our life, we ſhould indeuour to the vttermoſt of our power, that there might remain a good ofſpring after our deceaſe ſo as Gods glory might not be quenched nor buried, but ẏ his praiſe might indure for euer. That (ſay I) is the marke whereat fathers & mothers ought to aime: inſomuch that euen they ẏ haue no children, ought to haue the ſame minde and deſire, yea and to ſhewe it alſo by their doings as much as they can poſſibly. What ought he then to doe, who is bound to it by ſome ſpeciall reaſõ? When he ſeeth a mirrour of Gods grace in his
Pſal.128. houſe, it is the bleſſing which the ſcripture doth ſo highly commende as who would ſay, I haue my yong children about me, & God ſheweth me as it were with his finger, ẏ he loueth me & hath a care of my houſe. He hath created mee heere yong children of my ſeede, after his own image, and they be baptiſed in his name, to the intent I ſhould bee the more mooued to dedicate them to him, & to frame them to the obeying of him. If a man haue ſuch a teaching, and ſuch a marke to ſet his eyes vpon, and yet is neuer the more prouoked to doe his duetie: muſt it not needes be that he is worſe than a block? So then let this reſpect bee well marked, and let men beare it in mind, that it may ſtirre them vp to do the thing that is tolde them heere, namely to bring vp their children faithfully if they haue any. And moreouer when they ſee any euill touch or vice in them; let them labour to reforme it, ſo as the father and mother may proteſt that they haue done their dueties.

Nowe moreouer, heere is expreſſe mention made of ſtubbornneſſe. For as concerning peculiar faultes, a father and a mother ought to indeuour continually to bring their children into the right way. True it is that God ment not to haue other faultes to goe vnpuniſhed. When a childe hath any way offended hauing a father or mother aliue; it is not meant that hee ſhould be exempted from puniſhment, vnder colour that he is vnder correction of his father and mother. But heere God ſpeaketh of an other caſe, which is, that fathers and mothers ſhould bring their children before the Iudge to haue them put to death. Loe, heere is a great extremitie. We knowe well what a heartbreaking it is to a father to ſee his ſonne puniſhed by Lawe, euen though it bee by ſome other bodyes meane. Then is it not poſſible for a father to deliuer his ſonne to death, vntill he haue aſſayed all the remedies that can bee: for otherwiſe it were againſt kinde. Therefore not without cauſe is heere mention made of ſo great pride and ſtubbornneſſe, that the father hauing ſtreyned himſelfe and done what hee can to the vttermoſt to reclayme his childe, perceiueth that it booteth him not to doe any more, and therefore that he muſt bee faine to deliuer him into the Iudges hande to be put to death. And ſo wee ſee that fathers and mothers muſt proceede in chaſtiſeſing their children, vntill they ſee them vtterly paſt hope of amendement. And I adde this, becauſe that parentes are ſo out of patience ſometimes when their children will not be reclaymed at the firſt choppe, that for very ſpyte they let them alone: and ſo their children fall into all exceſſe. But they ought not to deale ſo. Howe then? Vntill they finde by experience that their childe is out of meaſure ſtubborne, and ſheweth himſelfe to bee of ſo frowarde and ildiſpoſed nature, that hee can not be reclaimed: the father and the mother ought to proceede ſtill with that nurturing of him which God commaundeth heere. And parentes ought to bee patient in this caſe: for mildeneſſe is a vertue right requiſite in this behalfe, becauſe that if a father truſt to his owne courage, he ſhall marre his children if he finde any hardeneſſe in the teaching of them, foraſmuch as it is alwayes a painefull thing, and yet GOD will haue men to occupie themſelues in nurturing of their children, notwithſtanding the painefulneſſe thereof. And if they can not frame their children according to their deſire, but that they will needes take the brydle in their teeth: truely it can not but turne to the great griefe of the parentes. What ſay they? Ought not one worde to ſerue to the childe? Ought he not to be aſhamed if there were any droppe of honeſtie in him? After that manner might a father ſpeake. But howſoeuer the worlde go, yet muſt not the creature be left at randon, without regarde of winning him to God. Wee muſt rather vſe patience ſtill, as Saint Paul counſelleth vs in ſpeaking of corrections. In deede hee telleth vs that we muſt vſe ſharpneſſe and rigour to moue ſuch as be ouermuch hardened in their naughtineſſe, but yet hee woulde haue it matched with meekeneſſe and patience. Nowe then, what ought fathers to doe? Should they bee ſo far out of patience, as to giue ouer the correction of their children? No. And therefore let vs learne that in this text fathers for their parte are warned to haue a ſtay of themſelues, when they ſee their children giuen to lightneſſe & vnconſtancie, and to misbehaue themſelues: and that although they cannot winne them at the firſt, nor bring them to ſuch meekeneſſe as to make them take ŷ right way of their owne good will; yet they muſt conſider with them ſelues howe it is Gods will to keepe them occupied in that kynde of paines taking; and to trye their patience after that manner. Thus yee ſee one other poynt more which wee haue to marke in this text, where mention is made of ſuch vnreformable ſtoutneſſe and ſtubborneſſe as fathers and mothers doe finde to bee paſt remedie, in reſpect of themſelues, and therefore are faine to reſort to the Iudge.

Nowe let vs come to the euidence that is to be giuen by the father and the mother. It is ſaid, that *they ſhall come to the gate*; for that was the place of iuſtice in olde time. So then they ſhall repaire to the ſeate of iuſtice, and *there ſay, This ſonne of ours is ſtubborne againſt vs, & froward:* wee haue aſſayed to reforme him & cannot preuaile with him: *He is a riotour & a drunkarde*: and therfore wee put him now into your handes. Gods will is that vppon this euidence, the chyld ſhall bee ſtoned to death. And it is not without cauſe ŷ he giueth ſuch authoritie to fathers and mothers. For it is not likely that men wilbe ſo cruell as to ſpill their own bloud: that were vtterly againſt nature. Therfore it is good reaſon that ŷ father & mother ſhoulde bee beleeued without further ſcanning or ſifting of the matter, ſeeing the caſe concerneth their own children. For it were a ſhaming of the father & mother, to driue them to bring witneſſes againſt their own children, & then dealing by ordinarie maner of inditement ſhould be a derogation to the degree wherein God hath placed them. And ſeeing ſuch prerogatiue is giuen to men, they ought to haue the more regard of their duetie. But Gods will is that the father and the mother ſhould be beleeued. And why? Becauſe hee hath printed & ingrauen ſuch an affection naturally in their hearts towardes their children, as that they had leuer to dye than to do them wrong. Nowe if a man bee ſo wicked and beaſtly, as to practiſe any thing falſly againſt his owne childe, and to ſhewe himſelfe voyde of the louing kindnes which our Lorde hath printed in mankind, and whereof ſome footeſteppes and ſparkes are to be ſeene euen in the brute beaſtes: what a thing is it, that a man ſhould ſo farre ouerſhoote himſelfe? And therefore parentes ſee here what honour God doth them, in making them to be beleeued againſt their children: which thing ought to make them to inforce themſelues the more to loue them, and to bring them vp with al gentlenes, yea, and (euen in their chaſticing of thē) to vſe the rule that Saint Paul giueth vs, which is, that parents ſhoulde not put their children out of heart by their ouergreat rigour. Eph.6.4. For dyuers tymes it falleth out, that a chyld is put out of heart, becauſe he ſees his father vſe no mieldneſſe towardes him, nor any reaſon or loue in his doings. Therefore muſt diſcretion be vſed in this caſe. And to bee ſhort, let vs note, that the more honour GOD doeth vs, the more are wee bounde to doe our dueties. As for example, ſuch as are aduaunced to any degree or ſtate of honour, ought to conſider that GOD hath bounde them exceedingly, and that they ought to ſtrayne themſelues the more to doe their duetie: and this belongeth generally to al ſtates. But it is ſayde here expreſſely, concerning fathers and mothers. And therefore ſuch as haue children, muſt looke that they loue them after ſuch a ſorte, as they may well keepe themſelues from abuſing the power and authoritie which they haue of God: for it is not committed to them to that end.

Alſo it is declared heere further, that the father and the mother may not accuſe their children iudicially, vnleſſe they finde them vnreformable. I haue tolde you alreadie that this place ſpeaketh of puniſhment by death. For if fathers and mothers fall to putting of their children to death, before they haue vouchſafed to take paynes with them to ſee them well inſtructed: ought they not to bee coupled with them, as cauſers of their deſtruction? A father perchaunce will ſay, I haue not conſented to my ſonnes lewdneſſe, I haue let him alone. Yea, but ſhouldeſt thou haue falne aſleepe, when as God appoynted thee to keepe watch? Thou ſhouldeſt haue guyded thy childe, ſo as hee ſhoulde not haue ſtepped one pace, but thou ſhouldeſt haue beene at hande to direct him; Thou wouldeſt haue guyded a bruite beaſt, and haſt thou made no reckening of thine owne ſeede? Thou letteſt the creature alone which is formed after the image of God, whereof notwithſtanding thou waſt appointed to bee the keeper: and thinkeſt thou to ſcape by ſo tryfling an excuſe. Then if fathers and mothers come to this plunge of ſhewing their children to haue beene ſturdie and vnreformable, if they can not firſt proteſt that they haue done their dueties in chaſticing them, they themſelues alſo ſhalbee taken for guiltie, foraſmuch as it is apparant that it was long of themſelues that their children did leaudly, becauſe they did ſuffer them to runne at randon. By reaſon whereof if a man bee puniſhed by lawe, it may well bee inquired howe hee hath beene brought vp, and what teaching hee had in his fathers houſe: and when the miſchief procedeth from that ſpring, the father ought no more to ſcape ſcotfree than the ſonne. Thus yee ſee what wee haue to beare in mynd.

And here is mention made of two vices. *Our ſonne is a riotour & a drunkard.* Doth this import that other vices ought not to be corrected? No, but vnder theſe two kyndes, God ment to ſhew that fathers & mothers ought to bring vp their children in all vertue and honeſtie: For vnder ryoting and drunkenneſſe, hee meant to comprehende all looſeneſſe of life. If ryotouſneſſe bee puniſhed, what is to be doone to other much heynouſer thinges? What ſhall become of whoredome, theft, and periurie? What ſhall become of ſuch other like things? God then reſtreyneth not this lawe to theſe two vyces, but intendeth to ſhewe generally that all fathers and mothers ought to haue a vigilant eye to the conuerſations of their children; and that if they finde any miſbehauiour or vnthriftines in them, they muſt do their indeuour to reform them, and to bring them back againe from their euill trade. Thus much for one poynt. To bee ſhort, it is all one as if hee had ſayd, that if there bee any priuie faultes in children, their fathers and mothers muſt haue a vigilant eye vppon them, and reclaime them againe, that they growe not deſperate. For what a thing were it if a man ſhoulde marre his chylde, by bearing wͭ him in ſome particular fault? One euil woulde drawe on a hundred mo after it: and ſo the chylde ſhould bee loſt and vndone. Men therefore muſt take good heede, and preuent the danger, that their children growe not worſe and worſe, and that the forgiuing of one fault make them not to fall into another, and ſo they become euery day worſe than other. For if men ſuffer ryot or drunkenneſſe in their children, thoſe vyces are ill ynough of them ſelues alreadie: but yet in the ende a ryotour becomes a ſwyne, and wilbe altogether vnprofitable. And though there were no more in it but the vntemperance in yͤ abuſing of Gods creatures: ſoothly it were too much. What is drunkenneſſe? It is a kynde of beaſtlineſſe, that bereaueth men of the grace which God had beſtowed vpon them in nature. A ryotour being an ydle and vnprofitable lubber, and hauing ſpent all vpon bellyfare, muſt needes fall to ſtealing when he wanteth wherewith to furniſh out his exceſſe. But a drunkarde is yet worſe. The worlde ſees theſe euil inconueniences. Therefore wee had neede to preuent them, and to lay aforehand that ſuch miſchiefes come not to paſſe. Notwithſtanding it is ſhewed vs herewithall, howe men tumble out of one euill into another, vntill they come to deadly ruine. If a chylde bee a glutton or a drunkarde in his youth; well, men will ſay they be euill touches: but yet ſhall they be bornwith, and they wil not be thought to be deadly ſinnes. But wee ſee to what poynt children come by yͤ meanes. If that ryotouſneſſe bee not reformed in them, but that they continue ſtil in their ſtubbornes: at length they muſt bee deliuered into the hande of the Iuſticer, and bee put to death. Seeing it is ſo, let vs beware that wee flatter not our ſelues; but whenſoeuer there is any vyce in vs, let vs aſſure our ſelues that if ſtubbornnes be matched with it; we ſhall grow euery day more wilfull and hardharted than other, in ſo much yͭ a fault which is counted but ſmall before men, and as it were a veniall ſinne, wil become an intollerable cryme. Now it is God which ſaith ſo. Therefore let vs learne to examine our ſelues, and when we perceiue any vyce in vs, let vs doe our indeuour to amende it, for feare leaſt it throwe vs downe headlong altogither, and finally ſinke vs in ſuch ſorte as there remaine no mo puniſhmentes but the laſt, that is to ſay, the mortall and deadly puniſhment. Thus much concerning that poynt.

Nowe let vs treate of the duetie of children towardes their fathers and mothers. In deede it were to bee wiſhed afore all thinges, that children were of themſelues ſo wyſe and weladuyſed, as not to vexe their fathers and mothers in teaching them, and ſpecially in chaſtycing them for their faultes. And ſoothly, were our nature ſo well ruled as it ought to bee; a chylde woulde not tarty till hee were rebuked or compelled: but rather hee woulde thinke, alas, to what ende liue I in the worlde? And on yͤ other ſide hee woulde conſider thus, God hath ſet thee heere, to be ſerued and honoured by thee, & againe to obey my father and mother whome he hath giuen vnto mee to that end. Contrariwiſe if they reape nothing but ſorow by my meanes, it had bene better for mee to haue dyed before I was borne, yͭ the earth might haue ſwalowed me vp. After that maner ought a child to thinke. But foraſmuch as youth lacketh diſcretion; & childrē are not ſo reformable of themſelues as were requiſite: at leaſtwiſe let them ſuffer themſelues to bee gouerned by others. And if their father ſpye any vyce in them, let them acknowledge it when they bee put in mynde of it, and not onely confeſſe the miſdeede, [but alſo reforme it.] For it is but hypocriſie when a chyld holdeth on in his vnthriftineſſe, after hee hath made pretence of repentance, by humbling him ſelfe before his father. If hee change not his conditions, but continue ſtill in his vnthriftineſſe, it is a lying before GOD, and mocking of his father. Therefore if a chylde haue done amiſſe, or ſee himſelfe ſubiect to any vyce, and God is ſo gracious to him that hee hath a father or mother: Let him conſider thus with himſelfe: Go too; God reacheth thee his hande in this behalfe: for what are my father and my mother but the handes of God, and his inſtruments wherewith he intendeth to ſerue his turne, to guyde thee into the way of welfare? For when I ſee my father and my mother goe about to correct my vyces: I muſt needes ſet my ſelfe againſt GOD, and defye him openly; if my ſtomacke bee not abated and pulled downe, to receiue their correction. And ſurely, children ought to vnderſtande that this ſuperioritie ouer vs is the amiableſt in all the worlde: I meane the ſuperioritie which our fathers and mothers haue ouer vs. For although Kinges,

princes, & magiſtrates be to be reuerenced : yet is not that kind of ſuperiority ſo amiable. A man wilbe aſhamed to be corrected by his prince, or by his ſuperiour that weeldeth the ſword of Iuſtice: but if a father ſpeake to his ſonne, yea and ſmite him too, it is no ſhame at all for the child to ſtoope to him, though the father doe him wrong, or reuile him ſaying, thou villaine, thou ſtretchehalter, thou graceleſſe knaue, what wilt thou doe? When thou haſt killed me with greife and ſorrow of mind, thou muſt needes cal down Gods vengeance vpon thee. When the father vſeth ſuch roughneſſe towardes his chylde, and the chyld humbleth himſelfe vnto him, and becommeth as it were dumme without replying at all againſt him; it ſhalbee a great honour to him to haue receiued correction at his fathers hande, and to haue beene touched by him after that faſhion. Now then, ſith wee ſee that this ſuperioritie which God hath giuen to fathers & mothers, is a thing which wee ought euen naturally to haue in eſtimation: if a chyld nod his head at all the warninges that are giuen him, ſhewing himſelfe brazen faced and vtterly paſt ſhame, ſo as hee regardeth not what his father and mother ſay vnto him, but wrings his groyn at them for their putting of him in mynde of his faultes: is he not quyte & cleane paſt grace? What can a man ſay more, or hope for at his hande? Now then, let children haue regarde hereof, and let them note alſo that the honouring of their father and mother is the firſt commaundement that is giuen in the ſeconde table, and the onely commaundement of the law that
Eph.6.2. hath any promiſe, I meane ſpeciall promiſe, as S. Paul declareth. And hereby wee bee put in mynd, that ſuch as holde ſcorne to honor their fathers and mothers, doe not only deſpiſe God, but alſo ſhewe their vnbeleefe in mocking at all his promiſes, and in refuſing and caſting away of all his bleſſings wilfully; as if they ſhould ſay, I paſſe not for proſpering by Gods grace, I will none of that meane. And for proofe that it is ſo, God hauing ſayde that we muſt honour our father and mother, addeth, To the ende thou
Exo.20,12. mayſt liue long in the lande which the Lord thy God giueth thee: as if hee ſhoulde ſay, Looke not that I ſhoulde proſper you or bleſſe you, but vppon this condition, that yee obey your fathers and mothers. Nowe then, as for thoſe that harden themſelues, doe they not ſhewe that all is one to them whether they bee depriued of Gods grace and bleſſing, or no? And that is an intolerable vnthankfulnes.

Moreouer, let vs mark alſo, that wheras God ſpeaketh of the honouring of our fathers & mothers, hee meaneth not of ceremoniouſnes; but that children ſhoulde thinke thus with themſelues, God hath giuen mee a father and a mother to the intent I ſhoulde bee ruled by their hande, and liue vnder their direction. The honour then which a chylde oweth to his father & mother, conſiſteth not in pretending ſome ceremonious and counterfet humilitie: but in behauing himſelfe meekely, in ſuffering them to haue the gouernement of him, and in beeing tractable to bee refourmed when his parentes tell him of his faults. Thoſe bee the things that children ought to regarde, but ſpecially religion. For often times fathers and mothers deſerue well to bee diſobeyed at their childrens hands. And in deede, they can no skill of ſeruing God, otherwiſe than by diſobeying their fathers and mothers. If there bee any man ſo wicked, that hee woulde haue his ſonne giuen to craftineſſe, to leaudneſſe, to vnthankfulneſſe, to periurie, and to trecherie: what a thing were that? And yet we ſee a number of fathers, which haue beene deſpyſers of God all their life long, and all their ſeeking is to bring vp their children in their owne ſchoole. A father will ſay to his ſonne, I renounce thee if thou bee not like me. Such curſed wordes ſhall we heare men ſpeake. In ſo much that hee which hath beene a whoremonger and infected a whole countrye with his filthineſſe all the time of his life, or a blaſphemer, or a drunkarde; will needes haue his ſonne to bee like himſelfe. Nowe in ſuch caſes children muſt diſobey their parents: for otherwiſe they cannot obey God. And therefore S. Paul ſpeaking of the honor and obedience that children ſhould yeeld to their parentes, addeth this exception or afterſpeeche, *in the Lorde*. For Eph.6,1.
God muſt euer haue the vpper hande. And for the ſame cauſe alſo did I ſay erewhyles, that the honour which is required in this commaundement of the lawe, ought then cheefely to be put in practiſe, when fathers and mothers doe their indeuour to trayne vp their children well, and to correct their vyces. Then muſt the children in any wiſe obey, aſſuring themſelues that if they admit not both the warnings and the chaſticements of their parents, and reforme themſelues thereafter when they heare their vices ſo condemned: they ſhewe themſelues to be diſobedient both to God and to the order of nature. Notwithſtanding to the intent that children excuſe not themſelues, and beare themſelues in hande that it is a light fault to diſobey their parentes; heere God condemneth ſuch diſobedience to death. It is God that giueth this ſentence, and not man. And hee ſayeth that it is an vnpardonable fault, when a childe is ſo hardhearted, that his fathers and mothers correctiō cannot preuaile with him. For why? wee muſt euer come backe to this point, that ſuch a one is as a monſter: and whatſoeuer is againſt nature wee ought to lothe & abhorre it. And no dout but Gods curſe & vengeance would bee kindled againſt vs, if we ſhould ſuffer the thing that is againſt nature. Nowe if a child wil not heare his father and his mother, when God vouchſafeth to giue him gouernours at home to tell him his faults: his deſpyſing of them is a manifeſt deſpyſing of God. For why? God hath printed his marke vppon the father and mother, inſomuch that if there bee any religion, the ſame muſt bee acknowledged in the perſon of the father and of the mother. Euen the very Heathen had a cōmon ſaying concerning the obedience which they yeelded to God and to their parents. As if they ſhould ſay, (as nature had taught them)

that fathers & mothers beare the image of God in this world,& ỹ he which hath any religion in him,& acknowledgeth any ſoueraine maieſtie & ſubmitteth himſelf therto: muſt alſo needs obey his father & mother. The verie heathen ſpake after ỹ maner,it was their common ſtyle. Nowe then,if we receiue not this inſtruction, muſt it not needes follow,ỹ wee be too deſtitute of wit? Greatly ought we to be aſhamed,to be taught in the ſchoole of the Heathen,to knowe our dutie. Therefore(as I ſaide afore) let children knowe that it is no light fault nor eaſie to be pardoned, when they bee diſobedient to their fathers and mothers.For why?They had the inſtinct of nature,which they ought to haue followed. And therefore it is an vnpardonable cryme to diſobey a mans father & mother, according whereunto it is ſayde in another place, He that ſmyteth his father or his mother, ſhall dye ỹ death without fauour. Exod.21.15 If one ſtrike another man: well, he ſhalbe puniſhed for it. but if he beate his father or his mother, it is as much as if hee had killed a man: elſe there were no order or reaſon in nature. And why? For let vs alwayes haue an eye to the grounde which God hath ſet downe in nature: namely, that it is all one as if a man woulde confounde heauen and earth together, when hee ſetteth himſelfe ſo againſt his father and mother. And this ſerueth to hold children in awe, if they haue any ſparke of myldneſſe in them, and that they bee not vtterly vnreformable, ſo as Satan poſſeſſeth them wholly. That is the thing which we haue to remember more vpon this text.

Howbeit, foraſmuch as the time wil not ſuffer mee to ſpeake ſo much therof as were to bee ſpoken; wee will nowe come to the concluſion: which is, that if the diſobedience which is committed againſt the fathers of this worlde, bee ſo grieuouſly puniſhed by Gods lawe: what ſhall become of men when they will not heare the voyce of their heauenly father? True it is that heere God ſpeaketh of the corrections which proceede from himſelfe: for when a man nurtureth his chylde, he is Gods miniſter in that behalf, and his voyce is not the voyce of man but of God. But yet when as God declareth after a more manifeſt faſhion, that it is hee which gaue his lawe, ſo as wee haue his holy writte, where wee may heare his heauenly voyce: that is a voice of more authoritie, than the ſpeaking of a father or a mother at home in their houſe. Againe, wee come to the Church, where Gods worde is preached vnto vs, and God hath dedicated that place and the pulpit to deliuer out his worde to be heard, as though he were there in his owne perſon. Seeing then that Gods worde is ſo ſet downe vnto vs in the holy ſcripture, and ſo preached vnto vs: are they not to bee reiected as monſters, and in no wiſe to bee ſuffered, which diſobey the ſame and make no account of it? And if men beare with them, is it not a procuring of Gods wrath? When it hath lurked neuer ſo long among vs, in the ende it muſt needes bewray it ſelfe, and wee muſt feele to our coſt what it is to haue maintayned euill willingly and wittingly. So then, let vs alwayes make this compariſon. Seeing that God wilbee acknowleged in his creatures according to the degree which hee hath giuen to euery of them: and ſeeing alſo that hee will haue thoſe to bee obeyed which are in preheminence, ſo as the reſt muſt receiue their correction and ſubmit themſelues to them: it is much more reaſon, that hee himſelfe ſhoulde bee heard and obeyed, when hee ſpeaketh with his owne holy mouth, which thing hee doeth when wee reade the holy ſcripture, and when we heare his word preached. For inaſmuch as he hath ſet this order in his Church, that they which preache his worde ſhould repreſent the perſon of his ſonne: can wee ſay it is a light fault to haue deſpyſed Gods maieſtie, and to haue made no reckening of the hearing of his worde? Then let vs looke well to it.

Finally, let vs marke how it is ſaid here, *Thou ſhalt roote out the euil from thee, and all Iſraell ſhall heare thereof and be afrayd.* Here our Lord repeateth that againe which wee haue heard afore, ỹ is, that when outragious crimes are foſtered among vs, it is the next way to infect vs,& we ſee there needeth not much leauen to make ſower a whole lump of dow; beſides that we be tolde it by Gods word, experience alſo doth ſhew it vs. And therefore let Magiſtrates bee vigilant in rooting out wickedneſſe, yea and in puniſhing mennes faultes as they deſerue. If there bee neede of mannes correction, let it bee had, and let this extremitie of putting men to death bee alwayes preuented. But if the cryme be vnpardonable, then muſt ſeueritie and rigour be vſed. For if wickedneſſe bee willingly foſtered, men ſhall ſee in the ende what they ſhal haue wonne by it. Alſo let vs take warning therewithall, to benefite our ſelues by the examples which wee ſee before our eyes; that when any puniſhment is executed by order of lawe, wee may vnderſtande that God teacheth vs at other mennes coſt, and therefore wee ought to haue regarde thereof. Moreouer if Magiſtrates and Iudges bee called here of God, yea, and expreſſely cōmaunded by him to puniſh the diſobedience that is committed againſt earthly fathers and mothers: let vs mark, ỹ whenſoeuer there is any manifeſt contempt of God, any irreligiouſnes, or any withſtanding of his worde, thoſe thinges are much leſſe to be ſuffered: and that if they be borne with; it is rank treaſon to Godward, which he will not leaue vnpuniſhed. And therefore let all Magiſtrates and all ſuch as are ſet in place of gouernement to execute iuſtice, vnderſtande that God commendeth his owne honour to them aboue all thinges, and that they muſt bee vigilant in that caſe chiefely, yea, and that after ſuch a ſort, as al of vs together may ſhew by our doings, that our whole deſire is that God ſhould reigne among vs,& that we would not haue his worde to be deſpiſed and ſcorned, but rather reuerenced as it ought to bee. Wherefore let vs ſhewe this zeale, if wee will haue our Lorde to bleſſe and proſper vs.

Nowe let vs kneele downe in the preſence of our good God with acknowledgement of our faultes,praying him to vouchſafe ſo to tame vs, that whereas wee bee inclyned to much wretchedneſſe and corruption, at leaſtwiſe wee may not become frowarde and vnreformable : but that when wee bee warned by his worde , wee may euery of vs humble our ſelues, and quietly take the yoke which hee layeth vpon our ſhoulders, and patiently beare the corrections which he layes vppon vs by men, ſpecially by thoſe to whome hee hath giuen the charge to guyde and gouerne vs , ſo as euery of vs acknowledging himſelfe to bee ſubiect to his ſuperiours , may yeeld God his due obedience , and in no wiſe tary till wee bee compelled, and ſpurred , but receiue the warnings that are giuen vs , (from whence ſo euer they come) as the warnings of God, knowing that all trueth is of him, and that by that meanes alſo hee procureth our ſaluation . That it may pleaſe him to grant this grace, not onely to vs,but alſo to all nations and people of the earth,&c.

On VVedneſday the firſt of Ianuarie 1556.

The Cxxiiij. Sermon which is the fifth vpon the one and twentith Chapter.

22 If a man haue committed an offence worthie of death , and is put to death for it,and thou haſt hanged him on tree:

23 His dead bodie ſhall not hang all night vppon the tree, but thou ſhalt burie him the ſame day : For the curſe of God is on him that is hanged . And therefore defyle not thou the land which the Lorde thy God giueth thee to inherit.

THE lawe that I haue rehearſed here,containeth two parts. The one is, that when an offender is executed by order of lawe ; men muſt not bee aſhamed of the hanging of his bodie. Why ſo ? For a witneſſe that his death is a thing neither againſt God,nor againſt right:but rather that for the mainteining of ciuil gouernment among mankynd , it is requiſite that miſdeedes ſhould bee puniſhed, as wee haue ſeene alreadie that the euill muſt bee rooted out from among the people . And the ſeconde parte is, that the dead bodie(for all that) ſhall not hang vppon the gibbet aboue one day,becauſe it ſtriketh a horror into men and maketh them diſmayed,to ſee a mannes bodie ſo hanging in the ayre . God therefore willed that men ſhoulde content themſelues with it for one day in reſpect of iuſtice, and that afterwarde the bodye ſhoulde be buryed. In deede it is true that this lawe was peculiar to the Iewes, and that at this day wee bee no more bounde to it than to the ceremonies: it is now ſet at libertie.But yet doth the doctrine thereof continue ſtill. The vſe of the lawe is vtterly aboliſhed : but yet muſt wee haue an eye to the ende wherefore God commanded it,and apply the ſame to our learning.

Firſt of all then let vs marke,that although it bee a dreadfull thing to put a man to death,becauſe hee is created after the image of God:yet notwithſtanding , when it is done vppon iuſt cauſe , and by thoſe to whome God hath committed the ſworde of Iuſtice: it muſt needes bee done, and wee muſt not eſteeme it , as an vnkindly thing. For what a thing were it,if faultes ſhoulde ſcape vnpuniſhed ? It were better for vs to bee wylde beaſts. So then, ſeeing that mankynde cannot bee maintayned , but by rigour of iuſtice , and by the puniſhing of ſuch as haue diſturbed the common order : it muſt not bee taken for crueltie or for a defacing of Gods image,when a man is put to death . All ſuch manner of allegations muſt bee ſet aſide . For God him ſelfe ſpeaketh and telleth vs, that wee ought to bee ſo little aſhamed to put an offender to death ; that his body muſt bee layde out to the ſight of euery man , and thereupon God is to bee praiſed , for hauing ſo great and ſo fatherly care of men , as to roote out the perſon that is a diſturber of the peace , and to cut off thoſe as rotten members which might marre all the reſidue , that the reſt might abyde in ſafetie .

To bee ſhort , wee haue here a maintenance of the iuſtice that is executed by magiſtrates, in puniſhing mennes faultes and miſdeedes euen vnto the death. Iuſtice is not to be abhorred or miſliked, becauſe a man is ſent to the gallowes. Well may wee bee afrayde when wee ſee ſuch examples before vs: but yet muſt wee alſo commende and reuerence iuſtice. For why? Yee ſee here howe God alloweth and vpholdeth the puniſhing of offenders , as a thing acceptable to him; and that he will haue the verie heauen to bee a witneſſe thereof, by hanging vp the body vppon a gibbet , and hee will haue all the elementes to bee there alſo, to ſaye ; No, no, yee muſt not ſpare them: God hath appoynted that this execution ſhould bee done, and commanded the ſame, and therefore you ought to obey him. For if that were not, wee ſhoulde come to vtter confuſion : and God hath ſhewed vs that wee ought not to bee ſo wiſe as to incounter his will. I tell you this is a leſſon verie behoofefull for vs in theſe dayes.

Although this lawe was but for the outwarde man; yet was it Gods will that the inſtruction thereof ſhoulde indure for euer. And in very deede it hath continued among men, euen by nature. For the Heathen, (who had not the lawe of Moſes) fayled not to followe the ſame order: inſomuch that whenſoeuer any man was executed by iuſtice; it was ſet foorth for an example. Whereby wee may perceiue, that God hath grauen this principle in mennes heartes, that the executions which are done by perſons of authoritie, and by ſuch as are in office & haue the charge committed vnto them, are not to be euil ſpoken of, but rather that wee ought to cōmend them for obeying God, and for doing the thing that belonged to their degree. For if a Iudge beeing armed with the ſworde, doe ſpare the partie that hath committed a wicked deed: he is as blameworthie before God, as if hee had
Prou.17.15 condemned a guiltleſſe perſon, as Salomon auoweth. And this ſerueth to ouerthrowe the fantaſticall opinions of ſuch as ſay that among Chriſtians no man ought to be put to death, becauſe the like rigour is not as was vnder yͤ lawe. Verily as who ſhoulde ſay that God had changed his mynde and reſigned his office: for wee knowe that hee is Iudge of the worlde for euer: And although hee reſerue the execution of that office till the laſt iudgement, and haue committed that charge to our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt: yet is it his wil that there ſhould be ſome reſemblance of iuſtice euen in this earthly life. True it is, that it ſhall not come to perfection heere, and that the moſt parte of ſuch as ſhalbee condemned at the latter day, ſhall in this worlde ſcape the handes of the earthly Iudges: but yet for al that, howe ſoeuer the worlde goe, God will not haue inordinate looſeneſſe to reigne, ſo as men might do what they liſt, and al crymes ſcape vnpuniſhed. Therefore his will is that vengeance ſhould be executed by thoſe into whoſe hands hee hath put the ſworde of iuſtice, as ſayeth S. Paul in the thirteenth to the Romanes, where hee telleth vs that Gods arming of them after that ſorte is not for naught, hee will not haue them to bee but as a ſhadowe to ſcarre babes, and to bee vtterly voyde of power: but hee will haue Iudges to knowe that they bee bounde to puniſh miſdeedes. And ſo farre off is it that their ſo doing ſhalbee imputed to them for euill or ſinne; that God hath ſhewed by this ceremonie of the lawe, that all the Elementes of the worlde accept it and allowe of it as witneſſes to God, as who ſhoulde ſay that the body hanging in the ayre is as a ſolemne Record that ſuch execution is not to bee condemned, neyther ought the magiſtrates to bee deſirous to hyde it as though they were murderers of ſuch as they cauſe to bee put to death, but rather to ſet them out for an example, as who woulde ſay, wee haue done a ſacrifice vnto God, it is our office, it is our charge, thus behoueth it vs to doe: for if wee ſhoulde ſpare men in this behalfe, wee ſhoulde ſell that good cheape which is none of ours, that is to ſaye; Gods iuſtice. For it is committed vnto vs vppon condition that wee muſt yeeld account thereof. Thus much concerning the firſt poynt.

Nowe there is alſo a ſeconde poynt, which is that the body muſt not hang in the ayre aboue one day. And that is, becauſe ſuch ſightes doe in trueth make men afrayde. Alſo it was Gods will that one dayes recorde ſhoulde ſuffice among his people, & that they ſhould not keepe the corps there any longer. But I haue told you alreadie that wee be no more bounde thereunto by neceſſitie. In ſome countryes they haue deuiſed certaine brotherhoods, who ſhould goe and take down the bodyes from the Gibbets & burie them. And truely that was a fonde deuotion, for they knewe not wherefore they did ſo. The Iewes alſo were ſo bewitched with their owne dotages, that they thought that the buryall of them commaunded in this place did concerne the welfare of their ſoules. Likewiſe the Heathen imagined that the ſoules of men went wandring and ſtraying heere and there, vntill their bodyes were buryed. But theſe are dotages of the diuels owne deuyſing, to turne away men continually to a multitude of lyes. Gods care is rather of vs which are alyue, as though hee meant to ſet a meane betweene the rigour of Iuſtice and the gentleneſſe which ought to bee among vs. This meane therefore is well woorthie to bee marked; for wee euer ſwarue aſide to ſome extremitie. In ſhunning crueltie, wee become cowardly, and haue no more regarde of Iuſtice, but woulde haue all faultes forgiuen, and that men might haue free leaue to do all manner of miſchiefe without correction. On the other ſide, in mynding to bee ſeuere, we run in daunger of being too ſeuere. God therfore appoynteth a meane: which is, firſt of all, that we ſhould puniſh the offences that deſerue death. And ſecondly to the ende that Iuſtice ſhoulde bee had in honour, and that we ſhoulde not ſurmiſe any reprochefulneſſe in it; hee will haue the offenders bodies hoyſed vp into the aire for men to looke at, as it were in way of warrantie yͤ whē a magiſtrate puniſheth an offence, he offereth vp a ſacrifice acceptable in heauen, & conſequently which ought to be well taken on earth. Yet for all this, hee will not haue vs to be too hardhearted, but alwayes to reteine ſtill ſome pitifulneſſe and compaſſion. And when iuſtice is ſo approoued, he will haue the body to bee buryed, yea, euen remooued from of the earth as an infection. For why? So long as a mannes body hangeth vppon the gallowes, there are two thinges ſeene: the one is, that God hath well prouided for mankinde, in ordeyning the execution of iuſtice, and that malefactours ſhould not bee ſpared. That is one poynt. Another is, that men may ſay thus with themſelues, Lo here is a wicked deede done: for theſe are tokens that the land hath bin defiled. Therefore when a bodie is ſo hanged vp, it is a ſigne of the defyling of the lande by the committing of ſome robberie, murther, or other haynous cryme. When it is ſo, let this alſo bee euer marked. God therefore intendeth to ſhewe that where iuſtice is executed the fault is forgiuen, and the countrey ſtandeth no longer charged therewith, but his wrath is pacified: And as though the miſdeede had bin ſpared, he will haue the body buried. Thus yee ſee howe the executing of iuſtice vpon offenders and wicked doers, and the cutting off of leaudeneſſe, is a warrant that Gods vengeance ſhall not light vpon the Lande. Nowe then wee ſee in effect what God ment by his Lawe. Alſo we ſee howe the inſtruction continueth ſtill vnto vs, though we haue not the vſe of the Lawe it ſelfe, becauſe the Lawe commaunded a thing whereunto wee be no more bounde ſince the comming of our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt. So to be ſhorte, this doctrine is not vnprofitable: for wee knowe Gods meaning, which concerneth vs as well as the Iewes.

But nowe muſt wee come to the chiefe point that is to be gathered of this text. For whereas our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt was hanged on tree, it happened not by happe hazarde. Truely the Iewes deſired that he might be crucified, which in thoſe dayes was the moſt horrible, reprochfull yea and painefull death that could be. For the hanging of Chriſt vpon the tree, was not after the manner that is ſpoken of heere. Such as were ſtoned among the Iewes were alſo hanged vp vppon a gibbet after they were dead: and although they were not ſtrangled, nor beheaded, but ouerwhelmed with ſtones: yet were their bodyes taken and hanged vppe, that all others might take example at them. But our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt was crucified, yea euen as though hee had beene a cutthrote, after the ſame manner that men lay murtherers nowadayes vppon the wheele. And (as I ſayde) that was a verie cruell kinde of death. Neither was it doone by the Lawe of Moſes, but by cuſtome of the Romanes who raigned at that time in Iewrie. Yet notwithſtanding, the ſonne of God was hanged on tree. And the Iewes regarded it not, but cryed out to haue him crucified. Alſo when Pylate condemned him thereto, his meaning was not to put him to it, as in reſpect of the reprochfulneſſe thereof before God: but God gouerned it in ſuch ſort by his ſecret prouidence, that Ieſus Chriſt was accurſed when he hung vppon the croſſe, according to that which had beene ſpoken of him afore. And that is Saint Paules Gal.3.13. meaning. For in telling vs that we be ſette free from the curſe of the Lawe, hee ſayeth that our Lorde Ieſus bare it in his body by being hanged vpon tree. Alſo it is the ſame thing that Saint 1.Pet.2.24. Peter ment in ſaying that he bare our ſinnes vpon the tree. And otherwiſe this ſaying of the Eſa.53.5. prophet Eſay had not beene fulfilled, that the chaſtiſement of our peace was layde vpon him, ſo as hee was faine to beare our puniſhment, whereby we might be reconciled vnto GOD. And in the foreſayde text which I alleadged out of ẏ Galathians, S. Paul treateth of two things. He ſayeth that becauſe wee can not attaine to righteouſneſſe, but by fulfilling the Lawe in all pointes, and by being diſcharged before GOD: it behoued our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt to bee ſubiect to the Lawe, to the intent that his obedience might nowe be imputed vnto vs, and God accept thereof as though we brought the like obedience of our owne. When we ſpeake of being iuſtified before God, howe is that to be vnderſtoode? Verily that we ſhould obey the thinges that God commaundeth vs in his Lawe. For the righteouſneſſe that hee ſpeaketh of is, that he which doeth thoſe thinges ſhall liue thereby. Leuit.18.5. Then muſt our life be ruled altogether after the will of GOD, and then ſhall wee be taken for righteous before him. Is there nowe ſo much as one man to be founde, which commeth anie thing neere this obſeruation of the Lawe, and that with ſuch vncorrupt ſoundneſſe? No. The holieſt Saintes that euer haue beene, were farre off from ſuch perfection. Then are we all diſappointed of righteouſneſſe, ſo as we can not in any wiſe ſtande in Gods fauour. But yet are we righteous in the perſon of our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt. And why? For he beeing the ſouereigne king in whome there was no bondage nor ſubiection, did willingly ſubmitte himſelfe to the Lawe, and beare the yoke thereof for vs: for we knowe that he performed the will of GOD his father in all pointes to the full. And ſo by that meane we be taken for righteous in Ieſus Chriſt. Why ſo? Becauſe hee was obedient. Yea and that obedience of his was not for himſelfe; there was no ſubiection in him, neither was hee bounde to any thing: for he is altogether aboue the Lawe: therefore it followeth that he was obedient for vs. And therefore when wee flee to him for ſuccour, our heauenly father admitteth vs as if wee brought perfect obedience with vs. For looke what is wãting & miſſing in ourſelues, we go to ſeeke it like poore beggers in our Lord Ieſus Chriſt, and al is applyed vnto vs by the vertue of faith. Marke that for one point.

But Saint Paul addeth, that foraſmuch as we bee all accurſed by the Lawe, our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt was faine to beare our curſe. And he bare it (ſayeth he) for he was hanged vpon tree. And whereas the Lawe of God had ſayd, Curſed ſhall he be that hangeth on tree: the ſame was verified in the perſon of our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt. And S. Paul had an eye both to that which hath bin, and to that which we ſhall ſee hereafter, namely, Curſed ſhall the man bee which performeth not all the things ẏ are written here. Ye ſee how God hath declared his will. Thereupon he promiſeth that whoſoeuer keepeth his Lawe, ſhalbe taken for righteous and obtein the endleſſe life. But yet on the contrarie part he telleth vs, ẏ if a man faile in any one point, he ſhalbe curſed & Iames.2.10. forlorne without remedie. Now let euery of vs looke into himſelfe. Was there euer any man ẏ hath not failed many wayes? It is ſayd ẏ no man Pſal.143.2. ſhalbe founde righteous in his ſight. And againe in an other place, Lorde, if thou looke ſtreitely Pſal.130.4. vpon ſin, who can abide it? Who is able to ſhew himſelfe before thy iudgement ſeate? Needes muſt all men be confounded: and not for ſome one ſin, but for a number of wicked deedes ſhall we be put to ſhame, if god do once enter into account with vs. Then are we all vndone & damned as in reſpect of the Lawe, there is no more remedy, Curſed ſhal he be which doeth not all Leuit,8.5. thoſe thinges. Alas, we be neuer able to doe the hundredth part of them. I ſay ẏ although God guide vs vnto goodnes by his holy ſpirit, yet do we faile through our owne infirmitie, and there is euer great want in vs. Ye ſee then that we be vndone and paſt hope of recouery, vnleſſe the curſe be aboliſhed. And that was done in the perſon of our Lord Ieſus Chriſt, who as he hath performed all righteouſneſſe, ſo hath he alſo receiued the curſe to himſelfe which lay vppon our heades, & he hath borne it in his perſon, to the intent that henceforth we ſhould be free from it. As how? For he was not hanged vpon tree without the prouidence of God his father: wee muſt alwayes looke backe to ẏ point. For as for theſe raſcals which goe about to deface Gods prouidence, they ſhew that they neuer knew what religion meaneth; nay they be maſtife dogges, yea and much worſe than dogs, beleeuing no more in God than brute beaſtes, as the worlde knoweth. Notwithſtanding foraſmuch as God hath giuen his ſonne to death, as the ſcripture beareth witneſſe, that he hath ſo loued the worlde that he hath not ſpared his only ſonne, but hath deliuered him to death for vs: Let vs aſſure ourſelues that God ment to ſhewe vs to our faces, that he layde vpon him the curſe due to vs, ſo as the thing which we hadde deſerued was layde vpon the perſon of our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt. Therefore when wee beholde Ieſus Chriſt hanging on the tree, wee knowe that hee hath taken our bondage vpon him, euen to the intent that wee ſhould not be any more bounde to the curſe of the lawe, but free, and that the ſayde threate ſhould no more take place to condemn vs, Curſed ſhall hee bee which performeth not all thoſe thinges. For why? When wee flee for refuge to the death & paſſion of our Lord Ieſus Chriſt, our ſinnes are wiped out, God layeth them not any more to our charge, they be quite & cleane done away. And why ſo? Becauſe the curſe lyeth not any longer vppon the tranſgreſſors, when they truſt and reſt vpon the ſatisfaction that was offered vnto God the father, by him that was ordeined to that office.

Here it might be demanded, whether Chriſts hanging vppon the tree, and his beeing accurſed before GOD, was not a derogation to his maieſtie? Surely ſo farre off was it from diminiſhing or defacing of his glorie; that it is rather the chiefe thing wherefore wee are to magnifie him. For we ought to be euen rauiſhed at the ineſtimable loue of God towardes vs, in that he vouchſafed that his ſonne, who is the heade of the Angelles, before whome all knees ought to bowe, and vnto whom all creatures ought to do homage, ſhould ſo humble himſelfe euen to the loweſt depthes, and beare our curſe. When wee ſee that our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt hath ſo forgotten himſelfe, and had ſo litle regarde of himſelfe; that for very feruent loue which he bare vnto vs, he tooke vpon him the curſe wherewith wee were all ouerwhelmed, receiuing it wholely to himſelfe: is there any heart ſo harde, which ought not to cliue at the ſight thereof? Againe, how ought we to be inflamed to glorifie our Sauiour, who hath abaced himſelfe ſo farre to ſaue vs? Moreouer, let vs marke alſo, that hee ceaſed not for all that, to be bleſſed of God, according to the common title which was giuen among the Iewes. And in very deede hee is ſo named in the hundreth and eighteenth Pſalme [where it is ſayde], Bleſſed bee hee that commeth in the name of the Lorde. It was a propheſie concerning the redeemer of the worlde that had beene promiſed. Nowe ſeeing that God auoweth him to be bleſſed; howe comes it to paſſe that hee is accurſed, and that the curſe ſhould take place in his perſon? Theſe two agree very well. For whereas Chriſt became as it were accurſed; not onely before men but alſo before God: it was becauſe he was our ſuretie, and repreſented vs, ſetting himſelfe in our ſteede. Yet neuertheleſſe he reteined ſtill the thing that was due to himſelfe, to wit; to be the bleſſed of the father, who will haue him to bee knowen ſo to be, and that all the worlde ſhould beare witneſſe of ẏ bleſſednes. For the ſame ſhould haue beene Matt.21.9. ſpoken by the people, euen as wee ſee that the children did ſing the ſame ſong at the entrance of our Lord Ieſus Chriſt into Ieruſalem. Then was it requiſite that this bleſſing which was peculiar to himſelfe, ſhoulde bee knowen to the whole worlde. And ſo our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt was not made ſo accurſed, as ẏ the bleſſednes which was giuen vnto him could periſhe, and not continue alwayes vnappaired.

Moreouer we muſt come to that which Saint Paule ſayeth to the Coloſſians. For there hee Col.2.14. ſetteth out the croſſe of our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt vnto vs, as a Charyot of Tryumphe, ſaying that our Lorde Ieſus hath defaced and cancelled the handewriting that was againſt vs, and finally, nayled it to his croſſe. The Lawe hadde ſhewed Gods wil: And by meanes thereof it behoued al men to knowe themſelues to bee indaungered vnto God, and to feele thēſelues to be accurſed as I haue ſhewed before. But what remedy was there to comfort poore ſinners? In deede God ordained ſacrifices and waſhinges and ſuch other like thinges: but were they able to doe the deede? When men came to doe ſacrifice, it was tolde them in deede that their ſinne ſhould be wiped away. Yea, but that was not by the power of the brute beaſtes which was offered at the Altar. Could the bloud of an Oxe, a calfe or a Heckfer clenſe away the ſpottes of the ſoule? We knowe that the bloud of ſuch thinges is not onely corruptible, but alſo filthy. Therefore it could not ſatisfie Gods Iuſtice, it came farre ſhort of it. Againe, when a man waſhed himſelfe, it is true that he hadde a promiſe: but was that promiſe tyed to the water? We knowe that water is a tranſitorie element, and can not attayne to the ſoule to clenſe away the filth thereof. To be ſhort, both the Sacrifices and the waſhinges which GOD hadde ordeined in the Lawe, were a kinde of renewing of the bond which all ſinners haue ingrauen in their conſciences. Like as if an offender ſhoulde be taken and made to confeſſe all his miſdeedes, and haue all his former confeſſions rehearſed vnto him, to the intent to put him in minde of them: euen ſo was Gods meaning towardes the Iewes Leuit.1.3.4. in willing them to take water at their going to the Temple, as if they ſhould haue ſayde, wee acknowledge and proteſt before heauen and earth, that we be defiled ſo as there is nothing but vtter infection in vs, and yͤ we haue neede to be waſhed. Againe, came they once at the Altar: there a ſacrifice was offred vp, an innocẽt brute beaſt was put to death, and that was as a lookeingglaſſe to ſette before our eyes, that wee bee worthie of death, and not of bodilie death onely, but alſo of euerlaſting death before GOD, and to be plundged into hell. Ye ſee then howe the ſacrifices and ſuch other like thinges were as matters of recorde and authoritie, to aſſure all folkes the more of their ſinnes, and to conuict them of the ſame, and to make them the more to abhorre their miſdeedes. But was Ieſus Chriſt hanged on tree? Saint Paule ſayth Col.2.14. that in ſo doing he tooke vppon him the bonde that was againſt vs, that is to ſay, all the thinges whereto the Lawe bounde vs, all the fetters, all the condemnations, and all the ſentences that ſerued to put vs to ſhame, and to bewray our leawdeneſſe. Al theſe thinges tooke he vpon him, and cancelled them, as if a man ſhoulde take a handewriting and teare it in peeces, to make it of no force by defacing it after that faſhion, and euen ſo delt our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt, with vs. And Paule addeth there immediatly, that Chriſt tryumphed ouer all our enemies, ſo as the deuill was ledde in tryumphe. As howe? Yee ſee that Ieſus Chriſt was put to the vttermoſt reproch that could be in being hanged vpon the croſſe, and (as the prophet Eſaie ſayth) Eſa.53.2. he was ſo disfigured that folke vouchſafed not to acknowledge him for a man, but all men abhorred him. And where is then this tryumphe? Although the ſacrifice which he offered vp imported a curſe in it at the firſt ſight: yet ceaſed it not to yeelde a verie good ſent before GOD as the ſcripture termeth it. And therefore our Lorde Ieſus tryumphed againſt Satan, againſt Sinne, and againſt all our enemies. To be ſhort, let vs marke, that Ieſus Chriſt hath ſo borne our curſe, that he hath aboliſhed it quite and cleane. Becauſe hee was the fountaine of all glorie, it muſt needes be that the condemnation which he tooke vpon him on our behalfe, is quite and cleane diſcharged by his power. In like caſe ſtandes it with his death. He ſuffered death, but was he ouercome of it? No, but hee did rather aboliſh death. And the very ſtaye and truſt of our righteouſneſſe, is the diuine power of his reſurrection, as wherein hee hath ſhewed himſelfe to haue gotten the vpper hand of death, accordingly as Saint Peter ſayeth in Act.2.31. & 3.21. the thirde chapter of the Actes, that it was vnpoſſible for him to be helde downe by the ſorrowes of death, becauſe he had ouercome them, and by that meane hadde purchaſed righteouſneſſe for vs. Nowe wee ſee that whereas Ieſus Chriſt is ſayde to haue beene forlorne and accurſed for our ſakes: it did ſo litle abace his maieſtie, that we ought the rather to magnifie his glorie in that behalfe; aſſuring ourſelues that we ſhall no more be accurſed, becauſe hee hath done away our curſe, and borne it in his owne perſon.

Alſo let vs marke therewithall, that notwithſtanding his being accurſed before God, yet he ceaſed not to be Gods welbeloued ſonne, according to this ſaying vttered by the heauenly father himſelfe, This is my deerebeloued ſonne Matt.3.17. in whome I am wel pleaſed, and in whome I am pacified. And ſerued that but for one inſtant? Nay it was to continue for euer. How is it then that Ieſus Chriſt was accurſed, ſeeing that the father was pacified by him? And that hee was not only well liked himſelfe, but alſo the meane to reconcile the whole worlde. He is our peace and although through our corruption of nature GOD hate vs, yet are we beloued in the perſon of our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt; and howe is it then poſſible that he ſhould be accurſed before God? They agree both very well. For (as I haue ſayde afore) Ieſus Chriſt hath borne our curſe, yea and he hath borne it in ſuch wiſe as GOD ceaſeth not to loue him ſtill for all that. And this curſe is ſo aboliſhed, that the reproch of his croſſe is turned into glorie and tryumph, becauſe it is vnpoſſible that the ſonne of GOD ſhould not continue euerlaſtingly the ſame that he was afore. True it is that he was ſomewhat abaced for a while; but yet it behooued him to be alſo crowned with honour and glorie, as it is Hebr.2.9. now come to paſſe. After this manet muſt we put this text in vre.

Nowe therefore, foraſmuch as wee perceiue that GOD hath ſet downe heere a Lawe for the ciuill gouernement of the Iewes: let vs aſſure ourſelues alſo, that hee knewe well in his owne euerlaſting counſell, what ſhould come to paſſe, namely that his ſonne ſhould be hanged on tree: for hee had ſo ordeined it. And why? To giue vs the ſurer grounde of our ſaluation. Act.2.23. & 4.28. For had not our Lord Ieſus Chriſt born our curſe after a viſible faſhion, wee might ſtill hang wauering and in doubt of it. And whereas it is ſayde, that we be reconciled vnto God by his death, and that he hath ſatisfied all our debtes, ſo as the deuill can not hencefoorth any more accuſe vs, but that wee haue our defence for him, that is to witte, that our ſinnes are wyped away: notwithſtanding the reporte of all this vnto vs, yet might we ſtill be in perplexitie, and ſtande ſcanning after this manner: Yea but howe bee wee ſure of that? Lette vs open our eyes and looke vppon the death and paſſion of our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt, yea and let vs looke vpon it in ſuch wiſe, as wee may vnderſtande that euen from the beginning GOD ordeined the tree of the Croſſe to bee a recorde of curſing. Nowe then, whereas it is ſayde, Curſed ſhall he be which performeth not all the things that are contained in the Lawe: therewithall GOD ſendeth vs to his onely ſonne, and would haue vs to knowe that he was hanged on tree to yͤ intent to be accurſed. As how? Was he curſed in his owne perſon? No, but for our ſakes.

Yet notwithſtanding, we may nowe glorie, that the curſe of the Lawe hath no more power ouer vs, but that he hath diſcharged vs thereof. After this manner ought wee to put this text in vre.

Howebeit let vs marke by the way, that it is not by the vertue of the wood, that wee be ſo bleſſed before God by meane of our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt, as the papiſtes brutiſhly beare men in hand. For when they heare the croſſe ſpoken of, they be tyed to it with a deuiliſh ſuperſtition, yea and with ſo brutiſh a ſuperſtition as is pitie to ſee, that they ſhould leaue Ieſus Chriſt, and fall to worſhipping of a peece of wood. But when the ſcripture ſpeaketh of yͤ curſe which our Lord Ieſus bare in his body to ſet vs free withall: it ſetteth before vs two thinges. Firſt, that when we looke vpon the wood, wee ſhould take it as a token of the curſe, and thereat conceiue a terrour in ourſelues: for the thing of it ſelfe is horrible. Thus much concerning the wood. And therefore as for all the croſſes which the Papiſtes ſet vp, what betoken they elſe but that they bring Gods curſe continually vpon themſelues? It appeareth manifeſtly that they deſpiſe the ſacrifice which was offered once for all by the ſonne of God. Wee be reconciled to him for euer, and they come to bring vp yͤ curſe againe, as though they were deſirous to haue their ſinnes abide vpon their heades for euer, without any defacing or dooing of thẽ away by Gods mercy, through the power of the death and paſſion of our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt. And therefore looke howe many croſſes there are in the Popedome, ſo many recordes are there that crye out for Gods vengeance againſt thoſe wretched vnbeleeuers, which content not themſelues with the amends that was made for them when our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt indured the curſe in himſelfe which was due vnto vs. But knowe we once this curſe? If we reſort to Ieſus Chriſt, there we finde that the ſame curſe is quite and cleane wiped out & done away. After what manner? By the wonderfull power of God, euen after the ſame faſhion that we knowe that God made light to ſpring out of darkeneſſe in the creation of the worlde: and is it poſſible that light ſhoulde come out of darkeneſſe? Surely this chaunge is not to be done by man, nay, mannes wit can not comprehende it. But God ment to ſhewe that the meanes which he hath to worke by, doe farre exceede all yͭ euer we can conceiue. And therefore let vs marke wel, that he which at the beginning of the world turned darkeneſſe into light, yea and made light to ſpring out of darkeneſſe: was alſo as able to turne curſednes into bleſſedneſſe, in the perſon of his onely ſonne. And that is the thing which I ment in ſaying afore, that foraſmuch as hee is life and the very fountaine of life, therefore he aboliſhed death, and not without cauſe. In deede Ieſus Chriſt yeelded himſelfe to death; but after what manner? Was it in ſuch ſorte that he ceaſed in the meane while to be the life of the worlde? Nay: euen therein did he ſhewe himſelfe moſt of all to be the life of the worlde. Verily he was at the creation: For he is the ſame liuing woorde whereby wee were created, and whereby all thinges are ſtill preſerued and maintained in their ſtate & being. But when our ſaluation was reſtored vs by our Lord Ieſus Chriſt, then did he ſhewe that he had life in himſelfe, & that he is the welſpring frõ whence it behoueth vs to drawe it. Then like as hee loſt not his life when he ſubmitted himſelfe to death: ſo he ceaſed not to be bleſſed of God his father, when he ſubmitted himſelfe to the curſe.

Nowe, to knit vp the whole, it remaineth to be knowen after what manner our Lorde Ieſus became accurſed to ſette vs free from the curſe. The firſt is, that we ſhould no more be caſt off by God as we deſerue. For when as the ſcripture termeth vs accurſed, the meaning therof is that God vouchſafeth not to regarde vs. And of good right may he hate vs, becauſe there is no agreement betweene him who is the righteouſneſſe it ſelfe, and vs that haue all maner of wickedneſſe reigning in vs. Foraſmuch then as by nature we be enemies vnto God; by reaſon wherof he ſhaketh vs off, and vtterly diſclaymeth vs, ſo as we be not worthy to come neere his maieſty, and if we come, he muſt needes thunder againſt vs: therefore Ieſus Chriſt became accurſed euen by bearing Gods hatred as it were in our behalfe, to the intent that hencefoorth wee ſhould be beloued. Nowe I haue tolde you already, (and it behoueth vs to print it well in our mindes) that Ieſus Chriſt was neuer hated of God his father, for that were vnpoſſible. But he was faine to beare our curſe, becauſe he was our pledge, and wee could not be freed otherwiſe, than by the ſatisfaction of his death made once for all. And that is the very meane whereby we be come in fauour again & are beloued of God. Therefore if we will haue Gods fauour, and find him a father vnto vs, (for that is the title which we muſt vſe, if wee intende to pray to him with true truſt): we muſt euer reſort to the death and paſſion of our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt. All our prayers (ſay I) muſt be offered vp by the death and paſſion of our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt, or elſe they ſhall neuer come at God. The Papiſts take holy water and ſprinkle themſelues, when they go into the Church; but ſuch things are gewgawes and they haue borrowed them of the Iewes, not knowing whereunto thoſe figures ſerued. For they leaue the clenſing yͭ was made by our Lord Ieſus Chriſt, & ſtãd buzzing about ſuch dotages and ſuperſtitions. But as for vs let vs aſſure ourſelues, yͭ we muſt haue al our prayers beſprinkled with the bloud of our Lord Ieſus Chriſt, or elſe they will be vncleane before God, & they can neuer be made clean but only by yͤ kind of clenſing. The way then for vs to proceede to the obteinment of Gods fauour, is to reſort to the ſacrifice which Ieſus Chriſt hath offered vnto him. Secondly we muſt vnderſtande yͭ God forgiueth vs all thinges of his owne freegoodneſſe. For why? The ſcripture giueth the name of curſings to all the puniſhmentes which God ſendeth vpon men by reaſon of their ſinnes. Therefore let vs marke, yͭ whereas God might iuſtly powre out his vengeance vpon vs, and yͭ we ſhould lye euerlaſtingly vnder the burden of his wrath: the chaſtiſement which his ſonne hath ſuffered, hath deliuered vs from it. As howe? Becauſe he receiueth vs into fauour, and is at one with vs, in not charging vs with the ſinnes that we haue cōmitted, but forgiueth vs them in the perſon of his ſonne. True it is that God will chaſtice vs for our faultes: howbeit, yͭ is not with rigorous puniſhment, as one that entred into accoūt with vs to be our Iudge: but to warne vs, and that the correctiōs which he ſēdeth vs may become as ſo many medicines to vs. But howſoeuer we fare, we alwaies obtaine free forgiuenes of our ſinnes becauſe Ieſus Chriſt hath borne our curſe vppon his croſſe.

Nowe let vs fall downe in the preſence of our good God, with acknowledgement of our faults, praying him to make vs feele them more and more, as we may bee ſory for them as becōmeth vs, euen with ſuch griefe, that we may bring vnto him the broken heart which is the acceptable ſacrifice vnto him. And to the intent we may be the more prouoked to miſlike our ſinnes and to abhorre them, it may pleaſe him to grant vs the grace to looke wel vpon this horrible vengeance of them which was executed in the perſon of our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt, that thereby we may learne to miſlike ſo much of our vices and corruptions, that our whole ſeeking may bee dayly to cut off ſome thing, and to clenſe ourſelues better & better, vntill he haue ridde vs quite and cleane of all, and clothed vs againe with his owne righteouſneſſe. And ſo let vs all ſay, Almighty God heauenly father, &c.

On Thurſday the ij. of Ianuarie, 1556.

The Cxxv. Sermon, which is the firſt vpon the two & twentith Chapter.

THou ſhalt not ſee thy brothers Oxe or his ſheepe goe aſtray, and withdrawe thy ſelfe from them: but thou ſhalt bring them home to thy brother.

2 And if thy brother be not neere thee, or that thou knowe him not, then ſhalt thou take them home to thine owne houſe, and they ſhalbe with thee till thy brother require them, and then ſhalt thou deliuer him them againe.

3 Likewiſe ſhalt thou doe to his Aſſe, and likewiſe to his rayment, and alſo to all other thinges which thy brother ſhall haue loſt and thou found: Thou ſhalt not hide it away from him.

4 Thou ſhalt not ſee thy brothers Aſſe or Oxe ſinke vnder their burthen in the way, and withdrawe thy ſelfe from them: but thou ſhalt helpe him vppe with them againe.

FOr aſmuch as wee reſtraine the commaundement of the law too much, wherby theft is forbidden; therefore yͤ warning yͭ is giuen vs heere is very needeful. It ſeemeth to vs that if we haue not taken away another mans goods or ſubſtance, we be cleere before God, & can not bee accuſed of theft: But God hath a further reſpect, to wit, that euery man ſhoulde worke his brothers welfare. For we be bound therto, & he that maketh none account therof is condemned as a theefe before God, though he can not be blamed before men. If I abſtaine (ſay I) from doing any man harme, and keepe my handes vndefiled from robberie, and extorſiō: yet am I not diſcharged for al this. For if I haue ſeene my brothers good periſhe, and ſuffered it to goe to deſtruction through my negligence: GOD condemneth mee for it.

Therfore let vs mark wel, yͭ yͤ law in forbidding theft hath alſo bound vs al to procure yͤ welfare & profit one of another. And in deede it is a rule to be obſerued of vs in all caſes, yͭ God in forbidding any euill, doth therewith command vs to do the good that is contrarie therto. Thou ſhall not ſteale, ſayth he. And why? For he that doeth his neighbour any hurt or harme, is abhominable before God. Then is it to be concluded, that as I would haue mine owne goods preſerued, ſo muſt I be charie of other mens alſo, & euery mā muſt do the like on his owne behalfe. And therof we haue an example heere: namely that if I ſee my neighbours Oxe or cowe or any other cattell of his ſtraying in the fieldes, I am bounde to driue them home to his houſe, and to ſay vnto him, I haue founde thine Oxe ſtraying, looke better to him. Yea and if I finde a beaſt which I knowe not and ſee it ſtraying abroade, I am bounde to keepe it till the owner thereof come, I muſt not hide it, to make mine owne gaine of it, but I muſt declare it abroade that I haue founde ſtray cattle, that the owner may come to require it, and I muſt bee readie to deliuer it him againe. And Moſes addeth that the like is to be done in all thinges that are loſt, whether it be rayment, money, or any other thing, that ye liſt. Then if I finde any loſt thing, I am bound to keepe it ſafe, and to reſtore it to the owner. And truely euen vprightneſſe doth ſufficiently leade vs thereunto: For if a man haue loſt either money or anie other thing, and can not finde it, hee will make mone for it, and that iuſtly. Nowe the more wee be inclyned to our owne profite, the more let vs looke to bee condemned, when any body hath ſuſteined loſſe by our ſpitefulneſſe or negligence. I my ſelfe will blame others if they reſtore me not mine owne when I haue loſt it. And why ſhoulde not I be condemned in the like caſe? And ſo we ſee now that it is not ynough for vs to knowe the tenne commaundementes which are conteined in the Lawe: vnleſſe wee haue the expoſition of them alſo, ſo as we knowe what God ment and intended by thē. For if I take this ſaying, Thou ſhalt not ſteale, and thinke it ynough for mee to haue abſteined frō taking away of other mens goods: it is an ouer ſlender expoſition. And if I flatter my ſelfe and boſt of my pureneſſe and innocencie, it ſhall nothing boote mee. For GOD ſheweth that he had yet a further meaning; namely ẏ euery man ſhould haue a care of his neighbor, that being knit and vnited together, we muſt labour to maintaine our neighbours right as wel as our owne, and be ſo faithfull one towardes another, and on both ſides be ſo vprightly minded, as we might ſay, as I would not ẏ an other man ſhould ſuffer my goods to periſh, but that he ſhould preſerue them for me: ſo muſt I do the like to al thoſe with whom I am conuerſant, that is to ſay all men, as ſhalbe declared more fully hereafter.

And if we be bound to ſende home our neighbours Oxe or Aſſe that is loſt, let vs ſee whether wee may take away an other mans goods by extortion & leaude dealing. For there are manie which think it no offence before God, to conuey to thēſelues by ſuttle meanes the thinges ẏ belong not to them. And wherefore is that? Bycauſe they ſhall not bee impleaded for it at the Lawe. Yea, but who is he that acquitteth them? Thinke they to dally ſo with God? But as I haue declared before, the Lawe ſayeth, not only that we muſt abſteine from all robbery, but alſo preſerue the goods of our neighbours. For if I lay waite to finger to my ſelfe and to inrich my ſelfe by impoueriſhing them that haue wherewith to ſerue my turne, ſeeking mine owne profit by my neighbours loſſe: I muſt not thinke ẏ God liketh of my ſuttle dealings, craftines, & ſhifting. When we haue waſhed our hands neuer ſo clean before men, what ſhal it boote vs, if the heauenly Iudge condemne vs? Thus yee ſee ẏ the way for vs to put this text in vre, is to conſider Gods intent in condemning theft in his Lawe: which is, ẏ he will haue vs to indeuour to benefite our neighbours to the vttermoſt of our power, ſo as euery man may peaceably inioy his owne, and ech of vs helpe other, eſchewing all hurt & hinderance of our neighbours, and doing to all men as we would be done vnto. That is the effect of the thing which we haue to beare in minde.

We ſee that euen in the beaſtlines of Popery, ſome tracke of his doctrine was reteined ſtill. True it is ẏ thoſe ſhauelinges being as gulfs, and ſpreading out their nets to drawe in the pray to thē from all ſides, willed folke to make offerings of the thinges ẏ they had found, bearing thē in hand ẏ if the owner were not found, thoſe things were excheated to God, meaning to their owne purſe. Yet notwithſtanding, this ſtoode euer as a rule, ẏ vnder peine of theeuery it was not lawfull to conceale any thing that was found, being knowen to be loſt, but that all meanes poſſible ſhould be wrought to finde out the owner. Now ſeeing the blind wretches which were ſo brutiſh knew this: what excuſe will there be for vs? Nay, we ſee what libertie many folke do take noweadayes: inſomuch that euen they which pretend to haue the Goſpel, do play the theeues for euery trifle, ſo as there is nothing but pilling & polling ẇ them. But in very deed the moſt nūber of thē neuer taſted what Gods truth is. But how ſo euer the caſe ſtāde, this ſaying of God ringeth ſhirle heere, & our eares are continually beaten with this leſſon, ẏ we ought to procure the welfare of other men. Yet notwithſtanding, let a man go into ẏ fields, & he ſhal finde nothing but robbing and filching. And what ſhall he finde in townes & cities? much worſe. A man ſhall ſee ſnatching and catching euery where, & al mens indeuour is to fleece one an other. Wo worth vs therefore if we bethinke vs not better of ẏ thing that is tolde vs heere, which is ẏ God commandeth vs to procure the welfare of other men, and to looke to the doing of it in ſuch ſort, as no man may be hindered by our default, and not only ẏ we be cleere from all euill dealing, but alſo from all negligence or ſlothfulneſſe. For God inioyneth vs, ẏ as we thinke vpon our owne profite, ſo we muſt not forget the weldoing of our neighbours. But as we would haue others to looke about for vs, when we had loſt any thing: ſo muſt we be likeminded towardes all ſuch as wee can ſuccour in their neede.

Now if it be ſayde that we muſt bring againe our neighbours Oxe or Aſſe: what is to be done to his owne proper perſon? Or to his children and houſhouldefolke? I ſee a houſholde out of order, and the maiſter thereof deceiued: If I warne him not thereof, I am to blame. So then we muſt proceede ſo farre by degrees, that if wee muſt haue a care of beaſtes, much more muſt wee haue it of humaine creatures. If I ought to bring home a mannes Oxe when I finde him ſtraying, for feare he ſhoulde bee loſt: what ought I to doe to his children that are readie to periſhe, and runne a ſtraye like brute beaſtes? Shal I not thinke vppon them to bring them into the right way? Againe in generall, if I ſee my neighbour goe to decay and deſtruction, I ought to reclaime him, accordingly as S. Iames warneth vs ſaying: If any of you bring backe his neighbour into the right way, when hee was gone aſtray: he hath wonne a ſoule to God. Now if our Lorde extend his loue euē vnto Iam.1.19.

Oxen and Aſſes; what ought we to do to thoſe whome he hath created after his owne image,& which are like our ſelues,& to whome we be linked by a kinde of brotherhood, not onely in reſpect of our bodies, but alſo in reſpect of our ſoules? Shall we ſee them run aſtray & go to deſtruction,& not reach them our hand nor do our indeuor to bring them backe againe to the way of ſaluation?Therefore when we ſee mens ſoules in daunger to bee loſt, let vs learne to reclaime them, & let vs apply our ſelues thereto aſmuch as we can poſſibly.For if we be ſlacke in that behalf,there needeth none other witnes againſt vs than ẏ bruit beaſts. For if we ſuffer their owners to loſe them,we ſhalbe condemned before God. So muſt our inditement be made and framed againſt vs by the brute beaſts, when we ſhal haue held ſkorne after that faſhion, to bring back the wretched creatures that are gone aſtray,to cauſe them to be reduced againe vnto God: For if we be bound to maintain mortal men in their right: I pray you,be we not double,yea a hundredfold more bound to do it vnto God?Behold,God telleth vs that we belong to him,& that we bee his heritage.Now,I ſee a poore man goe aſtray like a beaſt that is loſt,and ſhal I ſuffer God to be bereft of his right,or to haue his poſſeſſions diminiſhed?True it is,that we cannot inrich him:but yet doeth he ſhewe howe deerely he loueth vs, in ẏ he hath purchaſed vs with the bloud of our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt. I ſee Gods poſſeſſion go to hauocke, and make no account of it, and ſo is it loſt from him through my defaulte: and how ſhall I excuſe my ſelfe? Wherefore let vs marke well, that if wee ought to mayntaine the welfare of mortall men, becauſe God hath ordeyned that there ſhoulde be faithfulneſſe among vs one towardes another: wee ought much more to indeuour and procure that God may abide vnimpeached in his ſtate, and that thoſe which be of his houſe (that is to ſay of his Church) may not miſcarie, but that they may all be preſerued vnto him. That is the thing which wee haue to remember vpon this text.

Nowe Moſes addeth,that men muſt doe it, though it be the more to their owne paine. For although I be vnknowen to the partie that hath a beaſt ſo ſtrayed, and he be not my neighbour: yet muſt not his beaſt be loſt by my negligence, but I muſt bring it backe leaſt it fall into euill handes: and my ſo doing muſt bee of purpoſe to reſtore it to the owner. Here wee ſee (as I haue ſaide afore) that it is not enough for vs to abſteyne from all miſdealing, but wee muſt alſo doe our neighbours ſeruice, as wee woulde they ſhoulde doe for vs. The taking of payne or care for an other mans benefite, muſt not make vs ſhrinke from the doing of our duetie. If wee alleadge, What am I bound to him? What hath he doone for me? It is not for vs to regard the doinges of men,whether they haue done vs any pleaſure or no,and there after to requite them, as who would ſay,I ſhould ſhew a man no friendſhip,vnleſſe he had firſt befriended mee before. No,It muſt ſuffice mee,that God wil be acknowledged in all thoſe things. And therfore we muſt not haue an eye to mens perſons to ſay we know them not: but it muſt ſuffice vs that God ſaith vnto vs, Although the parties bee vnknowen vnto you, yet muſt you doe your indeuour to ſaue their goods and ſubſtance: for it is my will that there ſhoulde be that bonde among men, and that by meane thereof they ſhoulde bee knit together, and euery man willingly become detter to other. Although men can not bring ye before earthly Iudges to compell you thereto, yet ought euerie man of himſelfe to yeelde vnto it and to beare in minde that I will haue you to exerciſe ſuch charitablenes amōg your ſelues. Thus much concerning that point where it is ſaid,that although the partie bee not our neighbour,no nor knowen vnto vs: yet wee muſt not forebeare to keepe his beaſt for him, or any other thing that he hath loſt.

There is alſo an other point, namely ẏ if we light vpon our Neighbors Oxe or his Aſſe falne downe by the way by reaſon of ſome diſeaſe or tyring vnder his burthen: wee muſt helpe to get him vp. And this ſheweth vs yet better, that all they which procure not the benefit of other mē, are eſteemed as theeues.For we commit not any offence,but the ſame is a breaking of the Law of God.It behoueth vs to marke that. Now what is ſaid in Gods law?Thou ſhalt not ſteale. It is but one word.But we muſt haue an eye to the lawemakers meaning.And ſo we muſt conclude,that if we ſee our neighbor ſtand in neede of our ſuccour before our eyes, and faile him: if wee perceiue he is like to ſuſtein loſſe,& we remedy not the matter,hauing the meane to do it we be cōdemned of felonie before God. It is a hard caſe, men may well diſpute of it,yea & imagine ẏ they ſhal get ẏ vpper hand:but al replying muſt be laid downe:for aſmuch as God hath ſpoken it,his ſaying is an vnreuocable ſentence. Therefore let it content vs ẏ the law telleth vs that if we ſaue not our neighbors goods to ẏ vttermoſt of our power God condemneth vs and taketh vs for theeues. Indeed if wee were to bee called before worldlie Iudges,we might alledge,he neuer bound me to do ſo much for him,I am not beholdē vnto him, I haue not promiſed him any thing, what couenant is there betwixt vs?& ſuch other like things But whē we come before God,we muſt ſhut our mouthes,& acknowledge ẏ if we haue bin negligent when we haue ſeene the loſſe or hinderāce of any mans goods,ſo as wee haue not helped to ſaue them,but haue ſhut our eyes at it, and not vouchſafed to put forth our finger to ẏ ſuccouring of them:it is all one with theft or robberie, before God.

And herewithall let vs marke wel, ẏ ſeeing it is ſaid here ẏ we ought to ſuccor the beaſts whē they be falne downe vnder their burthen:howe much more ought we to do ẏ like to men?When an aſſe is falne down,what is ẏ to vs?And yet for the loue of my neighbor, I am bound to lift him vp againe if I can.A poore man ẏ hath toild himſelfe to ẏ vttermoſt,ſtandeth in need of my help, and I forſake him: is this cruelty excuſable before God?Behold,I am condemned for not doing my dutie towards a brute beaſt:& what ſhal then become of me if I forſake mine owne image & the image of God, ſo as a poore man is borne downe & I ſuccor him not, but wring my mouth at it as if I had done no fault at all? So then let vs marke, yͤ in ſpeaking of the brute beaſtes, God ment to induce vs yͤ rather to the diſcharging of our owne dueties one towardes another: Like as 1.Cor.9.10. when S. Paul alledgeth this text, Thou ſhalt not muſle the mouth of the oxe yͤ laboreth for thee, thinke we (ſaith hee) yͤ God hath no further reſpect than of the beaſts? Nay verily, his ſpeaking of it is for the loue of men. As who ſhould ſay, If we ought not to withdraw foode from the beaſt that laboreth vnder our hand & for our profite: ought wee not to giue ſuſtenance to the handicrafts man, or to any other perſon when he doth vs ſeruice? Indeede S. Paul ſpeakes there of the miniſters of Gods worde; but yet generally wee be led to this vprightnes of maintaining ſuch as take paines for vs, according to reaſon. For why? God hath ſpoken ſo of Oxen: And he hath ſpoken it to doe vs the more ſhame, as if he ſhoulde ſay, The Oxe ſhall haue iuſt matter to condemn you. Indeed yͤ Oxe hath not ſpeech as we haue: but yet wee cannot ſo ſcape but yͤ God will condemne vs for cruell and vnkinde foolke, if we pitie not the brute beaſtes. It is ſaide in Salomons Prou.12.10. Prouerbs, yͤ the righteous man hath in regarde, the bloud of his horſes & of his beaſtes yͤ labour for him. Sith it is ſo, then if the poore ſoules that haue beſtowed their labor & trauel, & ſpent their ſweat & bloud for you, be not paid their wages as they ought to be, nor ſuccored and ſuſteyned by you as they ſhould be: if they aske vengeance againſt you at Gods hand, who ſhalbe your ſpokeſman or aduocate to rid you out of his handes? Now then, whereas here is mention made of the releeuing of Oxen & Aſſes when they bee falne downe vnder their burthens: let vs learne thereby, that it is much more reaſon we ſhould releeue our neighbors, when we ſee them vexed and ouermatched. Verily a beaſt cannot ſpeake to moue vs to pitie and compaſſion: and therefore we muſt go to him of our owne good wil, though we be not moued nor requeſted therunto. Hereby we be warned, that although a man crie not out at a murder, ne make any great bewailing: Yet his verie neceſſitie ought to ſuffice to make vs to ſtep to him aforehande, & not to ſuffer him to lie languiſhing to the laſt inſtant, that he bee conſtreined to ſay, Alas helpe me. We muſt not be ſo ſlow. For why? Although a beaſt cannot ſpeake a word, yet doth God commaunde vs to ſuccour it. And therefore much more do we owe like duetie towards our neighbors.

Furthermore, if a man demaunde what thoſe burthens are: S. Paul ſheweth vs them ſaying, Beare yee one an others burthens: as if hee had ſaid, yͤ our infirmities are burthens, & wee haue need to be eaſed of them. Therfore we muſt exerciſe our charitie after that maner. I ſee a neighbor of mine that is weake, I meane this of al mē. For how perfect ſo euer men be, they haue euer ſome faultes in them, and they haue need to be borne with. And I for my part cannot away with it, vnles men haue pitie vpon me: I haue my burthens as well as all other men. In reſpect hereof God ſaith vnto vs, Beare ye one an others bur- Gal.6.2. thens: for this is Chriſts lawe, ſaith S. Paul. And yet hath this law beene for euer. For if the brute beaſts were to be releeued by the law of Moſes: likewiſe were men to be releeued, as I ſaid afore. But S. Paul telleth vs that we haue more neede to doe it nowadayes than euer: For our Lord Ieſus Chriſt telleth vs that yͤ cheefe ſacrifice which he requireth of vs euen for God his father, is to haue a regarde wherein euery of vs may helpe his neighbors, & to indeuour to remedie infirmities where he ſees thē to be. Indeed we ought not to foſter vices. Neither is that S. Pauls meaning when hee exhorteth vs to beare one anothers burthens. His intent is not that we ſhoulde diſſemble, or that we ſhould ſoade men in their naughtines by playing the blinkards when folke haue done amiſſe. For yͭ were rather a leauing of the wretched ſoules ſtill in their ſtraying, vntill they were tumbled downe into the pit of deſtruction. Then is not yͭ S. Paules meaning in commanding vs to beare one an others burthēs: but rather, yͭ when we ſee an other man in ſorrowe, we ſhould comfort him: when we ſee him weakeminded, we ſhould harten him; when we ſee him too much intangled in the cares of this worlde, we ſhould labour to pul him backe, perſwading him, to put his truſt better in God, & not to bee ſo wedded to worldly thinges. When we labour after this faſhion to remedy al vices: then do wee beare one anothers burthens. And to induce vs thereunto, we muſt vnderſtande yͭ there is none of vs all, but hee hath neede to bee borne with. That is the thing which we haue to gather vpon this place, where it is ſaide that we be bounde to helpe vp an Oxe or an Aſſe or any other beaſt yͭ is falne downe abrode, and that we ought to releeue it as much as may be.

But here is no mentiō made of any other thā a brother. It is ſaid, yͭ if thy brothers aſſe or anie other thing of his be loſt: or if yͤ Oxe or horſe of thy brother be falne down by yͤ way, thou muſt help him vp againe. Who be the brothers of whō God ſpeaketh here? The word *Brother* is to be extended further than a number do extend it, who alwaies excuſing thēſelues, do pluck their heads out of yͤ coller as eaſily as they can, whē they ſee Gods cōmandements to be too hard & difficult yea & vtterly vnpoſſible for them to do; they ſlip yͤ coller by ſuch fond ſhifts as this: I am bounde (ſay they) to do this for my brother, yͭ is to ſay, for ſuch a one as I am acquainted with, or to whō I am linked by any familiaritie, neighborhoode, or friendſhip: thoſe indeed are our brothers. Yea. But what if we haue to do with the furtheſt ſtrāgers in yͤ world? ſhould we account them for our brothers? To what purpoſe were yͭ? Lo how yͤ hypocrites would dally with God, & breake yͤ bond which he hath made betwixt vs, vnder pretence of this word *Brother*. But the expoſition therof is giuen vs in yͤ three & twentith of Exodus, where it is ſaide, If the Oxe or the Aſſe of thine enemie be falne downe, thou ſhalt helpe him vp agayne: thou ſhalt do good to him yͭ hateth thee, and to him that ſeeketh to hurt or hinder thee.

Yee

Ye ſee then who are our brethren, namely euen our very enemies, ſuch as perſecute vs, & ſuch as could find in their hearts to eat vs vp. And yet for all that, euen with them muſt we maintaine brotherhood. As how? Verily it ſeemeth a right hard caſe at the firſt ſight: for haue not they alreadie broken the bond of brotherhood? What though there were an vnion among al mankind? Yet as touching thoſe which are ſo malicious & froward, and deſpiſe God by doing leawdly, are not they worthy to be ſhaken off, & to be barred from the companie of other men, ſeeing they haue ſundred themſelues from them? Truth it is that if we ſhoulde haue reſpect to their perſons, we might wel ſay, ſhal ſuch a one be my brother, hauing ſet himſelf after that faſhion againſt me? Were he a member of my bodie, would he haue cut off himſelfe from me? Seeing then that hee hath forſaken me, I will haue no acquaintaunce ŵ him in any maner of wiſe. The alliance which I had with him was of god, God made it betwixt vs: but he hath vtterly withdrawen himſelf from it, & therfore may I likewiſe forſake him. So long as we plead againſt the perſon, ſuch excuſes may well take place: but as for before God, they wil not go for paymēt. For his planting of neighborhood among vs was with condition, that although a man make himſelfe vnworthie thereof yet we muſt not faile to do him all the good we can. And ſo the bond of kinred ordeined by god, cannot in any wiſe be defeated. Were a man become the verieſt naughtipacke that could be, yet ought we to intreat him as our neighbour.

Truth it is that there are caſes wherefore we ought to forſake men, & to giue them vtterly ouer. But yet for all that, we muſt not ceaſe in the meane while to procure their worldly welfare, and much more the health of their ſoules, yea 1.Cor.5.11. euen of ſuch as are excommunicated & caſt out of the Church, as ſaith S. Paul. We muſt not ſeek them, for that were ẏ way to infect vs with their defilements, & to make vs their partakers. Nay, we muſt rather miſlike them & abhorre them, as it is expreſly cōmaunded vs. But yet in ẏ meane ſeaſon, we be bound alwaies to ſuccour them in their need, & to forbeare to hurt or hinder thē. That is the thing which our Lorde compelleth vs vnto. And therefore let vs marke well that it was neuer lawfull vnder the law to beare enmity againſt any man: yea & although a man had enimies: yet was it not lawfull for him to ſeeke reuēge. And if I be bound to ſuccor mine enemies Aſſe or horſe: what ought I to do to his own perſon? Shall I be exempted from himſelfe, when I am bound vnto his cattell? It is well knowen no. And herein we ſee the beaſtlines that hath been & yet ſtill is in the Popedome. For the ſuttle doctors ſay, that to do good to ones enemie is not a commaundement of God, but a counſell giuen by our Lord Ieſus Chriſt. And marke I pray you wherupon they groūd thēſelues. What ſay they? It is too hard a thing for vs to haue ẏ heart to do good to ſuch as hate vs & perſecute vs. And therfore it is to be concluded, ẏ God hath not commanded vs to do it: for that were too great rigor. If Ieſus Chriſt counſel vs, verily then is it a point of perfectiō: but yet are we not bound to it. And thereupon they hold opinion ẏ none are bound to it but only ẏ Monks, whoſe ſtate is angelical, & yet notwithſtanding, of al mē in ẏ world they be fulleſt of reuenge. Neuertheles, it is for none but Monkes to haue ſuch perfection; & as for vs that are lay people, they ſay that for vs to become Chriſtians it is enough to take it as a coūſell, and to tend ẏ way, howbeit without thinking our ſelues guiltie of deadly ſinne, though we doe it not. True it is that they can find in their harts to ſay, that we ought not to hate anie body; but to ſay that we be bound to loue our enemies, and to do good to ſuch as ſeeke to hurt or hinder vs; no no, they cannot digeſt that worde. And why? For they be forepoſſeſſed with this diueliſh opinion, that God cōmandeth not any thing which is not poſſible for men to doe. And thereupon they make as it were a counterpeiſe or euen balance, of freewill & of all Gods cōmandements: inſomuch that they ſtand ſcanning thus: Cannot we doe this or that? God then hath not commāded it, neither ought it to be done: & if a man did it, it were more than needed. As who ſhould ſay that God had forgone his right, becauſe we bee ſo corrupted and vntowarde as not to be able to performe ẏ which he hath ordeyned. And what a dealing were that? If a man owe me monie, & haue waſted all away by his leawd behauiour, is hee therefore cleerely quit and diſcharged, becauſe he hath ſo miſpent both his owne & mine? No ſurelie. Whence commeth it then that wee cannot loue our enemies, and that wee be ſo reuendgefull: but of our owne corruption & of the ſinfulneſſe of our nature? Yet notwithſtanding, we ceaſe not therefore to owe ſtill vnto God the things ẏ he hath inioyned vs. And therefore wee conclude that our Lord hath bewrayed ẏ blindneſſe of the Papiſtes, in making them to ſpewe out ſuch blaſphemies as theſe, namely, ẏ to doe good to our enemies is not a commandement of the law, but a counſell of our Lord Ieſus: For we ſee what was inioined by the law of Moſes. And again on the otherſide, a man may wel ſay there is great oddes betweene the perfection of Chriſtians, and the conuerſation of the fathers: yea verily, & the hardeſt part of all our life, is to loue our enemies & to doe good to ſuch as perſecute vs. But the fathers that liued vnder the law were bound to that as well as we. And therefore wee muſt not imagine that our Lord Ieſus brought any new rule as the Papiſts auouch blaſphemouſly againſt Gods lawe, ſaying that it was but an Apſie & an entrance: and that there is nowe a true holines and perfection, in the things which the Goſpell ſheweth vs. But we ſee ẏ cleane cōtrary, namely ẏ euen vnder the law God did expreſly forbid men to auenge themſelues: & againe on the otherſide cōmanded them to doe good to their enemies, & to indeuor to ouercom euill by doing good, which is the perfection of ẏ goſpel as S. Paul ſheweth in ẏ twelfth to the Romanes. And it is the verie ſame thing that is cōteined in the Sermon which our lord Ieſus made frō the fifth chapter of S. Matthew to ẏ ſeuenth. Alſo ẏ ſame thing is brought to our remēbrance by the thinges which Ieſus Chriſt ſaith, in the ſimilitude of the man that was wounded in his way by theeues, as he went from Iericho to Ieruſalem. There he taunteth the Iewes, who came of the linage of Abraham, and ceaſed not to vaunt themſelues of that holy pedigree. And yet he ſaith to them, I cãnot tel what kinred or brotherhoode there is among you. For if a man bee falne behinde hande. and haue neede of helpe, I ſee not that ye ſuccour him: ye acknowledge none other brotherhoode than that which is of the fleſhe. And if yee ſee any gaine to be had by allying your ſelues with any man: he ſhalbe your brother and your great couſen. But if yee ſee no profite to bee had by him, farewell he, he is no more your kinſeman. Hereby hee inferreth a ſimilitude, how a Prieſt looking vpon a poore mã that was wounded and ſore hurt, and in daunger of death; paſſed by him and tooke no heede of him: and likewiſe a Leuite, and alſo a common Iew. Then came a Samaritane, (yͤ Samaritanes were hatefull to the Iewes, as they who indeede had nothing but apes toyes and meere ſuperſtition in their Church) & yet our Lord ſaith there that the Samaritane had pitie vpon yͤ Iew which was ſo ſore wounded, and ſuccored him. Was not this man the Iewes neighbor? Ye cannot denie but that he was ſo. Hereupõ Ieſus Chriſt concludeth, that when the law ſpeaketh of neighbors, it meaneth not thoſe which are allied vnto vs, or which are of our owne bloud and kinred: neither meaneth it thoſe neighbors onely with whome we be conuerſant and familiar: but generally all men, yea euen the furtheſt ſtrangers vnto vs. Although we may ſay yͤ ſuch a one belonges not to vs, yet are we his neighbors as in reſpect of god. For our Lord could wel haue vſed another word: But hee intended of ſet purpoſe to touch vs to yͤ quick in ſaying, Looke how many men are in the world, ſo many neighbors haue we. And wheras in this text yͤ word is a *Brother*, indeed it had reſpect to the linage of Abraham. But nowadaies wee 1.Tim.2.4. haue all one father, who is called vpon in al languages and in all countries. He hath not choſen the race of any one man, nor ſhut vp his ſeruice within any one certaine countrie. For the parti- Eph.2.16. tion wal is broken downe, ſo as there is not now any difference of Iew and Gentile, accordingly as is told vs that we bee all one body in our lord Ieſus Chriſt, and yͤ ſeeing God is proclaimed by the Goſpell to be our Sauiour & father, we muſt maintaine a brotherhood among vs. And as touching the word *Neighbour*, the law hath vſed it of purpoſe to ſhew mẽ yͤ they may well ſhrink away one frõ another, but yet they be all of one knowẽ kinde, according to this ſaying of the Prophet E- Eſa.58.7. ſay, Thou ſhalt not deſpiſe thine owne fleſh. If I can ſay, This man is of a far countrie, there was neuer any acquaintãce betwixt vs, one of vs can not ſpeake a word yͤ the other can vnderſtande: what is all this to the purpoſe? Let me looke vpon him & beholde him throughly, & I ſhal find the ſame nature in him that is in my ſelfe: I ſhall ſee that God hath made him ſo like me, as if we were but one fleſhe. And all mankind is of ſuch ſhape and faſhion, that wee haue good cauſe to loue one another, and to know yͤ we ought to be all one. Although there bee ſome difference as touching this preſent life: yet ought we to conſider that we ſpring al out of one roote, & therefore that we ſhould tend all to one end, euen vnto God who is the father of vs all. And therefore it is not without cauſe that in ſteede of ſaying, thou ſhalt doe ſo to al men, our Lorde ſaith, thou ſhalt do ſo to thy neighbors. And albeit we fall to diſputing of the matter, and would ſlippe our heades out of the coler, ſeeking to ſhift off yͤ matter by alledging that we bee ſtraungers one to an other: yet can we not bring to paſſe that all men ſhould not be our neighbors, becauſe we are al of one ſelfe ſame nature, wherby God hath knit vs & linked vs all together. The thing then which we haue to mark in this part of the texte vpon yͤ word *Brother*, is yͤ whereas God ſpeaketh after that maner to the Iewes, becauſe hee had adopted the linage of Abraham: it ſheweth vs nowadaies that we muſt al be as brothers, foraſmuch as our Lord Ieſus Chriſt hath proclaimed peace through the whole worlde, and God is at one agayne with all nations & all men. Seeing it is ſo, it behoueth vs to maintaine the brotherhood which was procured by Chriſts bloudſhed, & whereunto God calleth vs. And although many ſpiteful perſõs go about to violate it by their vnkindnes in ſhrinking away from the Church, and become our enemies, by giuing vs occaſion to do them harme: yet notwithſtanding let vs ſtriue againſt their naughtines, & labour to procure the ſaluation of their ſoules, and yͤ welfare of their bodies ſo far as we can. And whẽ we ſee yͤ we on our ſide are weak, & cãnot frame our affections to yͤ obeying of God ſo wel as were to be wiſhed: let vs pray our good God to ſtrẽgthen vs by his holy ſpirit, yͤ we may outſtand all aſſaults yͤ are put vnto vs, ſo as we may haue yͤ vpper hand of them, when hee hath once rid vs of our fleſh.

Now let vs kneele downe before the maieſtie of our good God with acknowledgement of our ſins, praying him to make vs ſo to feele thẽ more & more, as yͤ being caſt downe in our ſelues, wee may be lifted vp again by his hand, & yͤ being ſo lifted vp & vpheld by him, we may follow his example towards our neighbors, indeuoring to cõtinue in good peace & concord, & bearing with yͤ weaklings, ſo as we may al with one cõmon cõſent keep our way vnto him, & attaine thither by his grace. That it may pleaſe him to graunt this grace, &c.

On Fryday the iij. of Ianuarie. 1556.

The Cxxvj. Sermon, which is the ſecond vpon the two and twentith Chapter.

5 A woman ſhal not weare the apparel of a man: neither ſhal a man put on the

garments of a woman. For whoſoeuer doth ſo, is an abhomination to the Lord thy God.

6 When thou goeſt abroad and findeſt a birds neſt in a tree or on the grounde, and young birdes or egges therein, & the dam ſitting vpon her young or vpon the egges: thou ſhalt not take the dam with her young birdes:

7 But thou ſhalt let the dam goe, & take the young ones to thy ſelfe, that it may goe well with thee, and that thou maiſt prolong thy dayes.

8 When thou buildeſt thee a newe houſe, thou ſhalt make a battlement about the roofe of it, that thou bring not bloud vpon thy houſe by the falling of ſome man downe from it.

THe firſt law which I haue rehearſed here, ſheweth yͭ in all our behauiour, we muſt haue a care to be honeſt, & eſchue al looſenes. Truely it ſhould ſeeme to be no matter of great importance for a man to be apparelled after one faſhiõ or other: but yet for all that, God wil haue things done in order. For if men go diſguiſed, & weare ſuch apparell as ſerueth not for neceſſitie but for follie: that is not conuenient. If women bee diſſolute, what a thing is that? They forget their nature: for women ought to bee modeſt. If there bee no ſhame, but that they will needes be out of order: it is a very beaſtlines. That is the effect of Gods intent in ſaying that men ought not to put on womens apparell, nor women ought not to bee cloathed in mens apparell: For it is good reaſon that there ſhould be a difference betweene men and women. And although there were no lawe written, doeth not euen nature teach it vs? And when S. Paul telleth vs that women muſt come to the Church with their heades couered & not with their haire about their eares: hee ſheweth the ſame thing. 1.Cor.11,5. What ſaith he? haue we need to ſpeake to you of ſuch things? For if a womã were polled, durſt ſhe ſhew her head abroade? A man may well be bold to ſhew his head bare, though he be polled: and ſhall a woman do ſo too? That were a ſhame, euerie bodie would mocke at her, and ſhe ſhoulde be faine to hide her heade. Now ſith ye know this without any ſcripture or worde written: doe ye not ſee howe God hath ſowen as it were a ſeede of modeſtie in you, to the intent that euerie man ſhoulde haue a regarde to that which is comelie for him? So then, let vs mark yͭ here God intended to ſhew vs that euery bodies attyring of themſelues ought to be ſuch, as there may be a difference betweene men and women. And truly we ſee what daungers doe inſue when folke go ſo diſguiſed: many inconueniences doe accompanie them, & God is offended with thẽ. Therefore the ſetting downe of this lawe is not without cauſe. For they that loue to go ſo diſguiſed, do deſpiſe God: as for example, in theſe maſkings & mummings, when men put themſelues into womens apparel, and women put thẽſelues into mẽs as ye know: what comes of it? Although no euil enſued thereof, yet the verie thing it ſelf diſpleſeth god. We heare what is ſaid of it in this place. *Whoſoeuer doth it, is an abhominatiõ.* Ought not this ſaying to make the haire of our heades ſtand vp, rather than wee would prouoke Gods wrath vpon vs wilfully? But beſides this, we are ſure yͭ the ſuffring hereof is the opening of a gap to all whoredome. At a word, ſuch diſguiſings are but inticements of baudry, as experience prooueth. Therfore let vs not think, that it was more than needed, for God to appoint men a ſeuerall kind of apparelling by themſelues, and the women another kinde of attiring by themſelues agreeable to their ſeuerall ſexes. Whereupon wee haue to remember, that God liketh well, yͭ there ſhould be an honeſtie euen in our apparel. Truely (as I haue ſaid afore) yͭ is not the cheefe point: For if a man ſhould ſet yͤ perfection of our life in this thing: it were al one as if he ſhould ſet the cart before the horſe: but yet is it not to bee omitted. For euen the Heathen themſelues haue ſhewed vs our leſſon, telling vs that if there bee no regard of honeſtie, men do bewray yͭ the reſt of their vertues are not counted for vertues any more. For if they obſerue not ſome order, diſcretion and modeſtie in their behauiours & maner of dealings, they may ſeeme to bee degenerated into brute beaſtes. Then is it as a witnes that we walke as before God, when we regarde a kind of honeſtie in our apparell. Truely men may ſoone ouerſhoot themſelues. Although they attire not themſelues like women, yet if they vſe any gaudiſhnes, and make themſelues to bee as gaſingſtocks: ſuch ſuperfluitie diſpleaſeth God already in another reſpect. Likewiſe though women attyre not themſelues in the raiment of men: Yet if they be too gallant & braue, and couet to haue too great a ſhow, they faile not to offende God, euen in another reſpect, as I ſaid afore. Yet notwithſtanding, we muſt firſt of all ſee that men be ſo apparelled as they become not womanlike, as we ſee diuerſe times yͭ they attire thẽſelues like brides. In ſo doing they ſeeme to be ſorie yͭ God made them not women, & to bee deſirous to renounce their owne ſexe. And that is a ſhamefull thing. Againe, when women go apparelled like men of war, (as there be ſome which had leuer to beare a hackebutte on their ſhoulder than a diſtaffe in their hand:) it is againſt kinde, and we ought to abhorre it. Although wee were not ſpoken to, ne had any law or ordinance of God yet do we euen of ourſelues perceiue it to be ſtrange and whoſoeuer hath any ſparke of pureneſſe in him, wil iudge ſo. Ye ſee thẽ yͤ firſt of al the faſhiõ which men do vſe in apparelling thẽſelues, muſt ſhew yͭ God hath created them to be as men: and that the women alſo muſt obſerue the modeſtie that is agreeable to their ſexe. Thus much concerning the firſt point.

And as touching the ſecond, let vs marke alſo generally, that in our apparelling of our ſelues God wil haue vs to reſpect vſe & honeſty. Thoſe are the two things which we ought to ſet ſtore by. The firſt is vſe. And my meaning by vſe, is ẏ men ſhould be contented with ſuch apparell as will defend them from cold and heate. And by honeſtie I meane that they ſhold not be clad & attired after a diſguiſed faſhion, as though they went to play an enterlude, or were deſirous to make folke to gaſe at them for the ſtrangenes of their apparell, that it might be ſaid, who is this? O, it is ſuch a one. Now then, if wee obſerue the vſe, that is to ſay, if we hold it enough to bee clothed onely: and therwithall do keepe ſuch meaſure as we breake not common order: it is a rule that God alloweth. Alſo whẽ women be not too curious in attyring themſelues, nor deſirous to drawe all mens eyes vnto them to behold them in their decking: that is the honeſt kinde of behauiour, which God commendeth vnto vs. 1.Tim.2.9. And in the ſame reſpect doeth S. Paul ſay that womẽ ought to haue a holy honeſtie, or a comelie holines. In ſpeaking of the attire and apparell of the faithfull women, he vſeth a worde which importeth that they muſt not onely bee honeſt, but alſo therewithal haue a certaine mark of holineſſe, that men may know them to haue profited in Gods word. And ſoothly if we conſidered wel what was the firſt cauſe of apparel, we would not be ſo greatly giuen to ſuperfluous brauerie as we be. For as oft as we put on either ſhirte or Cote, we be put in mind that our Lord commãdeth vs to hide our ſelues, becauſe his image is disfigured in vs: and our clothing of ourſelues ought to make vs thinke vpon the ſinne of our father Adam. For by reaſon of ſin, we become ſubiect both to heat & cold. And againe, God telleth vs that it is a ſigne of our ſhame. For nakedneſſe of it ſelfe is not vnhoneſt, were it not ẏ Gods image is diſfigured in vs by our corruption. Had we this regard with vs, ſurely we would be warer to keepe order and meaſure in our apparel, than we be. Howſoeuer the worlde go, let vs learne ẏ God wil haue vs not only to be pure and cleane from all lecherie, but alſo to preuent all inconueniences. As for example, when he ſaith, Thou ſhalt not commit aduoutrie: that commaundement hath an eye to this preſent text. I haue tolde you alreadie, that all the lawes which are writtẽ here, cõcerne mãners, & are rules of good lyfe, & are to bee referred to the ten commandements: For God hath not added anie thing to thoſe tenne ſentences. Therefore whereas in this text it is ſaid ẏ the man ſhall not weare the apparell of the woman; doeth God ſet downe an eleuenth commaundement? Did God bethinke himſelfe better afterwarde, and adde ſomewhat elſe to that which we had heard of him heretofore? No, it is but onely an expoſition of this ſaying of his, Thou ſhalt not commit adulterie. As how? For in forbidding aduoutrie, God not onely forbiddeth ẏ act it ſelfe, which were puniſhable & worthie of reproch euen before men: but alſo hee forbiddeth in effect al vnchaſt behauiour, ſo as none may appeare, neither in apparell nor in any part of our conuerſation. We muſt keep ſuch a meaſure, as our apparell tend not to vnchaſtitie, leaſt we runne into ſuch looſeneſſe, as we be blamed for ſeeking to make a hotchpotch, & to haue had no regarde of bringing all thinges to confuſiõ by ſuch diſorderly dealing. Which miſcheefe to eſchew, both men and women muſt haue a care to follow euerie of them their owne vocation. If we bee not of that minde, although we commit not any adultry in act, yet are we atteinted already before God, with ſome vice that tendeth towards adultry. Wherefore let vs learn that by this ſentence where our Lord ſaith that men and women ought to differ one from another in the faſhion of their apparell, he meant to expound and confirm this former ſaying of his, Thou ſhalt not commit Aduoutry. Were this as wel borne away as it ought to be, we ſhould haue better rule amõg vs than we haue: & there would be no ſuch impediments in the redreſſing the abuſe of apparell. The coſtlineſſe thereof would ſoone be corrected in ſome countries. And why? For yͤ ſhall ſee nothing now but imbroderie, & ſuch ouerſumptuous things, that by al likelihood men are wilfully bent to ouercharge themſelues with the deckings of women, but theſe thinges would be prouided for. And in the meane while men looke not to other vices which are as much or more to be condemned. For there is neuer any ho, when folke beginne once to ſeeke newe faſhions to diſguiſe themſelues This ſeemeth to be nothing: but as it commeth from an euill roote, ſo tendeth it alſo to an euill ende. For it is certaine that if it were not for ambition and pride, theſe thinges ſhoulde not bee ſeene ſo common as they be. Inſomuch that there are a great ſort, that can finde in their heartes to indure hunger and thirſt and a number of other incommodities in their bodies, onely to beſtowe their monie vppon thinges that canne ſerue them to none other ende than pompe and vanitie. And why doe they ſo? O, they loue wel gay apparell: they haue a delight to bee tooted at and gaſed at a great way off. And wee ſee it more nowadayes than euer it was ſeene. This fond curioſitie hath reigned in al ages among ẏ Frenchmen, and they cannot be reclaymed frõ it as yet at this day, but they deſpiſe God & nature more than euer they did. But we heare what God ſaith by his Prophet Sophonie, Soph.1.8. where hee threateneth ſuch folke as ſeeke newfangled and ſtraunge attires, coueting alwayes new ſhift. No doubt but he condemneth this pompouſnes and the perſons thẽſelues which ſeeke eueriday new faſhions, that they may be gaſed at afar off, and be the more eſtemed, and ẏ men may ſay of thẽ; Such a one hath inuẽted a new faſhiõ: ſuch a one is ſkilfull in finding out new attires. Surely ſuch folke are wel worthie to be condemned to be tailours. Theſe great lords & braue lads which wil needs weare tablets at their necks, ẏ is to ſay ſũptuous Iewels for folke to gaſe at a great way off ought of reaſõ to be al made taylors, ſeeing they haue ſo great pleaſure in finding out ſo diuerſe ſortes of apparell to diſguiſe themſelues with.

And by the way let vs marke, that in ſaying ſo our Lord ſheweth vs that we muſt come backe to the ſaid vſe and honeſtie, and to the rule which he hath giuen vs: and if wee keepe that; let vs aſſure our ſelues that it ſhall bee an acceptable ſeruice to him. Contrariwiſe, if we be led with a fooliſh and inordinate luſt, to chaunge euery minute of an houre and to diſguiſe our ſelues: it is a thing that diſpleaſeth God, though it importe none euill at all. And moreouer, we ſee how it proceedeth of fond vaineglory: and when men are ſo giuen to vanitie, ſurely they deſpiſe their owne Soules and neuer care for them. Alſo they bee infected with ouerweening, ſo as they will needes be commended. Nowe when men deale after that faſhion, can it be ſayd that there is no euill in it? No: for whereto doe all theſe diſguiſinges and ſuperfluities tend, but to all maner of corruption, and whoredome, and ſuch other like things, beſides ſuperfluous expenſes? And therefore let vs marke, that to keepe our ſelues from ſuch daungers, and from defiling our bodies with lecherie, and other infections; we muſt eſchew euill occaſions, and not meddle with any thing that may allure vs to any wicked luſt of lechery, or otherwiſe, but apparell our ſelues ſoberly and neceſſarily. Thus ye ſee in effect, how we ought to put this commaundement in vre.

Now Moſes addeth, *That if a man finde a birdes neſt, he may take the young ones, but he muſt let goe the dam, when ſhee broodeth her egges or her young ones:* At the firſt ſight this ſeemeth not worthy to bee ſet downe in Gods Law. For were there no greater & neceſſarier things to ſpeake of than young birdes? Why doth not God ſay rather that if a man ſee a mother nurſing of her childe, he ſhall not trouble her, but rather ſuccour her and helpe her, and in any wiſe beware that he touche her not, for that were a hurting of the infant which is a ſilly innocent ſoule. Why doth not God ſpeake after that maner? What needed it to goe ſay that a man ſhould let a Birde alone when ſhee broodeth her young? Hereby hee ment to expreſſe the better, howe greatly hee abhorreth all crueltie. For if hee cannot beare with it when it extendeth but to the little birdes: ſhall a man ſcape vnpuniſhed when hee falleth to hurting the image of God himſelfe, that is to ſay when he offereth wrong to another man? So then let vs marke that in ſpeaking of little birdes, GOD hath much better declared his meaning, than if he had ſpoken ſimply of mē. For it is all one as if hee had ſayd, Accuſtome your ſelues in ſuch wiſe to bee kinde hearted, and to doe no deede of crueltie, as that euen the little birdes may feele it. Not onely practiſe you it among your ſelues; but alſo when yee ſee a little Bird, conſider thus with your ſelues: no, our Lord, to inure vs yͤ better to vprightnes and reaſon; will haue vs to giue ſome proofe and witneſſe of it euen towards the creatures which cannot complaine of vs. A young bird hath no tong to craue reaſon at our hands, or to attempt an action againſt vs. Yet notwithſtāding, albeit yͤ (to our ſeeming) there is no account to be made of them, neither is vprightnes to be vſed but among men: yet for all that God will haue vs willing to frame our affections the better thereby; that whē we come to deale with our neighbors; we may be reſtrained by it to ſay, What? It is not lawfull for vs to be cruel to the Birdes: and howe may wee then bee cruell to ſuch as are of our owne kinde, in whom wee ſee the image of God imprinted? Thus ye ſee what wee haue to remember in the firſt place; where our Lord ſpeaketh ſo of little Birdes.

Nowe let vs come to the pith of this Lawe. It is ſayd, *Thou ſhalt let the Damme goe, and onely take the young ones to thy ſelfe.* When a Henbird broodeth her young ones, therein we haue an image of a mothers dutie towardes her children. And the ſillie birdes doe ſometimes teache vs our leſſon, when men and women are ſo brutiſh, that GOD is fayne to ſend them to ſchoole to Eſa.1.3. the beaſtes. For when as the Prophet Eſay ſaith, The Oxe knoweth his Maiſters ſtable, and the Aſſe knoweth his Crib: thereby hee ment to put men in minde of their leaudneſſe, and as it were to vpbraide them thus, Yee bee woorſe than the brute beaſtes, therefore go learne of them. For the Oxe in knowing his owne Crib or ſtall, doeth ſhewe you that you ought to knowe the Lorde your GOD. And ſeeing hee vouchſafeth to gather you into his flocke and into his Church, and yet you remaine woorſe than the wilde beaſtes: doe ye not ſhew your ſelues to haue vtterly forgotten the order of nature? Nowe then, ſeeing that the birdes haue ſuch a care of their young ones, ſurely they may teache men and women their leſſon, when they ſhewe themſelues to haue no care of their Children, as wee ſee ſome ryotous folke doe, which care not though they let their wiues and Children ſtarue at home, without regarde thereof, and in the meane while goe and ſpende thriſe as much at the tauerne as would find their whole houſe. Againe there are mothers yͤ haue no care at all of their children, all their ſeeking is to rid their hands of them, they cannot finde in their heartes to take the paines with them: wherein they ſhew themſelues to be vtterly void of louingneſſe and kindneſſe, and to bee woorſe than the brute beaſts, which teache vs our leſſon in this behalfe. For although the beaſts haue no further care of their young, than til they be able to ſhift for themſelues: yet are men taught their dewtie and charge thereby, and what they haue to doe all the time of their life. Why doe not the birds take care for their young ones, furtherforth than till they be able to ſhift for themſelues? Bycauſe a bird is not created in the world to be gouerned by his ſire and his dam all the time of his life; He is not bound to that: for he is a reaſonles creature. But the caſe ſtandeth not ſo with men. For euen when they be come to yeres of liberty, they muſt ſtill be guided and gouerned by counſell, and their fathers and mothers muſt put them in mind of their dewty when they haue done amiſſe. This needeth not in the beaſts: but yet doe the beaſts diſcharge themſelues of their duety ſo long til their yong ones be exempted out of their charge. And ſith it is ſo, what ſhall men doe?

Let vs reſorte to that which is ſayd heere, namely, Thou ſhalt not catch the dam when ſhee ſitteth vpon her young. And why? I ſee the dam brooding her yong ones, and (as we ſee) ſhe had leuer ſuffer herſelfe to bee eaten with vermine, than forſake her yong: ſhe ſittes there as vpon a torture, and ſhee paſſeth not for it. For why? Shee hath ſuch a care of her yong, that ſhee forgetteth her ſelfe for their ſakes: If ye demaund a reaſon of it, there is none that we know, but this; it is a naturall inclination and mouing impreſſed by God in birdes, that when they ſee their little ones, to their ſeeming they be deerer to them than their owne life. And although it bee a painefull thing to them to tary ſitting there in ſuch care: yet goe they to it with a cheerefull courage. Nowe when wee beholde this, is it not all one to vs as if we ſawe a picture wherein God ſhewed vs our dewtie? Let fathers take warning heere, to trauell earneſtly for their children. And as they ought to haue a care for the feeding and mainteyning of them: ſo muſt the mothers alſo doe their diligence in that behalfe, aſſuring themſelues that it is an acceptable ſeruice to God, when they take ſuch paines in reſpect that GOD hath bound them to that Condition, and that it behoueth them to yeeld thereunto, willingly and with a franke and free goodwill. Seeing then that wee ſee an Image of our charge, and God ſheweth as it were with his finger, what dewtie fathers and mothers doe owe to their children: ſhall wee goe ouerthrow it, were not that all one as if a Child ſhould goe burne his booke? When he hath a booke bought for him to goe to ſchoole with, and he teareth it in peeces; ſhal he not be beaten for it? Then if wee burne the booke which our Lorde ſheweth vs, and wittingly defeate the order which hee hath ſet in nature, by playing the butchers in killing with our owne handes the ſilly bird, brought thereto by conſtraint of neceſſitie for the diſcharge of her fatherly and motherly duetie: what will become of vs? True it is that God hath giuen vs the birdes for our foode, as wee knowe hee hath made the whole worlde for vs. Yet notwithſtanding if wee bee ſo cruell that wee will not ſpare the poore birdes, euen when they bee as it were vnder Gods tuition, imploying themſelues in his ſeruice: is it not a refuſing of the grace which he offereth vs, in ſetting before our eyes as in a lookingglaſſe, the duetie which we owe towardes thoſe whom hee hath committed vnto vs? Yes verily. In ſo much that if wee bee not beſides our wittes, and caryed with too cruell a rage, wee will haue pitie and compaſſion vppon the poore birdes, when wee ſee them yeelde their life in that ſort, to diſcharge their duetie. And in deede, it ſhoulde ſeeme that men intended to defye God and nature, when they take the dammes ſo vppon their little ones. For they bee ſo leane, that they bee as it were frothe or ſlime. Nowe our Lorde meant to reſtraine men, and to ſhewe them that their luſtes are altogither out of order. As if he ſhould ſay, What will ye doe? Ye ſee there is no ſubſtance or ſtrength in them. For during the time that I take them into my tuition, they be not good for ſuſtenance. Now then if a man bee ſo cruell towardes the birdes without hauing regard hereto: ſurely he wil be cruel to his neighbours alſo. And he that maketh no ſticking nor cōſcience to kil birdes in their breeding time, will alſo cut his neighbors throat if he thinke he may haue any gaine by it. Thus wee ſee nowe why our Lorde hath tolde vs that hee woulde haue the Broodbirdes to bee in ſafetie though their young ones bee taken from them. Hereby we bee taught ſo to vſe Gods creatures, as the vſe of them may bee orderly, and ſpecially that wee may inure our ſelues to pitie and compaſſion all our life long. For to that ende is this commaundement to bee referred. As I ſayde afore, GOD ſtandeth not vppon the birdes, to put any great perfection therein: but hee ment to teache vs by an argument from the leſſer to the greater after what maner we ought to behaue our ſelues towardes our neighbours. Therefore if we trouble any man whyle he is doing his dutie, and put him to any vexation vnder colour ÿ he is buſie in diſcharging himſelfe towardes God and towards thoſe to whom he is bound: we bee worthie of double blame. If a man diſquiet a nurce or a mother in doing her duetie towardes her child, ſurely it is double crueltie. The inſtruction that wee muſt take hereat, is that euery of vs muſt ſtraine himſelfe to help his neighbours. When we ſee them take paines to doe the things that God hath inioyned them, we muſt indeuor to ſuccour them, & no man is to bee troubled or moleſted in ÿ behalfe. For if it be not lawfull to trouble ÿ birdes, what may we do towards them that are ioyned vnto vs, as our brethren, as hath bin declared heretofore?

Nowe it followeth, *that when a man buildeth a houſe, he muſt make battlemēts or railes about the roofe of it.* This ſerued for ÿ houſes of Iewrie. For there they builded their houſes with flat roofe, and in all the Eaſt Countries they haue kept the ſame faſhion ſtill to this day. And in that reſpect our Lord Ieſus Chriſt ſaid, looke what ye heare now in ſecret, ye ſhal preach hereafter vpon ÿ houſes toppes. Matt.10.27 When wee reade this text, it ſeemeth ſtrange to vs, if we haue an eye to the forme of building that is vſed here in theſe countries. For how ſhall a man get vp to ÿ houſe top, to preach there? But their houſes were made like Towers, that a man might walke vp and downe vppon them. Now if thoſe had no battlemēts or railes, men had beene in daunger to haue falne downe from them. For their children went vp to ÿ tops of their houſes, wherby many might haue beene ſlaine through want of heede; ſometime a man ſeruant, ſometime a chambermaide, and conſequently a child might haue falne downe, and ſo all ſhould haue bin in daunger. Now our Lorde commandeth thē to prouide aforehand for it, by making battlements about their houſes. But wee muſt firſt of all aduiſe our ſelues whereunto all the ſayinges are referred, which are ſet downe heere. Following the keye which I haue giuen already, which is that, there are but ten articles whereby to rule our whole life well: we muſt not goe ſeeke for fiue legges in one ſheepe, as they ſay: but we muſt alwayes hold vs to this point, ẏ God gaue vs a perfect rule of all righteouſneſſe and iuſt dealing, when he compriſed his Law in two Tables and in ten commaundements. Now whereas here is mention made of building mens houſes in ſuch ſort as they bring not bloud vpon them; hereby we ſee how our Lord hath ſhewed vs how deere the liues of al men ought to be vnto vs. Marke that for one point. And ſo haue we the expoſition of this commaundement, Thou ſhalt not kill. But is it ynough for a man, ẏ he abſtaine from murthering, from cutting of throats, from beating, and from vexing his neighbour? Truly it would be abhorred, if it were but ſpoken of in common ſpeeche: but God hath yet a further reſpect in forbidding murder. Why is that? Let vs come to this reaſon: that foraſmuch as mans life is precious vnto him: therefore it followeth that wee muſt preſerue our neighbours liues to the vttermoſt of our power. For although wee offer them no violence, yet ſhall wee not bee diſcharged. But euery of vs muſt looke that hee vſe no anoyaunce, nor giue any cauſe or occaſion of harme or loſſe to inſewe to our neighbour. Yee ſee then howe our Lorde hath tould vs yet better in this text, the thing which hee had ſpoken afore when hee ſayd, Thou ſhalt not kill. And ſo according to my rule, wee muſt come to ẏ foreſetdowne and foreexpreſſed commaundement, Thou ſhalt not kill. Well, God maketh there but a ſingle forbidding: but yet muſt we learn thereby to ſeek al the meanes wee can to maintaine the life of our neighbour. Thou wouldeſt not that any man ſhoulde put thee in daunger of thy lyfe, but rather that hee ſhould preſerue it, and that thou mighteſt not be in perill by another mans ouerſight. Therefore looke that thou yeeld ẏ like minde to thy neighbour.

Moreouer let vs marke that heere God hath vnder one part comprehended the whole. Hee ſpeaketh of the making of battlements or Railes vpon the roofes of mens houſes: but it is all one as if he had ſaid, whenſoeuer men build, let them bee well ware to build after ſuch a ſort, as no incōuenience may inſue therof. Many be ſo groſſe witted, that they make things in their houſes as it were of ſet purpoſe to intrappe them that come in: ſo as a man had neede of good skill where to ſet his foote, and if hee bee not very ware and looke well to himſelfe, hee ſhal bee in daunger to breake his necke. There are ſome which bee ſo ill diſpoſed. And God ſayth that he which doeth ſo, bringeth bloud vpon his houſe, that is to ſay, defileth his houſe with mans bloud. Nowe then, let vs looke wel about vs, and let vs ſo ſeeke our owne commodities, as our building may bee without daunger. And why? For otherwiſe wee ſhal bee worthie of blame. But (as hath beene declared already) we haue to gather vpon this text, that God doth well vouchſafe to lay for the preſeruing of our liues, & to prouide aforehand for all inconueniences, that none of vs may fall in daunger. For as much then as wee ſee that GOD hath ſuch a fatherly care of vs: haue we not cauſe to acknowledge his gracious goodneſſe, and to be vtterly rauiſhed at it? Therefore although our dewtie bee ſhewed vs heere, that is to ſay, although God tell vs that euery of vs ought to prouide for the ſafegarde of his neighbours life: yet haue wee another good leſſon to gather here, namely that GOD deſcendeth hither vnto vs; and ſheweth that hee hath his eye vpon our life, and that he intendeth to bee the defender thereof. Nowe ſith wee ſee this, haue wee not a ſingular recorde of his goodneſſe? Yee ſee howe our bodyes are but Carions: and yet GOD vouchſafeth to mayntaine them, and giueth vs heere a commaundement to prouide long aforehande for the daungers that may inſue to it, that it may bee preſerued from them. Ought not the ſight of all theſe things to touch vs to the quicke, and to make vs to magnifie the goodnes of our God?

And furthermore, when we know this goodneſſe, as in reſpect of this preſent life and this world: let vs mount vp one ſtep higher, and not doubt but hee hath a farre greater care of our ſoules, as hee ſheweth by experience. And therefore let vs reſt boldly vppon him, and not doubt but wee ſhall bee preſerued if wee abyde vnder his protection, and play not the looſe Coultes, but come broode our ſelues vnder his winges (as the Scripture ſayeth) not doubting but hee will keepe vs ſafe and ſounde. And beſides this, let vs marke alſo, that if they which put their neighbours in perill of their bodyes are guiltie before GOD: much more ſhall they bee accountable to him, which caſt any ſtumblingblocke in their neighbours wayes, whereby they be turned from the way of ſaluation. If a man ſhoote at aduenture and wounde one as hee paſſeth by, hee is worthy of blame, yea and of puniſhment too. For why? Men ought to looke one to another. Am I to be excuſed if I ſhoote at aladuenture and kill a poore man that miſtruſted no ſuch thing? Nay, I ought to be aduiſed for him aforehand. Euen ſo is it with all other lyke thinges. Inſomuch that if any neighbour fall into any miſſehappe through my faulte or negligence, it is an offence committed againſt GOD, and the world alſo knoweth ſuch thinges to bee puniſhable. But I make my neighbour to ſtumble, not onely to the breaking of his arme or of his leg, yea or euen of his necke: but alſo to the deſtroying of his ſoule: and what a thing is that? For wee ſee that the ſtumbling blocks which are caſt in mens waies, ſerue to the vtter deſtruction and caſting downe of the ſilly ſoules that were purchaſed by the bloud of our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt. Therefore when men procure troubles & ſtumbling blocks in the Church, doe they not cauſe the thinges to goe to deſtruction, which God had begun to build vp? And is not that one of ẏ higheſt points of treaſon againſt God? Therefore let vs looke to our ſelues, and ſeeing ẏ God hath ſuch a care of our perſōs, let euery of vs follow his example: & if we prouide aforehand ẏ no hurt may befal to mens bodies, let vs haue much greater regard of their ſoules.

And moreouer, let vs marke what is ſayde heere concerning euery mans houſe. For if a man giue euill example to his houſhould: he not onely bringeth bloud vpon his houſe, that is to ſay, he not onely defileth the houſe wherein he dwelleth; but alſo he bringeth much worſe vpon it, that is to ſay, all manner of curſedneſſe, and hee prouoketh Gods wrath. There is a man which is a deſpiſer of all Religion, hee paſſeth not to haue GOD diſhonoured in his houſe, nay hee neuer openeth his mouth, but to the ſpewing out of ſome blaſphemie or diueliſhneſſe: againe on the other ſide his wife is a harlot, or a drunkard, or a feend of hell, vtterly voyde of the feare of GOD, voyde of courteſie, voyde of modeſtie: and beſides all this, there are a great ſorte of other euil examples to bee ſeene there in diuers maners: and is not the dooing of all theſe thinges a wilfull defiling of his owne houſe? And what can come thereof? When a man hath goods, and a great houſholde, if in the meane while hee defile the place that was giuen him and wherein hee dwelleth, ſo as all is full of filth, as for example, his children are ill nurtured, his ſeruauntes are vnruly, and in ſtead of giuing themſelues to the ſeruice of God, there is nothing but looſeneſſe and cauſe of offence: what other can come of it than is ſayde in this text, namely that his houſe is defiled? And therefore let vs marke, that after our Lorde had declared in this text, that all thoſe are counted for murderers before him, which are not careful to preſerue all mens liues: hee addeth likewiſe, that euery man muſt ſo prouide for his owne houſhold, as no offence may bee committed there, and that the poore ſoules bee not deſtroyed: [as for example,] that the young children be not corrupted and marred by wicked bringing vp, nor the ſeruants and houſholdfolk ſee any thing that may marre them: but that the Mayſters and Miſtreſſes do ſo behaue themſelues that GOD bee honoured and ſerued, to the intent their houſes bee not defiled and infected with the common filth of the worlde, but that wee may ſhewe that God raigneth there, ſo as his bleſſinges may be powred out vpon it in all reſpectes, as well of body as of ſoule.

Nowe let vs fall downe before the Maieſtie of our good God with acknowledgement of our ſinnes, praying him to make vs ſo to feele them more and more, as we may returne to him as to the Phiſition that can heale vs of all our diſeaſes: Praying him alſo, ſo to call vs home to himſelfe, that with all ſoberneſſe and modeſtie we may caſt aforehand to keepe our ſelues chaſt and vndefiled for his ſeruice; and that therwithal we may euerichone of vs haue a care and regarde of our neighbours, being ready to releeue one another, &(as much as is poſſible)eſchuing all anoyaunce and harme dooing: and that by this meane wee may with one common accorde ſhewe our ſelues to bee true children towardes him, and bee able to call vppon him with full truſt. And for the bringing heereof to paſſe, it may pleaſe him to rayſe vp true and faithfull Miniſters of his woorde, &c.

On Wedneſday the viij. of Ianuarie. 1556.

The Cxxvij. Sermon, which is the third vpon the two & twentith Chapter.

9 Thou ſhalt not ſowe thy Vineyard with diuers kindes of ſeedes, leaſt thou defile the increaſe of the ſeede which thou haſt ſowen and the fruite of the Vineyarde.

10 Thou ſhalt not plowe with an Oxe and an Aſſe together.

11 Thou ſhalt not cloath thy ſelfe with cloth of diuers ſortes, as of wollen and linnen together.

12 Thou ſhalt make thee fringes vpon the foure quarters of thy veſture wherewith thou契 coureſt thy ſelfe.

There is no doubt but God in forbidding the Iewes to ſowe their Vineyardes with diuerſe ſeedes, to clothe themſelues with wouen garments of diuers ſtuffes, to plowe their grounde with an Oxe and an Aſſe, minded to bridle the multitude of inuentions which men forge vnto themſelues, to alter the plaine ſimplicitie which we ought to hold vs vnto, and which nature it ſelfe hath taught vs. For the minde of man is a wonderfull ſtorehouſe alwayes to deuiſe ſome one thing or other. And (as a man by dayly experience may ſee) it keepeth therein neyther meane nor meaſure. Nowe all this while ſuperfluities in all thinges encreaſe dayly. For men giue themſelues ouer only to delights and pleaſures, to their gorgeous pompes and braueries, and I knowe not what trimneſſe (as they terme it:) ſo as they haue cleane forgotten to liue after common order, and according to that vſe and faſhion wherewith men ought to content themſelues, if they had any ſtayedneſſe or ſobrietie in them. Wee ſee (I ſay) howe men giue the bridle to their luſtes, and take to themſelues ſuch lawleſſe libertie, that there is nothing but a mingle mangle in the whole order of nature. Nowe our Lorde minding to holde his people in ſome modeſtie, hath ſpoken in this place more groſſely, and vnder certaine particular thinges, meant to ſhewe them, howe he liketh of plaine ſimplicitie, to the intent hee might reſtraine ſuch ſtraunge deuiſes as dayly ariſe, and that men although their luſts bee ſo tickliſh, ſhould not be ouercurious, but liue and hold themſelues in ſuch contentation, as to ſay: Well, that which the Lord hath giuen vs ought to ſuffice vs if any reaſon might content vs. And therefore let vs not bee ſet vppon ſuch wandering fanſies as alwayes to deuiſe ſome thing or other without any ende, neither let euerie man bring his peece of deuiſe, and trauayle vainely in martyring themſelues to ſatiſfie their inordinate deſires: but let vs enioye the benefites which GOD hath beſtowed vppon vs, howbeit in ſuch wiſe as that wee remember howe his minde is that wee ſhoulde vſe them ſoberlie. Ye ſee then what the meaning of God is which we haue to beare in minde touching this place.

Nowe a man might treat very largely of euery ſentence, & yet we in the meane while ſhould reape ſmall profite therby: becauſe wee ſhould not vnderſtand the true marke which God heere amed at. We muſt therefore begin at this point, ÿ is to wit, to know why God forbad the Iewes to ſowe in this ſorte diuers ſeedes in one vineyard, to cloath themſelues with garmentes of diuers thinges, and to plowe their ground with an oxe and an aſſe. But let vs nowe returne to euery of theſe lawes. It is ſaid *That a man ſhall not mingle ſeedes together:* as it is ſpoken heereof likewiſe in the 19. Chapter of Leuiticus. For God there vſeth a preface ſaying, Yee ſhal keepe my ſtatutes. And hee doeth it becauſe wee alwaies alleage examples to cloake our faultes withall, and beare our ſelues in hande, that if others doe any thing, all ought to bee lawfull for vs. But God bereaueth his people of all ſuch excuſes by ſaying, Know yee that I am your gouernour: follow me, and hold your ſelues to my will. And this word is well worth the noting, to the intent we bethinke our ſelues well that if the Lord haue once giuen vs his word to the contrary, we muſt not preſume on the liberty of dooing that which is commonly vſed among others. And why? Sith God is ſo gratious vnto vs as to guide vs, let vs ſtay ourſelues on him.

But now he ſaith, *Ye ſhal not ſow diuers ſeeds.* And why? for (ſaith he) *ſo thou mighteſt ſanctifie that which thou haſt ſowen and the fruit alſo which might come of thy vine.* Now this term of ſanctifying or hallowing betokeneth as much as if it were ſaid: thou ſhalt bereaue thy ſelfe of thy vine, and of the fruite which thou ſhouldeſt gather thereof. And GOD ſheweth heereby, howe his will is that there ſhould be true and plaine dealing among the people of Iſraell, and that if a man ſowe corne, hee ſhould make ſuch lawefull marchandiſe thereof without any mingling, as that a man might ſay: ſee heere is Wheate, here is Barely, here are Beanes, heere are Peaſe, when euery graine is ſeueral by it ſelfe. For if the ſeede bee not pure, what ſhall come thereof, but that the people ſhall be deceiued? And beſides that alſo there ſhall not be one ſimple and naturall maner of foode as ought to bee. Moreouer here is mention made of ſowing the Vineyardes, bycauſe that in thoſe countries the vines are very large: for they are bigger than ours, and in faſhion like, but they be very large, and the grapes alſo very great, inſomuch that there they muſt haue more roome or ſpace for them. In effect we ſee now how our Lordes meaning was, that the ground ſhould be ſo ſowen ÿ the vittailes which were ſold among his people, ſhould be ſimple & all in their ſeueral kindes, and herein he compriſeth that which we haue aboue touched, namely that men ſhoulde alter nothing but maintaine the order of nature.

But now if the corne be falſly mingled in the garner, is it not all one, yea and more too, than if the corne had bin mingled in the field? Therefore when that which ought to ſerue for ÿ nouriſhment of men, is ſo chaunged from his owne kinde, there is no true dealing therein. And yet for all that, we ſee how ſuttle men are in this behalfe and howe they will yet alwayes haue ſome new faſhions, ſome for their lucre, & otherſome for ſome other reſpect, or to feede ſome curious humor of theirs. It were much better we helde faſt ÿ order which our Lord hath appointed. For ÿ is the very rule which we ought to follow. And although there were no great euill in dooing otherwiſe, yet we ought alwayes to hold vs herevnto. Seeing God hath deliuered vs this rule, ÿ there ſhould be ſimplicitie or ſinglenes as I may terme it among vs: let vs followe it. But wee ſee farther, ÿ al theſe medlies which are made in things, proceede either frō ſome craftie wilines & deceit: or from a certaine curioſitie & ambition: and ſecondly that they tend vnto a wicked gaine; namely when men haue no regard vnto ÿ loſſe of their neighbour, but euery man is giuen ouermuch to think on himſelf, as who wold ſay: O this will ſerue my turne very well, I ſhall haue the better vtterance of it, & the thing will not be ſo eaſily eſpied; or elſe it will paſſe well ynough with other ware, and it will be neuertheleſſe eſteemed; but I ſhall finde vppon my reckening, that it was ſo much ÿ more to my gaine. Therefore ſith we ſee that theſe medlies proceede frō ſo euill a roote, and tend to ſo wicked an end, are they not to bee doublie condemned? Yes verily. But yet herewithall let vs beare in minde, (as I haue tolde you before) that when GOD woulde not that the ſeedes ſhould be mingled in the fielde, hee forbad aſwell all other mixtures which are made of any wicked purpoſe. If wine bee newe brewed in the Hogſheade, is it not as yll or rather woorſe then if one vſed this mingling in the Vineyarde ? So then let vs haue an eye to the meaning of GOD. Let vs content our ſelues with ſingle ſimplicitie, and at a woorde, let vs maintaine the order of nature.

Now he addeth : *Ye ſhall not plowe your ground with an Oxe and an Aſſe.* Here may be had a double reſpect, the firſt is touching the beaſtes, who if they bee not alike coupled, haue the more painefull trauaile. The ſecond is touching the earing of the ground, which cannot bee doone ſo orderly by this meanes : nay it cannot bee done at al. And here he purpoſely maketh mention of Aſſes. For they had other maner of Aſſes in that countrie thã we haue here. For they ſerued to beare great burdẽs, as able there unto as Moyles, which are fourefold ſtronger & mightier than the Mules of our countrie. And therfore if one ſhould couple an Oxe and an Aſſe together, there would bee ſuch inequalitie, that the Oxe would bee much more grieued then if hee were matched with his like, and the Aſſe in like manner. And why? For they are not in nature matched well together. Nowe albeit God ordaine not like Lawes for all other beaſtes ; yet (as wee haue ſeene before) his will is that men ſhould vſe them ſo farre foorth with gentleneſſe, that they ſhoulde pitie the beaſtes which they employ to their vſe and ſeruice. For he that will ſhewe himſelfe cruell towardes his horſe or his Oxe, will be the ſame towards his neighbour. And men truely become hard hearted when they deale ſo cruelly with the beaſtes which God hath giuen into their handes to doe them ſeruice. For if they ſhew their crueltie vpon the poore beaſtes which trauaile to their profit, it is a ſure ſigne that they are of a crabbed nature, & that they would haue no more compaſſion vpon reaſonable creatures. Yee ſee then what regard God had in making this Lawe. Againe (as I haue alreadie touched) the ground cannot be ſo well plowed, if the beaſtes be not matches: for when there is not obſerued a iuſt and equal proportion betweene them, the labour can neuer proceede orderly. But wee muſt returne backe alwaies to that which we haue touched; namely that Gods will was ỹ his people ſhould not giue themſelues vnto ſtraunge inuentions, as we may ſee howe men alwayes runne this way and are greatly enclined thereunto. By forbidding all manner of mingling, he ment to traine vs vnto this point, that is to wit, that whereas God hath ordayned all thinges in this worlde to our vſe and profit, that wee ſhoulde looke to our ſelues to keepe ſuch a meaſure therein, that wee ſhoulde not mingle heauen and earth together, nor make an hodgpodge of all thinges when wee employ Gods creatures to our vſe. And in very deede whereas he ſayeth ye ſhall keepe my ſtatutes, it is to teach vs that he will haue vs to repreſſe all ſuch looſe libertie of ours. And although hee bound the Iewes more ſtraitely by this commaundement than vs at theſe dayes; yet this doctrine belongeth alſo vnto vs, as ſhall bee heere anon more largely declared. Let vs come nowe vnto the thirde Lawe which is ſet downe heere. God forbiddeth the Iewes *to cloth themſelues with garmentes wouen of Linnen and Wollen.* Heere wee may better vnderſtande that which wee haue alreadie touched: namely, that wee ought to keepe an order in thinges, and to content vs with that playne ſimplicitie which God alloweth of, ſo as wee take not ouer lawleſſe leaue to confounde all thinges, but conſider to what ende euerie thing is ordayned. Wee haue flaxe and hemp and ſuch like thinges: wel, wee muſt apply euery of theſe thinges vnto our vſe. Againe we haue wooll to make vs garments and diuers other things. When men vſe ſtayedneſſe in theſe thinges, their clothing of themſelues with them putteth them in minde of Gods prouidence, in that he hath more than a fatherlike care of them. For haue we neede to be apparelled? We haue a ſhert, we haue a coate, wee haue ſhoes. We ſee it: behold, we haue leather to ſhoe vs, we haue cloth to couer vs: and farther for an ouerplus, wee haue a ſhirt. And Lord howe thou haſt wel prouided for all! Hereof are wee put in minde. Nowe if men make a medlie of thinges, ſurely they become beaſtes in ſo doing: and Satan endeuoureth nothing more, than to bleare our eyes, to the intent wee ſhoulde make no account of this orderly differẽce, which God hath ſet in all partes of the world, that wee might beholde therein his infinite wiſedome which ſhyneth in all things, and his ſoueraigne goodneſſe whereby he ſheweth and declareth himſelfe our father. Satans whole deſire therefore, is that all ſhould be confuſed, and that men ſhould riotouſly waſte things here belowe, without any conſideration that God hath forgottẽ nothing which might ſerue for their vſes and neceſſities. Let vs therefore marke diligently, that when God forbad the Iewes to apparell themſelues with wouen garmentes of diuers ſtuffes; it was to the end they ſhould apply all things to their proper vſes, and haue this regard of things to ſay: Why hath God giuen this into our handes? To what purpoſe muſt it ſerue vs? So that men ſhoulde not be led with any exceſſiue curioſitie, but be contented to haue the naturall vſe of things, in ſuch ſort as God offereth them. I haue told you heretofore that the bondage which is nowadayes, is not ſuch as was vnder the Lawe: for wee haue greater libertie than the people which liued vnder it, whom God held as little children, as Saint Paul ſayth. Gal.4.2. Nowe wee know that it is needefull that little children ſhoulde bee ordered with a more ſtraite, and as it were ſlauiſh gouernment. And why? Bicauſe their age will not yet ſuffer ſuch libertie to bee yeelded vnto them as vnto others. Yet neuerthelater, that which men teach little children, is to the intent they ſhoulde obſerue and doe it when they come to mans ſtate. Their increaſing in age deliuereth them in deede from the rodde and ſuch other ſtraiteneſſe; but yet muſt they keepe ſtill that honeſtie and thoſe vertues alſo wherein they were trayned vp when they were but children. Euen ſo although our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt haue deliuered vs from ſo ſtrayte a bonde as were the ceremonies of the lawe: yet the ſubſtance thereof remaineth alwayes vnto vs:(and to be ſhort) we muſt beare in minde that God hath ſpokẽ thoſe thinges vnto vs as well as vnto the Iewes, although it be after an other manner: for wee are now to gather, that al confuſions & medlies diſpleaſe him. And why? Becauſe his wil is that wee ſhoulde vſe thoſe benefites which he beſtoweth on vs, ſoberly, that wee ſhoulde not wander in our delightes, nor mainteine any ſuperfluities among vs. And therefore let vs not buſie our heades with deuiſing of new inuẽtions to ſet all playne dealing aſide, to haue no other reſpect but to lay baytes for monie, as in very deede all theſe fine deuices tend to none other end but to picke mens purſes. Oh ſee here a trimme inuention (ſaith one,) & by & by fooles runne after it: and emptie their purſes by it. If men would content themſelues with plaine ſimplicitie, euery man ſhould ſpend leſſe, and bee contented alſo with leſſe. But when men goe once ſo aſtray, there is no ho with them. For hee that loueth to be talking of this new thing, and yͤ new thing, he muſt needes be corrupted in other thinges. And this is an occaſion of the enhauncing of wares, and to make them more ſleightly than elſe they would be, if euery man walked ſimply and ſoundly in that behalfe. And ſo ye ſee what wee haue at this day to gather vpon this place.

Truely the deſires of men are ſo infinite, and lyke gulfes and bottomleſſe pittes: that it would be a hard matter to gather all that might be ſaid vpon this place: neuertheleſſe it behoueth vs to be put in minde thereof. And againe, when wee ſhall haue heard the thinges in generall which God meant to teach vs here: euery of vs muſt afterward fall to the putting thereof in practiſe, and expreſſe the ſame particularly in our deeds, according to yͤ obiects (that is to ſay occaſions) which are offered vs. We haue already ſayd that our Lorde meant to reſtraine vs vnto a ſober & moderate vſe of his benefites. And therefore I conclude that whẽ men be ouerlauiſh and mingle thinges together to ſatisfie their luſtes, it is a defiling of the benefits of God. It is ſayd: *Thou ſanctifieſt*, that is to ſay, thou defileſt. *The fulneſſe of the ſeede*, that is to ſay, the thinges which thou ſhouldeſt gather. For the Hebrewes take ſometime this word Holy for curſed. Yea and yͤ name of an harlot which they vſe is deriued hence, as a curſed thing which we ought not to touch. For an holy thing and that which is dedicated vnto God ought not to be touched. After yͤ ſame maner, that which is defiled and curſed is called Sanctifyed, (that is to ſay ſuch a thing as a man muſt not touch) although it bee in an other reſpect. And ſo it is ſaid that we ſanctifie the fulnes or encreaſe of yͤ benefites which God giueth vs, when we apply thẽ vnto an ill vſe. Let vs therefore note, that we vnhallow the pure and naturall vſe of Gods benefites, when we for our luſts ſake doe make any great mingling of them. Now we are not to ſeeke for this vice onely in yͤ fields, whẽ wheate is mingled with oates or with ſome other graine: but we muſt alſo caſt our eye vpon our tables, where there is vſed ſuch varietie, as would make a man to wonder. Whereby it is to be ſeene how men are giuen ouer vnto this vice, ſo as they labour to diſguiſe all thinges, and they ſeeme to haue conſpired to alter and chaunge whatſoeuer is in nature. I pray you is it not a defiling of thinges, when men doe ſo diſguiſe the order of God? Is it not euen a ſpring of him? And are we worthie to enioy the benefits which he beſtoweth on vs, when we know not how to keepe any meane in them? If a man perceiue a childe to cramme himſelfe without meaſure; to take away that vice he will cut his morſels ſmaller. And if he perceiue that he is ouer lickerous and giuen to his luſts, he will giue him the cleane contrarie to that which he deſireth. And why? Becauſe that otherwiſe hee marreth him cleane. And if he ſhould bee foaded ſtill in his delightes, hee ſhould bee vndone when he is olde. Seeing it is ſo, If when wee come to mans eſtate, wee ſo abuſe the benefites which GOD hath diſtributed vnto vs in ſo good order, and we mingle them together, ſo as no varietie can pleaſe vs; muſt not our Lorde needes ſee to it, and vſe a forcible remedie, when hee perceiueth that by our good will wee can not keepe any ſtaye? If one demaund of mee, and ſay; yea ſir, but are all minglinges, ſinne? No. I will not ſpeake ſo ſtrictly. Yet neuertheleſſe the beginning of them proceeded from a wicked deſire. They which inuented ſo many varieties to feede the fond appetites of men, did queſtionleſſe offend God, and wee ought to deteſt them, notwithſtanding that they haue bin lyked of in their times, and that men haue ſaid: Oh here is an excellent cooke: oh here is a good Steward. Although they haue gayned glory by making ſo many delicates, and by their compounding of ſo many thinges to make their fine and new ſauces, and I know not what other conceites to feede the humors of ſuch as deſire to bee entertained ouerdelicatelie: yet muſt wee deteſt ſuch thinges: and it were to bee wiſhed that ſuch men had had their mothers wombe for their graue. But now what haue wee to doe, but to repreſſe al ſuperfluitie, and all that euer maketh vnto vice? Ought wee not to indeuour this with all our might? Yes verily. But what? Euery of vs is ſo farre from mending of one, that it ſeemeth rather that wee intend to pleade preſcription againſt God. Whatſoeuer is told vs, wee fare not the better by it one whit. And why? Becauſe we haue taken it vp of cuſtome. Yea, but God wil in the end ſhewe, that there is no lawfull poſſeſſion, but ſuch as is ruled by his lawe, and according vnto his will. Nay doubt wee not but GOD will puniſhe ſuch ſuperfluities, by cutting our commons ſhorter. In deede our nature is inclined to this wickedneſſe of retchleſſe confounding of thinges, which God had diſtinguiſhed: but yet muſt wee therefore feele the tokens of his anger, when he ſheweth not himſelfe ſo liberall a father towardes vs as hee was woont to doe. And if wee were wiſe or but well aduiſed, wee would not waite for the declaration hereof. That which is ſaid here woulde ſuffice vs, namely that we ought not to mingle the creatures of God, but alwayes to holde vs vnto a plaine ſimplicitie in our maner of liuing. Ye ſee then what wee are to note touching our meate and drinke, namelie, that men ought ſo to content themſelues with that which they haue, that being nouriſhed of God they may reknowledge it in this ſorte: Behold, our God hath a care to feede vs, and wee may well ſee that he is a father towardes vs, in that hee ſheweth himſelfe to haue ſo great a care of our lyfe. Let men therefore take heede that they be not drunken with their delicacies, and beſotted in their varieties, but ẏ they haue an eye alwayes vnto God. Now the lyke ought alſo to be obſerued in our appàraile. It is ſaid in effect that a man ſhall not clothe himſelfe with diuers ſortes. This ſerueth to teach vs, that we ought to keepe as great ſobrietie as wee can poſſiblie, aſwel in our apparaile as in our meates and drinkes. For if men decke themſelues with diuers ſortes, and vſe in their attire many fond diſguiſings, whereof procedeth it? ſurely nature teacheth them no ſuch thing. For the heathen men had skill to ſay, that if euery man would ſo loue nature herein, there needed not ſuch varieties of meats or diuerſities of apparaile. Men of themſelues doe martyr themſelues. Lo what our luſtes doe leade vs to! For they buſie vs in taking paynes about this and that, and make vs alſo to trouble others: and ſo all ẏ world is diſquieted. And why is that? If we could be content, wee ſhoulde liue much more quietly. But we are ſtill giuen vnto ſuperfluities; and that is the cauſe why wee can haue no end of our trauailes: we are become lyke the damned ſoules. And where is ẏ fault thereof, but in our ſelues? So then let vs note (as I haue touched already) that theſe diuers ſorts of varieties which men long after, ſerue for ſo many warrants to prooue, that we cannot ſtay within the true contentation of nature. I graunt it were but a meere follie to hold vs to the rigor and extreme preciſeneſſe of liuing which ſome fantaſticall and brainſicke men haue vſed: that wee ſhould be contented with nature, ẏ we muſt haue neither glaſſe nor goblet, but our bare hand only to drink out of: theſe be follies in deed. Nay, whē our Lord vſeth liberalitie towards vs, let vs conſider of it. Pſal.104.14 15. It is ſayd in ẏ 104. pſalme, ẏ God hath beſtowed on men, not only bread and water for the neceſſitie of their lyfe, but alſo wine to comfort their harts and to make them merrie. Whē we ſee ẏ God of his exceeding grace giueth vs beyond our very neceſſitie that which we neded not, well: let vs accept of his liberalitie, & know that he giueth vs leaue to vſe it in good conſcience with giuing of thankes. He could wel bring forth corn for our ſuſtenāce although no bloome came before it, and hee could wel enough cauſe fruite of the trees to encreace ẇout either leafe or bloſſome. But wee ſee how our Lord intended to delight all our ſences, and meant to preſent vs with his bleſſinges in all ſortes, and in all the creatures which he offereth vnto vs to reioyce in. So then this barbarous rigor, that men ſhould bee debarred of that which God hath beſtowed vppon them, is not to bee ſpoken of, or admitted. Let vs but onely reſtreine our couetous deſires: & let vs conſider well of that which God graunteth vnto vs, to goe ſo farre forth, and no further whē we once perceiue that the thing is not lawful before God.

Now our Lord commaundeth vs to keepe our ſelues vnto plaine ſimplicitie. It followeth then, that all needeleſſe minglinges and diſguiſings of thinges, are alwayes euill. For they are as ſo many vices which God reproueth. And if this wickedneſſe bee euidently ſeene in meates and drinkes, it is yet more apparantly knowen in apparaile. I pray you to what exceſſe are wee growen herein nowadayes? In deede this wickedneſſe raigned in men long agoe: and it is not for naught that the ſcripture ſpeaketh thereof; but yet it is much more nowadayes than euer it was. Eſa.3.15.&c The Prophet Eſay ſpeaking of the attire of women becauſe they were ſo curious in trimming vp themſelues, and had ſuch a ſorte of pettie trinkets, deciphereth them particularly as if he had had ſome inuentorie of their Chiſtes, euen from ẏ crowne of their head vnto the ſole of their feete; as their ouches and brouches and ſuch lyke knackes: And hee tels them that God can well skill to make a violent reformation, ſeeing they were ſo ſet vppon their brauerie and toke no care of amending that wickedneſſe. But we may ſee nowadayes more of this than euer was heretofore, and no varietie can pleaſe men. They are as it were beginning ſtil a freſh to deuiſe ſome new thing or other, and are neuer at an ende. And what is the cauſe hereof, but that we ſhew in deed, how we haue no care at all of our ſoules, when we are ſo buſied about our bodies; that we let our ſoules to ruſt, when through our fooliſh deſires we ſeeke ſo many beautiful deckings & ſuch ſtrange inuentions to make a ſhew of our ſelues to the worldward? Let vs therefore note that all theſe curioſities doe bewray that men and women deſpiſe God: becauſe they cannot hold themſelues within the order of nature which is the true rule to liue by, and ſo conſequently they defile the vſe of his creatures. So then we muſt not ſtand ſo much on the threedes whereẇ our garments are wouen, as who would ſay, God hath forbidden vs to weare Linciewolcie: but wee muſt vnderſtande that our Lordes meaning is; we ſhould obſerue a ſimple & natural faſhiō in our apparail, & not vſe ſuch gay glorious flimflams to diſguiſe things nor to ſeek after ſuch ſuperfluous deckings. For when we doe ſo, it is al one as if a man would come & diſorder an whole houſe. For example ſake, there is an houſhold well ordered: now if one would come and ouerturne the pottes and platters, and mingle the ſheetes with the handtowels and tablenapkins, and ſo tumble all thinges together, what a thing woulde that bee? The lyke is done when we cannot keepe ſuch meaſure as to apply vnto our vſe that which God hath giuen; yea which hee hath giuen vs (as I haue tolde you) on condition that wee ſhould eſchewe all exceſſe, and not mingle thinges together after our owne fantaſies. Now if this were well noted, we would by effect ſhewe that wee are a people ſchooled out for God, and that we haue his word which withholdeth vs from intermingling our ſelues with the defilementes of this world. But if a man would lay forth all the vices which are committed in this behalfe, one ſermon woulde not ſerue. For we ſee to what a maze this wickedneſſe is growen at this day. And that is a great ſhame. But yet for al that, euery man looketh to his owne profite. When we ſee that mens fond deſires tickle them, then beginne wee to reare vp ſome new deuice in our braine: and this wil be trimme (ſaith one.) I muſt needes haue an other new deuice and yet an other, & yet a third to that. There is no talke of the neceſſitie, nor of the vſe of thinges: but firſt of pleaſing the deſires of men, and ſecondly alwayes of making our gayne. And is mony ſpent vpon thoſe ſuperfluities? Wee muſt finde out more. And in the meane while there is nothing elſe but wickedneſſe, and naughtineſſe, wilyneſſe, and vnfaithfulneſſe among men. And I would to God this were not to be found. But wee ought to thinke better hereon than wee haue done. Ye ſee how we are to practiſe this doctrine, where God hauing ſpoken of food, commeth to ſpeake of apparaile, and ſayth, there ſhall be no ſuch varietie as might ſerue to paint out men and to peruert al the ſimplicitie which is in nature. And in deed if our ſight were not ouerdimme, we ſhould eaſily diſcerne this matter, and ſay: this and this is not conuenient. But what? wicked cuſtome hath ſo put vs out of the right way, that we be as blind herein as Beetles. Why can we not iudge, that there is nothing but confuſion in our lyfe? Becauſe we are ſo drunken with the filthie dregges of our ſuperfluities, that wee haue loſt all ſenſe and are become more than blockiſh. But if wee would take vnto vs ſuch as haue liued in playne ſimplicitie, and bring them aſide a little to beholde how men leade their lyfe, and to ſee how they haue to day one thing, to morrow another, and how they are euery day to beginne againe, and how they are alwayes forging of ſome new deuices, to put that out of vſe which was in faſhion but three dayes agoe, and all to gaine mony afreſh: and to ſee how others ſpend to maintaine their ſhewes and their braueries, if (I ſay) ſome of theſe good meaning men which haue bin brought vp in playneſſe ſhould ſee this: they would ſpit at ſuch follies. But yet for all that we are not to be excuſed. Although our vices blinde vs, yet the Lawe of God ſhall alwayes remaine. It ſhall remaine (I ſay) to our vtter confuſion, if we aduiſe not our ſelues better to reclaime our ſelues, and to reforme vs to that ſtayedneſſe which God hath commaunded vs.

Now it is ſayd moreouer, *That the Iewes ſhould make at the neather parts of their garmentes, fringes, or borders* that is to ſay, their garmentes ſhoulde haue a large border, and be plaighted in the edges: as mention is made hereof in the fifteenth Chap. of the booke of Nombers. For there it is ſayd that they ſhall haue fine cordes or laces of ſilke to folde together the borders of their garments. And why? The reaſon is there expreſſed. For otherwiſe this place would be obſcure. It is ſayd here: thou ſhalt make thee fringes, or borders vpon the foure neather partes, or quarters of thy garment. If there were no mo wordes than ſo, a man might demaund why, and not be aunſwered. But God in that place ſayth that that faſhion ſhould ſerue them for a monument. Thou ſhalt thinke thereby that thou art a people dedicated vnto God, who hath choſen thee to himſelfe to be thy protectour. In ſo ſmall a thing then God meant to admoniſh his people to ſay: ſee, Wee are not as the Paynims who walke after their owne fancies: for God hath deliuered vnto vs his lawe, to the end to holde vs faſt, to the keeping thereof. And we haue ſeene the lyke to this before in the fourth Chapter. For when God ſayd there, that the Iewes ought to exerciſe themſelues alwayes in thinking vpon his Lawe, he ſayd: you ſhall haue ſome ſentence of my Law written vpon the poſtes of the dores: whē you are at ẏ table you ſhal haue ſomething thereof: yea, you ſhall beare my Law about you, and decke your ſelues therewith. Whereas others haue their bracelets and images of golde, you ſhall haue ſome parcell of my Lawe to put you in minde that your God ſpeaketh vnto you, and will not that you forget his doctrine: yea he will haue you to make fringes and other ornamentes thereof. And ſo whereas others haue their guildinges which ſerue to no other end but to pride and worldlie vanitie; you ſhal haue your garmentes decked with ſome ſentence or other of my Lawe: to the intent you may bee put in minde to ſay: Behold, it is my Gods wil that I ſhoulde delight my ſelfe with his Lawe, that I ſhould take my whole pleaſure therein, and that I ſhould adorne and deck my ſelfe therewithall. As touching my life, I will ſhew that I haue bin brought vp in his ſchoole. For ſeeing he hath ſo vnited himſelfe vnto me, his praiſe and glorie ought to ſhine in me before men that they may knowe I haue not bin circumciſed in vaine, nor receiued the ſigne of his couenant for naught, to be coupled vnto the Church of God. According hereunto it is now ſayd, that the Iewes muſt make them fringes on the foure quarters of their garments, and put laces thereon. Now I tolde you that in ſo ſmall a thing, God meant to deliuer a good and profitable leſſon. For when the Iewes cloſed vp in this ſorte the endes. and borders of their garments, which were otherwiſe made than ours are, they were admoniſhed thereby, that God ruled them as if they had bin tyed by the heele. As who ſhould ſay: When thou walkeſt thou muſt keepe thy ſelfe in the way of thy GOD, and bee ſo hedged in for thy whole lyfe time, ẏ thou paſſe not meaſure. I graunt this might ſerue well for honeſtie to ty their clothes ſo with ſmall cordes, or laces, ẏ they might couer their whole bodies. For being opē & vnſowed on both ſides, it wold haue bin an vnſightlie thing if they ſhoulde not haue bin tyed. This might then ſerue wel for honeſt comlines. But there is in it a higher reaſon than ſo, as is expreſſed in ẏ ſame place of Numbers.

bers:that is to wit, that God meant to betoken thereby, ſome ſuch admonition as this: ſee if a man haue his legges vnbound and at will, hee is gadding by and by & leaping: but thy God will haue thee to haue theſe laſes tyed in this maner to teache thee ſo to meaſure all thy paces, yͤ the law of thy God may euer rule thee, & that thou maiſt obſerue it in all pointes, and neuer turn aſide from it. Ye ſee then in effect what we haue to beare in mind vpon this place. Now this Ceremonie is no longer in vſe, theſe fringes and theſe laces are compriſed vnder thoſe ſhadowes which were done away at the comming of Chriſt. But yet at this day let vs note, that Gods will is that we ſhould exerciſe vs in his Law in all reſpectes. And ſeeing we are out of this bõdage which ſerued for yong children, let vs know we ought to be ſo much the more earneſt in minding the law of God: ſo as we be warned and aduertiſed by theſe fringes and laſes and other like things, that our Lordes will is that his lawe ſhould ſerue vs for a reſtraint, to teach vs that wee haue not yet the libertie to doe what we liſt, but that our handes and feete, ſoules and ſenſes, and all the partes of our bodies and affections of our mindes, bee held reſtrained by his biddings and forbiddings. And ſo much the more heedefully ought we to note this, becauſe we ſee how mẽ haue alwayes dalyed with God and peruerted all ſounde doctrine. For the Iewes bare themſelues in hand, that they had diſcharged their whole dutie, whẽ they made faire large fringes and had written on them goodly ſentences of the ſcripture in great capitall letters. This was all their holynes, as our Lord Ieſus vpbraideth the Scribes, yͤ Phariſees, & Prieſts: who becauſe they would haue a more ſpeciall holyneſſe than the common ſorte; had great large gardes, & vppon them ſentences of yͤ lawe written which might bee ſeene afarre off. After which maner when the Monks haue their Frockes, & their Coules and all the reſt of their baggage vpon them, O they are no leſſe than halfangels. & yet in the meane time, vnder theſe holy veſtimentes, they ſhrowde vile and wicked deſires, yea and ſuch outragious enormities, as ſhew them to be monſters made contrarie to all nature. And ſo was it at yͤ time. And why? For the world thinketh to pay God with hypocriſie. We ought therefore ſo much yͤ more heedefullie to note yͤ meaning & the trueth of the Law; that is to wit, that our Lorde maketh no account of this ſmaller traſh, yͤ men ſhould haue either fringes, or laſes on yͤ skirtes of their garmentes; but his wil is that men ſhould exerciſe themſelues in his doctrine, & apply it to the proper vſe. Seeing then it is ſo, let vs aduiſe our ſelues well, and not abuſe the libertie which is giuen vs in yͤ Goſpell; but let vs be aſhamed, if being come to yͤ age of men, we haue no wit in compariſon of the fathers which liued vnder the Lawe, to frame our ſelues vnto the wil of God. In deede in reſpect of our ſelues wee are but little children; but yet in cõpariſon of the people of olde time, we ſhould be olde ones, & full & ripe in yeeres. Let vs then be aſhamed if yͤ Law of God which ſhould ſerue vs for a bond cannot holde vs backe, but we are carryed headlong into all wickedneſſe. Let vs bethinke vs of keeping our ſelues in ſuch an eſtate, as we may ſhew that God hath not without good cauſe ſhooled vs out vnto his ſeruice, that we will not take ſuch lawles libertie, as the ignorant and vnbeleeuing do, who haue no guide nor direction.

Matt.23.5.

Now let vs kneele downe before the face of our good God with acknowledgement of our faultes, praying him yͤ being touched with liuely repẽtance, we may runne vnto him who hath the remedie in his hand to help vs: And pray we him that of his gooodneſſe and fatherlie courtoſie he will beare with vs vntil he hath clothed vs with that fulnes of righteouſneſſe and holyneſſe whereunto we tend. And let vs notwithſtanding not ceaſe to bewaile our ſelues before him, vntill he haue fully deliuered vs from all thoſe ſtaines which are in vs. And ſo let vs ſay, Almighty God and heauenly Father, &c.

On Tewſday the xiiii. of Ianuarie. 1556.

The Cxxviij. Sermon which is the fourth vpon the two and twentith Chapter.

13 If a man take a wife, and when he hath lyen with her, hate her,

14 And laye ſlaunderous things vnto her, and bring vp an euil reporte of her, and ſay: I toke this wife, and when I came to her I found her not a maide:

15 Then ſhall the father and the mother of the maide take the ſignes of her virginitie and bring them forth before the elders vnto the gate.

16 And the maids father ſhall ſay vnto the elders: I gaue my daughter vnto this man to wife, and hee hateth her:

17 And lo he layeth ſlaunderous things to her charge: ſaying, I founde not thy daughter a mayde: notwithſtanding beholde the tokens of my daughters virginitie. And they ſhal ſpreade the veſtures before the elders of the Citie.

18 Then the elders of the Citie ſhall take that man and chaſtice him.

19 And ſhall condemne him in an hundred pieces of ſiluer, and giue them vnto the father of the maide: becauſe he hath brought vp an euil report vpon a maide of Iſraell, and ſhe ſhalbe his wife, and he may not put her away as long as he ſhall lyue.

20 But if this thing be true that the young woman be not founde a maide :

21 Then ſhal they bring forth the maide to the doore of her fathers houſe, & the men of the Citie ſhall ſtone her with ſtones, and ſhe ſhall die : becauſe ſhe hath doone leawdly in Iſraell, by playing the whore in her fathers houſe, and ſo thou ſhalt put away the euill from a mong you.

22 If a man be founde lying with a woman married vnto an husband : they ſhall die euen both twaine : namely the man which lay with the wife, and the wife her ſelfe. And ſo thou ſhalt take away the euill out of Iſrael.

23 If a mayde be betrothed vnto a husband, and a man finde her in the Citie and lye with her:

24 Then ſhal yee bring them both vnto the gate of the Citie, and ſtone them with ſtones that they die: the mayde becauſe ſhe cried not out being in the citie, and the man becauſe he hath humbled his neighbours wife, and ſo ſhalt thou take away this euil from among you.

ALl this which we haue here recited ſerueth to declare what ſpeciall care God hath, that chaſtitie ſhould be maintained among his people. And hereof wee may gather this, that if whoredomes haue their full ſkope among vs, it is ſuch an abomination in the ſight of God, that it prouoketh his wrath and vengeance. And that people muſt needes be accurſed, among whom there is a lawles libertie to goe a whorehunting, and where this vile filthineſſe is not clenſed. Ye ſee then in effect whereunto we muſt apply this whole doctrine. But yet for all that, we muſt note the thinges as they are ſet down here, to the intent we may apply euery point vnto his vſe. Firſt of all therefore our Lord ſheweth, that by great reaſon he ought to be chaſtiſed, which bringeth vp a ſlaunderous report vpon any body: for euery mans eſtimation ought to bee maintained. Moreouer, that if a man or woman complayne that he is wrongfully accuſed, when notwithſtāding he is found faultie, his puniſhment ought to be doubled. And from this Lawe we may gather a good leſſon. We know how it is ſayd : yͭ a mans good name is better and more precious than either golde or ſiluer. And if a man bee once paſt ſhame, it is a ſure token that he is wedded to all wickedneſſe. It is natural therefore to euery man, to maintayne his credite. In deede we muſt not be ambitiouſly giuen, as they which couet naught elſe but to bee eſteemed of men. Rom 12,17 Wo woorth vs if we goe that way to worke. But we ought (as Saint Paul ſayth) to procure that which is good, not onely in conſcience before God, but alſo in the ſight of men; to the intent that we be not a ſtumbling blocke of offence, and that men take vs not for a buckler, when they will doe amiſſe, and alledge, and did not ſuch a one doe ſo? For what a thing were it if men ſhould take occaſion by vs, to offend God? Ye ſee then to what end we ought to maintayne our credit as much as lyeth in vs.

And for this cauſe it is ſayd here, that if any after that he hath taken a woman to wife, accuſeth her that ſhe behaued herſelf lewdlie before he tooke her, then the father and the mother ſhall come and maintaine the honeſtie of their daughter: and the man which ſhall bee found to haue wrongfullie charged her whome hee had eſpouſed, ſhall bee puniſhed both in his bodie and in his purſe : and their daughter ſhall ſo remaine with him, that he may neuer bee diuorced from her. Wee ſee now how God would not ſuffer the husband to accuſe the wife wrongfully, and therefore by greater reaſon it may bee concluded, that it is not lawfull for a ſtraunger to ſlaunder one in reſpect of chaſtitie which is foūd innocent. For the husband might alledge that he hath more libertie to doe ſo, becauſe hee is her head and ſuperiour. But in any wiſe God wil not that a woman bee falſely accuſed, and hee commaundeth that the husband ſhould bee puniſhed for ſo doing, yea, and that in his very perſon. For beſides that monie which is here ſet downe, there was a further appointed correction by the Iudges. And let vs note that this was done, not onely to maintaine the womans good name, but alſo to moue women the more to liue chaſte, when God declareth himſelfe the protectour of their honeſtie. When we ſee that God hath this care that they which liue honeſtly and wout reproofe haue their good name alſo maintained, and that the husband ſhal be chaſtiſed if he ſlaunder his wife : when God (I ſay) abaſeth himſelfe to execute this office; ſhould women be ſo beaſtly and wicked as to giue themſelues ouer to vnchaſt villanie? No : for ſurelie this priuiledge cannot be to highly eſteemed, & yet they make a ſkorne of it. Ye ſee then what the end is which God amed at, and what wee haue to beare in minde in this Lawe.

Now withall let vs note, that when Iudges and Magiſtrates are warned of their office, euery one in particular ought to gather an inſtruction hereby. As how? If a falſe reporte be raiſed on one which is innocent; the office of them which beare the ſword, is to maintaine the good name of euery one. That is it which God commaundeth them. As for vs on our ſide, let vs not waite for our puniſhment at the handes of Iudges and Magiſtrates for falſe accuſing of any : But let vs keepe our ſelues from all ſlaundering, ſith it is a thing which ſo highly diſpleaſeth GOD. Let vs therefore take heede how wee open our mouth to ſtayne any mans credit. And why? becauſe that howſoeuer men beare with vs for it, yet it diſpleaſeth God. In deed he hath cōmaunded that it ſhould bee puniſhed. But whether men punniſh it or winke at it; yet God will alwayes ſhewe that he wil not ſuffer the perſon of any man to be wrōgfully greeued. Ye ſee then, how the thing which we haue to beare in minde, is that wee muſt liue vprightly together and take heede that none be falſly charged or ſlaundered, and that if there be any wickedneſſe, we muſt doe our beſt to take it away. But to deale vppon hatred and ill will or to be ſo maliciouſly bent to ſlaundering as to backbite our neighbors, or to be venemous tounged, and to diffame one another: is ſuch an outragious fault as God can in no wiſe ſuffer.

But on the otherſide let vs note, that as Gods will is that ſuch as be innocent ſhould be mainteined in their good reputation: ſo contrariwiſe if any man complaine that he hath wrong done him and yet be found faultie and is conuicted of the cryme of which he ſayd he was cleare; hee deſerueth to be dubblie puniſhed, as wee haue thereof here an example. If a mans daughter make complaint againſt her husband, & her father and mother take her part: well, reaſon is they ſhal be heard to ſpeake. But if the young woman be found faultie, and haue behaued her ſelfe amiſſe; although it were before ſhee was marryed, before ſhee was bounde to her husbande, before ſhee was betrothed: yet for all this it is Gods will that ſhee bee ſtoned. And why? for it is a kinde of theft, if one knowing himſelfe faultie, will for all that be ſo ſhameleſſe, as to chalenge vnto himſelfe the honor which appertaineth not vnto him. If a man haue offended, he muſt caſt his eyes to the ground: If one accuſe vs, we muſt be ſory and deſire God to burie our faults. Now contrarywiſe if we be ſo ſhameleſſe and bolde to wrye our mouth, and to ſay, tuſh wee did no ſuch thing: what a preſumptuouſneſſe is that? And yet notwithſtanding nothing is more common nowadays than that. For they which are the leawdeſt of all other, if a man giue them a nippe for their vices, yea though it be afarre off, wil make greateſt outcryes, and if their credit be not mainteined, O how they thūder? Who are they which nowadayes doe beare the countenance of honeſt men? Euen a ſort of raſcalles which are nothing worth, and in whom is nothing but vtter naughtines. He that is an honeſt man in deede, is almoſt aſhamed to be called an honeſt man, becauſe the title of honeſtie which ſhould haue bin holy, is ſo defiled. For euery man vnhalloweth it, becauſe euery man chalengeth it, & the veryeſt naughtipackes and the leawdeſt perſons (as I ſayd afore) doe clayme it moſt boldly. For not onely euery man with full mouth, vaunteth himſelfe to bee an honeſt, ſound, and truedealing man: but alſo if ye blame him, although he be neuer ſo faultie, he will threaten you with an action of ſlaunder. And if ſuch be an hundred times cōuicted they make none account of it. But our Lorde ſpeaketh otherwiſe thereof: his will is that whoſoeuer chalengeth vnto himſelfe that credite which is not his due, ſhould bee double puniſhed: ſo as if hee deſerued to be whipped, hee ſhould bee put to death, becauſe hee abuſeth Iuſtice in ſuch ſorte, and maketh a ſkorne of it; and would that men ſhould iudge him for an honeſt and good man, when there is apparāt wickednes in him. Ye ſee then heere a point which is well woorth the noting, namely that as Iudges & Magiſtrates are bound to mainteine the good name of them which are faultles: ſo alſo on ẏ contrarie ſide, if they ſee men ſhameles which would be mainteined vnder colour of Iuſtice, and enioy the priuiledge of good men & of ſuch as haue liued honeſtly and without reproofe, they ſhould vſe the greater rigor and ſeueritie towards them. And why? Becauſe if they had ſtolē but fiue ſhillings, they ſhould haue beene puniſhed: but now they haue ſtolen ẏ which is much more worth, that is to wit, the name of vertue. And from whō ſteale they it? Euen from al good men. For they would put themſelues in the aray of ſuch as haue walked in the feare of God and in al honeſt conuerſation before men: they would be eſteemed for good men, whom they defile w.th their filthines and corruptiōs by mingling themſelues in amōgeſt them. So then foraſmuch as they make ſuch a confuſion, they deſerue to bee ẏ more grieuouſly puniſhed. If one play the theefe, and will for al that iuſtifie himſelfe, & bee quitted from the crime which is laid againſt him: if afterward hee bee conuicted thereof, whereas an other which ſhal haue committed but ſingle theft deſerueth to be whipped; the former ought to be led to the gallowes. For it is robberie committed againſt God, when he would be ſo quitted & cleared vnder the colour of Iuſtice, as who would ſay, I wil bee accounted guiltles [whoſoeuer ſayes nay to it.] Such manner of dealing is a defiling of the throne of Iuſtice, and a ſpoiling of mens eſtimation, which haue liued wel (as I haue ſaid afore) and the next way to confound al things, ſo as no man may know any longer how to diſcerne betweene good and euil. And all this would come to paſſe if this wickednes ſhould be admitted & ſuffered to haue his ſway. This is the thing which we haue to beare in minde.

But now when we know that Gods wil is that men ſhould proceed according to Iuſtice, there is compriſed herein a warning for vs all: namely that we ſhould haue an eie vnto our conſcience that it be pure, ſo as if men accuſe vs, God may anſwere for vs, and be as it were our warrāt. The thing (ſay I) which is ſhewed vs in this place, & which we may gather hereupon, is, that if we be accuſed, we may ſay it is wrongfully. And before whom? Before God. For it wil not boote vs at al to bee iuſtified before men. Our wickedneſſe may wel bee hidden, wee may borrowe ſome cloke for it, but yet for all that GOD alloweth not of vs. And what ſteede then ſhall all the reſt ſtande vs in? Nay and if we bee ſo ſhameleſſe, (as we ſee nowadayes many are,) that albeit their wickedneſſe be knowen euen to little children, yet they care not, ſo they be not conuicted by two or three witneſſes: what a thing is that? Therefore if wee haue a care of our good name, let vs firſt of all walke in ſuch vprightneſſe before God, that if we be charged wrongfully with any thing, wee may call God to cleare vs, and haue our recourſe vnto him to ſay, Lord thou knoweſt that I finde my ſelfe guiltleſſe, vouchſafe therefore to ſtretch foorth thy hande, as thou haſt promiſed, to defende mine innocẽcie, as the ſcripture ſaith ẏ God wil make Pſal.37.6. ẏ righteouſneſſe of his ſeruants to ſhine forth as the breake of the day. Nowe therefore when wee bee falſely diffamed, let vs waite vntill GOD redreſſe it, and let vs knowe that in the ende, when wee haue beene humbled for a time, hee will make manifeſt the iniurie that men haue done vs. But let vs alwayes haue our recourſe vnto him: which thing cannot bee, except we be well aſſured of our owne innocency. And moreouer let vs take heede that we liue ſo with men, that if wee bee accuſed they may bee conſtrained to ſay: It is wrongfully: or at the leaſt they may bee aſtoniſhed & ſay, What meaneth this? This man hath liued ſo honeſtly, that he neuer deſerued any euil report. So let our life aunſwere for vs, notwithſtanding that men report euill of vs. Yee ſee in what ſort we are here to proceede.

And becauſe heere is expreſſe mention made of women, let them which will haue the good report of chaſtitie, take heede to walke in ſuch ſort as no ſuſpition may be raiſed on them, nor any occaſion bee giuen of ſpeaking euil of them. But what? We ſee nowadayes many ſlie dames which play the harlottes cloſely; who becauſe the worlde doeth not charge them with it, will needs be counted for honeſt women. And what tokens ſhewe they thereof? Yee ſee then howe the thing which wee haue to gather vppon this which God hath ſet downe here, is, That if a father or a mother complaine, and the daughter be founde voide of all crime, that ſhe ſhall haue her eſtimation maintained: and on the other ſide, that if ſhee bee found guiltie, ſhe ſhalbe the more grieuouſly puniſhed, euen by ſtoning to death, albeit ſhee haue not played the harlot before time, becauſe ſhe hath cõplained wrongfully, and hath commenced her action in forme of Lawe, and vniuſtly claimed vnto her ſelf that honourable title, which ſhee through her owne fault hath loſt. And hereby we may perceiue, that wee muſt not forbeare to puniſh offences, for feare of falſe accuſation. For nowadayes if a man woulde beleeue many men, there ſhoulde be no lawes to puniſh faultes and offences. And they alleage that it is done to ſhunne other inconueniences: yea, but ſhall wee in the meane while giue way to all lawleſſe behauiour, and ſhake off all yoke and all correction from vs? What then woulde come therof in the ende, but beaſtly confuſion in all places? And therefore although ſometime there may bee feare of falſe accuſations and ſlaunders, yet muſt wee not leaue the vſe of chaſtiſements and corrections, ſo far forth as reaſon and indifferencie require, but remedies ought to bee prouided againſt thẽ, as we ſee howe our Lord doth heere, in that hee willeth that the caſe be tried, if an husband raiſe a falſe report vppon his wife. Now then there muſt bee an orderly and lawfull manner of proceeding on both ſides; ſo as the wickednes may not remaine vnpuniſhed, and alſo that ſuch as are innocent bee maintained, and that meane obſerued which our Lord ſheweth vs. Ye ſee in effect what we haue to note vppon this place.

Let vs now returne vnto that generall point which we touched afore: namely, that God in al theſe lawes, declareth what a pleaſãt thing chaſtitie is in his eyes: and contrariwiſe howe hee cannot ſuffer the filthineſſe of whoredome to raigne among his people. For by ẏ puniſhments which are ſet downe here, wee may gather how grieuous and intollerable a wickedneſſe it is. And why? becauſe wee knowe that God exceedeth not meaſure, when hee puniſheth ſinnes, but that he doeth it with diſcretion. Let vs therfore conclude, that if the puniſhment bee rigorous, it is becauſe the ſinne alſo is great and exceſſiue. It is verie true that God doth not alwayes puniſh ſinnes as they deſerue; Inſomuch that hee permitteth a kinde of diuorcement among the Iſraelites, and alſo when a man played the fornicatour, hee was diſcharged ſo hee promiſed marriage vnto the maide and tooke her vnto wife. But albeit our Lorde in reſpect of the hardneſſe of that peoples heart, ordeyned not always ſuch preciſe lawes as to puniſh them according vnto their deſertes: yet wee ſhall not erre at all, if wee make this concluſion, namely, that if God haue puniſhed any fault of theirs, it is to declare vnto vs that the thing diſpleaſed him, and that it is not to be borne withal, and that wee prouoke his anger: and therefore that wee muſt ſtoope vnto him, ſith wee ſee that hee hath appointed certaine puniſhmentes, & that it ſhall coſt vs deare if we become not the better by them.

And this is the cauſe why S. Paul declareth that the puniſhmentes which God hath executed, are as lookingglaſſes & liuely pictures, becauſe we may gather thereby, that God will bee alwayes a iuſt Iudge to execute the like vengeance vpon them which reſtraine not themſelues willingly from the like wickedneſſe, by beholding the warning which hee hath giuen them. 1.Cor.10.6. As how? He alledgeth that God puniſhed thoſe which were rebellious amõg his people, ſo grieuouſly that the earth opened and ſwallowed them vp which did ſet vp themſelues againſt Moſes and Aaron. Againe wee ſee howe their luſtes were puniſhed in that GOD thundered downe from heauen vppon them. Indeede hee ſent them the meate which they deſired: but it had beene much better for them to haue ſtarued for hunger, than to haue payed ſo deare for their ſhotte, as to ſwallowe vp the vengeance of God together with their meate, which they vnlawfully deſired. As for whoredome, there was ſo grieuous a puniſhment for it, and the wrath of God was ſo kindled againſt his people that they were like to haue beene vtterly rooted out. Seeing then that we haue ſuch warninges (ſaith S. Paul) let vs learne to feare and take heede, that we tempt not God wittingly. For this is al one as if wee woulde defie him, if when wee ſee him ſet vs ſuch a barre and to threaten vs by other mens harmes, yet wee ceaſe not to followe the ſame wickedneſſe. This is al one (ſay I) as if we woulde defie him, and proclaime open warre againſt him. So then let vs learne, that when God ordayneth any execution of puniſhment, it is not only to the intent that he which hath offended ſhoulde bee chaſtiſed: but alſo that wee ſhoulde take it for a rule to learne howe to behaue our ſelues as we ought, and not be ſo ſenſeleſſe as to caſt our ſelues headlong into wickedneſſe, ſeeing our leſſon ſo written before our eies. And ſo to bee ſhort, let all the corrections which are contained in the Lawe ſerue vs for ſo manie bridles to reſtraine vs withal; and let them teach vs to walke in the feare of God, or at leaſt let vs take them for preſeruatiue medicines, and let vs not tarie till the miſchiefe light on vs, but prouide for our ſelues before hande and pray God that hee ſo guide vs as we taſte not of his anger. And let vs put that in practiſe alſo which S. Paul Ephe.5.6. ſaieth ſpeaking of adulteries and ſuch like things that no man deceiue vs with vaine words. Take heede ſaieth hee yee bee not deceiued: for the worlde diſpenſeth eaſilie with it ſelfe euen ſo far as to dallie ẘ God, & to ſet his iuſtice at nought: but bee not you deceiued in that behalfe (ſaieth hee) for the wrath of God commeth vppon the children of diſobedience for thoſe things. Nowe if God by puniſhing of ſinnes ſheweth howe hee deteſteth them, in that hee ſetteth downe a law in writing, and appointeth Iudges and Magiſtrates to execute that which he commaundeth, I pray you is it not a moſt certaine warning, and ſuch a one as ought to touch vs more neare the quicke? And if for all this we will be ſtubborne and hardhearted in our wickedneſſe, is it not a ruſhing with our hornes againſt God, as I haue ſaide alreadie? [Yes ſurely]. And therefore let vs note that ſeeing God hath puniſhed aduowtries ſo grieuouſly, it is to ſhewe vnto vs, that it is ſo great a filthineſſe as cannot but nouriſhe his wrath and vengeance. Therefore his will is that aboue all thinges faithfulneſſe ſhould bee kept in marriage.

Now here the ſpeciall caſe is of adulteries. Without doubt all kinde of whoredome diſpleaſeth God. For we muſt euer returne backe to this principle or grounde, that ſith God bleſſed man and woman, when he ioyned them in marriage, he curſeth all whoredome, accordingly as the Apoſtle alſo ſaieth, That marriage is holy & Heb.13.4. honourable: inſomuch that when the bedde is dedicated vnto the name of God; that is to ſay, when the parties are ioyned together in his name, and do liue honorablie, it is as it were an halowed eſtate: but adulterers and fornicatours God will iudge. He ſpeaketh not onely of adulterers, that is to ſay of ſuch as haue broken their owne marriage and the marriage of others, but alſo hee ſpeaketh generally and without exception of all them which giue ouer themſelues vnto any manner of whoredome, in reſpect whereof S. Paul ſaieth alſo that not onely adulterers are 1.Cor.6.9. ſhut out & baniſhed from ẙ kingdome of God, but fornicatours alſo. And againe we ſee that when hee ſpeaketh of ſuch as liue a wicked and looſe life, and therfore ought to be excommunicated and caſt out of the Church; hee ſpeaketh not alonely of adulterers, but of fornicators alſo. And the reaſon why, is moſt worthie noting. For what are our bodies and ſoules, but the temples of the holy Ghoſt? Seeing God vouchſafeth vs this honour to dwell in our ſoules and bodies, is it not great reaſon that they ſhoulde bee kept holy and vndefiled? And if a man ſoyle himſelfe by coupling himſelfe with an harlot, is it not all one as if he woulde teare in pieces the bodie of our Lord Ieſus Chriſt? Let vs therfore note that generally God deteſteth all kindes of whooredome.

But hee ſpeaketh in this place of adulteries, becauſe in them there is the greater villanie. And why? becauſe if a maide promiſe marriage and falſifie the faith ſhe hath plighted, ſhee defileth not onely her owne bodie, and ſo conſequently violateth the temple of God, but ſhe alſo diſhonoreth her husbande with whome ſhee was coupled, ſo that ſhe robbeth another of his good, yea of ſuch good as cannot bee recompenſed with golde or ſiluer. For ſhe ſetteth him forth vnto open ſhame, for whom (if neede ſo required) ſhee ſhould ſpend her life. Is it meete then that it ſhould be ſuffered? Therefore let vs note that whereas our Lordes will is, that the maides which haue promiſed marriage ſhoulde be ſtoned if they commit whoredome: it is becauſe they haue committed villany againſt their husbandes in not keeping their faith to whome they were betrothed. And therefore he wil that ſuch a fornicatour bee likewiſe puniſhed. And why? Becauſe hee robbeth an other man of his good name, and breaketh an holy and ſacred promiſe. Men puniſh falſifiers and forgers: As for example: if a man ſteale a publike Recorde [as an indenture, deede, bonde, or ſuch like] or falſifie it, he ſhalbe grieuouſly puniſhed. & is not marriage a greater thing than a contract of an hundred crownes, or a bargaine of an houſe or of land? This caſe concerneth the fellowſhip of two reaſonable creatures, yea and their fellowſhip for life and death; the caſe concerneth an holy bande which God himſelfe hath ſtabliſhed among vs, yea and that to this intent that al cõfuſion ſhould be taken out of the world, ſo as we ſhould not be like vnto brute beaſtes which couple together ẘout any difference, but that ẙ mã ſhoulde haue his wife & the wife her husbande. And if this be violated and taken away, al order of nature is corrupted. If we play the blinde buſſards and winke at ſuch geare, & ſo let it ſlip: let vs not deceiue our ſelues for all that; for God will requite it with horrible reuenge. And we ſee it is not without cauſe that God hath ſo grieuouſly puniſhed the fornications of ſuch as had promiſed or betrothed themſelues vnto husbands.

And if this bee ſo with them, what ſhall bee ſaide of the wife which is alreadie married? For ſhee is giuen to an husbande to helpe him to gouerne his houſe in the name of god; & if ſhe giue her ſelfe ouer ſo villainouſly vnto whoredome, ſhee not onely robbeth her husbande of his good name, and worketh him a great outrage, but ſhe ſpoileth alſo the name of the whole familie: For ſhee playeth the whore with another man, and the children which ſhe beareth, through that whoredome, doe beare the name of her husband. And againe the goods and ſubſtance of the man are taken from the lawfull children, and be giuen to baſtardes which haue no title thereunto. And is not yͭ a more wicked villanie, than if one had broken vp an houſe, rifled all the coffers, ſpoyled and taken away all things, and committed the greateſt robberies in the worlde? Yes verily, and it ought leſſe to bee borne withall: and that knewe the heathen men well ynough. If we had no more but the Lawe of Moſes, yet ought we to be more aſhamed to ſee whoredome nowadayes ſo eaſily pardoned, and ſo ſmall account to be made of it. But when the heathen men teach vs our leſſon, and vſe better order by a great deale than thoſe which at this day call themſelues Chriſtians, I pray you what a witneſſe will that be againſt vs at the latter day? Blind men haue beene of more clearer ſight than we. Wee Chriſtians ſay continually, that Ieſus Chriſt hath brought a true declaration of the Lawe, to the intent we ſhoulde knowe that that is our perfect holineſſe which is there contained. Indeede hee added nothing thereunto. But yet neuertheleſſe wee ought to bee better learned than the fathers which liued before the Goſpel. But how profite we? There is no account made nowadaies of whoredome. Wedlocke is broken, faith is falſified; & yet men make no reckning of it, it paſſeth ſcotfree. In what ſtate then thinke yee are wee? If men will ſhifte the matter by ſaying, Oh ſir yee muſt beare with our weakeneſſe; thinke wee it ſhalbee taken for payment before God? Is not his worde alwayes vnreuocable? Is it not all one as if he ſhoulde ſay: Haue yee no care of that which I commaunde you? And what are yee? Are you trowe yee wiſer than I? Well, I will make you to knowe that I am your Iudge. And let vs note well that the ſinne and wickedneſſe is doubled, when men cannot finde in their hearts to yeelde vnto that which God hath once ſpoken, but will needes choppe Logike with him. So then let vs knowe that there is a double woe threatened vs when wee ſee God on the one ſide ſpeaketh vnto vs and telleth vs that whoredome is ſuch a peſtilent infection as hee can in no wiſe ſuffer it, and that hee declareth when marriage which hee hath dedicated in his name is corrupted, that it muſt needes bee puniſhed. When wee heare that God proceedeth vnto ſuch ſeueritie, and alſo ſee, that euen onely by nature hee hath inſpired the heathen to knowe that there coulde bee no order among men, except whoredome ſhoulde be ſeuerely puniſhed, what are wee able to ſay? Nowe then firſt of all whereas it is ſaide heere, that a maide which hath betrothed her ſelfe vnto an husbande ſhal bee ſtoned with the fornicator, if ſhee ſuffer herſelfe to bee defiled: wee muſt vnderſtande that ſeeing ſhee was ſo leawde as to falſifie her faith, yea and that in ſo holy and ſacred a thing as is marriage, our Lord eſteemed her as one giuen ouer to all vice and ſinne. For a woman which plaieth the harlot, is alreadie worſe than a thief, becauſe ſhee hath done much worſe in working her husbande ſuch wrong and villanie, than if ſhe had robbed him of his monie. Moreouer wee muſt returne to this point, namely to conſider of the promiſe that is made in marriage of howe great importance it is. For we knowe to what ende marriage was ordained, namelie, to the intent that men ſhoulde liue honeſtlie together, and that there ſhould be no ſuch beaſtlie looſeneſſe of coupling themſelues together like dogges and bitches, or like bulles and kyne, but that they ſhoulde ſhewe that they beare not the likeneſſe of God in vaine. Seeing then that marriage is ordained vnto this ende; if men will walk cleane contrarie, is it not an open defiance of God? Is it not a plucking of him out of his throne, and ſuch a wyping out of his image as men can no more know themſelues: but become as bulles and dogges? Therfore when men fall to ſuch extremitie, muſt not God ſhew forth his anger?

But let vs alwayes returne vnto that point which wee named before; that as this commandement is giuen vnto Iudges and Magiſtrates touching ciuill order, ſo ought euerie of vs to be admoniſhed of his duetie, that wee walke more carefully in our vocatiō. If ſuch as beare yͤ ſcepter of iuſtice in their hands, do ſuffer whoredom to raigne and wedlocke to bee broken, ſo as neither faith nor promiſe be kept any longer: they ſhall yeeld an account hereof vnto God. But yet for all that, let vs looke vnto our ſelues, and let euerie man ſo walke, as yͭ he haue not God for his iudge. For what ſhall we winne by ſcaping yͤ hands of men ſo as our offence is not perceiued, or elſe we bee by ſome wicked ſhifts & practiſes quit from puniſhment, and no man ſayes a word vnto vs. Yet for al that, we muſt come to our reckening before God, who will not loſe one iot of his right. Although men be negligent or play the blinde men, yet will God in the end ſhew that he forgate no peece of our doings, but regiſtred thē euerie one in his book. Let vs therfore take heed we walke in ſuch ſort, as wee eſteeme highly of mariage. And foraſmuch as wee ſee yͭ God beareth rule ouer it and accurſeth al adulterers and fornicatours, let that moue vs to be helde in the greater feare and carefulneſſe. We ſee howe the Paynims for al their ſuperſtitions and ydolatries, had yet I knowe not what a blind motion, whereby they were perſwaded for the better maintaining of marriages that their gods or rather ydolles were the protectours thereof. And why thought they ſo? It was euen of a meere follie. I graunt it: but yet this folly of theirs proceeded from a good grounde. They were corrupted with ſuperſtitions and had imbrewed it with their inuentions and errors. But yet neuertheleſſe, this alwayes remained, & was ſo engrauen in their mindes as it coulde not bee wiped out, that God meant there ſhould be ſuch a marke in marriage and that men ſhould know that hee had a care of it . Seeing it is ſo, let vs take good heede that wee make not God our enimie and aduerſarie partie, which doubtleſſe we ſhall doe, if wee falſifie the faith of marriage . If a man lay waite for an other mans wife, if a woman giue her ſelfe ouer to a whoremonger, bee ſhee married or be ſhe betrothed, if they falſifie the promiſe which they plighted , and breake ẏ faith which they gaue; it is all one as if they waged battle with God, and they ſhall feele that they deale with too hard a match. Let vs therefore walke in ſuch ſtayedneſſe, as our Lord may accept of vs, and that we may finde fauour in his ſight: Let euerie of vs reſiſt his wicked luſts, and not giue our ſelues the bridle to ouer leape our bounds ſo farre as to venter to corrupt ſo holy an order.

Nowe if the puniſhment be ſo grieuous when a maide which is but betrothed committeth fornication : much more reaſon is it that it ſhould bee ſo in a married woman, as I ſaide afore. And why? Becauſe ſhee wrongeth her husband, ſhee ſetteth him out into open ſhame, ſhee ſpoileth alſo the name of his houſe, ſhee robbeth the children which are yet vnborne, ſhee robbeth thoſe which are alreadie begotten in lawfull wedlocke . When a woman is become ſuch a diuell, what other remedie can there bee, than to roote out the whole miſchiefe? And this is the cauſe why it is expreſly ſaide, *Thou ſhalt put away the euill from thee.* Heereby our Lorde ment to giue vs to vnderſtande, that if men ſuffer a woman vnpuniſhed whē ſhe is growen to ſuch wickedneſſe as not to pitie her owne children, they ſuffer a monſter to liue. For what may one think that woman to be but a monſter, which hath no regarde of her children, and which maketh no account to haue baſtardes mingled with lawfull children? And that is a thing contrarie to al nature. So then (as I haue tolde you) the fault muſt needes be extreme, when the puniſhment is ſo grieuous, that God will haue it ſerue vs for an example, and that they which haue been offenſiue by their life, ſhoulde ſerue for an inſtruction vnto others by their death, that they may learne to keepe themſelues chaſt. Thus yee ſee what we haue to beare in minde.

Nowe touching whooremaſters, they are guiltie of the like . Indeede the woman ſhall not be ſpared, becauſe ſhe hath falſified her faith towardes her husbande, and hath committed an vnpardonable crime . If a man rifle his neighbours coffer, hee ſhalbe puniſhed, & that not as a ſingle thiefe, but as a robber. But the whorehunter commeth to defile ẏ whole houſe, hee commeth to infect it with whoredome, hee commeth to robbe his neighbor of his honour, credite, and good name, and in ſteed of the right ſeede, hee through curſed and villanous falſeneſſe, deliuereth a ſtraunge and baſtarde ſeede. Therefore if a man commit ſuch a robberie, I pray you is it a ſinne to bee puniſhed with eight dayes impriſonment onely; and peraduenture by being put to breade and water, that is to ſay, to be feaſted at the tauerne ? For wee ſee that the puniſhmentes which are vſed nowadayes againſt adulterers and fornicatours are but a meere mockerie both of God, and of Iuſtice, and of Lawes, and of all ciuil order. For when a man is put in priſon for committing adulterie, or for playing of ẏ fornicator, it is al one as if he were put there for men to bring him euerie man his glaſſe of wine and to ſay, Taſte which is the beſt. If he were in his owne houſe, he would be contented with ordinarie: but there hee ſhal bee at greater choyce than if he were in a common tauerne. Euerie man will come to viſite him, yea forſooth, the poore priſoner muſt be pitied. Yee ſee what is ordinarily done in this behalfe. And as for my ſelfe, I haue prayed God that whoredome might rather goe vnpuniſhed , than proceede in that order as we ſee it doth nowadayes. For it is a ſetting of Iuſtice forth to open ſhame, and skorning of God and of all his commandementes. And therefore wee neede not to meruaile if whoredoms be ſo rife, ſeeing they which offende are ſent ſo to the tauerne. But let vs put the caſe that the Lawe were obſerued, and that adulterers and fornicatours were locked vp in cloſe warde, there to faſt with breade and water. What is al that? O, ſaies one, they ſhal faſt three dayes or (as ſome ſay) nine dayes. Yea but if a thiefe be taken and accuſed, he ſhal be indited, he ſhalbe clapt vp by the heeles in the ſtocks, he ſhalbe manacled and tyed with an halter, and in the ende ſent to the gallowes : or when hee ſcapeth beſt for ſome pettie filching, hee ſhall bee whipt. And why? Oh he is a thiefe, he hath robbed a man, hee hath cut a purſe in the open market place. And what hath the whooremunger done? Queſtionleſſe hee hath done worſe in entering into the bedde which God had hallowed in his owne name, than if he had committed all the theeueries in the worlde. Hee hath matched himſelfe in whoredome like a beaſt: and is not this an intollerable offence, and ſuch a one as ought to bee puniſhed to the full? If wee open not our eyes to beholde it, yet the Lawe of Moſes muſt needes condemne vs. But beſides this, the Painims (who haue obſerued a better order than wee, and haue had lawes to puniſh whoremongers and to cauſe wedlocke to be kept vndefiled) euen they ſhal riſe vp againſt vs in the latter day, and ſhall proue that we offended not of ignorance, or for lacke of warning, but of wilfull malice, becauſe wee woulde foſter ſuch wickedneſſe.

True it is indeede that this wicked cuſtome is come from great antiquitie, as the Papiſtes will ſay that wee are not vnder the Lawe but vnder grace, and therefore we muſt not puniſh whoredome. But it is a mocking of God when we take the Law of grace for a Lawleſſe libertie to commit all wickedneſſe. And albeit our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt puniſhed not the woman which was taken in adulterie; wee may not ſay therefore, that he hath giuen vs leaue to commit adultery. For why? Hee refuſed alſo to bee Iudge: and being deſired to part the inheritance betweene two brethren, he woulde not doe it. Muſt wee therefore ſay that ſuch partings are not lawfull?

Iohn.8.11

No. But this was to ſhewe that hee came not to bee an arbiter and a Iudge. Againe let vs note that he ſaith, No man accuſeth thee, therefore I condemne thee not. But withall let vs knowe, that he came not to take away the law of his father or to breake al order, or to make his church a hogges ſtye as it is nowadayes, by graunting men libertie to doe all manner of euill: No, No; Be it farre from vs to impute ſuch a crime vnto our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt: for that were a blaſpheming of him aboue meaſure. But let vs know that whereas we haue here this law, it ought to ſerue vs for an inſtruction vnto the end of the worlde, that we may walke in ſuch chaſtitie, that when we haue kept mariages vndefiled among vs, wee may looke for the bleſſing of God which ſhall cauſe vs to proſper.

Nowe let vs kneele downe in the preſence of our good God with acknowledgement of our faults, praying him to make vs feele them better than we haue done, and that we may be ſo clean ridde of all our wicked deſires, that renouncing all our vices, wee may dedicate both our ſoules and bodies vnto our good God, in ſuch ſort as he may be glorified in all things, and we keepe ſuch faithfulnes and truſtines one towardes another, as wee may thereby ſhewe that we are true brethren, and hee may receiue vs for his children: and that this may encourage vs to call vppon him, & to lift vp our harts vnto him, to approch more neare & neare vnto him & to cleaue vnto his righteouſnes in all purenes of heart. That it may pleaſe him to grant this grace not only vnto vs but alſo to all people and Nations &c.

On Wedneſday the xv. of Ianuarie, 1556.

The Cxxix. Sermon which is the fifth vpon the two and twentith Chapter.

25 But if a man find a betrothed mayd in the field and force her, and lye with her: then the man which lay with her ſhall dye alone.

26 But vnto the mayd thou ſhalt doe nothing, becauſe there is in the mayde no ſin of death: for like as when a man riſeth againſt his neighbour and woundeth him to death, ſo is it in this caſe.

27 For hee founde her in the fieldes: and the betrothed mayde cried out and there was no man to reskewe her.

28 If a man finde a mayd which is not betrothed, and take her and lye with her, and they bee found:

29 Then the man that lay with her ſhal giue vnto the maydes father fiftie peeces of ſiluer, and ſhe ſhalbe his wife, becauſe he hath humbled her, and hee may not forſake her as long as he liueth.

30 No man ſhall take his fathers wife, nor vncouer the skyrte of his fathers garment.

ACcording to that which was hādled yeſterday, we ſee how GOD meant that wedlocke ſhould be faithfully obſerued. And it is good reaſon it be ſo, otherwiſe the whole order of nature muſt needes be ouerthrowne: For there is nothing which among men, ought to bee more ſtraitly kept and obſerued than this. Other couenants are faithfully to be kept in deede, but becauſe this exceedeth in holines, it ought to haue the greater reuerence. And therefore it is not without cauſe, that God hath decreed that he which meeteth with a betrothed maide and deflower her, ſhoulde dye without remiſſion. For why? Hee hath broken the couenaunt which ought to bee kept holy among all men: in making whereof Gods will is that his name ſhoulde be called vpon, to the intent that the parties might know that they are ioyned together with an inuiolable bond. Seeing then there is ſuch a rebelliō committed againſt God, it behoueth that the chaſtiſemēt be like & anſwerable therunto. And ſo we are yet better confirmed in this doctrine, that is to wit, that except we wil nouriſh the vengeance of God vpon vs, wee muſt obſerue wedlocke holylie. And we muſt not regarde what the common opinion is herein. For if wee will be wiſer than God, he knoweth wellynough howe to puniſh our diuelliſh pride; and wee ſhall be alwayes rewarded as we deſerue, if we will not vſe the remedie which God hath appointed vs in his Lawe. Indeede we are not bound vnto it preciſely in all points, (as hath beene alreadie noted, and ſhalbe yet farther declared hereafter:) but yet for all that, God warneth vs that if we ſuffer wedlocks to be broken, and graunt ſuch libertie that adulterers remaine vnpuniſhed; we muſt needes (as I haue told you) fall into horrible confuſion & extreme beaſtlineſſe.

Nowe by the way we muſt note further, that he which rauiſheth a maide, is heere likened to a thiefe which meeting with his neighbor ſleaeth him. He compareth him not wͭ one yͭ beateth his neighbor. This cōpariſon therfore doth euidently declare yͭ the act of it ſelf is beyond meaſure outragious & intollerable. For like as yͤ life of man is precious vnto God, ſo is the chaſtitie and the faith which is plighted in marriage. For the wife is linked vnto her husband to liue and to die with him. So then when this faith is once falſified, what honeſtie can there bee any longer amongſt men? Therefore God to ſhewe the grieuouſneſſe of the fault, ſaieth it is a kinde of open theeuerie and murther if a man meete with a maide & deflower her ſpecially by force. This is an vnpardonable offence. Moreouer, God doeth vs to vnderſtande that maides ought to make as great account of their chaſtitie, as of their life. For (as hath beene tolde you) if a maid fight not for her honeſtie, and her virginitie, doubtleſſe ſhee is not worthie to liue in yͤ worlde. For if ſhe crie not, but ſuffer her ſelfe to be defiled, ſhee muſt die without any pardon. Therefore our Lorde in this place againe declareth, that maides ought to behaue themſelues honeſtly: ſo as if they meete with any miſaduenture or finde any naughtipack which would entiſe them to naughtines, they muſt haue les regard of their life than of their good name, and rather ſuffer their throates to be cut, than their bodies to bee defiled, and to liue in ſuch ſhame. Yee ſee then in few words, what we haue to beare in mind vpon this place: becauſe the matter was handled ſo largely yeſterday, it may ſuffice to gather things briefly as neede ſhall require for yͤ words of Moſes. And here we ſee how it is not for vs to ſtand either vppon cuſtome or vpon mens fancies. For nowadayes if men alledge that adulterers are not puniſhed, they beare themſelues in hande yͭ it is a ſufficient buckler for their defence, and if they ſay, who complaineth of it? Ye ſee how god is ſhut out. Many men therfore beare themſelues in hand yͭ it is a reaſonable defence if they may ſay that all men vſe to doe ſo, it is the common cuſtome, it is the opinion of al men. But contrariwiſe we ſee here how God reſerueth alwaies his authority. Albeit that men corrupt thẽſelues through abuſe, although they flatter themſelues in their vices although they be of opinion that al is lawfull for them, yet notwithſtanding this excuſeth them not, neither impeacheth it Gods authoritie any whit at all. Nowe then, let not men lean vnto yͭ which is in cõmon vſe, neither yet let them therupon harden themſelues, but let them haue an eye vnto yͭ which God hath once cõmãded. For that muſt needs always keep his courſe. And indeed, we may ſee what corruptions haue riſen in the worlde, when men haue ſo ſwarued from the word of God after yͤ fancie of this man or that man. From thence haue all ſuperſtitions proceeded. Ye ſee how the Papiſts nowadays being beſotted in their follies, cannot bee brought back into yͤ right way of ſaluatiõ. For they beare thẽſelues in hand, yͭ they are ſufficiently armed with this ſhift of theirs yͭ of long time men haue liued as they doe, & that themſelues are not the inuenters of the religion which they holde. But (as I haue tolde you) this can ſerue them to no purpoſe, no more than it can ſerue for yͤ defence of adultery, to alledge yͭ it is not puniſhed nowadayes nor any account made of it. No: but God who is the heauenly Iudge, will in the end ſhewe that theſe are ſuch enormities as hee can in no wiſe ſuffer. Now yͭ which Moſes addeth proueth yͤ ſame thing which we touched yeſterday; namely, yͭ God did not always puniſh offences in ſuch ſort as by good right he might, I meane of puniſhing according to yͤ law which he gaue for yͤ ordering of the people of Iſrael. For he bare wͭ many things becauſe of the hardnes of that people, as our Lord Ieſus ſheweth them when hee ſpeaketh of diuorcements which were done againſt all reaſon & indifferencie. For hee ſaith here that if a man finde a maide, and yͭ ſhe without forcing yeelde herſelfe, that hee ſhalbe quit by giuing of money for the marriage of yͤ maide, & by taking of her to wife, and by being debarred of yͤ common liberty, that he may neuer forſake her. Now I grant that this was a chaſtiſement vnto yͤ man which had played the fornicator. But was it ſo grieuous as the fault required? Nay verily. What ſhall we ſay then? Did God permit whoredome, or ment he to lay yͤ bridle on their neck, or gaue he to vnderſtand therby, yͭ the ſin ſhould be pardoned? No, none of all this. For we haue ſhewed afore, that when God deliuered his lawe which conſiſteth in ten words, hee declared therin his will, and preſcribed men a certaine rule wherby they ſhould liue. Now that lawe is it which ſhall iudge vs at yͤ latter day, & it not onely ſerueth to condemne offenders vnto temporal puniſhmẽt, but alſo doth vs to vnderſtand that we muſt anſwere thereunto before the iudgement ſeate of God, to periſh for euer. Therfore when we ſhall haue eſcaped yͤ hands of men, yea and yͤ god ſhal haue winked at our faults, yet muſt we in yͤ ende come to our accoũt before him. Ye ſee then yͭ the law of God is to iudge vs. As for this it ſerued but for an earthly policie. And God (as I haue ſaide) reſpected not ſuch perfection as is required in yͤ faithfull; but rather bare with the hardnes of yͤ people, which was ſo ſturdy & ſo hard to be ruled. And albeit he puniſhed not thoſe diuorcements which were made againſt all indifferency, yet is it not to be ſaid therefore, that he permitted thẽ. For we heare how our Lord Ieſus Chriſt pronoũceth therof, That whoſoeuer forſaketh his wife & taketh another (except it be for adulterie, ſo that he can proue ſhe hath played yͤ whore) is an adulterer: and that whoſo taketh her to wife that is forſaken, committeth adultery alſo, and his mariage is not lawful, but deteſted of God. Euen ſo ſtãdeth yͤ caſe in that which we ſee in this place. For although God puniſheth him not ſeuerely which cõmitteth fornication wͭ a maide, it is not becauſe that whoredome is any way at all to bee pardoned. If it be not puniſhed by mẽ, yet god alwais hath his right reſerued. But this is done becauſe yͭ commonly in yͤ eſtate of gouernement, men wil ſooner puniſh thoſe faults wherby their own cõmodities are hindered, than wherby God is offended. Indeed yͤ Iudges & magiſtrats ought not to giue the bridle ſo far, that God ſhould bee mocked, yͭ his name ſhould be diſhonoured, or that al religion ſhould be trampled vnder foote, as wee haue ſeene heretofore that blaſphemies were more grieuouſly puniſhed thã murders. But when there is ſome by offence cõmitted, wherin

Mat.19.9.

there is no manifeſt deſpiſing of God to be ſeen; men will not purſue it ſo fierſly, as when a matter toucheth themſelues. So then, as touching yͤ fornicatiõ which Moſes ſpeaketh of in this place, foraſmuch as it concerneth the loſſe & diſcredit which is done vnto a man becauſe his daughter is kept back from prefermẽt in mariage: he that hath inueagled her muſt aſſigne her a dowry: & becauſe it may be that ſhe ſhall not find another match: therefore he muſt take her to wife if her father wil. And if he ſhould caſt her off againe wͭin a while after, ſhe ſhould be new to prouide againe. Therfore he muſt keepe her ſtill, and be ſo debarred of that common right which belonged to others, yͭ he may neuer forſake her. Ye ſee thẽ howe God prouideth for the commoditie of the partie. But yet for all this God is ſtill offended if 1.Cor.6,15 a man defile the temple of the holy ghoſt which is his bodie, and giue ouer the members of our Lord Ieſus Chriſt to ſuch wickednes. For we are all members of his bodie. And farther, when he goeth about to defile a maide which is yͤ temple of God and a member of the bodie of our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt, I ſay that the doing thereof is an ouer great confuſion. And yet for all that ſhee is not puniſhed; no, not by ciuill order: But yet the law of God remaineth alwayes in his eſtate, yͭ is to ſay, it is the rule which he hath giuẽ vs to liue by, which ſhall not bend at our pleaſure. To bee ſhort, God by giuing his Law, ment to frame vs vnto his obedience: and to ſhew vs our dutie towards him. And therfore yͤ law goeth roundly to work, & ſheweth vnto vs wherunto we are boũd.

Moreouer touching ciuil order, god had an eye vnto yͭ which yͤ weaknes of yͤ world might beare, & conformed himſelf therunto: & therfore there were many things which were not puniſhed by the law of Moſes. Neuertheles we are taught yͭ albeit our faults be not iudged by men, wee muſt not therfore fal aſleepe in our ſins. For we ſhall gaine little, though earthly iudges let vs alone, & we eſcape without puniſhment before them, if in yͤ meane time yͤ wrath of God encreaſe vpon vs: and becauſe he hath patiently waited our amẽdment, it grow more & more againſt vs, & we put Rom.2.4. that in vre which S. Paul ſaith, yͭ is to wit, that we hord vp to our ſelues a treaſure of yͤ greater condemnation. Let vs therefore learne not to haue ſuch reſpect vnto mẽ, that we think ſo our faults be not vpbraided vs by them, or ſo they accuſe vs not, or frame no inditement againſt vs, we be therfore quited. Nay let vs know, that it ſhould be good for vs ſomtimes to be awakened by mẽ. For whẽ we be chaſtiſed; then doth God yͭ which S. Paul ſaith in an other place, to wit, hee puni- Cor.5.5. ſheth vs according to yͤ fleſh in this worlde, that we might not periſh euerlaſtingly. Now therfore let vs lift vp our eyes alwayes vnto yͤ iudgement ſeate before which we muſt come & appeare. Although we haue bin borne withall in this world, and yͭ we beare our ſelues in hand yͭ our ſins ſhal remaine vnpuniſhed, wee muſt be doublie puniſhed at yͤ hand of God, becauſe we haue bin ſtubborn & hardharted euen vnto the vttermoſt, and haue ſo abuſed his patience. Sith he waited ſo lõg for our amendment, & ſought by al gentlenes to win vs vnto himſelf, if we for all yͭ haue bin rebellious, and haue as it were laughed at his louing kindnes which he vſed towards vs; muſt hee not call all this to minde to our greater coſt?

And let vs note farther yͭ it is too vaine an excuſe which many make, ſaying; And whõ haue I wronged? Nowadaies if a mã charge theſe blaſphemers wͭ this wickednes, they will wry their mouth & come with I know not what ſhameleſnes, and ſay: & who complaineth of me? to whom is it yͭ I haue done any iniury? If we were al ſuch as we ought to be, doubtleſſe we would crie an alarme when yͤ name of God is blaſphemed, and we would al be proctors in yͤ caſe, ſeeing yͭ God vouchſafeth vs this honour, to haue vs to maintaine his maieſty & his own cauſe. Yet for al this, we make no account therof. If our ſelues haue any iniury done vnto vs, wee will crie at it. But if God be euill ſpoken of, ſo that his name be put to open ſhame, we let it paſſe, we take no care of it. They which haue ſo ſhamefully offended may ſay: who is he yͭ accuſeth vs? But yet for all that, this is ſuch a ſhift as ſhall auaile them but a little (as we haue ſaid.) For ſhall God forget himſelfe? Shall he ſuffer himſelfe to be ſo diſpiſed & make no account thereof? Hath not he ſworne by his owne name, that he will maintaine his glory vnto the vtmoſt? Now ſeeing it is ſo, what wil come of it if wee replie againſt him and ſay, that none can complain of any iniurie done vnto him, whẽ wee ſhall haue ſo offended the maieſtie of God? Alas, is it not more than if wee had bidden battaile vnto al creatures? Yes verily. Now the caſe is like in fornication. I graunt that a man which playeth the fornicatour may ſay: no man complaineth of me. For both yͤ parties were agreed together. But what? Yee ſee that the temple of God (as I told you) is vnhallowed. And is that trecherie ſo ſmall a thing? If a man had robbed, he ſhould haue beene puniſhed, as he well deſerueth. But here is a farre greater fault than theft. For when the temple of God is defiled, it exceedeth all the extortions and pollings which can be done vnto men touching their goods. Ye ſee howe two temples of God are defiled at once through fornication. Yee ſee alſo how our Lord Ieſus Chriſt is therein ſhamefully abuſed. For he vouchſafeth vs this honor that we bee members of his body, he hath vnited vs vnto himſelfe, and ſhall we for all this goe and abandon our ſelues to ſuch a ſhamefull villany? Is not yͭ a tearing of the bodie of the ſonne of God in peeces aſmuch as lyeth in vs? Let men then delight themſelues as much as they liſt, and let others ſooth them in their filthines and make but a laughing game therof: Surely they ſhall fare neuer the better at Gods hand for al that. So then let vs learne (as I haue told you) to lift vp our eyes vnto yͤ heauenly throne, and to walke in ſuch wiſe, as wee may alwayes haue a warrant within vs that wee haue proceeded in all vprightneſſe with God. And let vs not be ſo fooliſh as to reſt our ſelues vpon that which men command, but let vs holde that rule which cannot deceiue vs, that is, the lawe which God hath deliuered vnto vs, and whereunto he wil haue vs to frame our whole life.

But Alas, this is euill practiſed nowadayes. How many are there who if there were no laws, nor threatnings; would euer come to Church to heare one word of yͤ doctrine of god? And yet we ſee manifeſtly yͭ ſuch men doe it but for faſhions ſake. Well: they will come. But when? On ſuch dayes as are cōmanded. But if there ſhould be no expreſſe commandemēt, they are of opiniō that they are not otherwiſe bound thereto: and ſo it were much better that they came not vnto the Church at all. For they do nought elſe but defile the temple God. And they ſhew that they neuer taſted one whit of doctrine, they come thither ſo like dogs & ſwine. And ſo we ſee yͭ many in this worlde haue a care of nothing but of yͭ which is commanded and forbidden them, for feare they ſhoulde bee pinched by yͤ purſes, or haue ſome other puniſhment, according vnto ciuill order. Otherwiſe they ſhew yͭ they haue no religion, but are very beaſts. But as for vs, ſith we ſee that God is ſo gracious vnto vs, as to declare vnto vs his will that we might followe it, let vs bethinke our ſelues to draw neerer vnto him, and to make his righteouſneſſe ſhine in vs. For this is his true ymage. And therby we declare that we be his children, and it is our warrant that hee hath adopted vs, and yͭ he will execute the office of a father towards vs. But there are very few which conſider this. Yet notwithſtanding, it behooueth vs to be attentiue to that which I haue ſaid: namely, that becauſe God hath called vs vnto himſelfe, and hath vouchſafed to teach vs howe wee ought to liue: we alſo ought to profite in his ſchoole, and to come willingly of our owne minde vnto him, and alſo to accompliſh that which is ſaid in the Psal.40.8.& 110.3. Pſalme, to wit, that to be good ſouldiours of our Lord Ieſus Chriſt, we muſt come of our owne accord without forcing, and without threatening, we muſt come with a franke and free heart, as if we would ſay: Lorde, behold I offer my ſelfe vnto thee: therefore if we wil ſuffer the Lord ſo to gouerne vs, that looke what way ſo euer he turneth the bridle we wil go & be wealded by him, & not bee ſtubborne in any wiſe, nor fling againſt him like wild & ſauage beaſtes: that is it (ſay I) which we haue to beare in minde. But as long as we are led with a ſlauiſh feare, doutles God will not accept any thing of yͭ which we do. And I ſay, not onely yͭ our doing of yͤ things which are cōmanded vs, & our abſtaining from yͤ things which are forbidden vs, be but for feare of men & of earthly Iudges; but alſo yͭ if our obſeruing of gods law be but bicauſe we feare to be damned: he vtterly miſlyketh ſuch a ſeruice, & wil make no account therof. And what is yͤ reaſō? Forſooth becauſe he wilbe honored of vs as a father is honored of his children. For I pray you, if a child grind his teeth againſt his father, & it grieue him to obey him: but becauſe he hath no way to eſcape his hands, he wil doe what he commandeth him: and yet if it were poſſible he would get him out of yͤ houſe, and not obey his father: ſhall this ſeruice pleaſe him? Surely no. And wil God haue leſſe graunted vnto him than mortall men require, which are but rottennes? Of a very truth, they which ſerue God ſo by conſtraint could find in their harts to haue him plucked out of heauen if they coulde poſſibly doe it. And therefore let vs bethinke our ſelues to yeeld vnto God ſuch ſacrifice as he lyketh of. Let vs ſacrifice vnto him our ſelues, our Rom.12.1. thoughts, our wils & affections, and all yͭ is in vs: let vs dedicate al vnto him with a ſyncere affection, & with an vpright free hartednes (as we haue ſaid afore.) True it is that we ought to be ſore afraide of Gods puniſhments, becauſe we are like an Aſſe which muſt euer be ſpurred, & laid vpon with a ſtaffe. Therefore let vs humble our ſelues whē we ſee yͤ threats which are made againſt vs in the holy ſcripture. But withall let vs yet paſſe farther, to know yͭ God is our father; and knowing him to bee ſuch a one, let vs come vnto him like true children; as he requireth vs by his Prophet: If I bee your father (ſaith he) where is mine Mal.1.6. honour? He ſaith not onely, If I bee your maſter, wher is yͤ feare which you ow me? But he putteth both down together. If I be your maſter, wher is my feare? And if I be your father, wher is yͤ honor which you owe vnto me? God therfore wilbe honored of vs: but withal he wilbe ſerued of vs, and that of a frank & free goodwill, and of a ſyncere affection, as we haue before declared, when wee treated of yͤ ſhort abridgement of yͤ law in the ſeuenth chapter: what doth thy God O Iſrael require more of thee, but yͭ thou ſhouldeſt ſtick vnto him by louing him? This (ſay I) is in effect all yͤ ſeruice which God requireth of vs. And ſo wee are warned, yͭ we muſt not bee ſo ouergreeued wͭ the threats yͭ are made againſt vs, and with yͤ puniſhments which are contained in the law, but yͭ we ſhold alſo outgo yͤ ſame & be redy to offer vp our ſelues a willing ſacrifice vnto God, & to call vpon him as our father, accordingly as hee hath adopted vs for his children.

In the ende Moſes declareth, yͭ men muſt obſerue ſuch an honeſty of nature in mariage, that the ſonne in law muſt not couple himſelf with his ſtepmother. Indeed here hee ſetteth downe but one kind: But in the twentith of Leuiticus, there are mo degrees ſpoken of. But this ſerueth to put them in mind of yͭ which was ſaid before. For Moſes in this book maketh a rehearſal of the law which hee had already written. And I haue told you yͭ this is not more than needeth; becauſe mens memories are ſo ſhort, and they forget ſo ſoone that which God hath taught them. It was therfore expedient yͭ Moſes for yͤ better warranting of his doctrine, ſhould repete it again in this booke. And therfore he doth touch this but by yͤ way concerning marriages: that men ought to keep ſuch an order, as to hold inceſts for accurſed. For yͤ Paynims themſelues knew, yͭ if mariages were made wͭout all difference, there ſhoulde be inceſts (as they called them) committed, ſo as mariage ſhold be defiled before God, & become worſe than whoredome. They had this conceite imprinted in them by nature: & albeit they had not bin taught yͤ will of God purely, yet had they ſome ſparke of it. God would not that mankinde ſhold become ſo beaſtly, but yͭ they ſhold always haue a kind of light, to make them vnexcuſable, and to encreaſe their condemnation the more, as S. Paul alſo treateth hereof in yͤ ſecond Chapter of the Epiſtle to the Romans. Now to treate of all thoſe degrees which are ſpoken of in Leuiticus, were needeles at this time. It ſhall ſuffice briefly to beare in mind yͤ effect of all, namely yͭ we ought to haue a difference and honeſty obſerued in mariage: that degrees of kinred be not mingled and confounded together: that a father take not his daughter to wife, nor a brother his ſiſter, nor an vncle his neece: that a father in law take not his daughter in lawe, and yͭ a mother in law take not her ſon in law. For if we obſerue not this order, what differ we from yͤ brute beaſtes? But a man wil ſay, why ſir? It is by mariage. Yea, but like as mariage is an holy thing, ſo muſt it be kept with the greater reuerence. So that it is a double condemnation, if I will go vnder the colour of mariage, and defile my ſelfe like a brute beaſt. It is as if a man ſhold rob his neighbor vnder the colour of Iuſtice. He commenceth a falſe action againſt him, & when hee hath caſt him he will alledge: Oh I haue gotten yͤ ſute, I haue nothing but by way of iuſtice. Yea, but thy wickedneſſe is greater than if thou haddeſt cut a mans purſe. That offence of the twaine had beene the leſſer. For thy theeuery indureth ſtil: and (which worſe is) thou haſt falſly abuſed yͤ name of God, & defiled yͤ ſeat of Iuſtice. Seeſt thou not what a treachery thou haſt wrought herein? Then like as yͤ man is a double thiefe which by pleading a wrong cauſe and through ouerthwart meanes hath raked vnto himſelfe an other mans goods: ſo doubtles thoſe which violate the order of nature, as a father which marieth his daughter, an vncle which companieth with his neece, a brother which taketh his ſiſter, do worſe than if they committed whoredome. And why? Becauſe firſt the thing it ſelf is beaſtly, and can neuer be lawful. Secondly yͤ land is as it were defiled and infected where ſuch wickednes raigneth. Briefly mẽ ought to deteſt & abhor it. And yet notwithſtanding, if men will yet venter to confound marriage together, which is ſo holy a thing, which is yͤ liuely image of that ſpirituall vnion which wee haue with our Lord Ieſus Chriſt; which God (as we know) ordained at the beginning & bleſſed; if mẽ will intermingle it with ſuch filthines; if they will make but a ſport of it, to whom offer they this iniury? Offer they it not vnto God who is yͤ author of mariage, & commandeth yͭ it be maintained in all purenes? Ye ſee then what we haue to beare in mind concerning this place.

But now hath God prouided a lawe for it, and not without great cauſe. For in thoſe countries there was more corruption touching inceſtes, thã hath euer bin in al other countries beſides. I ſay, that neither in Greece nor in Italy men euer vſed ſuch lawles and vilanous liberty in this kind of wickednes, as they of Aſia and of all the Eaſt countrie did. For there it was counted nothing for the brother to couple with the ſiſter. It was therfore needfull yͭ God in this caſe ſhould reine his people with a ſhorter bridle. And hereby wee may ſee yͭ cuſtome ſhall not ſerue vs for an excuſe. If a thing diſpleaſe God, although it be vſed among men, it ſerueth not to leſſen the fault. For God wil alwayes remaine iudge. And why? Gods will is that we ſhould do him this honor to hold our ſelues vnto his ſimple wil, although mẽ draw cleane backward. Let vs therfore learn to yeeld our ſelues vnto the Lawe of God touching this point. And if a man reply, that we are not to bee held thral to yͤ order of Moſes, I grant it. But yet ought we at leaſtwiſe to admit yͤ warnings which God giueth vs, and to vſe his counſel. Although we be freed from this bondage of the ciuill Law of Moſes, yet will he haue vs to beare alwayes in mind this ground, to wit, that we bethinke vs for what cauſe God hath forbidden this thing. For it is becauſe the thing is intollerable. We muſt therfore frame our ſelues vnto that thing which we know to bee acceptable vnto God, and withhold vs from that which he forbiddeth.

But yet there is a double condemnation to fall vpon them which wil go cleane contrary againſt it, as S. Paul ſaith ſpeaking of him which had takẽ his mother in Law to wife in Corinth. How now? (ſaith he) Are ye not aſhamed yͭ ſuch fornicatiõ ſhoulde be among you, and that ſo villanous an act ſhold be committed, as yͤ Painims could not abide to heare the like ſpoken of? Indeede ſometimes ſuch like things were to be ſeen among thẽ but yet neuertheleſſe they did abhor ſuch wickednes. Seeing then yͭ the vnbeleeuing wretches haue bin taught, by ſuch a motion as themſelues knewe not, wͭout either ſcripture or preaching, albeit God draue thẽ therunto, to keepe this honeſtie in the degrees of mariage: what ought we to doe? Verily we ſee yͭ the very Paynims are yet more to our cõdemnation. For there was a certaine Emperour of Rome, who becauſe he wold cõmit the ſame inceſt himſelfe, made a law yͭ the vncle might mary with his niece. And this libertie which was ſo graunted by yͤ law was neuer folowed of any but of his own baud. Although he had all countries at cõmandement, yet could he neuer make yͤ law of ſufficient authoritie yͭ any man beſides himſelfe & one baude of his woulde be perſwaded yͭ the vncle might marry with the niece. Now what ſhall we ſay of this, but yͭ our Lorde had a ſecret bridle for men, as if he ſhould ſay: I will yͭ there remaine ſome honeſtie in nature in deſpite of all thoſe which beare rule in yͤ world, & would make ſuch a confuſion that men ſhold be as brute beaſts, yea euẽ as dogs & ſwine? Do what they can yet wil I be aboue thẽ, & cauſe my law to be ſo printed in yͤ heartes of men, yͭ for all their wickednes & blindnes they ſhall yet retaine ſome honeſtie in yͭ which I haue principally cõmanded thẽ. Beholde (I ſay) how God hath borne ſway in ſuch ſort yͭ men (how vnbeleeuing ſoeuer they were) haue yet had ſome remorſe, yͭ they would not altogether go againſt that which was forbidden them in this lawe. In deede men might haue alledged: This thing is lawful for vs. The Law is made, the ſentence is proclaimed, libertie is granted vnto al mẽ to do ſo: & yet we ſee how God ouerruleth al & ſheweth yͭ he himſelfe wil ſo waken mẽ & ſũmon thẽ to appeare before him, yͭ they ſhal not fall into ſuch confuſion. And therefore let vs humble our ſelues vnder him and be ſo far frõ wayting vntil he cal vs vnto our account & draw vs vnto this honeſty by force, that we alwayes preuent his iudgement, to walke in ſuch feare and carefulnes, that wee make it our pleaſure to ſerue and honor him: ſo as there may be ſuch an honeſt conuerſation among vs as not onely the order of nature may bee obſerued, but alſo that we may ſhewe how it is not for nought that hee hath ſhouled vs out from among the vnbeleeuing wretches, and would that we ſhould be an holy people vnto him and dedicated vnto his ſeruice.

But now let vs kneele downe in the preſence of our good God with acknowledgement of our faultes, praying him to make vs feele them more & more, and to draw vs away from them, & ſo to rid vs of them, as we may encreaſe from day to day, & be reformed vnto his righteouſnes: & that he wil in the meane time beare with vs in our infirmities, & not intreat vs ſeuerely, but pardon vs our faultes, vntill he hath clenſed vs altogether from them. And ſo let vs all ſay: Almightie &c.

On Thurſday the xvj. of Ianuarie, 1556

The Cxxx. Sermon which is the firſt vpon the three and twentith Chapter.

NOne that is hurte by burſting, or that is gelded ſhall enter into the congregation of the Lorde.

2 A Baſtard ſhall not enter into the congregation of the Lorde, neither ſhall the tenth generation of him enter in.

3 The Ammonites & Moabites ſhal not enter into ẏ congregation of the Lord, neither ſhall their tenth generation for euer enter into the cõgregation of the Lord.

IT might ſeeme a ſtrãg caſe ẏ God in this place ſhutteth out of his congregation ſuch as are maymed in their bodies. For men can hardly bee perſwaded ẏ this hindereth any to come neare vnto God. Nay rather when there is any weakenes in them, it maketh them more worthy of pitie and compaſſion. And we are aſſured on the other ſide, ẏ God requireth a ſpiritual purenes, & maketh no great account of this outward appearance; as it is expreſly written in the fifteenth Chapter of ẏ firſt booke of Samuel, that he reſpecteth not thoſe things which appeare to the eye ward, as men do. But wee are to note, that when God in the old time vnder the law required any outward purenes, it was to bring the Iewes more forward to conſider, that they could not preſent themſelues vnto the temple, except they were throughly purified, ſpecialy touching their ſoules. The like is meant in that which we ſee here. For wheras God in this place condemneth ẏ maime which is in the body; it is to betoken, that they which will ſerue him & deſire to approch neare vnto him, ought to be ſoũd both in their bodies and in their ſoules. For whatſoeuer was figured in ẏ law, was referred vnto that ſpiritual and heauenly patron which Moſes ſaw in the mount: as it is written in the 25. Chapter of Leuiticus. And this is wel obſerued both by S. Steuen, and by the Apoſtle to the Hebrewes. So then let vs note ẏ when God barreth thoſe from entring into the ſanctuary, which had any mayme in their bodie: he ment to betoken therby that he woulde haue his ſeruants ſound & pure. Yea and that men ſhould not in ẏ behalfe reſt on that which is ſeen with the eye of man, but rather ſeeke after the true ſoundneſſe, which God reſpecteth, which is in our heartes and in our mindes.

Act.7.44.
Hebr.8.5.

The like is to bee ſaide of that which Moſes addeth touching baſtards. God meant hereby to ſhewe, firſt what a priuiledge he had graunted vnto the ſtocke of Abraham. And this was done to the intent that his fauour ſhoulde be the better knowen. Beholde howe God choſe out of all the world one certaine people. And why? Wee haue before ſhewed that there was no worthines at all in them, but this proceeded of his own freebeſtowed loue. Nowe becauſe men doe willingly darken the fauour of God or cleane forget it, or happily not knowe it in ſuch ſort as they ſhould; God would that the children of Abrahã, before they entred into the ſanctuary, ſhoulde learne to reaſon thus with themſelues: What is ẏ cauſe ẏ we haue acceſſe & entrãce vnto our god? What is the cauſe why hee ſheweth himſelfe ſo familiar vnto vs, and receiueth vs when wee come vnto him? It is becauſe he hath choſen the ſeed of Abraham, howbeit ſuch as are ẏ true ſeed of Abraham. We ſee thẽ how god ment to make thẽ which were deſcended from ẏ ſtock of Abraham, to perceiue ẏ without any deſert of theirs, he had choſen them to be the inheritãce of ẏ euerlaſting God. I ſay he ſhewed this vnto thẽ, & exerciſed thẽ in the remembrance of ẏ benefite, to ẏ intent it might be ẏ better acknowledged among thẽ. That (ſay I) is ẏ thing which we haue to note firſt of all. Secondly God by this meanes held the Iewes ſhorter ẏ they might keepe themſelues pure & chaſt, and ẏ there might be no fornication among them; nor any ſuch confuſion as men might not know which were right begotten and which were baſtarde children, when no difference might bee had in that behalfe. Therefore GOD by ordayning this Lawe, gaue the Iewes an occaſion to liue more chaſtly, to the ende their ſtocke might bee holie and not prophane, and that he which intended to commit adultery ſhould be moued thus to thinke and to reaſon with himſelf: How now? God choſe me before I was borne becauſe I am of the children of Abraham: and yet not contented herewith, he hath declared that hee will be my ſauiour, euen to a thouſand generations: he accepteth my ofspring, hee hath dedicated it vnto himſelfe; although we be al curſed by nature, yet this grace of adoption exceedeth in my ſtocke. And ſhall I goe now and raiſe vp a defiled ſeede, which ſhall not bee of the people of God, which ſhal not be of the body of his congregation, which ſhall haue no entrance into the ſanctuary? Were not yͤ a renouncing of the benefit of my god? Is it not to ſhut him far off from me, & to giue him no entertainment, or to ſhew him no countenance, when hee calleth mee ſo gently? This (ſay I) ought to holdẽ backe the Iewes, or els they were more than blockiſh. And that had beene too leawd an vnthankfulnes and a forgetting of the benefit which God had grãced vnto them.

Therfore that we may nowe apply theſe two places to our inſtruction, let vs note yͭ although God regard not nowadayes whether there be any blemiſh in a mans body or no, ne reſpecteth our parentage: yet notwithſtanding his will is yͭ this law ſhold ſerue for vs, and yͭ we ſhould apply the truth therof to our vſe: that is to wit, yͭ when we come vnto him, we muſt bring with vs an vpright ſoundnes. And wherein? Surely not in our bodily members, for we know yͭ his ſeruice is ſpiritual. Therfore let vs purifie our ſoules. I grant Ioh.4.23. yͭ our bodies ought to be purified alſo (as S. Paul Cor.6.6. warneth vs): but that is not in ſuch wiſe as there be no maime or fault of ſicknes in them, but it is meant, that we muſt not defile them wͭ vile and wicked thinges, as he ſpeaketh of Idolatry & fornication, & alſo as the ſcripture ſpeaketh of briberies & extortions. He which falleth downe before ydols, as much as in him lieth defileth his body, which ought to be dedicated vnto the ſeruice of God. The like is to be ſaid of fornicators, which giue thẽſelues ouer vnto ſuch wickednes as God deteſteth. They which ſpoile & rob ano- Eſa.1.15. ther man of his goods, haue bloudy hands as the Prophet Eſay vpbraideth them. Thus ye ſe how we ought to indeuor our ſelues to purifie our bodies. But yͤ chiefe point is, yͭ we haue this ſoundnes in our ſoules, that they be not ſcarred wͭ any ſuch maime, as may hinder vs from being quicke and ready to obey our God. We muſt not (ſay I) be womaniſh; but we muſt haue an inuincible corage to make battaile againſt Satan & againſt all temptatiõs, ſhewing our ſelues to be mẽ indeed. Likewiſe we muſt not be weake in faith, but wee muſt proceede always forward, and enforce our ſelues to come vnto yͤ mãs eſtate wherof S. Paul Eph.4.13. ſpeaketh to yͤ Epheſians, that we wauer not with euery word but hold vs faſt to yͭ which is good, & abide cõſtant, & ſtable in yͤ truth which we haue knowen. Wee muſt not be tottering & wauering too & fro; but we muſt reſiſt al temptations ſo as nothing may hinder vs to keepe on that courſe whereunto God hath called vs. Let vs therefore ſtrengthen again yͤ weake knees, & let vs fortifie yͤ trembling hands by the power of yͤ holy Ghoſt.

Thus ye ſée whereof we are expreſly warned in this place to occaſion vs to cling vnto our God, when we be to withſtand any tẽptations which hinder vs from ſeruing him.

And moreouer let vs note, yͭ ſeeing God hath ſanctified vs, (yea & that together with our whole ofspring) we ought to continue in true chaſtitie when we heare his voice at yͤ mouth of our God: I wil be yͤ ſauiour both of you & of your children Gen.17.7. alſo after you. Whẽ God is ſo gratious as to giue vs children, we ought to prouide diligently yͭ the ſtocke be pure & vndefiled. And let the faithfull take good heed that they intermingle not them ſelues with fornications or ſuch other like defilements. And why? Becauſe it is a renouncing of yͤ excellent priuiledge which God giueth them, when he chuſeth them in ſuch ſort vnto himſelf and therewithal chooſeth their children alſo although they be not yet begotten. But the chiefe point is, that we muſt learne to be the true children of Abraham. Rom.11.17. Gal.3.7. Seeing we be graffed into his ſtocke through faith let vs take heede that we be not cut off from this body by our vnbeliefe. For the Prophets who were yͤ true expounders of the law, do wel declare what the thing is which God ameth at in this place, when they ſay: Come you of the ſtocke of Abraham? No ye are the childrẽ of an harlot euerychone of you. Get ye hence ye harlots brats, appeare here in your liknes, come Eſa.57.3. foorth and let men knowe you; yee children of a Ezech.16.3. ſtrumpet (ſaith yͤ Prophet Eſay). And yͤ Prophets Ieremy & Ezechiel ſpeak in like ſort: What haue you like vnto Abraham whoſe name yee beare? Was not your father an Amorite, & your mother a whore? To whõ ſpeake they thus? Speake they to children of harlots & vnto baſtardes concerning yͤ fleſh? No. But vnto lawful borne children. And why then calleth hee them ſtrumpets children, as if they were begotten in ſome brothelhouſe? Becauſe they were corrupted & followed not yͤ faith of Abraham. For yͤ true parentage is Rom.9.7. ſpiritual (as S. Paul ſaith). They which deſcẽded Gal.3.7. from yͤ ſtock of Abraham concerning yͤ fleſh, are not therfore accounted yͤ linage of Abrahã. And what is yͤ reaſõ? Forſooth becauſe they are growen out of kind. So then let vs note that whẽ Moſes forbade yͭ baſtards ſhould enter into yͤ temple, it was not onely for this ſhameful note which is in reſpect of the world, when childrẽ are not begotten in lawful wedlocke: it was rather to ſhew yͭ the Iewes were not worthy to haue any acceſſe vnto God, to call vpon his name, or to company with his congregation, except they held faſt this ſpiritual kinred of Abraham, that is to ſay, except they followed his faith, & except they continued in yͤ pure couenant of god. Now this could not be done except they always bare in mind, that god had choſen them to bee an holy people, to bee a royal prieſthood. Let vs now for our part note yͭ albeit wee were altogether ſtrangers vnto God, although we had no acceſſe into his tẽple, & although (as S. Paul ſaith) we had no couenãt with Eph.2.12.& 19. him becauſe yͤ promiſes were not made vnto vs; yet notwithſtanding we are made houſhold ſeruants with the holy fathers, citiſens of the kingdome of heauen, through faith, foraſmuch as God hath communicated vnto vs this freedome which was giuen only vnto yͤ ſtock of Abraham.

Seeing it is ſo yͭ we which were wild & barren Rom.11.24. trees, haue bin beſids nature graffed into yͤ good Olife, let vs take heed yͭ we vſe well ſo excellent a benefite: and let vs ſticke with a ſtedfaſt faith vnto Abraham our father; and as oft as we come vnto the church, let vs take warning to examine our ſelues and to ſay: Behold God hath appointed this order, that we ſhould come together to Eph.2.18. the intent he may be among vs, & we haue familiar acceſſe vnto him: and that is on condition yͭ we become true children of Abraham. And in what ſort? Let vs conſider of that which is ſaid in Ioh.1.12.& 13. the firſt Chapt. of S. Iohn: for this kinred is there expounded, ſuch as God requireth nowadayes and alloweth of. It commeth (ſaith he) neither of the will of man, nor of the wil of the fleſh, nor of bloude: but the cauſe therof is that we haue beleeued in the onely ſonne of God. Seeing then it is ſo: that when we beleeue in our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt, & be graffed into his body, we are admitted for the ſonnes of God, although wee on our part are not worthy of that honour. Let vs take heede, that we hold our ſelues there, and that we grow not out of kinde through vnthankfulnes, & ſo cut our ſelues off from that body wherunto we were ioyned through the grace of God and his infinite mercy by yͤ meane of faith. Yee ſee then what we haue to beare in mind vpon this place, when it is ſaide expreſly, that baſtards ſhall not enter into the congregation of God, euen vnto the tenth generation.

But let vs come now to yͭ which is ſpoken of yͤ Moabites & the Ammonites. Theſe people were deſcended from Lot, and ſo ought to bee yͤ kinſmen of yͤ Iewes. Yet neuertheles God baniſheth them out of his Church, and will not yͭ they haue any entrance therinto, vnto the tenth generation, albeit they yeelded themſelues vnder yͤ obedience of yͤ law. He addeth: *They met you not by the way when you came out of Egypt with bread & water*, that is to ſay, they entertained you not as kinſmē and friends ſhould haue done. Now albeit yͤ Ammonites and yͤ Moabites were ſeuered from the ſtock of Abraham, as Lot was alredy gone vnto Sodome, and ſo had not the promiſe: yet neuertheles they ought to haue called to minde their kindred, and yͭ Abraham had brought Lot into yͤ land of promiſe, & had taken him for his ſon. The remembrance hereof ought ſo to haue endured, that yͤ Moabites & Ammonites (if they had had any good nature) ſhold haue granted paſſage vnto them which were of their owne bloud. And againe we ſee how God ſpared them. For we haue Deut.2.18.19. ſeene heretofore, how the Iſraelits were expreſly commanded to abſtaine from al iniury and violence, whē they paſſed through their land. Take heede yee vſe not any force of armes, take nothing but what you pay for: keep yͤ high and beaten common way as ye paſſe: buy yͤ water which thou drinkeſt, and vſe no extortion. And why? For they be thy brethren. And indeed although god choſe not Lot as he did Abraham, yet ceaſed he not to pity him, & to haue ſom care of ſparing his ſucceſſours & thoſe which iſſued from him, albeit thoſe people were begottē by his inceſtuous Gen.19.36. coupling wͭ his two daughters. The two fathers which were yͤ firſt rootes of this iſſue were Ammon & Moab, yͭ is to ſay, ſuch as were begotten by inceſt & by ſhameful and vnnaturall fornication. Yet neuertheles God beareth wͭ thē. But they are ſo wicked & vnthankfull, yͭ they defie both God and man. God hath compaſſion of them, and therwithall chargeth yͤ Iewes to haue a care of them. Ye ſee what curteſie yͤ Iewes vſed. They praied them to let thē paſſe through their country as friends, proteſting yͭ they woulde not moleſt nor annoy them in any manner of thing. They deſired them to graunt them paſſage for their mony, that they might come vnto yͤ lande Num.21.2 wherunto God called thē. But theſe curſed creatures wold needs hinder yͤ calling of god, & bring to paſſe, that yͤ people ſhoulde not enter into the land of promiſe to take poſſeſſion thereof. And hereupon they hyred Balaam the ſon of Beor yͤ falſe Prophet. Numb.22. And why? Becauſe they diſtruſted their owne power, and thought by the meanes of a falſe Prophet to coniure God, & that by vſing ſuch a kind of bewitching, they might curſe that people of his. Now becauſe they were ſo froward, and vouchſafed not to vſe yͤ benefite which God offered vnto them, it was good reaſon that they ſhould be puniſhed therfore. For albeit the vengeance of God was not by and by executed, yet God regiſtred it in his booke & we ſee here how their puniſhmēt for this wickednes was reſerued.

Now hereupon we haue to note, that if we intend to be accepted of God in the number and companie of the faithfull, wee muſt procure the welfare of the whole Church as much as lieth in vs. For thoſe which make any touble in yͤ church of God, or be any way offenſiue, are heere baniſhed the Church vnder the perſon of yͤ Moabites and Ammonites, as if God declared that they are not worthy to come neare vnto him, or to company with any of them which are dedicated vnto him. And nowadayes how many are to bee ſeene of this ſort? So yͭ we ought not to meruaile if yͤ curſe of god lie vpon ſo many men. And why? Becauſe yͭ for one which is found to aduance the weale of yͤ church, & to edifie yͤ people of God, a man may find a douſen which indeuour nothing els, but to bring vtter confuſion & deſtructiō vpon it. How many turmoiles ſee we nowadays in yͤ world to hinder yͤ courſe of the goſpel, & to bring to paſſe yͭ the Church might fal vnto yͤ ground, or be confuſed & diſordered? Now from whēce proceedeth this, but from yͤ wickednes of men? Thē like as God ſparred yͤ doore againſt yͤ Ammonits and Moabites at yͭ time, becauſe they refuſed to giue way vnto his people whē they ſhould enter into the lande of promiſe: ſo let vs note yͭ all ſuch as lay ſtumblingblocks nowadays to turne thoſe aſide, and to driue them into wickedneſſe which were in a good way, & al ſuch as breede troubles in yͤ Church of God, are euerychone reiected of God. And verily we ſee that there are nowadays many Ammonites and Moabites in the worlde. For who are they which ſeeke to peruert all things, and which giue ſo many offences & make ſuch great confuſions throughout Gods church? They are ſuch as name themſelues yͤ faithfull, ſuch as are of our company & haue one commō baptiſme wͭ vs: ſo that they ought to aide vs: they ought to bring vs forth bread & water;yͤ is to ſay, they ought to lend vs their hand, that we might follow our calling to come vnto that place to the which God calleth vs: thoſe (I ſay) which ought to receiue vs and open the way vnto vs; euen thoſe are they which barre vs of entraunce, thoſe are they which pull the bridle backward,& which make theſe hurliburleyes among vs.

Hereby we are warned, that ſeeing the people of God was ſo vexed by their owne kindred, we ought nowadayes to beare it patiently, if the lyke befall vs. And withall let vs be warned (as I haue told you)to behaue our ſelues in ſuch ſort as none of vs may be cōdemned of hauing ſhut vp the way againſt them which endeuored to come vnto God.But let vs ayde them as farre as we ſhall be able, euen vnto the vtmoſt of our power: If we doe otherwiſe, the vengeance of God is at hand, and ſhall light vppon vs. For God who once condemned the Moabites, will not faile to be our Iudge at this day. Although the ceremonie be not obſerued, yet (as I tolde you)all they which indeuor not to ſet foreward the courſe of the Goſpell, muſt needes be baniſhed his kingdome. And in very deede wee heare the threates which are made by the Prophets againſt all thoſe which are enemies of the Church, and which trouble it:and that was not for the time of the lawe onely:but they foretold vs of the kingdom of our Lord Ieſus Chriſt. Whoſoeuer they be that ſeeke not to ayde and Eſa.12.11. ſuccour Ieruſalem (ſayth the Prophet Eſay) the Lord will arme himſelfe againſt them, and they ſhall feele his ſtrong hand and be deſtroyed. All they which deuiſe any miſchiefe againſt thee,or relieue thy enemies to ſtrengthē them,ſhal feele the hand of God contrarie & enemie vnto thē. Zach.2.2. As much to yͤ ſame purpoſe is ſaid in Zacharie. And theſe prophecies and threatnings(as I haue touched alreadie)ſerued not for the time of the lawe, but for the ſtate of Chriſtianitie. Let vs therefore comfort our ſelues when wee vnderſtand that God hath ſuch a care of our ſaluatiō, that he proteſteth he will be an aduerſarie vnto all them which ſeeke to hinder vs frō comming vnto his kingdome, and into that inheritance which hee hath promiſed vs,and telleth them that his hand ſhall bee againſt them, and that his curſe ſhall fall vppon their heades. Hereby wee ſee how deare our ſaluation is vnto him, and what care he hath of it. Moreouer let vs be afraid (as I tolde you) to giue occaſions of trouble and offence. Let vs not be of the number of thoſe naughtipackes, which when they ſee yͤ Church floriſh, ſeeke nothing more buſilie thā to diſorder al things therein.The diuel hath drencht them with ſuch a poyſon, that they cannot abide the weale of the Church,therefore they ſeeke al the meanes they poſſiblie can, to breede confuſion and diſorder therin:let vs take heede(I ſay)yͭ we intangle not ourſelues among them,knowing that if we doe,we ſhall neuer eſcape the curſe which is here threatned vnto the Moabites and the Ammonites.

But we haue yet one point more to note.And yͭ is,yͭ although God at yͤ firſt puniſh not thē which moleſt his people: yet hee faileth not to keepe alwayes ſome puniſhment for them in ſtore,notwithſtanding that he delayeth it. And therefore let vs not bee ſo hardie as to beare our ſelues in hand,that if God beare with vs and wink at our faultes for a time, we ſhall ſtill remaine vnpuniſhed.For wee ſee how it fell out in this caſe with this people. No doubt but they bare themſelues in hand, that it was a matter of nothing when they moleſted the people of God. And why? Bycauſe God liſted not to execute his vengeance vpon them out of hand,Now in deede they were ouerthrowen. But what for that? They did but wagge their head thereat,bicauſe they bare thēſelues in hand that the Iewes wold not put them to any farther trouble. But God for all yͭ remained their Iudge. And ſo although yͤ Ammonites & Moabites were ſpared for a time,& God would not that they ſhould be rooted out as thoſe people which he had alreadie before condemned: yet notwithſtanding they made neuer the better match for all that;for ye ſee how like a ſort of vnhallowed people, they are put beſides all entrance into yͤ temple of God, they are reiected with this note of ſhame;yͭ they are declared enemies vnto yͤ people of God.Let vs therfore ſtand in feare ſith we ſee this. And although we be not puniſhed out of hand,yet let vs knowe yͭ we ſhall not eſcape the vengeaunce of God; when wee haue ſought to moleſt his Church, and haue ſet a barre againſt our neighbours that they may not enter in as they ought to doe. And why? Bicauſe although God lingreth,yet will he not forget yͤ wickednes of them which ſhal haue ſought to moleſt his Church, or to bring any maner of trouble vpon it. Ye ſee whereof wee ought to be aduertiſed. And if this were printed well in our heartes, we would haue another maner of care than we haue to edifie the Church of God, and we woulde withall more abhorre and deteſt all offences. But what? We ſee how headlong men runne into this wickedneſſe, euen with a madde & brainſicke diſpoſition.And why? Bycauſe God is not ready at hand to take vēgeance, they bare themſelues in hand yͭ the matter commeth al to one end, whether they worke yͤ Churches weale or woe, & thereupon they welter in their wickednes. But for al yͭ let vs looke vnto our ſelues.

And moreouer although God vtter not his vengeance at the firſt againſt them which ſeeke to trouble and to ouerthrowe the building of our faith: yet let vs aſſure our ſelues, that God(notwithſtanding that he winke at things for a time) yet ſleepeth not in heauen for all that.And therfore let vs patiently wayte vntill hee put to his hand.He ſuffereth the wicked ſometime to wander at will,and to triumph among vs,& we are of opinion that the earth will ſinke vnder them; we are aſtoniſhed & euen beſide our ſelues:we think there is no remedie, we ſuppoſe there is no way to ſuccor vs,we are of opinion yͭ god is laid down to ſleepe.But in yͤ end he putteth to his hād.And although he chaſtiſe ſome of them lightly, yet others ſettle in their lees.As for exāple, a mā ſhal ſee yͭ when God puniſheth ſome wicked perſons which haue been the occaſions and authors of many troubles and offences, yet others ſhall remaine vnpuniſhed, by reaſon whereof they thinke their owne wickedneſſe to be nothing, & ſo they followe it on farther, becauſe God beareth with them. But it is ſayd that the Ammonits and Moabites ſhal beare this curſe throughout ten generations. Therefore ſith we ſee that God will puniſhe them which moleſt vs, and which haue bin occaſions of falling among vs; howſoeuer the caſe go, let vs waite gods leaſure, hauing an eye to ẏ which is ſet downe here, & beholding ẏ which hath happened vnder ẏ Law, vntill he wreke his vengeance on the wicked.

For wee may vnder this figure which is here giuen vnto vs beholde the loue and fatherlike care which God hath for his Church in that it is his pleaſure that thinges ſhould bee well ordred therein, and, that none ſhould hinder his childrẽ whom he hath adopted, from cõming vnto that inheritance which he hath promiſed them. And therefore let vs alwayes conſtantly goe on, and ouerleape thoſe ſtumbling blockes which are layd in our way. When we ſee that the wicked aduaunce themſelues againſt vs, and inuent & deuiſe all that they are able, to deſtroy vs; let vs be armed with ſtrong and inuincible conſtancie to fight againſt ſuch temptations; let vs not ſlack our courage, but let vs aſſure our ſelues that God will looke to theſe thinges in ſuch ſorte, that by his reaching forth of his hand we ſhal ouercome all ẏ difficulties and incomberaunces which men on their part ſet againſt vs. This being done we ſhall knowe that God hath reſerued an horrible iudgement for our enemies; although they perſwade themſelues ẏ all is forgotten, & that there is no remembraunce of their miſdeedes. And when they be in full poſſeſſion of their wickedneſſe, God wil euen then prouide a remedie ſuddainly & beſide ẏ expectation of all men & of the whole world. Ye ſee then in effect what we haue to beare in minde vppon this place.

Now by ẏ way, a man might demaund what the cauſe is why God ordayned that the Iewes ſhould in no wiſe ſeeke the peace nor the proſperitie of the Ammonites and Moabites. For it ſeemeth that he giueth here the Iewes an occaſion to reuenge themſelues, the which notwithſtanding was neuer lawful. Let vs note in a word that God appointed them to execute his iudgement. And ſo his will is that they ſhould puniſh the Ammonites and Moabites, howbeit with a pure and vpright zeale. When God ordayneth Iuſtice, and putteth the ſword into the hand of them whom he hath called vnto that eſtate, hee commaundeth them to put ſuch to death as deſerue it, and willeth them to puniſh offences. And that vndoubtedly is a kinde of reuenge: but yet that reuenging is lawful; yea it is requiſite & neceſſarie. And if he which is armed with the ſworde of Iuſtice puniſh not offences, hee ſhall render an account thereof vnto God. Now it is very true ẏ magiſtrates ought to take pitie and compaſſion of thẽ whom they cauſe to be executed. When they put an euill doer to death, they muſt haue pitie on him becauſe hee is a man & a reaſonable creature. But howſoeuer the caſe ſtãd they muſt execute ẏ vẽgeance of God, howbeit without ſpitefulneſſe, and without bitterneſſe. So was it with the Iewes touching ẏ Moabites and the Ammonites. God ordayned thẽ to execute his iudgement. And for this cauſe hee ſaith vnto them, Ye ſhal not ſeeke neither their proſperitie nor their peace: that is to ſay, let them be as they are. For God will not haue you either to companie with them, or to relieue them. Now ſhal it be lawfull to helpe an euill doer, & to fauour him? That were to ouerthrowe Iuſtice, and the order which God hath appointed, & to bee a confederate with him in ẏ ſame offence. If a man fauour ẏ wicked, if he helpe & ayde thẽ; he becommeth guiltie of the ſame crime, & intangleth himſelfe in their wickedneſſe. And therefore God forbad ẏ Iewes to beare any ſuch affection towardes ẏ Moabites or Ammonites to help thẽ. And now wee ſee how reuenging was not onely graunted vnto ẏ Iewes, but alſo commaunded them: & this reuenging was not ſuch as ſhould proceede frõ a venemous minde or which ſhould be wrought after the luſt of ẏ fleſh, (for whẽ we hate any mã to the death, our affectiõs are alwayes troubled & we are neuer well ordered) but gods meaning was, ẏ the Iewes ſhould worke this reuenge, of a good zeale, as being taught thus to ſay: Beholde wee are appointed by God to execute his vengeance vppon ẏ Moabites. Sith it is ẏ vengeance of God which we ought to execute, we muſt not make it ours, ẏ is, we muſt not be ruled after our own luſtes, we muſt bridle our own wils. Now thẽ let vs after ẏ example of ẏ Iewes (which were executors of ẏ vengeance of God vppon ẏ Ammonites & Moabites) learn to ſubmit ourſelues wholie vnto ẏ obedience of God. For ſurely it is an acceptable ſacrifice to him, whẽ as we ſuffer our ſelues to be guided by his word, and will not attempt any thing beyond ẏ which he biddeth or forbiddeth.

Now hereby we be warned, firſt of all not to giue ẏ bridle to our owne reuengementes: and ẏ when we be wronged or iniured, we muſt not be pricked foreward through our carnal affections, to enterpriſe more than God permitteth vs. For it is written: Vengeance is mine & I will pay it Rom.12.19 home, as we ſhal ſee in the two & thirtith chapter of this booke. Now thẽ, haue we bridled our ſelues in that behalf? haue we not deſired reuẽge againſt thẽ which haue prouoked vs, & wrought vs any deſpyte? Let vs therewithall tary our Lordes leaſure for the redreſſe of it, yea and let vs haue pitie on our enemies and ſeeke by all meanes poſſible to bring them backe into ẏ way of ſaluation. And if we ſee that God alſo taketh reuenge vppon the wicked, let vs acknowledge his louing kindeneſſe towardes vs, and let it be a warrant vnto vs that he hath a great care of vs, & that he watcheth while we ſleepe. Let vs therfore learne to fare the better by all the chaſtiſementes which God layeth vppon the enemies of his Church, knowing ẏ therby he declareth that hee loueth vs with a fatherly affection, and is mindefull of vs and of our ſaluation; albeit wee thinke not ſo. This is a thing which ought to make the godly to reioyce, and to confirme thẽ to truſt ſo much the more ſtedfaſtly in God, and to runne vnto him,when the wicked vexe them, and when men ſeeke to turne them aſide out of the way of their ſaluation.But as for thoſe which are appointed to execute ẏ vengeance of God, let them doe it conſtantlie, & yet without ſpitefulneſſe,& without bitterneſſe. For if wee intermeddle our affections with that which God cōmaundeth, the vengeance is no longer his:but it proceedeth from our fleſh,that is to ſay,from our vnruly paſſions. Let them therefore which haue the charge of Iuſtice, take diligent heede that they proceede therein withall vprightneſſe and indifferencie: without being caryed away in any manner whatſoeuer with any wicked deſire.

And moreouer let vs be ſeuered generally frō the wicked:and not ioyne our ſelues with them; ſpecially when they ſeparate themſelues frō the Church of God; for if we haue any familiaritie with them, is it not a conſpiring againſt God & his people as much as lyeth in vs?Shal we not by that meanes be confederates with them? Yes,& therefore we muſt in this behalfe forget all kinred:we may not ſay,he is my friend,he is my goſſip, I haue vſed his companie this long time. We muſt lay all theſe thinges aſide and ſay;this man hath ſhewed himſelfe to bee Gods open enemie becauſe he is a let that the faithful agree not as they ought, and becauſe hee hath layd a ſtumbling block to ſtop the increace of the Church. When we behold ſuch thinges, let vs not be led with our doltiſh affections: for although ẏ Iewes were the Moabites kinſemen, yet muſt they reiect them.And why?Becauſe the Moabites were eſtraunged from the people of God, yea & were become their enemies.Ye ſee then what we are to beare in minde. But wee put it ill in practiſe. For who is he which nowadayes preferreth not kinred and I know not what elſe before God and his Church?Wē neede nothing to procure our ſelues fauour. If a man bee in office and haue a neighbour,he will be his friend.If he haue a goſſip or a kinſemā,he wil be his friend,much more. But though we be in no authoritie,yet we wil fauour one or other.And why?for euery ſmal wandring friendſhip is enough to win our heart. But in the mean while God is forgotten. We can ſee his Church deſtroyed before our faces, wee can ſee men indeuour nothing but to worke deſtruction and confuſion in all thinges, & yet we will be touched therewith neuer a whit. Are we worthie that God ſhould accept vs for his children? We heare the curſe which is pronounced in the
Pſal.137.6. Pſalme againſt al thoſe which make not Ieruſalē the cheefe of their ioye: that is to ſay,which eſteeme not more of the common welfare of the Church,than of al the proſperities of this world. Lyke as the faithful ought to endeuour that the Church of God may proſper,that it may bee aduaunced,that it may encreace:ſo when the ſame commeth to paſſe,they ought to bee farre gladder thereof than of all other benefites, commodities, and whatſoeuer elſe they enioy in this world.

And contrariwiſe when they ſee any affliction in the Church,they ought to be more ſorie for it, than if they ſuffred al maner of afflictions in their owne perſons. If they doe not thus, they are accurſed.But now we can ſee ẏ Church of God troubled by the wicked,and we can go and ioyne our ſelues with them.We are not contented to let them alone,ſuch as they are:but we will needes fauour them, wee will needes ſupport and ayde them. And is not this a confederating of our ſelues with Satan, as I haue ſayd afore? Is it not aſmuch as to make open war both againſt God & againſt his people? Yes verily: And therefore let vs learn to haue ſuch a regard vnto the welfare of the Church of God, as to holde all thoſe for our enemies which lift themſelues vp againſt it: and let vs wage battaile againſt them to the vttermoſt of our power, to reſiſt their wicked practiſes: except wee will be guiltie of confederacie with them to ouerthrow all that which God hath builded.

Moreouer,whereas it is ſaid,That they came not out to meete the people; let vs note diligently that GOD thinkes it not enough for vs not to bee offenſiue vnto his Church, but his will is that wee ſhould alſo employ our ſelues faithfully,alwaies to further the ſaluation of the faithfull, according whereunto it is ſaid: That all they which ſuccor not the Church ſhall bee curſed. After that GOD hath threatened them which made warre againſt the citie of Ieruſalem, hee turneth his threateninges againſt them alſo which holpe it not when it was in neceſſitie. For there muſt bee no neuterſhippe in this behalfe. We muſt be either friendes or enemies. Therefore if we minde to eſcape the vengeance of God, whenſoeuer wee ſee the Church ſtand in neede of our helpe, let euery of vs employ himſelfe faithfully, and let vs endeuour to aduaunce that which is belonging vnto GOD, and to ayde them which ſeeke him, and labor to come vnto vnto him. Let vs endeuour (I ſay) to aſſiſt them and to quicken them vp to goe on alwayes more forewarder. If wee doe not ſo, doubtleſſe wee ſhall be guiltie of hauing bin too retchleſſe and negligent in the Churches behalfe. But (as I ſayd afore) if we help and fauour men when they lay their heades together to deſtroy all, ſurely wee not onely bewray our ſelues to bee open enemies of God and of his Church, but alſo wee ſhewe our ſelues to bee double enemies, and ſo it muſt needes bee that double vengeance ſhall fall vppon our heades, as it is in this place declared vnto vs.

Now let vs kneele downe in the preſence of our good God ẇ acknowlegement of our faults, praying him to vouchſafe to make vs feele them better than we haue done, ſo as wee may bee alwaies quickened vp more & more to reſorte vnto him, & he ſo ſtrengthen vs to reſiſt the temptations which are bent againſt vs in this worlde, as we may withſtand al the enimies which ceaſe not to moleſt vs: and all the vnderlinges of Sathan which rayſe troubles and offences among vs; This good GOD of ours graunt vs grace not to bee diſcouraged with ſuch thinges, but that wee may continually proceede in the way whereunto God hath called vs, vntill he haue put vs in poſſeſſion of that ſaluatiō which he hath promiſed vs in the kingdome of heauen. That it may pleaſe him to graunt this grace not onely vnto vs, but alſo to all people and nations of the earth, &c.

On Fryday the xvij. of Ianuarie, 1556.

The Cxxxj. Sermon, which is the ſecond vpon the three and twentith Chapter.

3 The Ammonites &c.

4 Becauſe they met you not with bread and water in the way when ye came out of Egypt: and becauſe they hyred againſt you Balaam the ſonne of Beor of Pethor in Meſopotamia, to curſe you.

5 Howbeit that ẏ Lord thy God would not hearkē vnto Balaā, but the Lord thy God turned his curſe into a bleſſing vnto thee: becauſe ẏ Lord thy god loued thee.

6 Thou ſhalt not ſeeke their friendſhip nor their welfare at any time for euer.

WE ſaw yeſterday howe that although God did not puniſh ẏ ſpitefulneſſe and crueltie of the Ammonites and Moabites at the firſt; yet notwithſtanding hee did beare it ſtill in minde. Lykewiſe when as he winketh at faultes, it is not becauſe he hath forgotten them, but that euery thing ſhall be reckoned for in his due time. Whereupon I tolde you, that they which haue offended muſt not flatter themſelues, if GOD beare with them and lay not his hand vppon them at the firſt: but that they muſt conſider ẏ Rom.2.4. he allureth them vnto repentance when he is ſo patient, yea, and that he ſtayeth to ſee if men wil perceiue their owne wickedneſſe and be ſory for it. We declared with all, why God commaunded the Iſraelites to execute his vengeance, and in what ſorte they ſhould doe it. It remaineth now that we ſee the reaſon which is contained here, which is that the Ammonites & Moabites (though they iſſued out of the ſtock of ẏ Iewes) did notwithſtanding ſhewe themſelues their mortal enimies by ſtopping of them from comming into the land of Canaan. It is true that this poynt hath bin cōſidered of as concerning thoſe which rayſe offences to turne Gods children frō comming vnto the inheritance which is promiſed them, who are by good reaſon condemned in the perſon of the Moabites and Ammonites.

But now we muſt conſider that which Moſes toucheth concerning the curſe. He ſayth, That Namb.22. the Moabites hyred Balaam the ſon of Beor to curſe the people. Marke here the meane which the Moabites vſed to roote out thē whome God had choſed, and to ſparre the doore againſt them, that they might not take poſſeſſion of the land of Canaan which was promiſed them. The Moabites ſawe full well that they could not be the better men if they came to handy ſtrokes, and therefore they hired a falſe Prophet to curſe them. And in what ſorte? forſooth in the name of God. Now in the firſt place we ſee, that they which had no true & pure religion, had yet ſome ſeede thereof: yea and that they had this printed in their hart, that God gouerneth the world, ẏ all thinges are ordered according to his will, ẏ they whom he fauoreth do alwaies proſper, that they to whom he is contrary are vnhappy & vtterly confounded. That is ẏ cauſe why the Moabites hired Balaam in this ſort to curſe the Iſraelites in the name of God. For although all this which they did be diſallowed, & that they falſly pretēded ẏ name of God like trecherous caitifes as they were, ſo as this deede of theirs was in thē a curſed defilement, yet notwithſtanding al this proceeded frō a good grounde, namely: ẏ they yeelded vnto God all power of ruling ẏ worlde, howbeit ẏ they abuſed it afterward. Now when we ſee this, if we think to cōpaſſe ẏ things which we take in hand, ẇout calling on ẏ name of God, ſo as one putteth his truſt in his owne paines taking, an other in his wiſedome, a thirde in his ſtrength: we are worſe than theſe blinde wretches which neuer knew one word of the law: and there needes no other witneſſes to condemne vs before God. This therefore is a point wel worth the noting. Seeing God would ẏ ſuch light ſhold remaine among ẏ vnbeleeuing, as ẏ they ſhoulde knowe ẏ he gouerneth the life of men heere belowe, and ẏ all thinges are in his hande: [much more] ought wee to yeelde ẏ honour vnto him, vnleſſe wee will be worſe than thoſe which were without all true religion.

But let vs alſo take heede that when we haue ſome good ſeede, we corrupt it not. For ẏ matter conſiſteth not altogether in imagining this or ẏ of God: but we muſt haue a ſound & pure knowlege of him. For there is nothing more eaſie thā to ſnarle ourſelues, becauſe wee are ſo enclined vnto vanitie, & the deuill alſo forgeth vs many deceits to intangle our mindes ẇal, ſo as ẏ truth is by and by turned into a lie, except we ſtande heedefully vpon our gard. And therefore let vs learne to call vpon God, to the intent ẏ if he opē himſelfe vnto vs, we may not ſwarue neither to the right hand nor to ẏ left: and ẏ the knowledge which wee haue receiued, be not peruerted nor abuſed. For heere wee ſee what happened vnto thē which hired Balaam. They tooke him as a Prophet: & in very deed Balac the king of Moab ſayth vnto him: I know ẏ they whom thou curſeſt Numb.22.6 ſhalbe curſed, & thoſe whom thou bleſſeſt ſhalbe bleſſed. What is ẏ cauſe why Balac ſpeketh thus? He ſaw ẏ Balaā had receiued from God ẏ gift of prophecying, and of foretelling many things to come. He was therfore of opinion ẏ ſeeing God had made him ſuch an excellent mā, he ſhold be heard. So his intent and purpoſe was, to bring to paſſe that God might bee fauorable vnto him.

And

& this was good(as I tolde you) that he thought thus: Beholde, if God be on our ſide all ſhall goe well with vs, we ſhall remaine ſafe & ſound: but if his hand be againſt vs, we muſt needes periſh. Ye ſee one good thing in Balac and in al the Moabites which were his ſubiects, for they acknowledged that if God were their aduerſarie partie, they could not withſtand him, & thereupon they humbled themſelues before him, and deſired to obtayn fauor at his hand. Who wil not highlie eſteeme of this? yea, but in the meane while they went not the right way to worke. As I tolde you afore, it is not enough for men to haue ſome good meaning in generality, but they muſt come vnto God in ſuch ſorte as he commaundeth, and they muſt not ſeek any bypathes. For this is not the way to come vnto him, nay rather it keepeth vs aloofe from him, & maketh vs but to recoyle. Therefore albeit the Moabites knew that yͤ true happineſſe of men is to be in the fauour of God, and that they ſought to come thereunto: yet notwithſtanding they ceaſe not to offend him grieuouſly. And why ſo? For they take a cleane contrarie way, when they beare themſelues in hand that they ſhall buy the fauour of God for mony. And in what maner delt they? Although yͤ people of Iſraell was choſen of God, and the land of Chanaan was promiſed vnto them; yet the Moabites perſwaded themſelues that they might cōiure God in ſuch wiſe as he woulde not accompliſhe his promiſe, but ſhape and vnſhape himſelfe according vnto their luſtes and pleaſure. Let vs therefore note firſt of all, that to finde the fauour of God, we muſt not hardē our ſelues in our vices, but bee ſory for them: and ſecondly hope for nothing againſt his promiſes. Here bee two ſpeciall pointes. And it is all one as if it were ſayd, that to pleaſe God, we muſt be truely tepētant. For vntil we know our faultes, and be aſhamed of them, doubtleſſe God will alwayes remaine our enemie. And therewithal let vs groūd our ſelues vppon his promiſes. For it were a follie to thinke to obtaine any thing in ſuch ſort as God in the meane while ſhould bee faine to eate his worde, and be chaunged according vnto our fancie. Now the Moabites were of this minde. For they cōtinued ſpiteful ſtil. And how thought they to winne Gods fauour? They went about to buy it of Balaam for mony. Lykewiſe nowadayes among the Papiſts it is to be ſeene how they intangle themſelues in their ſinnes, and had leuer to rotte in their owne filth, than receiue the medicine which God offereth them. But in yͤ meane time they thinke to raunſome themſelues by their Maſſes, and by other ſuch meanes as they haue. But they ſhall gaine aſmuch as the Moabites did. And what meane they by theſe raunſomes which they bring, but that they woulde faine make God partaker of their wickedneſſe? When a man ſhall haue pilled & robbed others, he will bring part of that bootie for an offering. A fornicatour thinkes to cleare himſelfe by giuing of almes. Now this is all one as if they would ſet God in their owne aray, and make him alſo guiltie of the faultes as well as themſelues: & therefore they doe but prouoke his vengeance farther vppon them, as the Moabites did. So thē (as I haue tolde you afore) if wee will haue acceſſe vnto God, let vs learne to feele his anger: and in feeling of it, condemne our ſelues for our ſinnes, and ſo come and offer our ſelues purely vnto his ſeruice, praying him to change vs into new creatures, yͭ we may be acceptable vnto him.

And herewithall let vs come and ſeeke after that ranſome by the which we are recōciled vnto God, & redeemed frō all curſing: which is becauſe our Lord Ieſus Chriſt hath ſhed his precious bloud for our ſaluation. And thus ye ſee how we ioyne the promiſes of God with repentance. For it is not enough for ſinners to feele and acknowledge their faultes, & to be aſhamed of thē: But faith muſt be ioyned therewithall. For what doe the Moabites in this place? They tel Balaam that thoſe whome he bleſſeth ſhall bee bleſſed. What proofes haue they of this? Was God pinned on Balaams ſleeue? Was he bound to him? Ye ſee then howe fondly Balac delt. But the deſpiſers of God deſerue well to be ſo blinded. For they perſwade themſelues that God will come downe from heauen, and transforme himſelf for their pleaſure, yea after what maner ſoeuer they ſeeke him. For (as I haue told you) there is a rule and manner of ſeeking God which wil neuer deceiue vs. And aſſoone as men turne there, from that, they doe but wander from him. Howſoeuer the caſe ſtandeth then, if wee deſire in deede to finde fauour at the hand of God, let vs haue our eye fixed on his promiſes. Let vs know how and by what meanes it commeth to paſſe, that he fauoreth vs; and hying our ſelues thither, let vs wholy ſtay our ſelues on that which he telleth vs. To be ſhort, let faith be our guide, & ſhewe vs yͤ way. After that maner God wil accept of vs, whē we come vnto him; by that mean the gate ſhall be opened vnto vs. And ſo in the example of Balac and yͤ Moabites, we haue as it were a lookingglaſſe, wherein to behold al yͤ byſcapes & all the vagaries which yͤ world maketh, when they pretend to ſeeke God and yet keepe aloofe from him. For whatſoeuer they pretend, there is no alteration of minde in them, neither haue they any beliefe in the promiſes of God. On the cōtrary ſide, we haue alſo to gather how God will become fauorable vnto vs. And that is if we imagine not to bind him vnto vs, as though he ought to allow of our vices, and would intermeddle him with our filthineſſe: but ſeeke to bee clenſed from it, and to yeelde our ſelues vnto him, and to cleaue vnto his righteouſneſſe. Secondly when we conceiue nothing in our braine after our owne lyking, to ſay that wee muſt ſerue God, but how? after this manner: we muſt winne his fauour in this ſorte, after the manner of the lawleſſe libertie which reigneth nowadayes among yͤ Papiſts. But if we would aske any thing at the mouth of God: alas, wee are not worthie to come neare him. And againe when wee thinke on his maieſtie, wee muſt needes bee confounded for feare, becauſe there is nothing in vs but all manner of corruption, and wee muſt needes bee his enemies, euen of good right. Yea but wee haue thoſe promiſes which cannot deceiue vs, if ſo bee wee doubt nothing at all. Surely God ſo warranteth that which he hath ſpoken, ẏ if we ſet our mindes throughly vppon his promiſes and vnderprop our ſelues with them, we may goe on with a courage and not doubt but that he will receiue vs.

Now moreouer whereas it is ſayd that the Moabites hired Balaam, and meant that hee ſhould ſerue their turne to curſe the people; we haue hereby to note, that if we beare our ſelues in hand, that God wil helpe vs with his fauour againſt thoſe whom he loueth; the iſhew will be ſuch as we ſee the Moabites had thereof. And yet this is in common vſe, that the wicked think ẏ God ought to be on their ſide, notwithſtāding ẏ they perſecute & deſtroy folk with neuer ſo euil conſcience. Albeit ẏ they vſe neuer ſo much ſpitefulneſſe and crueltie, yet are they of opinion that God will helpe them. As for example nowadayes, when princes make warre vpon couetouſneſſe and ambition: they proclayme many ſolemne proceſſions. But what for that? Surely all that euer they do, is deteſtable before God. For what ſtirreth thē thereto, but that they are blinded with pride, couetouſneſſe and ſuch lyke thinges? ſo that they ſpare no mans bloud, ne make any account of confounding heauen and earth together: & yet notwithſtanding they call vpon the name of God. I alledge onely this one example, howbeit that euery particular perſon is at the ſame point. Euery of vs in ẏ trade which he vſeth, would faine haue God on his ſide. But yet for all that we continue ſtil our deceit & malicious wilineſſe, our cruelties & extortions, our periuries and trecherous dealinges, & wee giue our ſelues vnto all wickedneſſe: and is it poſſible that God ſhould be matched with our filthie infections? Should he renounce himſelf & turne his glory into ſhame? yet are mē ſo blockiſh that they dally thus with God, yea & ẏ with ſuch preſumptuous bouldnes, as it is an horrible thing to behold. Sith we ſee that this ſickneſſe is ouer riſe; let vs learne (as I haue told you) that when we wil cal vpon God to defend vs & to be aduerſary vnto our enimies, we muſt take heede that we haue a good cauſe, & that we be warranted in conſcience ẏ we attempt nothing but according to his will, that they which perſecute vs do it wrongfully, that we be deſirous as farre as lieth in vs to be at peace with our enemies, & that wee haue not prouoked them with any iniurie, nor giuen them any cauſe to moleſt vs. Whē we can proteſt this in conſcience before God; then we may wel call vpon him; & feare we not but he wil be our defēder. But if our cauſe be euil & that they which perſecute vs may truely alledge ẏ we haue prouoked them ſo to do, & haue giuen thē the cauſe therof; let vs not then looke for any fauour at Gods hand. For when we abuſe his name ſo falſly, our payment ſhal not be long after. And how ſhal we be rewarded? Verily not onely our labor ſhal be loſt, but God wil alſo laugh vs to skorne for taking part againſt his children. Therefore if wee wage battaile with good men, and vſe extortiōs, & wrongings, & other wicked practiſes, and increace the ſame with this further, of committing ſuch outrage againſt God as to intermeddle his name with our wickednes; queſtionleſſe hee will wreke his wrath vpon vs for it. Wee ſee what is ſaid in this place. For God pronouncing here ẏ ſentence of condemnation vpon the Moabites, ſaith ẏ they abuſed his name in hiring Balaā to curſe his people. Let vs therfore learn (as I haue tolde you) not to trouble thē which ſerue God, nor to maintaine any quarell againſt them, vnleſſe we will haue God for our aduerſarie. And in ſo dooing let vs not think to gaine any thing by calling vpon him, but rather perſwade our ſelues that in ſo doing we ſhall kindle his vengeance ſo much the more againſt vs.

Let vs come now vnto that which Moſes addeth: *God would not heare Balaā, but turned his curſe into a bleſſing: becauſe the Lord thy God loued thee.* This hiſtorie is handled more largelie from the 22. Chap. of Num. vnto the 24. But without making here the whole rehearſal thereof; it ſhal ſuffice to haue the effect of that which is touched here as by the way. It is ſaid that God would not heare Balaam, but there was yet more than ſo, as Moſes in that place rehearſeth. For God hindered him, and declared vnto him his will. Whē Balaam deſired leaue to goe at ẏ requeſt of Balac and of the Moabites: he made the meſſengers tarie a night, becauſe he would repaire aſide vnto God. Thereupon it was told him: Thou ſhalt not goe. But yet for al that, he bargained, yea & the deſire of gaine prouoked him to intreat God ſo long vntill he ſaith: Goe thy way; Howbeit ẇ diſpleaſure; inſomuch that God ſhewed him his rebellion & his own aſſe taught him, as who ſaw more clearer than he. He could not perceiue ẏ Angel of the Lord, and yet the brute beaſt perceiued him. Ye ſee then Balaā condemned; inſomuch that God giueth more reaſon & diſcretion to ẏ Aſſe whereon he ſate, than vnto him who was a Prophet: yea contrary to all nature ẏ Aſſe ſpeaketh. When we ſee all this, is it not aſmuch as if God had expreſly ſet himſelfe on the cōtrarie ſide, to ſhew ẏ he garded ẏ people of Iſrael vnder his protectiō? And after this when Balaam is come, what ſaith he? He telleth Balac ẏ king thus. I can doe nothing. Truely I haue enforced my ſelf to doe ſomewhat, but I ſee ẏ God withſtandeth me: and I cannot open my mouth to ſpeake, but he turneth my words clean cōtrary from my purpoſe. Hereupō they make many cōiuratiōs to hinder God, & make him beholden to thē: they reare vp ſeuē altars on one ſide, & ſeuē on another. And wherunto tēdeth al this, but to ẏ which I told you, ẏ the wicked woulde faine bring God to their part? But they goe not ẏ right way to ſeeke him. They fetch their vagaries and go by ẏ wayes. And they doe nothing but turne tayle to him. And if happilie they caſt an eye towardes him, it is but to prouoke his anger and to kindle it ſo much ẏ more. Ye ſee then in what ſort Balaam and Balac go forward. Now in the end whē God had opened Balaams mouth, hee prophecied of the good which ſhould come vnto the people of Iſraell vnto the reigne of Dauid: Saying, That a ſtarre ſhould come out of Iacob, the brightneſſe whereof ſhoulde reche vnto Iſrael, and Moab ſhoulde bee ſubiect vnto them, and humble himſelfe vnder their feete. And vndoutedly in the reigne of Dauid there was a figure of the kingdome of our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt. Yee ſee then how Balaam was conſtrayned to ſpeake in this ſort mauger his beard, and againe, when Balac reproued him ſaying, What meaneſt thou? Thou art come hither at my charges, and commeſt thou to deceiue mee? for thou doeſt cleane contrary to that which thou didſt promiſe mee. And what can I do ſaith Balaam? Is God like vnto men, that hee ſhoulde change his purpoſe? If he haue once decreed a thing, it muſt needs be done, it abideth for euer. For hee altereth not, ne changeth according to the luſt of men. Beholde how the falſe prophet ſpeaketh in as excellent a ſtyle and manner of ſpeech as can be, of Gods vnchangeable truth.

Now becauſe the Iſraelites ſhould not think that Gods doing hereof, was either becauſe thy had deſerued ſomething, or becauſe they were better than the Moabites: Moſes ſayeth afterwards: *That this was becauſe God loued the Iewes.* To the intent therefore that he might be magnified for his freebeſtowed goodnes, and that ẏ Iewes might humble them ſelues knowing that they had obtayned fauour at his hand by reaſon hee had choſen & elected them of his owne good will; he ſaith: *Thy God hath now declared how he loued thee.* Here we haue to note firſt of all that Balaam was ſuch a falſe prophet, as notwithſtanding had ſome particular gift of prophecying from God: and theſe be no contrary things that a man ſhould haue the gift of prophecying, and yet for all that abuſe the gift of the holy ghoſt, and turne it to a wicked purpoſe. Wee ſee that alſo which S. Paul ſayth in his Epiſtle to the 1.Cor.14. Corinthians; namely, that they which had the gift of tongues, of interpreting, and ſuch like things which were excellent in the Church; had notwithſtanding no regarde of edifyng of the Church: and that many of them were not renewed in ſuch ſort by the ſpirit of God, ẏ they Phil.1.18. ſought to ſerue him. It may wel be therfore that men ſhal haue receiued excellent gifts to bee eſteemed, & that they ſhall beare the markes of the ſpirit of God, & yet not haue the chiefe and principal thing of all, ẏ is to wit, the ſpirit of regeneration, nor be ſo confirmed, that they ſhall giue themſelues ouer wholy vnto the ſeruice of God, & endeuour to make that auailable vnto them which they haue receiued, by applying it vnto a good & lawful vſe, wayting for the ſaluation which God ſetteth before them. This may wel be. And if this fall out in the Church, that is to ſay, to them which are of the houſholde of faith: what ſhal we think of Balaam & the like? & ſo we ſee there is no inconuenience, ẏ Balaam had the gift of prophecie, & yet for all that had many corruptions therewithal, inſomuch that he was an idolater, & vſed ſorceries. But what is the cauſe that God gaue him the knowledge of foretelling things to come? for it might ſeeme ẏ by this meanes he ſetteth forth his name vnto open reproche. It is true in deede that Balaam & ſuch like, when they thus abuſe the gifts of God, do vnhallow ẏ which is holy, & that which they haue receiued of God. Yet notwſtanding there was this reſpect, ẏ God ment to leaue ſome witneſſe of himſelf euen among the Infidels, to the intent they might haue ſo much ẏ leſſe excuſe, & be ſo much the more conuicted, if they would make ignorance their buckler. As for example, the Moabites foraſmuch as they had not ẏ law, therefore they had neuer knowen any thing of God, except their fathers had left thẽ ſome ſmal remnant therof. For Lot was not ignorant of it, but beeing brought vp in his vncle Abrahams houſe, he knew what religion meant. As for the Moabites, they were altogether eſtranged from it. Howbeit there remained ſome ſmall print therof, ẏ they might be conuicted at the latter day: ẏ if they had ſought after God, they might haue attained vnto him, but becauſe they were ſnarled in the multitude of ſuperſtitions which they themſelues had deuiſed, & were growen cleane out of kinde, they can ſeeke after no ſtarting holes: for they ſhal always be condemned for hauing a malicious wickednes in them, and for turning aſide from God, ſo as they deſerued to be blinded in ẏ faſhion by ẏ deceits of Satan. And thus yee ſe what is to be noted in the firſt place touching Balaam.

Now in ẏ Balac beleeued, ẏ if Balaam once curſed ẏ people, al ſhould paſſe on his ſide: wee ſee therby how men can neuer hold the mean, but euen do ſwarue aſide to ſome extremitie or other. It is true in deede ẏ when wee are bleſſed Gen.2.7. of ẏ prophets of God, the ſame is a warrant vnto vs of his bleſſing. But yet we muſt alwayes haue an eye vnto God. For if we teare him in pieces, what ſhal we win therby? But when men think to coniure God, it is al one as if they would diſmember him. For they intend to ſeuer his iuſtice & vprightnes from his truth, & his gratious goodnes, from his mightie power. God ſaieth ẏ when we be bleſſed of his prophets, we ought to aſſure our ſelues that he ratifieth ẏ ſame in heauen. When Abraham bleſſed Iſaac, when Iſaac bleſſed Iacob, when Iacob bleſſed his children, it was no vaine bleſſing, becauſe it had his certaine force & effect. And why? Becauſe God had giuen vnto them this office. And what is ẏ reaſon ẏ we are bleſſed at his hand, when mẽ bleſſe vs with their mouth? His wil is that men ſhould beare this reuerence vnto his word, by ẏ which he declareth him ſelf here below vnto vs, he cõmeth not downe alwayes from heauen in viſible maner, he ſendeth not his angels at our pleſure: but thoſe whome he hath ordeined his meſſengers, are to declare his wil vnto vs. He wilbe ſerued by them as by inſtruments, to the intent he may make his bleſſings which he ſendeth vnto men to profit them. And therefore if we ſay that being bleſſed by the Prophets or by the prieſts, we are aſſured ẏ God ratifieth the ſame in heauen: we ſhal ſpeake truly. Yea verily, if ſo be wee haue an eye vnto God, & be conformable vnto his wil. But if we dally with God, & wil haue him transforme himſelfe at our beck; let vs note ẏ he wil curſe vs, yea, ẏ he will curſe vs double when we vſe him in that order. For when God ordeined that the prieſtes ſhould bleſſe the people, it was to good effect & purpoſe. For it is expreſſely ſaid in the ſixth Chapter of Numbers: Ye ſhall bleſſe my people in my name, & they ſhalbee bleſſed. There is a promiſe made. The prieſtes then when they opened their mouth in ẏ name of God, had this trueth warranted from heauē, ẏ they might promiſe the fauor of God, and the people were certaine ẏ they ſhould proſper whē they once had this warrant which was offered vnto them. But yet for all that it behoued them to haue an eye vnto God. For if ẏ wicked ſhould come to ſeeke for a bleſſing at the prieſts hāds, & the prieſts on the one ſide ſhould defie God & make their gaine of him; & they on the other ſide which come vnto them, haue hyred them to bleſſe: what might be thought of it? It were a diueliſh ſuperſtition, & a peruerting of ẏ order of God. And yet notwithſtanding they do it daily in the popedom. For ye ſee what our Lord Ieſus Chriſt ſaid vnto his diſciples. If you forgiue ſins Matt.16.19. vpon earth, they ſhalbe forgiuen in heauen: and Iohn.20.21. whatſoeuer yee vnbinde vpon earth, ſhalbe vnbound in heauen. Ye ſee then how our Lord Ieſus Chriſts will is, ẏ his bleſſing ſhould be vttered vnto vs in his name. But what do the papiſts? Their prelacie forſooth on ẏ one ſide vſurp the office of God, & by their charmes & ſorceries they would ſo bleare ẏ eyes of the whole world, ẏ men ſhould not ſeeke after God. It is ynough (ſay they) to haue a croſſe on ẏ back, or a ſprinkling of holy water, & I know not what. And the world on ẏ other ſide is ſoone entreated to receiue theſe dotages. For men fal aſleep in their vices, & beare themſelues in hande it is ynough for them to haue diſcharged al their ſinnes once a yere into a prieſtes boſome, & then to haue a Maſſe or two ſung, & other like ſolemnities vſed After this maner haue men purchaced bleſſings not at Gods, but at Balaams hand. What is then to be done? Becauſe we ſee men ſwarue thus aſide vnto theſe ſinful extremities; let vs know, ẏ when Gods wil is ẏ his bleſſing be declared vnto vs by ẏ mouth of men, it is to the intent wee ſhould look vp vnto him, & receiue the bleſſing at his hand, yea, & ẏ in ſuch ſort as wee ſeuer it not from his trueth or righteouſnes. On what condition is it ẏ he bleſſeth vs? It is to the intent firſt ẏ we ſhould know, ẏ there is in vs nothing but curſednes, & ſecondly ẏ we ſhould haue recourſe vnto his maieſtie, & hold our ſelues in ẏ right way which hee hath ſhewed vnto vs, and therefore let vs not diſioyne ẏ which is ioyned togither by God leaſt we become guiltie of this crueltie of tearing God as it were in peeces, as the Papiſts do nowadayes, & the Moabites did in time paſt. Now then we ſee wherin Balac offended, & how we are warned by his fault, which is, that he thought Balaam had this priuilege to bleſſe at his pleaſure, & that God had layed the bridle on his neck, & that he had reſigned ouer vnto him his own office. Let vs take heede of ſo vaine & fooliſh thoughts. And let vs vnderſtand ẏ when God ſendeth vs men to declare vnto vs his word, it is not becauſe himſelfe would bee at reſt & ſleepe in heauen, & in the mean time forſake his church here below, & ſuffer men to beſtow at their pleaſure ẏ treaſure which he hath committed vnto them; but it is to the intent ẏ we ſhould be guyded vnto him according vnto our weaknes. If we haue men to ſpeake vnto vs in his name; it is not to the end ẏ we ſhold ſtick vnto them, but to the intent they might be our ayders & helpers. And yet notwithſtanding if we wil come vnto God, we muſt be bleſſed in his name; yea, & receiue ẇ faith & true repentance the good which he offereth vs. And when we be ſo bleſſed, let vs knowe ẏ that which men ſhall haue done, is no vaine or fruitles thing: becauſe God warranteth & ratifieth it in heauen: but yet for al ẏ, he himſelf muſt gouerne vs, he muſt always haue the chiefe preheminence, & we muſt not leane to creatures, but reſort vnto him and ſay: Lord it is of thee that I deſire to be bleſſed. And how? not by forging ſuch imaginations as ſhal ſeeme good vnto vs: but thou Lord haſt appointed ẏ we ſhould come vnto thee, & ſith wee haue thy word, it is ynough to aſſure vs that our labor ſhal not be loſt: but that the thing which thou haſt pronounced & decreed by thy worde & by the doctrine of ẏ Goſpel, ſhalbe fulfilled: & that although it be done on earth, yet notwithſtanding ẏ effect therof ſhalbe ſhewed in heauē. Wherfore whenſoeuer we heare the warrant of our ſaluation preached vnto vs; it is all one as if we had ſeene an angel from heauen, or as if god himſelf had taught vs in his own perſon: and we muſt do God this honor to receiue his word reuerently without making any reply againſt it, at leaſtwiſe if we wilbe holden & accounted for his people. Now herewithal we are alſo warned ẏ God by witholding the mouth of Balaam, declared therby the power of his promiſe which hee had made vnto Abraham. Truely he might haue vſed other meanes: but his intent was to certifie the Iewes more fully of their adoption. Sometimes God giueth the bridle to the wicked to blaſpheme with open & ful mouth, & to peruert al truth, whereupon they take ſo vnruly & lawleſſe leaue, as none cā be greater, & do nothing elſe but pluck forward the vengeance of God vpon their heads. To be ſhort, all the world groweth out of kind by their abuſes. God ſomtimes permitteth this. And why ſo? bicauſe mē are worthie ſomtimes of ſuch ſcourges. Secondly, God meaneth to humble vs. And thirdly, he will trye ẏ ſtedfaſtnes of our faith. But in Balaam he vſed another manner of order, ẏ is to wit, he bridled his tongue ſo as he could not do what he would, & what he purpoſed: for god withſtood him. And why did hee ſo? Becauſe ẏ people were ouer tender & nyce harted: they had neede of helpe, and therefore God meant to giue them this aduantage. So then let vs note, ẏ he ſuffereth deceiuers ſometimes to darken the trueth, yea, & to caſt forth their lyes at ful, & in the meane while notwithſtanding diſappointeth them of their purpoſe: or if his wil be that they preuaile, it is becauſe of mens vnthākfulnes: for (as S. Paul ſaith) they haue wel deſerued that God ſhould forſake 2.Theſſ.2.11 them. But ſomtimes he wil bridle the toūgs of ẏ wicked, ſo as the enimies of the worde of God cannot ſpeake that which full faine they would; & we ſee nowadayes many experiences hereof. In deede a man may ſee on the one ſide theſe hyreling villaines, theſe hypocrites & flatterers [I meane] which write nowadays as their knowledge ſerueth them, & as men greaſe them in yͤ hand like common ſtrumpets of the ſtewes. It is nothing with them to ſpeake euil of God, and to aduaunce themſelues againſt his word. We may ſee many ſuch Balaams nowadayes, which are at the Popes pay, & are of his ſtinking clergie, & be of the number of theſe horned beaſts. But yet we ſee alſo how God bridleth them, & locketh them vp in ſuch cloſe ward, yͤ they ſpeake ſometimes cleane contrarie to that they purpoſed, ſo as they profit vs more by that meanes, than if they had ſet themſelues purpoſely to ſerue god: inſomuch yͤ the throte of Popedom is cut by his own vnderlings, & by all theſe Balaams which endeuour to bring al to vtter deſtruction, & the things which are done by them, doe ſerue vs to as good purpoſe, as if the ſeruaunts of God had ſpoken & written. Therefore when we ſee this, let vs acknowledge the goodnes of God, and be confirmed more & more therin. And moreouer if he ſometimes giue ſuch great libertie vnto yͤ wicked, yͤ they diſguiſe al things, & falſifie the trueth by turning of it into a lie: Let vs pray him to ſtrengthen vs againſt ſuch temptations, and not ſuffer the weaklings to quayle altogither by that meanes. Now it is to be noted alſo yͤ God heard not Balaam, but held him backe, notwithſtanding that he declared his wil vnto him, & in the end did ſuffer him to goe. Hereby wee are taught not to come with hypocriſie as Balaam did when we deſire leaue for any thing at Gods hand. For wee ſee what leaue he had. The like was ſaid vnto king Achab. 1.King.22.15. Yea thou ſhalt haue yͤ victorie. But God mocked him, becauſe he wold needes haue leaue of him, whether he would or no. Wel, God gaue him leaue, but it was to doe him to vnderſtand, yͤ he was prouoked thereby to farther diſpleaſure: ſo hapned it vnto Balaam. But how euer it be, let vs thus conclude: that for aſmuch as Balaã was ſo ſtubbornly bent; therefore his couetuſnes ſo blinded him, as he ſought onely after gaine. For as a ſwyne when he hath once winded his meat, runnes on to ſwaſh himſelf in it, though he ſee men readie to ſtick him, becauſe his luſt carieth him on headlōg though it be to his death: ſo doe the wicked which deſpiſe God. And why? For their deſires blind thē, & cary them away headlong, & yet will they needes haue Gods leaue with them.

But wee ſee what befell of it: namely yͤ God cōmādeth him to bleſſe his people, & to curſe the Moabites. Foraſmuch as wee ſee this, let vs know yͤ ſith God did put the warrant of his truth in the mouth of a falſe prophet, [we muſt aſſure our ſelues that] when he ſheweth vs ſo great fauour as to ſpeak vnto vs by thoſe whom he hath appointed ſheepheards in his church, & by whō he wilbe ſerued; it is an infallible warrant of his gracious goodnes towards vs. And ſeeing that a falſe prophet was conſtrayned to ſay yͤ God is not like vnto mortal men, what ought we to do? Seeing yͤ a falſe prophet ſpeaketh thus, Num.23.19 we ought to be aſhamed to call the trueth of God in queſtion, ſpecially when he declareth it vnto vs: by ſuch as repreſent his perſon. And therfore let euery man anſwere Amen in his heart. Sith wee heare euery day yͤ God allureth vs vnto himſelf, that he reneweth the remembrance of yͤ adoption which he hath made vs, yͤ he layeth before vs the benefite of the death & paſſion of our Lord Ieſus Chriſt, declaring vnto vs that we are cleanſed by that meanes, & yͤ we are reconciled vnto him: let theſe thinges cauſe vs to aunſwere Amen; & let vs rightly ſeale vp the ſame, to ſhew yͤ when God ſpeaketh we are content with that which he ſaith, nothing douting but that he will fulfil the ſame in his time.

Now let vs kneele downe in the preſence of our good God with acknowledgement of our faults, praying him to make vs feele them more & more, yea, & yͤ knowing how there is nothing in vs but al maner of miſerie & wretchednes, & yͤ vntil he accept of vs through his mercie, wee muſt needes be his enemies; it may pleaſe him to grant vs the grace to ſeeke him, not with fainednes & hypocriſie, but in plain truth, ridding vs of all our wicked affections, & of whatſoeuer we haue beſides which may hinder vs from cōming vnto him purely & in ſuch ſimplicitie as he requireth. Let vs therfore go vnto him with repentance & faith, ſubmitting our ſelues wholy vnto his word, & embracing his promiſes which he maketh vs to feele with their power & effect. And that albeit we heare them not but of mortal men which ſpeake vnto vs, yet wee may not fayle to ſticke wholly vnto yͤ doctrine which is of God, & to yͤ order which he hath appointed, knowing yͤ our Lord Ieſus Chriſt wil ſhew howe it was not for nought yͤ he ordeined yͤ his church ſhould be ſo ordered. That it may pleaſe him to grant this grace not only vnto vs, but alſo, &c.

On Wedneſday the xxij. of Ianuarie, 1556.

The Cxxxij. Sermon which is the third vpon the three and twentith Chapter.

7 Thou ſhalt not abhorre an Edomite, becauſe he is thy brother. Thou ſhalt not abhorre an Egyptian, becauſe thou waſt a ſtranger in his land.

8 The children which are borne to them in the third generation, ſhal enter into the congregation of the Lord.

9 VVhen thou goeſt out with an hoſt againſt thine enemies, then keepe thy ſelfe from euery wicked thing.

10 If any among you be vncleane by that which cōmeth vnto him by night, he ſhall go out of the hoſt & not come into the hoſt againe.

11 But at euening he ſhall waſh himſelfe with water, and when the Sunne is downe, he ſhal come into the hoſt againe.

WE haue already declared whereunto this which Moſes treateth of here doth tend. Namely to this, that for aſmuch as God had ſeuered the people of Iſrael from al other nations of the world, that priuilege might be obſerued: and that was to the intent ẏ thoſe whom he of his free fauour had ſo choſen, might the better vnderſtand, how deepely they were bound vnto his frebeſtowed goodnes. For as we haue before ſeene, he preferred them not in this maner before all the world, either for any worthines or nobilitie which was in their perſons. Ye ſee then how the children of Abraham were then adopted, when God gathered them vnto himſelf, to be taken for his children. And therefore they are exhorted not to mingle thēſelues with the defilements of ẏ Infidels, but to continue in al holines, becauſe God hath ſo dedicated them vnto himſelfe: knowing ẏ they ought not to match themſelues with ſuch as were remoued from God, for that had bin an infecting of themſelues to peruert the grace of God. Likewiſe nowadays being aſſured ẏ God hath giuen vs his word, it is to the end we ſhould walke, not as blinde men in darkenes but as folke ẏ are enlightened & haue the ſunne of righteouſnes, our Lord Ieſus Chriſt. Yee ſee then in effect what Moſes treateth of in this place, to wit, that ẏ people of Iſrael being elected of God, ſhould keepe poſſeſſion of that grace which was granted vnto them.

Now if a man had ſeene ẏ eſtate of ẏ children of Iſrael at ẏ time; he would haue ſcorned ẏ forbidding which is ſet down here. For alas poore men they had wandered alreadie in the wildernes fortie yeres; they had not one foote of land of their own; they were hunted out of al places, & yet for all ẏ, as if they had bin of ſome great nobilitie, & in ſome high dignitie, God ſaith vnto them: make much of the benefit which I haue beſtowed vpon you, receiue not the Moabites, for they are your open enimies; but receiue the Egyptians & Edomits, in ẏ third generatiō. Yea, but what ſhould ẏ Edomites haue gained by cōming to ſuch a wandring & vagabond people? & again, as for ẏ Edomites, they were in peaceable poſſeſſion of their inheritance, no man troubled them, & therfore this might ſeeme ſuperfluous. But let vs note ẏ God valueth more the fauour which hee beſtoweth on men when hee calleth them into his church, than if they had all ẏ riches & honors, & all ẏ delicate pleaſures in the world. Ye ſee then ẏ reaſon why God forbiddeth ẏ Iewes to receiue them whom he had curſed & reiected. For ẏ queſtion is not whether ẏ Moabites & Egyptians ſhould aduantage thēſelues the more as touching earthly commodities, by ioyning with ẏ people of God: that cōmeth not into account: but whether it would not benefite them to come vnto ẏ inheritance of ſaluation if they were mēbers of the church of God, if they were partakers of ẏ adoption which God made in the perſon of Abraham. That was the thing which was to be conſidered. Therfore albeit we be now deſpiſed of the world, yea, & ſcorned alſo as we ſee how this heathniſh kind of men are ful of pride, & make ſuch triumphes to ẏ worldward ẏ they wil ſcarſe vouchſafe to make vs their foot ſtooles to tread vpon: although (ſay I) that wee ſee our ſelues brought into ſuch contempt: yet notwithſtāding let vs know, ẏ ſith God hath beſtowed ſo ineſtimable a benefite vppon vs, as to looke mercifully vpon vs, & to draw vs to him, & ẏ at this day we are of his houſhold: Surely it ſurmounteth al that euer men do cuſtomably eſteeme of in ẏ world. For ẏ which is ſaid by Eſay ẏ Prophet ſhal always hold: namely, that we are more eſteemed before him, than are all ẏ great kingdoms of ẏ world. Eſa.43.3. So then let vs learn to cōtent our ſelues with the fauour which God hath beſtowed vpon vs, in ẏ it hath pleaſed him to gather vs into his houſe as his own children, and let vs beare patiently ẏ want of all other things, & not be ouerpenſiue or grieued, though ẏ world make no account of vs. For it ought wel to content vs ẏ our Lord ſheweth himſelfe our father, & ẏ he hauing adopted vs, calleth vs to our heauenly inheritance, although in this world we be moſt miſerable, & (as it ſhould ſeeme) none in worſe eſtate & condition than we. Let vs come now vnto ẏ which is ſaid of the Edomites. Gods wil is, *That in the third generation they ſhould be receiued, yea, euen to be accounted of the Church, if they offer themſelues therunto.* And he addeth, *That they are brethren*, that is to ſay kinſmen, *of the children of Iſrael.* For we know ẏ Eſau from whome the Edomites came, was the eldeſt ſonne of Iſaac: ſo ẏ by nature he ſhould haue bin preferred before Iacob, if God of his freebeſtowed goodneſſe had not made a change therin. Now ẏ Moabites alſo were kinſmen of the children of Iſrael by reaſon of Lot. But we haue ſeene why God did cut them off, to wit, becauſe they enforced themſelues to ẏ vtmoſt of their power, to hinder the children of Iſrael from cōming to their inheritance. Thoſe then which ſhould haue bin neere by bloud, eſtranged themſelues wholly from the people of God. For they troubled the gratious fauour which God had beſtowed on his people, or at leaſtwiſe it was not long of them, that it was not troubled. For they hyred Balaam, & endeuoured to annihilate the bleſſing of God, & to aboliſh his promiſe. Yee ſee then in them an vpardonable offence. But as touching the Edomites, there was no ſuch reaſon. And ſo, God remembred ſtill, that hauing made the promiſe to his ſeruaunt Abraham, hee extended his fauour to his whole ſtocke. Yea, albeit that Eſau was for a tyme depriued of it; yet notwithſtanding he would not haue him ſo farre remoued from it, as other nations were. In deede if wee conſider both theſe people, as they are, either in his eſtate, wee ſhal ſee that to be true which is ſaide by the Prophet Malachie: Mal.1.2. for God vpbraideth the children of Iſrael with their vnthankfulnes in this behalf ẏ they conſidered not what a priuiledge he had giuen them. What (ſaith he) haue you forgotten ẏ loue which I haue ſhewed you? And wherin? There he bringeth in the children of Iſrael as wicked folke & ſuch as had caſt vnder foote ẏ which they had receiued. I pray you (ſaith he) was not Eſau Iacobs brother? and yet I loued Iacob your father and hated Eſau. My will was he ſhould bee ſhut vp as it were in the deſerts & hilles, & I haue giuen you all this countrey in poſſeſſion. Yee ſee thē how God magnifieth his goodnes towards ẏ ſtock of Iacob, in compariſon of Eſau. But heere Moſes ſaith ẏ if the Edomites wold yeeld themſelues into the church of God, they might bee receiued in the third generation, yea & bee incorporated thereinto altogither. For he which offered himſelfe to be circumciſed, was alwayes receiued; but he was not yet accounted of ẏ bodie of the people, vntil the third generation. Let vs therfore diligently note, that here the children of Eſau be not made equall vnto the ſtock of Iacob. But it is ſaid that if any of them would renounce his own kinred, he ſhould be accounted in the number of this bleſſed ſtocke which God had ſhouled out to ſerue him, and be receiued in among them.

Now we are here to call to minde, that when God made his promiſe, it was vnto the whole ſtock of Abraham; not that al were partakers of the promiſe of ſaluation, but that God had a certaine regard & bare a ſpecial fauour vnto al that houſe, & vnto them which were to iſſue from it, accordingly alſo as we ſee how he ſaith: As concerning Iſmael, I haue heard thee. Gen.17.20. And in very deede, it was not for nought ẏ God cōmaunded ẏ Iſmael ſhould be circumciſed. We know what circumciſion importeth: it is a ſigne of the fauor of God. Now ſeeing it was giuen vnto Iſmael, it is great reaſon ẏ he ſhould approch more neere vnto God than the Paynims which were altogither defiled, & which had no ſigne that God loued them, I ſay no particular ſigne. For in as Matt.5.45. much as he maketh his ſunne to ſhine vpon the good & vppon the wicked, & in that he nouriſheth the whole world; therby he proueth himſelfe a father towards all. But here the caſe is of hauing ſome warrant of adoption. Now Iſmaell had it. But in the end it is ſaide that he ſhall not Gen.21.10. be the inheritour of the houſe. Behold he is cut Gal.4.30. off. And S. Paul alſo alleageth the ſame ſimilitude, to ſhew that there are many which are called in the church of God, which in the ende are driuen out againe & baniſhed, as not worthy to enioy ſo great a benefit. And ſo was it with Eſau: for he was the ſonne Iſaac, yea he and his Gen.25.24. brother Iacob were twinnes: by reaſon whereof it might ſeeme there ſhould haue been two nations of like condition & eſtate altogither. Eſau was the elder, & for that cauſe ſhould haue been preferred before his brother, but he was bereued of his right: God chaunged the order of nature, to the intent we might haue a looking glaſſe (as the holy ſcripture ſheweth it to bee) that it is of meere fauour, when we are elected of God: ẏ we muſt not ſeeke ẏ cauſe therof in our ſelues, as if we had preuented him, or as if we had deſerued any thing, & ẏ he had found vs more worthy thã others. There is none of al this. But if wee bee ſmal & contemptible, yea & as it were thinges borne out of time; God will magnifie his goodnes ſo much the more, by chooſing vs. Yee ſee how Eſau is driuen out of his fathers houſe. And in what maner? Is it that he ſhould be put beſide all ẏ commodities of this world? No. For he was rich & wealthie. Yea, it ſeemed ẏ he was an hundredfold more happie than his brother Iacob. For whiles Iacob remained a ſtranger ſtil in the land, Eſau was wel harbored, & his offſpring was ſettled in peace. Yea, he had then the lordſhip & gouernment in ẏ countrey of Edom, which countrie caried his name. And al this whyles poore Iacob is a fugitiue in a farre countrie: And when hee returneth hee falleth on his knees before Gen.33.4. him, & deſireth mercie, ſo as his life ſeemed to hang by a ſlender thread, & that Eſau ſhould deuour him, like as when a Wolfe holdeth a ſillie ſheepe in his chawes. Euen ſo ſtoode ẏ caſe with him. And in the end when Iacob was com home againe, wee ſee he did nothing but wander here & there, ſo as hee had ſcarce any corner to liue in, yea, & ẏ was at the curteſie of another: he had no water to drink, but it coſt him dearely: he was hardly entreated & many quarels were picked vnto him for al the things ẏ he had; laſtly hee was driuen from his owne home into Egypt by reaſon of famine, & there to dye. But as for the Edomites, they pyned not away after that maner. And ſo we ſee (as I told you) ẏ God meant in this behalf to ſhew the fauour which he beſtoweth on men when he vouchſafeth to chooſe them vnto himſelfe. And herewithal we ſee how his goodnes was extended to al the ſtock of Abraham, although they which were children only after ẏ fleſh, were not accounted nor aduowed to be of the church: yet neuertheles there alwayes remained ſome remnant of grace amōg them. Likewiſe at this day we be farre neerer neighbors vnto the Papiſts, than vnto ẏ Turkes or other Paynims. And the reaſon is, becauſe ẏ albeit they are eſtranged from the grace of god, & haue corrupted al religion, & are ſo intãgled in their abuſes & corruptions as it is horrible to behold; yet notwithſtanding there remayneth among them ſome footſtep of ẏ calling of God. For they haue baptiſme which is a viſible ſigne wherby we ſee ẏ God held thē of his houſe & of his fold. Ye ſee then how ẏ papiſts are as it were the Edomites. For they were firſt called; and ſhoulde haue beene partakers of the ſaluation which was preached vnto vs by the goſpel; they beare yet the mark therof as touching baptiſme. But becauſe they haue peruerted the ſeruice of God, yea & as it were taken faith clean away, by the which they ſhould haue bin called vnto the mercie which hath bin brought vnto vs by our Lord Ieſus Chriſt; it is great reaſon ẏ they ſhold be held for Edomites.But on the other ſide, we ought notwithſtanding to call to mynd the brotherhood which they had with vs:And therfore let vs endeuor as much as is poſſible for vs, to bring them back againe,that we may be knit togither againe.And how knit togither againe ? I meane not,that we ſhould turne aſide from the pure trueth of God,to be at agreement with the Papiſts,but that they ſhould enter,that is to ſay, that they ſhould approch neare vnto God,& ſo we be reconciled al of vs,yeelding obediẽce vnto our heauenly father,ſo as we may haue al one head Ieſus Chriſt who will defende vs vnder his wings.When the Papiſtes come & order themſelues thus,we are to receiue them with all gentlenes,by reaſõ of the brotherhood which God hath ſet betweene them & vs. And we muſt not only do ſo; but alſo muſt ſeeke them as much as is poſſible for vs to do.

As touching the Egyptians, it is ſaide yͤ they alſo ſhalbe receiued into the Church.And why? *For thou waſt a ſtranger* (ſaith he) *in the land of Egypt.*Now in deede,true it is that the children of Iſrael were oppreſſed with cruel bondage by reſon of the cruel tyrannie which the Egyptians exerciſed ouer them. But yet Gods will is that their benefits ſhould be acknowledged. Albeit they ſo vniuſtly oppreſſed the childrẽ of Iſrael, yet becauſe yͤ children of God had their refuge thither in the time of famine, & were there relieued:God wil not haue that benefit forgotten. And yͤ is the cauſe alſo why God by the Prophet
Eſa,52.4. Eſay,comparing the captiuitie of Egypt with yͤ captiuitie of Aſſyria,ſaith : In deede my people went to ſoiorne in Egypt, & neceſſitie conſtrained them therto: & wheras the Egyptians oppreſſed them,in ſo doing they did them wrong: but yet they had ſome colour thereof, in yͤ they might ſay,Theſe men yeelded themſelues vnto vs.But as for the Aſſyrians, they came & vexed them of their own accord,ſayth he. Now then we ſee yͤ although the children of Iſrael might iuſtly complaine of their euil intreatance in Egypt,& of yͤ manifold iniuries which they had indured there; yet neuertheles God cõmandeth them to think yͤ they were bound vnto the Egyptians for ſomething. For ye were harboured in their countrie(ſaith he).Hereby we are warned to be mindeful of yͤ good which we ſhal haue receiued at any bodies hand:in ſo much that if we be afterward harmed or ouermuch oppreſſed by him in any thing;yet we muſt beare it paciently & alwayes beare in minde to ſay: wel,yet for all this,we be ſtil bound vnto ſuch a man. In deede I graunt we ſhall haue occaſion to be grieued againſt ſuch: but yet ſeeing yͤ God hath ayded & releeued vs by their meane, yͤ muſt always preuaile with vs & we muſt remaine their friends as farre as lieth in vs.And that is a good leſſon for vs to beare in mind vpon this place.

But yet further let vs thinke alſo of yͤ which I told you, namely, that when God gaue an entrance vnto yͤ Egyptians,to be receiued into the congregation in the third generation:it was not to the intent yͤ the people of Iſrael ſhould defile themſelues with the abominations of Egypt, or meddle any whit at al with them:but rather that the Egyptians ſhould not remaine in ſo deſperate a caſe as they were in,but be brought to worſhip yͤ liuing God & to dedicate thẽſelues wholly vnto him.For if our Lord had not opened the gate both vnto the people of Egypt & of Edom, they would haue bin ſo much the farther off frõ comming vnto true religion. But if when yͤ gate is opened vnto them,they accept not the benefit as God offereth,they are to be the more griuouſly condemned. And ſo we ſee the intent & meaning of this law.It was not Gods meaning,yͤ his people ſhould gratifie the Egyptians by making a mingled & corrupted religion,that euery man might put to his patch & his peece: but yͤ if the Egyptians would forſake all their owne corruptiõs,they might be graffed as an imp is on a tree,they might (I ſay) be vnited vnto yͤ church of God.And we ſee how in yͤ 45.Pſalme mention is made of the wife of Salomon,& albeit ſhe was a kinges daughter,it is ſaide vnto her: Hearken O daughter, thou muſt forget thy fathers houſe & al thy people, & cleaue wholly vnto thy huſband,& then he wil loue thee. Now we knowe yͤ the holy ghoſt in that place hath giuen vs as it were a generall rule, that all they which before time haue bin ſtrangers to the word of God,& haue not knowen what the doctrine of ſaluation meaneth,muſt vpon their calling firſt of al forget their kinred & their birth, & al their former trade of liuing,& then ſubmit themſelues wholy vnto him,which is made their head, & in whoſe name & perſon God marryeth vs.For we knowe that our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt maketh a ſpirituall marriage with vs,to the intent we ſhould be mẽbers of his bodie. Let vs therfore note, yͤ Gods opening of the gate into his Church, both to yͤ Edomits & the Egyptiãs,was not to haue them bring in their infections to peruert his ſeruice,or to make any medly , but rather yͤ yͤ Edomites & Egyptians ſhould come & agree in al points vnto his law, & yeeld their conſent vnto yͤ purenes of doctrine which is therein contained. And therfore nowadayes, ſeeing yͤ God hath ſhewed himſelf ſo gracious vnto vs , as to make vs his church , let vs learne ſo to keepe vs vnder his wings,as we may not be drawen aſide one way nor other: let vs take heede(I ſay)yͤ we ſtray not at mens pleaſures: but let vs hold our ſelues vnto yͤ pure doctrine which we haue receiued. Let vs be readie to receiue them which wil be reclaimed therunto , yea let vs haue our armes ſtretched out, not only to them which are the children of God,but alſo to ſuch as are our kinſfolke afarre off,endeuoring for al yͤ to winne & to gain them,howbeit alwayes with this condition, that they remoue not vs from God,but that they rather be knit againe vnto him with vs.

Now this fauour which God had graunted both to yͤ Edomites & the Egyptians, & this benefit which he had beſtowed on them,was afterward againe taken from them by reaſon of their own wilful malice. And that is yͤ cauſe why it is
ſaid in the Pſalm, Lord remember the children Pſal.137.
of Edom. For they ſaid in the day of Ieruſalem, Sacke it,ſacke it,raſe it downe to the grounde.

Ye ſee how the holy Ghoſt pronounceth a newe curſe vpon the Edomites. And yet notwithſtanding they were brethren together with the children of Iacob: yea they came of the ſtocke of Abraham, who (as we know) was the father of the Church. Yea and we haue ſeene likewiſe, ẏ God had ſuch a regarde of the Moabites, ẏ he woulde not haue the Iſraelites to make warre againſt thē, but rather to call to minde the auncient brotherhood or kinred which was betweene thē. Neuerthelater when the Moabites had altogether reiected the grace of God, & were ſo ſore poyſoned as to hire a falſe prophet, & to indeuor with al their might to annihilate the promiſe of God, and ẏ they conſpired againſt ẏ people of God w̄ ſuch deuiliſh rebellion; then was it behouefull ẏ they ſhold be dubly puniſhed for their churliſhnes. As much is to be ſayd of the Edomites. For we ſee how God had a regard vnto this promiſe Gen.17.7. which he had made vnto Abraham (I wilbe thy God euen to a thouſande generations) & which was continued towardes Iſaac. But when ẏ Edomites abuſed this goodnes of his, and not onely made no account of it, but would alſo faine haue the people of God rooted out: ſee ye not how it was a kinde of bidding battaile vnto God, & a defying of him opēly? For they ought to haue called to minde ẏ Eſau was put backe, ẏ he had loſt his birthright, and ẏ this came not to paſſe but by the decree & appointment of God, as was declared Gen.25. vnto Rebecca when ſhe was great with child. The Edomits ſhold haue cōſidered theſe things. But ſeing they were ſo enuenomed againſt God, wheras he notwithſtanding with long pacience forbare them; it was needefull ẏ he ſhould curſe them againe (as we haue before alleadged.)

Aſmuch is to be ſayde of the Egyptians. For there are great threatninges vttered againſt thē, in the holy ſcripture: they are holden for ẏ curſedſt people of all natiōs in the world. And why? becauſe they endeuoured with might and maine vtterly to aboliſh the ſeruice of God, they turned ẏ people frō it aſmuch as lay in thē to do. Therefore they not only loſt ẏ priuilege which was giuen vnto thē: but alſo prouoked the vengeance of God vpō them: ſo ẏ they payed ful deerely for the fauour which he had offered vnto them: And hereby we are warned, ẏ if God take pitie vpon vs, & draw neere any way vnto vs, we on our ſide muſt not behaue ourſelues like deafe folkes, but receiue the fauour which he beſtoweth on vs, & learne in dewe time to fare the better by it. For if we be founde wilde and vntamed, ſo as we will not vouchſafe to come neere him, but rather fling with our heeles againſt him when he would keepe vs vnder his yoke: his fauour muſt needs be turned into a curſe againſt vs. And therefore let vs learne ſo to profit by the fauor of God, that aſſone as it is offered vnto vs, it may bring forth fruite in vs, ẏ he may be glorified thereby, and ẏ we perceiuing how far wee are bound vnto him, may ſtudie to apply our ſelues wholely vnto his ſeruice. Thus yee ſee in effect what we haue to beare in minde touching that which is ſayde of the Egyptians in this place.

Nowe Moſes addeth, *That when the people goe out vnto battaile, they muſt keepe themſelues from euery euill thing.* And he addeth certaine examples, to ſhewe what is meant thereby. And heere wee muſt marke firſt of al, ẏ Moſes ſpeaketh purpoſely of warres: becauſe ẏ men beare themſelues in hand that then all thinges are lawfull. When we are in peace and euery man keepeth his houſe, it may well ſeeme that then it is a more eaſie thing to keepe good order, & to maintaine ciuill gouernment: for then lawes are of force. But when warre is once begonne, there is much vnrulines which men can not remedy, and there is no longer any meanes to bridle folke: inſomuch that although neuer ſo much extortiō & violence be vſed, a man may well lie downe & cry, but he cā not let it. To be at a word, there is no longer any order among men. For this cauſe Moſes ſheweth, ẏ although men goe out to battaile, yet for all that they muſt take heede of al euill thinges, and not graunt thēſelues a lawles leaue to be caried headlong into any wickedneſſe. Albeit men haue many allurements and many occaſions offered, yet muſt they holde themſelues in ſuch ſubiection, that God may be ſerued & honored. And in very deed if men were in their right wits, they would walke in greater feare & carefulneſſe in the time of warre, than of peace. For when we are at deathes doore, when wee are threatned with perils on all ſides, ought we not to haue an eye ſo much the more vnto God? Ought not this to humble vs, & to make vs to ſtoope? Ought we not to haue our whole recourſe vnto him, and to pray him to be our guide? Yes verily, if wee be not ouer blockiſh. And therefore when we are in warres, we ſhould holde vs to ſo much the ſtraiter rule, and remaine moſt peaceablie vnder the obedience of our God, becauſe of the neceſſitie which preſſeth vs, & of the dangers alſo which threaten vs on all partes. But what? As I tolde you afore, we ſee the cleane contrarie by experience: namely, that men graunt themſelues pardon for all thinges, the drumme no ſooner ſoūdeth, but lawes muſt keepe ſilence, ſo as there may be no longer any rule of order, no longer any meane or meaſure, no longer any leſſoning or warnings to be hearkened vnto. Nowe becauſe men be ſo ill diſpoſed, heere God putteth them in minde of their dutie, and ſayth: although this wicked cuſtome raigne through out the worlde, that they which are ſouldiours are of opinion that all thinges are lawfull for them to doe: yet notwithſtanding doe not you ſo: but rather abſteine from all wicked thinges. When you come into the fielde, & ſtande there againſt your enemies, thinke not that yee ſhall be pardoned any more, than if ye were at home in your own houſes. For the caſe ſtandeth ſo, ẏ ye muſt fight vnder my banner, yea, and yee muſt take mee for your captaine. And therefore I muſt not bee ſo diſhonored, as to be accuſed of hauing leaude ruffians & diſſolute perſons in my bande. For if it be ſo, how can my name be called vppon ouer them, and they named after my name? Now we ſee in effect what is contained heere.

And hereupon we haue to gather, firſt that cōmon abuſes can not ſerue to iuſtifie vs, but that when our account is to bee giuen vp to God it ſhalbe a vaine excuſe to ſay: euery man doth ſo: the thing is as cõmon as may be among men. If we ſay ſo, God wil reply readily ynough vpon vs. For is there any thing more cuſtomably vſed, than this lawles leaue which ſouldiours take and vſe? It is growen in maner euen to a law, ẏ without controlment all may do ſo. But our Lord for all ẏ, will not be barred of his right. Therfore he ſaith, *Let men take heede of euerie euill thing*. Nowe thẽ albeit we ſee a bottomles ſea as it were & an vniuerſall flud of all vices in the world; ſo as euery man is wilfully bent to do euill, & men haue taken ſuch poſſeſſiõ of ſinning, ẏ a man dares not ſo much as mutter when he beholdeth ſuch outragious things as none can be more out of order: let vs not beare our ſelues in hand for all ẏ, that we ſhalbe excuſed before God, but let vs alwaies haue an eie vnto his word. Mẽ do thus and thus: yea but God faileth not to be of a cõtrary iudgement. And this is the thing which we haue to beare in mind in the firſt place.

Moreouer if wee be forbidden to do euill although we be prouoked thereto by many occaſions, notwithſtanding to ẏ worldwarde it ſeemeth ẏ we may be ſuffered to do it: what ſhalbe thought if we offend when we haue no ſuch temptations nor ſo great? Doutles we are in double fault. For if it be ſaid ẏ in time of war when the doore ſeemeth to be ſet opẽ to all wickednes, yet notwithſtanding euen then we muſt ſtande on our gard: what is to be thought if when we may folow the good rule of cõuerſation, & things be not ſo far out of order, nor the deuill hath ſuch meanes to drawe vs into wickednes: yet notwithſtanding euery of vs ruſheth forth into all vnrulines, ẇout remẽbering our God any whit at all? I pray you doth not ẏ fault deſerue greater puniſhment? So then let vs note, ẏ in all eſtates we muſt alwayes take occaſion to ſerue God. Notwithſtanding ẏ the world do alwayes ſeeke to turne aſide, & to withdraw it ſelfe frõ his ſeruice, inſomuch that if men be in peace, they become ſo dronken with their pleaſure & delites, ẏ they can not be helde frõ wandring & from giuing thẽſelues ouer vnto many corruptions; & if they be in war, they behaue themſelues much wors But we on our part, what ought we to do? when we are in griefe and trouble, let vs know ẏ God by ẏ meanes calleth vs vnto himſelf, & wil haue vs to be ſo much ẏ more carefull to ſerue him, foraſmuch as wee want his ſuccor and ẏ he muſt hide vs vnder his winges. If we haue time of peace, let vs know ẏ he giueth vs leaſure to bethink vs what we haue to doe, & to call vpon him in quietnes & to conſider ẏ better of our duetie a great while aforehande, while we haue faire & calme wether. For if the wether become troubled ẇ ſtormes & clouds, we ſee not a ſtones caſt (as they ſay) from vs; but when ẏ ſun ſhineth faire & cleare, then we can ken a far off. Euen ſo our Lord, when he granteth vs peace & quietnes, would haue vs vſe it in ſuch ſort as euery man ſhold diſpoſe & order his life vnto his obedience, ẏ he may enioy vs, & we be farre from confuſion & diſorder, & not drawe back when he allureth vs vnto him by gentlenes, nor ſhake off his yoke as though we wold not ſuffer him to gouerne vs any longer. Thus ye ſee in effect what we haue to gather vpon this place.

As touching ẏ exãple which is ſet down here, whereas Moſes would *That he which is defiled in his body, ſhould be ſeuered frõ the company of others*: Let vs briefly for a concluſion note two things therin. The one is ẏ God by ſuch ceremonies would haue his people to keepe themſelues altogether pure both of body & ſoul. True it is ẏ before god the man which hath offended, ſhall not be abſolued for his waſhing of himſelfe in water. That auaileth nothing. For none of theſe corruptible elements pertaine any thing to ẏ ſaluation of our ſoules. Neuertheles becauſe God ordaineth thẽ, therefore they ſtand vs in ſteede. As ẏ water of baptiſm is not like other cõmon water, & the reaſõ is, becauſe God hath hallowed it vnto a ſpecial vſe, to ẏ intent it ſhold be a warrãt vnto vs, ẏ we are waſhed by ẏ bloud of our Lord Ieſus Chriſt. Now when we haue this we muſt alſo make our profit of the aide which God hath giuen vnto vs becauſe of our weaknes. The people of olde time had many mo, becauſe they were holden like litle children as S. Paul ſayth, & in compariſon of Gal.3.24. them we are come vnto mens eſtate. Therfore when God ordained ẏ men ſhold waſh thẽſelues with water for any bodily defilement; it was to the intent ẏ euery man ſhould know (as he him ſelfe declareth) ẏ to be dedicated vnto God wee muſt walke in all purenes, & when there is any corruption amõg vs, it muſt be purged. Ye ſee thẽ whereunto this law ſerueth vs, & in what ſort we muſt apply it vnto our inſtructiõ. I grant we haue not now ẏ olde ceremonies of ẏ law, we are not preciſely bound to waſh ourſelues when we are defiled or haue any ſpotte in our bodies; but yet wee muſt hold ſtill ẏ truth & ſubſtance therof: which is, ẏ ſeeing God hath ſanctified vs, we muſt continue in his ſeruice, purging vs from all corruptions both of body & of minde, as S. Paul alſo exhorteth vs in the ſecond of ẏ Corinthians, where 2.Cor.6.17. he ſheweth ẏ euill muſt not be nouriſhed among vs. For when it is ſuffered to encreaſe & to infect the whole flocke, what wil come of it in the end, but ẏ it will growe remediles when the infection Matt.17.8. hath taken hold throughout. And ẏ is the cauſe why excõmunication was ordained in ẏ church: if there were any which behaued themſelues amiſſe, by leading an vnruly & leaud kinde of life, our Lord Ieſus cõmanded to ſeparate them for a time frõ the church, to the intent to make them aſhamed, ẏ they might humble thẽſelues, & therupon returne vnto ẏ flocke, & liue better than they had done afore, and that others alſo might thereby be warned, ſo as wickednes ſhoulde not haue lawles libertie as though all thinges were lawfull & permitted. We ſee then that although nowadaies this figure be no longer in vſe, yet notwithſtãding we may gather a good & profitable inſtruction from ẏ which was cõmanded to the antiẽt people. Firſt of al, we muſt be fuly reſolued to offer ourſelues vnto God in ſuch ſort as our bodies & minds be kept vndefiled, knowing ẏ we haue ẏ like promiſes ẏ the auncient fathers had, yea & far larger: & therfore we ought to endeuor ſo much the more, to attaine vnto that purenes which I told you of. And therewall if we ſee any which corrupt the flock with their infections, let them be remoued according vnto ỹ order which our Lord Ieſus hath cōmanded vs, & let them be ſo remoued, ỹ knowing their wickednes & repenting thēſelues of it, in the end it may ſerue them for a medicine to purge them, ſo as ỹ infection growe no further: but ỹ the Church of God be alwaies maintained in ſuch order as mē may know ỹ God hath not for nought drawen vs out & remoued vs from the reſt of the world which is defiled, but to the end ỹ he might gouerne vs by his holy ſpirit, and we be ſo wholy his, that we may be true ſacrifices vnto him both in life & in death.

Now let vs kneele downe in the preſence of our good God with acknowledgement of our faults, praying him to touch vs with right repentance, ỹ being angry with ourſelues for offending him & for being turned away from him, we may endeuor nothing more, than ỹ he may frame vs wholy vnto his will: and ỹ being rid of al corruptions and infirmities of our fleſh, we may be clothed with his righteouſneſſe ſo as his glory may ſhine in our whole life. And becauſe it can not otherwiſe be, but ỹ in this world there ſhalbe alwajes ſome thing wherefore hee may finde fault with vs, let vs pray him to vouchſafe to beare with vs in our imperfections, vntill hee haue brought vs vnto himſelfe into his heauenly kingdome. And ſo let vs ſay almightie God heauenly father, &c.

On Munday the xxvij of Ianuary, 1556.

The Cxxxiij. Sermon which is the fourth vpon the three and twentith Chapter.

12 Thou ſhalt haue a place without the camp, wherunto thou ſhalt goe forth.

13 And thou ſhalt haue a paddle among the reſt of thy tooles: and when thou liſteſt to ſitte downe without, thou ſhalt digge therewith: and when thou haſt eaſed thee, thou ſhalt couer that which is come from thee.

14 For the lord thy God walketh in the middeſt of thy camp to deliuer thee, & to giue thee thine enimies before thee. Therfore let thine hoſt be holy that he ſee no filthy thing in thee and turne away from thee.

15 Thou ſhalt not deliuer the ſeruant vnto his maſter: which is eſcaped to thee from his maſter.

16 He ſhall dwell with thee euen among you, in what place ſoeuer he ſhall chuſe in one of thy cities where it liketh him beſt: thou ſhalt not vexe him.

17 There ſhalbe no whoore among the daughters of Iſraell, nor anie whooremonger among the ſonnes of Iſrael.

WE haue already ſeene heeretofore, how God meant to traine vp the people of old time vnder the lawe, in all purenes, euen in the ſmalleſt thinges: intending thereby to accuſtome them to keepe thēſelues holy without any maner of ſtain or defilement. And this is ỹ principall end wherunto wee ought to referre the firſt ſentence of ỹ which we haue now read. A man might think it ſtrange at firſt ſight, ỹ God ſhould ſpeake of ſuch a thing as is mentioned here: namely that when men will eaſe themſelues, they muſt couer their ordure. A man would thinke ỹ this ought not to be put in ỹ law of God. For theſe are ſuch things as are not honeſtly named. But as we haue already touched, it behoued the people to be alwaies led by the things which concerne the body, vnto the keeping of thēſelues in al holines in the ſeruice of God: as for example, wheras in the lawe mention is made of waſhings; it was not for ỹ the clenſing of the ſoule cōſiſted in taking a litle water to waſh ones hands or to wet his body withal but the people was warned thereby, ỹ they muſt purifie thēſelues before God, or otherwiſe they were defiled. If a mā happened but to touch the body of one ỹ was dead, he was become vnclean. And why? Thereby God gaue vs to vnderſtand, that wee can ſcarcely in all our life mooue either hande or foote, but we drawe vpon vs ſome ſtaine or other. For this worlde is full of occaſions vnto euill: and we for our part do no ſooner take any thing in hand but we offend therein: ſo as we ought alwaies to conſider & acknowledge, that if God take vs for ſuch as wee are, hee muſt needes abhorre vs. And why? Becauſe wee are filthy and vncleane. What remaineth then for vs to doe? Let vs ſeeke the remedy of our vncleaneſſe. Can the water enter as farre as the ſoule to purge vs? No. It is but a ſigne, to betoken that men haue neede to be waſhed, and to be made cleane: and they ought to bee guided thereby vnto that which is repreſented vnto them by the water. The like is to be ſayde of all other thinges. Let vs therefore note well, that whereas Moſes ſayth here, that if men auoyde their excrementes, and any ſtinke inſue therof, or if there be any diſorder among them: God is offended at it: not ỹ he ſtayeth on thoſe thinges: for we know that all is one vnto him, ſo our harts be pure and clean, & our bodies anſwerable therunto, ſo as we be not ſtirred vp to defile ourſelues with our wicked luſtes and affections.

But yet for all that becauſe men pardon themſelues ſo lightly for many faultes, and by giuing themſelues the bridle are led from one euil vnto another: this law (ſay I) was giuen to this intent, that men ſhould accuſtome themſelues, euen in the ſmalleſt thinges, to take heede of all vncleanes. If a mā be of vnhoneſt behauiour in his life, doutles he will become ſo hardhearted, yͭ he wil make no account of filthy things, as we ſee how beaſtly ſome are become in that behalfe: when they haue once forgottē God & al honeſty, they caſt off al ſhame, ſo as a man may ſay they haue no longer any diſcretion to knowe what is good & what is euil: and this cōmeth of euill accuſtoming of thēſelues. And therefore our Lord (not without good cauſe) ment to bridle his people in all theſe things which pertaine vnto yͤ body. For it was not lawfull for thē to make water, (I know not how much leſſe to eaſe themſelues) but in ſecret. And why? For if they had bin a filthy & vncleane people, this filthines of theirs might haue bin to their further diſcredit. As much may bee ſaid of vs. If we be not aſhamed hereof, we giue ourſelues by & by the bridle in things alſo cōcerning God. It is needeful therfore yͭ we be reſtrained & gouerned with ſuch honeſtie, as men may ſay we walke in the preſence of our God. And in deed, whē we are to receiue any honorable geſts our houſe ſhalbe ſwept & we will take good heed yͭ no ſluts corner be left, nor any thing elſe which may offend thē. What reuerence then ought we to beare vnto our God, who alwaies beholdeth vs, & we can not ſtir a finger but he eieth whatſoeuer we do in our whole life? Ought we not ſo to walke before him, as to be well ware euery one of vs leaſt we ſhould diſpleaſe him? True it is indeede (as I haue already touched) yͭ God is not offended wͭ theſe corruptible things for he is not ſubiect to our paſſiōs, nor to be moued with thē. But becauſe of our rawnes, & for yͭ we are groſſe and earthly minded, there is great need yͭ by the things which concerne yͤ body, we ſhold be warned to come vnto yͭ which is ſpiritual. So then we haue now yͤ meaning of this law, wherin God forbad his people, to lay their filth abroad to be ſeen.

And he addeth alſo the reaſon thereof: *For I am in the middeſt of you* (ſayth he) *and I will turne away from you if you do otherwiſe.* Heereby he declareth yͭ neither the health of the people nor any ſuch like thing was the matter yͭ he reſpected in making this law, neither was it any ciuill policie, as for exāple it may bee well cōmanded & it is a very good order, yͭ men ſhal make clean yͤ ſtreets and ſuch other thinges, for it is for the health of men: & when ſuch things are not obſerued, it is a filthy thing, & if a man ſee heapes of filth & mire in a citie, he wil ſay, there is no good order ſeene vnto: God had no reſpect hereunto whē he forbade ſuch filthineſſe: but hee aimed at an higher thing, to wit, yͭ the children of Iſrael ſhold be put in minde to ſay: wel, God is ſo gratious vnto vs, as to dwell among vs, let vs therefore learne to walke in ſuch purenes of ſoule & body, yͭ principally our ſouls be purified frō al wicked thoughts and affections: and ſecondly yͭ our bodies alſo be kept in ſuch honeſty, yͭ we be not hardned to cōmit any filthy things before men, & grow paſt all ſhame: for yͭ were yͤ next way to make vs forget the duetie which we owe vnto God. We alſo on our ſide muſt take heede of theſe things, not in yͤ manner as the Iewes did, which ſtraitely obſerued this law & other ſuch like touching the ceremony: but we muſt keepe ourſelues vnto yͤ truth and ſubſtance therof, which they ſo much deſpiſed, according to the cōmon cuſtom of yͤ world, which is euer wont to buſie it ſelfe about the formalitie or ſhew of things, & to make no account of the ſubſtance. Let vs therefore learn to know, yͭ whereas the Iewes obſerued this ceremony wͭout any minding at all of yͭ which God required of them, they did but dally & play with God, and their whole obſeruation thereof was but hypocriſie, ſo as they did nothing elſe but prouoke yͤ anger of God. For when men wreſt & peruert his word in ſuch ſort, it is ſuch a trecherie as he can not ſuffer. But it is no wonder to ſee this abuſe among men. For they would faine content God with ſuch outward things, it is ynough for thē ſo they ſet a good face on yͤ matter. And being thēſelues carnall, they meaſure God by their owne ell. But contrariwiſe let vs note yͭ when God cōmādeth vs ſmal things, it is to lead vs to a farther matter; & therefore let vs alwayes aime at this mark, & not ſtay ourſelues on things which are of no gret importāce, according to yͤ rule which our Lord Ieſus hath deliuered vnto vs in this behalf. Ye ought in deede (ſaith hee) to doe theſe ſmall things whē they are cōmanded by yͤ law: but yet ye muſt alwaies come vnto yͤ chiefe & principall point. And we know what God ſayth: namely, yͭ he requireth mercy & not ſacrifice: his will is yͭ there ſhoul be faithfulnes, & iudgement and vprightnes among men. And as for ſacrifices & waſhings & ſuch like thinges, his meaning was yͭ by thē men ſhold be trained to put the aſſurance of their ſaluatiō in yͤ fauor which he hath promiſed vnto thē, yͭ they be ſory for their ſins when they ſee them before their eyes, & yͭ they ſhould ſerue thē for witneſſes to endite themſelues, to yͤ intent yͭ when they offer themſelues to God being in ſuch diſpleaſure with their ſinnes, they might attaine pardon and mercie of him. Thus ye ſee what we haue to beare in minde.

Mat. 23.23.

And now ſeeing the figure is paſſed & done away, we haue no neede to buſie ourſelues in the outward obſeruatiō of this law. What remaineth then? Is this law needeles nowadaies in reſpect of vs? Ought not we to reade it? Yes: for ye ſee that God ment it ſhould be an inſtruction for his church euen vnto yͤ end of yͤ world. It remaineth then, yͭ letting the figure paſſe, we gather yͭ which is taught both to the Iſraelites & to vs: namely yͭ in all things we muſt take heede of ſtayning and defiling our ſelues. Nowe we are not ignoraunt what the things are which defile a man. It is not yͭ which entereth into a man (as our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt ſpeaking of meats ſayth) but it is yͭ which cōmeth out of a mā. Look how many wicked affectiōs we haue, ſo many ſtainings of vs haue we before god. For frō whence cōmeth fornication? Proceedeth it not out of the heart of man? From

Mat. 15.18.

whence cõmeth ambition? From whence come other wicked deſires, as couetouſneſſe, enuie, pride,and all the reſt? Now when ẏ ſoule of man is ſo full of ſuch foule ſtaines, ẏ it is infected before God:it draweth the body by & by vnto thẽ, and if we put wicked thoughtes in practiſe, beholde, howe our bodies alſo are wrapped in the ſame filthines with our ſoule,& we become altogether defiled. Let vs therefore learne ſo to dedicate ourſelues vnto God,as our infectious filth be not a cauſe to driue him away from vs; And therewithall let vs beare in minde that which S. Paule ſayth: namely that ſeeing God will dwell 1.Cor.6.20. 2.Cor.6.16. within vs we muſt purifie both our minds & bodies. And this is the reaſon which Moſes alleadgeth,when he ſayth *That God alwayes dwelt in the middes of the campe of Iſrael,to deliuer thẽ, & to giue vp their enemies into their handes.*

And afterwarde he addeth, *Take heede that the Lorde thy God depart not from thee,when he ſhall find any vncleaneſſe in thee*. At this day this fauour is beſtowed in more ample maner vpon vs, than it was then vpon the auntient people.For we know howe God is ioyned vnto vs in the perſon of his only ſonne. Now ſeeing ẏ the fulnes of the godhead Col.2.9. doth dwell in our Lord Ieſus Chriſt,& that not vnder a ſhadowe as in the arke of the couenant where ẏ lawe was encloſed,but is aſſuredly our God being manifeſted in the fleſh: & ſeeing 1.Tim.3.16. it is ſo ẏ we are members of Ieſus Chriſt, & that he hath vouchſafed vs ſo great a benefite, as by cõming downe from heauen to ioyne himſelfe wͭ vs: let vs note ẏ at this day God is more neere vnto vs than he was vnto ẏ people, yea & he will make vs to haue more feeling of his vertue and power. For we are alwaies in ſuch ſort vnder his protection, ẏ we neede not to feare but that his power is ſtill ſtretched out to maintaine & preſerue vs. When our Lord Ieſus ſayd vnto his diſciples; I am with you euen vnto the ende of the Matt.28.20. worlde,ſurely he ment to ſtrengthen them in all the conflictes which they were to ſuffer in preaching of the Goſpel,and it ſerued likewiſe to declare vnto vs alſo ẏ he will neuer forſake vs as in reſpect of his power. Seeing it is ſo then that we are vnder the gouernment of the ſonne of God, and ẏ although he be aſcended vp into heauẽ,he faileth not to fill all,& ẏ he is alſo our ſhepheard to the intent ẏ none of them whõ his heauenly father hath giuen vnto him ſhould be loſt:& that Eph.4.10. we are bone of his bone & fleſh of his fleſh(as S. Eph.5.30. Paul ſayth) and ẏ there is no greater coniunctiõ betweene ẏ husband & the wife than is betwene the ſon of God & vs.Seeing it is ſo I ſay. let ſuch gratious fauour as this, prouoke vs to withdraw ourſelues frõ al filthines;& let vs keepe this holy vnitie which we ought to haue with our God.

And moreouer let vs alſo diligẽtly note, how precious a thing it is ẏ God dwelleth with vs, to giue vp our enemies into our hands,& to deliuer vs frõ all euill. For hereby we are warned ẏ were it not for his fauour, we are ſet open to ten thouſande deathes. And in very deede let euery of vs cõſider his own infirmities throughly,& we ſhall finde ẏ if our Lord had not a care of vs & fought not mightily for our defence, we ſhould periſh euery minute of an houre.How is it then ẏ we are aſſured of our ſaluation?Surely becauſe our Lord who watcheth ouer vs, is ſtrong ynough,& therfore albeit ẏ all the armies of hell were banded againſt vs, yet ſhall they not preuaile any thing at all,if God be on our ſide: inſomuch ẏ we ſhall not only be preſerued from the hand of our enemies,but alſo haue ẏ victorie ouer them & bring them vnder our feete; becauſe God dwelleth among vs. Ye ſee then on the one ſide, howe men ought to feele what need they haue ẏ God ſhold help them,ſeeing they are thẽſelues ouer weake and haue no helpe to defende thẽſelues: & alſo how for all ẏ,they may boldly boſt. And why? becauſe God hath receiued them vnto himſelfe, & will preſerue them & be their ſafegarde. Behold (I ſay) what ẏ glory of the faithful is,which notwſtanding proceedeth of humblenes.For we can neuer be ſafegarded by our God vntil we haue learned to diſtruſt our ſelues,and feele ourſelues forlorne conſidering ẏ weaknes which is in vs.

But let vs alſo note the threat.*Take heede*(ſaith he) *leſt thy God,whẽ he ſhal ſee any filthy thing in thee, depart from thee.* Now the filthy things among vs which may offend God,conſiſt not in our bodily ſluttiſhneſſe. For where doeth God oftener dwel thã in poore cottages,which through great neede and penury ſomtimes there is vermine & ſometimes ſtinch?There are poore Lazars who haue not wherwith to ſerue their neede,& much leſſe wherewith to ſerue their pleaſures:a lamẽtable caſe to beholde. Surely none of all theſe things,which may ſeeme ſluttiſh vnto moſt men do offend God: but ẏ filth which maketh him to depart from vs, is the defiling which commeth from the heart, & afterwards(as I tolde you)defileth our bodies.And therfore let vs not think ẏ God is like vnto mortall men, or ẏ he is led with ſuch paſſions,but let vs know ẏ being a ſpirit; his will is ẏ we alſo ſhould haue a ſpirituall purenes in vs: that is, ẏ we ſhould put away farre from vs the thinges which may infect vs (as I haue ſayd afore)namely fornication,enuy,hatred, treaſon, exceſſiue deſire of hauing riches,ambition, and pride.Al theſe things are filthy & diſpleaſe God, and when our bodies are defiled with them, the wickednes is double. Let vs therefore learne to purge ourſelues frõ all ſuch infections, if we will haue God to be reſident among vs. For as hee is come neere vnto vs,ſo wil he alſo withdraw himſelfe frõ vs,if we be not pure temples. For vpon none other condition than ẏ,will he dwell amõg vs. Therefore this threat may ſet our hayres on end on our head where it is ſayd: *Take heede that thy Lord depart not from thee.* For ſeeing ẏ our lord hath vouchſafed vs this honor to come neere vnto vs, and ẏ he declareth ẏ he will haue the chief roome in our cõpany;it is good reaſon ẏ euery of vs ſhould take heede ẏ we giue him no repulſe,& ẏ there be ſuch publike order takẽ as our infections cauſe vs not to want ẏ preſence of our God: wherefore let euery of vs particularly looke vnto himſelfe & afterward let vs al vniuerſally do our indeuor ẏ al honeſty may be mainteined,ſo as we may be a people hallowed vnto god.For if euery of vs giue ouer himſelfe to filthy demeanours,ſo as one taketh leaue to be an adulterer, an other diſpenſeth with himſelfe to play the theefe, and to vſe deceites and extortion, reſpecting onlie howe hee may enriche himſelfe by vnlawfull meanes, and a thirde giueth himſelfe to wicked practiſes, to vndermine and to ouerthrowe his neighbour: and a fourth is full of arrogancie and ambition, & ſo blaſphemouſnes reigneth at wil: is it not all one as if euery of vs for his part had conſpired to baniſh God out of our companie, and to driue him away? Seeing then that vices doe ſo reigne, and there is ſo horrible confuſion among vs: Lette vs looke well to ourſelues and let this warning ſerue vs for a bridle to reſtraine the miſchiefe, or otherwiſe we ſhall bee guiltie of driuing GOD away that he might no more dwell among vs to bleſſe vs. Thus ye ſee what we haue to beare in minde concerning this place.

Now Moſes addeth: *That if a ſeruant*, (that is to ſay a ſlaue as we haue expounded it heretofore) *which is of the heathen, doe runne away and deſire refuge among the people of Iſraell, they muſt ſuffer him to dwell there, and not deliuer him into the hande of his maiſter.* This lawe may ſeeme euill at the firſt ſight, if we conſider not well what God meant thereby. For ſeruauntes were at that time in the ſame plight and ſtate that a mannes oxe or horſe is now. Men imployed them to maruelous painefull and burthenſome thinges, and their maiſters had power ouer them both of life and death: ſo as among the Paynims a maiſter went not to make his complaint vnto the Iuſtice when he would put his ſeruant in priſon or ſet him on the racke, yea or put him to death. Euerie man might hange and drawe in his owne houſe, and that was a verie harde caſe. And moreouer (as I haue tolde you heretofore) a mans ſeruantes were counted among his moueable goods in like ſorte as an horſe or an oxe. So then if it had not beene lawfull to withholde from a man any part of his goods, but it had bin verie ill dealing to haue done ſo: why was it lawfull to keepe backe his ſeruant? It might ſeeme that a man doeth him wrong and iniurie to defraude him in this wiſe of that which is his right, and men might perſuade themſelues ẏ God diſpenſed here with his people to play the theeues after ſome indirect maner. But the meaning of the Lawe is that it was Gods will ẏ there ſhould be ſome priuiledge for ſuch ſeruauntes as were willing to yeelde themſelues vnto his ſeruice: and that becauſe, as long as they liued vnder the Paynims, they were not their own men nor had ſuch libertie: and therefore when they turned into the better way, God granted them this exemption by way of priuiledge. Moreouer let vs note, that becauſe of the exceſſiue cruelty of the maiſters, the Lawes themſelues were to graunt ſome releaſe vnto ſeruants. For ẏ maiſters moſt cruelly abuſed the authority which was granted vnto thẽ ouer their ſeruants, inſomuch ẏ for euery ſmal trifle (as ẏ breaking of a glaſſe [or ſuch other like]) a maiſter would hamper his ſeruaunt to beate him without pitie or mercy. Theſe examples cauſed men to let thẽ haue ſome refuge. And the heathen themſelues permitted ẏ if the ſeruants could eſcape vnto any tẽple, they were in ſafetie from their maiſters, not ẏ they were altogether freed, but that they were ſolde vnto ſome other who peraduenture woulde handle them more gently. Alſo if they coulde get holde of the image of an Emperour, they hadde as it were a ſuretie for their ſafegarde. Our Lorde likewiſe had the ſame regarde in the lawe which is ſet downe heere, that is to ſay, becauſe the Paynims hauing no feare of God, did torment their ſeruauntes with more than tyrannicall crueltie: he would that thoſe poore wretches ſhould haue ſome place of refuge, that beeing preſſed with anguiſh and affliction, they might haue a meane to be brought vnto true religion. For we knowe that when men are daunted after that manner, then they ſeeke vnto God. It is a good preparatiue to bring vs vnto the obedience of God, when we are afflicted and can no longer tell what to doe. For we ſee that when we are at heartes eaſe and haue our delightes, we are ſo dronken with them, that God is no bodie with vs. That is the very thing whereat this lawe aimeth.

Now let vs note, that when God giueth forth ſpeciall lawes, he gaineſayeth not him ſelfe: but we muſt alwayes referre them vnto the generall doctrine. As howe? If a ſeruant ſhould runne away vpon deceite, or vpon malice, or vppon any other ſuch cauſe, it were a ſinne in him; and that theeuerie were not good nor alowed of GOD. Therefore when this ſpeciall law and priuiledge was giuen foorth, that a ſeruant ſhould be ſuffered in the Lande of Iuda, it repealeth not that which our Lorde had deliuered concerning ſeruants afore. And againe whereas he ſayth: Thou ſhalt not couet thy neighbours ſeruaunt, nor his maide; ẏ commaundement ſtandeth ſtill in full force; ſo that it was not lawefull for the Iewes to holde backe an other mans ſeruãt, for their own profits ſake; neither was it lawfull for ſeruants to deceiue their maiſters. But when a ſeruant eſcaped vnto them, & deſired to dwell among ẏ people of God; this leaue was graunted vnto him: howbeit vpon this condition, ẏ he was oppreſſed, and ẏ he had iuſt & reaſonable cauſe of running from his maiſter, for being too leaudly & cruelly handled. That was to be preſuppoſed afore. For (as I haue tolde you) the law which is conteined in the tenne cõmandements is an infallible rule. When we haue that abridgement, we haue therin the will of God fully warranted vnto vs. And we ought to meaſure euery particular lawe by thoſe ten cõmandements, That is ẏ true touchſtone whereby we muſt examine how euery ſpeciall lawe is to be taken and expounded. For we ſhall neuer vnderſtande thinges to any purpoſe, except we referre them all hither. And why? for perfect righteouſneſſe is contained in thoſe ten commandements which God hath deliuered in the two tables. Seeing it is ſo, we can neuer be deceiued if we examin things after this maner. Go to: here is the law, Pertaineth the thing vnto the ſeruice of God, or to the ſecond table; that is to that table wherin God hath preſcribed how we ought to liue with men? It is of the ſecond table. Well then, let vs ſee nowe whether it pertaine vnto the firſt commaundement of honouring father and mother: or to the ſecond, Thou ſhalt doe no murder: or to the third, Thou ſhalt not commit adulterie: or to the fourth, Thou ſhalt not ſteale: or to yͤ fift, Thou ſhalt not beare falſe witneſſe: or laſtly to yͤ ſixt, Thou ſhalt not couet. When we ſhall haue thus conſidered of the thing, ſo as we may ſay, this belongeth vnto ſuch a commaundement: then ſhall wee haue a keye which will open vs the dore vnto the right vnderſtanding of the thing. If a lawe concerne the ſeruice of God, be it of the firſt cõmaundement, or of the ſecond, or of the third, or of the fourth, we may haue the better aſſurance how this Law ought to be vnderſtoode. And why? For we ſhall conſider of the end whereunto it tendeth. If the law be between both (as we ſay) let it be referred vnto the firſt and the ſecond table, let it be mingled of both, and then we may alſo iudge eaſily of it. But to return to yͤ preſent matter: when yͤ Lord graunted a place of refuge in the lande of Iury vnto poore ſlaues, there is no doubt but he ment neuertheles to leaue his law ſtill in his full force. Let vs therefore conclude, that he meant in this place to remedie the exceſſiue and outragious cruelty which maiſters vſed, & would that poore afflicted wretches (who as touching the worlde could finde no eaſe of their greefes) being deſtitute of all ſuccour, might haue libertie to come into the Countrey of Iurie and there to dwel for euer.

Now we are warned hereby to help to yͤ vttermoſt of our power ſuch as are vniuſtly & wrongfully afflicted. In deede wee muſt not maintaine wicked quarelles; wee muſt not cloake that which is ill. For they which ſhall vſe ſuch mercie, ſhall not bee able to iuſtifie their caſe thereby before God. There are many which could be content that all leawd faultes might be buried, and they will oftentimes willingly foſter wickedneſſe through a fond pitie or deuotion as they call it. But let vs note yͤ Gods will is not to lead vs vnto that kind of dealing: but yͤ when wee ſee any poore ſoules tormented, he would haue vs moued with pitie to releeue them as much as in vs lyeth. We heare what is ſayd vnto Moab. Iſa.16.3. Moab thou waſt the harbour of my people, and thou madeſt hew & cry after thoſe which came to ſhelter themſelues vnder thy ſhadow. Although the people of Iſraell were iuſtly puniſhed for their euill deedes, yet as in reſpect of the world, they had not prouoked the infidels to be ſo cruell vnto them. For the Infidels came and made warre againſt them like tyrantes as they were, they came like wolues to ſpoile and deuour all. And well, the poore Iewes flie into the lande of Moab, and our Lord ſayeth that he had appointed that Countrie, as a place of harbour for them. And why? Was there any Prophet which tolde them ſo? No. For humanitie perſwadeth this of it ſelfe, that if wee ſee any poore people which are driuen out of their owne Countries by warres or by any other violent oppreſſions, it is all one as if God ſent vs a meſſage both to receiue them and to entertayne them as curteouſlie as wee are able to doe. And ſo let vs beare in minde, that where there are any poore wretches with vs whome men haue perſecuted, and tormented, we are too too vnkind if we deliuer them into their enemies pawes, which ſeeke nothing elſe but to vſe all violence and all maner of cruelty againſt them. That is it which wee haue to beare in mind vpon this place.

Now ſeeing it is ſo that we ought to ſhew ſuch gentlenes, and to vſe ſuch compaſſion towardes all that are vniuſtly oppreſſed, and whom men torment beyond meaſure without any cauſe; how ought we to behaue our ſelues toward thoſe poore ſoules which are afflicted for the worde of God? By much more reaſon is it that wee ſhould giue them refuge, and ſuccour them in their afflictions: and if we doe not relieue them, let vs alſo feare that which is ſaid by the Prophet vnto Eſa.15. the Moabites. For he addeth that God will hunt them out of their ſecreteſt lurking corners. And why? Bicauſe they diſcouered the people which fled vnto them, and ſet them foorth for a pray. Therefore if we cauſe the children of God to be perſecuted by tyrantes, and ioyne with tyrantes in ſuch wickednes, bȳ driuing Gods children out from among vs, doubtleſſe the Lorde will not faile to puniſh ſuch crueltie. But when our turne commeth to bee viſited after the ſame manner, (as it muſt needes come) men ſhall hunt vs alſo out of our corners, and we ſhall finde no harbouring place for our ſelues in the whole world, bicauſe wee haue laboured to caſt them away whom God deliuered into our handes. Yee ſee then in fewe wordes what wee haue to beare in minde.

And moreouer as touching the matter which I haue treated of alreadie, wee muſt vnderſtand that our Lorde commandeth vs to ſtraine our ſelues to the vttermoſt, to bring them vnto the knowledge of the trueth, which haue ſtrayed heeretofore in ſuperſtition. The ſeruants which offered themſelues out of ſtraunge Countries were in the ende framed vnto the ſeruice of God. For albeit they were at the firſt rude and rawe, yet was it behoouefull that they ſhould accuſtome themſelues vnto the Lawe, and that in the ende they ſhould frame themſelues wholly vnto it. Seeing then it is ſo, let vs gather vppon this place, that God ment to ſtirre vs vp to ſeeke after the poore wandering ſheepe, to bring them into the way of ſaluatiõ, and to gather them into his flock. And ſo ye ſee what we haue to beare in minde as touching this cuſtome.

Moſes in the third place ſayth: *Let there be no whore in Iſraell, nor any filthie & infamous fornicator,* And whereas he ſpeaketh heere, of fornicators; it is not meant of common fornication, but of that outrageous filthyneſſe which is contrary to all nature. And verily it is a dreadfull thing to conſider that the people which was dedicated vnto GOD, ſhould bee forbidden ſuch wickedneſſe: and eſpecially that they ſhould at that time ſo exceede in villainous behauiour, that they had not onely ſtewes for ſtrumpets, where women abandoned themſelues vnto filthie luſtes, but alſo that men with men were giuen to ſuch filthyneſſe. Is not this a thing which ought to make euery hayre of our head to ſtande on ende? But heereby wee are warned what men of themſelues are, except GOD holde them backe and gouerne them by his holy ſpirite. Wee muſt not thinke that theſe corruptions neuer came into the worlde before this day. They haue beene in it from all time. For ſince the time that Adam eſtraunged himſelfe from GOD, it was of neceſſitie, that hee ſhoulde beare the puniſhment of his ſinne, and that all his poſteritie ſhould bee abandoned vnto wickedneſſe. For the roote of all vices, yea of all outragious crimes doeth then budde foorth when man is forſaken of GOD, and hath the brydle layd looſe on his necke as it is to bee ſeene heere. For wee ſee that naturall fornications ſuffice not, but more than beaſtly enormities are committed. Common filching theeueries ſuffice not, but there are robberies and piracies: there are inuentions and practiſes more wicked than all the theeueries in the world. Men are growen ſo farre out of kinde, that they are dayly inuenting of ſtrange faſhions, they thinke it not ynough to haue put their enemies to death, except they extend their crueltie yet farther. To bee ſhorte, if wee conſider well of all that is in man vntill GOD gouerne him; we ſhal find within him euen a ſinke and gulfe of hell. And as euery man nouriſheth in himſelfe much wickedneſſe, ſo muſt it needes be that the miſchiefe thereof ſhall increaſe, except GOD prouide a remedie for it. And whereas among the Paynims themſelues there was alwayes kept ſome honeſtie; it came ſo to paſſe through the wonderfull prouidence of GOD, who meant ſtill to reſerue ſome honeſtie among mankinde. In deede the Paynims had neuer this intent of ſeruing GOD, as was reaſon they ſhould, but yet although none of their workes were accounted pure before GOD, he notwithſtanding ſo ruled them, as thinges might not bee vtterly confounded. Sith wee ſee this, let vs learne that when God ſheweth vs any ſignes of his prouidence by retayning men in ſome order and honeſtie; it is to make vs perceyue thereby, that he watcheth ouer mankinde. And on the other ſide let vs knowe alſo, that if hee helde not out his hande to keepe men vnder ſome order; wee ſhould ſee ſuch villainous and deteſtable things, that euen the brute beaſtes ſhould behaue themſelues more honeſtly than men. See (I ſay) what wee are to conſider of; to the ende we may pray God to receiue vs, and not to ſuffer vs to fall into any ſuch enormities as euen our ſelues ſhould bee conſtrayned to abhorre them. And for as much as wee ſee yͤ examples of theſe things haue beene giuen ſo long time ſince; and perceiue by experience that the worlde ceaſeth not to growe worſe and worſe: what woulde come of it if God ſhoulde not redreſſe it? What would bee the ende of it? Queſtionleſſe were it not for Gods wonderfull prouidence in this behalfe, it muſt needes come to paſſe that all honeſtie among men ſhould be cleane wiped out. Thus yee ſee what wee haue to conſider vppon the forewarning which GOD maketh in this place. And moreouer let vs note that this lawe of GOD himſelfe coulde not vtterly diſappoint the raigning of ſuch abhomination euen in the people which named themſelues holy and elected aboue all the reſt of the world. Inſomuch that ſometimes the holy Scripture ſpeaking of Kinges which were not ouer diligent in dooing their dueties, ſaith that there were Stewes, yea euen againſt nature, not onely of harlots which were there at hire, but alſo of other ſhamefull filthyneſſe not to bee named: and that this wickedneſſe raygned. And where? In Iuda. Therefore when wee heare this rehearſed vnto vs, wee ought to tremble and walke in feare and warineſſe, praying GOD to hide vs vnder his winges, and not to ſuffer ſuch corruptions to happen vnto vs. And let vs note that from the one wee ſteppe to the other. For when looſe behauiours is once permitted, men beare themſelues in hande that euery thing is lawefull. When ſuch infamous thinges are ſuffered, and lawleſſe libertie of vſing them is graunted in any countrey; men not onely giue themſelues to lechery lyke dogges, but alſo in the ende doe fall into greater and more outragious filthyneſſe. Therefore ſeeing it is ſo, let vs learne in generall to haue ſuch a care among vs, as all infections of whoredome may be remoued, and wee cleane purged from them. For that is the very thing which GOD aimeth at. Now indeed it is true that this is a ciuill lawe: but yet for all that, it belongeth vnto the third commaundement of the ſecond table: where it is ſayde: Thou ſhalt not commit adulterie. Why are the people of GOD forbidden to haue a ſtewes among them? Becauſe fornication is a deteſtable thing in his ſight: for his will is that wee ſhoulde bee wholly dedicated vnto him both in our ſoules, and in our bodyes. So then whereas God deteſteth whoredome, what ſhall we thinke when open ſtewes are ſuffered, and no puniſhment or chaſtiſement appointed for adulterers? What ſhall wee thinke thereof, but that men in the ende will defie God and perſwade themſelues that whoredome is nothing? Wee ſee then whereunto God meant to lead vs, namely, that we ſhould knowe howe profitable a thing it is for vs to thinke on the wretchedneſſe of ſome men, that is to wit, that they fall into ſo outragious thinges, that they forget all honeſtie of nature; and that there would bee nothing but beaſtlineſſe in them, except they were withheld by yͤ hand of God. Let this put vs in feare, and quicken vs vp to pray God to withdrawe vs from theſe corruptions whereunto we are ouermuch enclined, or rather wholly giuen ouer. And let vs yeeld our ſelues fully vnto him, & not behaue our ſelues as horſes which are broken looſe. Let vs take heede of ſeeking occaſions of wickedneſſe, or of graunting vnto our ſelues leaue of lawleſſe libertie to doe wickedly, either in adulterie or otherwiſe: and let vs keepe our ſelues in ſuch pureneſſe, as euery of vs may be ready to frame himſelfe vnto the righteouſneſſe of God, and to keepe and maintaine our ſelues in all innocencie before him.

Now let vs kneele downe in the preſence of our good God with acknowledgement of our faultes, praying him to make vs to feele them more and more. And bicauſe it hath pleaſed him to call vs vnto himſelfe, yea and to declare oftentimes that he is our God, and to make vs alſo to perceiue the power of his helpe, not onely touching our bodyes, but alſo touching our ſoules: let vs beſeech him that we may be prouoked hereby to yeelde our ſelues wholly vnto him, & that all of vs examining our ſelues more narowly, and perceiuing our owne defilements, may reſort vnto the holines and purenes of our Lord Ieſus Chriſt, praying him ſo to purge vs by his holy ſpirit, that our onely ſeeking may be to offer our ſelues vp vnto our God both ſoule and body, and that therewithall wee may learne to liue one with another in all vprightnes and honeſtie, ſo as it may alwayes ſerue vs to mortifie our wicked affections, and not hinder vs frō enioying thoſe benefits which he daily beſtoweth vpon his Church. And that it may pleaſe him to impart theſe things not onely to vs, but alſo to all people and nations of the earth, &c.

On Tewſday the xxviij. of Ianuarie. 1556.

The Cxxxiiij. Sermon which is the fifth vpon the three and twentith Chapter.

18 Thou ſhalt neither bring the hire of a whore nor the price of a dogge into the houſe of the Lord thy God for any vow: for both theſe thinges are alike abhominable before the Lorde thy God.

19 Thou ſhalt not giue vpon vſury to thy brother, whether it bee vſury of monie or vſury of vittayles, or vſury of any thing which men giue to vſurie.

20 Thou mayſt giue vpon vſurie to a ſtranger, but thou ſhalt not giue vpon vſurie to thy brother: that the Lorde thy God may bleſſe thee in al that thou ſetteſt thy hand vnto, in the Land whither thou goeſt to poſſeſſe it.

VEe knowe it was not lawfull by the Lawe to make any offering or ſacrifice of vncleane things. Inſomuch that the beaſtes which GOD had declared to bee vncleane, might not bee mingled with the holy offeringes. The reaſon was that GOD meant thereby to holde his people in all pureneſſe. The effect then of all this is; that when wee come before GOD, whatſoeuer wee offer muſt be cleane and pure, and without any ſpotte. And now Moſes addeth that if a man brought the price of a dogge, GOD abhorred that likewiſe, for a dogge of himſelfe and in his owne nature was an vncleane beaſt (as they ſay). Nowe then if one ſhould ſay he woulde not offer a dogge, bicauſe it was not lawfull ſo to doe, but that hee might offer the price which hee had receiued for ſelling of him: Moſes declareth that this in like manner was reiected of God as an abhominable thing. Whoredome of it ſelfe is a wicked thing, and deteſted of God. Now if one thought likewiſe to bring the price of whoredome, to agree with God and to bee cleared of his fault, it was an abuſe. For God will not haue his name which is holy, to bee mingled with any ſuch filthines and vncleanes. So this place containeth in effect a declaration of the lawe which I tolde you of, ẏ we may not offer any thing vnto God which is not pure and holy. Now to the intent men might knowe that God admitteth not any Sophiſtrie or ſuttleties, as men doe when they fetche their byleapes, and beare themſelues in hand that they can ſo countenaunce their wickedneſſe, as it ſhall not bee condemned before God: Moſes telleth them that it is nothing woorthe, and that they muſt come to that vprightneſſe and ſoundneſſe whereby if a thing bee euill of it ſelfe, then all that euer commeth thereof is likewyſe abhominable before God.

Now then wee ſee what doctrine wee haue to gather in this place. The firſt poynt is, that al the offerings which wee make vnto GOD, muſt bee pure and cleane. If this was required in the time of the Lawe: wee ought well to practiſe the ſame at this day, according vnto that which the prophet Malachie ſayth: For after that GOD had reproued the ſacrifices which the Iewes made vnto him, becauſe there was much vncleaneſſe in them: hee ſayth, The time ſhall come when my name ſhall bee called vppon through out the whole worlde, yea, when I ſhall bee called the great GOD, when I ſhall bee worſhipped of all men, and when men ſhall offer vnto me a pure and cleane ſacrifice. Now becauſe the prophet in that place treateth of the eſtate of the Chriſtian Church, and ſheweth that GOD ſhould bee exalted throughout the whole world at the comming of that Redeemer which was promiſed; therefore this appertayneth vnto vs. Not that we muſt now offer ſacrifices of Oxen and Sheepe or of other brute

Mal.1.11.

beaſtes: for wee knowe that ſuch ſhadowes are done away: but wee muſt offer that reaſonable ſacrifice (as ſaint Paule termeth it in the twelfth Rom.12.1. to the Romanes:) which God liketh of, that is, that euery man dedicate himſelfe vnto GOD by becomming newe both in heart and minde. Therefore whereas wee ſee that God nowadayes requireth ſpirituall ſacrifices, bidding vs to offer vnto him our ſoules and our bodyes; it is neceſſarie before all thinges that wee ſhould be purified. For it is too great an abuſe, if we thinke in this ſacrifice to bring our owne defilements. As much is to be ſaid of all yͤ offerings which God requireth which are ioyned vnto this ſolemne ſacrifice of our owne perſons. For when wee pray, it is a kinde of ſacrifice which GOD Pſal. 50, 13. nowadayes liketh, as it is ſayde in the fiftith Hebr.13.96 Pſalme. Our almes likewiſe are ſacrifices, as it is ſayde in the Epiſtle to the Hebrewes. Forget not to helpe the poore ſtraungers, and them which are in neede and neceſſitie: for they are the true ſacrifices which God requireth. But nowe what remaineth for vs to doe? Verily wee muſt be pure if we will haue God to receiue ſuch ſacrifices at our handes. For otherwiſe hee diſalloweth of all: as it is ſaid in the Prophet Aggee: Agge.2.13. That yͤ which we touch ſhall be defiled with our vncleannes. For there yͤ Iewes were condemned ẇ all their pompes & ceremonies. And why? For one was giuẽ to robbery, another to whoredome, another to ſome other wicked dealing, and another was full of crueltie, enuie & rancor, and yet for all that they came to make a faire ſhew in the temple, pretending to be wondrous deuout men. But what? God ſaieth vnto them, when a man is vncleane in his owne perſon, is not al that which euer he toucheth defyled alſo? Yes verily. Nowe then your ſacrifices are full of vncleanneſſe, for your handes are defyled, and yet yee come to handle thoſe thinges which are holy. Therefore you doe nought elſe but prouoke mee vnto farther anger. So then let vs learne (as I haue alreadie declared) that if we will offer our ſelues vnto GOD, wee muſt firſt of all bee pure and cleane, that is to ſay, wee muſt bee ridde of all our wicked thoughtes and affections. For if wee bee intangled in them, GOD liketh not of vs, and howe fairely ſo euer wee proteſt that wee doe all thinges to pleaſe him and to apply vs vnto his ſeruice, doubtleſſe hee will diſallowe all. And againe if wee deſire that our prayers, ſupplications, and almes ſhoulde bee acceptable vnto God; let vs take heede that all proceede from a ſyncere and willing affection. And ſo yee ſee what wee haue to beare in minde in the firſt place.

Now if one demaunde howe it is poſſible for a man to be ſo clenſed, that there ſhould remaine no blemiſh in him: we aunſwere hereunto, That it is moſt certaine wee cannot come vnto ſuch perfection, but yet we muſt tend thereunto: for we are not excuſed, ſo as we ſhould alwaies abide and ſettle in our filthines. Therefore euery one of vs knowing that he is full of vncleaneſſe, muſt enforce himſelfe by the power of Gods ſpirite to clenſe himſelfe, and labour to come vnto a perfect pureneſſe. When wee are ſo affected, and haue this deſire in vs, then God ceaſeth not to accept our ſacrifices although they bee not worthy to be accepted. And why? for our Lord Ieſus Chriſt ſupplieth that which is wanting in vs, as it is ſayde in an other place to the Hebrewes: Hebr.13.15 That it is through him that wee offer prayers and thankes giuing and ſacrifices of praiſe vnto God. Yee ſee then in what ſorte the pureneſſe of our ſacrifices ſhal be eſteemed, to wit, if they bee watered with the blood of our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt, to clenſe them from all their ſtaynes. But in any wiſe he which endeuoureth to ſerue GOD, muſt examine himſelfe, and knowing his owne filthyneſſe and vncleaneſſe, hee muſt enforce himſelfe to bee drawen from it. For if wee double with GOD, hee will diſlike of all thinges that wee take in hande. And although men are of opinion, that wee doe more than our duetie; yet queſtionleſſe in the ſight of God, all ſhalbee holden for abhominable. And herewithall alſo let vs note, that God reprooueth all ſuttle dealing, when wee thinke to paint foorth our caſe in ſuch ſort, as to bleare the eyes of God, and that by ſo dooing wee doe but double our fault, as is declared vnto vs by this text. Therefore, if wee bring vnto God any ſacrifice, and yet our proteſting that wee will not offer vnto him any vncleane ſacrifices, is but a ſetting of ſome faire colour on the matter; our Lorde ſayeth ſtill, *The price of the dogge, and the dogge is all one. The hyre of an whoore, and the whooredome is alike vnto mee*, as if hee ſayde, that wee muſt take away all the appurtenances of euil. For if we retaine any thing of it, we ſhalbe alwayes condemned. What muſt wee do then? wee muſt walke vprightly. There is nothing which God hateth ſo much as a double heart, as the ſcripture ſayth. Pſal.12.3. Sith it is ſo, let euery man enter into himſelfe, & let vs make good tryall of our ſelues, to the intent wee flatter not, ne harden not our ſelues in our vayne pretences and imaginations. But when wee finde, that there is any ſtayne of wickednes in vs which diſpleaſeth God, let euery of vs bee in diſpleaſure with himſelfe for it, and let vs offer vnto God the ſacrifice of mortifying our ſelues, and ſay: Alas Lorde, I ſee full well that there are many wicked defilementes in mee, ſo that when I approch vnto thy maieſtie, I am vtterly confounded. But Lorde I come and offer vnto thee my heart in ſacrifice, which thou knoweſt to bee heauie becauſe I ſee my ſelf beſpotted with ſuch a vice. When God ſhal once perceiue yͤ with vnfained repentance we deſire to bee ridde of our vices; hee will receiue vs, for this repentance is the ſacrifice which wee owe vnto him, and this anguiſh of heart which wee haue for beeing inclyned vnto any wickedneſſe, and for offending of God, is the true ſworde wherwith the ſacrifices bee offered vnto God, I meane the reaſonable ſacrifices. Rom.12.1.

Nowe if it be not lawfull to bring vnto God any fayned thing: what will come of it if we intermeddle him with our iniquities? As there are many which giue almes. But whereof? Of their

ſpoyles

ſpoiles: when they haue pilled and robbed, they perſwade themſelues that God will be appeaſed, if they beſtow ſome part of the booty vpon him. But there is no ſuch beaſtly mocking of God as is this. When one hath played the whoremonger, he will make his account to redeeme himſelf before God with ſome price, and yͭ with a price ful of filthynes. And therfore let vs diligently note yͭ which Moſes ſaith in this place; namely, That al theſe things are abhominable in yͤ ſight of god. It is too much that we haue ſo offended already, though wee added not a ſeconde fault. If one through extortion & wrong dealing ſcratch vnto himſelfe another mans goods: he is already in too too great a fault. But if he thinke to dally in ſuch ſorte with God, as to thinke to raunſome himſelfe by paying I knowe not what part thereof, or by way of almes, or (as men doe in Popery,) by offering to a block, or by cauſing of maſſes to be ſung, or by appointing ſom yearly dirige, or by building of ſome chappell: if I ſay men thinke to content God ſo with mony or monies worth: they double their fault, and do but prouoke God vnto farther anger. For that is ſuch a trechery, as we know not how to do God a greater iniury, than ſo to entermeddle him with our filthines, as if he were a confederate with vs in the ſame wickedneſſe. Ye ſee then in effect how we ought to abſtaine from āl maner of defilements, if we will preſent our ſelues before God with any offering at all on our behalfe.

And nowe Moſes hauing thus ſpoken, addeth, *That the Iewes ſhall not byte their brethren by vſurie, neither of ſiluer, nor of corne, nor of Wine, nor of any other things*, and yet notwithſtanding whereas among themſelues he will haue them to abſtaine from vſurie, he permitteth them to vſe it towardes the Paynims. Nowe we haue to note in this place, that albeit this bee a ciuill lawe, yet it hath a reſpect in part vnto conſcience, as wee haue aboue touched that we muſt examine all yͤ lawes which are contained in Moſes by the lawe of the ten commandements. For that is the perfection of all, and that is yͤ rule of our life. Therfore when we meete with any law, we muſt conſider vnto what commandement it ought to be referred: and thereupon conclude, that if it be a ciuill lawe, wel: touching the order of policie, it was properly belonging vnto the Iewes, but yͤ ſubſtance and ground thereof, remaineth vnto vs, that is to ſay, yͤ equitie and the vprightnes of it. Now this equitie of it (ſay I) laſteth for euer, & not for a time onely. And wherehence proceedeth all vprightnes, but from the righteouſnes of God as from his fountaine? But that righteouſnes is euerlaſting & changeth not, therefore it followeth that all equitie and vprightnes is inuiolable. And although men abuſe it, yet in very deede they are ſufficiently conuicted, yͭ whatſoeuer God hath ſhewed vnto them is rightfull, & muſt remaine in force for euer. But let vs nowe come & wey the text. Moſes forbiddeth yͤ Iewes to exerciſe vſurie amongeſt thēſelues. And why? Bicauſe they were the people of God. He giueth them leaue to exerciſe vſurie vpon the Paynims, with whom they had not acquaintaunce. But yet neuertheleſſe they were mē, & therfore they had no leaue granted vnto thē, to ſpoile them of their goods. Some to aunſwere this queſtion, alleage this excuſe, that God had giuen them the goods of al the people of the land of Chanaan, as of the Amorrhites, yͤ Phereſites, the Hethites and ſuch like, that God (I ſay) had giuen their goods vnto the Iewes for pillage: ſo that they had leaue to ſpoile them of all, yea and were commaunded to put al of them to death: and for that they did not ſo, they committed a great fault, for which God reproued them, and they were likewiſe puniſhed for it. But in this place there is no mention made neither of Hethites, nor of Amorrhites, nor of Iebuſites, nor of Chananites, nor of any other people of that lande, but in generall of all nations in the world. Egypt is heere compriſed, and Syria, & all the Iles of the ſea, and all they who had entercourſe of merchandiſe with the Iewes. Therfore this aunſwere is not ſo proper to this place. But let vs note that God permitted the Iewes many thinges for policies ſake, which were not therefore good, as we haue already ſeene: and howe did he permit them? Forſooth he appointed no puniſhment for them. And ſo in this place when it is ſayd, Thou maiſt gnaw ſuch as are ſtrangers with vſury: God maketh not the thing lawfull, but he leaueth it vnpuniſhed. And yet for al that, that law abideth alwaies in his full force: Thou ſhalt not ſteale. Vnder this word we are forbidden to exerciſe any wicked practiſe, whereby our neighbours may be grieued, we are forbidden to make our gaine by the loſſe of an other. To ſpeake in feaw wordes: I graunt that before men this ſhall not bee condemned for theft, but yet we muſt be accountable for it before God. For as for ciuill Lawes they haue reſpect vnto earthly Iudges which puniſh not all offences, nor cannot if they woulde. In deede they ought to enforce themſelues thereto: but when they haue done all, yet muſt they let paſſe much wickednes which ſhalbe iudged in that great day. And therefore let vs note, yͭ when God ſuffered the Iewes to exerciſe vſurie, and to handle the Paynims in ſuch ſort as it is ſaide in this place; he ment not therefore to preiudice yͤ commaundement wherein he had forbidden men to ſteale. I grant yͭ this theeuerie which was committed in vſurie was not puniſhed by men, but yet for all yͭ we muſt alwais return vnto this point, yͭ the righteouſnes which is contained in yͤ ten commādements is euerlaſting, and yͭ men cannot change it. Seeing it is ſo, we muſt therfore conclude, that whatſoeuer bringeth with it any harme, was forbidden yͤ Iewes aſwell as vs. And yet nowadaies when they beare thēſelues in hand, yͭ they haue free leaue for the practiſing of this wickedneſſe, ſo yͭ among thēſelues there be no extortion nor other ſuch euil done; they ſhall perceiue yͭ they are ſo farre from being excuſed hereby, that rather they are in double wiſe condemned. For they ſhould be ioyned with vs, bicauſe God hath opened vnto vs the doore into his Church. But they haue loſt their roome, they are ſhut out, and baniſhed from the kingdome of God, and we in the meane while are accounted for the children

Gal.3.7. of Abraham, although touching the fleſh wee come not from that ſtocke. Therefore albeit in olde time the Iewes had that priuiledge, that they might lend vpon vſurie vnto the Paynims: yet is it not therefore to be ſaid that they ſhould nowadayes grieue and moleſt the children of God, eſpecially when themſelues are cutte off from his Church, and are taken for baſtardes, bicauſe of their rebellion and diſobedience.

But the chiefe and principall point is, that we apply this place vnto our profite. It was ſayde vnto the Iewes, *Yee ſhall not practiſe vſurie vppon your brethren.* And I pray you who are our brethren nowadayes? Wee knowe that our Lorde Eph.2.13. Ieſus came to be our peace, to the intent to reconcile vnto God both ſuch as were nigh, and ſuch as were afarre off. There hath beene a common brotherhood among all, ſince the time that our Lorde Ieſus declared that wee are all adopted, and there is no longer nowe either Iewe or Gal. 3.28 Gentile, as the ſcripture ſpeaketh. Therefore whereas it is ſaid that we are brethren, and that without any difference; let vs conclude, that that equitie which the Iewes were commanded to keepe betweene themſelues, wee ought nowadayes to keepe betweene vs. So then it is not lawfull for vs to bite any creature liuing with vſurie. Let that be marked for one point.

Nowe let vs note, that this worde *vſurie* commeth of the verbe which is here placed, and ſignifieth, *To bite.* It is ſaid, *Thou ſhalt not gnawe with gnawing:* (if we would tranſlate it word for word) or rather, *Thou ſhalt not bite with biting.* And ſo the worde of Gnawing or of Byting, by a borrowed ſpeach is taken for vſurie. And why? Bicauſe it byteth and waſteth a poore man which is charged with it. Neuertheleſſe this is the whole effect, that we muſt not harme our neighbours by taking any profite of them, ſuch profite I meane, as is gotten by their loſſe. And to the intent that no man reſt preciſely vppon theſe wordes, let vs note that when Ezechiel in the 16. Chapter condemneth vſuries, he placeth not there onely this worde, Neſech, which is here put, and ſignifieth byting: but he vſeth another worde which ſignifieth encreaſe: as if he ſayde, all that which is beſide the principall. Nowe for all this God forbiddeth not all manner of gaine, ſo as a man may not make any profite at al. For were it ſo, we muſt lay aſide all Marchandiſe, and wee might not lawfully buy and ſell one with another. But hee forbiddeth the profite or encreaſe which a man getteth by deliuering out his owne goods without his owne loſſe, and yet notwithſtanding will ſucke another mans ſubſtance: and careth not whether he harme his neighbour or no, ſo that he may enriche himſelfe. This is the encreaſe which is condemned by the Prophet Ezechiel.

Againe wee muſt diligently note the other wordes which Moſes vſeth in this place. For he ſayth not, Profite of money by vſurie, but he ſaith of corne, of wine, and of all thinges. Then is it but a meere mockage: if I ſhal ſay: as for mee, I haue not taken any profite for my money by vſurie, but I haue taken for my corne, or for my wine, and that was giuen vnto mee for a recompence. Wee woulde gladly deale ſo ſubtilly, that when we offend, God ſhould not ſee our wickedneſſe. But wee knowe that when Adam couered himſelfe with figge leaues, it profited him little. And thinke wee that any of theſe rouing titles which wee take to colour our wicked practiſes with all will ſtand vs in better ſtead than Adams figge leaues did him? Shall wee be able to bleare the eyes of God, when men themſelues, yea euen ſuch as are ſtarke ſtaring blinde can grope our wickedneſſe? And therefore men are ouer fondly beſotted, if they ſay that vſurie is not but in money: for wee ſee how God hath extended it to all kindes of profite: ſo that if wee take encreaſe for corne or for wine, wee are alwayes vſurers. Moreouer wee muſt not reſt preciſely on the terme, but conſider what is ſignified thereby. Nowe that which is heere called Byting, is verie manifeſt. And why? For wee ſee what Gods meaning is, and the worde alſo it ſelfe ought to ſerue vs for an expoſition. Seeing God treateth here of that which biteth poore men and gnaweth them, he meant to giue vs a prouiſo, that we ſhoulde not gnawe any man by any vnlawfull meanes, nor rake vnto our ſelues other mennes goods. This is the thing which wee haue to beare in minde. But if a man will preciſely preſſe a worde, and not regard what is ſignified thereby, he plaieth but the ſuttle Sophiſter with God. If a man thinke to excuſe himſelfe by ſaying, he calleth not a bargaine vſurie: it is but a mere mockerie. I ſpeake this bicauſe there are ſome which ſtand onely vpon the terme of vſurie, and would hereby eſcape and cleare their caſe: but God for all that quiteth them not, although they be ſo ſuttle and ſo wilie: nay rather he pronounceth that they are as rauening Wolues, to deuour other mens goods. But yet in the meane while all is one to them, ſo they may haue any colour to diſguiſe their matters withall. And that is the very cauſe why men haue found out ſuch diuers contractes in the world, to the intent they might ſet ſome colour vpon their wicked practiſes. I haue tolde you howe that ſome, ſo they take no money, make account to ſcape ſcotfree. And why? One maketh this fooliſh reaſon, That money doeth not beget money. And therefore Ariſtotle in his Ethicks. that it is not lawfull to receiue any thing for it. Now as for mee I will take no money, but a man ſhall giue me ſo much Corne vppon a ſumme of money which I ſhall lend him. And is not corne that whereby a poore man is ſuſtained? And ſhal I goe rob him of that wherewith he ſhoulde bee nouriſhed and ſuſtained? He hath not any thing to eate by reaſon that I haue vſed ſuch crueltie towardes him: and for all that, ſhall I ſay that I am no vſurer? It had bin better that I had taken the money out of his purſe, than ſo to bereaue him of that which ſhoulde ſuſtaine him. And therefore let vs not deceiue our ſelues by the word, as men will ſay in Fraunce; this is no vſurie, or as they call it here in Geneua; this is no renewing. And why? They bring a skinne of Parchment and ſay: ſee how wee couenaunted together. But if the ſunne giue ſo much light vnto it ẏ men may ſee it, ſhal not the eyes of God ſee as farre? And thinke we to dimme Gods eies with the ſhadowe of a leafe of Paper, or of a ſheepes ſkinne, ſo as hee ſhall not ſee one whyt? Men may well vſe ſuch manner of dealing, as they ſhall haue (as I tolde you) ſome faire coulour to ſay: O I haue made ſuch and ſuch a contract, and hee ſhall not bee taken for an vſurer. And why? Becauſe thinges are diſguiſed. But God will condemne vs with all our formalities. For (as I haue tolde you) wee muſt come to the verie point of the matter. Let vs hearken vnto the lawe of God, for that is the rule which cannot deceiue vs: Whatſoeuer wee doe let vs examine it thereby: let vs conſider to what commaundement it is to be referred: namely to this, Thou ſhalt not ſteale. But nowe what is theft in this commaundement? Forſooth all thoſe meanes whereby wee vſe to rake vnto vs other mens goods, whether it be by deceyte or by violence. Therefore if we wil make our profit by ẏ loſſe of another, if ſome will ſcratch aſmuch as they can get, if they will abuſe their credite, if they will ſet their foote on the throates of poore men; if they will play the tyrantes ouer them: if others will faune and flatter, and yet in the meane while haue their nettes laide, and ſometimes runne to an fro, ſometimes lie lurking, & ſo vſe al the meanes they may to pil their neighbours; if we (I ſay) doe behaue our ſelues thus, we are theeues before God. Let vs therefore conclude, that vſurie is an vnlawfull gaine which we take either for the loane of corne or of monie, or of any thing beſides. As for example, if a man lend corne and not monie; yet fayleth he not to be an vſurer: for we ſee that the reaſon which ſome nowe and then alleadge is childiſh; Monie begetteth not monie. For if I make a loane of corne, and when the corne is worth fortie ſhillinges I ſay vnto a man: Well I wil haue three pounde: why doe I ſo? Becauſe I deliuered vnto him my corne which woulde haue yeelded mee ſo much monie: yea but I haue twentie ſhillinges more than it is worth, am I not an vſurer before God? And yet men beare themſelues in hande that this may bee lawefull. But ſuch gainetaking is theeuerie. And as I told you, all the ſuttleties which men vſe ſhall not ſo bleare the eyes of God, but hee will alwayes condemne all them which vſe this dealing for theeues and vſurers. So then let vs take good heede vnto our ſelues, and whereas it is ſaide, That wee ought not to gnawe our neighbour by vſurie: Let vs knowe that our Lorde meant in effect to commaunde vs by theſe wordes, to vſe equitie and vprightneſſe in all our doinges, and then eſpecially, when wee are to lende vnto our neighbours: for loanes which are willingly made are for the neceſſitie of him which boroweth, he hath neede of monie. Well then, if a man which is thus in neede come vnto mee and I feele his diſeaſe, and knowing howe hee ſtandeth in neede of readie monie, will pinche him and ſeeke ſome wicked gaine by him, it is vſurie, howe euer my colouring of it make it to bee otherwiſe taken before men. And what though men haue ſought diligently, and coulde find no cauſe of blame in me? What if they haue ſifted the matter neerelie, & not found me faultie? Yet notwithſtanding God wil not fayle to condemne mee. And why? For in diſguiſing my couenaunt, I haue ſought to make my profite by the loſſe of an other, and that vnder this colour that the man which deſireth ſuccour at my hande is in neede. Ye ſee then howe there needeth no long ſcanning to find, what the vſurie is which God condemneth.

And herein we may ſee the hypocriſie of mē: for oftentimes they will come to aske counſell of this and that, when their owne conſcience might ſatisfie them well enough. It were needfull oftentimes that the Preachers ſhoulde bee marchauntes and skilfull in all the trades of the worlde, that they might bee able to aunſwere them which aske counſell in this thing in particular. They then which knowe themſelues ſo well what is to bee doone in ſuch affayres, why come they to aske counſell of him who is not trayned vp in thoſe dealinges? For wee can ſay well in generall what the thing is. But there are many which haue great ſtore of ſuttleties & ſhifting policies, which none beſides them that are of the ſame trade doe knowe: and theſe wil goe and beguile men, and then beare themſelues on hande that they are cleared before God, if it may bee ſaide vnto them: I finde no euill in ſo doing. No, but hee which ſaith ſo is not acquainted with the wickedneſſe which is hidden, becauſe that as then hee handled the doctrine but in generall. Let vs therefore mark that in effect the point whereunto wee muſt returne, is, that when we lende we muſt not abuſe the neceſſitie of our neighbor and ſay: wel, here haue I a fitte occaſion, I may nowe profite my ſelfe.

But nowe ſome man will demaunde, whether all manner of profite bee forbidden by lending. And it were a thing worth the diſcuſſing. For put the caſe that a man dealeth plainely, & deliuereth his ware at a price and for a time. If the other breake day with him and delaye him of his monie, doubtles he deſerueth to pay the forfeture or the profite which hee withholdeth from him who made the loane. And when the intereſt or gaine thereof is ſet by Iuſtice, ſurely he needeth not to make anie conſcience to take it. There is a man which hath taken my commoditie whereby I muſt liue: for when I haue ſolde to day I buy againe to morrow: and therefore hee that hindereth mee, by withholding from mee the gaine of my commoditie, from maintaining the trade of my ſhoppe, hee doeth no better than cut my throate. For beholde, I grounded my ſelfe vppon him, hee promiſed to pay mee at ſuch a day, that time is paſſed, and I can get nothing of him, hee cares not though I and my familie ſtarue for hunger. Therefore in ſuch caſe, iuſtice ought to prouide for a man: although that nowadayes it diſchargeth his dutie but ſlenderly herein. For it ſeemeth that iuſtice nowadayes fauoreth the caſe of coſiners, and that when they haue ſnatched what they can, and hee that is bitten commeth to recouer that which is reaſon by way of iuſtice; it ſeemeth that he commeth into the court to haue a newe fine ſet vpon his heade. Verilie it is too too wicked a mockerie, when a man ſhall bee ſo deceiued, and yet can haue no remedie for it. So then if a man bee in this wiſe deceiued, it is a cleare caſe hee may take intereſt and gayne, and not be accuſed therefore either before God or before men. Wee may not therefore ſtand (as I tolde you) on the terme or the word.

And moreouer let vs beare in minde that which hath bin alreadie declared, namely that to be excuſed by lawe, is not all that wee ought to ſeeke: for there is a lawe of fiue in ẏ hundred. And this is a generall lawe becauſe Magiſtrates cannot ſet a certaine rate for euerie caſe: but they appoint that a man may take fiue in the hundred. And why? For trafficke ſake, and becauſe this ſtint might not be paſſed. Nowe, may I ſay therefore that it is lawfull to take alwaies fiue in the hundred? No. For if a man which is in neede come vnto mee: and I take gaine of him, what excuſe ſoeuer I bring, I ſhall bee accounted a theefe and an vſurer before God. For he is in neede: my part is to helpe him, and I do not. Ye ſee then what we haue likewiſe to beare in minde.

Nowe withall alſo let vs note on the contrarie ſide, that when we thinke to auoide the worde of vſurie or intereſt, we muſt beware that we fall not into a greater and more outragious fault in the ſight of God. For it may ſo be, that I will lend my monie without ſuch intereſt as the law permitteth me, I wil take nothing for it: but I will put vnto it a tayle which ſhall marre all. A man cōmeth & deſireth me to lend him an hundred crownes, well hee ſhall pawne vnto mee a peece of lande which is worth two hundred. It falleth out that the bonde is forfaited. I will take no more than lawe awardeth mee for the profite of my monie, or I will take nothing at all. But I will force a ſale thereof, and hee ſhall withall ſurrender me his title. And a man will make himſelfe beleeue, that hee may waſhe his handes as an innocent, when hee hath done all this. What (ſaith he)? I lent my monie, and when it was not paide me againe, I bought ſuch a peece of lande. And if you will inquire futher of the matter, Why: it was ſurrendred vnto me. Yea, but was it done of the parties owne free accorde? When I helde the poore man by the throate, and kept him in my pawes, till I made him ſay that worde, That he woulde ſell it vnto mee: and ſhall not God in the meane while bee Iudge betweene vs? So then (as I haue tolde you) it is not for vs to ſtande altogether on the wordes, but wee muſt rather haue an eye vnto the thing, that is to wit, that before God, wee bee not guiltie of anie extortion, that we haue not more than was lawfull for vs, nor raked vnto our ſelues other mens goods. For oftentimes men wil take euen the moſt honeſt titles that be in the world, ſo as yee would thinke there were nothing but holineſſe in them, and yet will thoſe pinch a man much more than the gayne would which a man might lawfully take. And we ſee howe manie inuentions are framed in this behalfe: and which wee cannot at this time handle to the full. And I woulde to God that the practiſe of them were not ſo wel knowen as it is. But what? All they which knowe howe to make their gaine, are great clarks herein: Yea to dally with God, and to find out for themſelues ſhrouding ſheetes, whereas they will neuer haue an eye vnto the cheefe and principall poynt. Yee ſee then what wee haue to beare in mind, namelie that when it is demaunded whether all vſuries bee lawfull, wee muſt not ſticke ſimplie vnto this word Vſurie, but wee muſt conſider what the intent and meaning of God is.

Matt. 7. 12.

But to knowe this the better, wee muſt reſort vnto that equitie which is ſhewed vnto vs in his lawe. Yea and wee heare what our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt telleth vs, namely, that wee muſt not doe vnto others, but what wee would haue them to doe vnto vs. This ſaieth hee is the whole lawe and the Prophetes. No doubt then, but that this forbidding of vſurie is compriſed alſo in theſe wordes, That we doe not vnto others but what wee woulde haue them to doe vnto vs. Nowe then inſteede of asking counſell howe to excuſe our ſelues before God, let euerie man examine the matter thus: Goe to, if I were in this mans caſe, woulde I haue a man pinche mee thus with vſurie? Nay verilie woulde I not: I woulde ſay a man did me wrong. And if I durſt not ſay it, yet I woulde thinke ſo in my heart. Nowe if a man thus condemne himſelfe in his owne proper fact, is it not enough? What neede we then aske either this or that? And moreouer if we obſerue this equitie and vprightneſſe of not dooing vnto an other, ẏ which wee would not haue a man to doe vnto vs, wee ſhall bee abſolued before God: yea and ſo abſolued, that this lawe ſhall not trouble our wittes about the ſcanning of the forme of the woordes thereof; but wee will ſtande ſteadfaſtly vppon this grounde, that God meaneth that euery man ſhoulde haue his due, and that wee ſhould not robbe, ſpoyle, and deuour other mens goods.

And let vs note further that it is not enough for vs, not to haue raked our neighbours goods vnto vs by guyle: but wee muſt knowe that wee are bounde to helpe and ſuccour him. Therefore ſo little leaue haue wee to ſpoyle our neighbour of his goods, that if wee helpe him not in his neede, we are guiltie of theft before God. If I ſay, Oh I haue deceiued no man, it ſhal bee replyed againſt mee before GOD, that I haue. For if I haue wherewith to helpe a man and I will not diſburſe one pennie, but leaue my Neighbour in extreeme neede when I haue the meane to ſuccour him; doubtles I am taken for a theefe before God.

And againe let vs note, that vſuries ſometime are more to bee condemned in a ſmal profite, than in a great. This I ſay to the intent that men ſhoulde not ſeeke fooliſhe cloakinges of their faultes. For that which I ſay might ſeeme ſtraunge at the firſt bluſhe. What? And ſhall a man thinke better of a ſtrong theefe, than of a ſmall pelting theefe? I woulde haue no contention about the worde: but I ſay there is greater wickednes ſhewed ſometimes in the reaping of ſmal profit, thã in a great gaine. And why? For there may be a rich man which is no neceſſitie, but yet notwithſtanding he ſtandeth in need of readie monie, as there are manie which haue wheron to liue, but they would always encreaſe their ſtocke. Such a man woulde buy a certaine peece of Lande, which woulde ſtande him in good ſteade: not that neceſſitie conſtrayneth him, but for a deſire hee hath to growe ſtill richer and richer. Nowe one lendeth him a Thouſande crownes, the profite of this ſumme will bee much greater, than the profite of foure Florens, which a man lendeth vnto an other. Yea but to whome is this latter monie lent? To a poore man which hath ſmal children, & hath not a morſel of bread to put into their mouthes. Nowe if for the loane of theſe foure Florens, a man will haue one, and the poore man muſt make readie yͤ monie at the end of one moneth or twayne, this vſurie or Returne is is worſe thã yͤ other. For he returneth his mony ouer ſoone. I graunt it is a leauing of the olde ſkinne ſtill behinde: but where ſhall a man finde a newe in the meane time? Yee ſee then howe this ſmal gaine is more dammageable than ſome great gaine. For why? It pincheth the poore man much more than if hee ſhoulde take a verie great gaine of an other which is able to beare it, and is not pinched in deede ſo to the quicke by it.

Nowe for concluſion, let vs knowe that God forbiddeth vs in this place to rake vnto our ſelues other mens goods by anie vnlawefull meanes, by vniuſt dealing or by crueltie. And we muſt not here bring our ſuttleties to excuſe our vſuries and our ſnatching. For our Lord reſteth alwayes on the ſubſtaunce in that hee commandeth that none ſhoulde bee pinched, and that the profites which wee take ſhoulde not be taxes and impoſtes to ſucke the bloude of poore men, and to gnawe their ſubſtaunce euen to the bones of them. And it is expreſſely ſayde; To the intent that the Lorde thy God may bleſſe thee, and that thou maiſt proſper in the Lande whither thou goeſt to poſſeſſe it. Hereby our Lorde meant to withdrawe vs from all vnlawfull meanes of heaping vp of riches. As if hee ſhould ſay yͭ his bleſſing ſhal auaile vs more than all the prouiſion which wee can make; and that al the payne which wee take to inrich ourſelues, ſhall not ſerue vs to ſo great purpoſe, as if wee were bleſſed of him. For hee will make vs to proſper, and hee is riche enough to giue vnto vs wherewithall to mayntaine vs. Let vs therefore learne, that our Lorde meant here to reprooue the vnbeleefe of men, in that they ſo diſtruſt him, and thinke that the earth ſhall fayle them. And thereuppon euerie man concludeth thus: I muſt vſe ſuch a meane, I muſt practiſe ſuch a feate, I muſt looke vnto ſuch a buſineſſe; or otherwiſe I ſhall bee behinde hand in all thinges, I ſhall but pine away, I ſhall not get halfe my liuing, if I proceede not in this manner. Therefore when wee haue ſuch a diſtruſt, that is the verie cauſe why wee vſe ſuch wicked trades. Wee muſt therefore vtterly forſake al ſuch things. If wee will haue GOD to bleſſe vs, let vs attempt nothing, but what is agreeable vnto his will, and what hee permitteth vs. If wee doe ſo; let vs aſſure our ſelues that God will make vs to proſper, and that his bleſſing ſhall ſtande vs in better ſteade than all that euer wee are able to get by vnlawefull meanes. As wee ſee likewiſe howe his curſe is vppon all thoſe which giue themſelues ouer vnto ſpoyling, and vſurie, and other ſuch wicked trades. Wee ſee into what an horrible confuſion they are brought, when they graunt vnto themſelues ſuch lawleſſe libertie, as ſhalbe farther declared hereafter.

Nowe let vs kneele downe in the preſence of our good God with acknowledgement of our faultes, praying him to grant vs the grace to be ſo dedicated vnto him by his holy ſpirite, that when wee come to preſent our ſelues vnto his ſeruice, wee may offer vnto him pure ſacrifices & ſuch as he may accept of. And although there be always many ſpottes & ſtaines in them, that he notwithſtanding wil not impute them vnto vs: and that in the meane time hee will ſo correct them, as wee may tend vnto that perfection to the which he calleth vs, and whether we open our mouth to call vppon him, or beſtowe of our goods in way of almes, that we may do it without any ſiniſter affection, & endeuour ſo to diſpoſe that which he hath put into our handes, yͭ we may be found faithful ſtewards when we ſhal come at the later day to giue vp our account vnto him, & generaly that we may ſo liue one with another, as that there may bee an vpright brotherly dealing among vs, that euery one endeuour ſo to liue, & ſo ſeeke after his own profit, as he grieue not his neighbors, but rather yͭ euery man may be holpen & ſuccoured by vs as much as is poſſible: & that thereby wee may learne to ſhewe that we are the children of God, & that he is our father when wee ſhall ſeeke in this ſort to maintaine the brotherhood wherein he hath ioyned vs togither. That it may pleaſe him to grant this grace, not onely vnto vs, but alſo vnto all people and nations of the earth, &c.

On Wedneſday the xxix. of Ianuarie, 1556.

The Cxxxv. Sermon, which is the ſixth vpon the three & twentith Chapter.

20 Thou maieſt, &c.

21 When thou voweſt a vowe vnto the Lorde thy God, thou ſhalt not ſlacke to performe it: for the Lorde thy God will require it of thee, and ſo there ſhall be ſinne in thee.

22 But if thou abſteyneſt from vowing, it ſhall not bee anie ſinne vnto thee.

23 Thou ſhalt keepe and performe that which is gone out of thy lippes, as thou haſt vowed it willinglie vnto the Lorde thy God, and as thou haſt ſpoken it with thy mouth.

IT was declared briefly yeſterday, that if the promiſe which is here contayned were printed well in our heartes, men would be contēted to get their liuing otherwiſe than by ſuch meanes as God condemneth. For it is nothing elſe but our vnbeleefe which prouoketh vs to vſe deceite and other harme doing. And that is the cauſe alſo why God meaning to bridle vs, maketh mention of this promiſe: Feare not that I will caſt thee off, or that I will forſake thee. And this is it whereunto the Apoſtle likewiſe Ioſ.1.5. Hebr.13.5. leadeth vs in the Epiſtle to the Hebrewes, where hee intendeth to correct all manner of couetouſneſſe. And therefore let vs beare well in minde, that if wee wil liue with our neighbours in all vprightneſſe and equitie, wee muſt alwayes ſet before our eyes this bleſſing of God, to wit, that becauſe hee claimeth vnto him ſelfe the Charge of ſuſteyning vs in this worlde, euerie of vs ought to haue an eye vnto him, and to depende vppon his prouidence. And therefore when wee trauell for our liuing, let vs vſe ſuch meanes as God hath graunted vnto vs. And if we thinke to inrich our ſelues any way wee care not how, whether it bee by hooke or by crooke; let vs conſider on the contrary ſide, that if God bereaue vs of his bleſſing, we may well do what we can; but what will bee the iſſue thereof? Verily all muſt needes ſlippe away like water, and we muſt goe backewarde. And albeit God ſuffer a man for a time to increaſe his wealth beyonde meaſure; yet ſhall that bee turned in the end into a woe, both for him and for his childrē. And therfore let vs not be intiſed by ſuch bayts. When wee ſee that manie through pilling and polling of others, doe profit themſelues greatly and heape together much wealth; let not that mooue vs to enuie them. And why? Becauſe the bleſſing of God is much more worth than all the riches in the worlde. And that is promiſed to none but vnto them which holde themſelues within their bounds, and abſteyne from all wicked dealings. And in verie deede if we woulde but open our eyes, wee ſhoulde bee ſufficiently warned of that which is here tolde vs. But what? Euerie man is caried away ſo headlong, that wee conſider not of thoſe thinges which might teach vs plainly euerie day. Beholde there is one which thinketh hee hath ſwallowed vp a great part of the worlde, and it woulde abaſh any man to ſee how ſoudenly hee is conſumed & brought to nothing. God in ſo doing doth ſhew vs as it were with his finger, howe hee curſeth mens couetouſneſſe, extortion, and ſuch like thinges, and yet wee haue no regarde of them. Manie complaine and ſay: Oh beholde we had thought to haue aduanced our ſelues, and in ÿ meane time wee bee falne behinde hande, yea, and that is becauſe they conſidered not whether they depended ſtill on the goodneſſe of God, or whether they proceeded not any further than hee gaue them leaue.

Therefore let vs learne to fare the better by all thoſe teachinges which God beſtoweth vpon vs. When wee ſee that he curſeth ſuch as ſnatch ſo to themſelues on all ſides, which play the rauening wolues, which haue nothing in them but craft and wilineſſe to circumuent, and to ſnare the ſimpler ſorte: when wee ſee how God vndermineth them and conſumeth them: again when wee behold on the other ſide that he bleſſeth thoſe which walke ſoundly and vprightlie, and that although they haue no great aboundance, yet he fayleth not to nouriſh them and to haue a care of their familie: when wee ſee this, let vs deſire much rather to bee bleſſed in this ſort of our God, than to haue all the meanes in the worlde which are ſo accurſed of him. And in deede, the grace and fauour of God ſhineth forth much clearer when a man hath not much to liue vppon, than when hee hath great reuenewes and a rich trade of Marchandiſe, and monie in his purſe and prouiſion of his owne, both in his garners and in his ſellars. Why ſo?

For if a man be ſo well furniſhed of all thinges, hee maketh this reckening, that God hath no longer neede to helpe him. But when a man muſt liue from hande to mouth, or when hee hath not much to maintaine himſelfe withall, & that at leaſt he might conſume al that he hath in the compaſſe of one yeare: and that yet for all that hee goeth on without diminiſhing, and yet knoweth not whẽce his wealth proceedeth, but that hee is certainelie perſwaded that God hath pitie of him; when hee thus driueth away the time, and at the ende of the yeare acknowledgeth that it was God onely which ſuſteyned him and his; therein (ſay I) there is a much more manifeſt declaration of the goodneſſe of God, and GOD by effect ſheweth vnto vs howe he bleſſeth his, and howe much his bleſſing auaileth.

Nowe withall let vs beare in minde howe it is ſayde here, That God will bleſſe them which vſe no wicked trades, as vſuries, extortions, bryberies: yea, that he will bleſſe them in all things which they put their handes vnto. God in this place ſheweth, that hee wil not bleſſe idleneſſe, but that hee will haue men to doe their indeuour by ſuch meanes as ſhall bee admitted vnto them. Let vs therefore employ our ſelues to doe whatſoeuer our Lorde hath inabled vs; and then may wee looke for his bleſſing. But if wee will bee vnprofitable blockes, wee may not thinke it ſtraunge if hee forſake vs. Why ſo? For wee ſee the condition which hee addeth when hee promiſeth that hee will make vs to proſper: that is, ẏ euerie of vs ſhould offer him ſelfe vnto him, and that hee requireth vs to doe nothing but what wee can. Nowe I graunt that the meanes are not alwayes in mans hande; but yet wee on our part according to our power muſt ſeeke to employe our ſelues to doe well, and not priuiledge our ſelues from all carefulneſſe.

As touching the concluſiõ of this whole matter, it hath beene declared that when God forbade the Iewes all manner of vſurie among thẽſelues, it was to the end that men at theſe daies ſhoulde abſtaine from it, becauſe hee hath knit together the whole worlde in one ſelfeſame bonde. And ſith wee haue beene reconciled by our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt, wee muſt lay aſide all vſuries and ſuch other wicked trades, and not doe otherwiſe vnto anie in the world than we would that other men ſhoulde doe vnto vs. For why? Wee are all neighbours, whether we bee of the ſame countrie or farther off: and of what condition ſoeuer wee be, wee fayle not to bee of that neighbourhood which God hath eſtabliſhed betweene vs. And therefore let vs come to that which is ſaide in the fifteenth Pſalme, that to be citiſens of the Church of GOD, our trading muſt not be by vſurie, or ſuch vnlawful dealings whereby wee ſpoile others of their goods, and gnawe them whom we ought rather to releeue. Briefly, let that teach vs, not to doe any thing vnto others, which we woulde not haue doone vnto our ſelues. For that is in verie deede the effect of all, to the intent that men ſhoulde not vſe anie ſutletie with GOD by cloking any wicked contractes which might be to the dammage and loſſe of other men. And let vs further note diligently that whereof our Lord Ieſus warneth vs; ẏ if we haue the true perfectnes which is required in all the children of God, wee muſt lend & that without hoping for any thing, that is to ſay, we muſt not onely abſtaine from all gaine and increaſe, but if there be a poore man which can neuer be able to quite the good turne we do him with the like, there muſt our liberalitie bee ſhewed. For why? If we looke for recompence, ẏ heathen men do aſmuch. But if we wil haue our ſeruice accepted of god, we muſt hope after no recõpẽce in this world. Thus ye ſee how mẽ ought to liue together. Firſt they muſt abſtaine from al maner of harmedoing, whether it be by deceite or by extortion: and then they muſt endeuor to helpe ſuch as are in neede. And ſo euerie man muſt conſider of his owne abilitie, & as he hath the meanes wherby he may do it, ſo he muſt releeue them which be in neceſſitie and require his helpe. Truely ſuch is the wickednes of men that it requireth this matter to bee treated of euery day, and that men ſhould vſe exhortations to ẏ ſame end, yea & that men ſhould repreſſe ẏ crueltie which is in many: but if we were as ready to learn ẏ which our Lord teacheth vs as we ſhold, we needed not many ſermons & huge volumes to inſtruct vs in this doctrine. For (as I haue tolde you) nature it ſelfe ſheweth what euerie mans duetie is, but becauſe we be deafe of hearing, and are moreouer forepoſſeſſed with ſuch vnbeleefe, that we are of opinion we ſhall neuer haue enough, and that the earth wil ſtil fayle vs: it ſtandeth vs in hande to be exhorted and quickened vp continually. But we muſt not waite vntill men ſpeake vnto vs, euerie man muſt ſtirre vp himſelfe in his owne behalfe, hauing alwayes recourſe to that ſhort leſſon which I haue tolde you.

Matt.7.12.

Luk.6.35.

Now Moſes addeth, That when a man hath vowed any thing vnto God, he muſt performe it, or elſe it ſhall bee imputed vnto him for ſinne. But therewithall he ſaith, how that if a man abſtaine from vowing and vow not at all, he committeth no euill; ſo as God will not binde men thereto, but it is enough if they accompliſhe their vowes: and that if they wil vowe nothing, he will not charge them for it. Nowe let vs note that whereas mention is made heere of vowes, it is not meant indifferently of any thing which a man ſhall liſt to promiſe at randon and without diſcretion. For it is ſaide, When thou voweſt a vowe vnto the Lorde thy GOD. We muſt therefore haue an eye vnto the partie with whom wee haue to deale in making a vow, that is, vnto God. So then let vs note that all vowes are to be made with ſuch reuerence, that men muſt iudge wiſely what is good and what is ill. As in very deed if I promiſe any thing vnto a man, I wil haue this conſideratiõ with my ſelf, to thinke whether he wil accept of it or no. Will I promiſe vnto a man by way of mockerie that which ſhall not pleaſe him, and without knowing how he will take it? No, I will beare him ſo

much reuerence as to knowe his will whether hee liketh of ſuch a thing or no. Therefore if we ſhoulde enterpriſe to vowe vnto God whatſoeuer wee thinke good, without making a further enquirie what hee liketh of: were it not a diminiſhing of his authoritie? Yes verilie. For wee make lighter account of him than of a mortall creature. So then, that wee may fare the better by this doctrine of Moſes, wee muſt lay this mayne grounde, namely that when hee ſpeaketh of vowes, he meaneth not whatſoeuer mẽ ſhall fancie, but that which is good and lawefull to vowe, and that which God liketh of. And in verie deede vowes are a part of ẏ ſeruice of God. For when wee vowe anie thing vnto him, it is to honour him and to do him homage. We muſt haue an eye vnto the meaning of a vowe. Nowe the meaning thereof is nothing elſe, but to put vs in minde that wee owe all thinges vnto God. And although all of vs ſhould inforce our ſelues to giue him more than is poſſible for vs to doe, yet we cannot yeeld vnto him the hundreth part of that which we owe: neuertheleſſe when wee giue him any thing, we witnes thereby that wee are bound and beholding vnto him: and thereupon vowes are made whereby a man declareth this, that hee doeth offer vnto God all that which hee hath giuen him, as if hee ſhoulde ſay: Lorde I yeelde vppe all vnto thee. And this is a reknowledging of his benefites which I make vnto him, as when a man is to pay a yearely Rent, he acknowledgeth thereby that the Lande which hee holdeth is his Lords. Euen ſo when a man offereth a vowe vnto God, hee doeth it to acknowledge that all that euer hee hath hee holdeth of God, which thing hee alſo proteſteth by a viſible ſigne. But nowe let vs conſider whether God will bee ſerued after the luſt of men, or according vnto his owne wil? Doubtleſſe hee will bee ſerued in ſuch wiſe as hee himſelfe commaundeth. For hee ſayth that it is as the ſinne of witchcraft, when men of themſelues attempt to doe anie thing, and will needes ſhroude themſelues vnder the fayre ti-
1.Sa.15.23. tle of Deuotion. It is no deuotion (ſaith hee) but it is all one as if you were witches and cõiurers, and did put your truſt in your coniuringes and in your charmes, and therefore I like of nothing which you doe, but I condemne it. Therefore ſeeing wee heare that God will not bee ſerued of vs, but in ſuch manner as hee by his worde teacheth vs. And ſith hee ſayth
1.Sa.15.22. in expreſſe tearmes, That obedience is better than ſacrifice: Let vs keep vs within our bounds, that wee vowe not vnto him whatſoeuer commeth into our brayne. For why? That is diſalowed of him. Therefore this worde is well to be weighed, When thou voweſt vnto the Lord thy God.

And ſecondly wee muſt conſider of the end which wee haue named. For it is not enough that a thing bee good, but it muſt alſo bee doone to a good purpoſe and of an vpright and ſyncere meaning: and ſo wee muſt conſider what the vowes are which God alloweth. The vowes which were made in the lawe, were as ſolemne thankſgiuinges. When a man was ſicke, he vowed that if God woulde giue him his health, hee woulde come into the Temple and offer ſacrifice. And why woulde hee doe ſo? Euen to confeſſe that he held his health of God, and that he acknowledged him for his father, becauſe he had deliuered him from his ſickeneſſe. When a man went out to warre hee made one vowe or other, and when he was to make anie daungerous voyage he did the like. We ſee the example of Iacob, howe he ſaith that hee vowed vnto GOD, that if he brought him backe into the countrie where he was borne, into the Lande which hee had promiſed him for an inheritaunce, he would giue him the tenth part of all his goods, hee would make him an offring thereof. What ment Iacob heereby, but to confirme vnto himſelfe, that although he went as a poore fugitiue perſon which was chaſed out of his fathers houſe to go into a ſtrange & vnknowen countrie and had death alwayes before his eyes, hee was notwithſtanding inheritour of the Lande of Chanaan, and that God woulde bring him thither againe? His meaning was therfore to confirme himſelfe in that thihg, becauſe he had alreadie the promiſe therof warranted vnto him by the bleſſing of his father Iſaac. But to bee the more aſſured of it in his heart, he added this thankſgiuing, as if he had alreadie ſeene the thing accompliſhed and euen preſent before his eyes: my God I hope ẏ thou wilt bring me home ſafe and ſound. It ſeemeth in deede that I am nowe put off from all thinges, and that I ſhall liue no longer in this countrie: Yet my God ſeeing thou haſt made me a promiſe, I will hope that thou wilt ſo conduct me, that I ſhall returne againe into this lande; and therefore I nowe acknowledge this benefit, and promiſe to offer vnto thee the tenth of all that euer thou ſhalt giue vnto me. Yee ſee how this example doeth ſufficientlie declare vnto vs the intent and meaning of thoſe vowes which were made in the time of the Lawe: that is to wit, that they ſerued for prayſes and thankſgiuings vnto God, and ſo by this meanes they were (as I tolde you) an acknowledging of his benefites, or a kinde of homage which was done vnto him.

Nowe hereby wee may gather, that thoſe vowes which men make without iudgement, & without aduiſement taken wnat pleaſeth God, and what hee accepteth; are not onely vaine, but alſo corruptinges of his ſeruice euerichone of them. For men doe falſely abuſe the name of God, when they vowe they knowe not howe or wherefore. And that it is ſo, experience teacheth vs by many examples. But wee muſt holde vs vnto that reaſon which hath beene alreadie alleadged, namely that becauſe vowes pertayne vnto the ſeruice of God, if wee make them at randon and without ſuch ſobrietie as to ſay we will obey GOD in them, we make a foule and filthie medlie of that which we ought to keepe pure and cleane. There is then a defiling of Gods ſeruice, and a kinde of robbing of him of his honour committed in ſo dong. And herein wee ſee howe blunt witted the Papiſtes are. For to prooue their vowes,they take a text all to broken, as if a man woulde take a clauſe onely of an Indenture or ſuch like writing, and cancell all the reſt, and were not that a manifeſt falſhoode? The Papiſtes doe no better. When they reade this word Vowe, O it followeth then that wee muſt performe vnto G O D all the vowes which wee haue made. Is that true? Nay wee muſt firſt knowe whether they be lawful or no? They which ſhould haue murdered Saint Paul and had conſpired together by a ſolemne agreement, did not they make a vowe? But who will ſay nowe that they are bounde by their vowe, and that God liketh Act.23.12. of it? They make a ſolemne vowe not to eate nor drinke, vntill they haue put Saint Paul to death. Truely this is all one as if they would make God a companion of their murder. See what a diueliſhe agreement is made, and they confirme it by and by with a ſolemne vow. Yea but if our wittes be ſetled, we will condemne all ſuch vowes. Nowe then wee ſee when vowes are to bee performed. But Moſes ſaid not without cauſe, When thou doeſt vowe a vowe to the Lorde thy God, appointing God in this place for the partie which accepteth that which ſhall bee preſented and offered vnto him: for without that, all ſhall bee of no value and of no effect.

But nowe what do the Papiſts in their vowes? Firſt they take vnto themſelues ſome trifling toy or other, and thereuppon binde themſelues vnto God: and they beare themſelues in hande, that hee is much beholding vnto them, and that they deſerued ſome recompence of ouerplus at his handes. One voweth a pilgrimage to ſuch a Saint, an other maketh a ninedayes vowe, an other voweth to eate no fleſhe on ſuch a day, or to faſt ſuch a feaſtes euen. Nowe let vs conſider whether God liketh of anie of al theſe thinges. Doubtleſſe hee doeth not. For as for going on pilgrimage, it is not onely a kinde of Iewiſhneſſe, but it is alſo a wicked corruption. And although vnder the lawe, it was Gods will to haue one Temple to the which men ſhoulde reſorte to worſhippe him: yet it is nowe aboliſhed. Nowe if the place which GOD had choſen, which was ordeyned by his owne mouth is no longer in force, but wee muſt call vppon God eueriwhere throughout the whole worlde, without going either vnto Mount Sion, or to any other place which men ſhall chooſe: I pray you howe may men of their owne brayne make ſuch holy places? That is to ſay; howe may they according to their owne fancie hallowe Rome, or Saint Iames of Compoſtella, or I knowe not what? And ſecondly for eating of fleſhe on ſuch or ſuch a day, we know it is mere ſuperſtition.

Seeing our Lorde hath ordeyned that men ſhoulde feede on all meates ſoberlie without any queſtioning concerning this meate or that meate; as though one meate were vncleane in compariſon of an other, and that whoſoeuer doeth otherwiſe, ſerueth the diuell: a man may well alledge his deuotion, but out of all doubt the diuell ſettes him a worke, and hee muſt pay him his wages. Aſmuch may bee ſaide of all the other pelting baggage, which the Papiſtes vſe when they faſt. And ſo wee ſee that theſe things are not vowed vnto God, and that although his name bee therein pretended, yet hee will neuertheleſſe diſalowe of all. For why? None of it is ruled by his worde. Againe the Papiſtes vowe that which is not in them to performe, as the Monkes and the Prieſtes vowe perpetuall chaſtitie, as they ſay. Nowe I graunt indeede that all men owe chaſtitie vnto G O D: but this chaſtitie is not an abſteyning from marriage: but the leading of an honeſt life by keeping himſelfe vndefiled in the ſtate wherein he is: but among the Papiſtes there is no other chaſtitie, but the abſtayning from marriage. They vowe this vow vnto God; but is it in them to performe it? Nay it is a diueliſhe arrogancie. But if a man haue the gift of continencie, hee muſt vſe it with all humilitie, committing himſelfe alwayes into the hande of G O D, knowing that whatſoeuer God hath giuen vnto him to day, he muſt be fayne to continue it vnto him to morrow, or elſe al wil ſlip away like water in a minute of an hour. And further we know not how God will diſpoſe of vs in this behalfe. Againe, it is not all one to abſtaine from marriage, and to abſtayne from a thing which God hath not permitted vnto vs. A man may haue excellent vertues, as if hee were an Angell of heauen, and yet marrie for all that. God calleth him thereunto, hee hath libertie to vſe marriage for a remedie, therefore let him vſe it. But howſoeuer the worlde goe, let vs beare in minde that which our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt ſayth: namely, that the gift of continencie is not giuen Matt.19.11. vnto all. And S.Paul as a faithful interpreter of that which his maiſter had ſaide, warneth euerie man to walke accordingly as hee is called. 1.Cor.7.17. Therefore it is a diueliſhe arrogancie in a man, to preſume that hee hath in him ſelfe and as it were in his owne ſleeue the power of abſteyning from marriage. And if hee make a vowe thereof, it is all one as if hee did openlie defie G O D, and ſay, hee paſſeth not for him. Wee ought to offer vnto G O D. But of what? Of the benefites which hee hath beſtowed vppon vs (as I tolde you.) Nowe wee knowe not whether hee will graunt vnto vs the benefite of abſtayning from marriage for all our life time, or no. And howe then can wee promiſe that vnto him, which wee haue not receyued? For wee muſt alwayes make account to ſay: Lorde I offer vnto thee that which thou haſt giuen mee. Euerie man therefore muſt haue an eye vnto himſelfe, and to his owne abilitie. Moreouer when a Fryer voweth pouertie, is it not a notable mockerie? Some of them vowe pouertie: but after what manner? Forſooth they will ſticke to their bagge and wallet, they will haue a common gathering, they will be as bloud hounds to ſmell out the beſt collections, they will conuey other mens goods vnto thēſelues from all ſides. Therefore they mock God euen to his face, when they vowe pouertie, and that is to doe nothing but to waxe greaſie and fat at all other mens coſtes. Others goe and lurke in a ſtie, as theſe monkes doe, who are wel landed and rented, and whereas they be readie to burſt with eating & drinking, yet for all that they vowe pouertie. And doth not this pouertie pleaſe God well thinke yee? Nay, what is to dalie plainely with God if this bee not? Laſtly they vowe obedience. And to whome? To an Abbot or to a Prior. But in the meane while they will be priuiledged from all obedience of God and men, I meane from that which apperteyneth to anie rule of gouernment. Ye ſee how God hath put children in ſubiection vnder fathers and mothers: but they may ſhake off this yoke vnder ſhadowe of being in monkerie. God hath put men in ſubiection vnder Magiſtrates, and vnder ſuch as haue the ſword of iuſtice: and a Monke will exempt himſelfe from all this. It muſt bee lawfull for him to breake all the bonds and liſtes which God hath ſet, vnder colour of forging in his owne ſhoppe a newe obedience whereof God in no reſpect liketh. Wee ſee then howe the papiſtes generally and particularlie mocke God with all vowes which they make, & not only mocke him, but defie him; and by going ſo cleane croſſe againſt him, do pul his vengeance vppon their heades. Therefore it is too groſſe a beaſtlineſſe when a man will come and wreſt theſe places of ſcripture, to prooue that all vowes muſt bee performed without diſcretion. For firſt wee muſt knowe what wee are able to vowe vnto God, whether hee will accept our vowes, and whether they ſhall bee pleaſing vnto him or no? And therewithall (as I told you) the intent and meaning muſt bee looked vnto. For if wee vowe a thing vnto G O D which in it ſelfe is good: yet if the intent bee wicked, the vowe is corrupt and naught. For example: Wee haue alreadie alleadged howe Iacob vowed an offering vnto G O D of the tenth part of his goods: a man may doe the like and yet doe it not as Iacob did: for hee is not ledde with the ſame ſpirite. Hee doeth it to merite or for I knowe not what other imagination which hee hath conceyued, and not of purpoſe to render thankes vnto God after the example of Iacob. The intent therefore and meaning muſt heere bee conſidered, and wee muſt aduiſe our ſelues well, for what purpoſe and howe wee vowe vnto G O D: to wit, that wee haue not anie of theſe fooliſhe imaginations of meriting and of binding God vnto vs by doeing this or that: but it muſt bee doone to mooue vs, to render homage vnto G O D, and to proteſt that wee are bounde vnto him for all the benefites which hee hath beſtowed vppon vs: And that although wee cannot throughlie diſcharge our ſelues for them, yet at the leaſt wee make ſuch open proteſtation of them. Except theſe pointes bee purelie and ſimplie obſerued, doubtleſſe all our vowes ſhall bee reiected of God, although in outward appearaunce they haue no euill at all in them. Thus yee ſee then howe wee muſt vnderſtand this place.

Nowe it is ſaide, *When thou voweſt vnto G O D, acquite thy ſelfe and performe that which thou ſhalte haue pronounced with thyne owne mouth and of thyne owne good will. If thou doeſt not vowe at all, or forbeare to doe it, thou ſhalt not ſinne.* Here wee ſee firſt of all howe God woulde not binde men; but left them at libertie, to the intent they ſhoulde ſerue him of a more franke and free good will. Saint Paul ſaith that G O D loueth him which giueth with a cheerefull affection, that is to ſay, with a minde voide of conſtraint, and of a pure deuotion as men call it. 2.Cor.9.7. For if wee offer any thing vnto God of neceſſitie: as if wee doe an almes beeing conſtrayned thereto, or full ſore againſt our willes: it is reiected of him, as a man ſhall ſee theſe miſerable pinchpennies do, who when they giue an almes doe gnaſhe their teeth at it, and woulde if it were poſſible withholde themſelues from beſtowing of any, and when they open one hande, woulde hold faſt in the other whatſoeuer eſcapeth them. May ſuch offeringes bee acceptable vnto G O D? Doubtles no. Yee ſee then the reaſon why wee ſay nowe that G O D woulde not tie men in any ſtraite bonde, but rather leaue them free vnto themſelues, to the intent hee might bee ſerued with a ſynceere and freehearted affection. And that is the cauſe why Moſes ſaith here expreſſely. *If thou vowe not, it ſhall not be imputed vnto thee for ſinne.*

Nowe if it was ſo in the time of the law, by greater reaſon ought we nowadayes to be freed therefrom. For vowes were then common among the people, and it behooued the people alſo to bee exerciſed in ſuch ceremonies according to the weakeneſſe of that time, when our Lorde Ieſus was not yet come into the worlde. And it was requiſite that the faithfull ſhoulde folowe thoſe figures and ſhadowes which were in that time. And albeit God helde them in, as little children by appointing ſuch ceremonies: Yet notwithſtanding in this behalfe hee layde the bridle on their neckes as men ſay, & meant not to perſwade them to vowe, or to occaſion them to binde themſelues; but left the matter to their owne choyce and libertie. Nowadayes then ſeeing that wee are vnder the Goſpell, where there is no longer anie ſuch bondage as was in the time of the lawe; thinke wee that our Lorde taketh any great pleaſure of it when men vowe, ſo as they thinke they be not deuout enough, except they vowe one thing or other and paſſe others therein? But our Lorde contrariwiſe had much rather that men ſhoulde keep themſelues vnto that which he hath ordeined and followe the common rule in which is al our perfection. Moreouer let vs note, that if anie man thinke to adde any thing to the lawe of God by vowing, hee is to bee condemned for it, although it haue no other euill nor vice in it. For wee are forbidden to adde anie thing vnto that which God hath declared vnto vs. Therefore when we make any vowe, it muſt not bee as if wee woulde giue God ſomething beſides that which he hath required; but it muſt be to keepe vs alwayes vnto his ſeruice. When wee tende vnto this ende, we may ſay: wee belong vnto God, and all that hee hath giuen vnto vs is his ſtill, and it is good reaſon that we ſhould make an acknowledging of it: In deede wee haue not any ſpeciall rule to ſay: I will offer this thing or I will offer that: God leaueth it in our owne choyce. But howeſoeuer the worlde goeth we muſt attempt nothing beyonde that which hee hath permitted vnto vs, and what wee knowe that he requireth of vs by his worde. If men (I ſay) bee not helde with ſuch a bridle, queſtionles whatſoeuer wee vowe is vncleane and diueliſhe, and God diſaduoweth al and condemneth it. So then it is a point worthie to bee obſerued, when our Lorde ſheweth that hee will not lay any great bonde or bondage vppon his, but leaueth them their choyce whether they will vowe or no. But yet for all that, his will is that vowes ſhoulde bee performed if they bee lawefull: For hee ſheweth what is required in them. Will wee knowe whether God like of the vowe which wee make? Wee muſt in the firſt place conſider whether it bee agreeable vnto his will or no; and ſecondly whether that which wee vowe bee in our power; and thirdlie whether that our intent and meaning bee vpright and ordered by a good rule. If all theſe things meete together, Gods will is that we ſhould diſcharge our ſelues vnto him.

Nowe if wee conſider well of thinges, wee ſhall finde that wee haue a generall vowe for our whole life, ſeeing wee are called of God to come and offer our ſelues vnto him in ſacrifice. Therefore if a man knowe what the end of his calling is, hee woulde certaynly bee perſwaded that hee ought to vowe himſelfe vnto God. For hee receiueth vs, hee intertaineth vs, he adopteth vs for his children, on this condition that we ſhould ſerue him in innocencie of liuing. Seeing hee taketh vs on ſuch condition, euerie one of vs muſt bee prepared to offer vp himſelfe vnto him. Nowe I graunt indeede that wee cannot doe it except wee be ſanctified by his holy ſpirite, and the faithfull when they preſent themſelues vnto God, doe it not in any confidence of their owne power, they doe it not to attempt any thing of themſelues or vppon imagination to atteyne thereby vnto anie perfectneſſe, but they doe it, grounding them ſelues firſt of all vppon this, that God accepteth of their good will although it bee weake and vnperfect. And why? Becauſe they haue the forgiueneſſe of their ſinnes promiſed vnto them, and this is therein compriſed, that God will not impute vnto them thoſe thinges which are faultie in their workes. Moreouer they haue a promiſe that God will gouerne them by his holy ſpirite. So then hereuppon euery faithfull man muſt vowe himſelfe vnto God. And nowe hauing ſo vowed our ſelues: Let vs take heede we performe that which wee vowe. For there is a threat added which we muſt obſerue and feare. It ſhall bee imputed vnto thee for ſinne (ſaith God.) Truely if wee were all Paynims, that wee had neuer hearde ſo much as one worde of the lawe, or of the Goſpell, yet ſhoulde wee not bee iuſtified therefore, if wee ſerued not our God. For hee hath placed vs in this worlde to the intent hee might bee glorified in vs. But as for them which are called of him, and which knowe that they ought to dedicate themſelues wholy vnto his obedience, and which haue promiſed to do ſo: they ought to vnderſtande that they are doublie bound: and if they breake that bonde, they are in ſo much greater fault, and a great way leſſe to bee excuſed. Therefore if wee will applie this to our inſtruction, wee muſt knowe that the generall vowe which wee haue all made vnto GOD, is grounded vppon our baptiſme. Seeing that he hath adopted vs for his children, let vs honour him as our father, and ſeeing hee hath chooſe vs vnto him ſelfe, let vs bee giuen indeede vnto his ſeruice; let all our life bee ſubiect vnto his obedience, let vs (I ſay) thinke vppon this.

But nowe touching particular vowes; if a man demaunde whether it bee lawfull to make them among Chriſtians, the anſwere is, that we cannot be too well aduiſed in that behalfe. And therefore the leſſe wee vowe; the better it is alwayes for vs. Truely wee may not condemne al vowes: For ſeeing GOD hath left them at libertie, wee muſt alwayes remember this; that therefore it is lawfull. But howſoeuer the world goe; let vs bee contented to walke euerie one in his calling, and let vs not vſe vowes, I meane, ſo as to binde our ſelues ouer much: for wee ſee our owne weakeneſſe, that when wee ſhoulde walke as God hath commaunded vs, albeit the way be ſhewed vs, yet we ſwarue aſide ſo often, that it is pitifull to beholde, and wee are conſtrayned to crie out with Dauid: Who knoweth his faults? Pſal.19.13. For why? Wee neuer haue ſuch wiſedome as were requiſite, but it befalleth vs to wander and to turne aſide one way or other, ſo as wee ſinne many a time without thinking on it. Therefore if it bee an harde thing for vs to keepe our ſelues in our accuſtomed way by reaſon of the weakeneſſe that is in vs; what ſhould we meane to charge our ſelues yet further with an harder thing, as if wee were well able to ſurmount them al? Ye ſee therefore how we ought to abſtaine from al vowes, and to content vs with this plaine ſimplicitie, to ſay: I ſee what my God hath commaunded mee, I muſt holde my ſelfe thereto without ſtepping any further. But yet notwithſtanding, if wee haue purpoſed to acknowledge any benefite towardes God, let vs take heede that we performe it. For if the promiſes which wee make vnto men muſt be kept; what ſhall bee ſaide of that when we call vpon the name of God, & direct our ſelues vnto him, and that he bee made a partie? In few words therefore, let vs beare in minde vppon this place, that wee muſt bee faithfull and truſtie towardes our God, for hee is ſuch a one on his part, and will neuer breake his promiſe: let vs not miſtruſt that wee ſhall bee deceyued in waiting for any thing from him. And therefore ſith hee hath called vs vnto him, and woulde that we ſhoulde bee bounde vnto him, let euerie one of vs take heed that wee keepe our ſelues ſtedfaſt vnto his ſeruice, and let vs not behaue our ſelues, as wilde horſes which are broken looſe. And whereas it is declared vnto vs, that we are redeemed by the bloud of our Lord Ieſus Chriſt: Let vs knowe that wee are no longer our owne, but his who hath redeemed vs with ſo deere a price. Therefore let vs liue and die vnto him, indeuouring nothing elſe, but to yeelde vnto our G O D the obedience which wee owe vnto him, euen by nature it ſelfe, and that alſo which we haue promiſed vnto him, ſo that wee may purely call vppon his holy name and declare by this meanes that we are his people indeed.

Nowe let vs kneele downe in the preſence of our good G O D with acknowledgement of our faultes, praying him to make vs to feele them more and more, and that feeling them we may be touched with ſuch repentaunce, as to come and ſeeke the remedie of them in him alone, that is, that hee will pardon our faults which are paſt, vntill hee hath wholy reformed vs & clothed vs with his owne righteouſneſſe. And ſo let vs ſay, Almightie G O D and heauenly father, &c.

On Thurſday the xxx. of Ianuarie, 1556.

The Cxxxvj. Sermon which is the ſeuenth vpon the three and twentith Chapter, and the firſt vpon the xxiiii.

24 When thou commeſt into thy neighbours vineyarde, thou maiſt eate grapes at thy pleaſure vntill thou bee ſatisfied, but thou ſhalt put none into thy veſſell.

25 VVhen thou commeſt into thy neighbours corne, thou maiſt plucke the eares with thy hande, but thou ſhalt not put a ſickle into thy Neighbours corne.

The foure and twentith Chapter.

VVHen a man taketh a wife and marrieth her, if it come to paſſe that afterwarde ſhee finde no fauour in his eyes, becauſe he hath found ſome ill fauoured blemiſhe in her: hee ſhall write a bill of diuorcement, and put it in her hand, and ſend her out of his houſe.

2 And when ſhe is departed out of his houſe, and being gone her wayes doeth marie with an other man:

3 If this other alſo hate her and write her a letter of diuorcement, and put it into her hand, or if this latter man which toke her to wife die:

4 Then her firſt husbande which ſent her away, may not take her againe to be his wife after that ſhe is defiled; for that is an abhomination in the ſight of the Lorde: and thou ſhalt not cauſe the lande to ſinne which the Lorde thy God giueth thee to inherite.

ALthoughe Gods will was that euerie man ſhould poſſeſſe hys owne, & ordeined that none ſhold doe wrong vnto anie, yet hee alwaies ſo moderated this extremity of due right, as the poore ſhould bee releeued by the riche. And this gentleneſſe ought alwayes to beare rule among vs, that they which haue aboundaunce, albeit they may vſe it as their owne, yet muſt they not deuour all themſelues, but beſtowe part of it on ſuch as are in neede: and euerie man according to his meaſure and abilitie, muſt put to his helping hande to releeue their penurie. And that which wee haue nowe read tendeth to this purpoſe. For it is ordeyned that euerie man ſhoulde reape his owne Lande, and gather in his owne grapes, and receiue the fruite thereof.

Gods will is not that thinges ſhoulde bee ſet ſoorth to open pray, as if they were made common: but that euerie man ſhoulde poſſeſſe that which hee hath, and enioye it without controlment. And yet hee woulde not that there ſhould be ſuch crueltie as that the poore ſhould not bee any whit at all ſuccoured by the rich. And that is the cauſe why hee ſuffereth them which are hyred to gather in the vintage, to eat of the grapes; and them which are hyred in harueſt worke, to gleane and to gather with their hand the eares of corne, as it were an hand full: and not to carie away their basket full of grapes, or to carie away the corne by whole ſheaues. For that were a kinde of theft. When a workeman which is hyred for the profite of his maiſter, will pilfer away thinges in ſuch maner vnto himſelfe; what vpright dealing doeth hee ſhewe therein? Let vs note then that where as it is ſaid, he that commeth into the vineyard, may eate of the grapes; he that commeth into a feelde of corne, may gather of the eares with his hande; it is not meant ingeneral of all commers in, and paſſers by. For what a thing would it bee, if libertie were graunted to al paſſers by, to eate as many grapes as they woulde? The vintage woulde bee ſoone gathered in: there ſhoulde bee no neede of ſixe weakes labour, euerie man woulde make ſuch a ſpeedie diſpatch, that there woulde bee nothing left to gather in. But it is here expreſſely meant of ſuch as are hyred. And in deede it was not lawfull to enter into an other mans field or vineyeard to ſay: I will goe and eate grapes, I will goe and fill my bellie at an other mans coſt, and when I am wel filled, I will not pay my ſhotte. For if this had beene lawfull, it woulde haue bredde a barbarous confuſion. But our Lorde (as I tolde you) ſpeaketh here of the vintage and harueſt. For herein no man ſuſtained any loſſe. For after that ſuch a lawe was made, hee which had a vineyarde hyred men on condition, that they might eate grapes. And if any likewiſe hired harueſtfolke, hee knewe they might gleane, ſo that they tooke not euerie man his reaphooke to cut him a ſheafe. For this had beene to take tith of the owner of the fielde, and he ſhould haue ſowen for an other. And therefore there was no reaſon in ſuch dealing. But when our Lorde permitteth a reaper to take an handfull of corne, herein there in no extortion; there is no vnrulie dealing vſed.

We ſee then howe in this lawe the poore & the rich are taught their leſſon. For as for the poore, although they ſee that one hath great aboundance of corne, that an other hath great plentie of wine: yet ought they not withſtanding to beare their penurie patiently, and not to runne and ſcratch for other mens goods, as if they were left at ſixe and ſeuen. Yea and that when men giue them ſuch acceſſe, they muſt not repyne at him which is wealthie, to pilfer anie thing ſecretlie from him. As if a man being hired to ſowe a grounde, haue a ſacke of corne diliuered vnto him, and hee ſteale a bagfull of it: verily he committeth a double theft. It had beene better he had cut a purſe or filched away ſome other thing, than ſo to haue deceyued one which put him in truſt. Againe, if the threſhers likewiſe, when a man openeth his barne vnto them, conuey away an other part: If a ſeruaunt which is of ſome houſe, ſteale a thing which hee founde caſt aſide in a corner: theſe filchinges are as bad almoſt as open robberies. For thefts which are committed by ſuch as are houſeholde ſeruauntes, deſerue much greater puniſhment, than thoſe which are committed by ſtraungers. And why? For when a man truſteth one ſo farre as to bring him into his houſe, into his fielde, or into anie other place where his goods are; hee ought to ſhew himſelfe twiſe or thriſe as truſtie and faythfull as hee woulde doe otherwiſe. And if a man do the contrarie, hee offendeth greeuouſly both in the ſight of GOD and of men. So then let vs note, that the poore ought ſo to beholde other mens wealth ſo, that they bee not prouoked with anie couetous deſire to pilfer away, or to ſteale any thing. For why? Seeing God hath beſtowed on them no abundance of welth, they ought to content themſelues with that litle which they haue, and to knowe that it is God which hath poynted out to euerie one his portion in this world, and that he hath not without cauſe ordeyned that euerie man ſhoulde poſſeſſe that which hee hath gotten, or that which is come vnto him by inheritance, or that which hath beene giuen him: in reſpect whereof his will is that there bee a certaine order, ſo as none bee deceyued of their right. Yee ſee then how the poore are taught, That they muſt not bee entiſed to doe that which is euil, although they ſtande in neede of the goods of this worlde. For it ſhall not ſerue them for an excuſe before God, if they alleadge: Why? I ſawe that that man was nothing vnder foote, and as for my ſelfe I was in extreeme neede. No: Our Lorde will not haue men to giue themſelues the bridle ſo farre, but that euerie man ſhould keepe himſelfe within his bonds.

Nowe by the way the richer ſorte are warned to exerciſe gentleneſſe, and not to be ſuch holdefaſtes and ſo miſerable, as to bee greeued if the poore bee releeued by their goods. As for themſelues they liue ſtill in aboundance, they want nothing, yea they haue more than will ſerue their turne: And therefore they ought at leaſtwiſe to vſe ſome ſmall gentleneſſe to the poore; according whereunto it is ſaide in an other place, That when a rich man gathered in his harueſt, hee ſhoulde not gleane afterwarde; but leaue it for the poore people to leaſe and to gather the ſcattered eares; like as if chickens ſhoulde picke vp crummes, after that a man hath eaten his fill. Yee ſee then howe the rich are taught by this lawe, ſo to vſe their aboundaunce, that they defraude not ſuch as are in neede: but ſeeke rather to communicate part of their goods with them: not that they ſhoulde ſet out the mayne heape for him to take which hath neede: but that euerie man ſhould conſider his owne abilitie, and although there

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there bee no certaine lawe, to ſay: Thou ſhalt giue ſo much in almes, yet notwithſtanding, all men muſt knowe, that they are bounde by the worde of God, to releeue their neighbours, and to extende their liberalitie towardes them, as farre as they are able. Thus yee ſee in effect what wee haue to beare in minde vppon this place.

Nowe if this doctrine were well obſerued, thinges woulde go better than they doe. But we ſee nowadayes poore folke giuen to ſuch craft and malicious wilineſſe, as woulde loath a man to ſee it: they are become little better than theeues. A man cannot haue fieldes and vineyardes in the countrie abroade, but they are alwayes deceiued of ſome parte of them, and that in ſuch wiſe, as if they were in the Lande of their enemies. And why? Becauſe the poore diſpence with themſelues, and beleeue that they haue ſome vantage aboue the rich to pilfer away and to take by ſtealth, whatſoeuer they can come by. And what ſay they? O it is of the goods of GOD which wee take. Well then ſeeing it is Gods, it ought to bee accounted holy. Therefore thou robbeſt GOD when thou pilfereſt away an other mans goods: thou goeſt to catch that out of Gods hande, which hee had kept in ſtore for an other. Againe wee ſee what crueltie there is in riche men, howe they woulde faine ſwallowe vp the whole world, howe nothing can ſuffice them. And therefore their wealth oftentimes is not bleſſed of GOD, becauſe it is not in his ſafegarde, nor kept vnder his protection. Wee ſee howe GOD telleth vs, that wee muſt vſe ſuch gentleneſſe towardes our neighbours, as that euerie man muſt employ himſelfe to releeue thoſe which are in neede and neceſſitie. If men woulde doe ſo, doubtleſſe GOD woulde holde their goods vnder his protection, and himſelfe would keepe them; but becauſe rich men vſe rather crueltie than bountifulneſſe towardes their neighbours, it occaſioneth poore men to pilfer away all that they can get: becauſe the rich abuſe their goods in ſuch ſorte, as men ſee. Neuertheleſſe this is not here written in vayne. All ought to followe the leſſon and the warning which is here vſed, to wit, that the poore bee ſomewhat releeued, and that they wrong not the riche, that they robbe them not of their goods, and that when they are hyred, they ſo employ themſelues and beſtowe their labour in ſuch wiſe, that it may be to the profite of the maiſter which payeth them their hyre.

Let vs nowe come vnto that which Moſes addeth touching diuorcementes. Hee ſaith, *That if a man hath married a wife which afterwardes diſpleaſeth him for ſome blemiſhe which ſhee hath, hee may caſt her off, ſo that he giue her a bill of diuorcement. And hauing ſo caſt her off hee may neuer take her againe, if ſhee marrie her ſelfe againe vnto an other.*

Nowe let vs note that this bill which the man gaue in this caſe, was to the credite of the wife, and to the diſcredite of the husbande. For it declared thus much: I haue maried a wife and ſhee diſpleaſeth mee. And why? For ſome blemiſhe which ſhee hath in her bodie, or for ſome qualitie which is in her. The husbande then declared hereby that hee was a faithleſſe and forſworne man. For why? Hee tooke a wife on condition to haue her companie all the time of his life, and nowe hee caſteth her off. See howe through his fault, ſuch an holy bond as marriage is broken. Yea but there was ſome thing amiſſe in her. Oh, but thy ſelfe wouldeſt gladlie bee borne withall. And thy wife was committed vnto thee on that condition, that ſhee ſhoulde bee a part of thine owne perſon: and thou cutteſt thy ſelfe as it were in the midſt. If thine arme bee weake, wilt thou cauſe it to bee cut off at the firſt choppe? If there bee any contagious diſeaſe which might empoyſon the whole bodie, ſurelie thou were better leeſe one member, than thy whole life. But when a finger is ill faſhioned, and a man ſeeth ſomething, which I knowe not howe, is not ſo feate as he coulde wiſhe, muſt hee therefore mangle his bodie? Verilie it were againſt nature. Euen ſo an husbande was not to bee excuſed, when he deliuered in this ſorte ſuch a bill vnto his wife. The thing tended nothing to her diſcredit, but it ſerued rather to ſhewe that ſhee was innocent, and that men ſhoulde knowe that ſhee was not put away either for adulterie, or for anie other lewde deede: but only for yͤ waywardneſſe of the husbande beeing a crooked ſurlie fellowe, and ſuch a one as deſired to haue his luſt ſatisfied. Nowe it is ſaide in the ende, *That when the husbande hath thus diuorced his wife, and ſhee bee maried vnto an other, her firſt husband may not take her againe. For this were an abhomination before the Lorde.* In this lawe wee haue firſt of all to note, that when GOD thus permitted diuorcementes, it was not to diſpence with the thing, to make it lawfull: but becauſe hee meant not (as touching ciuill order of gouernment) to exerciſe any rigour againſt the Iewes. For yet for all this, the lawe of marriage remayned in his full force, and (as it hath beene aboue handled) ciuill order of gouernment is not to preiudice the tenne commaundementes or to chaunge anie thing in them. For in the two Tables GOD hath compriſed a perfect rule of life, and a certaine and infallible rule whereunto wee muſt order our ſelues. Nowe may the rule of ciuill gouernment chaunge anie thing in theſe tenne commaundementes? No. For yee ſee howe wee ought to liue. But the rule of ciuill gouernment is an ayde hereto, not to ſhewe vs any perfection, but to leade vs thereto, to the intent that men might be bridled from ouerflowing their banks too farre, and that the wicked which by their good will woulde not obey, might bee forced by conſtraint.

Yee ſee then whereto the rule of ciuil gouernment ſerueth. But yet for all that, the lawe abideth in his full force. Agayne, in ciuil order there may wel be ſome expreſſing of theſe ten commaundementes, but that is all, it ſheweth no perfection. And this is a point which we ought alwaies diligently to note. For we ſee that as the world is ſhameleſſe, ſo many thinke to bee iuſtified if they can alleage: What? Men charge me with nothing. O they are pettie Angels as they thinke. And yet howeſoeuer the worlde goe, they fayle not to bee diuels. Nay ſome wicked varlet will ſay: What? I am in office, it may well beare mee out. Yea as though they which had neede to correct their owne vices, were iuſtified by puniſhing of others: and as if this might ſerue them for a ſhrowding ſheete to cloake their wickedneſſe with all, ſo as they might ſay they had offended in nothing. And they which ſpeake thus, vnder colour that men diſſemble their wickednes, or not puniſhe them, nor lead them to the gallowes, nor ſhut them vp in dungeons: they take themſelues to bee innocent men. And what a vile ſhameleſneſſe is that? But what for that? The thing is as common as the high way. Againe if they which come like ſwine to the ſupper of our Lord Ieſus Chriſt alleaged to couer their vices: What? I am receiued to the ſupper of the Lord, yea but there are many which come thither which yet are vnworthy. It is vnpoſſible to purge the Church of God ſo, but there ſhall ſtill Matt.13.29. remaine much chaffe among the good corne. Now if a man be receiued to yͤ ſupper of yͤ Lord, becauſe he could not be condemned before men, or happily becauſe men vſe too great patiēce towards him: may this ſerue to leſſen his wickednes? Nay contrarywiſe he encreaſeth his ſinne before God, bicauſe he abuſeth his name ſo falſly, and defileth the table which was hallowed for the children of God. And ought they which are no better than dogges and ſwine, to come nigh it? So then let vs learne that the order and rule of gouernment both concerning earthly Iuſtice, and alſo of the church, is not to ſhew what yͤ perfectnes is which is required. But we muſt alwaies returne to that tryall which is to be made by the lawe of God.

And this is it which our Lord Ieſus Chriſt hath alſo declared vnto vs vpon this place, as wel in yͤ fift chapter of S. Matthew, as alſo in yͤ ninteenth. For there he ſaith expreſly: although a man was ſuffered to diuorce his wife, that it was no lawful thing notwithſtanding ſo to doe. But is God contrary to himſelfe? No. And heerein there is no diuerſitie as I haue told you. For in yͤ two tables of the law, God hath compriſed whatſoeuer is required to perfect holines and righteouſnes. Ye ſee then how men ought to gouerne themſelues, and they cannot be deceiued. Moreouer there is a rule of ciuil gouernment which ſerueth ſomewhat to brydle men, but not to leade them vnto perfection: but to prouide that all things be not brought to vtter confuſion among them. For the rule of ciuill order hath no ſuch regarde of perfection, as the lawe requireth. Yea and God in his law not onely forbiddeth vs yͤ outward act of wickednes, but euen the inward luſt and deſire therof, which cannot be puniſhed by magiſtrats nor earthly Iudges. For it is not knowen. God in his law forbiddeth not onely yͤ very act of fornication or to luſt after another mans wife, and to entiſe hir: but he forbiddeth vs alſo to haue any byluſting, although there be no conſent, or thē will framed thereunto. So that if a man haue but a wantō eye, he is already condemned for a fornicator. If there bee in a man any hatred, any rancor, any euill will, it is condemned for murther before God. Ye ſee then how the Lawe of God is ſpirituall, & that it requireth ſuch a true & perfect obedience, that all the ſences, all the affections, all the thoughts of a man muſt bee agreeable vnto the wil of God: and we muſt be ſo reformed, yͭ being rid of al the corruption of our own nature, we may yeeld our ſelues altogether ſubiect vnto yͭ which God commandeth vs and which he liketh of. Ye ſee what yͤ righteouſnes of the law is. But there is no notice of this inward wickednes vnto men, it cannot be iudged by thē men ſhall not accuſe them, men ſhall not indite them for it, there are no witneſſes in this behalfe but yͤ guiltie conſcience of him which ſinneth, which ſhal prick him and reproue him ſufficiently. And this is as much as all the reſt: nay this is all in all, when a man is thus conuicted in himſelfe. We ſee then how ciuill order and rule of gouernement is diuerſe indeede from the law of God, but yet for al that, there is no contrariety. And therfore this is no excuſe for a mā to bring; nay rather it is an abſurd thing for a man to ſay: What? God puniſhed not diuorcements, it followeth then that he gaue his conſent they ſhould ſo be doone. No: the thing fareth otherwiſe. For marriage muſt hold alwaies in his ful force, both as touching the law of nature, and as touching the will of God, who ordained it, and declared that it ought to remaine inuiolable. But yet for all that, diuorcement is permitted: I meane as touching common order, which is but to brydle men heere belowe, and not to reforme them as the children of God ought to be, which are gouerned by his holy ſpirit. Ye ſee then as touching yͤ firſt point, that albeit God puniſhed not thoſe diuorcemēts which were made without any reaſonable and lawfull cauſe, yet notwithſtanding he alwaies condemned this vnfaithfulneſſe, and meant that mariage ſhould remaine alwayes inuiolable.

And ſo we are warned by this example, not to ſleepe in our ſinnes. Although men reprehend vs not, although we come not in place of Iuſtice to yeeld account of our doings: yet let vs not thinke that we haue eſcaped the hand of God. For wee ſhall haue another reckoning, & a more ſtraitter to make before him. When wee ſhall be ſummoned to his ſeate, we ſhal not be tried guilty by the verdit of men; but the bookes of regiſter ſhall be opened, as it is ſaid in Daniel, and yͤ ſecrets of Dan.7.10. our hearts (as S. Paul ſaith) ſhal thē be bewrayed, 1.Cor.4.5. all ſhall be layde foorth before vs. So then let vs learne to haue alwayes an eye vnto this iudgemēt of God: let vs learne to ſift our ſelues according vnto his law, when we wold know whether our life be well ordered or no: and let vs not be abuſed with yͭ which men thinke or iudge of vs.

In deede we muſt obey common order, but this is not all: it is but one part. If a man bee a tranſgreſſour of ciuill lawes, and ſo become puniſhable before earthly Iudges, hee deſerueth double puniſhment at the hand of God. For firſt there is an euill thought, ſecondly there is a wicked act, and for the third there is an offence and euill example giuen. Behold three wicked things in him which is puniſhable by the ciuill Lawes. For firſt hee hath offended God in his heart, becauſe there is the roote of euill, and againe hee hath doone and committed the act it ſelfe for the ſecond, and for the third there is giuen a publike offence. Thoſe therefore which offende againſt the lawes, are greeuous tranſgreſſours agaynſt God. But although we walke in ſuch ſorte, as men can finde nothing wherefore to blame vs, yet we are not quited as guiltleſſe for all that, except euery one of vs entring into himſelfe haue there the witneſſe of his own conſcie̅ce, that he hath walked ſoundly and vprightly, and finde that as hee hath committed no euill, ſo he hath had no will thereto, yea and that hee was in no ſorte prouoked vnto it. And albeit a man haue withſtoode his wicked concupiſcences and luſtes: Yet neuertheleſſe hee muſt alwayes condemne himſelfe before GOD, and confeſſe with humilitie that hee ſhould bee culpable, except God vſed mercie towards him. For it is not alonely ſayde: Thou ſhalt not commit adulterie, nor theft, nor murder, but: Thou ſhalt haue no wicked deſire. Nowe this ſurmounteth all the abilities which are in vs. It followeth then, that wee haue no other remedie, but to humble our ſelues before GOD, and although hee graunt vs grace to fight agaynſt our wicked affections, yet to confeſſe that they proceede from the weakeneſſe of our owne nature, and that it is through his goodneſſe that wee are abſolued, and not through our owne merites. Thus yee ſee what is to bee borne in minde touching this point.

But nowe let vs treate of the matter of diuorcement. As touching ciuill order, a man was permitted to put away his wife, but ſo, as hee gaue her a bill for a witneſſe of her honeſtie, to the intent that the wife through the crueltie or waywardneſſe of her husband, might not bee diffamed: but that men ſhould be giuen to vnderſtand, that ſhee for her parte ordered her ſelfe honeſtly, and that ſhee was not put away for any fault of hers. Yee ſee what is to bee noted in reſpect of ciuill order. Nowe if a man demaunde whether ſuch maner of diuorcementes bee noweadayes permitted? Let vs conſider of that which our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt ſayeth concerning this matter. Matt.19.8. Was it not forbidden you (ſayeth hee,) becauſe of the heardneſſe of your heartes? Nowe then although ſuch a permiſſion were graunted vnto the Iewes, yet notwithſtanding, the lyke is not giuen vs nowadayes. For the hauing of moe wiues than one was permitted them likewiſe, as wee haue ſeene heeretofore, becauſe it was not puniſhed: and ſhould wee therefore looke nowadayes to haue the like libertie in that behalfe? No. For wee ſee that becauſe God hath reueiled his will more fully vnto vs, than vnto the Iewes, it is good reaſon that wee haue a ſtrayter brydle than they had: yea and the libertie which is giuen vnto vs, ought to binde vs ſo much the more in this behalfe, than were the Iewes. For as concerning ceremonies, and other ſuch like thinges, the Iewes were vnder as ſtraite bondage as none might bee greater. They were loaden with ſuch a burden, as made them to bende and to ſigh vnder it. And for this cauſe it is ſayde, that the lawe bringeth nought elſe but feare. Nowe wee Rom, 8.15. are freed from this ſo heauie yoke, I meane in reſpect of the ceremonies; but as for the reſt, wee are a great deale more bounde to walke according vnto the will of our GOD. So that all theſe diuorcementes and this hauing of moe wiues than one, ought nowadays to be abhorred among Chriſtians, although among the Iewes there was libertie graunted for theſe things, and they remained vnpuniſhed. Let this bee noted touching the rule of ciuill order.

But the principall point is for vs to vnderſtand what is lawfull for vs, and from thence euerie one may gather what his office and duetie is towardes his wife. And the wiues alſo are to bee exhorted to diſchardge themſelues the more faithfully towards their husbandes, when they ſhall knowe vpon what condition they are ioyned together. Nowe as touching the husbandes, our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt ſayeth, that Matt.19.9. if any man forſake his wife, except it bee for fornication, hee is an adulterer, and hee maketh his wife an adultreſſe alſo: he excepteth fornication. Nowe when hee ſayeth that the man is an adulterer, it is becauſe hee hath broken wedlocke. For if hee ſeparate himſelfe from his wife although hee play not the adulterer otherwiſe, yet ſeeing hee hath falſified the fayth which he once plighted, he is conuicted of adultery. The reaſon is, becauſe it is the law of mariage that when a man ioyneth himſelfe vnto a wife, hee taketh her for his companion to liue & to dy withall. If the nature of wedlocke be ſuch that the man and the wife be contracted together to the end to liue & to die together, & that yͤ man ſhould be the head, & the woman yͤ body: the man hath now but the halfe part of his own perſon, and can no more ſeparate himſelfe from his wife, than cut himſelf into two peeces. And yͭ were (as I told you) againſt nature. Now he maketh his wife alſo an adultreſſe: for although the wife haue liberty to take vnto hir a newe partie according vnto ciuil order, yet as touching God, ſhe ought to take no other, but to remaine a widow. For if ſhe go and marry hir ſelfe againe, ſhe is an adultreſſe: and that is yͤ cauſe why S. Paule 1.Cor.7.11. alſo ſaith expreſſe: that if a woman be ſeparated from hir husband, not for adultery (for he meaneth not ſo:) but becauſe the husband cannot brooke his wife, ſhee ſhall remaine a widowe, or reconcile her ſelfe (ſayth hee) vnto her husbande. Yee ſee what the remedy is which Saint Paule giueth. And it is no new remedie which appertayneth to Chriſtians as touching conſcience it hath euer beene. For S. Paul addeth nothing vnto the law of God, nor to that rule which is common vnto all the children of God. But although the Iewes had that cuſtome bicauſe of ye hardnes of their heartes, yet neuertheleſſe if a woman bee put away from hir husband, ſhe ought rather to remaine a wydowe, or to reconcile hirſelfe vnto hir husband, than to marrie againe. For otherwiſe ſhee ſayleth not to bee defyled, as wee ſee by this place. And that were an abhomination before GOD. And if ſhe had patiently wayted to enter into fauour, and to bee coupled agayne to hir firſt husband, ſhee had not beene an adultreſſe. Nowe as touching the man, he committeth double adulterie by diuorſing his wyfe in this order. For, for his owne part, ſeeing hee hath broken wedlocke he is an adulterer: and againe he caſteth off his wife as if hee woulde put her into the ſtewes, hee maketh hir an harlot by giuing of hir leaue to take a newe make: for that is againſt GODS inſtitution, it is againſt the order of marriage which ought to be kept without any gaynſaying.

Nowe heereby wee are taught, that men ought to beare with their Wiues; and although they haue ſome vices and ſome ſtaines in them, notwithſtanding when they ſeeke to correct them, they ought to vſe all gentleneſſe. For why? It is not ynough for a man to keepe his wyfe in his houſe and ſay: Well, I cannot driue thee out, tarie here therefore, and in the meane time hee groyne at hir, he ſpurne hir, he beateth hir, hee vexeth hir, and hee vouchſafeth not to doe the office and duetie of an husband towardes hir. If a man keepe his wyfe by him in ſuch order, it were much better he were diuorced from hir, and that ſhee liued in peace in ſome little corner or other, where ſhe ſhould not ſo languiſh and pine away in ſorrowe all the dayes of hir lyfe. And wee ſee in what ſort our Lorde ſpeaketh hereof by his Prophet Malachie, when he treateth of the matter of hauing moe wiues than one. If thy wife pleaſe thee not, put hir away rather, than ioyne thy ſelfe with many. Not that hee gaue a man leaue to put away his wyfe, but hee ſayeth it were better for a man to put away his wife, than to keepe hir ſo, with griefe and ſorrowe. And he maketh a compariſon betwixt two euilles, of which a man ought to ſhunne the woorſt. Yee ſhall haue ſome man keepe his poore wife, but it ſhall bee for no other ende but to brawle with hir, and to moleſt and vexe hir with all the diſquietinges in the world. Nowe there is no reaſon to the contrarie, but that a poore creature ſhoulde at the leaſt haue peace and quietneſſe. So then (as I haue told you) let this place of the Prophet ſerue to ſhewe vs whereunto wee are bound, that is, that a man put not away his wife by diuorcing of hir. But when wee are commaunded euerie man to keepe his wife (except it bee for adulterie) it is all one as if it were ſayde, that a man muſt bee gentle towardes his wife; and loue hir as his owne fleſh, as Saint Paule warneth vs in another place in the fifth to the Epheſians: and if there bee vices in hir, hee muſt beare with them in ſuch ſort, as there may bee peace and concord maintayned in the houſholde. If men vnderſtoode that they are ſuch debters vnto their wiues, that is to ſay, that marriage requireth a peaceable kinde of life betweene man and wife, ſo as if there bee any thing amiſſe, yet they ought not to bee ouer frowarde therefore, but quiet and patient: wee ſhoulde ſee an other manner of bleſſing in al houſes and families than we doe now ſee. But nowadayes the moſt part of husbandes and wiues are like Dogges and Cattes. For they haue no ſuch regard of their duetie, that if a man bee vexed of his wife, hee will call vppon God and deſire his holy ſpirit to repreſſe his affections, but he falleth rather into worſe and worſe. If a man eſpie any ſpot of wickedneſſe, he defieth his wife by and by thereupon, and caſteth hir off. The Diuell is a ſtickler betweene both, and lyke a wylie Pye in this behalfe, hee knoweth well ynough howe to finde occaſions and meanes to ſeuer that aſunder, which God hath coupled together: but neuertheleſſe wee ſee what a leſſon is giuen vs by our Lord Ieſus Chriſt, to wit, that becauſe the husband is not at libertie to put away his wife for any cauſe, but for fornication; he muſt moderate himſelfe, And that albeit his wife be not altogether perfect, but haue her infirmities, yet he muſt ſeeke to amend them by gentlenes. and howſoeuer hee fare, he muſt take heede that hee ſhew himſelfe gentle, and nouriſh peace and concord with his wife.

Mal.2.16.

And heereuppon let women on their parte bethinke themſelues to acknowledge the fauour which GOD ſheweth them, and to magnifie him for it. Seeing GOD hath vouchſafed them ſuch honour, as to ioyne them to their husbandes who are their heads, let them not perke vp aboue them: but let them enforce themſelues ſo much the more to take paynes in the thinges which are appointed them to ſerue their husbandes in: and let them haue this conſideration to ſay: behold the husband is as it were the head of mankinde, and women are as it were the body. Now ſith God hath ioyned mee vnto an husbande to bee his ayde and companion, I muſt endeuour to pleaſe my husbande in ſuch wiſe, that he haue no cauſe to be grieued by me. He is to beare with me as God hath commaunded him: and ſeeing God hath ſuch a care of me, ought I not to haue the more heedefull eye to gouerne my ſelfe ſo, as I be not a torment and vexation vnto my husband? And if there bee in me any euill qualitie, let mee bee the firſt my ſelfe to correct it, and to fight ſo againſt it, that I bee not forced and conſtrayned otherwiſe to reforme my ſelfe: but let me of my owne goodwil ſeeke to pleaſe my husband, that there may be peace and quietneſſe among vs, and not brawling & fighting as it were betweene diuels. Ye ſee in what ſort euery man ought to haue an eye vnto his dewtie when our GOD ſpeaketh of the pure coniunction which ought to be in marriage, & ſheweth that as touching

ching men, it is by no meanes to be broken.

But nowe let vs paſſe farther in this matter, Matt.19.8. purſuing that which our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt ſaith when hee was asked: And why then did Moſes permit that bill of diuorcement? Hee did it ſaith hee becauſe of the hardneſſe of your heartes: but it was not ſo in the beginning. This is rehearſed in the nineteenth Chapter of ſaint Matthew. Nowe note for one point that our Lorde vpbraideth the Iewes with the hardneſſe of their heartes: and that is to the intent wee ſhould learne to condemne our ſelues, if ciuill order bee not ſo perfect among vs as it ought to bee. When wee ſee that the Church of God may be founde faultie in many thinges, when wee are not reformed according to the order and practiſe of the Apoſtles, when we keepe not that pureneſſe which was in the primatiue Church, when wee ſee howe wee offend in theſe pointes, let euery one of vs ſigh for ſorrowe, and examining our ſelues ſay: Alas we ought to haue this thing, wee ought to haue that, but we are farre from hauing of them. Wee ſee what order hath beene heeretofore. Firſt as touching the almes of the Church, there were Deacons in that behalfe. We ſee how liberall euery man ſhewed himſelfe, ſo as there was no neceſſitie: there was but one minde and one affection, ſo as the faithfull were but one. Wee ſee alſo touching the ſupper of our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt, that it was adminiſtred in ſuch wiſe, that if there were any man of a looſe and diſſolute life he was put from it. And excommunication was of an other force than it is, & men vſed it after an other faſhion than they do nowadaies. And likewiſe as touching Baptiſme, it was miniſtred with ſuch reuerence, that euery man was attentiue vnto it, the congregation was aſſembled together, as if one were to receiue an holy freedomſhip, as in very deede it is. But among vs none of theſe things are ſo, as they ſhould be. After the ſtate of ciuill gouernment, faults are not halfe puniſhed therein. And if there be any puniſhments, they are but playes and paſtimes as a man may ſay. What ought wee to call to minde heereupon, when we ſee that both generally and particularly, things are not ſo well ordered as they ought to bee? Surely euery man ought to conſider and to ſay: alas it is becauſe of the hardneſſe of our hearts, that we can haue no ſuch order as ought to be among the children of God, that things are ſo waſted, and that no remedie can be had in this behalfe. What is the cauſe heereof? To whom muſt the fault heereof be imputed? To all of vs. For wee haue an hard heart. Wheras if we were ſo pliable to be taught, as that we could ſuffer our ſelues to be gouerned according to that which God commaundeth vs, Lawes ſhould bee better obſerued, Magiſtrates ſhould not bee ſo hindered, nor finde it ſuch an hardneſſe to do their duetie: we ſhould ſee eſpecially the Church of God (wherein nowe many ſhamefull things are,) better ordered. And therfore in ſtead of this, that hypocrits cloake themſelues with this ſhrouding ſheete to ſay: What? Men finde no fault with me, and doe any thinke that I am culpable before God? In place of this (ſay I) let vs learne to confeſſe, that our ſelues are the cauſe why thinges are not ſo well ordered as they ſhould bee, it proceedeth from the hardneſſe of our heart, which can bee made pliable by no meanes.

Nowe wee muſt farther note how our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt leadeth vs to the firſt inſtitution of GOD, to ſhew what is the true nature and condition of marriage. It was not ſo (ſayeth hee) in the beginning. Heereby hee declareth that as GOD created man and woman and was himſelfe the authour of marriage, ſo hee deliuered a Lawe wherein nothing muſt be chaunged: and as ſoone as men ſwarue from it, what excuſe ſoeuer they take, what colour ſoeuer they haue as touching men, yet fayle they not to forge a thing contrary vnto the inſtitution of GOD, which ought to ſuffice vs. And therefore if husbandes and wiues will diſcharge themſelues of their dewtie, they muſt looke farther than that which is before their eyes. For things are too confuſedly diſordered in this worlde. Therefore if men hang altogether vppon examples, euery man will drawe his neighbour vnto vtter deſtruction. But let them haue an eye vnto that which GOD hath ordayned. Gen.2.18. Hee ſayde: It is not good for man to bee alone, let vs make him an helpe like vnto himſelfe. Seeing it is ſo, let vs note that all thoſe which are called vnto mariage, that is to ſay, ſuch as are not priuileaged to bee without it, and which feele that God hath not giuen them the gift of continencie to abſtayne from marriage; let all thoſe knowe, that of a truth GOD calleth them and as it were, leadeth them by the hande vnto this eſtate. And if they bee well perſwaded of this, doubtleſſe they will goe with a franke and free goodwill; euery husband will endeuour to diſcharge himſelfe of his dewtie with all diligence, when hee ſhall knowe howe hee is bound, not onely vnto his wife, but alſo vnto GOD. The wife alſo on hir parte will conſider, that ſeeing ſhee ought to bee an ayde vnto her husbande, ſhee muſt not bee as a diuell to hinder and to trouble him. For that were a peruerting of the order of nature. But ſhee will thus bethinke her ſelfe: Beholde, GOD with his owne holy mouth pronounced, when hee ſpake of creating the woman: Let vs make an helpe for man. Hee ſayde not, Let vs make a woman for him; but an helpe. Nowe ſeeing that the woman ought to bee an helpe and ayde vnto her husbande, it is greate reaſon that ſhee imploy her ſelfe to doe her dewtie therein: yea and that of a franke and free goodwill; knowing that it is not vnto her husbande that ſhee is bounde but vnto God who ordayned ſuch a coniunction in the beginning. Thus yee ſee what we haue to obſerue.

And agayne note wee that when it is ſayde, That a man ſhall forſake father and mother Gen.2.24. and cleaue vnto his wife; it is to magnifie ſo much the more that holy bond which was ordayned by GOD. For can a man renounce his father and mother? Doubtleſſe no. Nowe much leſſe may hee renounce his wife. If it bee not lawfull for a childe to renounce his father and mother, an husband ſhall bee leſſe to bee excuſed for ſeparating himſelfe from his wyfe. For why? God hath ſo pronounced that albeit a childe bee ſpecially bound to his father and mother: yet there is a ſtraiter bonde of the husband towardes the wife. Therefore if an husband bethinke himſelfe of this, he ſhall not be ſo eaſily tempted to forſake his wife, as a childe to exempt himſelf from ẏ ſubiection of his father. And the wife likewiſe on her part ſhall know to ſay: behold my husband is my head, he hath authoritie ouer me, & God hath bound me to him, and ſhall I then ſeparate my ſelfe from, either through an headie will, or affection, or through ſome other frowardneſſe? Ye ſee how a wife ſhal be kept in the obedience of her husband when ſhe ſhall thinke thus: ſeeing God hath allotted vnto me ſuch a condition that I muſt be ſubiect to my husband, I muſt not hoyſt vp my head like a wilde hinde and ſhake off the yoke. For I ſhal not diſobey a mortal man, I ſhal not offende him onely; in as much as I breake the faith wherein I promiſed to be ſubiect and obedient vnto him, and do altogether the cleane contrary; but I ſhall offend him which hath put me in ſubiection vnder him, to wit God, who gaue me into ẏ handes of my husband, and wil that I be more ſubiect vnto him than vnto father and mother. Ye ſee how this beginning ought to be as a brydle to holde vs backe, that wee preſume not to chaunge any thing in the inſtitution and order of God. And ſecondly let vs extend this vnto al other things: knowing that the Lawe of God is not as mans lawe is. If there bee an olde lawe, it may be forgotten and buried, men will not thinke on it, and a man ſhall not bee condemned for hauing tranſgreſſed ſuch a lawe. If a man ſay it was three hundred yeeres ſince it was publiſhed, there is no remembraunce of it nowe: if a man offend againſt it, it skils not, the lawe is no longer in force. But the matter is otherwiſe in the lawe of God. For wee can make no preſcription of time againſt him, wee cannot lie and ſape our ſelues in our vices, and ſay: I haue not beene warned, I remember the lawe of God no longer, the worlde tranſgreſſeth beyond all meaſure againſt it: men make but a game of it: wee may not (I ſay) couer our faultes with any of theſe excuſes: for they are vayne and of no value. But wee cannot handle this whole matter at this time: wee will keepe it in ſtore therefore for to morrowe, with that exception of fornication.

Nowe let vs kneele downe in the preſence of our good God, with acknowledgement of our faultes, praying him to make vs feele them better, yea in ſuch ſort, that being caſt downe in our ſelues, wee may lament and bee ſorie that wee haue ſo greatly offended him. And ſeeing it hath pleaſed him to remedie our faultes, and to declare vnto vs that they are forgiuen in the name, and by the meane of our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt, pray wee him, that he will likewiſe hereafter giue vs the grace by the power of his holy ſpirit, to ouercome all the temptations againſt which wee are dayly to fight, vntill he hath giuen vs victorie in all our conflictes, when hee ſhall haue withdrawen vs to himſelfe, to make vs partakers of his glorie in the kingdome of heauen. That it will pleaſe him to graunt this grace not onely vnto vs but alſo vnto all peoples and nations of the earth, &c.

On Fryday the laſt of Ianuarie, 1556.

The Cxxxvij. Sermon, which is the ſecond vpon the foure and twentith Chapter.

1.2.3.4 When a man taketh a wife, &c.

5 When a man taketh a newe wife, he ſhall not goe to warre, neither ſhall hee be charged with any buſines, but ſhalbe free at home one yeere, and reioyce with his wife which he hath taken.

6 No man ſhall take the neather nor the vpper milſtone for a pledge: for this gage is his liuing.

I Haue declared already at large, how men ought to liue in agreement with their wiues, and how the bonde of mariage is ſuch as cannot bee broken. It remayneth nowe, that we come to the exception which our Lord Ieſus Chriſt maketh; to wit, that for the cauſe of adulterie, it ſhall bee lawfull for a man to put away his wife. The reaſon is, for that the man on his parte breaketh not the faith which he plighted, but the wife hauing played the harlot doth aſmuch as in her is, Matt.19.9.

vndoe the marriage altogether, and ſo defileth it, as there remayneth no longer any holyneſſe in it. For on what other condition is the husband ioyned vnto the wife, but that they ſhould liue chaſtly one with another? But the partie which committeth adulterie, breaketh this condition, and therefore the bond of mariage is then vntyed. So then if a man knowing his wife to be a whore, and hauing likewiſe prooued her ſuch a one, forſake her: he violateth not the inſtitution of God, neither tranſgreſſeth he this law, They Matt. 19. 5. ſhall be two in one fleſh: but he is quitte, and ſet freee, becauſe the wife hath ſwarued aſide from the order of God and of nature. Let vs therefore note well, that when our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt aloweth the diuorcement which is made for the cauſe of adultery, it is not to graunt a man leaue to chaunge any thing in the inſtitution of God. For it muſt euer holde true, That man may in no wiſe ſunder thoſe whom God hath ioyned together. But becauſe the woman hath broken the condition of mariage, the husband is freed from it. The thing then which wee haue to beare in mind is that the exception which we heere haue rehearſed, ſerueth not in any way to leſſen the force of the law of God. That coniunction which God hath ordayned muſt alwaies remaine firme and ſteadfaſt. But ſhe that playeth the harlot, is no longer a wife, ſhe is no longer to be taken & deemed for ſuch a one. Now if a man demaund on the other ſide, whether yͤ woman for her part hath like libertie, we heare what Saint Paul ſaith, 1.Cor.7.4. yͭ like as yͤ husband is not maiſter of his owne body, no more alſo is the wife of hirs. Ye ſee what an equalitie of like right yͤ holy ghoſt ſetteth downe: yͭ like as yͤ woman when ſhe is maried, is not myſtris of her owne body, ſo on the contrary ſide a man after yͭ he hath plighted his faith to his wife is bound in ſuch wiſe, yͭ if he abandon himſelf otherwiſe vnto luſt, his fault is alike with yͤ adulterie which yͤ wife committeth. So then if wee will hold our ſelues vnto yͭ which God hath commãded, we ſee yͭ the rule is moſt euident and cleare, namely, yͭ the man muſt not only content himſelfe wͭ the wife which he hath taken, yͭ is to ſay. he muſt not only keepe hir for a companion, but alſo beare with hir: bicauſe yͤ marriage importeth a true and perfect vnion of two perſons, and that as hartie as any may be. Which vnion is not poſſible to be maintained, except yͤ husband doe beare with his wife & with thoſe frailties which are in hir: & the wife alſo for hir part endeuór to pleaſe hir husband, & to bee obedient vnto him. This we ſee (I ſay) on the one ſide: & againe wee ſee that if the wife be ſo looſe in life, as to giue ouer her ſelfe to fornication, ſhee breaketh wedlock, wherby ſhe doth as it were warre with God, peruerting all honeſty, which ought to be holy & inuiolable. Now if when the woman offendeth ſo on hir part, the husband likewiſe ſtep aſide in his dewty, and ouerſhoote himſelfe ſo farre as to breake the faith which he hath plighted vnto his wife; he is condemned of God. For why? The bond (as I told you) which paſſeth betwixt them, is mutuall and of like force touching them both.

And in this caſe there is no doubt, but that a man may marry a gaine, if he in this ſorte put away his wife becauſe of adulterie: and men ſhew an ouer groſſe abuſe when they weigh not the words of our Lord Ieſus Chriſt: That if a man Matt.19.9. forſake his wife, except it be for adulterie, & mary an other, he is an adulterer, & that he cauſeth her whom he hath forſaken to commit adulterie alſo. Now when Chriſt excepteth yͤ cauſe of adulterie, it is to ſet the man in yͤ caſe at free choice & libertie to mary agayne. For what a thing were it to bar a man from a newe match; if he haue obſerued his promiſe faithfully, & liued in the feare of God, and not beene vnfaithfull towardes his wife? If he be conſtrained to put her away, muſt he be puniſhed for the offence of an other? What reaſon were in that? Should he not haue open wrong doone him? Eſpecially conſidering that our Lord Ieſus Chriſt in that text addeth, That Matt.19.11. 1.Cor.7.11. all haue not the gift of continencie, and that ſuch as haue not receiued it, haue the remedie of marriage, and that they ought to vſe it. When our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt pronounceth this, thinke we that his meaning was that the poore wretched man, who hath liued blameleſſe with an harlot, ſhould bee left in diſpayre? Nay; if hee ſee filthyneſſe in his houſe, he muſt, whether he will yea or no, caſt foorth ſuch vncleanneſſe, except he will infect himſelfe therewith and be accounted a partie in ſuch wickedneſſe. Now if a man diſcharge his dewtie in this behalfe, thinke we that God barreth him of all right, and that he leaueth him in ſuch trouble and anguiſh, as he may not know where to become, but muſt remaine vnprouided of all remedie? It was therefore an ouer groſſe folly in men not to knowe that our Lord Ieſus Chriſt leaueth a man in free libertie to marrie agayne, when his make hath violated the faith of marriage. As much is to be ſayde in the behalfe of the woman, ſeeing the right in this caſe is equall and mutuall, as I haue ſhewed afore. And ſo yee ſee what we haue at this day to obſerue: namely, that euery man ought to conſider, that the vocation which hee hath of God, is ſuch a yoke as he may not ſeeke to ſhake off. For it is the cheefe and principall ſeruice which wee can render vnto God all our whole lifetime, to haue an eye vnto that which he requireth of vs: and when hee hath ſet vs in ſome eſtate and calling; to doe that which belongeth vnto our dewtie: and that euery one yeelde himſelfe obedient in all humbleneſſe, to ſay: hath God called me vnto this ende? I muſt frame my ſelfe thereunto without any reply or gainſaying. Therefore when we bee of a milde and gentle diſpoſition, ſubmitting our ſelues vnto yͤ will of our God; therein (ſay I) conſiſteth the principall ſeruice which he liketh and deſireth. And without this al our vertues are nought elſe in his ſight but doung and filthyneſſe. Nowe ſeeing it is ſo, let vs conſider, as touching mariage, what the calling of God is, and what maner of Law, or what yoke he layeth on the neck of man: to wit, that he liue quietly with his wife, bearing with thoſe infirmities which are in her, & be a companion to liue and to die with hir: and that the wife lykewiſe ſubmit herſelfe with all humblenes vnto her husband,ſo as they nouriſh and maintaine peace one with the other. Thus ye ſee how God may bee honoured and howe his grace alſo and his bleſſing may dwell and abide in a familie. And if a woman bee ſo wicked as to proſtitute hir ſelfe, the husband according vnto the will of God, may not onely put hir away, but is in perfect and full libertie to leaue hir, and to marrie himſelfe vnto another. As for the woman,there is in deede another reſpect touching hir than for the man. For the wife ſhall not bee ſo diſhonored by the adulterie of hir husband, nor bee put to ſo great ſhame, as the husband ſhall bee by the wyues. But yet if the husbande bee an whooremonger, and waſteth his goods and ſubſtaunce vppon harlottes,ſo as his wife is ſhutte out of doores, or bee kept in with all manner of crueltie like a wretched ſlaue; if this miſchiefe holde on ſtill: then to leaue a wretched woman in ſuch bondage, were againſt all reaſon and right: eſpecially Mal.2.16. conſidering that which was yeſterday alleaged out of the Prophet Malachie, That it were better that a man ſhoulde put away his wife, than to haue more than one. And what ſhall bee ſayde then in this caſe, when a man ſhall keepe an ordinarie ſtewes, and that no man is able to correct this vice of his: is not the wife then ſet at greater libertie? This is the thing which wee haue to beare in minde vpon this place.

Nowe ſith our Lordes will is that marriage ſhoulde bee ſo indiſſoluble and inuiolable,yea, and that through the vertue of this ſentence which our Lorde hath pronounced with his Gen.2.24. owne mouth, That there ſhall bee two in one fleſh: let vs note that it is much greater reaſon that the ſpirituall vnion which wee haue with our Lorde Ieſu Chriſt, ought to bee diligently kept and mayntained: For his will is to contract marriage with vs, and dayly he doeth ſo, or at leaſtwiſe ratifyeth it by the preaching of the Goſpell. And on what condition is it? It is (as Saint Paule ſayeth) to the ende wee ſhoulde bee as chaſt women, not turning our mindes aſide vnto falſe doctrines. For he compareth all errours and all corruptions of the pure ſimplicitie of fayth, to fornications. As if a wife hearken vnto a bawde, beholde ſhee is alreadye wonne, and begynneth foorthwith to breake the fayth of Marriage. Euen ſo is it with vs, if wee abide not in the obedience of our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt, holding our ſelues wholly vnto his doctrine, wee are like vnto aduowtrous women. And therefore ſith that GOD hath ioyned vs vnto his only ſonne,and that our whole felicitie and glory conſiſteth therein, let vs learne not to decline from it in any manner of wiſe.

Nowe it is ſayde, *That the man which ſhall haue ſo put away his Wife, ſhall not, (if ſhe marrie otherwiſe) euer take hir agayne, bycauſe ſhee is alreadie defiled.* Heereby GOD meant for to ſhewe that albeit hee did not puniſh ſuch diuorcements as were made without any good ground; yet he leaueth not to condemne them: for there was heerein a remedie, that a man being grieued with his wife, myght in continuaunce of time beyng better aduiſed take hir againe: and if the wife were married againe, becauſe hee had ſet her foorth vnto fornication, and becauſe that (aſmuch as in him lay) hee had broken all order of nature, he might not take her againe. Now in that God ordayned ſuch puniſhement, although hee permitted diuorcementes, I meane as in reſpect of humaine policie: it ſhewed ſufficiently that hee allowed not of them. And ſo the Iewes excuſed themſelues but in vaine, as if they had put away their wiues by the authoritie of the Lawe. For this texte ſufficiently declareth, that this manner of putting of them away was wicked, and that it coulde bring nothing elſe but all manner of euill and miſchiefe; yea and farther, that it was not poſſible for the man to amend the fault which hee had committed, after that the wife had taken a new husband. When the Lawe declareth thus much, is it not a condemning of the Iewes? How can this ſerue them for a ſhrowding ſheete to ſay: The law permitted vs this thing, our Lorde woulde not puniſhe ſuch a ſinne by any earthly iudgement? Yea but for all this, hath hee declared that he alloweth of it? Hath hee ſayd that ſuch a fact is lawfull? Nay but all the contrarie. For the thinges which of themſelues are good haue alway a good end and iſſue,but when there followeth any wretched miſhap in any thing,eſpecially ſuch a one as can be by no meanes recouered,it is a ſigne that the thing diſpleaſeth God So then let vs diligently note that God meant in this place to diſcouer the reaſon of his counſaile, why hee puniſhed not diuorcementes. In effect hee meant to giue the Iewes to vnderſtand that it was for the hardneſſe of their heart (as our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt thereof ſpeaketh) Matt.19.8. and that they muſt needes be conuicted to acknowlege that the cauſe why God eſtabliſhed no perfectneſſe of ciuil gouernment among thẽ was,for that they were not capable of it. But they conſidered little of this. Nay they bare thẽſelues in hand rather that all thinges were lawfull for them,ſeeing they were not puniſhed by earthly iudgement, and they thought that by this meanes they were alſo preuiledged from the iudgement of God.

Hereby wee bee warned of that which was more fullie handled yeſterday, to wit, not to runne at rouers,but to make a perfect tryall of thoſe thinges which wee take in hand,by hauing our eye alwayes on the Lawe wherein our Lorde hath compriſed the effect and abridgement of his wil,& that is alſo the true touchſtone whereby we ought to try all our words, yea and all our thoughts. Seeing it is ſo,let vs returne thither,& although wee be not puniſhed by men,yet let vs not ceaſe to miſlyke of our ſelues for our vices, knowing that they muſt elſewhere be accounted for,albeit GOD hath ſpared vs in this lyfe. And yet there are now and then ſome by puniſhmentes layde on vs in that reſpect, inſomuch that although God call vs not ſolemnlie vnto the barre, ne frame an inditement preciſely againſt vs: yet neuertheleſſe he vſeth ſome kinde of chaſtiſement, to admoniſh vs of our faultes, as wee ſee that this hauing of many wiues was not puniſhed, & yet our Lord ceaſed not to ſhewe that it was a deteſtable thing in his ſight, as whereby the order of marriage was broken and violated. Let vs therefore conſider of all the corrections which GOD ſendeth, to the intent we may preuent his anger, and not abuſe his patience although he for a long time beareth with vs.

Matt.19.8.

Briefly, let vs take heede that we attempt not any thing againſt yͤ rule which is giuen vnto vs: let vs alwayes return back vnto this point; It was not ſo in the beginning: For if we aledge cuſtome, it ſhall not ſerue to exempt vs from condemnation: if we ſay: it hath bin in vſe this long time, we haue an infinite number of examples for it: all this ſhal litle auaile vs. For why? This one only word ſhall cut off all ſuch excuſes, where it is ſayde, that, what GOD hath once eſtabliſhed; it muſt be alwayes obſerued, although men bee changeable, although they be rebellious, and ſo through their venterouſneſſe, and their raſhnes, make a confuſion of all thinges, and enterpriſe whatſoeuer their luſt fancieth, and thereupon carrie themſelues headlong into all wickedneſſe, yea and one folow an other; all this ſhall be nothing before God, but a more grieuous condemnation to aggrauate, and to encreaſe the haynouſneſſe of their wickedneſſe. And why ſo? For it ought to ſuffice vs yͤ god hath declared vnto vs his will which cannot varie, and from the which alſo it is not lawfull for vs to ſwarue. Now moreouer let vs note well yͤ which God addeth: *Leaſt they ſhoulde make the Lande to ſinne which hee had giuen the Iewes to inherite.* Moſes hath heretofore vſed the ſelfe ſame manner of ſpeaking: but ſeeing it is in this place rehearſed, we ought to call to minde yͤ which hath bin already aboue declared: that is to wit, that if a vice raigne, and men ſtill let it ſlip: they make the whole land to ſinne, yͤ it is to prouoke yͤ anger of God & to nouriſh it, & that all are made guiltie thereof. God ſayth not, that he which ſhall ſo take his wife againe ſhall ſinne before God and not abide vnpuniſhed; & that the woman lykewiſe committeth abhomination: but he ſaith, *The land ſhal ſin.* And how yͤ land? It may chaunce that there ſhall not be paſt a three or foure diuorcementes, and yet yͤ there may be a million of people in yͤ land: and why ſhal yͤ fault be ſo farre & ſo largely extẽded? It ſeemeth yͤ none beſides him which maketh the diuorce, ought to be accuſed. But God knoweth well how hee ought to iudge. And it is not for vs to teach him his leſſon. Let vs therfore holde vs vnto this decree of his which hee hath here pronoũced: & let vs know yͤ the whole land is defiled, when ſinnes raigne therein, without any bridle, and the cauſe is manifeſt. For there Iuſtice cannot be without blame, where is no bridle of reſtraint. Where men haue not this conſideration to ſay: Behold God is offended, this is a deteſtable thing, but are altogether careleſſe of it; there iuſtice is idle. And ſo foraſmuch as yͤ magiſtrates execute not their office faithfully, ye ſee how the ſinne becommeth publique, and ſo the whole people is as it were cõſenting vnto it. And moreouer, when wickedneſſe is ſo permitted, euery man is of opinion yͤ all things are lawful: for of cuſtome men alwayes make a lawe. And a mans eye may bee witneſſe, how on the one ſide men put away all ſhame, & on yͤ other ſide ſtãd in no feare. And doubtleſſe yͤ feare we haue of puniſhment, & the ſhame which we haue of doing euill, are two bridles to reſtraine vs. When theſe two thinges are layd aſide, ſo yͤ men ſet braſen faces on yͤ matter, & take leaue to do what they liſt; there is no remedie but that all miſchiefe muſt proceede thereof when ſinnes haue ſo full ſcope. And that is the cauſe why S. Paul vpbraideth the whole Church of Corinth, with the inceſt which was committed, although one man alone had taken to wife his mother in lawe. Yee boaſt your ſelues (ſaith he,) but what a ſhame is it yͤ you nouriſh ſuch villanie & filthineſſe among you? So thẽ let vs wiſely conſider, yͤ as often as the ſcripture ſpeaketh in this wiſe, it is to admoniſh vs both publikely & particularlie of our dutie: yͤ firſt of al ſuch as haue publike charge, diſſemble not yͤ wickedneſſe which is cõmitted, but ſeeke to correct it; yͤ the Paſtours which haue yͤ charge of teaching, doe open their mouthes wide wͭ all libertie, and that when they ſee yͤ miſchief encreaſeth and is augmented, they cry out at it, condemne it, & reproue, & repreſſe it aſmuch as lyeth in them; that ſo much yͤ more ſeuere puniſhment be vſed in yͤ Church: yͤ the magiſtrates who haue yͤ ſword in their hãd take heed, yͤ they employ thẽſelues to doe for their part what God hath cõmaunded them; & beſides, yͤ euery man priuately & particularly enforce himſelfe by exhortations & admonitions to purge his houſe from al filthines, & to eſchue & auoyde all wicked companie: yͤ we may at the leaſtwiſe ſhew yͤ the wickedneſſe diſpleaſeth vs, & that we will not at any hand bee partakers thereof, folowing yͤ which S. Paul ſaith, That by not cõſenting vnto yͤ workes of darkeneſſe, we muſt reproue thẽ. Behold (I ſay) what yͤ thing is whereof we are admoniſhed, when God declareth yͤ the land is guiltie of ſinne, if an offence remain vnpuniſhed. And if we be not able to remedie the miſchiefe thereof, let vs bewaile our ſelues, knowing that if God wold deale rigorouſly wͭ vs, we were worthy to be plunged forthwith into yͤ deepeſt dungeon of hel. As for example, if blaſphemies & fornications, & other vnruly behauiours, lewd & wicked practiſes, wrongful dealinges, deceites & cruelties raigne in any place, & there be no end of them; let vs know yͤ when God giueth Satã ſuch libertie, as to cõtinue ſuch an outragious diſorder in all things, it is a ſigne yͤ he is angrie wͭ vs, & that we want his kingdome. Knowing this let vs be ſorrie, & walk in yͤ greater heedefulneſſe, praying him to vſe mercie towardes vs, and with fatherly gentleneſſe to correct that wickedneſſe of ours whereby wee deſerued to be raſed and rooted out of the land of the liuing, euen out of hand, if God woulde

1.Cor.5.a.

Ephes.5.11.

deale with vs according vnto our offences. Yee ſee in effect what wee haue to beare in minde concerning this place.

And now Moſes addeth two Lawes, whereof the one tendeth to the fauoring of ſuch as are new marryed: and the other ſerueth to barre them which lend monie, from being ouer cruel, and from beeing ſo greedy in taking of pawnes and gages, as to deſtroy their neighbors, and to take from them ẏ meanes wherby they might liue. Ye ſee in effect what the two poyntes bee, which are contained here. Now as touching the firſt, there is no doubt, but Moſes had an eye therein vnto the common profit of all. For at the firſt ſight a man might finde it ſtrange what the cauſe ſhould be why he diſpenſed thus with newe marryed folkes, that they ſhoulde keepe themſelues at home, that they ſhoulde not bee compelled to goe vnto warre, that they ſhould haue none of thoſe charges layde vppon them which might turne them from their familie. For to what end and purpoſe was this, but that God in commaunding ſuch an order by his ſeruant Moſes, had an eye vnto that which might folow by the contrarie? For when a man taketh a wife it is good and requiſite that he forme & faſhion her, that is to ſay, that he teach and accuſtome her ſo to liue as they may agree both together al the time of their life. Now if a man take a woman to wife, and at the end of three dayes leaue her while the wife knoweth not yet the maners and conditions of her husband, and while the husbãd likewiſe is vnacquainted with the diſpoſition of his wife it may be a cauſe that they ſhall not agree together all their lyfe long. And again we know what yong houſholders are, vntil they be by longer time inured to know by vſe and experiẽce, how to ſet their houſhold in order. Now if a man bee led away the firſt day, and forſake his wife; the yong woman not knowing what belongeth to the ordering of an houſe, and remaining alone may fall into many inconueniences. And though there were none other than this which we haue alleged; yet were it enough and too much, namely that the husband returning after ſome time ſhall bee as one vtterly vnacquainted with his wife, and the wife in lyke ſorte ſhall be as ſtrange to him, which thing might be an occaſion that they ſhoulde neuer agree one with another. God then had reſpect vnto this: And therefore let vs not imagine that this Lawe was made for pleaſures ſake, to ſay that a man ſhould ſporte himſelfe with his wife which hee hath taken. I graunt that Moſes vſeth this word: but that is becauſe he would therein compriſe al the profite which commeth by this meanes of the husbandes ioyning and vniting of himſelfe vnto his wife, wherby there groweth a conformitie of manners betweene them, ſo as the one is well knowen to the other, and they are brought to this point that they can beare each with other: but yet neuertheleſſe God hath in this place an eye vnto the common profit and welfare of all.

Now it is very true that this law reſpecteth in ſuch ſort the policie and rule of gouernment among the Iſraelites, that we are not bound therunto: but yet for all that (as I haue declared afore) wee muſt gather ſome doctrine from that which God had ordayned for the people of olde time. We muſt euer haue an eye vnto the ende which God ameth at, and from thence gather ẏ ſubſtance of the law which appertaineth vnto vs, and is belonging as common vnto vs together with the Iewes. Now in effect it is heere declared vnto vs, that men ought to auoyde all occaſions which ſerue to eſtranging of thẽ frõ their wiues, & to the diſordring of their houſe. We are already of our ſelues ouer frail & weake, & though no farther occaſion be offered, wee ſee how many ſwarue aſide from their dueties, & are ſo tickliſhe ẏ they cannot holde themſelues quiet & ſtill in their vocation. But now if there bee ſome other temptation & ẏ men wander wilfullie & truſt to their own cõſtancie, & preſume vpon maruelous things in thẽſelues, & in the meane time keepe not thẽſelues vnder ẏ bridle of God: what other thing may fal out in ẏ end, but extreme cõfuſiõ? Let vs therfore learne not to tempt God through ouer great boldneſſe and preſumption: but let euery one take heede he hold himſelfe within his boundes, to ẏ end he may be the more inabled to diſcharge himſelf of his duetie. For euen whẽ we would vſe all the meanes wee can poſſiblie to doe that well which God hath ordayned, yet our fleſhe hath alwayes ſuch whot boylings, that we are oftentimes as headſtrong horſes which are broken looſe. We haue neede therfore to be held backe by diuers & ſundry meanes. And therfore let vs looke vnto our ſelues as our Lord warneth vs. And againe on the other ſide we haue alſo to beare in minde that which Saint Paul declareth in the ſeuenth of the firſt to ẏ Corinthians, to wit, ẏ they which are married are intangled in many cares, the which according vnto rigour might be imputed for ſinne, except God did vſe ſuch gentleneſſe towardes vs, yea, and that ſuch fatherlie gentleneſſe, as to wink at our faults: & this ought to be wel conſidered. For whẽ a man entreth into mariage, if he think vpon ẏ multitude of troubles & incõmodities which it hath, it will breede ſuch a feare in him, ẏ hee will wiſh to withdrawe himſelf farre from it. And beſides ẏ, the diuil hath indeuored as much as is poſſible, to diffame mariage, to the intent men ſhoulde ſo become as brute beaſtes, in defiling thẽſelues with fornication; yea & that vnder colour of auoiding ẏ bondage which in reſpect of martiage ſeemeth to be ouerhard & grieuous: as ẏ diſciples alſo ſayd: Matt.19.10. If it be ſo, it were good for a man not to touch a woman. Yea ſaith our Lord Ieſus Chriſt, if ſo be hee were at his owne choyce. But now, leaſt when we conſider of ẏ incommodities & troubles which are in marriage, we ſhould be wholy diſcouraged: let vs returne vnto ẏ which is declared vnto vs in this place. For it was a good thing ẏ the people of God, being ſet vpon, & aſſaulted, ſhould go forth to warre to employ thẽſelues in ẏ defence of the whole countrie & bodie of their people, and alſo furniſh out ſuch other charges an offices as ſerued to maintaine ẏ Church of God. Now when God giueth vnto thẽ which were new married, ſuch a diſpenſatiõ, as to beare with them in theſe thinges, hee ſheweth in generall, that although they which are maried cannot eſcape free, but that they muſt needes bee giuen ouer to many cares and carkings, and be ſnarled in many & ſundrie incommodities, yet notwithſtanding he beareth with them, and that of eſpecial fauour, and that this he doth in the fauour of marriage. Therefore let the faithful comfort themſelues, ſeeing that GOD hath pytie on them, and that although marriage bringeth with it ſuch a nũber of troubles, wherby men ſeeme as it were to be held bound in this world, yet notwͭſtanding God for all this, doth not caſt them off. And why? Becauſe he hath ordayned mariage, and knowing ẏ troubles it hath, he voutſafeth to vſe a remedie by forbearing and pardoning many faults which are in it.

But herewithall let vs alſo note, that this may not ſerue to rock vs aſleepe, let not married folkes, vnder colour that God dealeth ſo gently and pitifully with them, behaue themſelues ſo looſely as if all thinges were permitted them: but let them haue the wit to ſay: Go to: Had wee neuer ſo ſmall a care which might withhold vs from comming vnto God; yet ſhould wee be to blame. But we ſee many ouer froward, wee ſee in others much impatiencie, and many other thinges: againe we ſee much vanitie committed; inſomuch that ſome man louing his wife too wel, will exceede meaſure therein, & lykewiſe in his children, ſo vnrulie alwayes are our paſſions. If there be in vs but one ſmal vice, wee are already culpable before God: and if there be an infinite number, behold wee are then plunged as it were into a bottomleſſe pit. And ſhall we then vnder ẏ couert & cloke of mariage, ſetle our ſelues in our dregs, & flatter our ſelues in our wicked doings? What reaſõ were in ẏ? Nay rather let men quicken vp themſelues, and know ẏ the goodneſſe of God ſerueth not to lead & allure them vnto wickednes: but contrariwiſe to make them to feele their faultes, & hauing felt them to returne vnto God, and to pray him ẏ he wil more & more cut off ẏ ſuperfluities which are in our affections. Ye ſee thẽ what we haue to beare in minde concerning this place, namely ẏ the faithful haue wherwith to comfort thẽſelues, ſeeing ẏ God beareth with thẽ as long as they liue in this world, and ẏ albeit they cannot bee as angels to walke in all heauenly perfectneſſe: they are not for all ẏ reiected of God. For in the fauour of marriage which he hath ordayned, he vſeth patience and gentleneſſe in bearing wͭ them. But on ẏ contrary ſide alſo, ſeeing the infections wherwͭ they are on all ſides encloſed, they muſt not onely condemne thẽſelues, but ſigh continually, & endeuor to correct thẽſelues, & to approch more nearer & nearer vnto God, & to vnfold themſelues out of ẏ temptations, which are a let & hinderance vnto them. Ye ſee then what ẏ doctrine is which wee haue to gather from this lawe. Now it is certaine ẏ God meant in this place to ſhew as in a looking glaſſe, ẏ marriage, although it be in it ſelfe honorable, bringeth many incommodities with it, Hebr.13.4. inſomuch ẏ a man is made more vnapt to apply himſelfe freely vnto ẏ which he ought, than he would be if he were not maried. Not ẏ this proceedeth frõ ẏ nature of mariage: for if our father Adam had remained in ẏ integritie & perfectnes wherein he was firſt created, doubtleſſe marriage, lyke as God gaue it for an ayde, had bin a perfect & angelical life. But becauſe we are corrupted, & becauſe we haue ſo many vices in vs as is pitie to behold, we turne ẏ which was good, into euill: & that which God had ordayned for our glorie, wee turne oftentimes to our reproch and ſhame. That is ẏ roote then, from whence all ẏ incommodities which are in marriage proceede. And therefore to ẏ intent wee accuſe not God, who is the author thereof, and lay all ẏ fault vpon him; let vs know that whatſoeuer a man may complayne of in marriage, is as it were accidentall, ẏ is to ſay, proceedeth from elſewhere, than from marriage it ſelfe, to wit, from ẏ corruption of ſinne. Neuertheleſſe we may ſee (as I haue already told you) and we may in this place behold as if ẏ thing were paynted forth before our eyes, ẏ if a man enter into marriage he entãgleth him ſelfe in many thinges, which ſhall ſtay him from doing of his duetie. And ẏ is the cauſe why Saint Paul alſo ſayd, That if a man and woman could liue without it (conſidering how ſhort a time wee haue, at ſuch time as our Lorde oppreſſeth his 1.Cor.7.29. Church with ſo many afflictions, that we ſee nothing but miſeries in the world) it were good to runne with all ẏ haſt we might here below, & not bee ſtayed or hindered by any meanes whatſoeuer from finiſhing our courſe. So then when wee enter into marriage, let vs know ẏ we are ſtraight way ſo ſnarled, ẏ wee cannot make ſuch quicke ſpeede as we ſhould, to diſcharge our duetie: and let this cauſe vs to cal on God ſo much the more, and to deſire him to be mercifull vnto vs, and not to impute vnto vs any of all thoſe offences which we dayly commit.

Moreouer let vs enter alſo into this generall confeſſion, that ſeeing we are ſo ſinful as to marre euery thing that is good, we ought to deteſt the ſinne which dwelleth in vs, or rather which rayneth in vs, vntill our Lord haue transformed vs. For if we bee left in our firſt nature, what ſhall we be? Not only we ſhal be cleane cõtrary vnto ẏ wil of God and his righteouſnes; but alſo whatſoeuer is in it ſelfe good, holy, and honorable, and which God had ordayned for our welfare, wee can not but turne and conuert it vnto our harme and hinderaunce. Whereof wee haue a notable example in this place.

But we are yet farther admoniſhed, ẏ although through the corruptiõ of ſinne, we alter ẏ which God had ordayned for our welfare, and turne it to euil, yet we may not for all ẏ forſake and take our leaue of the good ordinances and decrees of God. And not to ſeeke any farther, let vs take marriage for an example in this caſe. We ſee (as I haue already told you) how many troubles and incommodities it hath, and that not alonely in reſpect of the body, ſo that when a man is maryed hee hath many hinderances which turne him now to one thing, and then to an other, ſo as he is faine to carke and care how to nouriſhe his children, and to watch for his profite when he ſhould ſleepe:but alſo mariage bringeth with it more than this. For a man ſhall not be ſo free and at ſuch libertie to employ himſelfe in the ſeruice of God: and yet all this muſt not ſtay him from this calling. For they truely which ſtand in neede of marriage, muſt ſubmit themſelues vnto this order of God, and vſe no excuſe as many doe, and as we ſee lykewiſe what is happened among the Papiſtes, how the diuell hath ſharpened the venemous tongues of thoſe hypocrites the Friars, and Monkes, and ſuch lyke, who haue forbidden marriage vnder colour that there are theſe and theſe faultes in it. But all thoſe things which are confuſed and diſordered, let not but that marriage remaineth alwayes good and profitable for them which vſe it well, although it drawe after it diuerſe inconueniences, howbeeit not of it ſelfe, but by reaſon of the ſins of men, bycauſe we cannot nowe vſe vnto our welfare this order which God hath ordained, in ſuch ſort as is requiſite, except wee reuerence mariage. And we ſee that the cauſe of theſe horrible confuſiōs which are happened in the world is this, that men haue diſpiſed mariage, and that the diuell hath wrought ſo farre as to make mē trample that holy inſtitution vnder foote, inſomuch that when euen the filthieſt varlets of all haue preſumed on their abilitie of abſtayning from it, and of liuing here as chaſt a lyfe as the Angels of heauen: wee ſee ſuche vnrulineſſe in conuerſation as ought to make euery hayre of our head ſtand on end. For if we would beholde nowadayes what the popiſh chaſtitie of the Prieſtes and Monkes, and of all the reſt of this peſtilent vermine is, wee ſhall finde it a bottomleſſe pit and an infernal gulfe of al beaſtlyneſſe. But let vs on our ſide conſider how to walke in the feare of God, and to keepe our ſelues vnder his bridle. For the doing whereof (as I haue tolde you) let vs haue our recourſe vnto our calling and ſay: Whither vnto doth God call me? Thither muſt I follow him without making of any reply. There followeth in yͤ ſecond place the other lawe which forbiddeth a man to take the vpper or the neather milſtone for a gage. When mention is made here of two milſtones and then of the vppermoſt, it is all one as if our Lord ſayd, that a man ſhall not take both the milſtones which ſerue to grinde, no nor one of them. For why? A man were as good take all, as one part. For there muſt be two Milſtones to grinde: I will leaue the lower, but he can doe nothing without a fellow. So then if I bereaue a man of the profit of his tooles, what greater harme may I worke him? For he can no longer gaine his liuing. Now in deede expreſly God ſpeaketh in this place of Milſtones: but vnder one kinde he hath compriſed the whole. As it is a common thing in the Lawe ſo to doe, and we haue alreadie declared that this rule muſt be kept for a kaye to open vnto vs the ſenſe and meaning of many places. And in verie deede the reaſon which Moſes addeth, giueth a good and eaſie declaration of this place. For he ſaith, *Thou takeſt his life to pledge:* that is to ſay, thou cutteſt a poore mans throate, when thou takeſt frō him thoſe neceſſarie tooles with which he getteth his liuing. Let vs therefore note in this place, that although it be here ſpoken of Milſtones, yet we are generally warned yͭ if whē we lend monie we take a pawne for it, we muſt not bereaue a man of thoſe meanes by the which he getteth his liuing. As ye ſee how the Farrour or lockſmith hath an anuel, a hammer; a pare of pinſers, and other tooles: Now if a man take any of theſe thinges from him becauſe he hath lent him mony; yee ſee how the poore man ſhall dy for hunger, and it had bin better that he had lent him nothing (for yͭ he had had ſome meanes to get his liuing by, & albeit he had pined away, yet he had gotten ſome ſmall morſell of bread to eate though it could haue ſlaked but half his hunger) than ſo to bereaue him of yͤ meanes which he hath to liue by. Now although a man take not away all his inſtrumentes from him; but leaue him his Anduell, & in the meane while keepeth frō him, his hammer and his pinſers, and ſuch lyke thinges, it is all one. And if he excuſe himſelfe and ſay: I haue but a part of them. No, but the other part will ſtand him in ſmall ſtead, except he had the reſt. If a man doe the lyke vnto any handicraftes man and man of occupation, wee know that all their reuenewes conſiſt in getting their liuing by yͤ labor of their handes, they haue neither landes, nor quarter rents comming in. Now ſeeing that God hath put their liuing in their hand; that is to ſay, in their labor, if a man bereaue thē of thoſe neceſſarie meanes by yͤ which they get their liuing, it is al one as if he had cut their throate; I ſay that their liuing, conſiſteth in their labor, not yͭ man by his trauaile can win any thing but through yͤ bleſſing of God: For wee muſt returne backe alwayes vnto this poynt: That God giueth reſt & quietneſſe vnto them whom he loueth. Whiles others take great payne, goe late to bed, and riſe early, eate browne bread, and drinke the water Pſal. 127.2. of tribulation, & yet profit nothing, but in ſtead of thriuing, go backward; yͤ childrē of God proſper in all their dealings. It is then the only freebeſtowed bleſſing of God which nouriſheth mē, as we haue ſeene heretofore how Moſes ſaith: Thou ſhalt not thinke in thine heart, that it is Deut. 6.17. the trauel or labor of thine owne handes, which hath nouriſhed and ſuſtayned thee: but know thou that it is thy god which worketh with thee, & that except he looked vnto thee, thou ſhouldeſt be vnprouided of all thinges. Wee muſt (I ſay) reſolue our ſelues throughly as touching this point. But withal, wee ſee how God hath an eye vnto the trauaile of men, in that when hee ſpeaketh of their liuing, hee hath a reſpect vnto the order which he hath eſtabliſhed: to wit, that when a man employeth himſelf vnto the trauell of his hands, he hath made this promiſe: I wil bleſ yͤ labour of thy hands, if thou do yͭ which belongeth vnto thy dutie. Therfore albeit yͭ we receiue our food and nouriſhment frō the hand of God, yet hath he ordayned yͭ we ſhould trauaile for it. Now is a mans trauail takē frō him? No, for then his life falleth to yͤ ground: & therefore it is an ouerwicked crueltie to conſtraine poore men to deliuer in pawne their tooles wherewith they ſhould ſerue their turne in their craft and occupation. So in effect our Lordes will is, that no man ſhould exerciſe any crueltie vnder color of lending: whereby to ſet his feete vppon poore folkes throates, but yͭ we ſhould rather aide and ſuccour them, knowing yͭ their borrowing is for neede & neceſſitie. Now if one bereaue a man of his lyfe vnder color of lending him a peece of mony, it were better that he ſhould leaue him in that neceſſitie in which he found him, than ſo to take from him thoſe meanes by the which he maintaineth his life. We ſee thē that God would not that lones ſhoulde be lynes to ſnare poore men withall which are in neceſſitie; to which purpoſe men haue at all times vſed them, and nowadayes doe more than euer heretofore. For men haue no other deuiſes thā how to deceiue, to circumuent, to beguile, and to ſuck the bloud of poore men. They draw them dry not onely of their ſubſtance but of their bloud too, when they eſpy them to be in need and penurie. This (ſay I) is the faſhion of men nowadayes. But for all that, let vs conſider what the will of God is in this behalfe, to wit, that we muſt not onely vſe no crueltie towardes our neighbors vnder color of any lending vnto them: but alſo ſeeke to relieue the preſent neede of all thoſe which are in neceſſitie, to the intent that they may alwayes goe foreward and maintaine themſelues in their eſtate.

Now let vs kneele downe in the preſence of our good God with acknowledgement of our faultes, praying him to make vs feele them better, yea in ſuch wiſe as we may return vnto him, ſeeking nothing els but to abide alwayes vnder his obedience, and to cleaue vnto his word without ſwaruing from it in any wiſe: and that wee may ſo walke euery man in his vocation, as wee may teſtify thereby that wee haue God for our maiſter and father, and that we are of his familie, liuing according to the order which he hath commaunded vs: and that wee may liue in ſuch wiſe one with another, as may be to the maintayning of loue and honeſtie among vs, and that ſuch vprightneſſe may raigne in vs, as wee haue not an eye vnto that which men permit vs, but looke euer at this marke, how we may ſerue one anothers turne in vpright brotherhoode, to the end we may bee confirmed alwayes more and more that God is our father, and that we may call vpon him, as ſuch a one. That it may pleaſe him to graunt this grace not onely vnto vs, but alſo to all people and nations of the earth, &c.

On Saturday the j. of Februarie, 1556.

The Cxxxviii. Sermon, which is the third vpon the foure & twentith Chapter.

7 If a man be found which hath ſtolen any of his brethren of the children of Iſrael, and he hath miſuſed him or ſold him: this thiefe ſhall die: and thou ſhalt put euill away from among you.

8 Take heede of the plague of leproſie, that thou marke it diligently, and doe according vnto all that which the Prieſtes the Leuites ſhall teach you, take heed yee doe as I haue commaunded them.

9 Remember what the Lord thy God did vnto Marie by the way, after that ye were come out of Egypt.

THe firſt thing that God declareth in this place is, that if any ſtole away a man of Iſrael and ſolde him, the offence which he committed in this behalfe, was to be puniſhed by death. And heereby hee giueth vs to vnderſtand how dearelie hee loued that people which hee had choſen vnto himſelfe. For we knowe how God appointeth puniſhmentes accordinglie as he eſteemeth of the greatnes of the ſinne which is committed. So then whereas hee puniſheth that man by death which had ſtolen away his brother, thereby we ſee that the life of the children of Iſrael was pretious vnto him. And no maruaile. For if a father haue loſt one of his children, eſpecially if he be ſtolen from him, and he knoweth not what is become of him, wee know he would haue bin better contented to haue loſt his goods, than his childe. Now ſeeing that God had adopted the ſtock of Abraham, he accounted thoſe which deſcended from it, to be of his owne houſhold, and named himſelf their father, and in very deed circumciſion was a mark to ſeparate yͤ people frō other nations. Therefore whoſoeuer ſold any one of the ſtocke of Abraham, he did wrong and iniurie not onely to the perſon it ſelfe, but alſo vnto God. Againe a man being ſolde vnto another people, was in daunger of being conſtrained by force to commit idolatrie. In deed he were better ſuffer death; than doe ſo: but lyke as many are fraile & weake in this caſe, ſo might they alſo bee ſeduced, and turned aſide frō yͤ law, & from yͤ ſeruice of God: & therefore by this means enſued not only yͤ deſtructiō of a mans body, but alſo of his ſoule. We ſee thē now that this law was grounded on great reaſon. And moreouer we know likewiſe, yͭ God had ſo redeemed this people, that they were called a royall prieſthood. And therefore if this honour ſhoulde be aboliſhed, it were all one as if a man ſhold rent in pieces the priuiledge which a prince had giuen: and like as God is greater than mortall men, ſo ſuch an outrage committed againſt his maieſtie, were more heinous and intollerable. But we muſt nowe returne vnto our ſelues. For albeit there bee not nowadayes any certain people which God hath choſen, & ſhouled out from the reſt of the worlde; yet are wee come by ſucceſſion into the roome and place of the Iewes. For God hath receiued vs into his Church, and we are at this day in the ſame degree of honour which the children of Abraham were in. Seeing it is ſo, he which ſtealeth away a man nowadayes, to cut him off from the Church of God, is in as great fault as he who in old time ſold any one of the Iſraelits. And although earthly iuſtice hath eſtabliſhed no lawe againſt it, yet doth it not ceaſe to be a grieuous ſinne ſtil in the ſight of God. Let vs therefore acknowledge the honor which God vouchſafeth vs, when he maketh vs of the number of his houſhold, & taketh & aloweth vs for his childrē. Now foraſmuch as this is an ineſtimable benefit, we muſt endeuour to the vtmoſt of our power to preſerue and keep it: and yͭ not euery one for himſelfe only; but for his neighbors alſo. Therfore when we ſee yͭ God hath aſſembled & gathered together any company of people to himſelfe, let vs ſeeke to keepe them ſo together, as none of thē may go aſtray. And if we be a cauſe and occaſion that yͤ congregation of God bee deminiſhed, and yͭ hee which was ſometime of it, be eſtraunged from it by our meanes; we ſee what puniſhment yͤ lawe hath ordained. As touching yͤ outward policie and ciuil order, it remaineth not, yet neuertheles God hath declared yͭ ſuch lewdnes ſhall not abide vnpuniſhed. For he wil at yͤ leaſt haue as great regard vnto his houſe, as euery of vs woulde haue vnto our own houſes. And therfore let vs learne by all meanes poſſible to keepe thē ſtil which are of Gods flock, and to ſtay men as much as we cā from departing from yͤ ſame. Yea and we knowe how we be commanded not only to nouriſh thē which are already begotten the children of god, but alſo to do our indeuor to win thē which are ſtraungers: what wickednes then were it to turne thē out, which are alredy receiued vnto yͤ church of God? I meane thoſe which in very deede doe ſhew & declare thēſelues to be yͤ children of god. For we know yͭ there is a regard to be had, yͭ al tag & rag be not receiued into yͤ church. For there are many which ſeeke after Chriſt to haue their bodily eaſe, & there are many deceiuers: and if there be no diſcretion in receiuing thē in, it were altogether a mocking of god; as we haue too many examples in this caſe. Therfore we haue need of wiſedom in this behalf. Neuertheles if we thorowe a cruelty, or wickednes, doe diminiſh the church of god, we muſt render an accoūt therof, and yͭ not as for ſom ſmal fault, but for ſo weighty a crime as we ſee God accounteth it, and as the paine which he ordained vnder the law of Moſes, declareth it to be.

Yet notwithſtanding wee finde many who for their owne profites ſake doe in this ſort diſſeuer their neighbors & cut thē off from yͤ Church of God. We ſee what marchādiſe of ſoules is made by them which ſeeke (as it ſeemeth) nothing els but to rent yͤ world: and many are not contented to ſteale their neighbours away, but they ſteale themſelues too. For al they who for their tēporal & tranſitory profite, do turne aſide and wͭdrawe themſelues from yͤ ſeruice of God, commit they not I beſeech you this theft wherof I now ſpeak? There is one which belongeth vnto yͤ body of yͤ church, God hath vouchſafed him yͤ grace to cal him vnto yͤ knowledge of his truth; & what doth he? Becauſe yͭ nowadayes he which is knowen to be a faithful mā is perſecuted in yͤ world, it were better to ſhrowd himſelf in a corner, thā to make a ſhew & countenāce of any thing: he reaſoneth thus wͭ himſelf: what? Shal I take in hand ſo hard a thing? And is there any other likelihood but yͭ in yͤ end I ſhalbe put beſide my liuing & my life? O this were too heauy a burdē for me to beare. Now he beareth himſelf in hand yͭ he is ſo excuſed. And thus mē ſteale thēſelues away, both frō god & from his church. They make marchādiſe & ſale of their own ſoules, as it were for a meſſe of potage, as it is ſaid of Eſau: that is to ſay, for Gen.25.32. earthly foode they ſel themſelues & become the bondſlaues of ſatan. And ſo we ſee yͭ this lawe is nowadays very ill kept; and therefore we ought ſo much yͤ more to note the intent & meaning of God, to the end yͭ euery man after that god hath vouchſafed him yͤ grace to gather him into the number of his people, may keep himſelf among them: and yͤ better to maintaine yͤ libertie which wee haue, let vs conſider (as S. Paul ſaith) howe dearely it hath coſt the ſon of God: let vs not enter againe into the bondage of ſatan and of ſin, Rom.6.17. 1.Cor.7.23. ſeeing we are freed thence by the bloude of the only ſonne of God; but let vs walke according vnto that priuiledge which god hath giuen vnto vs, and hold faſt the poſſeſſion therof as long as we liue. And when euerie of vs ſhall haue had ſuch a regarde of himſelfe, let vs doe the like towardes all our brethren, that they whom God hath ioyned vnto vs depart not out of his houſe: but let vs ſo imploy our paines as euery of vs may keepe his eſtate, that none bee diminiſhed, that none wander nor go aſtray. And farther let vs be afraid to make marchandiſe of thoſe ſoules which haue beene redeemed by our Lord Ieſus Chriſt with ſo deare a price, and let vs not ſeeke after our owne commoditie in that behalfe, as we ſee howe retchleſly many giue themſelues ouer in this point, and ſo they may finde the fatter fare, they care not one whit whether they remaine in the Church of God or no. Euen in this citie without ſeeking any farther, we haue examples hereof, namely yͭ men haue bin ſold for redy mony: inſomuch yͭ for yͤ pleaſure of a drunkard or I know not of whō, one hath bin ſold as an open marchādiſe, to yͤ ſame wickednes: ſuch leaudnes hath bin ſeene heere at Geneua. But let vs not take this example for a two or three: but let vs know yͭ God ment in this place to giue a general rule and inſtruction, that wee ought aſmuch as lieth in vs to ſeeke and procure, yͭ they which are of the body of the Church may remaine therein euen vnto yͤ end. Ye ſee in effect what we haue to beare in mind. And if the liberty of yͤ bodies was held ſo deare of God in yͤ time of yͤ lawe, let vs at this day make far greater account of yͤ freedome which our ſoules haue obtained, by the bloud of our Lord Ieſus Chriſt.

Let vs come now vnto yͤ ſecond law which is mētioned in this place. It is ſaid: *That men ſhal diligētly iudge of the leproſie, and take heede thereof, obſeruing all the things which were commanded in the lawe: & that the prieſts of the ſtock of Leuie ſhalbe Iudges, & that the people ſhall ſtand to the iudgement which they ſhal giue*: which they ſhall giue I ſay, not as they luſt themſelues, but as God had made a declaratiō thereof, as we may ſee in Leuiticus from yͤ thirteenth chapter to yͤ fifteenth, where it is fully treted of. Moſes in this place ſpeaketh of it as by yͤ way, and ſaith that they ſhal keepe al yͤ order. And for more ample confirmatiō he addeth: *Remember what G O D did vnto Marie by the way when ye came out of Egypt*. For becauſe Marie & Aaron murmured againſt their brother Moſes Numb.12. for his wiues ſake who was an Aethiopian; they bare themſelues in hand that they ought to bee aduanced in as high a degree as hee: inſomuch that Mary became ſo arrogant & preſumptuous, that ſhee would needs be a Prophetiſe in equall degree with Moſes. But God puniſheth her for ſuch preſumption: Aaron is born withal although he had in like ſort deſerued to be chaſtiſed. Mary therfore was ſtriken with the leproſie, and was ſhut vp by yͤ ſpace of ſeuen dayes. And there ſhe had bin like a rotten carrion all her life long but that Moſes prayed for her, & her ſin was pardoned. Neuertheleſſe he addeth there: If her father had ſpit in her face, ſhe ought to haue hiddē her ſelf for hauing offended him: & therefore ſhe muſt depart (ſaith he) from among yͤ people, that men may know the offence which ſhe hath committed, and at yͤ end of ſeuen days let her returne into yͤ campe. Now God declareth by this example, that ſuch as were ſtriken with this diſeaſe, were ſhut vp.

Now let vs firſt of al note, yͭ the leproſie wherof Moſes ſpeaketh in this place, and which yͤ law treateth of, is not yͭ which we cal yͤ leproſy nowa days: but a far diuerſe thing from it. For this leproſie was not only in yͤ bodies of men & womē, but alſo in houſes. And although we find yͭ other coūtries & nations were touched ſomtimes wͭ this 2.King.5.10 diſeaſe, as we ſee how Naaman yͤ Syrian was, yet was it neuertheles as a particular diſeaſe belonging only to yͤ Iewes: and yͭ was a notable vengeance of God vpon them, to declare his anger & wrath by ſending foorth this leproſie as a viſible ſigne & tokē therof. Ye ſee then what we haue to beare in mind in yͤ firſt place. And yͭ verily which among yͤ Papiſts men call yͤ diſeaſe of S. Mayn or yͤ ſcurfe, was a kind of this leproſie. There were in deed many ſorts of this diſeaſe, as a man may ſee by yͤ place which I haue alledged. And I ſpeak no more of them in this place, than is expedient for the vnderſtanding of the text, and not to make therof any great leſſon. But yet neuertheles it is needefull for vs to obſerue yͭ which I haue touched as it ſhalbe anon more fully declared. Now then we ſee what the leproſie was: to wit, a certaine ſkurfe or ſomtimes a ſpot in the body which had no outward appearance of ſkurfe vpon it: but was a certaine hid and inward diſeaſe, as it were a certaine ſcab within the fleſh, wherin appeared ſome whitenes. Seeing that yͤ leproſie was after yͭ ſort, we ſee nowe that God had a regard of the inſtructing of his people, when hee would haue them which were touched with this diſeaſe, ſet apart from the reſt. And why? Euen to yͤ end yͭ men ſhold be in greater feare of yͤ puniſhment, which was knowen to proceede from the hand of God. If this chaſtiſement had ſlipt away without any account made thereof, it could not haue profited ſo much. God therefore to yͤ intent hee might make this chaſtiſement more notorious, ſtraitly commaunded yͭ hee which was ſtriken with the leproſie, ſhould be ſhut vp, and yͭ he ſhold ſerue for a looking glaſſe for others to look in, yͭ they might bee afraide at yͤ ſight of it & ſay, Alas, ſee ye this poore wretch which is ſtriken wͭ the leproſie? And what ſigne is it? It is god yͭ hath wrought it, his hād hath done it; Alas, euery one of vs hath deſerued aſmuch, and therefore let vs not tempt yͤ patience of our God: if hee ſpare vs, let vs for our part ceaſe to prouoke him to anger. Ye ſee then yͤ admonition & warning which was giuen vnto all mē whē they ſaw a man thus ſhut vp. And this order was obſerued euen as farre as vnto yͤ king himſelf, as we haue an example therof in Ozias, who being not content with yͤ kingdome, would be a prieſt & vſurpe yͤ ſpirituall regiment of the Church, and therfore God ſtrake 2.Chro.2. him with yͤ leproſie, & depoſed him from his roial dignity, and he was according vnto yͤ law ſhut vp all yͤ time of his life. There was yet a ſeconde reaſon of this ſhutting vp. For this diſeaſe might be contagious. And therfore Gods wil was that yͤ infection therof ſhould be remoued from yͤ people, to yͤ intent yͭ al ſhould not be infected with it. But yͤ principall cauſe was, to the end yͤ people might be put in mind, yͭ they ought to be remoued from vncleaneſſe, and from all manner of defilements. And yͭ is the cauſe alſo why yͤ iudging of the leproſie was giuen vnto yͤ prieſts, who were of yͤ ſtocke of Leuy. God appointed not the phiſitions nor ſurgeans iudges, but he wold haue the prieſts take a notice of yͤ leproſie. And if any were ſpotted therewͭ, they had autority to reiect them: & if any were healed thereof, he was likewiſe receiued by thē. For albeit yͭ this diſeaſe was hardly & ſeldom cured, yet was it not incurable. Therfore if ſo be yͭ any were healed, the prieſts were Iudges of it, & when they which were healed preſented themſelues, & had done certain ſolemnities which were required in yͭ behalfe, they came and offered their preſent in the temple, acknowledging what a ſingular benefite God had beſtowed on them. For when a man was healed of that diſeaſe, it was very behoouefull yͭ he ſhoulde make a ſolemne acknowledgment of ſo great a benefite, and ſay: Lorde thou haſt raiſed mee as it were from the deade: for I was a wretched and miſerable carrion; thou hadeſt thruſt mee out of all companie, and nowe behold Lord thou haſt made me whole and ſound, thou haſt reſtored mee vnto my former eſtate: therefore I acknowledge Lorde, that I haue receiued a kinde of reſurrection, conſidering what weakenes & frailtie was in me. It was (I ſay) behoouefull that ſuch a ſolemne acknowledgement ſhould be made. But (as I haue tolde you) the prieſtes were Iudges of this diſeaſe. And why? Becauſe it appertained vnto the ceremonies of the lawe.

Now here we haue to gather a good inſtruction, that is, that firſt although this order of excluding thoſe from our companie which are ſtriken with any euil diſeaſe be not obſerued nowadays, yet notwithſtanding wee muſt not ceaſe to haue an eye vnto the hand of God, that we may fare yͤ better by al yͤ chaſtiſements which he layeth vpon men; neither muſt any of vs waite till he feele the blowes himſelf, but he muſt make his profite by yͤ correctiõs which our Lord ſheweth vs afar off. And therfore when we ſee any of our neighbors afflicted, let vs take a view of our ſelues, and of our own faults, and let vs iudge our ſelues before yͭ God iudge vs. And thereupon being ſorie for our ſins, let vs haſten to draw our ſelues out of them, and not ſtay vntill God viſite vs in the like maner. This is the thing which wee haue to note as touching yͤ firſt point. And for aſmuch as we ſee that God ment to waken yͤ Iewes to yͤ intent they ſhould the better know how to benefite themſelues by this chaſtiſement of yͤ leproſie, let vs nowadayes in all diſeaſes, not onely in this or that ſicknes, but in all afflictions which God ſendeth vs, know yͭ it is all one as if he gaue vs a warning not to ſleepe in our ſins, and not to abuſe his patience. Lo what we haue to beare in mind.

Now as touching yͤ ceremony it hath bin very fondly & fooliſhly abuſed in yͤ Popedome, & the abuſe therof raigneth in yͤ ſynagogue yet ſtil to this day. Firſt, for that hearing yͤ name of leproſie, they ſuppoſed it was yͤ ſcurfe, and ſo haue taken the one for the other. And therupon what haue they done? Forſooth their officers muſt iudge of this diſeaſe, whether any be touched wͭ it or no. And by what knowledge? They ſende to the barbers and to the phiſitians, and when they haue iudged therof, then they themſelues afterward giue their verdit. And by what right? Becauſe god ordained yͤ prieſts to be Iudges of yͤ leproſie. That is true. But yͤ prieſts, whom God orned were of yͤ ſtocke of Leuie. Now ſince yͤ comming of our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt, this Prieſthoode
Hebr.5.5. hath beene transferred vnto him: as the Apoſtle ſaith in the Epiſtle to the Hebrewes. I know the Papiſts are ſo ſhameles yͭ they ſtick not to mock God openly, in ſaying that it came from Leuie vnto the Pope. But the Apoſtle expreſly declareth, yͭ it belongeth vnto him, who by a ſolemne oth was appointed according vnto the order of Melchiſedech. And becauſe our lord Ieſus Chriſt being now riſen from the deade dieth no more; the prieſthood likewiſe muſt remaine vnto him in his own perſon, & he hath no ſucceſſour. The Papiſts therfore rob Chriſt of his dignity, when they ſnatch in ſuch wiſe vnto themſelues, that which is belonging vnto him. And moreouer let vs note (as I haue already touched) yͭ they play the beaſts ouergroſſly in this point: for god ſpake of the leproſie which was a diſeaſe which he ſent vpon the people of Iſrael, and they transfer it to the ſcurfe, a thing far different from it. But for al this, they haue not left to reare vp an other tyranny: for they ſay yͭ this is a ceremonial lawe: I grant it. Therfore it importeth a figure. Al this is true. We muſt come then now vnto the trueth & ſubſtance which is correſpõdent therunto. They ſay that ſinne is the leproſie. Well let all this bee graunted vnto them. It muſt be purged therfore (ſay they) & the prieſts muſt be Iudges of it. Yea but let them enter into the place of Ieſus Chriſt, and then ſhall they be taken for Iudges: but vntill that Ieſus Chriſt be depoſed from his prieſtly dignity, which God his father gaue him, it appertaineth not vnto any liuing creature in the whole worlde. Wee muſt therefore conclude, that the Papiſts are trecherous traitours in that they beare vs in hande that they are ſucceeded in the roome of Ieſus Chriſt, to iudge the ſpirituall leproſie. And hereupon they haue ordained the law of Chriſt. That is the very ground of their confeſſion or ſhrift. For there is not one worde for it in the holy ſcripture: but they vſe this ſuttle cauilling: Sinne is the leproſie, & the prieſtes muſt bee Iudges of it, but we are prieſts, therefore the iudging is ours. But wee haue alreadie ſhewed that by vſurping the prieſthood, they are theeues and treacherous traitours, and that they lift themſelues vp againſt the ſonne of God. Take that for one note. But let vs proceede farther. A man cannot iudge (ſay they) without hee knowe the cauſe; and the cauſe cannot bee knowen, without there bee a confeſſion of the ſinne; and therefore it followeth that euery one is bound to confeſſe his ſinnes once a yeare. For al are ſtained with this ſpiritual leproſie, becauſe al are ſinners. As touching that which they ſay, that no mã can iudge except he know the cauſe, it is true: but he muſt not iudge by coniectures & vpon vncertainty, as they doe. For I pray you, iudge they vpon knowledge, when they cannot skill to diſcerne whether they which confeſſe themſelues in their eares diſſemble, with them or ſpeak the truth? Behold, a man commeth to confeſſion, and who knoweth what his minde or will is? Who knoweth any of theſe thinges, whether he mocke the prieſt or no; whether he ſpeaketh any thing by conſtraint, whether he keepe any thing cloſe for ſhame that he hath of it? What knowe they of all theſe thinges? And therefore theſe Popiſh Prieſtes cannot iudge vpon knowledge of the cauſe. Againe it is well knowen how great clerks they be: inſomuch that when a thing is told them; they can hardly diſcerne either the thing it ſelfe or the end or qualitie thereof. And though they coulde, yet were not that ynough: Men know what maner of Iudges & howe competent they be. And in very deede they ſay well, that in confeſſion there muſt be ſome degree of knowledge: but a little after they ſay, that it skilleth not greatly whether there be any or no; for autority abideth ſtill, albeit that knowledge bee wanting: they gainſay themſelues manifeſtly, for firſt they ſay that there muſt bee a degree of knowledge, and afterwardes they ſay that it is

not ſo neceſſarie, but that they may forbeare it. And a mans eye may bee witneſſe, howe they diſcharge themſelues heerein. It followeth then that they cannot haue knowledge of the cauſe, at leaſtwiſe ſuch lawful knowledge, as may ſuffice them to giue their verdict and iudgement thereuppon. But to ſpeake in a word, theſe abuſes of theirs are ouer vaine and childiſh, when they ſeek after ſuch ſottiſh reaſons as to ſay: We are Iudges: for wee are the ſucceſſours of the prieſts of the law. But this ſucceſſion (as I haue tolde you) appertaineth to none but vnto our Lord Ieſus Chriſt. And in verie deed the prieſthood of Leuie was ordayned to continue vntill his appearance in this world. And for that cauſe Gen.14.20. Abraham alſo who was the father of the church, payed tythes to him in the perſon of Melchiſedech. For when he offered the tenthes to Melchiſedech, hee offered them as it were vnto his ſuperiour, But Leuy was yet in the loynes of Abraham (as the Apoſtle ſaieth): whereby we ſee that the prieſthood of Leuie was inferiour vnto the prieſthood of Ieſus Chriſt, or rather, was nothing in compariſon of it, & that the prieſthood of Melchiſedech muſt returne againe in truth.

But now hauing declared this ſo groſſe abuſe which raigneth in the Popedome, let vs returne vnto the right and pure inſtruction which God ment to giue vnto vs in this lawe. Wee haue already briefly declared how hee meant to warne the faithfull, that they ought to purge away all manner of defilements from among them. Wee haue not at this day the outward ceremony: but the ſubſtance and trueth thereof remaineth in his full force. Let vs therefore looke diligently vnto our ſelues, and remoue from vs all vncleanneſſe, to the intent we be not ſtained with it: For whereunto had God reſpect in this Lawe. And to this ende ſerueth excommunication nowadays: for God wil haue ſome diſcipline in his Church. And this is not ordained by mẽ: but yͤ holy Ghoſt hath deliuered a rule for it. If wee haue this order, it is grounded on God, we haue the truth of the ceremoniall Lawe. And wee haue no neede to ſeek farther after the pelting traſh of the Papiſtes, whereby they make themſelues a laughingſtocke to the worlde: but farther beſides this order of excommunication, wee are warned in generall not to intermedle our ſelues with any filthie defilements: for we ſhall ſoone be ſtained by them. We ſee what frailtie is in vs, ſo that although euery of vs keepe good watch & warde, yet can we not liue in the worlde among ſo many defilementes and corruptions; but wee ſhall draw ſome ſpotting from them: and the iniquities which raigne, are as deadly poyſons to infect vs, except we withdraw our ſelues far from ſuch filthines, that wee be not ſtayned by them. And that is the cauſe why it is purpoſely repeated in this place, Take heede, looke narrowly vnto it, obſerue it diligently. It ſeemeth that many words are beſtowed vpon a thing of no great importance. But God tendeth vnto this ende which wee haue ſaide, that men ſhould not thorow their little heede taking, be as it were limed with the defilements of this worlde. And by this outward order, he ment to inure thẽ to a more diligent watching euery one ouer himſelfe. Let vs therefore giue diligent heede heereunto, and when we perceiue that we are in daunger of being depraued and corrupted by any mans company, let vs flie farre from it: for albeit I goe not and welter in wickedneſſe with him; yet ſhall I haue ynough and too much too in my ſelfe. And what a thing were it for me to tempt God? I ſee well that I cannot be but the worſe by this or by that mans company, and yet for all that, I will not ſhun them; but I will goe welter and wallow in the mire with them: and what a notable wickedneſſe were this? Am not I worthie to be infected with their filthines and vncleanneſſe? Yes verily. And therefore let vs in generall knowe, that all wicked examples, and all offences, are to be remoued and raked out of yͤ Church of God, & that yͤ diſcipline which God hath ordained, & which we ſee that the Apoſtles vſed, muſt be pra- 1.Cor.5.5. ctiſed, that is, excommunication muſt raigne & beare rule. And moreouer let euery of vs in his owne behalfe, take heede, wee haunt no wicked company, but (as S. Paul warneth vs) obſerue and 2.Theſſ.3.14 note them which are ſtained with any euil blot, and withdraw our ſelues from them: that it may not onely put them to greater ſhame, but alſo, yͭ the infection breake not out vpon al, & that the miſchiefe being of it ſelfe contagious, go not ſo far, as to infect them who before were pure and cleare, & ſo fall on the whole flocke of God. And this is it which we haue to beare in mind in this place.

And now Moſes for a more ample confirmation (as wee haue already touched) alleageth in this place yͤ example of his ſiſter. And hereby we are done to vnderſtand, that he ſpareth not his own ſtocke & kindred. For it was to his owne infamy & reproch, that his ſiſter had bin thus chaſtiſed of God. But what? Both in this & in al other things, we ſee, that he wold not couer yͤ ſhame & filthines of his own lynage. For why? Hee was a true and faithful ſeruant of god. And therfore he always condemneth wickednes with great liberty, although ſome ſhame redoũded therby, both to himſelf, & alſo to his parentage. Therefore in this place he ſetteth forth his owne ſiſter for an example. And hereby wee are warned, not to bee won to beare with wickednes in fauour either of bloud, or of kindred; as wee are accuſtomablie wont to do. For we had rather haue the wickednes encreaſe, than to grieue any of our kinſmen or friends. And therof it commeth yͭ all right is peruerted, and yͭ the truth is turned into a lie, becauſe yͤ wickednes is borne withall. But wee haue in this place an example to yͤ contrary, that is, yͭ Moſes to ſerue God yͤ more faithfully, hath no reſpect of perſons, he hath no eye to any worldly cõſiderations: inſomuch that euen when his own ſiſter might ſerue for yͤ inſtruction of yͤ people, he ſpareth her not. Let this be noted for one point.

Now by yͤ way we may behold in yͤ example of Aaron & of Marie, how God ment therby yͤ better to confirme yͤ calling of Moſes. For Aaron enuieth him for it. That which before fell out in yͤ caſe of Core, Dathan, and Abiram, and yͤ reſt of Numb.16.

the tribes,when euery man ſought to obtaine yͤ prieſthood, was no ſuch ſtraunge or notorious a thing as is this,when his owne borne brother riſeth againſt him on the one ſide,and his ſiſter on the other, and murmure againſt him: whereby we may ſee that there was no compact made for the aduancing of the dignity of his owne houſe: and therfore it ſerued the better to authoriſe the calling of Moſes. And in very deed God ſhewed that it was he who conducted and defended him. That is to be noted for one point.

Againe,what a mercifull dealing was it,that yͤ children of Aaron were ſuffered to ſucceede ſtill in the prieſthood?For although Moſes was much more great and excellent than Aaron was(as it is declared in the 12.Chapt. of yͤ booke of numbers) : yet his children were of the common order of yͤ Leuites which ſerued yͤ high prieſt, and were kept far from that dignity. And what was yͤ reaſon hereof? If Moſes had promoted his owne children,it would haue bin ſaide by and by, that he had brought this to paſſe through his craftie wilines,& that he had pretended yͤ name of God onely for to aduance yͤ dignitie and honor of his owne houſe:but in yͭ his own children are in this wiſe diſplaced, and yͤ children of Aaron are preferred: wee ſee it is Gods worke,and that it proceedeth from his gouernment, ſo as the mouth of wicked mē muſt needs be ſtopped,and that all muſt confeſſe yͭ the law and whatſoeuer it containeth,is not forged nor counterfaited by men,or ſuttlely deuiſed: but that God is the author thereof. As touching Moſes it is ſaid in that place of
Numb.12.6. Numbers:If I ſpeake vnto my ſeruants the Prophets,I will ſpeake vnto them by dreames or by viſions: becauſe that Aaron & Mary ſaid:What? dwelleth not yͤ ſpirit of god in vs aſwel as in Moſes?And muſt he alonely beare rule?And are we no bodie? Well(ſaith God)if you were yͤ greateſt Prophets that euer were,yet keep I one meaſure towards my Prophets. I ſpeake vnto them by dreames & by viſions.But I ſpeake vnto Moſes as vnto my familiar friend; I ſpeake vnto him as a man would ſpeak vnto his fellow & companion. And ſo Moſes was aduaunced to an higher degree,and God ment to magnifie his grace & fauour in yͤ man.Therefore we ſee how he diſgraced both Mary and Aarō,becauſe they murmured in that ſort: but yet for all that,yee ſee that yͤ children of Aaron ſucceeded in the prieſthood, although their father was vnworthy of yͤ honor, and deſerued rather to be degraded, than to en-
Num.16,31. ioy it. What befell to Core , Dathan & Abiram? The earth ſwallowed them vp al aliue.And why? Becauſe of their murmuring. And had not Aarō committed yͤ like fault? And yet notwithſtāding God pardoneth him yͤ ſinne.And when we heare
1.Sam.2.30. that the children of Elie were depoſed from the prieſthood,and yͭ the dignitie therof was beſtowed vpō Samuel,becauſe they behaued thēſelues ſo euilly in their office: yͭ is alſo a like example. And why then doth not God yͤ like vnto yͤ ſtocke of Aaron? Let vs(as I tolde you)acknowledge in this caſe a meruailous mercy of God.Yea,and againe when it ſeemeth good vnto him, he puniſheth faults rigorouſly. If he will pardon them: it is at his choice. Therefore we muſt not binde God to any Law, to haue him to puniſh ſins according vnto our luſting:he will doe it when hee ſhall find it good. And moreouer if it pleaſe him to vſe mercy, ſuch ſins as are committed ſhalbe wiped out;at leaſtwiſe they ſhal not be ſo hardly nor ſo grieuouſly puniſhed.That is to bee noted for one point. But let vs nowe returne to apply yͤ example of yͤ preſent matter which is treated,to yͤ end we may know yͤ intent & meaning of god. Remember(ſaith he)what was done vnto Mary by yͤ way when ye came out of Epypt,as if he had ſaid,my minde is that who ſo is ſtriken with the leproſie,ſhalbe ſeparated and remoued from the people,to the intent hee may ſerue for a looking glaſſe for others,that they which ſee him may be put in mind to ſay: ſee here a plague which God hath ſent, beholde a teſtimony yͭ God is Iudge. Seeing this is his appointment,let vs fare yͤ better by ſuch examples.So we ſee yͭ which I declared more plainly afore,to wit,that God meant yͭ this withdrawing and reiecting of ſuch as were leprous,ſhold ſerue for a common inſtruction & leſſon vnto yͤ reſt of yͤ people,to occaſion them to walke in their dueties in all feare & heedfulnes. And here firſt of al Marie was taught to humble her ſelfe before God.For if ſhe would not knowe her fault & be aſhamed of it, & confes it,ſhe deſerued to be cleane cut off without any remiſſion.And God had begun to work ſo violent a correction, that ſhe ſeemed but a carrion & rottennes , and was changed in a moment in ſuch ſort, that a man would think ſhe could not but fall in pieces through ſuch an infectious filth & rottennes.And therefore it ſtood her in hand to knowe her own caſe.And hereby we are warned,yͭ when any of vs are viſited by yͤ hand of God, it is high time to humble our ſelues,and to know yͭ it is all one,as if God did ſpit in our face.When a father ſpitteth in his childs face,it is a ſigne(as it is ſaide there)yͭ he deteſteth him. Now if ſo be we be afflicted by yͤ hand of God,we haue great occaſion to looke vnto our ſelues, & to be beaten down & to feele our own filthines, & not to feele it onely in hart:but alſo frankly to confes it before men,to yͤ end yͭ God may be glorified. That is one thing which we haue to do according to yͤ exhortation which we haue in this place. And ſecondly let vs be willing to ſerue other for an example.If when we haue offended God , he chaſtiſe vs; let vs be an inſtruction vnto others,and let vs beare it patiently,and not be grieued with it,if ſo be that al may turne vnto the glorie of God and the welfare of our neighbors. Let vs be contented with it, as good reaſon is we ſhold be. For we may not be more priuiledged than the ſiſter of Moſes, & if we be rubbed on the gall (as we ſay) wee may not grue at it, ſeeing that Moſes ſpared not his own ſiſter. For when God taketh on him the office of a Iudge, and giueth men commiſſion to denounce his wrath or other like thinges by his worde , it is good reaſon that they ſhoulde diſcharge their duties in that behalfe. As for them which think thus;We our ſelues ſhalbe hindered thereby,let them know yͭ it ſhal profite them nothing to ſeeke to auoid it in that wiſe:for if they

breake the ordinance of God, they ſhalbe confounded. Therfore ſith we ſee ſo notable an example in the perſon of Marie, let vs knowe that God ment to warne vs, that we ought not to take it in euill part to be chaſtiſed at his hand: but rather to know our faults and to be ſorie for them, and thereupon to endeuor that the puniſhment which we haue ſuffered, may ſerue all others for an example.

Now let vs kneele downe before the maieſty of our good God with acknowledgement of our faultes, praying him to make vs to feele them better than we haue done, & that we may endeuor w̄ all our might, not only to keepe our ſelues in that holy vnion which he hath made with vs, but alſo to win them which are yet eſtraunged, and to confirme thoſe which are already called with vs into his Church: and that therwithal we may not ſuffer the name of our God to be vnhallowed, but endeuour to remoue our ſelues from all filthes and defilementes, that ſeeing it hath pleaſed him to ſanctifie vs for himſelfe, wee may remaine temples of his holy ſpirite, and ſacred veſſels to be applied vnto any vſe whereunto he hath appointed vs, that is, that his righteouſnes may ſhine in vs, ſo as wee may neuer deſire any other thing than to frame our ſelues in all points vnto the obeying of his holy lawe. That it will pleaſe him to graunt this grace not onely vnto vs but alſo vnto all people and Nations of &c.

On Wedneſday the v. of Februarie, 1556.

The Cxxxix. Sermon, which is the fourth vpon the foure & twentith Chapter.

10 When thou lendeſt any thing vnto thy neighbour, thou ſhalt not enter into his houſe to take his pledge.

11 But thou ſhalt abide without, and the man which borroweth of thee, ſhall bring the pledge out of the doores vnto thee.

12 And if the man be poore, thou ſhalt not ſleepe with his pledge:

12 But ſhalt reſtore him the pledge when the ſunne goeth downe, that he may ſleepe in his raiment and bleſſe thee, and it ſhalbe righteouſneſſe vnto thee before the Lord thy God.

WE muſt call to minde in this place, the ſentence of the Prophet which our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt alſo alleageth: Oſe.6.7. Matt.9.13. Mercie is more worth than ſacrifices. For if we think to pay God by offering him this or that which we haue ſpoyled from our neighbours, he will deteſt and abhorre both vs and our offerings alſo. For why? God will not chaunge his nature according vnto our luſt: and there is nothing more properly belonging vnto him than kindneſſe and goodneſſe. For hee indeede is the very fountaine and roote of it. And therefore ſeeing it is ſo, muſt he not either transfigure himſelfe, or deteſt vs, when hee ſhall ſee vs as cruell as wilde beaſtes, ſo as euery of vs endeuoureth nought elſe but to deuour the ſubſtance and goods of his brother? Yes verelie. For he cannot like of cruelty as long as he abideth like vnto himſelfe. Let vs therefore diligently note, that except wee be pitifull, except wee haue compaſſion on them which ſtande in neede of our aide to ſuccour them, except we vſe gentlenes and humanity towards our brethren, we can haue no acceſſe vnto our God, but al the offerings we can preſent him withall, ſhal ſtinke in his ſight, and he will refuſe them. And that is the cauſe why the Prophet expreſly ſaith: That mercie is better than all the ſacrifices in the worlde. True it is indeede that God ſetteth more by his owne honour than hee doeth by the life of men: as reaſon good hee ſhoulde ſo. But here the caſe ſtandeth, to know whether we ſerue God truely or hypocritically. For if I loue God, doubtleſſe I will declare this loue of mine towards them which beare his ymage: and wee muſt haue recourſe vnto that which ſainct Iohn ſaieth: 1.Ioh.4.20. That if when we dwel with men and liue together with them, wee beare them no loue, is it not plaine mockerie to proteſt that wee loue GOD, whome wee ſee not? Therfore all ſuch as vaunt themſelues, that they loue God, and yet are ſo ful of crueltie that they wil ſpoile poore folkes of whatſoeuer they can poſſiblie catch from them, without all pitie or compaſſion; are no better than hypocrites & ſhameleſſe lyers. And ſo we ſee the reaſon of this ſentence, and why God, albeit hee priſeth his honour highly, hath ſaide notwithſtanding, that he will not eſteeme ſo much of all the ſacrifices which men make vnto him: as he will do of the mercie which men ſhewe one vnto an other. For indeede our almeſdeedes are thoſe ſweete ſmelling ſacrifices, which God accepteth: Hebr.13.16. as the Apoſtle ſaith in the Epiſtle to the Hebrewes. And heereuppon is that lawe of God which wee haue nowe hearde, grounded; where it is ſaide: *That if wee lende monie vnto a poore man, wee muſt not goe and ranſacke his houſe to finde out a pledge for our owne liking, but that he muſt bring that which hee hath.* And then we may keepe the pledge without doing of him any wrong. And why ſo? For God permitteth vs ſo to doe: If not, hee will haue them to carie backe againe the gage which the poore man brought, as for example: if it be his bed whereon hee ſleepeth, or his couerlet,or his coate,or his gowne, ſo that hee remaineth naked & vnclothed,God wil not haue vs to keepe ſuch a pledge. For when wee haue confeſſed that wee ought in deede to be pitifull, and that wee are farre from beeing of the number of the children of God if we vſe no brotherly loue one towards another:when we haue ſaid all this: yet wee know not what the thing meaneth, when we ſhould come vnto the practiſe of it. For if any ſtande in neede of our helpe,wee haue forgotten this generall doctrine: Wee are alwayes good diuines to ſpeake in the ayre . If a man ſet vs down a doctrine which preſſeth vs not, euery man is readie to yeeld his conſent thereunto,but the practiſe thereof ſheweth that we bee verie loath to accorde vnto it. And although wee confeſſe that God hath wel ſpoken; yet wee will not put that in practiſe which is tolde vs, if it preiudice our gayne and commoditie; and therefore GOD is faine to ſpecifie things vnto vs more particularly . When hee hath once declared that there is nothing more acceptable vnto him, than the pitie which wee haue on our neighbours to ſuccour and relieue them,he muſt point foorth ſome ſpeciall kindes therof with his finger: and when he hath taught vs to bee mercifull,hee muſt ſhew vs how and in what maner,& ſo condemne our crueltie,which we(if it were poſſible) would excuſe. As for example,if this ſo ſpecial a declaration ſhould not be made, the ſentence of the Prophet would be receiued without any gainſaying, That mercie is better than ſacrifices: but none for all that will come to this point, & to this reaſon,that a man muſt not take ſuch a pledge of a poore man, as he ſhall account neceſſarie for his owne vſe. For men will ſay: Is this any crueltie? He commeth to borrow of mee, and I may deny him if I liſted: but if I doe him ſuch a pleaſure as to lend him my money:I wil haue ſome aſſurance for it. And ſo a mã wil not acknowledge it to be crueltie to take any mans coat or couering to gage.It will be alwayes ſayde,Why?I may lawfully doe it. For I lende him my money, and it may bee gaynfull vnto him: I leaue him the whole profite of it,I deſire but to ſaue my ſelfe harmleſſe, and not to looſe the principal.I deceiue him not of a farthing: I take no vſurie for my money,nor any thing at all: and why then ſhould I be condemned? Thus men woulde excuſe themſelues. But what? God will bee the Iudge of our dealings.Yee ſee then the cauſe(as I haue told you) why God preſſeth vs to a ſpeciall poynt:becauſe the generall doctrine is ouer coldly taken of vs, and woulde not leade vs ſo farre as were requiſite . Let vs therefore beare in minde that which is here declared. Firſt it is ſayde: *That a man ſhall not goe and ranſacke his neighbours houſe to take a pledge from thence , when hee woulde lende him a peece of money.* Nowe the cauſe why this is ſpoken, is not onely (as ſome haue thought)for that it were a putting of poore men to ſhame, to goe and ſee howe naked their whole houſe is: God had no regarde of any ſuch thing: but hee meant rather to brydle the couetous deſires of the riche. For wee knowe howe couetous our eyes are to drawe thinges away, and euery man is verye ſharpe ſighted for his owne profite. If I enter into an houſe, I will haue an eye by and by on all the fayreſt thinges: and when I haue requeſted to haue this and that corner ſhewed mee; if I ſee any thing which liketh mee, I beginne to ſay: This is good houſholde ſtuffe:yea this will ſtande mee in ſteede. I will haue it (ſay I); and the poore man cannot tell what to anſwere: for hee is at my mercie. If hee denie it; O (ſay I) there is no dealing with you: goe your wayes : it is no pitie to helpe you. And thus a poore man ſhall bee helde as it were vppon the racke. Yee ſee then the meaning of this lawe, when our Lorde forbad a man to enter into his neighbours houſe to ranſacke it for a pledge. For why? He which entreth cannot iudge what the poore man, which deſireth to bee ſuccoured might beſt ſpare: but lucre (as I told you) blindeth vs ; and when wee bee once forepoſſeſſed with ſuch deſire , wee iudge no longer what is rightfull, becauſe euery of vs will conclude : O I muſt aske this. And why? Becauſe it will bee good for mee. Wee ſee then now the reaſon of this firſt part.

But if a man bee at his owne free choyce to bring what pledge hee will, ſo as hee bee preſſed: hee may then withdrawe himſelfe aſide & beware that hee bee not trodden vnder foote, nor pinched beyonde meaſure : hee may beethinke himſelfe what is to bee done , hee may aduiſe himſelfe by his owne counſayle, there is no man to control him,or to diſturbe the ſtuffe of his houſe: and then a man may take the pledge to aſſure his money . Nowe becauſe there may bee ſometimes ſuch vrgent neceſſitie, that a man will ſome time ſhift him ſelfe to his ſhirte to haue ſomewhat to eate: our Lorde prouideth farther in this caſe to remedie it, and therefore hee commaundeth the pledge to bee reſtored againe , when a man ſhall perceiue, that a poore man cannot miſſe it. For in ſuch a caſe a man muſt bee touched with greater compaſſion, for two cauſes: the one is,becauſe that when a man putteth himſelfe beſide his bedding and his clothing, it is eaſie to iudge and to gather, that hee is come to greate extremitie, and to the fartheſt degree of pouertie. That is one poynt to bee noted . The other is in conſidering of this poynt,what difference there is, whether a man dye for hunger or for colde. This is but to change his torment: this is not to ſuccour him.

I lende a man money, and hee buyeth bread therewith to eate, and in the meane time, hee is froſen to death through mee, and doe I releeue him then? So then wee ought in ſuch a caſe to bee mooued with compaſſion, or elſe there is no humanitie in vs . So then for this cauſe GOD will haue the pledge reſtored againe, when wee ſee that the thing wee take is neceſſarie for the preſeruing of a mans life: as is his cote,his doublet, his bedde, his couering, or ſuch like things.

I graunt that according vnto the rigour of ciuill iuſtice, this is not obſerued : and God alſo hath not giuen it in this place for a ciuil order : but hee meant to preſcribe a rule for euery man to followe of his owne free will. As many things are permitted vs before men,of which notwithſtanding wee ſhal bee accountable before God, although wee eſcape the handes of earthly Iudges. There is no man will let mee from vſing the vtmoſt rigour I can, towardes him which oweth mee any thing : and yet when I ſee hee is behinde hande with mee, and that there is no guile nor malice in him, if I for all that do cauſe him to bee caſt into priſon, if I rid him of al that he hath, if I leaue and forſake him, doubtles I do him wrong in the ſight of God. Nowe ciuil iuſtice can ſet downe no other order, but that all muſt be done as I will haue it. Yea, but (as it hath beene declared heretofore) when we ſhal haue beene excuſed before men, it is not to be ſayde therefore, that wee ſhall not bee culpable before God. For the lawe requireth a farre other perfection than earthly and common iuſtice doeth.

So then let vs note, that although it was lawfull for the Iewes as touching earthly iuſtice, to take any gage they liſted; yet doeth God condemne it for intollerable crueltie. And if this were in the time of the lawe; how much greater reaſon is there for the practiſing of it nowadayes, when wee haue more occaſion of exerciſing ſuch humanitie and gentlenes one towards another? For we muſt returne vnto this principle & ground, that Gods will is that wee ſhould reſemble him, becauſe hee hath adopted vs for his children, and ſhewed himſelfe to bee our father. God hath in deede alwayes ſhewed himſelfe ſuch a one: but at this day in the perſon of our Lord Ieſus Chriſt, he hath diſplayed
Luke.1.78. and ſhewen foorth the bowels of his mercie, as the ſcripture ſpeaketh: for it cannot ſufficiently expreſſe the infinit bountie and goodnes, which God hath ſhewed vnto vs in our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt. Sith it is ſo that God hath made vs to feele more than euer heretofore his ineſtimable loue, ſo much the more ought we to enforce our ſelues on our ſide, to followe him, & to conforme our ſelues vnto his example. Therefore if wee be ſo cruell as to let them dye for want & neede, which deſire and ſeeke after our helpe: or if wee ſpoyle them of that which they cannot forbeare and liue; there is ſo much the leſſe excuſe for vs, and our ſinne is double and farre more haynous nowadayes. And therefore let vs knowe that God ſpake not onely vnto the Iewes for the time of the lawe, but that this rule muſt abide in full force, vntill the ende of the worlde: and that as this ſentence was alleaged by our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt: That mercie is better than ſacrifice: to ſhewe that it appertaineth vnto the Chriſtian Church, ſo all the kindes of mercie which are dependant vppon it, are belonging vnto vs: and wee muſt exerciſe mercie, not according vnto our owne fancie, but as God ſheweth vs, according to the declaration thereof which wee haue in this place. For what elſe is this lawe which Moſes hath here ſet downe in writing, but an expoſition of that ſentence which the Prophet hath more generally ſet downe? Yee ſee then in effect what we haue to beare in minde.

And hereby wee are taught likewiſe not to ouer greeue ſuch as for their needes doe come to ſeeke releefe at our handes. Euery man muſt haue an eye vnto his owne abilitie what hee may doe, and not trample his neighbour beeyonde meaſure vnder foote. The very thing wherein wee ought to holde our ſelues ſtreight, is that euery of vs hauing an eye to his owne abilitie, muſt doe his indeuour to the vttermoſt without ſparing of himſelfe. For wee muſt exact of our ſelues that which our Lorde hath commaunded vs, and wee muſt ſtrayne our ſelues in that behalf to the vttermoſt of our power. Wee muſt ſuccour thoſe whome wee ſee in neceſſitie, and not tarrie vntill men conſtrayne vs thereunto. For (as I tolde you) God will peraduenture lay the brydle on our necke as touching ciuill order, howbeit that ſhalbee but to trye our charitie the better. If men reſtraine vs from beeing cruell, and from vſing ſuch outragious libertie as otherwiſe we woulde vſe: it is a ſigne that wee beare no reuerence vnto God, and that the ſeruice which we yeeld vnto him is not of good will, but of compulſion. But if men let vs alone, ſo as wee may doe the woorſt wee can, in tormenting and vexing poore needie wretches, and yet wee are lead through a curteous and gentle affection, not onely not to vexe and harme them beyonde al meaſure, but to deale indifferently with them, and (in fewe wordes) not to deale otherwiſe with them than wee woulde haue others to deale with vs in the like caſe: our ſo dooing and our ſuccouring of them, when no man driues vs thereunto, is a ſigne that there is founde charitie in vs, and yͤ in louing God wee do alſo ſhew and prooue in deede that wee are his children, and that wee liue in good brotherhood, and mutuall agreement with our neighbours.

Nowe to the intent wee ſhoulde be the eaſier led heereunto, Moſes alleageth in this place two reaſons the better to perſuade vs. Firſt he ſayeth: *That hee vnto whome wee ſhall reſtore and bring the pledge againe, ſhall bleſſe vs.* And ſecondly hee addeth: *That is ſhalbee righteouſneſſe vnto vs before the Lorde our God.* Nowe theſe two reaſons are not ſuperfluous, conſidering what holdfaſtes we are, and how euery one wil ſafely prouide for himſelfe. We think that the whole earth will fayle vs; and when wee lende, it is with an heauie heart: when the money is once ſcaped out of our handes, wee thinke our ſelues ſo much impayred, and wee fetch deepe ſighes for it. God therefore ſeeing men ſo giuen vnto their owne lucre, and that they haue no freehearted liberalitie, or at leaſt wiſe are not ſo much enclyned vnto it as were requiſite, vſeth firſt a perſwaſion and ſayeth: *That the poore ſhall bleſſe vs*, that is to ſay, hee ſhall pray for vs.

Nowe I knowe, that the wealthie, and theſe greate deuowrers, and theſe ſeagulfes which ſeeke nought elſe but to ſwallowe vp all, will make none account of this bleſſing. Tuſhe (ſay they) he is but a poore beggarly knaue, and what care I whether he pray for mee or no. See I pray you what theſe deſpiſers of God, & theſe heatheniſh folke ſay. But let vs note wel, that it is not without cauſe that God declareth in this place, that it is a ſingular benefit to haue a poore man pray for vs. For if a poore man crye (as it is ſayde) hee ſhalbee hearde. Exod.22.27 Hee needeth neither man of lawe, nor Proctour to handle his cauſe before God with any great Rhetorike. If a poore man bee vniuſtly borne downe by mee, and I haue wrought him any oppreſſion or violence, or haue ſpoyled him of that which was his, or if I haue greeued and troubled him in any ſorte, although hee vtter not a woorde, but onely ſigheth to himſelfe: yet may not I thinke that I ſhall eſcape the hande of GOD. There ſhall neede neither witneſſes nor writings, nor great inqueſt to caſt mee; for one alonely ſigh of the poore man, ſhall kindle ſuch a fire of Gods vengeance vppon mee, as ſhall neuer bee quenched. For the complayninges which the poore make againſt them which haue moleſted them, are heard of God; they pearce thorough the clowdes, and come into heauen.

Alſo on the contrarie ſide when a poore man hauing receiued releefe of any man, ſhall ſay: Bleſſed bee hee which tooke pitie on mee. This woorde is as if an Angell of heauen had made ſuite for him. Nowe ſeeing God ſayeth it is ſo, let vs not thinke that it is in vayne, or by way of mockerie. And therefore let vs learne to eſteeme more than wee are wont to doe, of the prayers which the poore make that are relieued and ſuccoured by vs. For although we beare our ſelues in hand that they are nothing, yet hath God declared of what force they are, & commendeth them vnto vs in this place for a ſingular thing.

Nowe this ought to teache vs, not to deſpiſe the poore, nor to diſdayne to heare them, or to giue them a good looke: for God ſayeth that hee heareth them, and that they are ſuch as haue readieſt acceſſe vnto him. They are heard both in their complaintes and in their prayers and petitions. For God doeth more for them by an hundredth part than wee which are but wormes of the earth, will vouchſafe to doe. The thing then which wee haue to beare in mynde is, that if a poore man come and deſire helpe of vs, and wee thinke wee ſhall but looſe that which we beſtowe vppon him, becauſe hee is not of abilitie to recompence vs, & that although hee ſhould liue an hundred yeres after his death, yet he ſhould not requite vs the good turne and pleaſure hee receiued of vs. We ought to bethinke our ſelues thus: Well: in deede as touching the worlde he cannot benefite mee, he can neither coole me nor heat me: but before God ſuch a bleſſing as proceedeth from him, ſhalbee heard. If wee conſider this: is not the recompence which wee ſhal haue in the kingdome, better than all that which might be beſtowed vppon vs in this frayle and tranſitory life? Yes verily, if wee haue any faith; if we haue any aſſurance of the heauenly life, and are not altogither beaſtly beſotted with this preſent worlde.

And although a poore man become vnthankfull, yet ſhall not wee therefore faile to be bleſſed of God. For the heate which hee ſhall haue receiued by vs, when wee haue giuen him his coate or his couering, ſhall bleſſe vs. And if hee bee ſo wicked as to forget it, as many are, with whome it is growen as it were vnto a common cuſtome, that when they are releeued they will not vouchſafe to acknowledge the good which is done vnto them: but rather there is nowadayes ſuch pride in ſome of them that they wil thinke a man is the more bounde vnto them for that hee hath done them all the pleaſure in the worlde; inſomuch that ſome will ſay, what hath he done vnto mee, but hee was bounde to doe more? And what is this in reſpect of all that which hee oweth mee? Such is the vnthankfulneſſe which yee ſhall ſee ſome poore folke to vſe. But, as I haue ſayde; although they bee dumbe and ſpeake not a worde: yet the good turne which wee haue done them ſhall ſerue vs for a bleſſing before God. As on the contrarie ſide men are wont to ſaye: When a man ſhall holde his peace and ſuffer him ſelfe to pyne away in his miſerie, and yet men will not vouchſafe to take pitie on him, let him remaine quiet and patient in his aduerſitie as long as he will. (Though I ſay ſuch exãples are wondrous rare: for wee ſhall heare nothing but complaints and murmuringes although there bee no greate cauſe why.) But let vs graunt that ſome man were ſo quyet, that hee will not vtter one word, though hee bee not releeued at his neede: Shall wee for all that bee quit before God, although there bee no crye made againſt vs, to endite vs? No, no: for wee ſee what is ſayde concerning Abel. After hee was murdered, did hee crye for vengeance at Gods handes? Gen.4.10 No, but his bloude cryed. And therefore the neceſſitie which a poore man endureth, cryeth lowde & ſhrill ynough in Gods eares, ſo that hee needeth not to make any complaynt and to ſaye: one hath greeued mee in this or in that ſorte: but if hee dye for colde becauſe wee keepe his coate or his couering from him, there ſhall neede no other thing to condemne vs before God. So then let vs learne, that albeit the poore diſcharge their duetie verie ill, and that beeing ſuccoured they bleſſe vs not; wee may not therefore ceaſſe to doe that which GOD commaundeth vs, knowing that the almes which proceedeth from vs, ſhall ſerue vs well ynough for a bleſſing, although they whome wee haue relieued holde their peace. As on the contrary ſide, wee muſt bee afrayde leaſt the crueltie which wee vſe may accuſe vs before GOD, although no man doe open his mouth to ſpeake.

There is alſo in this place an inſtruction for the poore: that becauſe God hath made them ſubiect to that ſtate that they muſt be fayne to deſire ſuccour and helpe of their neighboures, they muſt bee ſo much the more humble, & lay aſide the arrogancie and preſumption which is in many of them. Some when they aſke an almes, thinke they require nothing but their own: inſomuch that to their ſeeming they haue wrong if they bee made to wayte for it, and that men preuent not their neceſſitie: they woulde that a man ſhoulde put off his cappe and deſire them to receiue an almes: there are ſome which bee full of this preſumption. But God contrarily declareth, that hee wil haue him which receiueth a good turne, to acknowledge it, and to bleſſe him by whome hee is releeued. And in verie deede, if a man bee holpen in his neede, and hee forget it, and ſeeketh not at leaſtwiſe to God to requite it, when himſelfe according to the worlde hath no meanes to do it, hee is a theefe: and pretende hee neuer ſo fairely, that a man gaue him ſuch a thing: yet becauſe hee abuſeth the liberalitie which was vſed towardes him, hee is a theefe. A man helpeth mee, and on what condition? God bindeth mee to pray for the proſperitie of him which hath in ſuch wiſe ſuccoured mee, and to proteſt at leaſt, that I am bounde vnto him: and when I am able to recompence him I muſt do it. But if I cannot, I muſt haue God for my witnes, that I acknowledge my ſelfe bound vnto him for his curteſie: if I doe it not, verily it is theft, as I told you. So then as the rich are taught in this place, and as God ſheweth them that they ought to be contented when they whome they haue holpen do bleſſe them: ſo on the other ſide, the poore are taught to knowe, that if they borrowe, or haue any thing giuen them, it is to the intent they ſhoulde bee moued to pray for their neighbors, for ſo much as they haue ſuccoured and releeued them, that charitie may by that meanes bee maintained. For the true bond thereof is, that they which haue of themſelues no abilitie ſhold knowe that God calleth them vnto himſelfe, & that they ought to doe that which belongeth to them to doe, namely, reſort vnto prayer, becauſe they are able to doe no other thing. Yee ſee then in effect what wee haue to beare in minde. And ſo let vs note that when we can diſcharge our dueties towardes our neighbours no otherwiſe, wee muſt haue recourſe vnto that remedie which is ſet downe here, that is, to prayer.

It followeth afterwarde: that it ſhalbee reputed vnto vs for righteouſneſſe before God, & this is according vnto that which I haue to note alreadie, namely, that mercie is better than ſacrifice. For Moſes meant to declare that if wee vſe not ſuch humanitie towards our neighbors, wee may well beare a countenaunce of ſeruing God, wee may haue great appearance of vertue in the ſight of men, wee may well bee honoured and eſteemed of them: but yet neuertheleſſe God will condemne vs for wicked men, when wee bee ſo cruell. Briefely Moſes hath in this place declared, that there is no righteouſneſſe acceptable before God, except there bee ſuch humanitie in vs, that wee liue ſo with our neighbours as euery of vs enforce himſelfe to ſuccour the poore and needie to the vtmoſt of his power. Yee ſee then the intent and meaning of Moſes when hee ſayeth, *That it ſhalbee reputed vnto vs for righteouſnes before God*. And this is a worde which ought well to bee weyed. For wee ſee howe men thinke to diſcharge their duties notwithſtanding that they bee ſet altogither on pilling and ſpoyling. And in what order trowe yee? Looke mee among the Papiſts: if a man haue erected a chappell, if hee haue taken order that ſo many Maſſes ſhalbee ſung, or if hee haue done ſome ſuch like thinges; then hath hee his hands cleane; or at leaſtwiſe thinketh them to bee cleane: and yet in the meane while, extortion, deceite, and other lewde and wicked practiſes haue their full ſway with him, and no pitie hath any place in his heart. Nowe, the man which ſhall ſhewe ſuch a faire apparance ſhalbee accounted a iuſt and holy perſon. But yee ſee howe God in the meane while pronounceth the cleane contrarie, that all this is but doung and filthineſſe in his ſight, and that there is no righteouſneſſe where there is no humanitie and gentlenes. When a man hath no compaſſion on his neighbors, when he tormenteth them, when hee troubleth them, when he ſpoyleth them, when hee hath no pitie nor mercie with him, whatſoeuer hee is able to doe beſides, is but abhominable before God: hee reiecteth all beſides, and will none of it, except a man be ſo kindhearted as to take pitie of them which are in neede, and to releeue their neceſſitie. Beholde (I ſay) in what ſort wee ought to fare the better by this place. For (as I haue ſaid) men woulde alwayes thinke to diſcharge their duties towardes God and yet giue no almes.

Wee ſee alſo as touching almes giuing, that there is in many men much hypocriſie and no little raſhnes: in ſo much that men neuer deale vprightly with God in that behalfe. What is the cauſe why our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt forbiddeth men to blowe the trumpet, and to make ſuch greate and open ſhewes when they giue their almes, but becauſe many are ledde with ambition, and when they deale their doale, there muſt bee a greate pompe of it at their gate? Matt. 6.2. Such as haue pilled and polled all their life long, and haue done nothing elſe but eaten and deuowred the poore, thinke to burie their ſinnes and to wipe them cleane out, by beſtowing a piece of money at their deceaſſe. For why? They bleare the eyes of men thereby: and they beare themſelues in hande that they are able to deceiue God too. But they abuſe them ſelues too groſſely. So then it ſtandeth vs in hande the more diligently to note this ſentence, wherein wee are taught, that if without all vanitie of ſhewe, wee haue pittie on them which ſeeke for refuge at our handes, & & helpe them without grieuing them at all: it ſhalbee reckoned vnto vs for righteouſneſſe. And before whome? Before the Lorde our God. We are in this place ſũmoned before yͤ heauenly throne, to yͤ intent yͭ we ſeeke not for our reward before men. For yͭ alſo is an other thing whereunto our

our Lord Ieſus leadeth vs when he ſaith that we muſt not blowe with the trumpet when we giue our almes; but that wee muſt rather hide our ſelues,and not let our lefthand knowe what our right hand doeth; nor be deſirous of many witneſſes by whom wee may vaunt our ſelues:And in verie deede if it ſuffice vs not that God liketh of vs,and that hee accepteth the ſeruice which wee doe vnto him in beſtowing of our almes, we ſeeke for our payment here below:and therfore we are then recompenced when men praiſe vs and ſay: O this man is a great giuer of almes: O he diſchargeth his dutie faithfully in this behalfe. If we haue once gotten ſuch a report, & that the ſame do pleaſe vs,verily wee haue our rewarde. Let vs not thinke that God will ſet it any more in his booke of account: for ſo ſhould wee bee twiſe payed; I ſay if wee ſeeke through ambition to bee ſeene of all men. For although when wee giue our almes, wee may ſometimes make it knowen: yet neuertheleſſe wee muſt take heede that wee be not ledde away with a vayne deſire,to bee eſteemed of in this worlde: but whatſoeuer wee giue, let vs conueie it as it were into the boſome of God.And foraſmuch as the good which wee haue done, ſhalbe receiued and eſteemed of him: let vs ſeeke no other thing but that euery one bee edified thereby, & that euere one for his parte enforce himſelfe to relieue the neceſſitie of his neighbours. But howe euer the worlde go, ſeeing it is God vnto whome wee ought to lende the almes which we beſtowe vppon a poore man, and that he receiueth it; this conſideration ought ſo to rauiſh vs, that wee ſhoulde not deſire to leane vnto the worlde, nor to any of the faire praiſes which we may receiue, nor to the reputation which wee may get by it. God ſayeth, that when wee giue vnto a poore man, wee lende vnto him himſelf. Beholde heere a manner of ſpeach which might ſeeme ſtrange at the firſt ſight, to ſay, that wee lende vnto God. But yet neuertheleſſe he vſeth this manner of ſpeache, and that not without cauſe, and ſayeth that hee is well able to pay vs vſurie and gaine for our money, ſo as wee neede not feare that wee ſhall looſe any thing by our long tarriance for it, for hee wil recompence vs to the vtmoſt. Seeing that God hath once declared that hee becommeth detter vnto vs, and that hee putteth all thoſe Items into his bookes of accounts, as though hee had borrowed them at our handes: I pray you are not wee ouerblockiſh if wee for all that ſeeke for prayſe here belowe and hang wholly vppon it? Nowe therefore let vs learne to fare the better by that which is ſayde here:namely, *That it ſhalbe accounted for righteouſneſſe vnto vs before God.* It is in effect all one as if Moſes had ſayde: Deceiue not your ſelues by thinking to pleaſe God after the common order and faſhion of men, who make many faire ſhewes of diuers things: they will needes offer ſacrifices, they will come vnto the temple, they will ſet a good countenance on all things, yea, they will make men beleeue that they haue all the vertues in the worlde, & that nothing is wanting in them: but you are deceiued if that you thinke to diſcharge your dutie towardes God by ſuch meanes.For there is no righteouſneſſe in you which pleaſeth God, and which hee liketh of, except you bee ſo gentle and kinde hearted as to haue pitie on the poore, and to releeue them in their neede: that is to bee noted for one poynt. Againe, for the other hee ſayeth thus: Go to,you are of opinion that all is loſt which you giue vnto a poore man; and that becauſe hee hath not wherewith to recompence you, or becauſe hee is vnthankfull, as wee ſee many are. But holde your ſelues contented with this, that before God it ſhalbee accounted vnto you for righteouſneſſe: feare you not ſeeing that God accepteth that which you offer vnto him. Ceaſſe to regarde men. This ought to ſuffice you: Yea, put the caſe that one render vnto you euil for the good which ye haue done, yet notwithſtanding your God will not reiect your prayers and requeſtes; but will acknowledge that wherein you haue ſerued him. And becauſe hee maketh a tryall of your charitie by this meanes, and will knowe howe you loue him by your helping of thoſe which hee offereth vnto you in his owne name: if you receiue them which flye vnto you for ſuccour:Let it ſuffice you that God accepteth both of you and of that which you haue beſtowed on him which ſought vnto you. That is in effect the thing which wee haue to beare in minde in this place.

Matt.6.3.

Prou.19.17.

But here a man may demaund a queſtion, & aske what it meaneth that Moſes ſayeth a mans almes ſhalbee accounted vnto him for righteouſnes? for it ſeemeth therefore that our ſelues obtayne righteouſneſſe before God, and that we deſerue rewarde by our good workes. And this were againſt the chiefe and principall article of our ſaluation, where it is ſayde, That wee are iuſtified by faith. And what elſe importeth this worde Faith,but that wee are accepted of God for his owne mercies ſake, without bringing any merite or deſert of our owne? If wee bee iuſtified by fayth, why doeth Moſes ſay that wee are iuſtified by our woorkes, as by our almes deedes? Let vs note that when the ſcripture ſpeaketh in this wiſe, it preſuppoſeth that God hath alreadie receiued vs ſo to mercie,that hee pardoneth vs all our ſinnes: yea, and that albeit there bee ſome imperfection in our workes, hee regardeth it not, but accepteth that which wee offer vnto him, as though it were worthie to bee accepted. But foraſmuch as this matter cannot bee handled at large as nowe: therefore let vs note, that where as it is ſayde that faith was reckoned vnto Abraham for righteouſneſſe: it is to giue vs to vnderſtande, that men when they come before God, are all of them to bee condemned: yea, the moſt perfecteſt of them. For if a man will ſeeke for vertue and holineſſe in the worlde, it may bee founde in the perſon of Abraham: for hee is as excellent a man as euer was: but yet if GOD woulde haue iudged him with rigour, he might haue condemned him with all the reſt. For what is there in Abraham to make God to bee beholding vnto him? So then wee are all confounded in our ſelues. And therefore there is no other remedie left vs, but to beleeue in the free promiſes which hee hath made vnto vs, embracing his mercie and fatherly loue, & hanging thereon the aſſurance of our ſaluation. The cauſe (ſay I) why we are iuſtified by faith, is that in our woorkes there is no righteouſneſſe which may anſwere for vs before God, but wee are all to bee condemned. But nowe God hath ſo receiued vs with this condition that hee forgiueth vs all our ſinnes; and that not onely for a day, but for all the time of our life: not that wee ſhoulde ſinne vnder colour that God wilbee mercifull vnto vs (let vs take heede of that) but becauſe we are frayle and weake, God will alwayes continue his goodneſſe towardes vs. And farther when wee doe any good, there is yet ſome euill euen in that good which wee doe. For wee neuer giue any almes with ſuch perfectnes as were requiſite, but God may alwayes finde ſome fault or other in it. It is with our workes as men vſe to ſay of wine, that there is ſtill ſome faulte or other in it. It is good wine will one ſay, but it hath taken winde, it is too ſharpe, it is muſtie, or there is I know not what in it; it is turned: and ſo the wine is nothing woorth. Euen ſo is it with our workes, there is alwayes ſome ſpotte or other in them: ſo that God ſhall haue iuſt cauſe to reiect them. Seeing it is ſo, wee had neede to be borne withall at his hande, as a chylde is borne withall by his father. And in verie deede hee hath made vs ſuch an expreſſe promiſe by his Prophet Malachie, That hee will ſpare vs euen as a father ſpareth his chylde, who perceiuing his chylde to bee willing to doe that which hee commaundeth him, although hee doe not his worke ſo perfectly as were requiſite hee ſhoulde, wil not deale rigorouſly with him, if ſo bee hee goe about it with a willing and cheerefull mynde. So then yee ſee why it is ſayde that wee are iuſtified by faith.

Mal.3.17.
Pſal.103.13

But whereas it is ſayde on the contrary ſide, that our workes ſhalbee reckoned vnto vs for righteouſneſſe; it is becauſe God accepteth them. And why? Is it becauſe they are worthie to bee accepted, or for that they haue any merite in them? No. But becauſe of the couenaunt and agreement which hee hath made with vs: that ſeeing wee are members of our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt, hee beareth with vs, hee pardoneth vs our ſinnes, and accepteth that which wee offer vnto him: although it bee woorth nothing, yet is it ynough that hee accepteth of it. According vnto this reaſon, it is ſaide in this place, that the almeſdeedes which wee doe for Gods ſake, ſhalbee accepted at his hande for righteouſneſſe. And this letteth not but that wee bee iuſtified alonelie by faith: for when righteouſneſſe is referred vnto his fountaine, from whence proceedeth it? From the free mercie of God in that hee forgiueth vs our ſinnes. Nowe, ſith it is grounded vppon that, wee muſt not imagine that there is any contradiction in theſe places. And therefore let vs briefely note, that when our Lorde ſayth, that the almes which wee beſtowe ſhalbee reckoned to vs for righteouſneſſe; it is to encourage vs the more, to the intent wee ſhoulde not feare that eyther our payne or our money is loſt, when wee haue relieued the neceſſitie of the poore. And when wee haue this leſſon, we will not come and laye the foundation of our ſaluation vppon our woorkes: but wee will alwayes buylde the aſſurance of our ſaluation on the onely mercie of God, and vppon the death and paſſion of our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt; by whoſe ſacrifice wee are reconciled, and through whoſe obedience all our ſinnes and iniquities are done awaye. This (ſaye I) is the meanes to aſſure vs of our ſaluation. And thus when wee haue ſettled our truſt and confidence in the onely mercie and goodneſſe of God, wee will haue no mynde to ſtande vppon our woorkes: but it will ſuffice vs that beeing accepted by the free mercy of God without any merite or deſeruable worthineſſe of our workes, hee will giue vs will, ſtrength, and power to ſerue him, to ſerue him I ſay, not after our owne fantaſie, but accordingly as hee commaundeth vs.

Nowe let vs kneele downe in the preſence of our good God with acknowledgement of our faultes, praying him to take them away, and therewithall ſo to refourme vs by his holy ſpirite, as our whole indeuour may bee to pleaſe him, and to obey his holy will, as hee hath declared it vnto vs in his lawe. And becauſe we cannot come vnto ſuch perfection as were requiſite wee ſhoulde: pray wee him to reache vs out his hande alwayes to ſupplye our wantes, and to ſtrengthen our infirmities, vntil hee hath cleane ridde vs of them. And ſo let vs ſaye, Almightie God & heauenly father, &c.

On Munday the x. of February, 1556.

The CXL.Sermon which is the fifth vpon the foure and twentith Chapter.

14 Thou ſhalt not defraude the hired ſeruaunt which is needie and poore, neither of thy brethren, nor of the ſtraunger which is in thy lande within thy gates.

15 Thou ſhalt giue him his hyre for his day, before the ſunne goeth dowen: for he is poore, and therewith ſuſtaineth he his life. Leaſt he crie againſt thee vnto the Lorde, and it be ſinne vnto thee.

16 The fathers ſhall not be put to death for the children, neither ſhall the children die for the fathers, but euery man ſhalbe put to death for his own ſinne.

17 Thou ſhalt not wreſt the right of the ſtraunger, nor of the fatherleſſe: neither ſhalt thou take the widowes rayment to pledge.

18 But thou ſhalt remember that thou waſt a ſeruaunt in Egypt, and that the Lorde thy God deliuered thee thence. Therefore I commaunde thee to doe this thing.

IF there were not great wickednes and crueltie in men, it were needeles to ſet downe anie ſuch law as is heere contained, to wit, *That we withholde not from a poore mā the wages which he hath earned.* For we knowe that it is as it were his bloud, according as it is written: In the ſweat of thy face ſhalt thou eate thy breade. Gen.3.19. Therefore when a man beſtoweth himſelfe in our ſeruice, we ought at leaſt wiſe to giue him that wherewithall he is ſuſtained and nouriſhed. And therefore I tolde you that if we had but one droppe of kindnes in vs, we needed not to be taught this doctrine. For nature teacheth vs what is right and indifferent. Let vs therfore conclude when we reade ẏ which is written here, that we are accuſed before God. of beeing as brute beaſtes towardes our neighbours. For God would ſuffer vs to followe on our owne courſe, if he ſawe that euery of vs did diſcharge himſelfe of his duetie. But foraſmuch as men are ſo peruerſe and wicked, that the rich ſeeke nothing but to deceiue the poore, & to deuour their ſuſtenance & the labor of their hands; it was needefull that he ſhould prouide ſome remedie againſt them. And this is the way for vs to fare the better by that which appertaineth to the ordering of our life. Oftentimes when we reade of any admonition in the holy ſcripture, we are of opinion that it is ſuperfluous. For why? Wee haue no conſideration of the cauſe which moued God to cōmand this or that, to wit, that foraſmuch as he ſeeth ẏ vices which are lurking in vs, he meaneth to correct them. Wee muſt therefore examine ourſelues; and that will teach vs, that God exhorteth vs not in vaine to do that which is our duetie. For albeit we know well ynough what men ſay vnto vs, and euery of vs can confeſſe that the things which are ſayd are true: yet is it not ynough for vs to haue the reaſonablenes and rightfulneſſe of ẏ thing proued vnto vs, vnleſſe wee be alſo inforced to followe that which we knowe to be iuſt and acceptable vnto God.

Nowe whereas it is ſayde that a man ſhall not withholde the hyre of a poore man, it is all one as if God in generall did ſhewe, that men ought to deale vprightly, & vſe all kinde of curtiſie with thoſe which are poore, and employ themſelues to doe vs ſeruice. And hee ſpeaketh expreſly of the poore, becauſe there is no pitie in this caſe towardes the rich man: for if we owe him anie thing, he may tarrie for it, he is not ſo haſtie to haue his monney payde him from day to day, a man ſhal not be ſo ſoudainly preſſed to giue him his payment. In deede we ought not to tarry til we be plucked by the eares, to pay that which we owe. That is alwaies to be condemned: and we excuſe ourſelues vainely, if we ſay: this man is aforehande, he hath no great neede: I may therefore withholde that which is his. But I ſpeake of the preciſe houre of payment, when a man is contented that I ſhall deferre the payment of my dette from this day vntil to morow. If I offer to pay him, he will aunſwere me, I ſhal haue it time ynough. And why? He knoweth that I am readie to paye him any day: and as for himſelfe hee hath no ſuch haſt but hee can well ſtaye. But a poore man hauing trauailed the whole day, hath nothing to eate but what he getteth by his labor: what crueltie then were it if I (when I haue had a mans ſweat, and labour) will for all that withholde from him his dayes hyre? And therefore this reaſon is expreſly added: *for he ſuſtaineth his ſoule therwith*, or he eaſeth his ſoule thereby. For ẏ word which Moſes vſeth may be ſo expounded: that is, that a poore man hath an eye alwayes vnto his labour. Like as the rich man which is well furniſhed with al plentie, and hath his garners and his ſellars full, reſteth himſelfe thereon: ſo a poore man which hath neither reuenewes nor inheritaunce turneth his ſoule, that is to ſay, his heart vnto that which he maketh reckening to get: and ſayth, wel, I haue trauailed, I ſhall haue at leaſtwiſe aſmuch as wil finde mee to day: to morrowe I will returne againe to my labour, and I will get more towards my meate and drinke. The poore folke haue their minds ſet vpon that: not that we muſt haue ſuch an eye to our owne trauaile and labour, as if it were that alone whereby wee are ſuſtained, and not rather the bleſſing of God: for we haue ſeene what God hath ſayde to the contrarie in Deut.8.17. the eight chapter of this booke: namely that we muſt take heede that wee darken not the grace and fauour of God by perſuading ourſelues that we haue done this or that. Men therefore muſt attribute nothing vnto themſelues. Howebeit, Moſes in this place hath meant no other thing, but that the meanes whereby poore folke are ſuſtained in their trauaile, all their goods, rents, and landes is the labour of their handes. Seeing it is ſo that they haue no farther abundance, and that God hath as it were locked them vp in ſuch neceſſitie, is it reaſon that a man ſhoulde depriue them of the fruite of their labour. If one ſpoyle a mans corne fielde, if hee mowe downe the graſſe of his medowe, or if hee make an hauocke of all: the whole worlde will cry out vpon him for a murderer: And yet it is a more hainous crime to haue deceiued a poore man of the labour of his handes. For he hath (as I tolde you) no other landes nor inheritaunce: and beſides that, he ſpareth neither his labor, nor his bloud to get his liuing. This reaſon therefore ought to wey well with vs in this caſe of rendring hire vnto them which haue ſerued vs.

And let vs note by the way, that God meant here to commaund generally all maner of kindneſſe towardes poore folke. For if I conſtraine a poore man to labour for me, and I will pay him but by halfes; doubtles I defraude him of his labour. If I couenaunt with one to ſerue me; well [ſayth he] you ſhall pay me thus much for my dayes worke: but in the ende I cutte his hyre ſo ſhort, that the poore man after he hath done all hee was able, ſhall not haue wherewith to feede himſelfe. For why? I wil ſee: This man here muſt needes labour, he hath not elſe whereon to liue, and hee muſt needes paſſe through my handes, therefore I will haue him for what I liſt. After that maner do the rich behaue themſelues often times in this behalfe, they eſpie ſome occaſions or other, to the intent they may cut off the one halfe of the poore mans wages, when he knoweth not what to ſet himſelfe about. The poore folke offer themſelues to labour, they deſire but to get their liuing if they could tell where. Hereupon ye ſhall haue a rich man ſay: this fellowe is out of money and out of worke, I may hire him now for a morſell of bread. For he muſt yeelde vnto mee ſpyte of his teeth, I will giue him but halfe wages, and he ſhalbe glad and fain of that: therefore when we vſe ſuch rigour, although we haue not withheld their hyre: yet is it a point of crueltie, and we haue defrauded the poore: and this cloke of paying the money the ſame day, wil ſtande vs in no ſteede before God. For it is to be knowen whether the poore man be cõtented or no. When a rich man hath wares to ſell and one comes vnto him for them, he will ſay, you ſhall not haue them for any leſſe: And why: His wares diminiſh not in his ſhoppe. But if there be a poore man which liueth frõ hand to mouth, and hath neither pennie nor halfe pennie in his purſe, he ſhalbe forced to ſel his ware for nought. If one buy them at that price, and knoweth the neceſſitie which the poore man is driuen vnto, he is a manifeſt oppreſſour: and we can skill to ſay in common prouerbe: It is a holding of our foote vpon a poore mans throate: it is a kinde of robberie. We haue skill (I ſay) to ſpeake thus by them which buy ſuch penie worthes of thẽ that are in neede, and are ſo farre pinched, that they can be at no other choyce but to doe what they will haue them. Let vs note well then, that God in this place not onely commaundeth vs to pay them without driuing off from day to day, which haue laboured or taken paines for vs: but alſo would haue vs to haue a dewe regarde of euerie mans neede, and that when we ſet a poore man a worke about our buſineſſe, wee ſhould pay him his dayes hyre: yea and that euery man ſhoulde ſet a price of his owne wares, ſo as if we come to driue a bargaine, the ſeller ſhould not be faine to ſay to vs, make what price you yourſelfe liſt: And againe, that when a poore man hath trauailed for vs, [wee ſhould not deale ſo vnconſcionably] as to make no further account of him than to haue the fruit of his labour: but rather enter into iuſt tryal with ourſelues, whether if we were in his caſe which pineth away & hath no other meanes to ſuſtain himſelfe but this, we ourſelues would be contented to be ſo handled. We would haue men to vſe gentleneſſe towardes vs and relieue and ſuccour vs: let vs therefore do the like or elſe we ſhalbe accuſed before God. For it is ſayde, *That it ſhalbe ſinne vnto vs when a poore man ſhall ſo crie out againſt vs*. And yet for all this wee heare euerie day the cries and clamours which the poore ceaſe not in lamentable wiſe to make, and thinke we that God is deafe all this while, & that he heareth not their complaintes? I grant that the poore in deede are ſomtimes vnthankfull and ſpitefull, ſo as there is no dealing with them, and they would as it were rake vnto themſelues other mens goods; and when they are requeſted to lend their hande to ſome worke, they would haue a double and treble recompence, & they will haue great wages. Ye ſhall ſee ſome ſo ſtoute and preſumptuous, that they will not beſtowe paines in any thing, except they be greatly intreated: and yet they are ſo laſie, that they will ſcarcely put foorth one hande to doe their worke aright: and for all this there is ſuch a doe to pleaſe them, that they will haue their full paiment, yea and double the price of their dayes worke. This is to be ſeene. But yet for all that, there are many (as I tolde you) which are pinched. And therefore their cries muſt needes aſcende vp into heauen: and let vs not imagine that we ſhalbe founde guiltleſſe before God. For whereas it is ſayd that it ſhalbe ſin vnto vs, it is to ſhew ỷ albeit men ſue vs not ne cōmence any action againſt vs for it in this world; yet notwithſtanding we ſhall not faile to be culpable before God: yea although the poore ſhould not crye at all, as it hath beene declared heeretofore. The thing then in effect which wee haue to beare in minde, is that we ought to haue an eye vnto euery mans neede, and not to oppreſſe him which is in neceſſitie, thinking that we haue an occaſion of making our own profit by an other mans loſſe, when we ſee that he can not be without vs. Let vs beware that we be not ſo cruell. For although he make no complaint againſt vs in this world, yet before God we are culpable: and that ought to quicken vs vp ſo much the more in our duty, conſidering that God reproueth vs of crueltie in ſuch wiſe.

Nowe Moſes addeth a ſeconde lawe: *That the fathers ſhould not be put to death for the children, nor the children for the fathers, but that euery man ſhould beare the puniſhment of his owne ſinne.* This Lawe was ordained becauſe of a wicked & beaſtly cuſtome which then raigned among the men of the Eaſt countrey, who made it a matter of no conſcience to put the children to death for the fathers offences, and ſo to ſhed the bloud of the innocent. God therefore meant to withhold his people from following ſuch barbarous dealing of the Paynims and Infidels. And it is a point which we muſt diligently note. For wee might muſe why it is ſayde, that the father ſhall not be killed for the childe, nor the child for the father. It ſeemeth that it is needeleſſe to forbid this thing, becauſe we knowe that where ſinne is founde, there the puniſhment ought to be layde without ſeeking any farther. Nowe therefore foraſmuch as we are giuen to vnderſtande, that men haue bin ſo blockiſh as to put him to death who was in no fault, ſo as the father hath ſometimes beene drawen to death with the child; we perceiue thereby that God hath not without cauſe eſtabliſhed this lawe. It is true in deede that this is ſpoken vnto Iudges and vnto ſuch as beare the ſword in their hand: that the children ſhould not be put to death for the ſinne of the fathers, nor the fathers for the ſinne of the children: but yet notwithſtanding God in generall warneth vs alſo, that wee ought not to hate the children for their fathers ſakes. Whenſoeuer we ſee a wicked man, foraſmuch as he is a reaſonable creature, we ought to pitie him, and not to hate him, although we muſt alwaies deteſt the vice, and puniſhe the perſon for his miſdeedes. But if we hate the father for the ſonnes ſake, or the ſonne becauſe of the father, albeit wee haue not the ſworde in our hande, yet neuertheleſſe this wicked affection which we haue, is al one as if we did put the father to death for the childe. And ſo let vs note well, that this lawe appertayneth vnto vs all. And although we be not armed with power and authoritie to puniſh whome we liſt. Yet notwithſtanding God putteth vs in mind not without iuſt cauſe, that he which hath offended muſt beare his owne puniſhment, and not any other guiltleſſe perſon beſides.

Heere a man might demand a queſtion: what is the cauſe then why God threatneth that hee wil puniſh the wickedneſſe of fathers vpon their Ier.32.18. children, and caſt it as it were into their boſome? This is ſayd, becauſe that GOD is at libertie to curſe not one man alone, but his whole race and poſteritie alſo. For what are we, if it pleaſe not him to beholde vs with pitie? If he once turne his mercie from vs, we can not but goe into vtter deſtruction. And therefore let vs learne, that when God leaueth vs ſuch as we are, it is a kind of puniſhment which he layeth vpon vs. Ye ſee then howe he puniſheth the wickedneſſe of the fathers vpon the children, and yet doth wrong vnto none. Let vs mind that. And in very deede we ought to obſerue what difference there is betweene God and men. An earthly Iudge puniſheth the faultes which are knowen vnto him: but before God it is not ſo, for we are al of vs giltie. He which before men is faultleſſe, and can be charged with nothing, let him come before God, and there he ſhall finde himſelfe ſhort. Againe we ſee not the cauſe why God puniſheth young children, euen ſuch as are yet in their mothers wombe: but he knoweth a reaſon why he doth ſo: and we muſt with al humblenes of mind reuerence his iudgementes, when a thing ſeemeth ſtraunge vnto vs, and wee be tempted to reaſon againſt him; wee muſt ſubmit our ſelues, and know that we are too raw & too weake to cōprehende the iudgementes of God, which are ſo high. And therefore let vs not meaſure God by men, to binde him to doe that which earthlie Iudges are commaunded to doe: for hee is not ſubiect vnto the ſame lawe, and the reaſon why we haue declared. And in deede he proteſteth alſo by his prophet Ezechiel, that he wil not puniſh Ezech.18.4. the children for the fathers ſake. For it was nowe growen to a common prouerbe in Iſraell, that they which were troubled with warre, famine, and other calamities, would ſay, What? we are not ſo wicked that GOD ſhould handle vs with ſuch rigour, for wee haue ſerued him, wee haue done the beſt that we could. Therefore we muſt needes ſay that God puniſheth vs now for the faultes which were committed an hundred yeeres agoe, and ſhould nowe haue beene buried. Thus men complained of God. As in deed we ſee how men are too much enclined to iuſtifie thēſelues by condemning of God. Hereupon our Lorde aunſwereth them: no no, this prouerbe ſhall be no longer vſed in Iſrael, That the fathers haue eaten ſower grapes, & the childrens teeth are ſet on edge: for he which ſinneth ſhall beare his owne burden, & the chaſtiſement of his offence. We ſee then that God doeth ſo puniſh the ſinnes of the fathers vppon the children, that notwithſtanding all are culpable, and there is not one which hath a ſufficient excuſe to aske a reaſon why God puniſheth him. And if any alleadge that he corrected Dauides fault by cauſing the childe to die which was begotten by him, it is aunſwered (as I haue already touched) that God will ſometimes puniſh the children for the fault of their fathers, but this is after his own maner which is incomprehenſible vnto vs, that is to ſay, that he doth nothing but iuſtly and vprightly. We ſhall not alwayes ſee the cauſe why hee doeth it, for we haue already declared that our wittes are ouer groſſe and dull to enter into the bottomeleſſe gulfe of Gods iudgementes. But howſoeuer the caſe ſtande, we muſt vouchſafe him ſo much honor as to confeſſe, that when he puniſheth the iniquitie of the fathers vppon the children, he doeth it on good right. And howe? Will we ſay: It is not for vs to enquire beyonde our meaſure: Let vs content ourſelues with this, that Gods goodneſſe is an vnblameable iuſtice, and in the meane while let vs walke as hee hath commaunded vs. Let vs not ſay: he doth this, and why may not wee doe the like? Yea: but what are we? For GOD knoweth his rule full well; but we for our parte hadde neede to be helde in awe and vnder ſubiection: and if wee woulde be at libertie to doe what ſeemed good to ourſelues, there would be too too great confuſion. Yee ſee then what we haue to beare in minde, when it is ſayde in this place, that the father ſhall not be puniſhed for the childes fault, nor the childe for the fathers: but that he which offendeth ſhall beare the puniſhment of his offence himſelfe. Nowe wee are warned alſo by the way, not to intangle ourſelues in the condemnation of thoſe which haue offended. For many are of opinion that they diſcharge not their dewtie, except they maintaine an other mans wickedneſſe. Oh, [ſay they] he that hath doone this offence is my neighbour, or my couſen, or I knowe not what. If I holde him not vp by the chinne, if I ſeeke not to violate and corrupt iuſtice, I ſhall not be thought to haue dealt with him like a kinſman, like a friende or like a neighbour. But we ſee what is ſayde to the contrarie: namely, that hee which hath offended, ſhall beare his owne ſinne. Therefore when wee ſee any one to offend, let it grieue vs, let vs indeuour to the vtmoſt of our power to bring him into the way againe: but yet for all that, let vs beware that we wrap not our ſelues in his condemnation, ſeeing God hath exempted vs out of it. And that is a thing which wee haue to remember yet further vpon this place.

The thirde lawe which Moſes addeth in this place is, *That they ſhall not peruert the Iudgement and right of the ſtraunger, that they ſhall not treade the fatherleſſe vnder foote, that they ſhall not wring a pleadge from the widowe. And why? Remember* (ſayeth he) *that thou waſt a ſeruaunt in the Lande of Egypt, and that the Lorde thy GOD hath drawen thee out from thence, to the intent that thou ſhouldeſt pitie them which are afflicted, and that thou ſhouldeſt not grieue them.* We haue already ſeene heeretofore, that as men are of leſſe credit and countenaunce touching the worlde, ſo are they more ſpecially recommended vnto our care by God. For they which haue meanes to helpe themſelues, ſeeke not willingly eyther to this or to that man for helpe. For why? They can helpe themſelues well ynough. Hee that hath good friendes, and is of credit carrieth his priuiledge, to gette him fauour himſelfe: a riche man likewiſe and he that hath policie and courage in his dealinges. For men are afrayde to deale with them, they dare not offer to treade them vnder foote, becauſe they ſee they are able to worke their owne reuenge. And that is the cauſe why God maketh no mention of ſuch perſons. It is true in deede that generally he alwaies appointeth vs this rule, Not to do vnto others otherwiſe than we would haue doone vnto Matt.7.12. ourſelues; and yͭ we muſt abſtaine from al wrong, deceites, and violence. He ſayth this in deede to all in generall, but he ſayth not: Take heede of iniuring and oppreſſing a riche man and one which is in credit and authoritie. For why? We are withhelde from offring of ſuch a one any wrong, becauſe wee are afrayde of the like. But God ſayeth: Let not any man grieue the poore man, let none afflict the ſtranger, let none trouble the fatherleſſe, let none moleſt the widowes. And why ſpeaketh he thus of them? Becauſe when we ſee that they are not defended by men, we thinke that they are ſet foorth vnto vs, for an open pray. And yͭ is the cauſe why wee be ſo venterous beyond all reaſon & conſcience, to ſnatch from them whatſoeuer we can take holde of. Let vs therefore note well, that God in this place (as he hath done before) declareth, yͭ he is the protectour & defender of all ſuch as are deſtitute of mans ayde, and are not vnder propped in this worlde. And herein there are two points which we ought to note: yͤ one is yͭ if we do good vnto a ſtranger, vnto a poore man which is forſaken of all men, or vnto yͤ fatherles, we ſhall not looſe our labour. For why? God acknowledgeth and accepteth it for a ſeruice done vnto himſelf. If a man being acquainted with ſuch as are rich and well friended, do for them; hee maketh alwaies this account, wel, he is able to requite me for my paines: & againe he hath good friends, & as he ſeeth yͭ a man doth for him, ſo will he ſeeke to ſhewe him the like curteſie. We will alwaies cōſider whether men be able to make vs recompence. But when a poore man cōmeth vnto vs, he ſhall hardly ſpeake with vs or find any fauour at our hands. For why? we thinke yͭ we muſt doe him good for gramercy, becauſe he is not able to recōpence vs. That is yͤ cauſe why God putteth forth himſelfe, & proteſteth yͭ he is bounde vnto vs, and that if we thinke we profit ourſelues nothing at al by helping thē which be in neceſſitie, we are deceiued: for he accepteth of the thing, as if it were done vnto himſelfe. This is to be noted for one point. For the ſecond let vs note, yͭ he threatneth on the contrary ſide, yͭ if we moleſt a poore man, if we vexe & trouble the widowe or the fatherles, if we be cruell towardes the ſtranger, although as touching yͤ world this wickednes of ours be not puniſhed, yet ſhall we render an account of it before him. And why? For we haue ſet light by his protection. Like as princes and other greate ſtates will giue protections vnto them which are hated, and whome they ſee to be in daunger: ſo god giueth his protection vnto the fatherles, to the widowes, to the poore, and to the ſtraungers. And why? Becauſe they haue no meanes to the worldewarde to defend themſelues withall, he ſupplieth this want of theirs, and declareth that hee will not haue men to treade thoſe vnder foote whom hee hath receiued vnto himſelfe, telling vs that hee is their protector. If one for all this, doe enterpriſe any thing againſt them, is it not as much as to doe him wrong, and as it were ſpitefully to deſpiſe him? So then let vs note well, that as often as mention is made vnto vs of the poore, of the ſtraungers, and of the widowes; wee haue to deale with God, & wage battaile againſt him, if we vſe not all equitie and right towardes them, and if we be not ſo gentle and kindharted as to releeue and to ſuccour them. Ye ſee then now what the cauſe is, why it is ſayde in this place, *Thou ſhalt not peruert the right of the ſtraunger.*

Now to peruert the right is, to skorne a man when he hath a iuſt and good cauſe. And this is at all times to be ſeene. In deede in the courtes of Iuſtice there will ſometimes ſuch regarde be hadde, that a ſtraunger ſhall haue the more ſpeedie diſpatch of his matters: and men will ſay that they muſt proceede more quickely in giuing of ſentence when a ſtranger commeth to demaunde iuſtice, and not ſuffer him to linger in his ſuite as thoſe which are at home at their eaſe and may goe about their buſineſſe: theſe may better bee delayed, but as touching a ſtraunger which commeth from a farre place to require iuſtice, men by nature ought to be moued not to make him linger, but to make a quick diſpatch with him. But this notwithſtanding when the thing is to be practiſed in places of Iuſtice, ye ſhall ſee the cleane contrary. Let a ſtrãger, whoſe caſe is as cleare as the ſunne, come to demaunde his right, and he ſhalbe put off vntil eight dayes, and yet from that time he ſhall bee further delayed. And then in the ende, when he is wel wearied, he ſhalbe new to beginne againe: and if he will followe on his ſuite, it ſhall growe worſe and worſe. This is at al times to be ſeene, and men make but a ſport and game of it. The poore ſtraunger knoweth not to whome to make his mone: if he meete by chaunce with a lawyer he lamenteth and ſayeth: what a thing is this? I thought to haue founde ſome iuſtice, but there is nothing but confuſion: I ſee that all thinges are ruled by fauour. Such cryes (I ſay) and complaints a man ſhall heare euery day: and yet for all that, men care not for them, but paſſe on ſtill: but yet theſe things muſt come to a reckening before God. And why? It is not ſayd, Thou ſhalt not peruert the right of thine owne countreyman or Citizen. For why? It is ſufficient ÿ there is this generall rule for it. Thou ſhalt not peruert any mans right. But let vs knowe that ſtraungers are to be more ſpecially maintained, and ÿ God taketh not on himſelfe ÿ defence of them without iuſt cauſe: inſomuch that whoſoeuer offereth thẽ any outrage or wrong, ſhalbe called to pleade his cauſe before him. When we heare this, let vs looke more narrowely vnto ourſelues, and not think to dally with ſuch a maiſter as God is. But let vs learne to vſe ſuch rightfulnes towards men, ÿ if a ſtranger come before vs, he may haue as much right done for him, as if hee had all the fauour of the whole worlde, or as if he were well knowen vnto vs, and as if we did feare leaſt ſome reproch ſhould come vnto vs by the contrary, & as if he were able to ſeeke further to make vs puniſhed for our euill dealing. Let vs on our part doe that which our Lorde cõmandeth vs: eſpecially ſeeing that beſides the promiſe which he maketh, he alſo threatneth vs. On the one ſide he ſeeketh to winne vs by mildenes and gentlenes, ſaying: Hearken to mee: yee ſhall not looſe your labour when you doe good vnto ſtraungers and ſuch as are vnknowen vnto you. And againe on the other ſide (as I told you) he threatneth vs, to the intent we ſhould not thinke that we are eſcaped although men complaine not of vs. Yet notwithſtanding there be many with whom this warning beareth no ſway at all. The Lawe of God hath alwayes bin: and yet what iuſtice hath beene ſhewed vnto ſtrangers? Men haue doone the worſt they could vnto them, and the faulte is nothing accounted of. And why? For if I bee to doe iuſtice, and I ſee that in dooing the ſtranger right I ſhall offende him whom I knowe: O I will not doe it. And verily I knowe not through what madneſſe it cõmeth to paſſe, that all folke although they knowe that it is ill doone, ceaſe not for all that, to procure the bolſtering and bearing out of their owne countreymen and citizens, and of ſuch as are of the ſame place that they themſelues be of. And why? O will one ſay, our acquaintance muſt not be iniured. That is the common ſpeech. But in the meane while we pull the wrath of God vpon the whole towne and countrey, and yet we thinke not of it. If men be asked in this caſe; what? will ye be at defiance with God? They will ſay: No. We muſt doe Iuſtice, we muſt execute puniſhmentes. Againe if a man ſpeake of the oppreſſion which hath bin vſed towardes a ſtraunger, euerie man will bee a Iudge in the caſe and ſay: there is no reaſon that one which is in credit and eſtimation ſhould be borne withal, and a ſtranger troden vnder foote, but that hee to whome the right of the matter belongeth ſhould haue it. And yet for all this, when the thing commeth to the proofe, there is nothing but fauour and corruption; The poore ſtraungers are left and forſaken, and there is no Iuſtice to be had for them. Yee ſee howe this Lawe of GOD hath beene euill practiſed in all times. But this is no excuſe for vs. Let vs therefore bethinke ourſelues to pitie ſuch as are deſpiſed of the worlde, knowing that if wee vexe and grieue them, we offer God the iniurie. And if we helpe them, God wil accept of ſuch ſeruice. Aſmuch is to be ſayde concerning the widowes and fatherleſſe. The fatherleſſe are ſometimes deuoured. And why? They ſeeme to be left for a pray. The caſe is like as touching widowes. But God oppoſeth himſelfe againſt this wickedneſſe of men, and ſheweth that he hath a care of them. Let vs therefore walke in ſuch ſort in the preſence of God, that we reſpect not the worlde to ſay: O I feare that if I do not wel I ſhal heare of it. But let vs alwayes mind this poynt, that nothing can be hidden from the ſight of God: and although men beare with vs and we ſtand ſtil in their fauour, yet if the curſe of God light vpon our heads, all the friendſhips in the world ſhall ſtand vs in no ſtead. Let vs mind this; and in minding thereof, let vs be moued thereby to abſtaine from all wrong dooing, although wee be perſwaded that in reſpect of men wee may well and lawefully doe it. Nowe God purpoſely alleadgeth: *That the people ought to remember howe they were ſometimes ſeruauntes in the Lande of Egypt, and that God brought them from thence euen to the intent that they ſhould walke as he appointed them.* Willingly ought wee to haue compaſſion on an other mans miſerie, when we for our part haue beene pinched with the like. For he which neuer knewe what miſerie meant, hath no pitie on them which are diſtreſſed. But when we our ſelues haue taſted of many miſeries and afflictions, it ought to make vs the more pitifull to relieue thoſe which are in the like eſtate, which are preſently afflicted as well as we haue beene. And that is the cauſe why God in this place putteth the Iewes in minde, that they had beene ſeruauntes in the Lande of Egypt. For one which is borne in a rich houſe, which hath beene dainetily brought vp, which hath beene alwaies crouched vnto, which neuer had a crooked word giuen him to grieue him withall, ſuch a one when he ſeeth a poore man thinketh that hee is one of an other kinde than himſelfe is of, and hee vouchſafeth not to looke vppon him as on his neighbour. But if a man haue endured much trouble, when he ſeeth any one to be grieued and troden vnder foote, he bethinketh himſelfe thus: Alas I my ſelfe was ſometimes thus trampled on, and nowe albeit GOD hath exempted me from the like miſerie, yet muſt I not forgette that which I haue taſted of heretofore. And heereupon he calleth to minde all the afflictions which he hath ſuffered. What? I was grieued at the verie heart when ſuch wrong was done me; therefore I muſt nowe ſhewe that I pitie his caſe, who is preſently ſo oppreſſed. This affection is in vs by nature. God therefore leadeth vs vnto this conſideration. And heere we be warned howe greatly euery man is addicted to himſelfe. For if our affections were ſo well ruled as they ſhould be, there woulde bee greater kindeneſſe in vs to take pitie of them which endure afflictions. For there is not that man in the world, which ought not to bee a lookingglaſſe for vs, to behold our owne nature in him, becauſe that God hath ioyned vs al together. So when one endureth griefe and miſerie, we ſhoulde open our bowels (as I may ſay) vpon him, and ſuffer part of his griefe with him. But what? We are far ynough from doing of any ſuch thing. For euery of vs is too well contented to be at his owne eaſe and reſt, ẏ if we ſee others in miſerie, we leaue thē in the ſame caſe; nay we ſhut our eyes, and will not looke vppon them. Now for this cauſe it is needful that God ſhould bring vs home to our ſelues, to teache vs to ſay: Looke on thy ſelfe: what if thou wert in the ſame ſtate? It is a ſigne then that wee are too much wedded to our owne profite, when we haue ſo litle compaſſion on them which are in miſerie; and that we are worſe than the brute beaſtes, when wee are no otherwiſe moued in that behalfe. Yet neuertheleſſe it is not for nought that God leadeth vs in this wiſe vnto the minding of our owne condition, to ſhewe what wickedneſſe and corruption is in our nature. And ſeeing wee knowe it, let vs learne to vſe ſuch prickes as theſe are, to quicken vs vp to the diſcharge of our dueties, that when wee ſee any man moleſted, we may endeuour to helpe him according vnto our abilitie. And why? Becauſe he is a creature made vnto the Image of God, becauſe he is our brother, becauſe the like miſerie may betide vs, or hath alredie happened vnto vs, at which time we alſo deſired to be relieued. Let euery man therefore quicken vppe himſelfe by this meanes, as with a goade which we ſee God vſeth to pricke vs forward: and when we foreſlowe to do our duetie, let euery man accuſe himſelf and ſay, What? It ſeemeth that thou art become a beaſt in that thou takeſt no pitie on him which endureth miſerie: If thou wert in his place thou wouldeſt haue all the worlde runne to relieue thee: and canſt thou any longer number thy ſelfe in the aray of men, when thou takeſt no greater care of a creature which is made vnto the Image and likenes of God? Thus a man ought to quicken himſelfe vp in his dutie. Now if we be exhorted to haue ſuch pitie on thē which are in any kind of miſerie, how much leſſe may it be lawful for vs to come & lift vp ourſelues againſt thē like wilde beaſtes, and to tread them vnder foote, which are deſtitute of all ayde and helpe? God cōmandeth vs to relieue & to ſuccor them, and what wickednes were it then for vs to come to moleſt and trouble thē? So then let vs learne, firſt of all to abſtaine from all iniury and harme doing: and yet let vs not beare ourſelues in hande, ẏ we are ſo diſcharged, when we haue done no harme: but let vs furthermore endeuor to relieue ẏ oppreſſed, by helping them, and by bringing to paſſe ẏ they may find a way to be deliuered out of their miſerie: let euery man employ himſelfe hereunto. And if we thinke ẏ in reſpect of men our labour is but loſt, let vs know ẏ ſuch ſeruice of ours is acceptable vnto God, and that we ſhall not faile of his bleſſing: and let this ſtirre vs vp, accordingly as we are warned in this place.

Nowe let vs kneele downe in the preſence of our good GOD with acknowledging of our faultes, praying him to make vs feele them better than hitherunto wee haue doone: and that aboue all, (ſeeing hee hath ioyned vs together as brethren, adopting vs all into the number of his children) we may ſo ſerue and honour him, as we may therewall liue in brotherly loue one with an other, ſuccouring one another in all our neceſſities, and abſtayning from all malice, outrages, and deceites, in ſuch ſorte as our conuerſation in this worlde bee a true teſtimonie vnto vs that our God gouerneth vs by his ſpirite, and hath giuen vnto vs the marke of that inheritaunce whereunto wee labour to come. That it may pleaſe him to graunt this grace, not onely vnto vs, but alſo to all people and nations of the earth, &c.

On Tewſday the xj. of February, 1556.

The CXLI. Sermon which is the ſixth vpon the foure and twentith Chapter.

19 When thou cutteſt downe thine harueſt in thy feelde, and haſt forgotten a ſheafe in the feeld, thou ſhalt not returne backe againe to fetch it: but it ſhalbee for the ſtranger, for the fatherleſſe, and for the widowe, that the Lorde thy God may bleſſe thee in all the workes of thy hands.

20 When thou gathereſt thine Oliues, thou ſhalt not returne againe to ſeeke ouer the braunches, but it ſhalbee for the ſtranger, for the fatherleſſe, and for the widowe.

21 VVhen thou gathereſt thy vineyard, thou ſhalt not gather the grapes which thou happeneſt to leaue behinde thee: but they ſhalbe for the ſtranger, for the fatherleſſe, and for the widowe.

22 Remember that thou waſt a ſeruant in the lande of Egypt, therefore I commaund thee to do this thing.

Deut.23.24

WE haue ſeene heretofore howe God ordayned, that in gathering in of the harueſt, and of the grapes of the vineyarde, they which were hyred, might whyle they were reaping and gathering of the grapes, eate their fill. And this permiſſion hee gaue vnto them, to ſhewe, that the rich muſt not ſo ſwallowe vp all thinges, but that they muſt alwayes beſtowe ſome portion on the poore: euery man according vnto the plentie and aboundance which hee hath. For ſee heere with what condition God leaueth his goods in rich mens handes; namely, to the intent that hauing the abilitie, they ſhoulde alſo take occaſion to relieue their neighbours which are in neceſſitie. And ſo this kindneſſe and gentleneſſe ought to bee amongeſt vs, that hee which hath wherewithall to bee liberal, ſhoulde beſtowe ſome parte of his aboundance vppon his neighbours. And although none bee rated touching his liberalitie, by way of taxe or ſeſſement, yet neuertheleſſe euery man ought to thinke that God hath giuen him plentie of corne and wine vppon condition, that he ſhould beſtowe ſome parte thereof on them which are in neede and neceſſitie. That which we haue nowe recited, tendeth to the ſame effect. For God ordayneth that when a man cutteth down his harueſt, gathereth his grapes; or beateth his Oliue trees, (as wee with vs doe our walnuttes) hee ſhoulde not bee ſo couetous as to rake in the vtmoſt eare of corne, to looke for the laſt grape, or to ſeeke after euery Oliue: but that hee which gathereth in the corne of his feelde, ſhoulde leaue ſomewhat after him for the poore to gleane, as for the fatherleſſe, for the widowes, and for the ſtraungers which haue no landes nor poſſeſſions of their owne. Yee ſee what a reaſonable lawe God ſetteth vs downe in this place, to the intent wee ſhould knowe, that if God hath giuen vs aboundance of goods beyonde our owne vſe, wee ought not to bee ouer niggiſh of them: but that they which ſtande in neede, muſt bee ſome way releeued and ſuccoured by vs. There is alſo a promiſe added to correct that diſtruſt which is in men. For God ſayeth that when men ſhall ſo doe, hee will encreaſe their wealth which haue beene liberall to helpe the poore and needie. And beſides this, hee putteth the Iewes in minde, that it is hee by whome they were brought into that lande which they poſſeſſed, & that they helde it at his hande. As if the chiefe Lorde of the fee ſhoulde ſay vnto them which holde of his tenure: What? The lande you haue is mine, and I haue graunted it vnto you with condition that I ſhall receiue at leaſtwiſe the rentes and ſeruices. God therefore in token of a kinde of homage, reſerueth vnto himſelfe, the gleaning and other thinges for the poore that come after to gather the grapes and the oliues which are left behinde. God ſayeth that theſe are royalties which belong vnto him, and that hee giueth and beſtoweth them on ſuch as haue neede: and therefore, that the riche men ought not to bee grieued therewith, as if they had loſt any thing, or as if their owne goods were taken from them: for God ſaith, al is mine. Ye ſee then in effect what is here conteined. Now let vs note well, that God meaneth not ẏ the poore ſhould be in ſuch wiſe relieued, as that the rich ſhould be ſpoyled of that which they poſſeſſe. For what a confuſion and diſorder would that breede? We muſt therfore note, that God leaueth vnto euery man whatſoeuer he poſſeſſeth, either by way of inheritance, or by buying, or by any other iuſt and lawfull title. And hereby the poore ar warned, not to ranſack or make hauock of whatſoeuer commeth in their way, as many doe, which think they may ſnatch away any thing by good right, ſo they be not puniſhed by law, nor haue any to witneſſe againſt them. What? I haue great neede ſayeth one. Yea, but what neede ſoeuer a man ſtandeth in, yet God will not haue the ciuil order broken, and all right peruerted. If the rich diſcharge not their dueties, but be ſo cruell as to ſuffer the poore to dye in their neede, they ſhall render an account thereof, but that ſhalbe before the heauenly Iudge. But in the meane while the poore ought to take thinges patiently, they muſt abſtaine from all malice, from al rauine, from all pilling and ſpoyling. This then ought to be diligẽtly obſerued in the firſt place. For our Lord ſayth not in this place: he which hath need of corne in harueſt time, let him take a reaphook, and go and cut his neighbors corne to carrie it to the mill: but he ſpeaketh only of leaſing after the harueſt is in. But a man ſhall ſee perilous gleaners nowadayes. For if a man ſet not diligent watch ouer his poſſeſſions, euery body will take his ſhare; men are growen to ſuch vnrulineſſe, that there is no vpright dealing vſed: men haue no regarde to thinke that God hath diſtributed the goods of this worlde according vnto his owne good pleaſure, and that his will is, that hee which is richeſt ſhould poſſeſſe that which hee holdeth, and that no man ſhoulde doe him any wrong for it: no not although hee bee one of the vnſatiable gulfes, which thinke they haue neuer ynough. Yet for all that God will not haue any man to touche their goods or to doe them any wrong. But this is little regarded. And ſo although God directes his talke in this place expreſſely to the riche; yet neuertheleſſe hee giueth the poore a leſſon alſo, and meaneth to brydle them from going into another mans feelde to conuey away ſecretely what they can catch, and from entring into their neighbours vineyarde to gather grapes at their pleaſure. Nay, he will haue them to abſtaine from other mens goods, vntill ſuch tyme as they may gleane after the harueſt, and gather the grapes which remaine after the vintage. For this leaue is granted them, ſo they come not to ſpoyle like theeues, but to take that which God hath reſerued for them. And in verie deede wee ſuffer dogges to eate the crummes and other ſcrappes which fall vnder the tables: and ſhall wee not ſuffer our brethren, which are made to the image and likeneſſe of God? Ought not they to haue part of our aboundance, ſo as they might come and haue at leaſtwiſe ſome little pittance to licke vp? What great matter is it to gather the grapes which are left when the vintage is gathered? What great matter is it to gleane after the harueſt? Verilie it is but a ſmall thing. And therfore it were too too exceſſiue crueltie in men, if they which haue lands & poſſeſſions, after they haue gathered in the fruite of them, will yet bee ſuch niggards as not to permit ẏ poore to haue that which they might gather after them. But becauſe men are ſo diſtruſtfull, that they thinke the whole earth will fayle them, God to make this doctrine more auailable ſayeth: *I will make thee to proſper, thou ſhalt bee encreaſed and multiplyed through my bleſſing and fauour, when thou doeſt ſo.* There is no doubt but God meant in this place to correct the vnbeleefe which raigneth ouermuch in vs, in that euery of vs thinketh that hee ſhall neuer haue ynough: O ſayeth one, ſuch miſfortune may betyde mee. I muſt prouide for ſuch a harde time. And this is the cauſe why men ſnatche and ſcratche to themſelues on all ſides and cannot bee ſatiſfied, but the more they haue the more is their couetous deſire inflamed, as hee which is ſicke of the dropſie, the more hee drinketh the more hee thyrſteth. And what is the cauſe hereof? Euen our diueliſh vnbeleefe and diſtruſtfulneſſe in that wee conſider not that it is Gods owne office to nouriſh vs. And whereas wee aske of him euery day our dayly bread, there is not one among an hundred which vnderſtandeth what is meant by that worde: for wee deſire to be fedde at Gods handes. The riche vſe this fourme of prayer aſwell as the poore; and confeſſe thereby that they ſo poſſeſſe their goods, as if God gaue them a portion euery daye for their nouriſhment, and that that whatſoeuer they haue in their garner, they doe receiue it at his hande. But none thinketh hereon. And that is the cauſe why men are ſo inſatiable, and burne with ſuch couetouſneſſe, that they are alwayes raking to themſelues, and making vp huge heapes of wealth, and are neuer contented. Will wee then liue contentedly? Let vs haue our recourſe vnto God, knowing that if hee bleſſe vs, wee ſhall haue ſufficient wherewithall to bee ſuſtayned and nouriſhed. To this intent therefore is this promiſe ſet downe here, that God wil bleſſe them which are no ſuch niggardes towardes the poore, but that they ſuffer and permit them to bee ſomeway releeued by gleaning and gathering the ſmall frute which is left behinde. And ſo as often as wee are moued to doe any almes, let vs call this warning to mynde and correct our niggardlineſſe thereby, which proceedeth (as I tolde you [illegible]) this diſtruſt of ours, that wee conſider not that it is God which muſt prouide for vs.

Nowe it is true in deede, that when we giue an almes wee are not conſtrayned to ridde our ſelues cleane of all that wee haue. For Saint Paul ſheweth that God ſpareth vs heerein. I ſay not (ſayeth hee) that the poore muſt take that which the riche haue, but that at leaſtwiſe of your aboundance, you muſt ſuccour ſuch as are in neede, and ſee them ſomewhat releeued by you, as who woulde ſaye: It is not ynough that I haue for mine owne vſe, and that God ſhewe him 2.Cor.8.14

himſelfe ſo liberall towardes mee ſo as I want nothing; but foraſmuch as I ſee my neighbours pyne away through neede, they muſt haue ſome portion of that which is mine, and they muſt at leaſtwiſe feele ſomewhat of the bleſſing of God, when I am at mine eaſe. That is the thing whereunto ſaint Paul leadeth vs. So then let vs profite our ſelues by this place where it is ſayde: *Thou ſhalt gather in the fruite of thy vineyarde, thou ſhalt cut downe the harueſt of thy feelde, thou ſhalt beate thy Oliue trees*, knowing that it is a ſpeciall priuiledge, which God giueth vnto men, and which we ought to eſteeme well of, when euery man poſſeſſeth his owne without gainſaying, ſo as hee which hath a feelde, gathereth the corne to maintaine himſelfe & his familie, and hee which hath a vineyarde, reapeth the commoditie of the wine. Seeing the Lord granteth this vnto vs, let vs acknowledge his fatherly goodnes towardes vs: and let it ſtirre vs vp to releeue and ſuccour thẽ which are in neede and diſtreſſe: and when wee ſee the poore languiſhing in their miſeries, and oppreſſed with neceſſitie, let vs bee mooued with ſome pitie towardes them; let their caſe touch vs to the quicke: and albeit in reſpect of men wee may ſay: This is mine; yet notwithſtanding, let vs haue an eye vnto GOD, who hath beſtowed it on vs vnder condition that we ſhoulde not keepe all of it in our owne handes, but diſtribute it in ſuch wiſe as wee ſee agreeable on the one ſide to our owne abilitie, and on the other, to the neede and neceſſitie of our neighbours.

But let vs returne to the promiſe. For as I tolde you, a man might ſay: Well, I haue wherewith to finde mee this yeare: but what ſhall I haue for the yeare which followeth? A man muſt not aſſure himſelfe of that which he hath: For the corne which hee hath in his garners may bee conſumed: God can ſoone cauſe it to vaniſh. And it muſt not bee in way of hypocriſie that wee muſt ſaye, Giue vs this day our daily or ordinarie breade. For thereby wee confeſſe, that they which haue neuer ſo much, haue nothing at all, except God make it auaileable to their vſe. So then let euery man haue conſideration to ſay: What may this boote mee? Although I bee ſtored and furniſhed with all thinges; yet God may bereaue mee of all: he hath the heauens in his hande to ſhut them vp, and hee ſayeth that hee will make the heauens Leuit.26.19 as harde as yron, and the earth ſhalbee hardened like braſſe, ſo that wee ſhall not wring out of it one droppe of ſuſtenance for vs. Will wee then that the Lorde who hath hitherto fed vs, and beene our foſter father, euen vnto this preſent time, ſhall continue to doe the like vnto the ende? Let vs take heede that wee diſtruſt not his goodnes, and thereby bee hindered to bee kyndhearted towardes them which haue neede of our helpe. Let vs therefore helpe them, yea, euen without ſtaying vppon any other thing than this preſent promiſe, That the bleſſing of God ſhalbee vppon vs. Let vs be enclyned vnto pitie and compaſſion, to releeue them which ſtande in neede of our helpe, knowing that when God hath giuen vs one good yeare, if wee bee gentle and kindhearted to ſuccour our neighbours, hee will alwayes encreaſe his benefites and bleſſings more and more vpon vs: as Saint Paul alſo ſheweth in the ſecond Epiſtle to the Corinthians, where hee handleth 2.Cor. 8. & 9.Chapt. this matter at large. Let vs therefore haue this alwayes before our eyes, as ỹ verie point whereunto the ſcripture leadeth vs: namely ỹ we muſt be fully aſſured, and thorowlie reſolued, that our Lord wil neuer forget vs. Whẽ we are once thorowly perſwaded of this, doubtles we wil eſteeme more of the onlie bleſſing of God, than of all ỹ euer we might haue gathered & heaped vp together. Though we haue al ỹ prouiſion in ỹ world: it would not ſuffice vs ſo well as this onlie contentment will doe, to ſay: I haue my God which hath promiſed not to forget me, but to continue his bountifulnes alwayes vnto me: I haue euer found him liberall towards me euen vntill this day, and hee wil doe yet more for me, if I cõmit my ſelfe wholie vnto him and to his prouidẽce. Ye ſee then what we are to learne as touching this promiſe.

Let vs come now vnto that which God addeth, that is: *That the Iewes were ſeruants in Egypt, and that he brought them out from thence*: (as we ſaw yeſterday.) But he repeateth the ſame thing againe, & that not without good cauſe. For as it was yeſterday touched, if men be welthie, there is much crouching vnto them becauſe of their riches, they ſeparate themſelues as it were from mankinde, and they beare themſelues in hand that they are a degree aboue them, & the poore may not touche any thing of theirs. To bee ſhort, if God would haue beleueed them, he ſhould haue made a ſeueral world for them: for to their ſeeming, the poore are not woorthie to haue any dwelling with them. And that is becauſe they are not touched with other mens afflictions, to ſaie: Alas behold he is my fleſh, how wreched ſoeuer he be, as the prophet Eſaie Eſa. 58.7. Col. 3.12. 1.Iohn. 3.17 ſaith, who leadeth vs to ỹ minding of this point, when hee woulde haue vs enclyned to pitie and compaſſion, ſo as our bowels ſhoulde yearne at the afflictions of our brethren, as the ſcripture ſpeaketh. But there is not one which thinketh hereon. God therefore perceiuing that riches doe blinde men in ſuch wiſe, and that their eyes are readie to burſt, (for that is the ſimilitude which Dauid vſeth in the 73. Pſalme) ſayeth: *Remember that thou waſt a ſeruaunt in the lande of Egypt.* And ſo whereas the Iewes are exhorted in this wiſe, it is to the intent they ſhoulde not bee puffed vp with pride through their aboundance, or that beeing fatte and well fed, they ſhould not become like reſtie Iades as it is ſaide in the ſong: but that they ſhoulde alwayes bethinke themſelues thus: Wee were ſometimes in bondage, and that in ſuch cruell bondage, as none could bee greater, wee were in thraldome like poore ſlaues, but God hath deliuered vs. The remembrance of this one thing ought to abate all the pryde of the Iewes, and moreouer to leade them to pitifull compaſſion to helpe thoſe which were poore and needie among them.

As for example, if there were ſtraungers which had neither vineyardes nor other poſſeſſions: if there were widowes and fatherleſſe among them, they ought to think: Alas, when our fathers were cruelly afflicted in the lande of Egypt, they woulde faine haue beene ſomewhat releeued: is it not reaſon then that wee nowe ſhoulde doe the like? This (ſay I) is the meaning of God, when hee ſpeaketh of the bondage of Egypt. Moreouer, hee warneth the Iewes (as wee haue declared afore) that they poſſeſſe not the lande of Chanaan for their inheritaunce by any other title, than becauſe it was giuen them by GOD. It is therefore all one as if the chiefe Lorde ſhoulde require his royalties, his homage, & his other right, which are due vnto him. For God ſeemeth thus to ſay: I haue giuen you the land of Chanaan: but I haue reſerued the gleaning & ſuch like things for my ſelfe. And therefore deceiue mee not of that which is mine. Beholde, I appoynt the poore in my behalfe to goe and gather vp theſe things.

Nowe as for vs, it is true in deede that wee dwell not in the land of Chanaan, as did the Iewes, wee haue no ſuch order of gouernement as they had, neither are we of the ſtocke of Abraham, there are no ſuch portions of land allotted vs as are written of in Ioſua; and yet neuertheleſſe this ought alwayes to bee in force amongeſt vs; that hee which is of wealth, is bounde according to his meaſure and aboundance, to releeue them which are in need. Saint 2.Cor.8.14. Paul ſpeaketh not vnto the Iewes, he ſpeaketh not for the time of the figures vnder the lawe, but hee ſetteth foorth this doctrine & this rule vnto all the faithfull in generall, and will haue men obſerue it vntill the ende of the worlde. Therefore let vs note that whenſoeuer through our niggardlineſſe wee withdrawe our ſelues from helping our neighbours as wee ought, we are reprooued by this worde: What? whatſoeuer thou haſt, thou haſt it from the hande of God. And vnder what condition? For ſee I pray you, how men diſcharge them ſelues with ſlightneſſe; What? ſayeth one, Is not this mine? Yes, but yet oughteſt thou to bee kindehearted towardes ſuch as are in neede. For art thou riche? It is not becauſe of thy faire eyes [as they ſay.] In deede God hath giuen more to thee than to many others; but for all that, hath hee reſerued nothing for himſelfe? Hath he giuen all ouer vnto thee to make hauock of it? Although euery man enioy his owne feelde, and his owne vineyarde, although euery man eate of his owne corne and drinke of his owne wine, muſt charitie therefore ceaſe and bee layde aſide? Col.3.14. Muſt it bee diminiſhed? Is it not in degree aboue all the ciuil orders and lawes in the worlde? Is it not the bonde of perfection? So then they which are by nature ſuch miſerable pinchpennies and ſuch niggardes, they which whyne ſo when they ſhoulde giue an almes, and are as willing to doe it as a Beare to goe to the ſtake: let them fight againſt that vice of theirs, in ſuch wiſe as our Lorde ſheweth vs in this place, and let them ſay: Howe nowe? That which thou haſt is none of thine, ſauing that thy God hath giuen it thee. Conſider nowe what couenant hee hath made with thee. It is not that thou ſhouldeſt bee a gulfe to deuour and ſwallowe vp all, but to the intent that thy brethren ſhoulde bee ſomewhat relieued by thee, and hee vouchſafeth thee the honour to bee the diſpoſer of his goods. If God gaue me no more than I needed, yea, if I had not a crum of breade more than woulde feede mee: yet were that verie much: and coulde I euer diſcharge my ſelfe of my duetie to magnifie him ſufficiently for that his bountifulneſſe & goodneſſe towardes mee? No verily. But when as hee giueth a man more than hee needeth, hee appointeth him after a ſorte to repreſent his owne perſon, as if hee ſhoulde ſaye, Whereas it is my propertie to doe good: for all good thinges proceede from mee: It is I which make the earth to yeelde fruite: It is I which do giue it ſtrength to bring foorth her fruites: I doe as it were giue him mine owne office, and aſſigne him to bee as it were my lieuetenaunt: and howe greate an honour is that? All the riche therefore which haue wherewith to doe good, are doutleſſe as it were the officers of God to exerciſe that which is properly belonging vnto him, to wit, to helpe their neighbours to liue. Therefore ſith God vouchſafeth vs ſuch honour; are not we too ſhamefully malicious and more beaſtly than the beaſts themſelues, if wee bee not mooued with pitie and compaſſion towardes the poore? So then let vs remember this worde when it is ſayde, that God gaue the land of Chanaan vnto his people on condition, that the rich ſhoulde pittie the poore: and at this daye let vs applye this doctrine vnto our ſelues, according vnto that forealleaged warning which Saint Paul giueth vs.

Nowe wee are likewiſe warned in generall, to acknowledge the miſeries wherein wee were when God reached out his hande vnto vs, to the intent wee may bee ſo much the more feruent to ſerue and honour him, and to yeeld our ſelues wholly vnto his obedience. And that extendeth verie farre: for in generall when God meaneth to preſſe vs more neerely to diſcharge our dueties towardes him, and that euery one ſhoulde dedicate him ſelfe wholy vnto his ſeruice; hee putteth vs in minde that hee hath drawen vs from out of the deepeſt dungeon of death, and that wee were ſometimes the bondſlaues of Satan, that wee were helde faſt bounde vnder eternall damnation, & (to be ſhort) that we were as good as plunged in hell. Loe what inheritaunce wee haue by our birth, vntill GOD caſt his eye vppon vs, and of his mercie drawe vs out of the horrible confuſion wherein wee are and which wee bring with vs.

But nowe let vs looke vnto our firſt birth of all: Our Lorde created vs after his own image and likeneſſe. It is true: but that was wholly defaced and wiped out in vs by the ſinne of Adam: wee are accurſed, wee are by nature ſhut out from all hope of life: but behold our God hath redeemed vs by the bloud of his ſonne, & hath opened vnto vs the gate of heauen. Howe much therefore are wee bounde vnto him, if we conſider our firſt eſtate, and what wee were before hee aduaunced vs vnto this dignitie? And this is not yet all, wee were alſo wretched vnbeleeuers. For albeit that Ieſus Chriſt was the redeemer of the whole worlde, yet had wee as much as lay in vs, renounced that benefite, nay wee had falſified our baptiſme, whereby God from our infancie had marked vs, to ſay that wee ſhould bee of his houſe and of his Church. And howe haue wee liued all the time that wee were Idolaters? Wee haue annihilated Gods grace, whereby he had called vs to him, at leaſtwiſe as much as laye in vs: but the goodneſſe of God alwayes ſurmounted, and his truth was ſo firme and ſure, that it hath ouercome all the wickedneſſe of men: in ſo much that though they haue beene vnfaithfull, yet notwithſtanding GOD continueth ſtill to ſhewe himſelfe faithfull, ſo that the baptiſme which wee had defaced, remayneth ſtill in his full force: but it is not long of vs; for as I ſayde afore: wee were plunged in all vncleanneſſe and filthines: and were ſo defiled both in bodie and ſoule with all manner of defilementes, that wee coulde not bee but eſtraunged wholly from God. But yet hath hee plucked vs backe againe; and as nowe we bee become citizens of the kingdome of heauen, and are reconciled vnto him, and are adopted for his children, and yet wee are vnthankfull vnto him, yea, and we growe prowd againſt him; inſomuch that diuerſe preſume wonderouſly of themſelues, and yet knowe not that they are beholding vnto God for all the good which they haue. Yee ſee then how wee be moued to humble our ſelues, and that in acknowledging the benefites and giftes which we haue receiued of God, wee ought to endeuour to vſe them ſo, as all may bee referred vnto his honour, that hee may bee ſerued of vs, and euery of vs apply himſelfe, firſt vnto his obedience, and then to haue cõpaſſion of our neighbours.

Ephe.2.19.

When wee beholde the wretched vnbeleeuers in the Popedome, which are ſtill carryed away ſo headlõg in ignorance and in the damnable ſuperſtitions of Papiſtrie: alas wee ought to thinke that wee were like vnto them, vntill God deliuered vs from thence: and that wee are forgetfull heereof through contempt, as wee ſee that many diſdayne the Papiſtes and mocke them, and haue no pitie of them. And why? Becauſe they conſider not what they themſelues haue beene; ne magnifie the grace of God to ſaye: If God had not reached vs his hande, what had become of vs? Wee had remayned in our deſtruction, wherewith we had beene ouerwhelmed. Let vs therefore thinke hereupon when wee beholde them which are yet as it were reiected and forſaken of God: let vs knowe that our caſe and theirs was alike: and let it mooue vs to humilitie, that all pryde may bee caſt downe, and wee endeuour to winne them, as much as lyeth in vs, which are yet wandering from the way of ſaluation: let vs acknowledge that wee had once neede of ſuch helpe and ſuccour, and that God was not niggardly towardes vs, to the intent that wee for our parte ſhoulde not bee negligent to employ our ſelues likewiſe for our neyghbour, & by that meanes ſhewe that wee are his children, ſeeing it hath pleaſed him to ſhewe himſelfe a father towardes vs. Nowe I graunt that there are many which are wonderfully greeued when a man putteth them in minde what they haue beene in time paſt.

If a man bee become riche and is aduaunced to honour, hee woulde haue no man to remember him what hee was afore: but hee is carryed away with ſuch an headleſſe ouerweening, that hee ſurely thinketh that hee is fallen from the clowdes, and woulde gladly ſo blinde the eyes of the whole worlde, that men ſhoulde conſider nothing but his preſent excellencie. But our Lorde, not without cauſe, bringeth vs backe agayne. And why? For (as I tolde you) men are ſubiect to this forgetting of them ſelues when God hath once exalted them, and thereupon they diſdayne their neighbours, and pride ingendreth crueltie: (as it is ſaid in the ſixteenth Chapter of Ezechiell,) where Sodome is ſet downe for an example thereof. God ſayth that the pride which was founde in Sodome, prouoked his wrath and vengeance againſt that citie. For when they had once aboundaunce of all things, and were growen fatte, when they had meate and drinke at will: then began they (ſaith hee) to bee puffed vp in pryde, and afterwarde withdrewe their handes from the poore, and thought that it was ynough, ſo that they themſelues were furniſhed. Let vs therefore know, that our Lorde perceiuing the vice whereunto wee are ouermuch enclyned and giuen, meant to prouide ſuch remedie for it, as hee knewe to bee fit and conuenient for our ſaluation. So then if wee bethinke our ſelues well, wee ſhall alwayes finde iuſt reaſon to moue vs vnto kindneſſe towardes our neighbours. There is yet another thing which ought to induce vs heereunto, namely, if wee conſider thus with our ſelues: euen that I am a man, and that I am endued with ſome ſpeciall qualitie aboue others, it is of God; I am beholden to him for it, it is he that hath giuen mee that prerogatiue. But how ſoeuer I fare, I cannot cut my ſelfe off from mankinde: I am deſcended from the ſtocke of Adam which is wholly accurſed: and as for that knowledge which I haue of Gods trueth, it is a ſpeciall gifte which hee hath giuen mee: I haue it not by nature: and farther I am ſubiect to all the miſeries and wretchedneſſes in the worlde: if I bee to day in honour, to morrowe God may put mee to infamie and ſhame: if I be in health, God may caſt mee into ſickneſſe. Wee ſee how

Act.12.23. Kings and Princes themſelues haue beene eaten vp ſometimes with vermine and with rottenneſſe, and haue beene ſo ſtinking, that they haue loathed euen themſelues; whereby a man might perceiue the hande of God viſibly vppon them . Therefore when wee ſee ſuch examples, it ought to humble vs. And ſhall not this humilitie breede a brotherly kindheartedneſſe in vs to helpe our neighbours , or at leaſt wiſe to bewayle and to pitie the miſerie wherein they are, ſeeking as much as lyeth in vs to relieue and ſuccour them ? So then let vs alwayes thinke on this : *Thou waſt a ſeruaunt in the lande of Egypt , and therefore I commaunde thee to doe thus.*

Nowe when our Lorde ſayeth , I commaund thee to doe ſo, he taketh that as granted, which I haue alreadie touched, to wit, that becauſe hee is the Redeemer of this people, therefore they are bounde vnto him. You owe all thinges vnto mee (ſayeth hee): and ſeeing it is ſo, I will haue you pay ſuch a tribute in way of reknowledging of thoſe goods and lands, which you holde of mee: and I require nothing but that which is mine. Nowe when wee haue wel conſidered hereuppon, let vs take the expoſition hereof as Saint Paul deliuereth it vnto vs in the fourteenth Chapter of his Epiſtle to the Romanes: and wee ſhall ſee howe profitable this doctrine is for vs. For, for this cauſe (ſayth he) Ieſus Chriſt dyed and roſe againe, to the intent that wee ſhould be his, both while wee liue and when wee dye. Beholde here a bond which wee cannot eſcape, and woe be vnto him which ſeeketh to exempt himſelfe from it: to wit, to dedicate both our life and death vnto his ſeruice, who hath ſo loued vs and helde vs ſo deare, that hee hath not ſpared his owne life , to winne vs vnto himſelfe and vnto God his father. Seeing then that hee hath ſo redeemed vs, that we are his inheritance, and that hee declareth that we are wholie his, & that wee belong properly vnto him, it is good reaſon that whenſoeuer hee commaundeth vs any thing, wee ſhould lay our hande on our mouth, and receiue without any gainſaying whatſoeuer he putteth vnto vs. For ſeeing hee is our Redeemer and that wee hold of him whatſoeuer wee haue, are wee not ouer blockiſh, if wee ſubmit not our ſelues vnto him and reſt altogither on his will ? And that is the cauſe alſo why GOD vſeth this preface in his Exod.20.2. lawe: I am the euerliuing thy God which haue brought thee out of the lande of Egypt. Before that God ſetteth downe any commaundement to rule the life of his people by, hee ſaith: Know yee that I haue alreadie purchaſed you to ſerue mee. I graunt wee haue not beene brought out of the lande of Egypt; but yet the redemption which hath beene wrought for vs is much more precious: for wee are deliuered from the bottomleſſe pit of hell. For as much therefore as wee of our owne nature are ſo ſlowe to ſerue God, or rather ſo reſtie, that wee drawe cleane backewarde from his will: becauſe wee receiue not the yoke quietly, but are as young vntamed and vnhandled heiffers, or rather as ſtiffenecked buls. For we ſee how ſome are ſo headſtrong and brainſicke, that a man can by no meanes rule them; and others are ſpitefull and froward, full of rebellion, and vnreclaymable. Sith we ſee it is ſo harde a matter to bring vs in ſubiection vnder GOD; let vs quicken vp our ſelues in this ſort and ſaye: Howe nowe ? Knoweſt thou not who it is that ſpeaketh ? Is it not hee who hath redeemed vs? And ſeeing that wee are his, muſt hee haue ſo much a doe to winne vs vnto himſelfe ? Shal wee ſo reſiſt him ? Muſt hee bee fayne to fight with vs when hee woulde frame vs to his wil? Doe not we ſhewe our ſelues monſters in ſo dooing? And are we not to be holden for deteſtable perſons ? Verily if wee looke well to our ſelues, wee ſhall finde that this is not the onely cauſe whereby wee are bound vnto God: hee might vpbrayde vs with his creating of vs. And if wee bee his creatures, is it not good reaſon that hee ſhoulde quietly haue the mayſtrie of vs ? And what creatures are wee? He ſhalbee ſerued of the Oxen and Aſſes, hee ſhalbee ſerued of the earth which is without all ſenſe and feeling, and of corne and of wine and of all other ſenſeleſſe thinges: for wee ſee howe God imployeth them as it ſeemeth good vnto him. But hee hath created vs after his owne image and likeneſſe. Was he bounde to make vs reaſonable creatures, and to giue vs ſuch excellencie and dignitie ? Nay verily. Let vs knowe then that it ought to mooue vs to yeelde our ſelues wholly vnto his obedience, for aſmuch as wee ſee that hee hath preferred vs before aſſes, horſes, dogges, and other beaſtes, and before ſtones and other dead and ſenſeleſſe creatures. But there is yet more (as I haue ſayde) to wit, the redemption which God hath wrought for vs; which deſerueth that wee ſhoulde ſuffer our ſelues to bee gouerned by him: and that whenſoeuer he ſpeaketh, it is to be preſuppoſed that he hath all authoritie ouer vs, and that hee borroweth it not any where elſe, but hath it dewe vnto him, as vnto our ſoueraigne King.

But let vs farther note , that God meaneth not to wreſt from vs any ſeruile or forcible ſubiection, but woulde haue vs of our owne good will quietly to yeelde vnto that which he ſaieth. Why vſeth hee theſe wordes : *Thou waſt a ſeruant, but I haue nowe ſet thee at libertie* ? There is no dout but that hee meant to winne vs vnto him ſelfe by this myldneſſe. As if hee had ſaid: Go to, I might in deede conſtrayn you to ſerue mee: but I will haue you to ſerue me with a free heart: I will haue you like a chylde which taketh pleaſure in obeying and pleaſing of his father: I will not holde you as ſlaues and bondemen, but I woulde haue you offer your ſelues vp vnto mee as it were in ſacrifice. Nowe wee knowe that the ſacrifices which wee offer vnto God muſt bee offered with a free good wil & al ẏ euer he requireth of vs, he caleth ſacrifices. And therfore let vs note, ẏ by his receiuing of vs vnto himſelfe, after hee hath redeemed vs, he giueth vs to vnderſtand ẏ he meaneth not to hale vs to him by force, nor to hamper vs with cordes and chaines, nor to wreſt I knowe not what from vs, neither cōmeth he like a ſherife or bayliffe to leuy any thing of vs; but exhorteth vs mieldely: and ſheweth vs that ſith he hath redeemed vs, it is good reaſon that we ſhould be his and alſo all that euer hee hath put into our handes: And that ſeeing wee holde all of him, and by thoſe thinges hee teſtifieth his fatherlie goodneſſe towardes vs: therefore wee ought to bee ſo much the more moued and enclined too doe whatſoeuer it ſhall pleaſe him to commaund vs. And that is the cauſe alſo why the holy ſcripture vſeth ſuch amiable ſpeeches as theſe: I exhorte 2.Cor.5.20. you: I pray you. When Saint Paule ſpake, hee might haue vſed the authoritie of God: For when we bring the lawe, when we reprehende vices, when we exhort vnto that which is commaunded vs; ſurely it is God that ſpeaketh: and wee take it from him whatſoeuer wee vtter with our mouthes. But yet God in the perſon of ſaint Paul prayeth vs: and therefore wee ought to be aſhamed, if wee yeelde not thereunto, ne be meekened therewith, what hardeneſſe ſoeuer be in vs. So then let euery of vs learne to quicken vp himſelfe, when we ſee ſuch looſeneſſe in our ſelues, and that we are ſo ſlowe that wee rather recoyle backewarde than ſet ourſelues forwarde to any good thing. Conſider O wretched creature after what ſort thy God directeth his ſpeech vnto thee: hee commeth familiarly vnto thee: hee ſayeth not, Beholde I am your king: I haue all rule and ſuperioritie ouer you, and therefore I muſt handle you roughly: hee ſpeaketh not after that manner: but he ſayeth: I am come nigh vnto you. And for what cauſe elſe but to be your ſauiour? And this hee doeth not for his owne profite, but for our ſaluation: therefore ſith wee ſee that our Lorde vſeth ſuch gentleneſſe and mildeneſſe towardes vs, wee ought to fare the better by it euery one of vs, & to take occaſion thereby to quicken vp ourſelues the better in our duties.

And let vs note alſo howe God ſayth: I commaunde thee to doe ſo. And why? To the intent we ſhould liſten vnto his mouth, & depende wholely thereupon: and not euery man order himſelfe after his owne fancie and ſay: O I doe this in the honour of God, and is it not ynough? Euery man muſt not bring his owne opinion before God, to ſay: We muſt do this or that becauſe we thinke it to be good: but God will haue men ſimply to hearken and to follow without any exception, whatſoeuer hee calleth them vnto. And whē he leadeth vs in this wiſe vnto his own will, it is all one as if he had cut off all thoſe excuſes to ſay: And when I doe thus, will it not do well if I vſe ſuch a meane? GOD (I ſay) will not haue vs to take ſuch aduauntage of him, that euery one ſhould order himſelfe according to his owne pleaſure: but hee will haue his worde hearkened vnto, and obeyed without any gaineſaying. So then will wee haue a certaine rule? Wil we not wander in our life as wild and ſauage beaſtes? Let vs heare God ſpeake; and hauing heard him, let vs hold ourſelues vnto that which he ſayth: and let vs not preſume to bring in our replyes and ſay: yea and this would do well, and that were not amiſſe. But let vs bethinke ourſelues thus: Doth God commaund vs to doe ſo? It is not ynough to put yͤ whole world to ſilence, and to bridle not onely our tongues, but alſo our heartes, ſo as we preſume not to go againſt him, but yeelde him the honour which he requireth, and ſay: Lorde we are heere: And then if we wil ſpeake; it muſt be but to ſay, Amen Lorde. And therefore when he commaundeth vs any thing, let vs knowe that we muſt yeelde our conſentes vnto it, and that not by force or conſtraint, but willingly; and we muſt obey it, not by halfes, but fully and wholely, and not vſurpe any ſuch libertie, as to doe whatſoeuer wee thinke good, but ſuffer him to gouerne vs and to beare rule ouer our thoughtes and workes, that we may altogether be his.

Nowe let vs kneele downe in the preſence of our good God, with acknowledgement of our ſinnes, praying him to make vs to feele them more and more. And becauſe he hath beſtowed all thinges vpon vs, and ſheweth himſelfe ſo liberall a father towardes vs, let vs for our parte endeuour to ſhewe ourſelues his children, enforcing ourſelues to doe well, and to relieue and ſuccour them which are in neede. And foraſmuch as we feele ourſelues ſo far indebted vnto our GOD, let vs be ſtirred vp the more to acknowledge this ineſtimable benefite that hee hath done for vs when it pleaſed him to draw vs out of the gulfe of hell, and hath called vs to the hope of euerlaſting life, in the which he maineteineth and preſerueth vs dayly by his worde: and pray we him to confirme vs therein better and better, vntill he hath brought vs into the full poſſeſſion and enioying of that euerlaſting inheritaunce which he hath promiſed vnto vs, and which hee hath purchaſed for vs by the bloude of our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt. That it may pleaſe him to graunt this grace, not onely vnto vs, but alſo vnto all people and Nations of the earth, &c.

On Wedneſday the xij of Februarie., 1556.

The CXLII.Sermon which is the firſt vpon the fiue and twentith Chapter.

WHen there is any ſtrife betweene men, they ſhall come vnto Iudgemẽt: and they ſhall haue Iuſtice done them, by declaring him iuſt which is iuſt, and by pronouncing him wicked which is wicked.

2 And if the wicked be founde worthy of beating, the Iudge ſhall cauſe him to be layde down and to be beaten before his face, according to his treſpaſſe, vnto a certaine number of ſtripes.

3 Fortie ſtripes ſhall he cauſe him to haue, and not aboue: leaſt if hee ſhoulde be beaten aboue this number of ſtripes, thy brother ſhould appeare deſpiſed in thy ſight.

4 Thou ſhalt not muſſell the oxe his mouth which treadeth out the corne.

OVr Lorde in this place ſheweth thẽ which haue the charge of Iuſtice, what they ought to do when anie man hath wronged his neyghbour. For wee 1.Tim.2,2. knowe that ciuill order is ordayned on earth, to the ende that euery man might liue quietly, ſo as the weaker bee not borne to the grounde by the ſtronger, but that right and equitie might beare rule. If this were not, men were better to be beaſtes to raunge in the wilde forreſtes: for the beaſtes yet can maintaine and keepe themſelues one with another. But wee knowe that men are of ſo peruerſe and crooked a nature, that euery one woulde ſcratch out his neighbours eyes, if there were no bridle to hold them in. Seeing then it is ſo that God hath ordained magiſtrates to repreſſe the leaude behauiours of men, and not to ſuffer any iniurious and wrongfull dealinges to eſcape vnpuniſhed: it is not without cauſe that our Lorde commandeth heere, that if a man be vniuſtly moleſted, and complaine of it, he ſhall haue Iuſtice done him. And although it be here expreſſely ſpoken of ſuch iniuries as men complaine of; yet meaneth he not, that if any wickednes be committed and not complained of, the magiſtrates ſhould winke at it, and diſſemble it. For when a man is offended and ſeeketh thereupon for iuſtice, he ſhall haue peraduenture ſome reaſonable amendes. But in the meane time ye ſhall ſee God offended, ye ſhall ſee a crime committed not againſt one man onely, but againſt all; and yet no plainetiſe founde in this caſe; for wee knowe that ſuch zeale is not to be founde in the worlde; nay we are falne nowe into thoſe times of which the prophet Elias ſpake: That there is 1.Kin,19.10 not one which ſtandeth vppe to mainetaine the quarell of God: and except we ſee that either we ourſelues are like to ſuſtaine loſſe, or may make the matter gainefull vnto vs; we withdraw ourſelues, our mouthes are ſhutte vp. And therfore the magiſtrates may not thinke themſelues excuſed, although they haue no alarmes rung in their eares, nor complaintes made vnto them: for they ought to bee watchfull to puniſh ſuch faults as are committed: they ought to enquire after them although they be not firſt made priuie vnto them. Neuertheleſſe GOD will haue them to heare the cries of thoſe which are oppreſſed, and to reach out their hands vnto them. And in very deede it is ſayde that God will be on their ſide which are wrongfully intreated, & will defende them. The holy ſcripture pronounceth oftentimes that their cries are heard vppe Pſal.12.6. into heauen. Nowe God hauing firſt declared that; appointeth ſuch here belowe as ſhall execute Iuſtice in his name. Seeing hee heareth them which complaine vnto him, from the heauens; if earthly Iudges play the deafe men, ſhal they eſcape for it? Doubtleſſe nay. The regiſter bookes ſhall one day be opened, & God will ſhewe that there were theſe and theſe outrages and violences committed, & no redreſſe of thẽ. Let vs therefore note well, that God meant in this place to declare, that he wil cal thoſe which beare the ſworde of Iuſtice to their account and reckening, if they wittingly permit any man to be iniured and troden vnder foote. And in verie deede nature hath taught vs that. The Paynims

nims which had not the lawe of Moſes knewe full well that euery man ought to haue right, and that he which was oppreſſed, if he had deſired it, ought to haue Iuſtice doone him, or elſe that too great diſorder and crueltie ſhoulde bee ſhewed. And yet for all that we ſee howe careleſſe men are in this behalfe, and howe that if a man be but a little fauoured, his fault ſhalbe winked at, and hee which is beaten or otherwiſe ill entreated, ſhall be ſent away with ſome floute or other, and he which offered him the wrong ſhal eſcape. This is common to bee ſeene. And therefore our Lorde had neede to declare what intereſt himſelfe hath in this matter, to put magiſtrates in mind that if they diſcharge not their dueties faythfully, they haue a ſoueraine Iudge, and that if there be no place of Iuſtice to appeale vnto in this worlde, hee will in the ende holde his Aſſiſes, and heare thoſe cauſes handled, which haue beene caſt aſide and buried. As we ſee that the Iudges are oftentimes deafe in a poore mans ſute, ſo as if he come to demaunde Iuſtice, in deede there is not any that will bee ſo bolde as to ſay: Gette thee hence for thou ſhalt haue no Iuſtice heere: there is none that will ſpeake ſo impudently. But ſome will ſay: well, put vppe your bill: and at eight dayes ende, yee ſhall haue one giue him a flirt with his finger to doe him to wit thereby, that hee doeth but grauell himſelfe in vaine. For there ſhall be ſo many ſhiftes, and ſo many delayes vſed, that hee ſhall be at his wittes ende, and not knowe what to doe: nay you ſhall haue one or other come and whiſper in his eare and ſay: Alas poore fellowe why doeſt thou trouble thy ſelfe? Thou ſeeſt heere is no helpe for thee: Nay thou ſhalt bee made beleeue that thou beganſt the quarell and that thou wert the authour of the riot, and ſo thou ſhalt be puniſhed thy ſelfe. And therefore thou wert beſt to put vp the blowes which thou haſt without farther purſuing of thy cauſe. The Iudges all this while will not ſay a worde, they will ſhewe ſome good countenaunce like Idolles, but yet notwithſtanding they giue their conſent vnto ſuch wrongfull dealing, and they are partakers of ſuch trecherie, that hee which is moleſted and afflicted, after he hath ſpent his monney and taken great paines, goeth away and is mocked. Beholde in what eſtate we are. And this wickednes is ordinarily practiſed. And therefore we ſee that this lawe wherein our lord declareth that he will haue him which complaineth, heard, and his caſe tried, is not ſuperfluous.

And he addeth afterwardes: *That he which is iuſt, muſt be declared ſuch a one, and he which hath offended muſt be condemned.* We ſee that God is not contented to haue the ceremonie only vſed, and that men ſhould receiue the inditement, or bill or ſupplication which is put vp; but he will haue the Iudge to proceede to definitiue ſentence. For this long differring of ſentẽce, ſerueth to no other ende, but to hinder all right and to wearie the partie whoſe cauſe is iuſt, & thereby to make him giue ouer his ſute. That is the very ende of it. In deede this is ill dealing: but yet is it commonly vſed. So then for this cauſe God hauing firſt commaunded that mens complaints ſhould be hearde, addeth that they muſt proceede vnto ſentence. As if he had ſayd; that the Iudges muſt deale ſimply and vprightly, and not thinke that they haue diſcharged their duetie, when they haue made men beleeue that they haue done ſomewhat: but they muſt make a riddance of ſuch cauſes as come before them, they muſt condemn him which hath done wrong, & maintaine the iuſt man, they muſt declare themſelues to be the protectours of good cauſes. Thus we ſee in effect what Gods meaning is in this place. And heereby we may gather howe farre we are from following the rule which is giuen vs. For a man may ſee oftentimes the clean contrarie. But yet for all that, this doctrine ought to be receiued, and although corruptions be ouercommon in the worlde, yet ſeeing God hath vouchſafed to teach them with his owne mouth which ſitte in the ſeate of Iuſtice, lette them thinke ſo much the better on their duetie, lette them take the bitte in their mouthes as we ſay, and ſuffer themſelues to be ruled by GOD, and let them knowe that if they abuſe their eſtate and calling, it is not for nought that GOD hath ſpoken. And therefore let them be the better inſtructed to their ſaluation. But if they make no account hereof, they ſhall perceiue that GOD dallyeth not in pronouncing his vengeaunce againſt them: but that he will ſpeedily execute it, if they be ſo negligent in dooing that which hee commaundeth. And in verie deede men are too too blockiſhe, (I meane thoſe which were placed in the ſeate of Iuſtiue) in that the honour which GOD vouchſafeth them, mooueth them not to doe their dueties. Is it a ſmall thing to mayntaine right, and to condemne that which is euill? Nay verily: For it belongeth vnto God. It is GOD that is the fountaine of all Iuſtice, and of all trueth: it is hee which is the maintayner of it. Therefore when we ſee that God hath exalted mortall creatures ſo much and aduaunced them to ſo high degree, as to maintaine his owne cauſe to ſay: This is right, and this is wrong; when God (I ſay) hath giuen men ſuch authoritie, is there not in them an ouer wicked or rather an ouer beaſtlie vnthankefulneſſe, if they bee not moued heereby with ſome zeale to diſchardge theyr duetie?

But heere a man might demaunde, whether he which is wrongfully hurt may complayne or no. For we are commaunded to be patient: and we knowe the exhortation of our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt: If one ſtrike thee on the cheeke, receiue two blowes rather than ſeeke to reuendge thy ſelfe of him which did thee wrong. Nowe then, if wee muſt bee patient in iniuries as we are commaunded: howe is it lawefull to make our complaint before a Iudge? This matter ſhall be handled more at large anon. Neuertheleſſe let vs note heere, firſt that when God ordaineth a forme of ciuill order, hee treateth not alwayes what is lawfull for euerie partie: but he ſheweth what is the office of Magiſtrates.

Matt. 5. 39

that is to be noted for one point. Secondly let vs note, that God meant to arme the magiſtrats to defende euery mans right and to ſee that no man bee wronged either in his bodie or in his goods: and his ſo doing is to this intent, that we ſhould vſe this benefite of his: but yet no otherwiſe than according to his will. Now then albeit the magiſtrates ought to conſider that they haue authoritie to puniſh euill doers, ſo as euerie man may liue in peace and not be oppreſſed by any other which is ſtronger than himſelf: yet notwithſtanding, this letteth not but that we may ſuffer thoſe iniuries which are doone vnto vs, euen as God commaundeth vs, and not be ledde with any deſire of reuenge. A man will inferre thereupon, that then it is not lawefull to complaine. Nay, that followeth not. For when our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt forbiddeth all his to reuenge themſelues, it is no let but that they may procure the puniſhment of outrages aſmuch as lyeth in them, ſo it be doone without all malice and heart burning. In deede I graunt that this is a rare caſe and verie harde to be founde. For aſſoone as a man is iniured, he is kindled ſtraitway, and thereupon he conceiueth rancour, hee fretteth and fumeth, and when he commeth before the Iudge, he ſpeweth foorth his poyſon in ſuch ſort, that any man may eaſily perceiue his heart and minde is enuenomed. Ye ſee then where the whole miſchiefe lyeth, to wit in this, that we are ſet vpon reuenge, wee maintaine our owne priuate quarell, ſo that in effect we deſire nothing elſe but ẏ he which hath done vs harme, may haue his payment, and we by that meanes be reuendged. But if a man deſire to liue at peace, and when any wrong is doone vnto him, he is ready to procure ẏ welfare of his enemie, then, ſo his heart bee ſtil cleere, let him not forbeare to complaine vnto ſome magiſtrate that the offender may be puniſhed. And why? To the end that the euill may be repreſſed and practiſed no more; for it is a kind of graunting of libertie to doe euill, when euill doings be winked at and ſcāpe vnpuniſhed. But yet for all this, let vs beware that wee ſhroude not our ſelues vainely vnder this pretence of ſaying that wee may haue recourſe vnto the lawe, ſo we conceiue no wicked deſire nor enmitie: let vs not (ſay I) make this our buckler, as though we were eſcaped from the hande of God. If there be any hypocriſie in vs, let euery man haue an eye vnto himſelfe, and if we breede any rancour in vs, ſo as we deſire his harme & loſſe which hath wronged vs; let vs condemne ourſelues before God. Although Iuſtice be ordained to maintaine vs, yet we deceiue ourſelues if we bring thither any vnruly paſſion of our owne, and followe not
Matt.5.44. this rule of rendring good for euill, and of praying for them which curſe vs, and of doing good vnto them which perſecute vs. If wee followe not this rule, we ſhalbe alwayes condemned before GOD. We may well proteſt, I ſeeke not to reuenge my ſelfe with mine owne handes, I attempt nothing but that which I may doe: but yet for all that, we abuſe Iuſtice, when we proceede not with ſuch vprightneſſe and ſimplicitie as GOD commaundeth vs. Let vs therefore note wel, that although it be ſayde in this place, that the Iudges ſhall heare the plainetiſes and iudge their cauſe: yet is it not lawefull for any man to accuſe his neighbour, if he doe it thorough enmitie and euill will. And this letteth not but that we ought alwayes to be patient for thoſe iniuries which men doe vnto vs. For what doeth patience import? Not that wee ſhoulde not onely not bee ſet vppon reuenge; but alſo that wee ſhould ſeeke to doe them good which perſecute vs, and that we ſhould pray for them which curſe vs. This is the thing which we are commaunded, and therefore let vs followe it; and then it ſhall be lawefull for vs to flee for refuge vnto them, which are armed with authoritie to maintaine the good and to puniſh the wicked, and to repreſſe all wrongful and outragious dealings: we may then I ſay haue our recourſe vnto them.

Nowe it followeth: *That the wicked man ſhalbe condemned according to his deſert*. There is here no mention of ſuch offences as were to be puniſhed by death. For if there were murder committed, or adulterie, or ſuch like thinges; they were puniſhed by death. We haue ſeene howe God commaunded that all ſuch kindes of wickedneſſe ſhould be vtterly rooted out: but here he ſpeaketh but of ſuch iniuries as deſerue ſome other chaſtiſement. And that is the cauſe why it is ſayde, *That the malefactour ſhall be puniſhed according to his deſert, yet ſo that he ſhall not haue aboue fortie ſtripes*. For they vſed a whippe made of an oxe hide, to chaſtiſe them which dealt wrongfully and outragiouſly with their neighbour, alwayes prouided that the offence deſerued not death. It is ſayde: *That they ſhall not paſſe the number of fortie ſtripes*. And why? *To the intent that the man ſhoulde not be mangled or diſfigured in his body*, but remaine whole and ſounde. Ye ſee then in effect what is heere declared, to wit, firſt that the ſentence muſt not be giuen in vaine: and ſecondly that ſome moderation muſt be vſed, ſo as the rigour be not exceſſiue. Firſt I ſay the ſentence muſt not be in vaine, but it muſt be put in execution. For ſometimes yee ſhall ſee Iudges make a countenaunce of thundring at a man: howebeit, that ſhalbe but for ſome policie. When they are minded to let an offender eſcape they will condemne him to doubble and trebble puniſhment. What? [ſay they] This wicked fellowe is not worthy to liue. A man would maruaile to heare them: but when the thing ſhould be put in execution, it falleth out to a mockerie. But our Lorde ſheweth that they may not dally ſo with him: and that ſeeing the magiſtrates beare not the ſworde in vaine nor are armed with authoritie in way of dallyaunce; they muſt vſe their power, and when they haue pronounced ſentence, they muſt afterwardes doe Iuſtice in executing of it. And that is the very cauſe why they are called the ſoules of the Lawe. For a lawe without magiſtrates, is as a bodie which hath neither ſenſe nor mouing. And when the bodie is idle and ſtirreth not, it is a ſigne that the ſoule is altogether blockiſh. And therefore when there are good lawes,and ſome outwarde forme of Iuſtice, and yet for all that there is no execution thereof; Inſomuch that it ſhalbe ſayde: Thus it muſt be, and yet the Statutes ſhalbe diſobeyed; yea and ſentence ſhalbe giuen, and yet ſlippe away vnexecuted:Surely it is a token of too groſſe blockiſhneſſe in thoſe which ſhold giue ſtrength to ỹ law,ỹ it might not be vnprofitable.That thẽ is ỹ thing which God declareth in the firſt place For ſpeaking of the executing of ſentence, hee ſayeth: *Lette the iuſt be declared for ſuch a one, and lette him which hath doone wrong bee condemned; lette him bee puniſhed according to his deſerts.* Nowe heereby he giueth vs to vnderſtand that we muſt not lette any ſuch faultes ſcape as ought to be puniſhed; neither behoueth it vs alonely to ſhewe our zeale in puniſhing of greate enormities: but alſo to conſider that ſmaller faultes drawe on the greater when they are let alone as buried. God therefore pronounceth expreſſely that the malefactour ſhall be puniſhed. And when? Not onely when hee hath offended ſo grieuouſly that his fault is vnpardonable: but if the fault be litle, he will haue the puniſhment and correction aunſwerable thereunto: hee will not haue men to ſay: O it is a ſmall fault: lette it paſſe. Well, the matter is not great, he may eſcape the better cheape. No: howe ſmall ſoeuer his offence be, hee will haue him ſmart for it,and be an example vnto others. Let vs therefore weigh this worde well, yea, let vs weigh it ſo much the better becauſe wee ſee that the practiſe noweadayes runneth cleane contrarie: for men ſeeke nothing elſe but to leſſen their faultes. In deede a man ſhall not bee altogither excuſed when he hath offended: but yet neuertheleſſe hee which doeth the wrong ſhall finde alwayes ſome aduocate to pleade for him, yea euen without bearing the name of it. He ought to be as a Iudge in the caſe;and yet he will ſo mitigate the faulte as it ſhall not be puniſhable, faire gloſes ſhall ſtill be founde to colour the matter withall: O ſir will one ſay: There is ſuch a circumſtaunce, there is this and that to be conſidered in the caſe: & ſo the tenth part of mens faults ſhal not bee puniſhed. For why? They bee not found ſo grieuous and hainous as they be in deede.No,but yet for al ỹ,if the fault bee ſmall, God will haue the chaſtiſement anſwearable thereunto; and if it be greate, he wil haue the puniſhment the more ſeuere and greeuous. Thus yee ſee in effect what wee haue to beare in minde.

Nowe whereas GOD ſpeaketh thus vnto earthly Iudges, let vs knowe that for his parte he might well puniſh vs by his iuſtice, and that not for petie faultes,but for notorious tranſgreſſions. Who is ſo iuſt and innocent among vs, that he findeth not himſelfe faultie before God, yea and that in many offences? Moreouer how many faults do we commit through vnaduiſedneſſe,when we thinke not on them? And therefore if God vſed not great mercie towardes vs, he ſhould lift vp his hand againſt vs,and drowne vs in the pitte of deſtruction euerie minute of an houre. So then whereas wee liue ſtill and are preſerued; lette vs acknowledge that it is thorough the infinite goodneſſe of our God. For if as touching earthly Iuſtice hee commandeth the leaſt faultes to be puniſhed, he might himſelfe by greater reaſon lay his hande vpon vs, euen to roote vs out of the earth, eſpecially conſidering the infinite number of faultes whereof we be guiltie before him. And if it be alleadged; Well then, ſeeing God is ſo mercifull, ought not men alſo to be mercifull, and ſo to followe him? It is eaſily aunſwered: That GOD hath this libertie to forgiue, whome hee will: beſides this, he hath alſo his latter iudgement which he reſerueth vnto himſelfe. We ſee in deede, that he beareth with the contemners of his maieſty, and with thoſe which are moſt harde hearted, and vnamendeable, he winketh at them, he maketh no reckening to puniſh them: but the time which he giueth them ſhall coſt thẽ very deere. They may well vſe that diueliſhe prouerbe of theirs: That the time is woorth a mans monie: but it had beene better for them that they had beene reformed at firſt, than ſo to haue nouriſhed the vengeaunce of God againſt themſelues. For after that they haue defied him to ỹ vtmoſt, they ſhall in the ende feele that they abuſed his goodneſſe ouermuch, which waited their leaſure ſo long and allured them vnto repentaunce. God then reſerueth vnto himſelfe a iudgement which appeareth not yet vnto men. But as for mortall men which are Iudges, they muſt doe their duetie, they haue their rule and their leſſon deliuered vnto them,let them ſticke to that, and diſcharge themſelues. So then lette vs learne to vnderſtande, that our Lorde ſheweth himſelfe very gentle and pitifull towardes vs, in that we liue ſtill in this worlde and are nouriſhed ſtill at his handes, and in that he beareth ſo mercifully with vs. For why? Our faults towardes him are innumerable, and wee ſhoulde be killed with ſtripes if he vſed not this ineſtimable goodneſſe which I haue ſpoken of.

Moreouer ſecondly in this place here is mention made of moderating the chaſtiſementes which are vſed. For the Iudges ought alwayes to conſider that they ſitte in Iuſtice in the behalfe of GOD, and therefore into that ſeate which is holy and dedicated to the dooing of right, they may not bring their owne paſſions, to feede their owne choler, and to deale croſſely and ouerthwartly as they themſelues liſt. God therefore in ſaying, *that there ſhalbe a certaine number of ſtripes*, declareth expreſſely that there muſt be a reaſonable meaſure vſed in puniſhing. Verily when a man is not to be cleane rooted out, but to liue ſtill in the worlde, God will not haue him maimed that he ſhould become vnprofitable as touching his body. For what a thing were it if a man ſhould be ſo rigorouſly handled as to be made a cripple ſo as hee can no more helpe himſelfe? It were better hee had beene put to death at the firſt, than to be left to pine away in this worlde, and to be as a blocke. Nowe therefore when a man is to bee left aliue ſtill, GOD will haue the Iudges to

haue a regarde that he be not beaten or ſcourged in ſuch wiſe as he be disfigured or made vnable to helpe himſelfe. That is the very thing which God will haue men to looke vnto. And for the ſame cauſe he ſetteth downe heere the number of ſtripes, to wit, *fortie ſtripes, and that at the moſt.* Nowe the Iewes being ful of Ceremonies tooke away one ſtripe: and it is the manner of men to adde alwayes ſomewhat to the lawe of God, as though all perfection were not contained in it. Truely GOD hadde ſayde vnto them, Ye ſhall not adde, nor diminiſh any thing from that which I haue ſpoken: but mennes affections are euer boyling, and men will alwayes bee wiſer than it is lawefull for them to bee. And that is the very cauſe of the inuenting ſo many rules & obſeruations; of the which ſort there are a number of thinges in the Popedome. And why? it is good to doe ſo (ſay they): a man can not do too much. In deede a man can not do too much in conforming himſelfe to the will of God. For howe great ſoeuer our care bee in that behalfe, yet our weakeneſſe will not ſuffer vs to be linked thereunto in ſuch ſorte as were requiſite. But to adde any thing vnto that which GOD commaundeth, is alwayes an ouerweening and preſumption worthie to bee condemned. Yet neuertheleſſe it was the manner of the Iewes to giue thirtie and nine ſtripes. And why? They thought thus with themſelues: Oh it is to bee doubted leaſt when a man hadde giuen fourtie ſtripes hee coulde not withholde himſelfe from giuing one more, and ſo by that meanes he ſhold goe beyonde the Law. Ye ſay well: but our lord had no reſpect of ſuch ſmall tryfles. He ordained onely that there ſhould be a moderation in all the chaſtiſementes, which were made: I meane alwayes when the offence deſerued not death, as we haue declared afore. But as touching this obſeruation, it hath beene a long time among the Iewes it is yet in vſe among them at this day. Saint Paule ſheweth it where hee reporteth that he was fiue times whipped. For albeit that at that time the Iewes had no iuriſdiction nor rule in their owne handes, yet ſome kinde of chaſtiſement was left vnto thē in their Synagogues: ſo that when any offended among them, if the crime touched not the publike eſtate, they had authoritie to correct him after
2.Cor.11,24 the manner of their countrey. And Saint Paule ſayth that he was beaten in this wiſe fiue times. And I receiued (ſayth he) fortie ſtripes ſaue one. When he ſayth ſaue one, he giueth vs to vnderſtande, that the Iewes neuer tormented him but with extreeme rigour: I meane as farre as their power ſtretched. For if they coulde haue killed him and eaten him vppe, they would haue done it: they ſought nothing elſe but to teare Saint Paule in peeces as farre as their rage and furie draue them. But becauſe it was not lawefull for them to paſſe any farther, they ſcourged him vnto thirtie and nine ſtripes, according as it was ſayde, that the puniſhment muſt be made according to the deſert. But a man coulde finde no ſuch deſert in Saint Paule: for it was for the name of our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt that he ſuffered ſuch puniſhment. But we ſee the crueltie of the Iewes who coulde not be ſatisfied without they had vſed the vtmoſt extremitie that they coulde againſt Saint Paule. Beholde how hypocrites would obſerue the lawe of God in vſing of ſome formalitie: but in the meane time they miſſe alwayes in the ſubſtaunce. So much the more therefore ought we to be warned to haue an eye vnto Gods meaning: and when wee ſee what it pleaſeth him to commaunde vs, lette vs holde ourſelues vnto it, let euerie man ſtay himſelfe thereupon, let vs not turne aſide from it neither vnto the right hande nor vnto the left, and in ſo doing we can not erre. And that is the thing in effect which we haue to beare in minde vpon this place. Nowe if ſuch chaſtiſementes muſt be vſed for the ſmaller iniurie, where a man can not complaine of any great matter; as that his arme is cut off, or ſuch a wounde is giuen him as will ſticke by him all the time of his life, but only that one hath hurte him either in his good name or in his bodie: if God (I ſay) will haue ſuch a fault ſo puniſhed, and that the malefactour ſhall not eſcape: what ſhall be done to thoſe faultes which are more haynous? Shall the Iudges bee helde excuſed if they lette them ſcape? Doubtleſſe nay. And therefore let vs conclude, that ſeeing God will haue the rigour of Iuſtice vſed, (howebeit with ſuch moderation as it behooueth,) euen where the violence that hath beene doone is not of any greate importaunce. Surely it is a much more likelihoode in reaſon, that if there be any greater treſpaſſe committed, (as if a man be maimed in his mēbers) the offender ſhall not in that behalfe bee ſpared, (as we haue ſeene in an other place) that an eye ſhall be giuen for an eye, an arme for an arme, a foote for a foote. Inſomuch that if a man haue offended in ſuch a caſe, it is not for men to ſhewe mercie; but the malefactour muſt paſſe vnder the edge of the ſworde, and be made an example for all others, to the intent that euery man by that meanes may be occaſioned to holde himſelfe ſhort from preſuming to offer any ſuch like outrage vnto his neighbors. Thus yee ſee in effect what wee haue to beare in minde.

And farther, if it bee expreſſely ſayde: that no one man ſhall be ſuffered to haue wrong, but that hee which doeth it ſhall bee chaſtiſed and puniſhed according to his deſert, lette vs note that if anie man paſſe his boundes ſo farre, as to ſette himſelfe againſt a whole ſtate, as it were in defiaunce both of God and the worlde, hee muſt bee the more grieuouſly puniſhed: and that if the Iudges and Magiſtrates ſuffer ſuch wickedneſſe vnpuniſhed, there is no excuſe for them. And why? For if there be a poore man, a man of no account, ſuch a one as men might bobbe out his eyes, and hee complaine, God will haue him hearde, yea and hee wil haue right done vnto him. Howe much more then, if there be as it were a waterfludde, that ouerfloweth all, wherein euery man hath intereſt, and the whole ſtate of a people ſtandeth in hazarde by diſſention? If that bee not repreſſed,

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wee muſt not looke that ſome one man alone will cry out vnto GOD, but the ayre muſt needes ring loude with outcryes: in ſo much that all the confuſions and diſorders which wee ſhall haue ſuffered will bee as outcryes and complayninges vnto GOD againſt them which haue not vſed the authoritie and power which was committed vnto them. Thus yee ſee in effect what wee haue to beare in minde vppon this place.

Nowe it is ſayde by and by after: *That the Oxe which treadeth out the Corne ſhal not be muſſeled,* and that wee muſt not binde his chappes together, ſo as he ſhoulde not open them to feede. No doubt but that in this place GOD meant to perſwade men vnto gentlenes and humanitie: Deut.24.15. as before he forbad vs to keepe backe the wages of the hyreling, which hath beſtowed himſelfe in our ſeruice. And why? Bicauſe he ſuſtaineth his life by his labour. It were therefore an ouergreat crueltie to defraude him of his labour when hee hath doone his worke. And ſo in this place it is expreſly ſpoken of the oxe which laboreth: as if our Lord had ſaide, that vprightnes and equitie ought to be miniſtred euen vnto the brute beaſtes. The Oxe cannot complaine though he bee defrauded of his foode when he hath doone his worke: but God taketh pitie of him, bicauſe he is his creature; and hee will not haue vs to abuſe the beaſtes beyonde meaſure, but to nouriſh them and to haue care of them. And that is the cauſe why Salomon ſaieth in the Prou.12.10. 12. Chapter of his prouerbes; That the iuſt man hath a care of his beaſt. If a man ſpare neyther his horſe, nor his Oxe, nor his Aſſe, therein hee bewrayeth the wickedneſſe of his nature. And if he ſay: tuſh I care not, for it is but a brute beaſt: [I anſwer again]: Yea but it is a creature of God. Pſal.104.27 It is ſaid that the goodneſſe and mercie of God extendeth to all the beaſtes of the earth. It is not ſaid onely of men whom God hath made after his owne Image and likeneſſe: but the beaſtes alſo are compriſed therein as well as they. If God vouchſafe to conſider of beaſtes, if he vouchſafe to haue a care of them; what ought wee to doe which are but poore wormes of the earth, which are nothing but rottennes? Wee thinke it were much againſt our honour to take care of beaſts: but whē God gaue them vs in ſubiection for our vſe, it was vnder no other condition, but ẏ employing them to our labour, wee ſhould alſo vſe kindnes and gentlenes towardes them. And Salomon ſaith, not onely that the iuſt man hath a care of his beaſt, but he ſaith alſo that the bowels of the wicked man are cruell: as if he had ſaid, a frowarde and churliſh man hath no pitie nor compaſſion in him, no not euen towardes his like; he tormenteth his brethren; hee trampleth on one vnder his feete, he oppreſſeth another, he would ſuck the marrow out of a poore mans bones if he might poſſibly do it, he wold eat his fleſh, he wold drink his bloud: to be ſhort, there is nothing but crueltie in him which is of a malicious nature. But if there be any equitie and vprightnes in vs, we wil ſhewe it not onely towards our next neighbours & ſuch as are of yͤ ſame brotherhood with vs, but euen vnto yͤ brute beaſtes alſo: bicauſe God hath formed & created them, and bicauſe he vouchſafeth to preſerue them through his prouidence, and prouideth them of foode, and (at a word) careth for them: and laſtly bicauſe that when he did put them in ſubiection vnto vs, he did it with condition ẏ wee ſhould handle them gently: that as we deale rightfully with men, ſo we ſhould vſe the like duetie euen towardes the brute beaſtes, which haue no reaſon, nor vnderſtanding, nor cannot complaine of the iniuries which are done vnto them.

But yet neuertheleſſe God hath not in this place reſpected ſimply the brute beaſtes: as S. Paule alſo ſheweth in the ninth Chapter of 1.Cor.9.1 the firſt Epiſtle to the Corinthians. Hath God care of Oxen, (ſaith he?) S. Paul meaneth not by theſe wordes, ẏ God careth not for the beaſtes which he hath created, as wee haue already declared: for then ſhould hee gainſay all the holy ſcripture: and experience alſo ſheweth vs that God muſt needes haue a care to prouide for the beaſts. For the earth yeeldeth not fruit of it ſelfe; but as it hath vertue giuen vnto it from aboue. When we ſee herbs and ſuch like things to grow, we are giuen to vnderſtand thereby, that God is the purueiour for the whole world, euen for the beaſtes of the earth, and for the birdes, and for al things. He prouideth them of foode to nouriſh them withal. By this (I ſay) we ſee, that God hath a care of oxen: but S. Paul meaneth ẏ his principal care is not for them. He treateth purpoſely of the miniſters maintenance, and ſayth, that they ought to be fedde and ſuſteined, and not ſkanted of their liuing: and he ſheweth that ſeeing they are appointed of God to deliuer forth foode for mens ſoules, it were an ouergreat wickedneſſe & crueltie to abridge them of ſuch wages as is due vnto them. And heerewithall to make them the more aſhamed which would play the niggardes in this behalfe, he ſaith vnto them: What? God hath not onely ordained that the man which laboreth ſhould be fedde and maintained, but hee ſpeaketh of oxen alſo. Is it bicauſe he hath a care of them? That is to ſay, is it bicauſe that oxen are in the higheſt and moſt ſoueraigne degree? No. For we know that the oxen were created for mēs ſakes. Let vs caſt our eye on all things whether they be aboue or beneath, in heauen or in earth; and we ſhall ſee that all is for our vſe and profit. When God created the ſunne, it was not to lighten himſelfe, but to giue light vnto vs. As much is to be ſaid of the Moone and of the ſtarres: they are ordayned to ſerue vs, as it hath bin elſewhere already declared. Agayne, although the earth bring foorth herbes for the brute beaſtes, yet neuertheleſſe all is referred vnto men, and God woulde haue vs to acknowledge therein his fatherly goodneſſe, and the great loue which he vſeth towardes vs. Seeing then it is ſo that GOD hath neither created nor ſuſtayned the brute beaſtes, but onely in reſpect of referring all vnto the vſe of menne: Let vs knowe that when hee ſayeth wee muſt not defraude the beaſtes which haue trauayled for vs, but nouriſhe and ſuſtayne them: it is to the intent that wee ſhoulde learne to exerciſe all manner of kindneſſe, and that when men haue ſpent both their ſweate and bloud in our ſeruice, it ſtandeth much more with reaſon that wee ſhoulde not deale niggardly with them by withholding from them their due wages, but rather that wee ſhoulde ſuſtaine them, not onely by paying them their dayly wages and by giuing them ſuſtenaunce and foode, but alſo by giuing them wherewith to maintayne them: for there are ſome which coulde bee contented at three dayes ende to haue a poore man killed, when he hath ſerued them; for all is one with them, ſo they may reape any profite by him. But contrariwiſe God ſheweth vs that we ought to deale ſo friendly with thoſe which labour for vs, that wee grieue them not beyond meaſure, but that they may continue and bee occaſioned to giue GOD thankes in their trauayle. For there is no doubt but God ment in this place, to correct the crueltie which is in the riche who employ poore folke in their ſeruice, and yet recompence them not for their paynes.

On the other ſide hee ſheweth alſo that hee which is ydle and vnprofitable deſerueth not to be nouriſhed or regarded. For we ſee that God hath commaunded euen the beaſtes to labour that they may be nouriſhed. Seeing it is ſo, what ſhalbe ſaide of men who ought to conſider for what ende they are created. A beaſt indeede hath his naturall inclination: but hee hath no diſcretion to ſay: There is a God which hath created mee. There is no ſuch thing in a beaſt. And yet God putteth beaſtes in ſubiection vnto men, to the intent that they ſhould not be vnprofitable. Therefore if a man who hath reaſon and ought to thinke thus: Gods will is that I ſhould labour; and it is a general law for all of vs, that we muſt eate our bread in the ſweate of our browes; if that man for all this, will be vnprofitable, and not vouchſafe to put his fingers to any worke; he is not worthy (as ſaint Paule ſaith) to be nouriſhed and ſuſtained. So then on the one ſide let vs note that God meant to perſwade euery man to vſe equitie and rightfulnes towards men, and not to tread them vnder our feete which ſerue vs, nor to defraude them of that which appertaineth vnto them: for that were crueltie. And on the other ſide let vs note, that thoſe which haue not wherewith to finde themſelues, muſt take heede that they labour diligently euery one in his vocation, ſo as they bee not condemned by the example of the oxen. For if they doe not, the brute beaſtes muſt riſe vp in Iudgement to condemne ſuch as bee ydle and employ themſelues to nothing, ſeeing God hath called them to ſerue their neighbours.

Nowe let vs kneele downe in the preſence of our good GOD with acknowledgement of our faultes, praying him to make vs feele them better than we haue doone, in ſuch ſorte that returning vnto him, we may craue pardon and mercie at his hands: to the intent that being gouerned by his holy ſpirite, hee may guide vs in all things according to his holy will, vntill that hauing drawen vs vnto himſelfe, and ridde vs of our infirmities and vices, hee cloth vs fully with his righteouſneſſe. And ſo let vs all ſay: Almightie God and heauenly father, &c.

On Thurſday the xiij. of Februarie, 1556.

The CXLiij. Sermon, which is the ſecond vpon the fiue and twentith Chapter.

5 If there be two brethren dwelling together, and the one of them die without children: the wife of the dead ſhall not marrie abroade to a ſtraunger, but her brother in law ſhall come in to her, and take her to wife, and marrie himſelfe with her.

6 And the firſt borne which ſhee ſhall beare, ſhall ſucceede in the name of his brother which is dead, that his name be not put out of Iſraell.

7 And if the man will not take his ſiſter in law, then his ſiſter in lawe ſhall goe vp to the gate vnto the elders, and ſay, my husbandes brother refuſeth to rayſe vp vnto his brother a name in Iſraell, and hee will not marrie with mee.

8 Then the Elders of the Citie ſhall call him, and ſpeake vnto him if hee ſtand in it and ſay: I will not take her:

9 Then ſhall his ſiſter in lawe come vnto him, before the elders, and looſe his ſhoe from his foote, and ſpit in his face, and aunſwere and ſay: So ſhall it be done vnto the man that will not build vp his brothers houſe.

10 And his name ſhall bee called in Iſraell: The houſe of him, whoſe ſhoe is pluckt off.

11 When men ſtriue together one againſt an other, if the wife of the one come neere to ridde her husband out of the hands of him that ſmiteth him, and put forth her hande and take him by the priuities,

12 Then ſhalt thou cutte off her hande: and thine eye ſhall not pittie her

VEe haue heere a lawe which might ſeeme altogether ſuperfluous among vs: for as it is at this day out of vſe, ſo the reaſon alſo of it remayneth no longer. And therfore we muſt take it patiently, if all the thinges which are declared heere doe not wholly belong vnto vs, or elſe if they bee not ſo fully vnderſtoode of vs, as were meete: and yet for all that wee will aſſay to gather ſome profitable doctrine out of it. For indeede, God hath left nothing in his lawe, but wee may fare the better by it, if hee giue vs the wiſedome to knowe howe to vſe it. Firſt wee ſee howe Gods will was that the houſes ſhould bee maintayned in Iſraell. And this was not for any ſuch reſpect as men haue commonly in the world; for noble men would be ſpoken of after their death, and therfore they would build vp a kinde of immortality heere on earth. God meant not to foode this follie among men. And verily if we were ſo wiſe as we ſhould be, we woulde conſider, that lyke as our lyfe paſſeth, and glydeth, and vaniſheth away out of hand; ſo GOD would not haue our heartes ſettled here belowe, to deſire to bee renoumed vpon earth: but that as our inheritance is in heauen, ſo wee ſhould conſider that it ought to ſuffice vs that wee haue our names written in the booke of lyfe. This is it wherein our reioyſing ought to Luk.10.20. bee, as our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt telleth his diſciples. So then wee haue to note, that GOD meant not to rocke men aſleepe in this fooliſhe ambition, whereunto they are ouermuch giuen; to wit, to bee of fame and renowne heere: hee had another reſpect than ſo. And that was, that bycauſe the parting of the land of Chanaan was made according to his will, hee would haue this order maintained and no chaunge made to the contrary, ſo as the inheritances ſhoulde returne alwayes to the ſame they were at the firſt, as we Leuit.25.10. know they did in the yeere of Iubile. In reſpect whereof when a man deceaſed without children, to the intent there ſhould be ſome ſtocke of him, and that the kindred ſhould alwayes continue, and that the inheritaunces ſhould not goe out of ẏ name; it is ſaid, that one of the kinſmen ſhould take the wydowe to wife: although in truth, before ẏ people were come into the land of Chanaan, wee ſee that this law or cuſtome was vſed through out the eaſt country, to wit, that a woman whẽ ſhe took an husband out of any houſe, bound her ſelfe, (in caſe that ſhe had no childe, but her husband departed without iſſue) to take an other husband of the ſame houſe: which thing we ſee to be true in the example of Thamar whẽ ſhe maried Iudaes ſonne: and we muſt not imagine Gen.38. that this ſerued but for one houſe only, but that it was rather a generall lawe growen vpon cuſtome (as we ſay): It was therefore a ſtraite bond or rather bondage for the women. For if a woman married in any familie, it was vnder this condition: Is my husband dead? I muſt take an other of the ſame houſe, yea if he offer himſelfe I muſt take him, and he muſt haue children of me, and that to rayſe vp a ſtocke vnto him, who is already dead. For the firſt childe that ſhe brought foorth, bore not his name that begat it, but his who was already dead.

Nowe when the Paynims brought vp this cuſtome, no doubt but they were ledde thereunto through this worldly vanity wherof I ſpake. And hereby wee ſee, that there bee many thinges lyke, which notwithſtanding are not of one ſelfſame qualitie. And why? Becauſe their end is diuerſe. There are which would haue a ſeede and ſtocke rayſed vnto one which is dead: and why woulde they ſo? To the intent that their name ſhould not periſh, or be cleane put out. So yee ſee that pride driueth them vnto that thing. But I haue already told you that we muſt haſten to finiſh the courſe of this life, knowing that God calleth vs vnto an euerduring eſtate, and therfore we ought to forget this world: and that if we be held backe by this vaine glory, of being heere in honour and eſtimation, it is a ſhutting of the gate of heauen againſt vs. Let vs therefore take heede howe wee wedde our ſelues vnto this fooliſh deſire, that men ſhould ſpeake of vs after our death: and let vs knowe, that God will haue vs to bee of no account in this world, that wee may bee reſtored vnto our heauenly inheritaunce. But let vs note in the meane time that God hath a contrary reſpect: for when he gaue the land of Chanaan to his people to inherite, hee ordayned that if a man which had taken a wife and doone his parte to leaue iſſue behinde him, departed without iſſue, an other of his kinſmen ſhoulde ſupply that defaulte, that hee myght haue as it were an adoptiue childe after his death. And why did God this? To the intent that the order which hee had eſtabliſhed by the hande of Ioſua, ſhoulde not periſhe, and that the partitions of the Lande ſhoulde continue as they were firſt made. We ſee then what the intent and meaning of this law is: the effect whereof was not to nuzzle men in that fooliſhe deſire which wee haue condemned. And moreouer God meant to ſhew the priuiledge which hee had giuen to the ſtocke of Abraham, euen for his ſake who was the cheefe of it. For whẽ God choſe Abraham he ſanctified all thoſe which were to come of his race, he had choſen them for his Church: he would therfore haue the Iewes ſtirred vp to magnifie him for vouchſafing of them ſuch honour as to chooſe them aboue all the worlde; hee woulde haue them to knowe howe much woorth this adoption of his was. Indeede it is true that they abuſed this goodneſſe of his, as well as others. For they were puffed vp with exceeding pryde, as who woulde ſay: We are the holie ſtocke, wee are the royall prieſthoode: but yet for all that, they minded not this point, that whatſoeuer they had, they enioyed it through the meere goodneſſe and fauour of GOD: and therefore that they ought not to bee proude of it; but rather to acknowledge themſelues ſo much the more bound vnto him. Yee ſee how the Iewes peruerted the grace and fauour of God which hee beſtowed on them: and yet hee exerciſed them in as ſundry ſortes, as hee might, to cauſe them to acknowledge the priuiledge which he gaue them in chooſing them for his Church, and as it were for his owne children. As if nowadayes we would onely make a buckler of baptiſme, and of the Lords ſupper, and of the other giftes and benefites of God, and yet continue an heathniſh kinde of people, diſſolute in life, and giuen ouer to all wickedneſſe: it were a point of notable treachery in vs. For GOD meaneth not that thoſe gifts which he beſtoweth on vs ſhoulde bee but as vaine pictures: his will is, that they ſhould bee profitable vnto vs. Therfore when we ſpeake of baptiſme, when we ſpeake of the holy ſupper, when wee ſpeake of the order of the church, it ſtandeth vs in hand to haue an eye vnto the vſe of thoſe thinges, for which God hath ordained them among vs. Yet notwithſtanding it behoueth vs to acknowledge it to be a ſingular yea and an ineſtimable benefite which God beſtoweth vpon vs, in ẏ we haue libertie to aſſemble our ſelues together in his name, to cal vpon him, to make confeſſion of our faith, to be taught at his mouth, and to be more and more confirmed in the trueth of the lawe and of the Goſpell: we ought (I ſay) to eſteeme this treaſure, and to exerciſe our ſelues therein. Nowe then for as much as God had choſen the ſtocke of Abraham, hee would haue the Iewes to acknowledge it for an excellent dignitie, that they were bleſſed in ſuch wiſe aboue the reſt of all the world. But let vs note that (as I haue told you) this was in fauour of their cheefe head. For Gen 15.5. it was not ſayde, In thy ſeedes ſhall the bleſſing Gal.3.16. be; but, In thy ſeede. Now this ſeede betokeneth not all thoſe which were deſcended from the ſtocke of Abraham: for Iſmael was cut off from it, although hee was Abrahams ſonne according to the fleſhe: and ſo was Eſau alſo. Therefore when a ſtocke is named, wee muſt vnderſtand a body, and a body preſuppoſeth an head. So then let vs note, that this dignitie which was in the perſon of Abraham had his roote and foundation in our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt. And therefore whereas it was GODS will that the families and kindreds ſhould be mayntayned; it was not to the intent the Iewes ſhoulde place their whole nobilitie in this worlde, to buſie themſelues there: but hee meant rather to turne their mindes vnto him who was promyſed to bee their redeemer, and to make them knowe that bycauſe hee ſhould come of their race and their lynage, they ought by great reaſon to be partakers of that benefite which hee brought vnto them. And ſo this Lawe ſerued to direct the Iewes vnto our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt, and they were put in minde heereby, that GOD had a care to keepe them in this bonde of one body, becauſe of the head which hee had ordayned. Thus wee ſee that albeeit the order which was vſed in olde tyme vnder the Lawe, be no longer nowadayes in vſe; yet notwithſtanding we may gather ſome profite by it, becauſe wee are giuen to vnderſtand thereby, that before our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt was manifeſted in the fleſh, God ordayned that lawe in fauour of him. Let vs therefore acknowledge, that we in theſe dayes ought to be ſtirred vp by this place to maintayne our ſelues by rayſing vp ſpirituall ſeede in Iſraell, not in the viſible Iſraell, or that which is according to nature: for we knowe that the Church of God hath his reache throughout all the world: we knowe that nowadayes the children muſt not be borne of fleſh Iohn.1.13. and bloud, as it is ſayde in the firſt chapter of S. Iohn: but of the will of God and of his onely grace. Therefore let vs take paynes and enforce our ſelues to the vtmoſt of our power, to raiſe vp this ſpirituall ſeede vnto God, that the Church may be preſerued and encreaſed more & more. Thus ye ſee in effect what we haue to beare in minde.

Nowe by the way wee ſee what vprightneſſe ought to be vſed in bondes. For becauſe the women for their parte were bounde in ſuch wiſe, it was requiſite that there ſhould be a mutual bond alſo on the mens ſides. There is no reaſon that ẏ one partie ſhould be bound, and the other left in in full liberty. Ye ſee then how we be warned in this place, that if two parties doe contract or couenant togither, the one muſt not be greeued, & the other borne withall: for that were vniuſt and againſt al reaſon.

And we ought to apply this vnto al contracts, couenants and bargains which we be to deale in. Therfore if in bargaining with a man I ſtand altogither vpon mine own aduantage and be ouer ſtraitely laced: in ſo doing I am wicked. And if I ſay: let him loke to his own profit if he will: well, but yet ſhould a man haue ſo much honeſtie in him, as not to pinch the party too much; though he be able to compaſſe him. We think all is lawful ſo a man yeeld to that which we would haue him. Oh (ſay we) ſeeing it was his owne will to bind himſelfe ſo, what wrong do I to him? Yea, but his agreeing to al thy demaundes was by cōpulſion. And againe the poore man was ſo ouerpreſſed, that he perceiued not the domage which he ran into. Indeed he agreed to al that was demanded of him; howbeit, ẏ was bicauſe he was in neede, & wiſt not how to ſcape otherwiſe. Let vs look to it therfore ẏ we beare ſuch an euē hand, as one mā be not troden vnder foot by another.

And when there paſſeth any bond betweene man and man; let it bee indifferent for both parties, ſo as either of them may feele himſelfe releeued. Thus ye ſee one point more which we haue to beare in minde vpon this place.

Nowe heere a man might demaunde howe it comes to paſſe that GOD woulde haue the brother whichſoeuer liued to take the wife of him that was dead, ſeeing that ſuch marriage was not lawfull, as wee ſee in the eyghteenth Leuit.18.6. chapter of Leuiticus; Seeing it was inceſt for one to take his brothers wyfe after his death, howe happeneth it that GOD not onely permitteth, but alſo inioyneth it? The Iewes confeſſe that this is not ſpoken of brethren in the firſt degree, that is, of borne brothers as wee call them, but rather of ſuch as were further off of kin; and the verie woorde it ſelfe alſo doeth properly extend no further than to ſuch as might contract marriage together. In deede in the example which wee haue afore alledged, the brethren which were of the firſt degree tooke Thamar to wyfe, and GOD rooted them out for their filthineſſe; but the Lawe was not yet made. And in the Eaſt Countrey they had no great regard of honeſtie, but behaued themſelues lyke beaſtes in marrying, in ſo much that they made no conſcience to couple the brother and ſiſter together like dogges and bitches. There was (I ſay) ſuch wickedneſſe vſed in that Countrie, yea euen among the kinges and Princes. In deede they be the perſons which take vnto themſelues greateſt leaue and libertie in this behalfe: but the common ſort (as I tolde you) did the like too. And according to this common cuſtome Iuda (after the death of his eldeſt ſonne) gaue his ſecond ſonne alſo vnto Thamar. And herein wee ſee the rather, what it is to bee caryed away by cuſtome. When wee haue no other conſideration than to doe according to the cuſtome which hath beene maintained afore times among men, we fal into horrible confuſion: & when one followes anothers faſhion after yͤ ſorte, there is no rule. But whatſoeuer men do, let vs learne to behaue our ſelues according vnto the wil of God, and not turne either to this ſide or that ſide, but abide ſtable and conſtant in that which God liketh of. That is yͤ thing which we muſt beare in mind, when we ſee that things haue bin ſo farre out of ſquare through out the world, and that the fathers of old time haue bin blemiſhed with them: for when wee dwell in a lawleſſe Country where euery man hath the bridle laid on his neck and may do what him liketh, we be then as in a tempeſt or in a whirle winde, a man cannot ſtay himſelfe but that the winde will driue him to and fro. The like force hath euill cuſtome; and therfore we ought the more as it were to impriſon our ſelues vnder the obedience of God.

Let vs nowe returne vnto this preſent law. It is ſayde that the next brother ſhall take the wife of his brother deceaſed, without Children. When wee heare the woorde Brother, according as the Hebrewes alſo take it, wee may not reſtraine it vnto this firſt degree of borne brother: but of couſẽs both in yͤ firſt and ſecond degree, as wee cal thẽ which are brothers & ſiſters children. For yͤ Iewes do vſe this word Brother generally, and not as wee doe: and therefore one lawe muſt bee conferred with an other. For when it is ſayde: *Let the brother take the wife of him which is deade*: It is to bee vnderſtoode ſo farre forth, as it is lawefull and permitted, and ſo farre foorth as GOD hath eſtablyſhed the degrees of marriage: ſo as inceſt bee neuer committed. Nowe wee haue the meaning of the law.

And it is ſayde expreſly: *If the brethren dwell together.* For that a woman when ſhee taketh an husbande in an houſe, ſhould binde her ſelfe in bondage generally vnto all the kindred, were againſt reaſon: and bondes as wel as al other lyke things, ought to bee bounded within ſome meaſure. Where thinges are ſet downe without limitation, there followeth confuſion by and by. If a man ſhould by his laſt will appoint ſo many heyres as could not be numbred; and therewithall would haue his will to endure vnto the ende of the worlde; what a confuſed thing were that? As much is to bee ſayde of other like thinges. And therefore if a woman ſhould be bounde to marrie in a houſe till the whole kindred had refuſed her: in what a ſtraunge caſe were ſhee? But heere it is ſpoken of thoſe kinſmen which are nigh at hande, euen of ſuch as dwell together, that they may bee knowen. For if a woman ſhoulde bee bounde ſhee wotteth not vnto whome, and conſtrayned to take one which ſhe neuer ſawe: ſhee ſhould be kept vnder too cruel bondage, and there were no reaſon in it. And therfore our Lord meant to limit this law within certaine bonds.

It followeth, *That the woman ſhall make hir requeſt to bee prouided for.* Not that ſhee was to beginne to ſeeke hir an husband; for it pertayned vnto the next of the kinne to come and demaunde hir for his wife. But in this place the caſe concerneth the ſetting of the woman at libertie. For if none of the kinne would haue hir, ſhee was to take hir leaue after this manner, by offering hir ſelfe to accept the condition which God had ordayned hir. For when a man is bounde vnto any condition, and is deſirous to bee ridde of it, and to ſet himſelfe free; he muſt offer himſelfe to doe his duetie ſo as men may vnderſtand that it was not long of him, that the former bond ſtoode not ſtill in force. The thing then which God hath ordayned in this place is, *That the woman ſhall come vnto the Elders of the Citie*, that for as much as none of the kin would take hir, they myght ſee ſhee was ready to doe hir duetie, and that thereuppon ſhee myght prouide for hir ſelfe, where GOD would appoynt her. And therefore ſhee was to come before the Iudges and to cauſe the next of the kinne, (that is to ſay, him which might lawfully take hir to wife,) to bee called: and the Iudges were to doe what they coulde to perſwade him.

For our Lorde meant not to compell men to take thoſe women, although hee might iuſtly ynough haue done it : But he had this conſideration; That forced and conſtrayned marriages, neuer come to good end. In deede God might haue preciſely ſet downe and commanded, that the next kinſman ſhould haue beene bound to marrie the wife of him that was deceaſed without heires : God might haue ſo commaunded. Why doth he then permit that a man might to his ſhame refuſe hir ? Verily bycauſe that if the husband and the wife doe not agree and loue togither, it is an vnhallowing of marriage, or rather (to ſpeake properly) no marriage at all. For the good will is the chiefe bond : in ſo much that it behoroueth the husband to acknowledge his wyfe to bee as his owne body, and the one Gen.2.23. halfe of himſelfe. Shee is bone of my bone (ſayeth Adam) being inſpired of God. Wherein hee giueth a common rule vnto all men : for it was not ſpoken in reſpect of Eue onely, but of that which muſt bee kept and obſerued for a rule vnto the ende of the worlde. Seeing then that this mutuall agreement is required in marriage : let vs note that our Lorde meant not preciſely to conſtrayne kinſmen to marrie thoſe women which were wydowes and without children : but hee was contented to releaſe them ſomewhat in this behalfe. And hereof wee are to gather this inſtruction; that when a man is to take a wife and to marrie hir, hee muſt take hir of his owne minde and good wil, knowing that where there is no true and ſounde loue : there can bee nothing but confuſion, and wee may not looke that GOD will proſper ſuch marriages. For the iſſue of them can not bee but ill, when both parties ſeeke not firſt to loue together in the name of GOD; that they may liue together in quietneſſe of conſcience. And let fathers alſo haue this regard. For what a thing were it for mortall men to take more vppon them, than God himſelfe woulde doe? And yet he is the chiefe and ſoueraigne father of all : neuertheleſſe hee will not force any to take ſuch a one to wyfe as hee liketh not of. In deede GOD is grieued and angrie with him which will not take hir, and ſetteth on him a marke of reproche and ſhame. But yet for all this, he which hath infinite power, hee which hath all ſoueraigntie ouer vs in all things without exception, euen hee (I ſay) doeth vſe a meaſure, hee ſtoopeth vnto vs, and hee beareth with vs, that wee may ſee hee woulde preſſe and ouercharge no man. And what then ſhall we thinke of a man who is leſſe than nothing, if hee will needes marrie his ſonne or his daughter at his owne luſt and pleaſure? It is verily contrarie to the whole order of nature : nay it is a blaſphemie againſt God for a mortall creature, and a worme of the earth, to preſume ſo farre as to take more vppon him, than GOD himſelfe hath taken vppon him. So then ſuch as haue children, let them take diligent heede when they intende to marrie them, that they obſerue this reaſonableneſſe and rightfulneſſe, ſo as they doe not compell them to marrie.

Nowe moreouer it is ſayd in this place : *That the Iudges may perſwade the man, and if they ſee him to ſtande ſtiffe in his opinion, then the woman ſhall plucke off his ſhoe from his foote, and ſpitte in his face, as by waye of reproche : and ſhee ſhall ſay, GOD doe ſo vnto all them which will not raiſe vp a ſtocke in Iſrael.* Nowe heere wee haue farther to note, that God would haue the Iudges ſpeake vnto the man to perſwade him as farre as they were able. And if the man woulde not conſent vnto them, they ſhould content themſelues with this kinde of puniſhment. Whereby wee ſee that the Magiſtrates and other Iuſticers ought to abſtaine from vſing any force and violence in that thing which they cannot ſimply commaund. As for example : if there bee a thing which is good, and yet there is no lawe for it : and I being of power and authoritie would conſtraine a man to doe what I thinke good; were there any reaſon in it? For the law conſtrayneth him not to doe it, and I ought not to paſſe thoſe boundes. Let vs therefore note wel, that ſuch as are armed with the ſword, muſt contayne themſelues within their boundſ: and not challenge to themſelues any Laweleſſe libertie to ſay : What? I commaunde nothing but that which is good, and therefore yee muſt doe it. No : For there is no conſtrainyng, where there is no Lawe. When there is a Lawe a man muſt holde himſelfe to the rule thereof : but yet in the ende the poynt that muſt bee come vnto, is to preſume to bring men into no further ſubiection than the Lawe byndeth them vnto. Ye ſee then what wee are farther to beare in minde vpon this place.

Now as touching the ſhame that was done in plucking off of their ſhoes, & in ſpitting in their faces, it ſerued to prouoke men to diſcharge their dueties the better. Yet neuertheleſſe if a man had rather ſuſtaine this reproche, than to take wife againſt his wyll, hee was diſcharged thereof. And heerein wee ſee (as I haue alreadie tolde you) that GOD ſheweth the authoritie of a Father in beyng grieued when the families was not maintayned in Iſrael : and yet was hee contented to beare with ſuch as could not finde in their heartes to ſtoope to that yoke, bicauſe it was ſo hard. Therefore if any had rather to ſuffer ſuch ſhame, than to take a wife after that maner, he came to declare it publikely.

But wee muſt nowe returne vnto that which I ſayd in the beginning, namely that there is not now any carnall kinred priuiledged as the race and linage of Abraham was. For God adopteth vs nowadayes vnder condition, that we bee ingraffed by faith into his Church : and ſo made the children of Abraham. For ſo much therfore as the kinred which we haue at this day is ſpirituall, the order of raiſing vp iſſue to ſucceede [in the inheritaunce of] houſes, landes, or medowes, is no longer in force. And why? For it behoued that the ſtocke of Abraham ſhould bee maintained vntil ẏ comming of our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt. And ẏ was the cauſe why ẏ land of Canaã was giuen in poſſeſſion vnto the people. Nowadayes ẏ whole earth is ẏ dwelling place of the children of God: & although they be diſperſed throughout the whole worlde, yet are they knit in one body by agreeing in one conſent of faith to call vppon G O D: and although they do it in diuerſe tongues, yet it skilleth not ſeeing that one ſelfe ſame ſpirit gouerneth them, and that they haue all one hope of the euerlaſting ſaluation which is promiſed vnto them. Thoſe are the things wherein they are all knit and conioyned together. Seeing it is ſo, let vs note that G O D will haue euerie of vs nowadayes for his owne part to do his indeuor, to multiplie the church. And the ſeed of Abraham is no longer begotten according to the fleſhe through carnall mariage, but it is begotten of the incorruptible ſeede 1.Pet.1.23 of Gods worde, as Saint Peter ſaith. And when God vouchſafeth vs his grace to winne anie man, and to bring him into his flocke, then are we as ſpirituall Fathers. And that alſo is the verie cauſe why the Miniſters of the worde bee called Fathers: and likewiſe the Church hath generally ẏ name and title of Mother; becauſe ſhe cõceiueth the children of God. Nowe albeit that all haue not that office of Preaching the worde of God, yet a priuate perſon being a member of the Church, may begette ſpirituall children vnto God, if hee haue occaſion and abilitie to winne a poore ſoule & to inlighten him with the faith of the Goſpell. Let vs then beſtowe our paynes to this ende, knowing that if the carnall mariage was ſo pretious vnder the lawe in the ſight of God: Surely the meane whereby we be made members of our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt, is a thing now farre deerer and of greater eſtimation with him. And therefore let euerie man employe himſelfe that way to the vttermoſt of his poore. For here is no forcing of vs to marie againſt our willes, but of the winning of wiues vnto our lord Ieſus Chriſt, that by the multiplying of the Church, wee may alwayes bee the more firmely linked vnto him. Seeing then that our condition is more gentle and ſweet than that which was vnder the lawe, we ought to be ſtirred vp ſo much the more to the diſcharging of that duetie, and we ſhall haue ſo much the leſſe excuſe if we be careleſſe and negligent therein. Thus yee ſee what wee haue to beare in minde in effect as touching this Lawe. And nowe wee ſee that although it bee no longer in vſe, yet may we gather ſome profite from it to bee edified thereby: For of all the thinges which the holy Ghoſt hath vouchſafed to leaue vnto vs, there is none vnprofitable, if wee haue the wiſedome (as I told you) & the diſcretion to applie it wel vnto our vſe. It followeth, *That if two men be at ſtrife, and one of their wiues come to deliuer her husbande, and take his aduerſarie by the priuities, her hand ſhall bee cut off.* This lawe betokeneth in effect that honeſtie is to bee kept continually: And that if a woman forgoe ſhamefaſtneſſe, it is a wicked and intollerable thing, and therefore ought to bee puniſhed to the intent honeſt ſobrietie and ſtayednes in conuerſation may be maintayned among the people of God, and no lawleſſe libertie of ſhamefull beaſtlineſſe ſuffered. That is the thing in effect whereat God amed in this law. And ſo let vs note that vnder one example, he meant to giue vs a generall inſtruction as touching all thinges which wee ought to take heede of. Now as concerning the ſpeciall caſe which is ſet downe here, we ſee howe the woman might haue ſomewhat for her excuſe, when ſhe commeth to helpe her husbande; ſhe might alleadge, that ſhe tooke not great heede, and that ſhe was aſtoniſhed or amaſed. but God holdeth her not excuſed for all that. Nowe then if euen in trouble, in daunger, and amaſedneſſe, God will haue honeſtie regarded, what ſhall wee ſay to it, if when no neceſſitie preſſeth vs, when nothing conſtraineth vs, when we are in no ſuch furie as that we alledge: I was afrighted, I knewe not what I did: Yet euen then if wee bee giuen ouer to leawdeneſſe and commit heatheniſh and diſſolute deeds, ought that to be tollerable among the people of God? No verilie. And therefore let vs not ſtande ſo much vpon the preſent example, as regarde the whole intent and meaning of our God: to wit, that he will haue vs honeſt in all our behauiours and in all our conuerſation, and not diſſolute and ſhameleſſe. For if it come once to that point, we by and by open the gappe vnto al wickednes, and one wickedneſſe will drawe on an other. Therefore like as fornication is forbidden vs, euen ſo conſequently all that which may leade vs thereto is likewiſe forbidden vs. As for example, what elſe is filthie and leawde talke, than a kinde of baudrie? And therefore Saint Paul ſaith that they are able to infect good manners. 1.Cor.15.33 Nowe when one ſpeweth out as filthie ſpeaches as any may bee, yet will hee ſay that hee meant no harme, and that hee doth it innocently: For when folke ſing their vile and bawdie ſonges, their common ſaying is: I meant no harme. Such folke would make God a lyer. Nowe if they bee not in any wiſe to bee borne with when they commit euill through ouerſight: what is to bee ſaide to them, when they doe it of ſet purpoſe? Albeit they ſay: I meant it not: yet (as yee ſee) their ſpuing out of ſuch leawde ſpeaches breedeth corruption of manners and yet they ceaſe not to doe euill ſtil. What confuſion then muſt they breede when wee knowe that they do it of a ſet and wilfull malice? Therefore if there were a good and godlie reformation among vs, ſuch lewd ſpeaches ſhould not haue their ſwinge. And ſeeing that they ſerue but to infect all, ſo as nothing may remaine ſounde and holy in our conuerſation, are they to bee excuſed which corrupt good manners after that faſhion? Yee ſee what the thing is, whereunto God had an eye in this Lawe. And at this day this ciuill order might bee well obſerued. And whenſoeuer ſuch a caſe befell; although there bee no written law for it in anie certain place, yet ought we alwayes to conſider that wee can not elſewhere haue better counſell than at the mouth of God. Indeede we are not bounde vnto the order of the Iewes through any preciſe neceſſitie: Neuertheleſſe wee muſt in the ende reſolue our ſelues on this point, that God ordeyned nothing for his people, but that which is iuſt, and that wee are bound at this day (in caſe that ſuch a thing ſhoulde happen) not to ſuffer it or to leaue it vnpuniſhed: and that to doe otherwiſe were not good, or to bee liked of. But the principall thing is that wee muſt receiue ſome generall inſtruction by it. And verily it were a foule and ſhamefull thing to ſee any woman ſo bolde as this example importeth. And to ſay the trueth, GOD meant not to puniſh that which was committed through ſome ouerſight, or amaſedneſſe: but hee conſidered that if a woman ſhoulde haue ſo ſmall regarde of ſhame & honeſt reuerence as to come running vppon a man after that ſorte, and touch that part of him from which ſhe ought to flee backe; if ſhe ſhould bee ſuffered in ſuch ſhameleſſe dealing, it were a kinde of diſpencing with all leawdneſſe and looſeneſſe of behauiour, ſo as no honeſtie ſhoulde bee kept any more. What is then to be doone? Wee muſt note here briefly two points. The firſt is, that God requireth ſuch modeſtie in women as that they muſt alwayes conſider what their ſexe will allowe them to doe, and that they become not like launceknightes, as wee ſee ſome are, which will handle an Harquebuſe as boldely as anie man, and march with enſigne diſplayed as couragiouſly. It is ſo monſtruous a ſight to beholde ſuch wicked women, that a man ought, not onelie to ſpitte at them, but alſo to take vp durt and caſt at ſuch impudent creatures, when they are ſo bolde to peruert the order of nature. Thus yee ſee what God requireth of womē in the firſt place, namelie ſuch a modoſtie as may holde them within the bonds of honeſtie. For if a woman haue all the vertues in the worlde, yet if ſhee be ſuch a Virago that ſhee wil counterfaite the man, all the reſt is but doung and filthineſſe. For we haue ſeene heretofore howe God did ſtraitlie forbid women to diſguiſe themſelues: And that tended to this purpoſe. Let women therefore learne here their leſſon, to bee modeſt, and to haue alwayes that vertue which is proper vnto them, to wit, ſhamefaſtneſſe, that they attempt no ſuch thinges as may ſhewe them to be paſt ſhame. In the ſecond place wee haue a cōmon rule for vs all (as I tolde you) yͤ is, that wee muſt not onely abſtaine from all fornication, but alſo bee honeſt in our whole conuerſation, and behaue our ſelues according as God commandeth: ſo as neither in our deedes nor in our wordes there be any ſuch thing as is contrarie vnto the honeſty of nature, and that which God commādeth, or which may leade vs to euill. Thus ye ſee in effect what wee haue to beare in minde vpon this place. And therefore although this order was made for the people of olde time, yet the inſtruction and ſubſtance of the lawe abideth for euer, and wee may gather from it a profitable leſſon for our ſelues. Let vs then applie this to our benefit which is contained here, as we may ſhew that foraſmuch as God hath adopted vs, and made vs holy as he himſelf is holy, & foraſmuch as Ieſus Chriſt alſo hath gathered vs into his body to the intent wee ſhould liue in al holines; let yͤ ſame be declared indeed both in al our talke & in al our conuerſation, ſo as there is not any part or member of our body, which is not anſwerable vnto that honeſtie.

Deut,22.8.

Now let vs kneele downe in the preſence of our good God with acknowledgement of our faults, praying him to make vs ſo to feele them, that acknowledging the wretchednes which is in vs and in our nature, wee may labour to drawe our ſelues out of it, by fighting againſt all our carnal affections, & by ridding our ſelues wholie of that which wee holde of our father Adam, vntill this good God hath cloathed vs with his owne righteouſnes, and that we bee made newe creatures in our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt, to come vnto that glorie which hee hath purchaſed for vs. And pray we him that while we be incloſed with our infirmities, it may pleaſe him to beare with vs, vntil he hath cleane deliuered vs from them, and to giue vs grace in the meane time, to doe our indeuour that his Church may bee multiplied, ſo as we may enioye that bleſſing to ſee his name glorified throughout the worlde, and that when we haue company our minds may euer be the more ſtirred vp thereby to follow that holy vocation wherunto he hath called vs. For the doing whereof it may pleaſe him to raiſe vp true and faithfull miniſters of his worde, &c.

On Fryday the xiiij. of February, 1556.

The CXLIIII. Sermon which is the third vpon the fiue and twentith Chapter.

13 Thou ſhalt not haue two manner of weightes in thy bagge, a great and a little.

14 Thou ſhalt not haue two manner of Ephas in thy houſe a great & a litle.

15 But thou ſhalt haue a iuſt and a right weight, thou ſhalt haue a perfect & a iuſt Epha, that thy dayes may be prolonged in the lande which the Lord thy God giueth thee.

16 For all they which doe ſuch thinges, and all they which deale vnrighteouſly are an abhomination before the Lorde thy God.

17 Remember what Amalec did vnto thee by the way after your comming out of Egypt.

18 Howe hee came againſt thee in the way, and in the hindmoſt of thy traine ſtrake all the weake which followed thee when thou waſt fainte and wearie: and he feared not God.

19 Therefore when the Lord thy God ſhal haue giuen thee reſt from al thine enemies which are round about thee in the lande which the Lord thy God giueth thee to poſſeſſe, then ſhalt thou put out the remembraunce of Amalec from vnder heauen: forget it not.

THere are two thinges eſpeciallie wherein wee offende our neighbours, to wit, deceyte and open violence. For ſome are giuen to deceite and malicious wilineſſe, to deceiue and beguile men: others vſe open wronging and iniuries. In priuie deceite the moſt miſcheeuous meane of beguiling that any man can vſe, is the falſifying of weightes and meaſures. For the vſe of them is the onely way for men to buy and ſell by, without ſtrife or variaunce. If we hadde not monie wherewith to buye thinges; what a diſorder ſhould wee haue? And wares alſo are commonly ſolde by weight and meaſure. Nowe then if there bee deceyte eyther in monie or in weightes or in meaſures, the bonde of that intercommoning which men haue together among themſelues is broken: ſo as they become like dogges and Cattes, and there is no meanes for them to deale one with an other. And therefore no maruell though our Lorde doe greatly miſlike the falſifying of weightes and meaſures, and tell vs that it is the worſt and deteſtableſt robberie that can bee. If a theefe purpoſe with him ſelfe to take a bootie, hee will ſet on a man, and from one hee will goe to an other. But wee are ſure there is no theefe can paſſe his boundes ſo farre, as to ſpoyle and robbe the whole worlde. But he which vſeth falſe weightes and falſe meaſures, hath no regarde at all, when hee robbeth; but doeth wrong vnto all in generall: and that is the next way to peruert all ciuill order, ſo as no humanitie or common honeſtie may remayne any longer among men. What ſhall Lawes doe? Or to what purpoſe ſhall Iuſtice ſerue, whẽ there is no more anie playne nor vpright dealing in thoſe thinges which ſhoulde helpe men to mayntaine their eſtate? Wee haue therefore a verie neceſſarie law in this place, where mention is made of weightes and meaſures. It is ſayde: *Thou ſhalt not haue diuerſe ſtones in thy bag.* And that is becauſe in olde time they were woont to make their weightes of ſtone. And this importeth aſmuch as if it were ſayde: *Thou ſhalt haue a iuſt weight and a iuſt meaſure.* Moreouer let vs beare in minde alwayes that which hath beene ſayde before, namely that GOD oftentimes vnder one ſpeciall kinde, giueth a generall doctrine. And ſo it is all one as if we were commaunded generallie in all buying and ſelling, to vſe reaſonable and vpright dealing without anie falſehoode. For when a man ſelleth one kinde of ware for an other, it is all one as if hee falſifyed his weightes or his meaſures. A ſimple man commeth to a ſhoppe and asketh for cloath: hee knoweth it not, but truſteth the Marchant, and the Marchant ſayeth vnto him, here is cloath of ſuch a place: and hee knoweth well that hee lyeth: now this is all one, as if he had giuen him halfe a yarde or three quarters of a yarde, for a whole yarde. So then wee ſee how GOD ordeyneth in generall that our trayding ſhoulde bee after ſuch a ſorte as that hee which buyeth doe bring lawfull monie; and that hee which ſelleth doe deliuer his wares at a reaſonable price and vſe no falſehoode, neither in weight nor in meaſure; at leaſtwiſe if it bee ſuch wares as are woont to bee meaſured by the yarde or ell, or weyed in ſcales or balaunces, but that on either part there bee true and iuſt dealing vſed.

And ſith wee ſee ſo manie lawes tending all to this end, that no man ſhoulde be deceyued, but that euerie man ſhoulde haue his right; let vs alwayes remember this ſaying, That GOD will haue mercie, iudgement and iuſtice. And therefore let vs haue compaſſion on them which are in neceſſitie, to releeue and ſuccour them. And ſecondlie let vs not onelie yeeld to euerie man his right, but alſo when wee ſee anie man wrong his neighbour, let vs not ſuffer it, nor bee conſenting vnto it in anie caſe. Loe wherein wee exerciſe our ſelues if wee will order our life according to the will of GOD. For excepte wee doe ſo, what fayre countenaunce ſoeuer wee ſette vppon thinges, yet all ſhall bee but deteſtable hypocriſie in the ſighte of GOD, vntill wee haue learned to liue charitablie with our Neighbours

Matt.23.23

Matt.7.12. bours, and to obſerue this vprightneſſe which nature hath taught vs, of not doeing otherwyſe vnto others than wee woulde haue doone vnto our ſelues. Heere withall alſo wee be made to knowe our owne naughtineſſe. For it were enough to haue warned vs in one word, if wee were diſpoſed to doe well, and had not ſuch a rebelliouſneſſe within vs, that wee euer drawe backewarde from that which is good. Then if men were inclined of themſelues to do right and to exerciſe humanitie: it were enough to make but a ſigne vnto them, and to ſay: Yee ſee what your duetie is: But nowe God is faine to make often repetitions, he is fayne to ſtrengthen the lawes which hee hath giuen, hee is fayne to expounde them, he is fayne to heape commaundement vppon commaundement. And what is the cauſe hereof, but that wee are ouerharde to bee ruled, and that our deſites are as fell and furious beaſtes: ſo that one bonde is not ſtrong enough to binde vs, but wee muſt be hampered with many cordes, nay wee muſt haue chaynes and fetters layde on vs? So then let vs know that our willes and minds are farre from beeing diſpoſed to obey God. And therefore let euerie man quicken vp and inforce himſelfe the more, conſidering how it is not without cauſe that God maketh ſo often rehearſall of that which ſerueth to bring vs to brotherlie faithfulneſſe and friendſhippe; for aſmuch as we drawe cleane backewarde from that which hee commaundeth as I haue tolde you before. Moreouer let vs beare in minde, that the more a thing maketh to the common benefite of al, the better is it alwayes to bee obſerued. Nowe I haue tolde you howe there woulde bee extreeme confuſion, if there were no weightes nor meaſures: and therefore if weightes and meaſures ſhould bee falſified, there woulde ſcarce remayne any ciuill order in the worlde. Therefore ſeeing the thing is ſo requiſite and neceſſarie, that without it wee coulde not liue together, but ſhoulde bee as wilde and ſauage beaſtes; let vs knowe that whoſo breaketh any part of this order, offendeth GOD moſt greeuouſly: and as the faulte is puniſhable by earthly Iuſtice: ſo let vs aſſure our ſelues, that ſuch offenders when they ſhall come to render an account before the heauenly Iudge, ſhal not eſcape the hande of God: For it was not long of them that all vprightneſſe was not cleane aboliſhed. Wherefore let vs ſtande in feare of that which is tolde vs here, and let euerie man deale vprightlie with his Neighbours; Let thoſe which vſe any trade of Marchandiſe haue a iuſt balaunce and a iuſt meaſure, and lawfull wares, and let them take heede that they vſe no deceyte. Let both the buyers and the ſellers vſe ſuch truſtie dealing, as it may appeare that they haue a Lawe which beareth rule in their hearts: and although wee had neither threates nor puniſhmentes; yet let it ſuffice vs that God hath declared his will vnto vs. Let that bee of force and power with vs, to guide and gouerne vs.

And moreouer whereas it is ſayde. *That all thoſe which doe ſuch thinges, are an abhomination vnto GOD*: it is ſpoken to the intent that men ſhoulde not deceyue themſelues by ſubtiltie or Sophiſtrie: as wee are alwayes ſeeking for ſome ſtarting holes: Such as are deſirous to winde in their neighbours with craftineſſe, haue alwayes ſome colour to paint their caſe withall. But although men holde vs excuſed, it is nothing ſeeing wee muſt come before the heauenly Iudge. For Moſes ſaith, *That ſuch a thing is an abhomination before GOD.* Therefore let not men beguyle themſelues anie more with any of the trifling excuſes wherewith manie men doe ſhroulde themſelues, but rather let them thinke thus: Beholde it is our GOD that ſpeaketh, it will not boote vs to diſguiſe our matters. For hee will not ſuffer himſelfe to bee mocked: and it is before him that wee muſt anſwere. And therefore let vs walke in ſuch wiſe as our owne conſcience may beare vs good witneſſe, and as wee may proteſt not onelie with our mouth but alſo within with our heart, ẏ we haue liued vprightlie with our neighbours, that there is no ſecrete wickedneſſe within vs, and that wee haue not made our owne gayne by an other mans loſſe. Lo (I ſay) what we haue to beare in mind vpon this place.

And whereas Moſes addeth: *Whoſoeuer doth vnrighteouſly*: it is to confirme that which I ſaid in the beginning: that is, that albeit GOD expreſſeth here but two kindes, to wit, Weight and Meaſure: yet notwithſtanding, it ſerueth to put vs in minde generally, howe men ought to liue with their neighbours without hurting of them. For if GOD leaue no kinde of wickedneſſe vnpuniſhed, whether wee plucke other mens goods vnto vs by force or vſe deceite to beguile the ſimple; if GOD call all ſuch thinges to account: what will become of vs when wee ſhall haue committed more outragious crymes, ſo as wee ſhall haue peruerted all common order, by playing the robbers & theeues in raking to ourſelues whatſoeuer we coulde come by, as thoſe doe which vſe falſe weightes and falſe meaſures? For certaine it is, that vnder pretence of buying and ſelling, ſuch foolkes doe play the rancke theeues, and are worſe than thoſe which robbe in the woods. And therefore let vs knowe that whereas God pronounceth himſelfe a Iudge to puniſhe all manner of wickedneſſe, hee ſheweth that by greater reaſon, vengeaunce ſhall fall on them which make no conſcience or remorſe, to rake other mens goods vnto themſelues without diſcretion, or rather which haue giuen their luſtes ſo large ſcope, that they ruſhe foorth into all euill, and all men both greate and ſmall are faine to paſſe their pawes. Thus yee ſee in effect what the thing is which Moſes meant to declare vnto vs in this place. Nowe if at that time it was behoouefull and neceſſarie, that GOD ſhoulde repreſſe ſuch deceytes as were committed in weightes and meaſures, howe much more needefull is it that hee ſhoulde doe the like nowe? For certainlie there is nowe no ſuch vpright dealing in the worlde as was at that time: but corruptions are ſtill increaſed:

and therefore ſo much the more ought wee to exerciſe our ſelues in this lawe. And let vs not thinke that wee may excuſe our ſelues by the great number of deceiuers and pollers which are nowadayes: but let vs knowe that the lawe of GOD is euerlaſting: and that if wee wil bee taken for the children of GOD, wee muſt keepe that vprightneſſe whereof Moſes here ſpeaketh, notwithſtanding all the wickednes that is cōmitted in the world. And that is the cauſe alſo why he thinkes it not enough to ſay: Thoſe which doe ſuch thinges are an abhomination in the ſight of the Creator: but he addeth alſo: *Before thy God.* And therefore we muſt alwayes returne vnto this point, ẏ becauſe GOD hath adopted vs for his children wee muſt not bee carried away with euill cuſtomes. Though this man misbehaue himſelfe and that man bee offenſiue through his euill life; yet muſt wee ſtill abide conſtant in obeying our GOD, ſeeing that he hath choſen vs, and keepeth vs for his owne. Thus ye ſee what we haue further to beare in minde concerning this place.

Nowe this lawe needeth not any long expoſition. For there is no man which of himſelfe knoweth not what confuſion there woulde bee in the worlde, if the meane of buying and ſelling were taken away. Yet neuertheleſſe yee ſee howe GOD doeth further open his mouth to teach vs. Haue wee then his lawe in three wordes? It ought to ſuffice vs: but yet the practiſe of it is verie rare. Yea verily: and therefore wee ought not to buſye our ſelues ſo much in ſaying ouer the words, which are ſet downe here, as to minde them throughlie, and to bethinke of them earely and late, and to ſay, Goe to, GOD hath commaunded that we ſhoulde haue iuſt weightes and equall meaſures, that wee might deale vprightly one with an other. When wee ſhall haue refreſhed our minds with the remembrāce hereof, it wil ſerue to perſwade vs to order our life in ſuch wiſe as it beehoueth vs to do.

Moreouer let vs note that vnder falſe weights and deceitefull meaſures, all acceptinges of perſons are condemned by GOD. For if it be not lawfull to falſifie a weight or balaunce, if it bee not lawfull to falſifie a meaſure or yarde; what ſhal we ſay of falſifying of iuſtice? If in a garner, if in a ſellar, if in a ſhop, God wil haue men to vſe vpright dealing among thēſelues: what is to be thought when it commeth to the iudging of a caſe in Lawe? If a man ſhoulde ſwarue aſide to the fauouring of any perſon, what a dealing were that? As I haue alreadie touched, we muſt returne vnto this generall commaundement of walking in vprightneſſe with men, ſo as wee neuer ſwarue aſide but holde on right foorth as God hath commaunded vs. And if in Marchandiſe which are tranſitorie thinges God will haue vs to obſerue ſuch vpright dealing: what ought wee to doe in the caſe where God is to be ſerued? Neuertheleſſe wee ſee howe men ſhape and vnſhape themſelues, and make lawes after their owne fancies, nowe one way and now an other. But let vs note that GOD boweth not anie way at our pleaſure, but when hee once giueth a lawe, which is vnchaungeable, euerie man muſt frame himſelfe thereafter. And let vs not beare our ſelues in hande that wee ſhall bee our owne Iudges: for wee are not competent enough, but let vs alwayes abyde in that which God hath commaunded.

Nowe let vs come vnto that which Moſes addeth concerning Amalec. A man might at firſt bluſhe, thinke it an harde caſe, that it ſhoulde bee lawfull for the Iewes to reuenge themſelues vppon the Amalekites, and that when they were at reſt from their enemies, they ſhoulde then roote them cleane out. *Remember Amalec alſo, becauſe hee woulde haue cutte thee off by the way, and made an aſſault on thy hindermoſt people, and ſought to make hauocke of thee. Forgette it not, but purſue it with fire and ſworde.* This is a verie ſeuere and ſharpe condemnation. But wee haue to note that the Amalekites had prouoked the vengeaunce of God againſt themſelues and were intangled in the condemnation which was alreadie giuen vpon the people of the lande of Chanaan, as vppon the Amorites, the Phereſites and ſuch like. Wee haue before ſhewed that wee may not account this ſentence of GOD anie way cruell, when he ordayned that all theſe people ſhould bee rooted out of the worlde. For hee had ſpared them nowe by the ſpace of foure hundred yeares and more: And although they had then deſerued to haue beene vtterlie ouerwhelmed with deſtruction; yet was it ſaid that Gen. 15. 16. their wickedneſſe was not then come vnto full meaſure. But amended they in all that tyme wherein GOD wayted for their repentaunce with ſo great patience? No, but of badde they became worſe. And therefore it behooued that cleane riddaunce ſhoulde bee made of them, ſeeing they were ſuch a ſtubborn and vnamendable people. The like reaſon was of Amalec alſo. And hereby wee ſee what it is to bee intangled among the wicked, when they are altogether forſaken of GOD. It is all one as if a man woulde caſt himſelfe into the middeſt of an hoate burning fire, where hee muſt needes bee conſumed with the wood. Let vs marke well then that vnder the example of the Amalekites, GOD hath warned vs in this place to take heede, that when wee ſee men giuen ouer vnto all wickedneſſe and hardened in their ſinnes, wee come not neere them, nor haue any thing to doe with them. And why? For it is the next way to binde vp our ſelues in the ſame bundell with them, and then muſt wee needes periſhe together. Wherefore let vs keepe our ſelues aloofe from foolke when wee ſee them ſo peruerſe, and that they bee deſpiſers of GOD, & are become as brutiſhe as beaſts in their wickedneſſe. Let vs I ſay, flee farre from them, vnleſſe wee will haue their condemnation to take holde of vs alſo, and bee carried awaye in the ſame tempeſt with them. And that is the cauſe alſo wherefore Eſay the

Eſa.48.20. & 52.11. Prophete cryeth with a lowde voyce, Flie farre from them. Hee is not contented to to ſay: withdrawe your ſelues from them, but flie, flie. And yet hee repeateth the ſame again and ſaith: ſeparate your ſelues farre from them. And why? Wee ſee howe he meant it of ſuch as Moſes ſpeaketh of in this place. Let that therefore be noted for one point.

Nowe herewithall we muſt conſider farther, that the Amalekites reſiſted G O D to the vttermoſt of their power, and woulde haue hindered the Iewes from comming into that inheritance which he had already appointed out for them. Indeede they thought they had waged battell with men: but in verie deede G O D was their aduerſary partie. For the Iewes came not thither through their owne power, but God had called them to poſſeſſe the Land of Chanaan for their inheritaunce. Therefore when the Amalekites banded themſelues in multitudes againſt them, it was as if they had bidden battell vnto God. And therefore wee may not maruell that their condemnation was ſo greeuous, ſeeing they flang foorth into ſo great rage [euen againſt God himſelfe.] I graunt they knewe not certeynly that the Iewes had any ſuch promiſe made them: and yet for all that, they were not altogether ignoraunt of it: It ſufficed for their condemnation, that they ought to haue knowẽ by certaine ſignes that it was a power exceeding mans power, and thereupon ſhoulde haue beene feared from ruſhing ſo venterouſly and at randõ againſt thoſe which were gouerned by the hande of God. And therefore wee are warned, when wee take any thing in hande, to beware that wee haue not God our enemie and aduerſarie partie. Nowe hee hath declared, that foraſmuch as the Church is in his protection, if wee attempt anie thing againſt the faithfull, whether it bee generallie or particularlie, it is all one as if we came to warre againſt God. And what ſhall wee get by that? It is not for Deut.32.10 nought that he hath ſaide, That hee keepeth vs as the apple of his eye. And therefore let vs learne to abſtaine from all doing of wrong, and conſider well that if we prouoke the liuing God to anger, it muſt needes bee to our great confuſion in the end.

Now as this doctrine ought to ſerue vs for a bridle, to make vs to abſtaine from all outragious and wrongfull dealinges: So wee ſee on the other ſide what a comfort it is vnto the faithfull when they know that God hath ſuch a care ouer them, ẏ he will take their part and be their defendour, and that if any man harme them he declareth that the iniurie is doone vnto himſelfe. Therefore ſith wee ſee that God ſetteth himſelfe expreſſely on our part, ought wee not to take courage vnto vs, and to reſt our ſelues wholy vppon his promiſes? Yet notwithſtanding there are but fewe which can taſt of this doctrine. For what is the cauſe that wee bee ſo kindled with deſire of reuenge as ſoone as any man moleſteth or troubleth vs? It is becauſe we knowe not that God watcheth ouer vs, and hath his hande ſtretched out to maintaine vs, and that hee will not ſuffer anie outrage to bee doone vnto vs, but he will redreſſe it and ſend vs helpe and ſuccour in time conuenient? Were we throughlie perſwaded hereof, wee would be as meeke and quiet as lambes, wee woulde bee patient in our wronges, wee woulde tarie till he redreſſed them. But what? Becauſe we haue no truſt in him, euerie of vs ſhifteth for himſelfe by right or by wrong, wee regarde not what is lawfull for vs to doe; nay wee thinke we ſhould deceiue our ſelues if wee ſhoulde ſtaye vppon the promiſes of God. And therefore let vs learne to conſider more deepelie of this doctrin, where it is ſaide: *Thou ſhalt not forget what Amalecke did vnto thee by the way.* For God ſheweth that although we paſſe it ouer and make no matter of it when wee haue beene vniuſtly vexed, but forget that anie ſuch thing was doone vnto vs: yet will hee remember it. Wee are tender enough in our own iniuries; but yet God ſheweth, that hee taketh them more to hearte than wee doe, and that hee will puniſhe them which haue vexed vs and dealte ouerrigorouſly with vs, ſo as hee will call to remembraunce all the euill which they haue done vnto vs. Ye ſee then what wee haue to beare in minde as touching this place: to wit that wee muſt take heede of doing any violence to our neighbours; for God will take their cauſe in hande and we muſt needs haue him for our aduerſarie party. That is the firſt point to bee noted. Secondly let vs walke in all ſimplicitie and gentleneſſe, knowing that if wee will bee as ſheepe, wee ſhall haue a good ſhepheard which wil keepe vs from the wolues, inſomuch that although wee ſeeme to be euen in their chappes and readie to be deuoured; yet God will prouide a remedie for all, if wee can put our truſt in him and feede our ſoules with Luke.21.19. patience, as our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt declareth.

But now we muſt alſo call to remembrance that which wee haue treated of before, to wit, Deut.23.4. that God is then ſpeciallie mooued vnto anger, when his people are troubled and hindered frõ taking poſſeſſion of their inheritaunce. And if hee haue declared ſuch ſigne of anger againſt the Amalekites, becauſe they would haue withhelde the Iewes from entring into the Land of Chanaan: what will hee doe, if wee nowe-adayes doe turne away the faithfull from entering, (not into the Lande of Chanaan, but) into the kingdome of heauen? For nowadayes God calleth vs not to poſſeſſe the Lande of Chanaan: but to the immortall and incorruptible life. And therefore we muſt keepe on our way and labour to come thither. Nowe then, if anie come to trouble vs: they which ſhall haue caſt ſuch ſtumblingblockes in our waye, that is to ſay which ſhall haue helde vs backe from ſeruing our G O D; ſhall bee driuen to feele a double curſe in compariſon of the curſe that lighted vppon Amalecke. Nowe let vs conſider howe many there are nowadayes which ſeeke to turne the children of G O D out of their right waye, ſome by crueltie and perſecutions, others by leawde and wicked examples:

amples : to bee ſhort, wee cannot ſet one foote forwarde in this waye, but wee are troubled, and Sathan deuiſeth ſtill I knowe not what to hinder vs; and euer hee findeth miniſters fitte for the purpoſe. What is the cauſe that all Churches are not ſo well ordered, as that God may bee ſerued with one common accorde, or that wee haue not ſuch loue and agreement among vs as may ſhewe in verye deede that wee call vppon GOD as our Father? It is bycauſe wee are mingled among Amalekites. Wherefore let vs take heede that they hinder vs not: and let vs alſo on our partes beware that wee trouble not the children of GOD, but rather let euerye of vs take his companion by the hande as the Prophet Eſay ſpeaketh, and ſaye, Esa.2.3. Come, let vs goe and mount vp into the hill of the Lorde, that hee may ſhewe vs his wayes, and guide vs in his righteouſneſſe. Nowe then if wee will not bee coupled with them whom GOD hath heere ordayned to deſtruction, let euerie of vs take payne to guide his neighbour and to further him in the good way, and let none of vs ſtaye or hinder them which are already on their way to goe whither God hath called them.

Nowe it is ſayde: *When GOD hath giuen thee reſt from all thyne enemyes in the lande whither thou goeſt to poſſeſſe it, then remember the Amalekites.* By theſe woordes wee are giuen to vnderſtande, firſt of all, that the people to the ende they myght bee the more encouraged to execute that which Moſes had in GODS name commaunded them; are certifyed in this place, that in the ende they ſhoulde haue the victorie ouer all their enemyes. For it had beene a matter of laughter, if Moſes had ſayde, Remember Amalec, and when thou haſt made a diſpatch of all the reſt, roote him out alſo. For the Iewes myght haue anſwered: What are wee to roote him out? Why? We are yet Wanderers; wee liue as it were at the courteſie of another man; wee knowe not what will betide vs. In deede God promiſed vnto vs, the land of Chanaan, but hath hee not led vs vp and downe in the wilderneſſe, as if we were worthy to bee altogether depriued and defeated of the poſſeſſiō of that land which he promiſed vs? Why? Wee are yet to enter into it. And what are we thē able to do vnto Amalec, ſeing we haue ſo many and ſo ſtrong enemies? For this cauſe Moſes ſetteth downe this promiſe, *When the Lord thy God hath giuen thee reſt from all thine enemyes*, (ſaith he.) Nowe heereby wee are warned, that when God commandeth vs any thing which ſeemeth harde, yea or altogether vnpoſſible, we ought to haue an eye vnto his power: for otherwyſe our courage cannot but fayle vs. And they which of themſelues preſume to execute whatſoeuer GOD teacheth by his woorde, doe breake their neckes in the ende through their fooliſhe preſumption. Seeing then it is ſo, let vs humbly and earneſtly deſire of GOD, ſo to ſtrengthen vs as wee may bee able to obey him. For the dooing whereof let vs haue an eye vnto his promyſes. For when GOD ſaith vnto vs, Doe thus: he addeth, care not though men withſtande you: if you cannot accompliſh that which I commaunde you, I haue power ſufficient in mee to ſupply your weakeneſſe: I will vpholde you: and when it ſhall ſeeme that you are fallen downe, I haue meanes wherewith to helpe you vp agayne: and if the thing be more than you can doe, I will bring it to paſſe for you. Let vs therefore arme our ſelues with theſe promyſes, and thereuppon take courage to marche forewarde in our waye; and what threates ſoeuer wee heare, or what ſtumbling blockes ſo euer are layde in our way; let vs yet keepe on our courſe ſtill. And why? Bycauſe GOD will take care of all, and wee cannot bee deceyued by wayting for his helpe. In deede if wee haue not the woorde from his mouth, wee may not truſt vppon our owne opinion and ſay: I hope GOD will helpe mee. Wee may not bee ſo preſumptuous, but wee muſt aſſure our ſelues vppon the warrant which hee giueth vs; as wee ſee in this place: *Thy GOD wyll giue thee reſt from all thine enemyes.* And therefore Moſes ſayde not ſimply, When thou haſt conquered the Countrey, when thou haſt the victorie ouer all thine enemyes; but hee referreth all vnto GOD. Whereby hee declareth (as I haue already touched) that men may not grounde themſelues vppon their owne power and abilitie: but wee muſt haue our recourſe alwayes vnto GOD, and acknowledge that it is in him onely to make vs inuincible againſt all our enemyes. And if it was needefull that GOD ſhoulde woorke in ſuch wyſe to make the children of Iſrael to ouerthrowe the Chananites, Phereſites, Iebuſites and the lyke: it is much more needefull that hee ſhoulde woorke nowadayes with a greater power in vs, bycauſe wee are to encounter with more mightie enemyes. For (as Saint Paule ſayeth) our combat is not againſt fleſhe Epheſ.6.12. and blooud, that is to ſay, mortall creatures onely, but alſo againſt the Princes of the ayre. In ſo much that if wee compare the power which wee our ſelues haue to reſiſte, with the aduauntage which Sathan hath ouer vs; alas, hee is the prince of the worlde, and beſides that, hee is aboue our heades, ſo as hee myght ouerwhelme vs out of hande. And therefore GOD muſt put to his helping hande and fight for vs, or elſe wee ſhoulde bee a hundred thouſande times vanquiſhed. So then, whenſoeuer wee are to aduenture vppon any thing, let vs learne to haue an eye alwayes vnto the power of GOD, aſſuring our ſelues that the ſame is mightie ynough to ſtrengthen vs. And thereuppon taking courage; let vs boldly defye all the forces of our enemyes bee they neuer ſo dreadfull: and let vs knowe that they are nothing in compariſon of the helpe and ſuccour which God hath promiſed vnto vs, and which he is readie to ſhewe in verie deede. Thus yee ſee in effect what wee haue to beare in minde vpon this place.

Nowe it is expreſſely ſayde : *That the Iewes ſhall bee reuenged vppon Amalec when they haue the lande in poſſeſsion, which was promiſed vnto them:* And it ſerueth to ſhewe that wee ought to bee as quiet as may bee in executing GODS vengeaunce. For when men reuenge themſelues of their enemyes, wee ſee they are altogether troubled with thoſe bickeringes which they haue with them, and they are ſet all on fire by their paſſions. And that is the cauſe why reuenginges are forbidden vs, when they proceede not from GOD, but that men thruſt themſelues ſo into them without any meaſure or diſcretion. Will wee then iuſtifie any reuenge of ours? Wee muſt bee at peace within our ſelues: that is to ſaye, wee muſt not haue an eye to our owne loſſe or gayne; wee muſt not bee mooued with any exceſſiue paſſion; to bee ſhorte, wee muſt haue a ſtayed and ſetled minde; and aboue all, the zeale of God muſt abide in vs and gouerne vs. Neuerthelater, we may not vnder this colour that GOD ſayde vnto his people, *Remember the Amalekites*, for I will haue them rooted out of the worlde; wee may not (I ſay) take occaſion thereupon to reuenge our ſelues after our owne luſt and liking. And why? For God layde not the bridle on his peoples necke, to ſay, Doe what you thinke good, you ſhall haue leaue to doe what you liſte: but hee woulde haue the reuenge to proceede from himſelfe: whereuppon wee haue to note two thinges. The one is that wee muſt bee appoynted of God, or otherwyſe it ſhall not be lawfull for vs to lift vp ſo much as a finger to puniſh any offences. The other is that although wee haue this calling, and that God putteth the ſworde in our handes, yet neuertheleſſe wee muſt not bring with vs our owne affections which alwayes driue vs on forewarde and ouermaſter vs: but wee muſt behaue our ſelues ſo ſimply and plainely in this vocation of ours, that the ſpirit of GOD may gouerne both our heartes and our handes. As touching the firſt poynt, I tolde you that hee which hath no expreſſe commaundement of God to that purpoſe, may not puniſh offences. If I ſee a man offend, although I ought to ſet my ſelfe againſt him to the vtmoſt of my power, and to withſtand his wickedneſſe: yet bycauſe I am a priuate perſon, I may not attempt to puniſh the offender any way. For GOD hath charged mee with no ſuch thing: and men may not on their owne heades, take vppon them any ſuch charge. For although at ỹ firſt ſight a man would take it for a great vertue if I ſhoulde fall vpon a wicked man and apprehend him: inſomuch that if he beate or abuſe a poore man, & I come and maintaine the good cauſe, it would be taken for a good deede: yet in verye deede I paſſe my boundes, and take more vppon mee than God hath commaunded mee; and this deede of mine may not be accounted for a vertue. Yee ſee then what ſtayedneſſe the faithfull ought to keepe in their liuing, to wit, that they attempt not any thing but what God hath giuen them in charge to doe. That is to be noted for one poynt. Nowe for the ſecond, wee muſt note that vnder colour that God hath armed them with authoritie to puniſh vices, men muſt not fall into heates through their carnall affections and paſſions, to reuenge their owne quarels, but muſt doe that which they knowe GOD liketh of, and yet to no other ende or meaning than hee hath appoynted.

And herewithall let vs note, that they which are ordained and appointed of God to execute Iuſtice, ought to keepe themſelues in the high beaten way, wherein God willeth them to goe without taking vnto themſelues any new leſſon. For it is not for earthly Iudges to make lawes at their pleaſure, and to ſay euery day: I will doe thus, and I will doe otherwiſe: but they muſt haue a carefull eye to their office and duetie. Beholde it is GOD which ſpeaketh, wee muſt execute that which hee commaundeth; and therefore let men holde themſelues thereunto, and not preſume to alter his commaundement in any wiſe: for otherwiſe a man may pretende goodly excuſes, but God liketh better of the obedience which men yeelde vnto him, than of al that euer they can alleage in reaſon, although it haue neuer ſo great likelyhood. Moreouer (as I haue alreadie touched) when wee heare concerning Amalec, that GOD woulde haue him cleane rooted out: a man might reply and ſay: What if a man ſhould handle this people gently and ſpare them? Were it not a reaſonable thing? Should a man deale ſo extremelie with them? Surely when the people of Iſrael left it vndone, their ſhewing of mercie was a kynde of deſpyſing GOD; and it is certayne that their 1.Sam.15.
ſo dooyng turned to their owne confuſion, according whereunto wee ſee howe it was ſayde, You haue not executed the vengeaunce of your GOD, and therefore thoſe whome you haue Numb.33.5
ſuffered to lyue muſt bee as thornes in your ſides to pricke and to punch you; or rather to put out your eyes: you ſhall ſurelye finde it ſo bycauſe yee haue not doone as GOD commanded you. This ſerueth then to ſhewe vs that euerye man muſt followe that which is appointed him, and when hee once knoweth what his office and calling requireth, hee muſt ſimply obey God.

And moreouer let vs alwaies haue recourſe to this point, that ſeeing God ſheweth himſelfe a friend to our friends and an enemie to our enemies; we muſt put our whole truſt & confidence in him; & hiding our ſelues vnder his wings, wee Exod.23.22
muſt not doubt but that he will ſhew in the ende what care hee hath had of our welfare. For hee ſayth, I am moued with ielouſie, I am inflamed Exod.13.7.
with choler, bicauſe of ỹ iniuries which my people hath ſuffered. In deede God is not ſubiect to any paſſions, he is not moued after the maner of men: neuertheleſſe, to ſhewe howe dearelye hee accounteth of our welfare, and bycauſe wee conceiue it not excepte hee doe (as yee woulde ſay) transfigure himſelfe and vtter himſelfe vnto vs in ſuch wyſe as wee maye con-

conceyue ſome paſſions in him: that is the verie cauſe why hee ſayeth that hee is mooued with choler, and inflamed with a iealouſie to defende his people. Let vs therefore ſettle our truſt thereuppon: and although he doe not by and by lift vp his hand and thunder vppon our enemyes, let vs not thinke therefore that hee hath forgotten vs, but let vs bee patient and ſorowfull, and let vs deſire him to accompliſh his promiſes. And if wee ſo doe, hee will rayſe vp ſuch men as we thought to haue beene againſt vs; and they ſhall ſpend themſelues in our defence, and wee ſhall bee armed in ſuch wiſe agaynſt all our enemyes, that wee ſhall beare away the victorie; and as it is heere declared that hee was the defender of his people in olde time; ſo he will nowadayes doe much more for vs, bicauſe he is come nearer vnto vs in the perſon of his onely ſonne.

Nowe let vs kneele downe before the Maieſtie of our good GOD, with acknowledgement of our faultes, praying him to make vs feele them more and more, and to receyue vs vnto mercie although wee bee altogether vnworthie of it, and that in the meane tyme hee will ſo gouerne vs by his holy ſpirite, that wee may apply both our handes and our eyes, and our feete to his ſeruice, and not attempt any thing without his worde, but that whatſoeuer wee doe, wee may doe it with ſuch a zeale, as hee may bee glorifyed and our lyfe may bee in all poyntes referred vnto his will, without turning of our ſelues aſide eyther to the right hand or to the left, and that wee may learne to reſt our ſelues wholly vpon him, and not bee tempted to iniurie any man, but that whatſoeuer wickedneſſe wee ſee in the worlde, wee may alwayes walke vprightly and ſoundly, to the intent that when wee bee vniuſtly and wrongfully tormented, he may ſhewe himſelfe our defender. That it may pleaſe him to grant this grace not onely to vs but alſo to al people & Nations of the earth, bringing backe all poore ignoraunt people from the ſuperſtitions and idolatries wherein they are helde: that ſo hee may leade them to the knowledge of his trueth: And that for this purpoſe it woulde pleaſe him to raiſe vp true Miniſters of his word,&c.

On Wedneſday the xix. of Februarie, 1556.

The CXLV. Sermon which is the firſt vpon the ſixe and twentith Chapter.

WHen thou commeſt into the lande which the Lorde thy GOD giueth thee for an inheritaunce, and poſſeſſeſt it and dwelleſt therein,

2 Then ſhalt thou take of the firſt of all the fruite of the earth, which the Lorde thy GOD giueth thee, and put theſe fruites which thou bringeſt out of thy land, in a basket, and goe vnto the place which the Lorde thy God ſhall chooſe, to place his name there.

3 And thou ſhalt come vnto the Prieſt which ſhall bee in thoſe dayes, and ſhalt ſay vnto him; I acknowledge this day vnto the Lorde thy God, that I am come into the land which the Lord ſware vnto our fathers for to giue vs.

4 Then the Prieſt ſhall take the Basket out of thy hand, and ſhall ſet it downe before the Aultar of the Lord thy God.

5 And thou ſhalt ſpeake and ſay before the Lorde thy GOD: My father was a Syrian, a poore man, and hee went downe into Egypt, and ſoiourned there with a ſmall companie, and grewe there vnto a Nation great, mighty, and full of people.

6 And the Egyptians vexed vs, and troubled vs, and loaded vs with harde bondage.

VEe haue in this place the Lawe of ẏ firſt fruits which was made for this ende, ẏ the Iewes ſhold thereby acknowledge vnto G O D, that they helde the lande of Chanaan of his mere and onely gifte : as when a Lorde graunteth any Lande in Fee, hee reſerueth ſome Rent and ſome kind of ſeruice to himſelfe to teſtifye that the Lande is helde of him. So likewiſe G O D meant to haue a certayne memoriall among the Iewes, whereby they ſhoulde bee put in minde to ſerue him, for ſo much as hee nouriſhed them, and that whatſoeuer they had in poſſeſſion, they helde it of his freebeſtowed goodneſſe. In deede G O D did it not after the manner of mortall men : for thoſe which are Lordes of any land, bee they neuer ſo riche, haue neede of Rentes and reuenewes: for the mayntenaunce of their eſtate. But G O D who ſtandeth in neede of nothing, ordayned this Lawe, onely for the profite and welfare of his people. For the firſt fruites were not brought vnto the Temple as though G O D were to receiue ſome commoditie of them to himſelfe : but the bringing of them was to this intent, that the people ſhoulde bee the better ſtirred vp by that meanes, to diſcharge themſelues of their duetie towardes G O D. For the firſt fruites went not for full payment, but they ſerued onelye for a ſolemne proteſtation, thereby to ſhewe that the people was much more bound vnto G O D.

And let vs note that G O D by appoynting this Lawe, meant to giue vs to vnderſtande what great vnthankefulneſſe there is in men, when there muſt bee ſuch meanes deuiſed to quicken them vp to acknowledge and confeſſe his goodneſſe. For if there were but one droppe of reaſon and vnderſtanding in vs, needed we any exhortation to magnifie and extoll our G O D, for enioying ſo great benefites as hee hath beſtowed vpon vs? Hee ſheweth himſelfe ſo liberall towardes vs that his bleſſinges doe euen (as yee woulde ſaye) ſtoppe our eyes. And is there not great reaſon then that this bountifulneſſe of his ſhoulde waken vs, to declare that wee haue not beene forgetfull of thoſe benefites, which hee hath beſtowed vppon vs? Yes verily. But what? Wee muſt bee ſpurred forewarde in this behalfe like Aſſes : whereby wee ſee what vnthankefulneſſe and vnfaythfulneſſe is in vs : for that is the cauſe why G O D ordayned this ceremonie among the Iewes, that they ſhoulde offer euerye yeere the firſtlinges of their fruites. Before they ſhoulde preſume to eate breade of newe Corne, or taſte anye other thing, they were enioyned to offer their firſt fruites vnto the Prieſt. And through this oblation all the fruites of the earth were as it were hallowed, I meane in ſuch wiſe, that then they myght lawfully vſe them.

In deede whatſoeuer the earth bringeth foorth, is of his owne nature pure and cleane; neuertheleſſe wee our ſelues are ſo defyled, that wee corrupt whatſoeuer wee touche, vntyll G O D ſende his bleſſing vppon his creatures; that by that meanes they maye bee ſanctifyed agayne to our vſe. And that is the cauſe why Saynt Paule ſayeth, that thorough fayth and prayer, the meates which wee receyue are hallowed : not that there is any vncleaneneſſe eyther in the breade, or in any other meates themſelues, but bycauſe wee are not woorthie to bee partakers of them, vntill G O D gyue vs leaue to vſe them as to his Children. And this wee obtayne through fayth, and by calling vppon the name of G O D, bycauſe it pleaſeth him to ſhewe himſelfe our foſter-father. Yee ſee then howe the firſt fruites ſerued to make all the fruites of the yeere pure and cleane, that men myght lawefullye vſe them, and bee made partakers of them, receyuing them as it were from the hande of G O D. And whoſoeuer they bee which without makyng this confeſſion, and without yeelding this homage vnto G O D, doe glutte themſelues with meates, although they may ſaye it is of their owne goods and lyuing, yet notwithſtanding they playe the theeues with G O D: and they are not woorthie to keepe any longer thoſe thinges which hee beſtoweth on them: as hee which deceyueth his Lorde of his lande, and wyl yet receyue profite by it, is woorthie to bee thruſt out of all the lyuing which hee holdeth of him. So then wee ſee for what purpoſe this Lawe was ordayned.

1.Tim.4.5.

But before wee proceede any further, it ſhall bee good firſt to conſider of that which is contayned in this texte, and then wee will gather vp altogether, and applye it vnto our inſtruction. It is ſayde, *Thou ſhalt take euerye yeere of the newe fruites which thou receyueſt out of thy grounde, and bring them in a basket vnto the place which the Lorde thy G O D ſhall appoynt to place his name there.* In that it is ſpoken of euerie yeere, thereby we doe the better vnderſtande the thing which wee haue alreadye touched, to wit, that it is not ynoughe for menne to bee taught their duetie once for all; but G O D muſt pull them often by the eares, and put them often in minde of that which hee hath once tolde them. For that which wee ſhoulde beare awaye, wee forgette by and by : but if wee haue once learned any tryflyng toye, or I knowe not what thing elſe, which ſerueth for no other ende but to marre vs; that ſhall bee throughlye imprinted and ingrauen in our memorie. But when we haue knowen the wil of God and haue heard his promiſes, and he haue commaunded vs any thing ẏ ſlippeth ſoone out of our remembraunce; except euery man for his part doe diligently minde the thing which he hath learned. Ye ſee then what the cauſe is why God thinkes it not ynough for men to make this acknowledgment once in their life tyme, or at the yeere of Leuit.25.10 Iubile onely, bicauſe that then ẏ poſſeſſions were renued, and there was good opportunitie to vſe this acknowledging in ſuch a chaunge. GOD could haue contented himſelfe with it, were it not that men (as I tolde you) haue ſo ſhort memorie, when the caſe concerneth their duetie towardes God.

And this may profit vs, not onely to teach vs to condemne that vice, which is ouer great and too too wicked in vs: but alſo to leade vs to the quickning vp of our ſelues. For in as much as we perceiue what ſlothfulnes is in vs, and that there is nothing more eaſie than to go ſo aſtray, as we ſhall neuer thinke on God; euery of vs ought to be ſo much the more watchfull to ſay: What ſhal become of mee, if I withdraw not my ſelfe out of this way and call to minde the will of God which hee hath already declared vnto mee? Surely I ſhall by and by become a very beaſt. Wee muſt therefore take occaſion to quicken vp our ſelues ſeeing God for his part ſtirreth vs vp & waketh vs in ſuch ſorte, which thing hee doeth becauſe hee cannot otherwiſe compaſſe vs. Let this be noted for one poynt.

Nowe to the intent that the people ſhoulde heere haue nothing to pleade, nor ſeeke any ſtartingholes to ſhift themſelues from dooing their duetie: it is expreſſely ſayde, *When thou commeſt into the lande which the Lorde thy GOD giueth thee to inherite, and poſſeſſe it, and doeſt dwell therein.* For it is all one as if GOD did heere auouche his tytle; as when a fyne is ſet, and any chiefage required, it is to bee layde foorth and declared, that hee which is to receiue the fine is the chiefe Lord, and owner thereof, & that his graunting of it at the firſt was with ſuch condition. Such is the caſe heere. For God ſheweth that the Iewes enioyed that lande, eyther by right of conqueſt as gotten by their owne force & power, or by inheritaunce, or by purchaſe, or by gift of man: to bee ſhort he declareth that they can make no title vnto it by any inferiour meane, but that they muſt looke vp vnto GOD aboue, and ſay: Our Lorde hath vouchſafed to plant vs in this land which was none of ours: wee cannot ſay that it belonged vnto vs, our fathers had no right vnto it: whence then doe wee receyue this benefite but of the free gift of our GOD? It behooueth vs therefore at leaſtwyſe to acknowledge this benefite, and to confeſſe howe greatly wee are bounde and indebted vnto God.

Men ought in deede of their owne mere motion to conſider the goodneſſe of GOD when it is vttered vnto them by effect: but yet wee haue neede to bee put in minde of it, and GOD muſt bee fayne to goe to lawe for his owne right and to defende it. And the reaſon is, bycauſe wee are too too wicked, and ſeeke by all meanes as much as wee can poſſibly, to darken the grace and fauour of GOD, except hee himſelfe bee a witneſſe thereof, and ſhew that hee wil not haue it miſbeſtowed. Therefore albeit this bee ſpoken vnto the Iewes, yet notwithſtanding let vs note, that GOD meant to vpbrayde all mankinde with the wickedneſſe which wee feele to bee in vs, that is, that hee himſelfe is fayne to ſpeake and ſhewe howe much wee are beholding vnto him. For except hee did ſo, there is not one of vs which would not priuiledge himſelfe from the obedience and ſubiection which he oweth vnto him.

Nowe it is expreſſely ſayde, *That they ſhall come vnto the place which GOD will chooſe to put his name there.* This was expreſſely commaunded to the intent that the Iewes ſhoulde bee reyned the ſhorter, as in deede men muſt bee ſo vſed, or elſe there is no dealing with them. Wee ſee howe euery man draweth backe with myght and maine, as if hee woulde exempt himſelfe from the ſeruice which he oweth vnto GOD. True it is in deede, that when wee doe any thing beyng forced and conſtrayned thereunto, GOD will none of it but reiecteth and refuſeth ſuch ſeruice: neuertheleſſe hee ceaſſeth not to giue vs the ſpurre, when hee ſeeth vs on our ſide to bee laſie, and that is to bring vs vnto willing obedience to make vs to goe to it with a free courage. But wee muſt needes bee driuen forewarde at the firſt, or elſe wee will neuer bee brought to yeelde our ſelues vnto him. But wee muſt alſo note that which hath beene declared afore, to wit, that GOD by ordayning a certayne place wherein hee woulde bee worſhipped and haue ſacryfyce doone vnto him, had an eye vnto the weakeneſſe and raweneſſe of men. True it is that GOD paſſeth not for theſe outwarde thinges, neither doeth any holyneſſe conſiſt therein: but ceremonies are ordayned for our ſakes. If wee were Angels, wee ſhall neede no ſuch helpes, but bycauſe wee bee intangled with our fleſh and bee ſo lumpiſh and earthly as wee are, God is fayne to ſtoope vnto vs, that hee may lift vs vp vnto himſelfe. God therefore vnder the Lawe choſe a certaine place wherein he woulde bee worſhipped. And why? Bycauſe the people comming thither, and hauing the Sanctuarie there, had a witneſſe of the peſence of GOD, which was in the arke. Againe the Aultar for ſacrifices was there, and all the reſt, as it was ſeene in ẏ heauenly patron whereof mention is made Exod.25.40 in Exodus. In ẏ place therefore there was as it were a lookingglaſſe whereby a man might direct his eye higher. For like as when a man hath a weake & dimme ſight, he muſt vſe ſpectacles to helpe his ſight: euen ſo bicauſe men are ouergroſſe, and cannot ſee farre, it was requiſite that GOD ſhoulde giue the Iewes a kynde of ſpectacles, whereby they might bee the better inabled to ſeeke him, yea euen in ſuch manner as behoued them. And that is the cauſe why no mention is made heere but onely of the name of God. For there was daunger leaſt the people would ſtande too much on the corruptible elements. For this cauſe God ſaith not, I will dwell in this temple, as the Iewes ſometimes imagined that hee did: and therefore it was requiſite that they ſhoulde bee vpbraided with that imagination by the Prophet, ſaying: Eſa.66.1. Act.7.48. What houſe will ye builde mee? And in another place it is ſaide, that the euerliuing God dwelleth not in any temple made with mans hand. But he ſaith, *I will put my name there:* that is to ſay, I wil giue you a certaine ſigne and marke, that I am neere vnto you, if you worſhip me after a ſpirituall manner, and intangle not your ſelues in your ſuperſtitions, ne transforme mee at your owne pleaſure, as men will needes be alwayes forging of ydoles: but knowe you that I come neare vnto you, to the intent that you might come the more familiarly vnto mee: and for the leading of you thereunto, you ſhall haue my worde preached and ſacrifices offered among you. And hee ſaieth further, before the Lorde thy God, or *In the preſence of the Lorde thy God*. For why? The ceremonies muſt profite vs, or otherwiſe they ſhall bee no better vnto vs than childrens toyes. If in baptiſme wee had nothing but the water, ne knewe what the vſe and vertue thereof is; it were but a contemptible thing. But foraſmuch as we knowe that the water is a certaine warrant that wee are waſhed with the bloude of our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt, and that it liuely repreſenteth vnto vs the ſpirite of God, by the which wee are regenerated and borne a newe: wee ſee that baptiſme is a certaine warrant vnto vs, that wee are clothed with the righteouſneſſe of our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt, and that by this meanes wee are reconciled vnto GOD as beeing cleanſed and waſhed with his bloude, ſo as wee bee made newe creatures by his holy ſpirite. All this wee ſee there. In the ſupper of the Lorde, when wee 1.Cor.11.24 heare Ieſus Chriſt ſay vnto vs, This is my bodie which is deliuered for you, wee knowe that it is not for nought that a morſell of breade is giuen vnto vs: wee knowe it is not for the nouriſhment of our bodies, but to leade vs to the foode of our ſoules. Yee ſee (I ſay) in what ſort wee may feele the preſence of God, not (as I haue alreadie ſaide) that hee is encloſed in theſe corruptible elementes, and that wee muſt ſeeke him there: but that theſe viſible ſignes muſt leade vs vp on high. Wee coulde not mount ſo hye of our ſelues, were it not that God reacheth vs forth his hande. Hee reacheth vs his hande by thoſe meanes which hee hath ordained, as himſelfe knoweth moſt fitte and conuenient for our weakeneſſe and rawneſſe. Let vs therefore beare in minde that whereas God in this place commaundeth the Iewes to offer their firſt fruites in the Sanctuarie, hee did it to this ende, that men ſhoulde exerciſe themſelues in ſuch ceremonies as are conuenient for them, and that they ſhoulde knowe that they ſerue to drawe them vnto God, and that they ſtande in neede of them, euen becauſe their nature is earthly. Moreouer, by this ſaying that God will put his name there, men are warned to worſhippe God ſpiritually, and that the hauing of ceremonies ſerueth not to tye relygion and holineſſe to them: but to make them goe further, and to mount vp higher, namely to doe them to vnderſtande that therefore GOD ought to bee worſhipped in ſpirite and in trueth, as it is ſaide in the fowerth of Iohn.4.23. Iohn.

Alſo there is this ſaying; *That God will chooſe the place*: And that ſerueth to bereaue the people of all libertie of inuenting any thing at their owne luſt and pleaſure. For wee knowe howe venterouſly men preſume on ſuch libertie, in ſomuch that when God is to bee ſerued, euery man forgeth ſome priuate deuotion to himſelfe, ſaying it is better for mee to doe thus; and then muſt I doe that: And why? For to my ſeeming it is good; I weene ſo. Euerie man groundeth himſelfe vppon his owne fancie. And by this meanes the worſhipping of God is vtterly corrupted. And euen that alſo hath beene the verie cauſe of the bringing in of ſuch confuſion throughout all Chriſtendome, as we may yet perceiue to bee among the Papiſtes. What is it which they terme the ſeruice of God? Euen that which hath beene forged by men. For they cannot ſhewe one ſyllable in the holy Scripture to warrant that which they doe. And therefore God liketh not of it, but reiecteth and refuſeth it by good right. For hee will haue men to holde themſelues altogether vnto his will without ſwaruing aſide one way or other. Yea, hee will haue them to waite for the worde from his mouth, and hee telleth vs that hee vtterly miſlyketh all that euer men doe bring of their owne, and that it is not only vaine Eſa.1.12. but ſtinking and abhominable in his ſight. Neuertheleſſe it is an ordinarie matter in Poperie, to forge ſuch pelting trifles and gewgawes without number. Yea, and it is a common prouerbe among them, That whatſoeuer is doone of a good intent, is well done: yea but God ſaieth the cleane contrarie. So then let vs note that as the people is in this place warned that they haue no libertie graunted vnto them to chooſe what place euerie man liſted, as who ſhoulde ſaye, wee will ſerue God in this place, and hee will accept well of it: but that they muſt come vnto the place which hee himſelfe had appointed, and not attempt any thing vpon their owne heades, but onely followe the ſaide rule of reſorting to the place which God had marked foorth. Whereby we ſee that when the caſe concerneth the ſeruing of him, we may not attempt any thing of our ſelues, but holde vs vnto that which hee hath ordained. Nowe in deede it is true that at this day there is no ſuch peculiar place appointed wherin God wilbe worſhipped, or wherein he will haue ſacrifices made as was the temple of Ieruſalem: yet notwithſtāding, vnder one particular we haue here a generall inſtruction, that it is not lawfull for vs to doe what we thinke good to worſhip God withall, but that we muſt haue an eye vnto that which he requireth and lyketh of, and neuer paſſe beyond thoſe boundes.

Let vs come now vnto this ſaying, *That the man ſhall offer himſelfe vnto the Prieſt and ſay: Beholde, I proteſt here that my father was a Syrian, a very beggar, and came into this land lyke a poore hungerſtaruen ſoule, and was afterward driuen into Egypt, from whence at length God brought him backe againe, and gaue vnto vs this Land, wherein wee dwell now through his fauour.* Now by this manner of proteſtation, the Iewes were done to vnderſtand that they ought to come vnto GOD without compulſion, as if it were ſayd, I looke not to be thruſt foreward, I looke not to bee called vp by proceſſe, as one that minded not to doe his duetie but by force: but I proteſt, that is to ſay, I offer my ſelfe here of mine owne good will, I come aforehand. In deede God had appointed this law, &(as I haue already tolde you) it was to reproue the people of their vnthankfulneſſe: but yet for all that, his intent was that the people ſhoulde come their owne good will: and that is the thing which I haue already touched. It might ſeeme at the firſt bluſh, that GOD conſtraineth vs; but yet hee meaneth not to ſtand vpon this poynt: it is but to inure vs to an vnfayned and freehearted obedience. At the firſt wee be lyke the young Heiffers which cannot ſkill to beare the yoke. For when a man ſetteth a young Heiffer firſt to the plowe, he turneth away his head, he ſtrugleth, ſtriueth, and chafeth, and in ſtead of going forewards, he draweth backward, vntil he be tamed. In lyke caſe is it with a horſe: there is much a doe with him at the firſt before hee can be broken. God vſeth vs in the ſame manner; howbeit but to make vs tractable, that whē we be once brought to ſubiection, then we may come with a free & franke wil to yeeld ourſelues obediēt vnto him. Let vs not therfore abide ſtil in this ſlauiſh feare: but let vs know ỹ God is our father, and that we ought to take pleaſure in framing our ſelues according to his will. Let euery man therefore enforce and ſet foreward himſelf herein, that we may truely ſay, Behold I proteſt that I am bound vnto my God.

Now it is ſayd afterwardes: *My father was a Syrian.* No doubt but this is meant of Iacob: not that he was borne in Syria; for he was borne in the land of Chanaan; and his father was a ſtraunger there, and had not one foot of ground to dwell on, he had onely a burying place which he bought for his monie: and they were faine to remoue often out of one place into an other, as men draue them out. They were lyke byrdes Gen. 37.41. vpon a bough. Beſides this, Iacob was baniſhed out of his fathers houſe, and forced to get him away, becauſe his brother Eſau threatned to kill him. By reaſon whereof he abode a long time in the land of Syria: he dwelled there fourteene yeere to get him thoſe wiues which hee had, namely, Lea and Rachel, and after that he ſerued his father in Law Laban for ſheepe, becauſe he would not depart home altogether naked. Ye ſee then how Iacob was firſt a poore wanderer; and had ſoone forgotten the land of Chanaan when he was gone out of it. In deede God alwayes kept him in ſure truſt of ỹ promiſe which was made vnto him, concerning that land: and that was the cauſe why hee made that vowe of Gen. 28.20. his, when he went out of the land which was giuen vnto him: yet neuertheleſſe he was olde before he went out of Syria. Behold, being a man broken with age, and ſtriken farre in yeares, he entreth againe into the land of Chanaan, & that as a Syrian: for he is altogether new, he commeth thither as one that had neuer bin there before: and although he had then ſome wealth, yet were al his miſeries there brought new again to his minde: My father, a Syrian, was in the very way of deſtructiō. For how was he afflicted when hee was conſtrained to leaue his fathers houſe? He hath the knife held as it were to his throate, for behold, Eſau his brother ſeeketh to Gen. 30, 31. put him to death: Eſau is poſſeſſed as it were wͭ a diueliſh ſpirite to perſecute his brother Iacob. And when Iacob meant to returne into the land of Chanaan; behold, that cruel beaſt, namely Laban deuoureth him, not onely fleecing the wool from his back, but alſo oppreſſing him after a tyrannous manner. In the end he muſt yet appeaſe his brother Eſau: in which miſerie of his he is as it were halfe dead, and maketh no other account, but to be vtterly caſt away; he thinketh neuer to ſaue his familie: Gen. 32. Neuertheleſſe he diuideth it into foure bandes, that if the one might not be ſaued, the other might eſcape. Beholde to what ſhift hee is put, and how hee deuiſeth with himſelfe; well, if there bee no remedie but that thou muſt dye, well, yet ſome one of thy children maye eſcape: and although I cannot ſaue all; yet God will keepe ſome one aliue to performe his promiſe in him. Such was the comming home of Iacob. So then it is not ſayd without cauſe in this place that hee was at the poynt to be deſtroyed: yet did God ſuccor him as it is ſayd here. Neuerthelater, Iacob is yet farther conſtrained to fly into Egypt by reaſon of famine, wherewith he is ſo pinched, ỹ he goeth to ſeeke foode in a ſtrange countrie, and for a time forſaketh the inheritance which was promiſed him. Afterward hee remaineth there in cruel bondage, and his ofſpring is after a ſorte drowned in Egypt. They were not onely put to great taxes and tallages, but alſo oppreſſed as bondſlaues: yea and in the end commaundement was giuen that all their male children ſhould be deſtroyed, ſo as that people might neuer be ſpoken of any more. Thus ye ſee in what horrible bondage they were, and a man would thinke that the children of Abraham dwelt in Egypt as in a graue, ſo as all was now paſt hope of recouery. But it is ſayd, wee cryed vnto the God of our Fathers and he heard vs, and hath giuen vs this land in poſſeſſion. And therefore I proteſt this day that I held it of him. Here we ſee firſt of all, how men are led to acknowledge the ſtate and condition wherein they were, when God firſt tooke pitie on them. For aſſoone as we are once at our eaſe, we beare our ſelues in hand that it is a fit occaſion for vs to runne aſtray: and thereupon followeth pride, & this pride is accõpanied with yͤ contempt of God. There is therfore no other way to humble vs,& to make vs to feele the goodnes of God,than to know yͤ before he reached vs his hand and helped vs, we were the moſt wretched & miſerable of all creatures. And this is a very neceſſary poynt to be noted. For ye ſhall ſee men ſo blinde, or at leaſtwiſe ſo bleare eyed, that they will thinke we are of I wote not what abilitie, vntill our Lord bring vs vnto this poynt of knowing and acknowledging our ſelues to be the children of Adam, and conſequently accurſed, and that from our mothers wombe. Wee bring nothing with vs but ſinne and deſtruction. If this were not declared vnto vs in the holy ſcripture; how wonderfully would men ſtand in their owne conceites? For euen yet for all this they cannot ſtay themſelues from boaſting,(ſuch beaſtes are they) neither vnderſtand they how it is a certeine kinde of drunkenneſſe that turneth them ſo away to vaunt thẽſelues after that faſhion,and to beare themſelues ſo in haud, that they haue this and that[which they haue not.] Thus yee ſee how men preſume maruailouſly of themſelues vntill their prating bee daunted: but when God once thundreth vpon all mankinde, and ſheweth that we are all heires of death, that we are the bondſlaues of Satan, that there is nothing in vs but curſedneſſe, that all our wiſedome is ſtarke fooliſhneſſe,yͤ we cannot bring any thing vnto him which he ſhall not miſlyke and condemne. Whẽ we ſee that the holy ſcripture painteth vs forth after that maner,ſo as there remaineth nothing to vs but vtter ſhame:then wee beginne to hang downe yͤ heads. But vnleſſe God vſed this maner of dealing with vs, it were vnpoſſible to win vs, but we would alwayes lift vp our hornes. Let vs therefore beare this leſſon well in minde, as it is taught vs here, which is, to bethinke vs of our firſt originall, whence we are come, whence wee are ſprong, what we were when God firſt tooke pitie of vs, and what we ſhoulde yet haue bin if hee had not preuented vs with his goodneſſe. After that we haue once knowen this in generall, let euery man particularlie alſo haue an eye vnto himſelf. He which thinketh that he hath ſomwhat to glorie in as touching the world (as there are many which will ſay, I am borne of ſuch a kinred,there is ſuch a thing in me, and another will glory in his wiſedome, and another in his vertue,and another in his riches,an other in his byrth)let him I ſay looke vpon himſelf and ſay, yea:but for all this, how many ſhamefull markes hath God imprinted in me, as well as in all others? And firſt of all, that how highly ſoeuer a man be exalted, yet aſſoone as God withdraweth his ſtrength,behold he is no better thã a wretched carrion: and again, what is the ſoule but a bottomleſſe gulfe of al wretchednes? And if any man haue a good vnderſtãding: it is without doubt the eſpecial gift of God. And moreouer they which are the moſt excellent of al others and beſt accounted of in the world, haue yet many ſpots and ſtaines in them, ſo as they haue wherefore daily to lament. For although a man haue ſomething in him which is worthie to be accounted of, yet ſhall hee finde ſo many wantes and defaultes in himſelfe,as ſhall make him to caſt downe his head. So thẽ let vs learne, not onely to haue an eye to that wretchedneſſe which is in vs,inaſmuch as we are the ſonnes of Adam; but alſo let euery man throughlie examine the faults,vices and infirmities which are in him, and therby learne to ſtoope, and enforce ourſelues to yeeld vnto God the glorie which belongeth vnto him, reſeruing nothing at all vnto our ſelues as in deed we haue nothing good of our owne. To be ſhort,let euerie man exerciſe himſelf in the vewing of his owne miſeries and let vs not doe as ſome fooles doe, who take a glaſſe to behold their own beautie in: but let vs take it rather to ſee what blemiſhes wee haue. And that is the very thing whereat God alſo amed,when he meant to haue the Iewes euẽ of purpoſe put in minde, that their father was a poore begger, & that he was as a creature halfe dead. For he was ſo deſpiſed a perſon in the eye of the world, that they had no cauſe to bee prowde of him, or to preſume to attribute any thing vnto themſelues in that behalfe.

Againe not only he ſpeaketh of their father Iacob: but they alſo ſay: *Our kindred went downe into Egypt, and there were we trampled vnder feete aboue meaſure:* which thing ſerued well to beate downe the pride of the Iewes,to the intent they ſhould no more attribute any worthineſſe to themſelues, ſeeing they were ſo euill intreated in Egypt: Alſo it ſerued well to make them forget whatſoeuer moued them to pride, when they were there as bondſlaues,and were ſo heauy burdened,as it would pitie a man to beholde: yea, and yͤ in the end they were condemned to haue their remembraunce raſed from out of the earth. When they were ſo far oppreſſed,it was an occaſion to make thẽ to forget all their hautines and ambition, and to confeſſe that they helde their lyfe of God. Now in the end it is ſayd, *We called vpon the GOD of our fathers, and hee hearde vs, and hath placed vs in this lande which wee doe nowe poſſeſſe.* True it is in deed that God tarried not vntill he was called vpon,for he had already made a promiſe vnto Abraham, that at the end of foure hundred yeres, hee would take pitie of his ſeede when it had bin ſo oppreſſed: ſo that God would haue the Iewes to know that they had no other deliuerance,than that which had beene promiſed ſo long before. For had not that bin: they might haue borne themſelues in hand that their deliuerance from that bondage had happened by mere chaunce. But when they were oppreſſed to the vttermoſt, thẽ it made them to bethinke thẽſelues thus: What? Our fathers haue promiſed vs that God in the end will drawe vs out of this vnknowen countrie, and ſtraunge bondage wherein wee are. This was then a preparatiue to make the Iewes to feele that fauour and grace which was promiſed vnto them: For nowe the fit time was come to bring it to paſſe.

Now whereas here is ſpeaking *of the GOD of the*

the fathers; it is to bee referred to the promiſes, leaſt men might thinke themſelues excuſed whẽ they call vpon ſuch a G O D as hath bin taught them, as the Papiſts nowadayes do ground thẽſelues vpõ their fathers: O (ſay they) I haue bin ſo brought vp, I haue bin ſo taught from a child, mine anceſtors haue liued after this ſort. They beare themſelues in hand that this is a ſufficient warrant, & ſuch a one as may not be gainſayd, to make good whatſoeuer they doe: but in deede it is ſtarke follie, becauſe it is not for men to forge Gods vnto themſelues at their owne pleaſure: for what elſe are they than very Idols? But when as here is ſpeaking of the God of the fathers, it is becauſe of yͤ promiſe that was made vnto Abraham, Iſaac, and Iacob. So then if we will call vpon the liuing God, let vs returne vnto this point and ſay: It is true in deed that there liued many men in the world before Abraham, Iſaac, and Iacob: but they neither ought nor deſerue to be accounted for fathers. For why? They withdrewe themſelues from God, of Epheſ.3.15. whome commeth all fatherhoode, and all kinred as ſayth ſaint Paul. We muſt therefore followe the Patriarkes and bee their children; and ſecondly let the Apoſtles bee our fathers, and let vs followe them; and if wee frame our ſelues after their example, let vs not doubt but that wee ſhall keepe the ſtraite way vnto God, and that hee alſo will take vs vnto himſelfe. Ye ſee then in what ſenſe it is here ſayd, that the Iewes called vppon the God of their fathers. And here wee are warned in fewe wordes, to gather together all the proofes and argumentes that can bee to aſſure vs the better, that all the good thinges which wee haue, doe come vnto vs from G O D. For why? Wee are not ſo ſharpe ſighted as it were needfull; it is ſoone dazeled (as I haue tolde you afore.) Yea, rather we bee as blinde men: wee muſt bee quickened vp to conſider Gods benefites towardes vs, or elſe wee ſhall neuer attaine thereunto. And therefore let vs take as much paynes as wee can to conſider it and ſay, Go to, God ſheweth mee here, how it is he that worketh, and he giueth me a token thereof. I muſt therefore apply it vnto mine inſtruction: & not ſay, this happened vnto mee by chaunce: I haue had good fortune: but I know that my God hath holpen me, that it is through his goodneſſe that I proſper, that it was his hand which hath ſuccoured mee in ſuch an extremitie. Foraſmuch then as wee are ſo rawe and weake of our ſelues, that wee conſider not the benefites of G O D, except wee haue many helpes to guide vs thereunto: let vs take all the proofes that wee can get, to aſſure our ſelues the more throughly of them. And to this ende is it that the Iewes ſay, *We haue called vppon the God of our fathers*: whereby firſt they put themſelues in minde of the promiſe, and ſecondly they ſee that God redeemed them by vertue of the ſame promiſe, whereby hee freely bound himſelfe vnto Abraham, Iſaack, and Iacob. And hereupon they might thus conclude: We are not come out of Egypt by the hand of man: that is to ſay, wee cannot attribute it either vnto our ſelues or to any creature liuing: but God muſt bee acknowledged for the onely author of our redemption and ſaluation. Now in effect wee ſee here, that whereas God deliuered vnto the Iewes ſuch a ſette forme of acknowledging his benefites, it was to conuict them, that in poſſeſſing of the land of Chanaan, they could not ſay: We haue conquered it by yͤ power of our owne arme, we haue gottẽ it by our owne labour, we haue bought it with our mony, or wee haue ſome other title vnto it in reſpect of men: No, it was nothing ſo: but we hold it of our God; we poſſeſſe it vnder his hand, the proprietie thereof is alwayes his. Yee ſee then whereunto this confeſſion whereof mention is made here did ſerue. In deede all cannot bee handled at this time. Let vs therefore learne this one ſhort leſſon, that in this example God hath put vs in minde to acknowledge how much wee bee bound and beholden vnto him for all the benefits which he hath beſtowed vppon vs. Wherefore conſidering our owne ſloweneſſe in this behalfe, let euery of vs quicken vp and pricke foreward himſelfe to confeſſe and acknowledge in deede, that wee holde all of the hand of God: and let vs ſhewe in deede, that we come to make ſuch acknowledgement, not as forced thereunto, but of our owne voluntarie and free good will; and that we be not vnthankfull for the good which hee doth vs in this worlde: but doe attribute all vnto his freebeſtowed goodneſſe, wayting for the poſſeſſion of that heauenly life whereunto he calleth vs.

Now let vs kneele downe before the Maieſtie of our good God with acknowledgement of our faults, praying him to touch vs with ſuch a feeling of them, as our whole ſeeking may bee to rid our ſelues of all our corruption from day to day, vntill wee bee renewed with his righteouſneſſe: and that wee may grow and increaſe more and more therein, in ſuch ſorte as wee may come in the ende into his heauenly glory, and bee wholy faſhioned lyke to the glorious immortalitie, which hee hath already ſhewed vs in our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt. And ſo let vs all ſay: Almighty God heauenly father, &c.

On Munday the xxiiij. of Februarie. 1556.

The CXLVI. Sermon, which is the ſecond vpon the ſixe & twentith Chapter.

5. 6 And thou ſhalt ſpeake and ſay.&c.

7 Then wee cried vnto the Lord God of our Fathers, and the Lord heard our voyce, and looked vpon our affliction, our labour and our oppreſſion.

8 And the Lord brought vs out of Egypt with a mightie hand, and a ſtretched out arme, with great terror, and with ſignes and wonders.

9 And he hath brought vs into this place, and giuen vs this land, euen a land that floweth with milke and honie:

10 And nowe loe I haue brought the firſt fruites of the land, which thou O Lord haſt giuen me, and thou ſhalt ſet it before the Lord thy God, and thou ſhalt bow thy ſelfe before the Lord thy God.

11 And thou ſhalt reioyce in all the good things, which the Lord thy God hath giuen vnto thee, and to thy houſhould, both thou and the Leuite, and the ſtraunger that is among you.

12 When thou haſt made an end of tithing all the tithes of thyne encreaſe in the third yere which is the yere of tything, and haſt giuen it to the Leuite, to the ſtraunger, to the fatherleſſe, and to the widowe, that they may eate in thy gates and be ſufficed.

WE haue declared afore, whereunto the confeſſion which the Iewes made in offring of their firſt fruites, did tend: namely that on yͤ one ſide they ſhould therby acknowledge the wretchedneſſe and miſerie from which God had deliuered and ſet them free: and againe on the other ſide, that they ſhould ſo much the more prayſe and magnifie the grace and fauour which God had beſtowed on thē, for we ſee how men forget themſelues in proſperitie: pride blindeth them, or at leaſtwiſe maketh them drunken, ſo as they thinke no longer eyther on themſelues, what they were, or on God. And therfore it is more than needefull for vs to haue an eye vnto our owne eſtate, to thinke how miſerable it were if God had not taken pitie of vs. For wee haue skill enough to proteſt and ſay, that God hath ſhewed vs fauor: neuertheleſſe, our doing thereof is but frō the teeth outward vntil it be proued to our faces, that if GOD had not vſed mercie towardes vs, we ſhould haue bin in a curſed caſe, we ſhould haue bin vndone, there had bin no way to ſaue vs. If we be not touched with a liuely feeling of theſe thinges, all the proteſtations which we make of the benefites of God, will be nothing but fainedneſſe and hypocriſie. For we ſee commonly that men will readily ſay: It is God that hath done this for me, it is his worke; but yet for all that this goeth no farther than our mouth. Now as touching the wordes themſelues, I will note you ſomething by the way. Where as we reade, *My father a man of Syria was loſt or vndone*, others reade, The Syrian woulde haue deſtroyed my father, referring it vnto Laban. But (as I tolde you before) Iacob is called a Syrian, becauſe he was baniſhed a long time out of the land of Chanaan, and was ſo ſetled there, as if it ſhould haue bin his graue, I meane in the countrie of Syria. But yet the word ſignifyeth rather to be deſtroyed, and vndone, than to intend or to minde to deſtroy an other. It is moſt agreeing then with the ſenſe of the wordes, that the Iewes ſhoulde in this place proteſt that their father Iacob was driuen out of his owne houſe, and accounted as a Syrian, and that when he came vnto the Lande which God had giuen him, it was as if hee had newlie come thither, and as if he had neuer entred into it before. This betokeneth therefore a more full expreſſing of that which I tolde you of before; to wit, that men haue neede to be warned, that whatſoeuer they haue, they receiue it from the freebeſtowed goodneſſe of God, and that he ſaued them, yea euen when they were in a moſt miſerable caſe.

Now as touching the ſecond point, we ſee, how Moſes hath here declared their comming out of Egypt, in ſuch maner, as the Iewes muſt needes bee awakened to conſider how mightilie God had wrought for them. For hee ſayth not ſimply that God deliuered them out of the land of Egypt, but hauing made a long rehearſall how the Egyptians had ſet their feete on the throate of this poore people, how they had afflicted and moleſted them, how they had exerciſed grieuous and cruel tyrannie vppon them, it is ſayd: *Wee called on the GOD of our fathers, and hee hearde our voyce*, hee ſawe our affliction and miſerie and hee deliuered vs out of it. And how? *By ſtrong hand and ſtretched out arme.* Neither yet is this all, *with terriblenes, with ſignes, with wonders.* Loe in what ſort our God ſuccoured vs. We ſee then how Moſes is not content to ſay in one ſimple worde, that GOD was the Redeemer of that people; but hee hath largely ſhewed, that the Iewes cannot attribute their deliueraunce, neither to fortune, nor to their owne policie, nor to any other meanes in the whole worlde: but they were forced to knowe the wonderfull power of God, who ſo ſtretched forth his arme, as if hee had come after a viſible maner to redeeme his people. Now then if wee will yeelde vnto GOD the honour which hee deſerueth, let vs learne to conſider of his power, not as it were at a glance or ſleightly: but as diligent markers of the things which he ſheweth vs, to the intent wee may bee the more throughly certified, that when it pleaſed him to ſhewe mercie on vs, hee meant not to leaue vs in doubt whether it were hee which wrought our deliueraunce or no: but that hee hath ſo playnely certifyed vs thereof, that the thing cannot bee but knowen and apparant vnto vs. Thus yee ſee what wee haue to beare in minde concerning this place.

And let vs note by the way, that albeit God heard the cryes of his people, yet he ſhewed it not by his dooinges at the firſt. Wee ſee how the people came to extreme miſeries, ere they were ſuccoured. And that is the cauſe why it is expreſly ſayd in Exodus, I haue ſeene, I haue ſeene the affliction of my people. Exod.3.7. God ſayth not ſimply that he hath ſeene their affliction, but hee repeateth it agayne, as if hee ſhould ſay, Becauſe I made no countenaunce of helping you aſſoone as you cryed, you thought that I was deafe at your requeſtes, or that I thought no longer vpon your miſeries: but I tell you, that they were alwayes before mine eyes, and yet I haue delayed, and deferred to helpe you vntill now: howbeit, that was not becauſe I had no care of you whom I had adopted for my children. So then let vs note well, that when we are of opinion that wee profit nothing by praying vnto God, wee muſt continue and not bee greeued as if our prayers were vaine and vnprofitable. For God conſidereth of vs although we perceiue it not, and in the ende he helpeth vs. But we are warned here to be patient, & not to be greeued at the matter, though God ſatisfie not our deſires at the firſt. Loe what we haue to gather cōcerning theſe words, where the Iewes expreſly confeſſe, *That GOD hearde their voyce*, although hee graunted not their requeſtes at the firſt.

Nowe remaineth that wee ſpeake of the ſignes and wonders. But becauſe this hath bin handled alreadie, it were needeleſſe to ſtand longer vpon it: it ſufficeth to be put in minde ỹ the deliuerance which GOD brought at that time was ſuch, as a man might perfectly perceiue that it was his hand which wrought it, and that it came not through any creature. GOD coulde well ynough haue ſubdewed Pharaoh and his ſubiects without ſhewing any miracle. But he would haue him ſtubborne. And why? It is ſaid, I haue raiſed him vp for this end, that my name might bee the better known in the world. Pharao therefore reſiſted GOD to the vttermoſt of his power; but this was to the greater ſetting forth of the redemption, which he wrought. So then it is not without cauſe that mention is here made of terriblenes, of ſignes and of wonders, and how GOD aſtoniſhed men, to the intent that feeling his power, they might ſubmit themſelues wholly vnto him.

But the concluſion ought to ſuffice vs where it is ſayd, *I come therefore to offer the firſt fruites of the increaſe of my lande to the LORDE my GOD.* The Iewes in this place declare, that when they yeelded thankes vnto GOD, it was not by way of any outwarde ceremonie, but for that they felte it in their heart that they were bound vnto him, and that they owed all vnto him. Exod.7.3. Doe we then deſire to haue God to accept of the praiſes which wee yeelde vnto him? We muſt firſt confeſſe the benefits which wee haue receiued of him, and acknowledge them with our mouth, wee muſt doe it from our heart, not for faſhion ſake as the hypocrites doe which ſpeake readily of his prayſes, but not with the heart nor with any affection. On the contrary ſide wee ſee how God eſpecially requireth that we ſhould be throughly perſwaded that it is hee which hath begunne to doe vs good, and that hee alſo will continue and goe on in ſo dooing vnto the ende. And that euery of vs ſhoulde acknowledge the ſame, not onely ſecretly, but alſo openly before men, ſo as wee may edify our neighbours thereby, and that God may bee glorifyed of all men with one common accord. I graunt wee haue not nowadayes the ceremonie any longer as it was vnder the Lawe: but yet wee muſt come vnto that poynt which I tolde you of before; to wit, that the ſubſtaunce and trueth of the ceremonie remaineth vnto vs at this day: ſo as if wee beſtowe any almes, or apply the benefites of GOD to ſuch vſes as hee commaundeth, wee offer vnto him of our firſt fruites. And ſo let vs note well that they which giue any thing of their goods which they poſſeſſe, muſt not bee pinching and nigardly as if they gaue any thing of their owne. For wee muſt alwayes beare in minde to ſay, I offer vnto my GOD. And whereof? Euen of that which I haue receiued at his hand. In deede I am the owner of it; but yet GOD hath

hath reſerued ſome chiefeage for himſelfe,ſo as I may not ryotouſlie waſt that which he hath giuen me, but I muſt learne to vſe it ſoberly, and to releeue my neighbours which are in neceſſitie. When we haue this conſideration with vs: then ſhall we offer ſacrifices of ſweete ſent, and ſuch as ſhalbe acceptable vnto God (as ſaint Rom.12.1. Paul termeth them):for without this conſideration we may wel rid our ſelues of al our goods, and yet doe nothing ẏ ſhalbe aught worth. For why?We want the principall thing, which is to feele how much we are bound vnto GOD, and that our offering vnto him ſome part of that which he hath giuen vs, be to ſhew that it is he of whom we hold all that we haue. Now hereby we ſee,ẏ they which haue no pitie on the poore, but hold faſt and locke vp things without any kindneſſe;are not only cruell towards men, but alſo vnthankfull towards God. For why? Were we throughly perſwaded vpon knowledge ẏ God ſheweth himſelf a liberal father towards vs,certainly we would not ſtick to ſpend ẏ goods which he hath cōmitted vnto vs, according to his wil, but euery of vs would diſcharge his dutie in that behalfe: and whereas we do the contrarie,it is a ſigne that wee would deceiue God and not mortal creatures.

And it is by and by added: *Thou ſhalt leaue thine offring before the Lorde thy God, and afterward thou ſhalt worſhippe before the Lord thy God.* Theſe two things do ſhew that we muſt not be the colder in doing our dutie, though there be no man to beare witnes thereof. And ẏ is a poynt which we ought to marke wel. For we are alwayes led with vaineglorie;and we cannot practiſe this doctrine of our Lord Ieſus Chriſt where he ſaith, Matt.6.3. When thou giueſt thine almes, let not thy left hand know what thy right hand doth. We would alwayes haue ſome or other to ſee vs and to praiſe vs. And although we cauſe not a trumpet to be ſounded: yet are we deſirous that men ſhoulde knowe what we doe. And what is the cauſe thereof,but that we haue not our eye ſo faſtened on God as were requiſite? Therfore this fooliſh vainglorie muſt needs beare rule in vs,by meanes whereof we ſeeke nothing but to pleaſe the world. And therefore wee may not looke that God ſhould acknowledge that which we do for his ſeruice: for wee are turned aſide from him. Let vs therefore learne to practiſe the doctrine which is ſet downe here,which is to leaue our offrings in the preſence of our God:and to hold our ſelues contented that God auoweth himſelfe to receiue that which we giue ẏ poore, and that which we beſtowe according vnto his will, euen as though he were come downe, and receiued our gifts from our hands into his owne hand. And ſeeing it is ſo, let vs not feare ẏ any thing is loſt, though ẏ worlde perceiue not what we do, and that we ſeeme to haue done nothing at all. Let it ſuffice vs as is ſhewed vs heere by this ſaying, that our Lorde GOD is come before, and accepteth of that which we haue doone, to obey him. Let this bee noted for one poynt.

Now the other poynt is, that the Iewes were commaunded *To worſhippe before the Lorde God.* Whereby we may ſee, that men muſt not make themſelues beleeue, that they haue deſerued any thing when they haue accompliſhed that which God appointeth them to doe, as we are alwayes readie to ſwell with pride, to vaunt of our owne power, as if GOD were much beholding vnto vs. Let vs lay aſide all ſuch diueliſh imaginations; and when we haue endeuored and taken paynes to doe that which God commaundeth vs; let vs worſhip before him in token that wee are much more bounde vnto him: as it is ſayd in the ſeuenteenth Chapter of Saint Luke, When you haue done all things, Luke.17.10. yet you muſt confeſſe that you are vnprofitable ſeruauntes. And why? For let vs come to account: If God would require his due of vs, is there any of vs which coulde performe the hundreth parte thereof? Wee deceiue him of that which wee haue, if we giue him but a peece of it whereas hee demaundeth the whole. Nay, though wee gaue him the whole, yet were wee not diſcharged; for wee cannot doe it with ſuch minde as were requiſite: and therefore wee runne alwayes into arrearages with GOD, and hee can owe vs nothing. Wherefore let vs learne to worſhip before him, that is to ſay, to ſhrink downe our heades; and although wee haue laboured to the vtmoſt to offer him our ſacrifices, and to preſent vnto him our owne perſons, and to giue vnto him of our ſubſtaunce, and to doe all that we can poſſibly doe: when wee haue endeuoured to dedicate all vnto him; yet let vs ſay, Alas Lorde: In deede we would gladly doe our duetie, but wee can neuer doe it perfectly; wee are farre wide from it; may it pleaſe thee therefore to accept at our hands that which is vnperfect, and to beare with vs in our weakeneſſe; and although there be many ſtaynes and blottes in the ſeruice which wee yeeld vnto thee, yet let thē not hinder thee from receauing and accepting of it at our hands. Behold with what modeſtie men ought to preſent themſelues vnto God when they make their offeringes vnto him.

Now let vs note by the way, *that the preſence of God* is here put for the ſanctuarie, or for the aultar both of ſacrifices and of incenſe, and for the Arke of the couenant: not that God was therein encloſed, but becauſe hee meant to drawe his people vnto him by that meanes. The ſhadowes of the Lawe then ſerued to guide the Iewes vnto God, becauſe wee are not able to mount vp into heauē except God reach vs forth his hand. To that vſe doe ceremonies ſerue vs. In deede we haue not nowadayes any longer the Arke of the couenant, nor any thing of all the reſt: but we may throughly aſſure our ſelues of ẏ preſence of God, becauſe he hath openly ſhewed himſelfe vnto vs in ẏ perſon of his only ſon, and becauſe we haue now this warrant giuē vnto vs, that wheresoeuer two or three be gathered together in the name of our Lord Ieſus Chriſt, hee Matt.18.20. ſitteth in the middeſt of them. Wherefore let vs not doubt of the preſence of our GOD, when wee come to make confeſſion of our faith vnto him: and eſpecially ſeeing that our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt dwelleth in vs, wee haue well wherewith to content vs, foraſmuch vs God ſheweth himſelfe there, not in figure, but in full force. Againe wee haue the two helpes which are moſt conuenient for vs, as Baptiſme, and the ſupper of the Lorde: where G O D declareth that hee commeth neare vnto vs, and that we are cloathed with our Lord Ieſus Chriſt, that wee are waſhed with his bloud, that wee are renewed with his holy ſpirite, that we liue in him and of his very ſubſtaunce, that wee are graffed into his body. Seeing wee haue ſuch ſure warrantes, wee neede not doubt any longer of the preſence of G O D. Yet notwithſtanding wee muſt alwayes mount vp higher: wee muſt not abuſe thoſe helpes which God hath giuen vs, as wee ſee men doe in Poperie: the wretched people there, are become as brute as beaſtes, and are of opinion that G O D is to be ſought no farther, than in the viſible and outward thinges. But contrarywiſe wee know that wee muſt ſeeke G O D after a ſpirituall maner. And therefore let the Sacramentes guide vs higher, and rayſe vp our faith aboue the world. And then let vs not doubt but that our G O D is neare enough vnto vs, ſo as wee may be bold to put our ſelues and all that euer we bring vnto him, into his handes. This is it in effect which wee haue to beare in minde.

Now as touching that which followeth, *of reioycing in the preſence of the Lorde*; it ſerueth to ſhewe vs that all the reioycings of men are accurſed, except they haue an eye vnto God, to yeeld him thankes for them. This hath bin touched afore: but yet is it not without cauſe that Moſes repeateth it here againe. Wee ſee how men are wont to make themſelues merrie, that is without any thinking vppon G O D. If we haue well dyned, when wee bee once full, wee waxe frolike. But what? Wee thinke not that it is G O D that hath fedde vs. If a man be encreaſed in wealth by his ſparing; he reioyceth, but God is ſtill ſet aſide. Nay which more is, wee thinke that wee cannot bee merrie, except wee turne tayle vnto God, and get vs away from him. It is not therefore without cauſe, that it is ſo often tolde vs in the lawe, that we muſt reioyce in the preſence of our G O D: that is, that as often as wee haue any occaſion of mirth, our mindes muſt be called backe vnto God, and we muſt giue him thankes for all: and this being done, we muſt ſo vſe his benefites as they carrie vs not away, and as wee be not blinded by the things of this world, as the wretched vnbeleeuing ſorte are. Loe what wee are to beare in minde as touching this worlde. And it ſerueth to vpbraid the vnthankfulneſſe of them which glut and cramme themſelues with the benefites that God ſendeth thē, without giuing him any thankes for them, which vice wee ſee is ouer rife. In this place then, God blameth the vnthankfulnes of men, and ſayth, What do you? For you gather the fruites of the earth: and who hath giuen them vnto you, but I? And yet for all that, when euery of you hath locked vp his corne in his garner, you bring it and other fruits alſo to your tables, and in the meane time I am no body with you: you thinke you may ſhut me out of your doores. Nay, but reioyce yee in my preſence: or elſe, all that euer you doe ſhall be imputed vnto you for theft. For why? We knowe that God feedeth vs with condition, that his goodneſſe ſhould bee acknowledged among vs. Therefore when we burie the remembraunce thereof, wee ſteale from him all that we haue, and wee are not worthie to eate one morſel of bread. So much the more heedefullie therfore ought we to marke theſe wordes, where it is ſayd, *Reioyce in the preſence of thy God.*

Now by and by it is added, *with the Leuites, with the widowes, the fatherleſſe, and the ſtraungers.* Wherein wee are farther warned, that they which giue thankes vnto GOD, and haue their handes ſhut vp from releeuing the neede of their neighbours, are but counterfeites and hypocrites: as wee ſee many of this ſorte, which bee ready to ſay, O, prayſed bee God, and vſe many other benedicites, when they haue ſcraped together on this and that ſide, and haue made vp an heape of riches. Oh ſay they, God hath bleſſed mee, hee hath proſpered mee: but as for giuing of almes, and kinde dealing, they can no skil of them, they be ſtraunge newes to them. Such folke doe but mocke G O D, and anger him as often as they prayſe him with their mouth. And why? For to reioyce in the preſence of our God, and to haue the company which hee hath appointed for vs, are thinges vnſeparable. Firſt of all hee commendeth vnto vs here ſuch as were occupyed in his ſeruice, and had the charge to teach the people. Hee ſayth therefore: *Thou ſhalt reioyce with the Leuites.* And ſecondly vnder the name *of ſtraungers, of widowes, and of fatherleſſe*, hee commendeth vnto our care, all ſuch as are in neceſſitie, and haue need to be helped. Therefore when they reioice with vs and take their courſe; then will G O D bleſſe our ioye; and it ſhall bee acceptable vnto him. But without that, all that euer wee doe ſhall bee diſlyked of him, it ſhall be filthie and vncleane in his ſight. And here is expreſſe mention of the houſholde, to the intent that euery man ſhoulde bee exhorted to deale gently with thoſe that are of his houſhold. For yee ſhall ſee ſome which coulde finde in their heartes to eate and drinke till they burſt, and it greeueth them that others ſhoulde haue one morſell, ſo faine would they that all were thruſt into their owne paunches. So they themſelues fare well, they care not though their meinie faſt and ſtarue for hunger. Yee ſhall ſee ſuch greedineſſe, or rather crueltie in ſome, that they coulde finde in their heartes to ſucke the very bloud of thoſe that ſerue them, and in the meane time take no care to ſuſteyne them. For this cauſe our Lorde ſayth that wee cannot reioyce in his preſence, that is to ſay, in ſuch wiſe as hee may lyke of our myrth, except wee reioyce with all our houſhold, and that wee ſhewe our ſelues ſo kindhearted and pitifull, as wee may all with one cõmon accord ſing prayſes vnto God. Ye ſee then how our mirth and melodie may agree very well together. Alſo we are exhorted to inſtruct them which are cõmitted to our charge to bleſſe the name of God: that whether we eate, or whether we drinke, God may be prayſed both of great and ſmall. This is the meaning of the doctrine which is conteyned here.

Now it followeth *That when the people haue payd their Tythes, in the third yeere, which is the yeere of tything, euery man ſhall bring his tythes vnto the Leuites, for the poore, for the widowes, for the fatherleſſe, & for the ſtrangers.* For the vnderſtanding of this place, we muſt note, that beſides the ordinarie Tythes which ſerued to ſuſtayne the tribe of Leui, and the Prieſtes, which ſerued in the temple; there was the tything of Tythes as they called it: & this was made from three yere to three yere, excepting euer the ſeuenth yere whẽ their landes were not tilled: for it was expedient that the reſt or Sabboth ſhould be kept in that behalf alſo. They fallowed not their ground from yere to yere or euerie eche other yere as wee doe in this countrie: for the fruitefulneſſe of that land might well away to yeeld fruite ſixe yeres together. So then, twiſe in ſixe yeres they receiued ẏ ſecond ſort of Tythes. And theſe are they whereof Moſes maketh mention in this place, which ſerued to ſuſteine the poore of the countrie: to the intent that not onely the Leuites might receiue the offringes, but that the fruite of them might reach farther, and that none in all Iſrael might want or neede. As touching the Tythes which were payd vnto the tribe of Leui, I haue tolde you alreadie, that there was a double reaſon thereof. Firſt foraſmuch as God reſerued the Leuites for his own ſeruice; there was great reaſon why they ſhould be ſuſteyned. Deut.14.22. They which ſerue at the aultar ought to liue of ẏ aultar. 1.Cor.19.13 That is ẏ cauſe alſo why they had a certain portion in all the offeringes, ſaue in the whole burnt offeringes. But in the ordinarie ſacrifices they receiue their part of them. Beſides this, wee ought to note alſo, that becauſe they were the children of Abraham, they ought to haue a part in ẏ land which was promiſed vnto him, for they were heires aſwell as the other tribes of Iuda, Beniamin, Iſſachar, Dan, and all the reſt. Leui (I ſay) was an heire of Abraham and of Iacob aſwel as the other. And why is he bereaued of his inheritaunce, but becauſe God recompenceth him after an other maner? Ye ſee then how they which Numb.35.3. come from Leui, haue no parte of the land, they haue onely their medowes in the ſuburbes of their cities to ſuſtaine their cattaile, but yet doth he aſſigne them the Tythes of the whole countrie to finde them withall, and he will not haue them ſo bereft of their heritage: but that men ſhould haue a regarde to maintaine them. And why? Becauſe he occupyeth them in his ſeruice: they muſt teach the people, they muſt offer the ſacrifices, they muſt doe that which was appointed in the temple: For this cauſe God will haue men to haue a care to ſuſtaine them. And herewithall, when they made the ſecond tything, thereby they were done to vnderſtand, ẏ ſomewhat was to be taken as it were from their portion, to giue vnto the poore: whereby they were put in minde that they ought not to glut themſelues with the offeringes no nor yet to enrich themſelues with them. And why? For they were the goods of the poore. Yee ſee then whereunto God had an eye, when he appointed the ſecond tything which was made euery third yere. It behoued the prieſtes and Leuites to acknowledge and ſay: Well, Truely we haue enough, yea, and more than enough to ſuſteine vs. And to what end hath God giuen vs this plentie? Is it that we ſhoulde make monie of it, and hoorde it vppe in our cofers? Is it that the people ſhould be diminiſhed, and we increaſed? No: but he poynteth to vs with his finger, & telleth vs that they bee the goods of the poore, and that the poore muſt haue a portion out of it to ſuſteine them withall, and that ſuch as are in neede and neceſſitie muſt be relieued by that meanes. Thus ye ſee in effect what is contayned in this place.

Now it is not without cauſe that God putteth his people againe in minde of that which he had already cõmaunded them: the ſimple law might haue bin ſufficient for them; but our Lorde putteth them in minde, that they muſt diſcharge themſelues, aſwell of the ſecond Tythe, as of the ordinarie tenth. And the reaſon why he doth ſo is becauſe the world is alwayes ſet on ſcraping, without caring how or in what manner: men conſider not what is lawfull, ſo they may make their gaine. And wee ſee alſo the vpbraidinges which the Prophet Malachie maketh for the Mal.3.8. ſame thing. You haue defrauded me (ſayth the Lorde) and the people come ſhameleſlie & ſay: Wherein? They woulde needes pleade againſt God, and deny the matter ſtoutlie and ſtiffely: For it is a very rare thing to haue men to confeſſe their debt at the firſt. They come here blearing out the tongue, and aske, whereof doeth God complayne? And wherein haue we defrauded him? In your Tythes (ſayth the Lord.) For whereas I haue reſerued the right of tythes and offeringes to my ſelfe; you defraude me of my right. When you pay me your tythes, it is but by halfes; when you bring me your offeringes, they are very leane and thinne, ſo as a man may ſee how your whole ſeeking is to catch from me, and to withhold that which is due vnto me. Now this vnthankfulnes of men is the cauſe why God ratifyed his lawe in this place. Yet notwithſtanding we ſee the ſhameleſneſſe and wickedneſſe of the people in that which we haue rehearſed. Hereby wee are taught, that when God hath taught vs our duetie, it is not enough for vs to haue heard what we ought to doe; but we had alſo neede to be waked, we had neede to be ſtricken as it were with blowes of a Beetle, to haue ẏ imprinted in our mindes which we haue not wel borne away: we haue neede (ſay I) to haue one leſſon often ſung vnto vs, becauſe our memorie is ſo ſhort when the caſe concerneth our duetie towards god. But whatſoeuer God do, & by how many exhortations ſoeuer he ſtirreth vs vp; yet we haue forgotten al in ẏ turning of an hand: we thinke no longer vppon it, and continue ſtill

In our woonted trade. God cryeth out to vs, and putteth vs continually in mind of our dutie: but our luſtes and affections doe ſo trouble vs, that wee cannot lend him an eare to receiue that which hee ſayth. So much the more then ought wee to take heede vnto our ſelues, knowing, that if the Iewes were dull vpon the ſpurre, and diſcharged not their dutie in the thinges that were commaunded them, the ſame vice alſo reigneth in vs: and therefore for this cauſe wee had neede to bee quickened vp. And let vs not think that the exhortations which men giue vs euery day, be ſuperfluous. When wee haue heard a thing an hundred times, yet are wee as ſcholers ſtill. God therefore muſt be faine to beginne againe with vs, and ſometimes doe as he Eſa.28.10. ſayth by his Prophet Eſay, and ſay A, A: B, B: for ſo doth hee ſpeake, and telleth vs that we are lyke a childe that is hardwitted & dul to learne. For a man muſt tel him A, A: and when hee ſeemeth to haue learned it, it is by and by forgotten. Then comes he to B, B: and yet for all that he is ſtill newe to beginne. Euen ſo is it ẘ vs: & that is the thing whereof God complayneth and ſaith: What? I haue plyed this people as a man would ply litle children; and yet for all my teaching of them, they be ſtill in their principles, they remaine ſtill in their A, B, C: And what a ſhame is that? That is the thing which we haue to note, to the end that euery one of vs doe pray to be ſo guided by the ſpirit of God, as wee may be the more apt to be taught, and more quicke and ready to beare in minde that which he hath ſayd, and to receiue his worde in ſuch humbleneſſe as we ought. And moreouer if we yet feele ſuch weakeneſſe in vs, that God muſt be faine to ſpeake againe, and returne the ſecond and third time, whẽ he hath taught vs once already: let vs thereby conſider and confeſſe his goodneſſe towardes vs, for bearing with vs: and let vs take heede, that when he hath ſpoken once or twiſe, we ſhew at leaſtwiſe, that hee hath not loſt all his paines, nor beſtowed it vnprofitablie.

Furthermore for a concluſion, let vs note that if in time of the Lawe the things that were conſecrated to the vſe of the temple, and to the Miniſters, was imployed to the behalfe of the poore, when the others had more than needed; ſurely the ſame lawe remaineth ſtill in force euẽ at this day. Truely the rule which S. Paul ſetteth downe ought to be obſerued, namely ẏ if in old time the Prieſtes were ſuſtained becauſe GOD had called them vnto that ſtate: they which nowadayes preach the Goſpell and offer as precious offeringes vnto God as thoſe of the Lawe, ought to be fed and ſuſteined. Yet notwithſtanding it is not meant hereby that they ſhould deuour all, as wee ſee is done in the Popedome. When offerings are made there, it is but to haue them waſted in pompes and heatheniſh vanities, or rather in other villanies: as the Byſhops, and Abbates, and other, euery one in their degree, ſpend their reuenues not only in gaming & hunting, and other vain paſtimes: but alſo in whoredomes, & in al other ſhameful things: ſo as there is no ſuch corruption to infect the whole world, as the wealth which is in the Church, as they term it, that is to ſay in the Synagogue and ſinke of the clergie. Now when we ſee theſe Churchrobbers fall into ſuch exceſſe that all goes to confuſion: let vs for our part know that we muſt alwayes come back to that which God telleth vs here; to wit, that if we will haue our offeringes acceptable vnto God, when we haue fedde and ſuſtained them vnto whome he hath bound vs, we muſt come vnto the poore, to the widowes, to the fatherleſſe, to the ſtraungers, and to ſuch as are in need. Thus ye ſee how our almes ought to be beſtowed. On the cõtrary ſide, we ſee that the dealing of thinges in the Popedome was but to fill the bellies of the Monks & Fryers, and of ẏ other ſhauelings of their Clergie. But God diſliketh of all ſuch thinges. And why? It is not for ẏ cauſe that he requireth offeringes of vs. We ſee whereunto he calleth vs. But now we may perceiue alſo our leawdneſſe. The wretched Papiſts ſpared for no coſt, euery one was ready to open his purſe to caſt ſomewhat into ẏ iawes of thoſe greedie wolues: euerie man brought them ſomewhat, & all this was no coſt: they founded obites or yearemindes, they built chappels, they ſet vp gay and coſtly puppets, they cauſed manie Maſſes to bee ſung: there was continuall going to them: and theſe cormorants ceaſſed not in the meane time to deuour all, and yet the people ceaſed not to vſe ſuch deuotions ſtil. And to what purpoſe? Surely ẏ Papiſtes make their offerings to the diuel, for it is certaine that God reiecteth them. But we on our ſide knowe ẏ when wee giue our almes, when we diſtribute our goods accordingly as the Lord commaundeth, he lyketh and accepteth of them all. Sith we know this, ſhould wee not at leaſtwiſe doe aſmuch as the Papiſtes, who worke at aladuentures? In deede they thinke not to ſerue the diuel, but yet they haue no aſſurance to the contrarie. But as for vs, God auoweth that he wil receiue at our hands whatſoeuer we offer vnto him as he hath commaunded. Should we then bee ſlacke in this behalfe? Nay rather, let vs be the more heedfull to ſtirre vp our ſelues to doe our duetie the better, when we ſee that which is tolde vs in this place. Let vs be diligent in diſcharging our duties, that God bee not occaſioned to blame vs for defrauding him of that which appertained vnto him, but let vs faithfully yeeld vnto him that which hee demaundeth of vs, or at leaſtwiſe let euery man ſtreine himſelfe thereunto, that we may truelie make that proteſtation, which to morrow God willing we ſhall ſee.

Now let vs kneele downe before the maieſtie of our good God with acknowledgement of our faultes, praying him to make vs to feele thẽ better than we haue done: and in the meane time to teach vs ſo to offer our ſelues vnto him, ẏ being reformed in our mindes and affections, we may endeuor altogether to pleaſe him in all poynts, and ẏ therewithal we may alſo apply that which he hath put into our hands to ſuch vſe, as al may be detted vnto him, and that we may offer vnto him the firſtlinges of all our fruites, that is, ẏ our life may be aunſwerable to that which hee hath ordayned, ſo as we abuſe not his benefits to defile them, but turne them to his glory, and to the common benefite and commoditie of the whole Church. That it may pleaſe him to graunt this grace not onely vnto vs, but alſo to people and nations of the earth, &c.

On Wedneſday the xxv. of Februarie, 1556.

The Cxlvij. Sermon, which is the third vpon the ſixe and twentith Chapter.

13 Then thou ſhalt ſay before the Lord thy GOD, I haue brought the hallowed thinges out of mine houſe, and alſo giuen it to the Leuite, to the ſtraunger, to the fatherleſſe, and to the widowe, according vnto all thy commaundements which thou haſt commaunded me. I haue tranſgreſſed none of thy commaundementes, neither haue I forgotten them.

14 I haue not eaten thereof in my mourning, nor held backe aught of it in vncleaneſſe, nor giuen aught thereof for the dead, but I haue obeyed the voyce of the Lorde my GOD, I haue done according vnto all that which thou haſt commaunded me.

15 Looke downe from thy holy dwelling place of heauen, and bleſſe thy people Iſrael, and the land which thou haſt giuen vs, as thou ſwareſt vnto our fathers, the land which floweth with Milke and Hony.

THere is not one amõg vs which deſireth not to be eſteemed of in the face of the world, euery man boaſteth himſelfe of the diſcharging of his duetie: and we are alſo enclyned by nature to ſet out our ſelues before men: for ambition driueth vs thereunto. But in the meane time there are very fewe which enter into their owne conſcience, to know howe they haue behaued themſelues before God, and which haue ſuch a regarde in ordering of their life, as to ſay: I walke in the ſight of the heauenly Iudge, it is he vnto whome I muſt bee accountable: I muſt therefore reſt my ſelfe vppon him, and not ioy in the eſtimation of men, for that is but a vanitie: there are very few (I ſay) which enter into this conſideratiõ. Now God ſeeing that vice to raigne in vs, ſeeketh to remedie it: as we may ſee in this place where it is ſayd that we muſt returne vnto him, to haue a good teſtimonie of our life. *Thou ſhalt ſay* (ſaith he.) And how? hee ſetteth vp here no ſcaffold for vs to make proteſtation before men, what we haue done: No: but he appointeth him ſelfe to be the Iudge, and will haue vs to ſpeake as in his preſence. *Thou ſhalt ſay before the Lorde thy God:* ſayth hee. And ſo wee are warned, that to order our life well, we muſt not haue our eyes faſtened on this world, nor take great care what men thinke of vs: but we muſt take eſpeciall paynes to approue our whole life, with all our workes and all our thoughtes vnto him, before whom we muſt appeare at the latter day. I grãt we muſt diligently auoyde all offences, and put the doctrine of S. Paule in practiſe, to doe well not onely in the ſight of God, but alſo before mẽ, 2.Cor.8.21. to the intent we may edifie others, and winne others by our example to doe that which they ought. But yet neuertheleſſe wee muſt labor aboue all, to haue God to lyke of vs, and albeit the world ſpeake ill of vs and ſlaunder vs, and turne al yͭ into euil which is good: yet muſt not yͭ turne vs aſide from our duetie, but we muſt hold our ſelues vnto God. To be ſhorte, to fare the better by this doctrine, let vs learne both euening and morning to ſummon our ſelues before God; let euery of vs enter into himſelfe, as if he were out of the ſight of mortall men, and ſay: Alas my god, I muſt liue as I were in thy preſence, and I cannot eſcape thy handes nor thine eyes: giue me grace therefore ſo to order my lyfe as I may referre it wholy vnto thee, and frame it vnto thy will. Behold what we haue to doe. And when we haue paſſed the day, let vs thinke: Alas my God, how haue I behaued my ſelfe towardes thee? When we haue ſuch a care, we ſhall not make any pompous ſhewes before men, as thoſe which would haue men flatter or reioyce in thẽ, and haue their prayſes preached; when in the meane time they fall aſleepe before God; neither can they conſider their owne blockiſhnes, but although they finde themſelues guiltie, yet they thinke all is wel ſo men lyke of their doings here belowe. This is the thing which we haue to cõſider, in yͭ God hauing ſpokẽ of the offering of the firſt fruits, addeth that wee may not thinke that wee haue gayned much when men accuſe vs not, nor vpbraide vs for defrauding GOD of that which is belonging vnto him. Therefore although men charge vs with nothing: yet wee may not ſleepe thereupon: but euery man muſt examine himſelfe, and conſider whether hee hath done that which was commaunded, and that not to the intent to bee commended of mortall creatures, but of the heauenly Iudge.

Now it is expreſly ſayd: *I haue done all thinges which thou haſt commaunded me, and according vnto* *thy ſtatutes, and I haue not forgotten them.* Wee ſee here, what is the rule of good lyfe: Namely to doe according as God hath commaunded vs; which ſuffereth vs not to dwell in doubt, as the ignorant wretches doe, who know not at what ende to beginne, becauſe they are not inſtructed in the word of God. Ye ſee how in Poperie, when a man would liue as he ought to do, he liſteneth to yͤ which one ſaith, & to yͤ which an other ſaith, he is turned and returned with euery wind, and euery mā bringeth in his peece, ſo as they are always to learne how to begin. To the intent therfore that wee be not wauering nor douting: let vs holde our ſelues vnto that, which is ſo often warned vs in the holy ſcripture, and whereof we haue a confirmation in this place: that is, that wee may be at defiance with all the worlde, if wee keepe on in the way which God hath ſhewed vs. Now I graunt that men may finde things enough in vs wherefore to blame vs: as wee ſee what outcryes the Papiſtes make, and how they ſtorme and ſay that we deſpiſe the traditions of our holy mother the Church, and the decrees of holy councels, that wee ouerthrow all order, that our lyfe is looſe and licentious, and that our whole deſire is to leade a brutiſh and beaſtly life. Theſe be the thinges which they vpbraide vs withall. And why? Becauſe wee forſake their tyrannie, becauſe we will none of their pelting baggage which they haue deuiſed; becauſe wee will not be hampered with their cordes, (for all their lawes and ſtatutes which they haue forged, are as cordes to ſtrangle poore weake ſoules with all) and becauſe wee caſt aſide all thoſe thinges. Now hereupon they indite vs. But let vs appeare before God, and then we may defy them: yea, we ſhall haue ſufficient for our defence, if we can make this proteſtation truely; God is my witneſſe that I haue behaued my ſelfe according to his worde. Surely this is an ineſtimable comfort that all they haue, which ſwarue not from the pure and ſimple plaineneſſe of the worde of God; but followe this playne path; reſpecting nothing but howe to obey him which hath all ſouereignetie, and authoritie ouer vs: When we haue done ſo; let vs be contented that God lyketh of our dooinges, though men condemne vs for them. For their judgements are no weightier than leaues, they are ſoone gone, and we ſee here whereunto God calleth vs. But let vs note withall, that whereas it is ſayd here; *I haue done according to al thy ſtatutes and thy cōmandementes which thou haſt ordayned, and haue not forgotten the ſame*: wee are thereby put in minde to inure our ſelues throughly to the knowing of our duetie: for what is it which maketh vs to tranſgreſſe ſo many wayes againſt the commaundementes of our God, but our negligence in not thinking on our duetie? By meanes whereof, we are eaſilie taken tardy. For the diuell is crafty, and alwayes prying and watching how he may entrap vs: & we for all that are careleſſe to think vpon that which God hath commaunded vs. In deede we would not of purpoſe defie God, nor rebel againſt him: but howſoeuer the worlde goeth, we haue little care, we apply not our whole ſtudie to conſider of our dutie, and to ſay; Go to, what is it that God requireth of mee? And becauſe we haue not an eye hereunto, wee ſtumble and fal, and go aſtray. We are therfore exhorted in this place, to looke more narrowly vnto our ſelues, & to bee more watchfull, that we forget not our duetie. For we haue a very ſhort memorie, if God did not often refreſh it. Let vs learne to conſider whether we haue followed the good will of God or no in this behalfe: let vs continue therein, and keepe all one courſe ſtill, and holde on in that trade all our whole lyfe. If this were well imprinted in our heartes, wee would be more diligēt to heare and to reade the worde of God than we are. We had neede to be put in minde of that which God hath cōmaunded vs, or elſe we wil ſoone forget it, euen in the turning of an hand: and yet we vouchſafe not, either to heare, or to reade any thing which ſhould be for our inſtructiō. God therfore is iuſtly prouoked to puniſh our negligence, & we muſt needs fal into many ouergroſſe faultes. And why? Becauſe we ſeeke not after that remedie which he hath put into our handes.

But here a man may demaund a queſtion, how God wold haue men to proteſt before him, yͤ they haue walked according vnto al his ſtatutes & that they haue forgotten nothing of thē. Is it poſſible for vs (how much ſoeuer we inforce our ſelues,) to obey God in ſuch wiſe, as there ſhal be nothing but perfectneſſe in our lyfe? That were cōtrarie to all yͤ holy ſcripture. For it is ſayd that none ſhall be found righteous in yͤ ſight of God. Pſal.143.2. If God would vſe rigour, we ſhould all periſh before his face. And yͤ place is ſpoken euen of thē yͤ are yͤ righteouſeſt. Verily, when S. Paul went about to proue yͤ we cānot be iuſtified but by faith onely, and through yͤ mercie of God & the fauor of our Lord Ieſus Chriſt: he alledgeth onely yͤ which is writtē in yͤ law: Curſed are they which performe not all thoſe things. Deut.27.26. Gal.3.10. For he taketh this for a ground, yͤ it is not poſſible for any man liuing, to performe yͤ law, becauſe it ſurmounteth all their power. It ſeemeth here then, that God ment to traine vp his people in hypocriſie, when he taught thē this leſſon to ſay, *I haue obſerued all thy ſtatutes, I haue let paſſe none of them.* Now to aunſwere this hard queſtion; let vs note yͤ the holy ſcripture in ſpeaking of yͤ faithfull, ſaith in deede yͤ they haue walked according to yͤ ſtatutes & ordinances of God, as whē S. Luke ſpeaketh of Zacharie, & Elizabeth his wife, he ſaith yͤ they walked vprightlie & perfectlie according to yͤ commaundementes & ordinances of God. Luke.1.6. And this manner of ſpeach is often to bee found in holy ſcripture. And yet this proueth not, yͤ Zacharie was altogether perfect, yͤ he had an holyneſſe of Angels, yͤ he had no vice in him, & that his wife alſo was ſuch another: No; but the ſcripture in ſo ſpeaking preſuppoſeth yͤ God of his goodneſſe beareth with yͤ faithful, & that hee imputeth not their faultes vnto them; when they ouerſhoote not thēſelues too far, nor become rebels and deſpiſers of God: but intend alonely to walke according to his wil, & ſubmit thēſelues vnto him, and enforce themſelues and take paynes yͤ way.

Foraſmuch then as the faithfull haue ſuch affection and zeale to giue thẽſelues ouer vnto God; although they trippe, although they ſtumble, although there be much amiſſe in thẽ; and that God in rigour might cõdemne their whole life, and that there is nothing in them which is not ſtayned with ſome blot or other: yet doth GOD accept their doings, as if they were ſound & perfect. And why? For when we are iuſtified through the grace of our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt, then doth God receaue vs vnto mercie, not onely to accept of vs as of his children, but alſo to take in good worth whatſoeuer proceedeth from vs, although it be worth nothing, ne deſerueth any ſuch lyking. Seeing then that God ſheweth himſelfe ſo gratious and fauorable vnto vs; let vs endeuour to doe well. Although wee performe not that which is required of vs, and bee but in the midway: yet ſhall it be allowed vs in our account as if we had performed the lawe. Now accordinghereunto, the faithfull proteſt, that they haue walked according to Gods will, that they haue kept his ſtatutes, that they haue forgotten nothing of them. And why? They meane that they haue had an vpright affection, that they haue not bin double minded, that they meant not to ſerue G O D by halfes as many do, but that in all reſpects they haue bin willing to bee ſubiect to the Lawe. Yet for all this, they are not ſo blinde, but they acknowledge their imperfections, and bewaile them, and knowe themſelues to be miſerable in that reſpect: but it ſufficeth thẽ that God hath vouchſafed them ſuch grace, as to walke vprightlie, and not to halt on both ſides as hypocrites doe. Wee ſee that they which were the iuſteſt in all the world, haue confeſſed their wretchedneſſe, and bin aſhamed of their whole lyfe. Job.29.15. Iob in deede ſayth, that he was an eye vnto the blinde, a foote to the lame, a defendour of the fatherleſſe, a father of the poore, the refuge of the widowe, that he deceiued no man, that he abuſed not his credit, and that his hand was not ſhut vnto thẽ which were in neede. And yet after he hath ſaid all this, hee ſayth, Alas; when I come before my Iudge, I muſt haue my mouth ſhut vp. Wee ſee how the ſeruantes of G O D haue not bin ſo preſumptuous, as to ſet forth their owne lyfe as Act.13.21. perfect. Dauid had ſuch a witnes of God, as wee may wonder at: I haue found Dauid (ſayth God) according to mine owne heart. Beholde how God ſpeaketh and auoweth that Dauid was the holyeſt of all creatures, and yet for all this wee heare what he ſayth; Alas Lord enter not into Pſal.143.2. iudgement with thy ſeruant, for neither I nor any man liuing ſhall be founde righteous in thy Pſal.130.3. ſight. Lord if thou deale lyke a Iudge, who ſhall ſtand before thee? Beholde we are all of vs confounded. If theſe men haue thus ſpoken, what ſhall be ſayd of vs which are farre wide from ſuch perfectnes as was found in their lyfe? And therfore we ſee how al the faithful yͤ euer were, haue alwayes acknowledged their faultes, haue euer bin humble, haue euer bin beaten downe. Rom.7.24. Saint Paul alſo who was ſo excellent in al vertue, ſaith, Alas wretch that I am, who ſhal deliuer me from this bodie of death? And afterward in the end, although he was a priſoner, although hee waited for nothing but death, and prepared him ſelf to receiue it, and beheld euen then yͤ crown of righteouſneſſe which was prepared for him: yet he ſaith, I am not yet come to my marke; Phil.3.12. but I muſt enforce my ſelfe yet farther. S. Paule herein confeſſeth his infirmities. So then let vs note that the Saintes neuer vaunted themſelues before God to haue performed all that he commaunded them, and to haue diſcharged themſelues of their dutie. But when they had taken holde of the free fauour which was promiſed vnto them, namely that G O D pardoned their ſinnes, and that he would not call them to any preciſe account, that he forgate and buryed all the ſpottes and ſtaynes which were in their workes; when they tooke holde (I ſay) of this promiſe, and hung wholy vppon it: then could they proteſt and ſay, Lord we haue done all that thou haſt commaunded vs to doe, yea becauſe they were grounded vppon the meere fauour of God, who will not examine their workes with rigour. After that manner ought this place to be vnderſtoode. It is not that any man may ſay that he hath fully diſcharged his dutie, and that he hath obſerued yͤ whole lawe: for we are al accurſed becauſe it is vnpoſſible for vs to obſerue it: but that God meant to ſtir vp men to enforce themſelues to do well. And moreouer becauſe we haue alwayes our recourſe to the freebeſtowed goodnes of God, he hath giuẽ vs this leaue and libertie to ſay, Lord, I haue done that which thou commaundeſt; that is to ſay, I haue ſought to do it. For when we tend to the ſeruing of God, it is all one as if we had ſerued him: whẽ we haue the affection, it is all one as if we had yͤ effect: whẽ we are in yͤ way, it is all one as if we had ended our courſe: when we deſire, it is all one as if we had put the thing in practiſe. And what is the cauſe hereof? Euẽ yͤ infinit goodnes of our God, who ſifteth vs not ſeuerely, but ſpareth vs & beareth with vs as with his children. We ſee now in effect what is ſayd. And hereby we are warned to doe our indeuour to walke according vnto the commaundementes of G O D, that wee may vnfainedly ſay: Lorde, I haue doone all that thou commaundeſt me. And yet in the meane time let vs alſo acknowledge our vices, and craue pardon for them. But howſoeuer the worlde goeth, let vs not double with G O D but let vs endeuour willinglie and vnfainedlie to obey him. This is the thing which wee are taught in this place of Moſes.

Now becauſe the fruits of the earth are treated of here, it is ſaide, *I haue not eaten of the firſt fruites in the anguiſhe of my heart.* This ſaying may be expounded two manner of wayes: either that men haue not eaten with griefe that which they ought to offer vnto God: or that how great ſoeuer their neede were; yet it conſtrained them not to ſwarue from doing well, but that they alwayes diſcharged their offeringes. As touching the firſt, it is certaine that albeit men bee at defiance with G O D ſo as they harden themſelues to offend: yet notwithſtanding they haue alwayes ſome remorſe within them.

In deede when men are come to the fulneſſe of all wickedneſſe,they haue no longer any remorſe of conſcience(as S.Paul ſaith,) Ephe.4.19. they make no conſcience of doing any thing as we ſee theſe robbers which are altogether brutiſh, and not onely ſuch as beſet the high wayes, but thoſe alſo which are giuen to pilling and polling; they are ſo ſetled in crueltie,that they make no conſcience of dooing any thing.The adulterers likewiſe,after the diuel hath once blinded them,are no longer aſhamed of their owne filthineſſe. As much is to be ſaide of all others, which are ſet to followe their carnall affections and deſires. Theſe ſeeme to haue no feeling nor remorſe of conſcience at leaſtwiſe as in reſpect of themſelues. But yet in the meane time God preſſeth them in ſuch wiſe, that ſpite of their teeth they are conſtrained to haue within thē many blinde ſightes,they are awaked when they would reſt, and they haue ſecret ſtinges which torment and vexe them,as the Prophet Eſay ſaieth, Eſa.48.22. That the wicked man hath no peace,& that his thoughts are as the waues of the ſea which meete together,and beate themſelues one againſt another. In this caſe are all ſuch as offend God. So then it is not without cauſe that it ſhoulde bee ſaid: I haue not eaten of it with anguiſh of my heart:as if it were ſaid:Lord I haue not eaten my bread in ſuch ſort, that I haue bin touched with any remorſe of hauing giuen any thing vnto thee faynedly,or of hauing kept backe ẏ offerings which thou haſt commāded me to make. Now hereby wee are warned, ſo to content our ſelues with ẏ which God giueth vs,as ẏ no prick of conſcience might grieue vs for keeping backe other mens goods. Yea but in ẏ meane while wee muſt note alſo,that we muſt be diligent in cōſidering what we haue done:for they that flatter thēſelues may wel proteſt ẏ they haue no anguiſh in their hart; but in ẏ end it muſt needs be ſtirred vp by God, and they muſt feele his anger in deſpite of their teeth,& knowe howe guiltie they are in his ſight. Let vs therfore on our part take good heed, and conſider whether we haue wronged any man : & let vs eate our bread in ſuch ſort as we may truly declare before God, that we haue neither remorſe nor prick of conſcience. But the true and natural meaning is that which we haue ſet down in the ſecond place,that is,that God would haue euery man to proteſt, that he hath not ceaſſed to doe his duetie for anie neceſſitie or extremitie wherein he was. For we thinke we are diſpenſed withal when we cannot diſcharge our duetie ẘout great paine & much adoe. For example,he that hath nothing to pay, thinketh he is quit of his debt. And it is commonly ſaid in ẏ prouerb, That neede hath no law. And ſo bicauſe mē are wont to make neceſſitie a ſhield & buckler for al the euils which they commit,therefore it is ſayd, I haue not withheld mine offeringes in the anguiſh of my heart. As if wee confeſſed, that although we haue bin ſo diſtreſſed, that we knewe not on which ſide to turne vs , that wee had no bread to eate,yet we haue not bin tempted therby to doe euill,but wee haue walked according to the will of God. Although wee haue beene in extreme neede; yet haue wee not ceaſſed alwayes to deale vprightly and indifferently, what neede ſo euer wee were in. This is it in effect which is meant by this place. And mention is purpoſely made of the anguiſh of the heart,to the intent we ſhould know, ẏ although there bee much weakeneſſe in vs, yet is it not a ſufficient excuſe to doe euill. There are many which when they haue vſed any deceyte , pilfering or extorſion; will alleage and ſaye: Oh conſider I am weake, I haue no ſuch conſtancie as others haue , the tentation ouercame mee. But GOD in this place alleageth ,that his children may bee tempted (for the anguiſh of the heart is a ſigne that wee bee made neyther of ſteele nor ſtone,) that wee haue ſtinges in vs, to pricke vs and to holde vs in bondage;but yet ẏ wee muſt fight againſt them whatſoeuer commeth of it. Therefore let vs learne that although pouertie be hard and grieuous;yet notwithſtanding we ought to reſiſt all the temptations which wee feele in our heart, and therewithall to walke vprightly. This is a fitte leſſon for poore folke , to the intent they beare not themſelues in hand, that in their need it is lawfull for them to catch what they can get, and to ſeeke their aduauntage as many doe;ſaying : Yee ſee there is none that pitieth mee, I muſt looke vnto my ſelfe : thereuppon they make no conſcience eyther to ſell counterfeite wares or otherwiſe to diſcharge themſelues verie yll of their duetie. And it is purpoſely ſayde (as wee ſee) that although wee bee diſtreſſed; yet wee muſt eate but of the bread which God giueth vs, and not whatſoeuer wee can catch by vnlawfull meanes.

There is afterwards mention made of *Filth and vncleaneneſſe, and of the deade :* And that is bycauſe of the ceremonyes of the Lawe. For wee knowe howe GOD meant to keepe the people of olde tyme occupyed in theſe figures, to the intent wee myght knowe that men are ſubiect vnto many defylementes, and that they become vncleane at euerie turning of a hande. And heere is mention made of the dead,bycauſe if one touched a dead man or entered into an houſe where hee was; he was defyled. Heereby the Iewes were warned, that in this preſent life wee are beſet with ſo many defylementes, that wee cannot ſteppe a foote forewarde, nor turne a finger, but God ſhall eſpie ſomething woorthye of blame in vs : and for that cauſe were the waſhinges appoynted. And the Iewes had a looking glaſſe and a liuely picture thereof, when they ſawe a deade bodye. For beholde, it is a carrion: and whence proceedeth this lothſomneſſe which we ſee to bee in a man, when hee is deade? For the body of man is the houſe and temple of the holy Ghoſt, and the dwelling place of the liuely Image of GOD. Yet notwithſtanding, the body of man beyng dead is more ſtinking than the carrion of a dog or of an Aſſe. Nowe then, the ſight heereof ſerueth well to humble vs in beholding the fruites of ſinne. For God ſheweth as it were with his finger,that the ſpirituall filthineſſe which dwelleth in vs, vttereth it ſelfe euen in the body.

And this was yͤ meaning of the figures which the auncient fathers had vnder yͤ law. Now it is true in deede yͭ the figures themſelues are no longer in vſe; but yet yͤ ſubſtance of them ſhall alwayes remayne, to do vs to vnderſtand yͭ foraſmuch as we be ſubiect to many defilementes bicauſe the world is ſo corrupted as is pitie to beholde, wee ought to keepe good watch, & that as oftē as we perceiue any ſtaine in vs, or that we haue not folowed Gods commandements roundly, or yͭ we haue bin allured by any wicked affection, or that wee haue not walked in the way of God with ſo feruent zeale as we ſhould haue done, or yͭ wee haue bin held back & hindered with ſome worldly care: wee muſt bewaile it before God, and flee for refuge to yͤ bloud of our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt: for there is no talke to be had of other waſhings. The holy water of the Papiſtes is but a charme, whereby they haue renounced yͤ benefite of the death & paſſion of our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt. Vnto his death therefore muſt wee haue our recourſe. And moreouer, although we feele not our faults, (as in very deede many eſcape vs, & wee knowe not yͤ hundredth part of them) yet muſt wee not ceaſſe to walke in carefulnes & humblenes, and to craue pardon of God; After that maner muſt we deale that we may be anſwerable vnto the figures which were vnder the lawe.

Now as touching this place, it is expreſly ſaid, *I haue held backe nothing of it in vncleanes, neyther haue I applyed any of it to the ſeruice of the deade*: to ſhew vnto vs yͭ we ought not to mingle yͤ ſeruice of God with the corruptions of yͤ diuell. As how? We ſhal ſee many, who hauing wel to ſpend, doe conſume it ill: ſome of them in whoredome, and ſome in I knowe not what ryot and exceſſe. And when they haue to their ſeeming giuen ſome litle piece of it vnto God: they diſpenſe with themſelues to fall to yͤ working of all wickedneſſe. As for example; when the Papiſts cauſe ſome Maſſes to be ſung, or whē they haue had ſome other priuate deuotions: they thinke yͭ God ought to be contented with that he hath had his morſell. Therefore when a man hath ſpent much money vpon an whoore, one Maſſe (as he thinketh) will ſet him free in reſpect of God. When a wicked varlet hath ſpoyled & robbed this man and that man, hee will come as it were in ſcorne to make ſome ſmall offering vnto God; & he thinketh all is well. And euen here among vs a man ſhall ſee ſuch as flatter themſelues after the ſame maner. For they beare themſelues in hand, yͭ they haue made amendes for their robberies, when they haue giuen a ſmal part of their booty vnto God. Pſal. 50.16. But the ſcripture telleth vs expreſly, yͭ God abhorreth ſuch ſacrifices as are mingled with our filthes, & that we doe but vnhallow his name by them, & that we work him moſt horrible treacherie. So then let vs note, yͭ Moſes meant to declare vnto vs, yͭ if we will offer ſuch offeringes as God may accept, we muſt not mingle them with our owne defilements. In deede (as I haue alreadie tolde you) we cannot bee ſo pure and cleane, as that no fault may be found with vs: but yet wee may come and ſerue our God purely, and not be fraughted with ſuch hypocriſie as to doe his commaundements by halfes, but ſerue him with an vpright and pure affection. Thus ye ſee in effect what we haue to beare in mind concerning this place: where it is ſaid, I haue taken none of it in filth and vncleanneſſe.

Now in the end Moſes rehearſeth that againe which he had alreadie touched, of obſeruing the commaundements of God: But he expreſſeth it more fully than he had done before. Frō whence proceedeth this obedience, & from what roote? Verily from hearkening vnto God whē he ſpeaketh, and when he ſheweth vs the way which we muſt keepe. *I haue hearkened vnto the voyce of the Lord my God, and haue followed that which hee commanded me.* By theſe words all ſuch as follow their owne likings are condemned. Wee ſee how peruerſly the moſt part of men doe walke. Euerie man wil ſay & confeſſe that we muſt ſerue God: but after what maner, and faſhion? There is not that man which ſnarleth not himſelfe in his own fanſies. Well (ſaieth he) I muſt ſerue God. And how? I will doe the beſt I can. But no man regardeth what God commandeth, no man conſidereth what is pleaſing vnto him: we goe & offer vnto him at randon whatſoeuer our own braine conceiueth. But all ſuch intentions of our owne are heere in one woord condemned, where it is ſaid that firſt we muſt hearken vnto the voyce of God: If wee will haue him to receiue our offerings and ſacrifices, all our offering vnto him muſt be according vnto his word, which we cannot doe except we be taught in his ſchoole. Will wee then walke as we ought? Let vs take paines to bee taught in the woorde of God. And this is the thing wherein we ſhall differ from the Papiſts, to wit, if we profit in the Goſpell. For thoſe poore beaſtes goe aſtray, and knowe not in what caſe they are: for they neuer knew, yͭ the ground of all ſacrifices is obedience. And therfore they do whatſoeuer commeth in their heads; and no wonder: for they neuer had the wil of God declared vnto thē, they are depriued of yͤ doctrine of ſaluation. But as for vs, ſeeing God hath vouchſafed to declare his will vnto vs, let vs hearkē vnto yͭ which he commandeth, let his voyce ring in our eares, & while he ſpeaketh, let vs not be deaf. Moreouer let vs not think our ſelues diſcharged by knowing what we ought to doe, but let vs alſo put it forthwith in practiſe. What are we yͤ better for the hearing of our duetie at a Sermon, or for the reading therof in the holy ſcripture; vnleſſe we proceede to put the ſame in practiſe, knowing that Gods ſpeaking vnto vs is to make tryall of our obedience?

Now hereupon it is ſayd, *Looke downe therefore O Lord from thine holy dwelling place, euen from heauen, vpon thy people Iſrael, and bleſſe them in the land which thou haſt promiſed and ſworne to giue them, in the perſon of our fathers*. Heereby God meant not to ſay that the people ſhould ground themſelues vpon their owne merites: but he ment to ſtirre vp the faithfull to walke ſimply in his feare if they woulde haue him for his part to continue his benefites and his bleſſings towardes them. This would bee darke if it ſhould not bee layde foorth more plainely. In deede all that euer

God promiſeth vnto vs, proceedeth from his owne freebeſtowed goodneſſe: But yet for all that he will not haue vs to neglect our dutie, and to abuſe his promiſes, as if we might binde him vnto vs, and wee in the meane time bee his enimies: he will not haue vs to ſpit in his face and to pinne him in the meane time to our ſleeue & ſay: Thou muſt ſhewe thy ſelfe a father vnto vs, although we be not thy children: thou muſt bee at peace with vs, although we make war againſt thee. No, we may not dally ſo with God. But will we enioy his fauour vnto the ende? Will we haue him to continue beneficiall vnto vs? Let vs take heede then that we ſerue and honour him, let vs take heed ỷ we walke according vnto that, wherunto hee hath called vs: for wee muſt alwayes beare this ſaying of his in minde, Turne ye vnto me, and I will turne vnto you. God ſaith that he turneth himſelfe from vs, when he letteth vs alone, and taketh his bleſſings from vs, and hath no pitie on vs, ne heareth vs though we call vpon him, but giueth vs vp for a pray, both vnto the diuell and vnto all our enemies. For when we turne our backes vnto him, it is good reaſon that he ſhould alſo forget vs. Neuertheleſſe hee willeth vs to turne vnto him, and hee will turne vnto vs, that is to ſay, if we walke in his feare, hee will neuer forget vs, but we ſhall feele his hande ready to aide and helpe vs in all our needes and neceſſities. This is the common doctrine of the holy ſcripture. And according hereunto it is ſaide in this place, *Lorde, ſeeing wee haue walked in thy commaundementes, looke thou alſo mercifully vppon thy people, and bleſſe thine inheritance, and the lande which thou haſt promiſed vnto our fathers.* True it is that the Iewes knewe verie well, and wee haue ſeene the ſame oftentimes heretofore; that this lande was not giuen vnto them in reſpect of the obedience which they had yelded vnto God: and that neither they, nor their fathers had any maner of way deſerued it. But God was moued by his own only good pleaſure, to giue it vnto them. The Iewes ought to haue beene throughly perſwaded thereof. Euen ſo let vs looke well to our ſelues, and ſay: Lorde, true it is that whatſoeuer we haue, we holde it of thy meere goodneſſe: for thou haſt alſo bound vs vnto thee, and haſt put this bridle vppon vs, that we be thy children, inſomuch that thou haſt preuented vs with thy mercy, and ſhewed thy ſelfe a father towards vs in adopting vs: And we Lord likewiſe haue followed the calling whereunto thou calledſt vs; we haue indeuoured to ſhewe that thy bountiful liberalitie towards vs is not vtterly misbeſtowed. Now therefore continue thou thy good doing towardes vs. To bee ſhort, this caſe admitteth not any bragging or boaſting (as I haue alreadie tolde you) but rather it ſerueth to ſtirre vp men to walke in the feare of God and to certifie them that although they haue not behaued themſelues in all pointes as they ought; yet God will continue his goodneſſe towardes them vnto the ende. And ſurely wee haue neede of ſuch an aſſurance. Wee ſee howe diſtruſtfull we be; inſomuch that although God haue powred out his benefites vpon vs longtime together, & we haue felt his help oftentimes: yet are we always in doubt, and we cannot tel whether God will continue his fauour vnto vs or no. For this cauſe he will haue vs most certainly aſſured, that when we walke in his obedience and depende wholly vpon him, he wil not forſake vs, but will continue in doing vs good ſtill; and not leaue vs in the midde way, but performe that which he hath promiſed, and as he hath ſaide, ſo will he doe. We ſee nowe in effect whereunto Moſes had an eye, and what doctrine we haue to gather out of this place. Will wee then abide in poſſeſſion of Gods benefites, yea euen as touching this preſent life? Let vs ſticke faſt vnto our God, and neuer ſeuer our ſelues from him; let vs doe our indeuor to ſerue and honour him. If we ſo do, ſurely we ſhall neuer haue any minde to turne away after our owne vanities: but when we ſee that he is come ſo neare vnto vs to doe vs good, wee alſo ſhalbe readie to giue our ſelues wholly ouer vnto him, that hee may make vs to feele the performance of his promiſes, and to knowe that he will continue to doe vs good, and reach vs his hand to take vs to himſelfe, not for a day or two onely, but for euer both in life and in death.

Zach.1.3.

Nowe let vs kneele downe before the maieſtie of our good God with acknowledgement of our faultes, praying him to make vs feele them more and more, and therewithall ſeeing it pleaſeth him to vſe ſuch fatherly goodnes towardes vs as to vouchſafe to accept the things which we offer vnto him, notwithſtanding that there bee much amiſſe in them: Let vs pray him ỷ this his ſo doing may encorage vs the better to yeeld our ſelues wholie vnto his ſeruice, and to imploy our ſelues therin, ſo as we may truely proteſt, that we haue not doubled with him, but that we haue endeuoured to frame our life vnto his holy commaundements: that hauing obtained ſuch grace of him through our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt by the benefite of his death and paſſion, we may bee ſo clothed with his perfect righteouſneſſe, that wee may appeare before God his father at the latter day, as if there were nothing in vs but all perfection. That it may pleaſe him to graunt this grace, not onely to vs, but alſo to all people and Nations of the earth, &c.

ON

On Wedneſday the xxvj of Februarie, 1556.

The CXLVIII. Sermon which is the fourth vpon the ſixe and twentith Chapter.

16 This day the Lorde thy GOD commaundeth thee to doe theſe ordinaunces and lawes, and to keepe them and doe them with all thy heart and with all thy ſoule.

17 Thou haſt ſet vp this day the Lorde to bee thy GOD, and to walke in his wayes, and keepe his ordinaunces and his commaundementes, and his lawes, and to obey his voyce.

18 And the Lorde hath ſet thee vp this day, in that thou art vnto him a ſpeciall people, as hee hath tolde thee, to the end that thou ſhouldeſt keepe al his commaundements.

19 That hee may make thee very hie in praiſe, and in name, and in glorie aboue all the nations which he hath made, and that thou maieſt be an holie people vnto the Lorde thy God as he hath ſaide.

Moſes in this place continueth the matter which was handled yeſterday, to wit, in ſhewing vnto the Iewes for what ende GOD had choſen them to bee his people and his flock. It was not that they ſhould liue as the Gentiles, which were in ignoraunce; but that ſeeing they had the lyght of lyfe and ſaluation, they ſhould follow it. For there is no reaſon, that ſeeing GOD hath adopted vs for his children, wee ſhoulde bee as brute beaſtes, euery man wandering after the fantaſies and luſtes of his owne heart: wee muſt order our ſelues vnder the direction of him which taketh and admitteth vs for his owne. It is therefore ſayde in this place, *This day the Lorde thy GOD commaundeth thee to keepe all his ſtatutes, and his commaundementes: to doe them, and to obſerue them, yea, and that with all thy heart, and with all thy ſoule.* This worde To day, betokeneth, that when wee are taught in the worde of GOD, wee are much more ſtraiter bounde, than if hee had onely created vs and placed vs in this worlde, and in the meane time left vs to walke after our owne liking. It is true in deede, that the vnbeleeuing ſort ſhall not bee excuſed, although GOD neuer vouchſafed to make them partakers of his woorde. Although they bee as poore blinde wretches in darkeneſſe, yet ſhall they not fayle to bee condemned in their ignoraunce. He that hath ſinned without the Lawe, ſhall periſh (ſayeth Saint Paul.) And in deede [without the Lawe] there is not that man which hath not ſome witneſſe ingraued in his owne heart, that there is but one GOD whome wee ought to ſerue, and whome wee ought to honour. They which knowe this by nature, deſerue ſufficiently to bee condemned: but when GOD commeth neere vnto vs, and vouchſafeth to vſe the office of a teacher to declare vnto vs his will, there is the leſſe excuſe for vs. Then muſt double condemnation needes fall vpon all them which receiue not the yoke of GOD, when it pleaſeth him to guide them, and to ſhewe them that hee will not leaue them to goe at randon, as the wretched and vnbeleeuing Gentiles. Ye ſee thē what Moſes meant by this woorde, *To day the Lorde thy GOD commaundeth thee*. And that is the cauſe why this word alſo is put in the 95. Pſalm. To day if ye heare the voyce of the Lorde. And the Apoſtle hath well weyed the ſame, in the Epiſtle to the Hebrewes: ſaying, that this worde *To day*, betokeneth that when wee once haue the woorde of God preached vnto vs, wee muſt vſe that occaſion, and that if it eſcape vs, wee muſt needes bee iudged by them, which neuer knewe what good and euill meant to make any ſure difference betweene them. And to this purpoſe alſo Saint Paule alleageth the place of Eſay, Beholde, nowe are the acceptable dayes, loe nowe is the time of ſaluation, ſeeke the Lord whyle hee is neere at hande, call vppon him while hee ſheweth himſelfe. So then let vs learne, not to let ſlippe the opportunitie of time while the Lorde calleth vs, and allureth vs vnto himſelfe, let vs not play the deafe men, let vs not bee ſlowe to come vnto him, but let vs be in an vnfayned readineſſe, and ſay; Lorde, behold we are heere, what is it that thou commaundeſt vs? We are preſt and ready euery of vs for himſelfe to obey thee. Thus yee ſee what we haue to beare in minde out of this place.

Rom.2.12.

Pſal.95.7.

Hebr.3.7. & 4.7.

Eſa.49.8.
2.Cor.6.2.

And moreouer in this place Moſes ſetteth downe theſe woordes, *The commaundementes and ſtatutes*, in the ſame ſenſe which we haue heeretofore already touched: namely, to ſhewe that GOD teacheth vs not by halfes when wee haue his woorde, but that wee haue a perfect inſtruction, ſo as the knowledge of no good thing ſhall be wanting vnto vs, if wee be not ſtubborne vnto God, and of ſette purpoſe ſtoppe our eares: as there are many which are ready ynough to make a countenaunce of not knowing what it meaneth: although GOD haue taught them. If we therefore on our part bee tractable to bee taught, there is no doubt but that our lyfe ſhall bee in all poyntes well ruled, when we haue the word of God.

And if this was ſaid of the time of the Lawe, which was much more darker than the Goſpell is, doubtleſſe wee haue nowe more plentie of doctrine and inſtruction. Let vs learne therefore to profite in the ſchoole of our GOD, while it pleaſeth him to vſe the office of a ſchoolemaſter towards vs, and let vs not doubt that any thing ſhall bee wanting vnto vs, when we come to him to bee taught. And that is the cauſe why Saint
Col.2.3. Paule alſo ſayeth, that in the Goſpel there is ſuch a fulneſſe of wiſedome, as a man can not wiſh any more. So then let vs not bee vnthankefull; but when our GOD ſpeakes vnto vs, let vs inquire after his will, and order our lyfe according vnto that which hee telleth vs. But with all wee muſt bee diligent. For ſeeing GOD forgetteth not any thing, ne leaueth any thing behinde which myght ſerue for the well ordering of our lyfe, ſhoulde wee on our part bee negligent? Or if wee heard but one woorde of that which hee will tell vs, ſhoulde wee ouerpaſſe it without thinking vppon it? No: but for as much as wee ſee that GOD hath ſuch a care of ordering our lyfe, let vs alſo on our ſide take paynes to profite in his woorde; let vs apply our whole ſtudies thereunto, knowing that it is not loſte time which is ſo ſpent; let vs occupie our ſelues in obſeruing his ſtatutes, his commaundements, and ordinaunces: and let vs ſet our mindes well vppon them. In deede GOD hath in ten wordes compriſed whatſoeuer hee requireth of vs, but theſe tenne woordes haue in them great ſubſtaunce. Our knowing of the ten commaundementes muſt not bee to prattle of them lyke a Pye in a Cage as they ſay: but wee muſt conſider well of the meaning of them, and marke whereunto they tend. When our Lorde hath ſpoken the woorde, wee muſt firſt conſider wherunto it tendeth: and ſecondly, what things depend thereon: and wee ſhall finde that wee haue neede to thinke vppon it, and to occupie and to employ our ſelues in it, al the time of our lyfe.

Nowe heerewithall Moſes ſheweth after what ſorte wee muſt keepe the commaundementes of GOD, to wit, *With all our heartes and with all our ſoule.* It is not ynough then to employ our handes and our feete to doe well, but our heart muſt marche foremoſt. For if wee ſerue GOD through conſtraint, all is nothing worth. After which manner, Hypocrites fearing to bee puniſhed make ſome fayre ſhewe of godlyneſſe, and in the ſight of men, yee would thinke there were cauſe why they ſhoulde bee prayſed; but their heart is full of wickedneſſe and rebellion, ſo as they defye GOD, and woulde haue him aboliſhed if it were poſſible. The firſt thing therefore which wee haue to doe in framing our lyfe to the obedience of GOD, is to ſerue him with a pure and free good will, ſo as wee bee not forced to doe that which he commaundeth vs, ne grynd our teeth at him, as who ſhoulde ſay wee woulde ſcape his hand, in dooing the cleane contrarie, if it were poſſible. But wee muſt offer our heart in ſacrifice, that God may bee ſo ſerued of vs, as wee may ſhewe that his Lawe is not ſuch as the ciuill orders and lawes of men are. For they ordayne what ſeemeth good vnto them, to the intent that men ſhould bee bridled but from the outwarde actions: but it is not ynough to pleaſe GOD withall, not to haue doone euill, vnleſſe our heart alſo bee anſwerable in all pureneſſe. And yet farther Moſes ſpeaketh not ſimply of the affections, but hee will haue the heart alſo to bee pure and vpright. *Thou ſhalt ſerue mee therefore with all thy heart, and with all thy ſoule:* that is to ſay, ſoundlye or vnfainedly, ſo as wee double not with GOD as wee ſee ſome doe; which make a fayre ſhewe for a time, but it ſoone vaniſheth: and againe, they haue a backe ſhoppe ſo as they ſerue not GOD but agaynſt their will. Wee muſt therefore laye open our heart before GOD, wee muſt offer our thoughtes and deſires vnto him, wee muſt endeuour to ſubmitte our ſelues wholly vnto him. Thus muſt hee bee ſerued and honored of vs, howbeit not after our manner, but according to his owne lawe.

But heere a man myght demaunde, howe it may bee poſſible for men to giue themſelues to ſerue GOD with all their heart. For as long as wee remayne incloſed in this fleſhe of ours, there will bee alwayes many infirmities and vices in vs which will holde vs backe and hinder vs. And verily wee heare how Saint Paule ſayeth, I can not doe the good which I Rom.7.15.
woulde. But if the heart were wholly giuen vnto GOD, the perfourmaunce of thinges woulde followe out of hande. It followeth then, that when wee bee ſo letted and hindered, wee obey GOD but in part. But as I haue alreadie declared, this letteth not, but that wee may ſerue GOD in ſingleneſſe of heart: for hee imputeth not vnto vs thoſe infirmities which hinder vs, when there is no faynedneſſe in vs, but that our chiefe deſire and ſeeking is that hee ſhoulde quietlye poſſeſſe vs and gouerne vs by his holy ſpirite, and that our lyfe may bee conformable in all poyntes to his woorde. Therefore when we haue this deſire in vs, although wee be helde backe and hindered with the infirmities of our fleſhe, yet GOD imputeth not that euill vnto vs. That is the thing which wee haue to beare in mynde out of this place. But a man may yet farther demaunde, whether GOD chargeth a man with any thing which is aboue his power and abilitie? For it ſeemeth an inconuenient thing that GOD ſhould require thinges vnpoſſible to bee doone. But this demaunde is eaſily aunſwered: for when God publiſhed and ſet foorth his lawe, hee reſpected not what we coulde doe, or what our power or abilitie is, but what we owe vnto him.

Therefore when he ſaieth : *You ſhall ſerue mee by keeping my Statutes with all your heart and with all your ſoule :* hee ſpeaketh not according to our abilitie : hee knoweth full well, that wee are not able to compaſſe it, wee are farre wyde from it : but yet for all that, wee ceaſſe not to bee bounde vnto him, and there is good right why hee ſhoulde require his due, although wee are not able to perfourme it. For whence commeth the faulte ? Of the corruptneſſe of our nature. Seeing it is ſo then, let vs conclude that GOD muſt not bee barred of his right. And therefore although men can not whollye diſcharge themſelues, yet GOD ceaſſeth not to ſay, You owe mee this, and therefore doe it. Now whereas the Lawe was in ſuch ſort giuen vnto vs, wee are ſo farre vnable to perfourme it, that wee knowe not howe to haue one good thought onely to beginne, 2.Cor.3.5. much leſſe haue wee any ryght affection to ſtirre one finger to doe it. That is no newes : but wee muſt mourne, knowing that wee are altogether rebelles vnto GOD, and that there is nothing in our nature, which is not repugnaunt to his righteouſneſſe. Haue wee done ſo ? Haue wee condemned our ſelues? Then let vs pray him to ayde vs with his holy ſpirite. And moreouer when hee ſhall haue ayded vs, let vs knowe that if there be any thing wanting in our duetie, yet ſhall it not come into account, but GOD will accept of the ſeruice which we yeelde vnto him, ſo it proceede from a free and ſyncere mynde, as I ſayde afore. Wee ſee then that the thing which wee haue to gather vppon this place, is, that GOD will bee ſerued, not by piece meale nor by force or conſtraint, but of a pure and freehearted deuotion and with all our heart. Moreouer let vs note, that wee cannot diſcharge our ſelues of all that which wee owe him, and as in reſpect of our owne nature, wee can not any way beginne. But whereas hee hath publiſhed his Lawe by the mouth of menne, and hath cauſed it to bee ſet downe in wryting ; hee muſt alſo write it in our heartes, as he promiſeth to doe ; Ier.31.33. Ezec.11.19. Hebr.8.10. Deut.30.6. both by Ezechiel and alſo Ieremie. And it is a common doctrine (as wee ſhall ſee heereafter) that hee promyſed the Iewes to circumciſe their heartes. After that manner doeth GOD ſpeake vnto his elect, that is, that through his holy ſpirite, hee imprinteth his commaundementes in their heartes. Moreouer wee muſt knowe that although GOD haue touched our heartes by his holy ſpirite, yet wee are alwayes rebelles againſt him, and wee neuer come to the perfect and ſubſtantiall ſeruing of him which is ſette downe heere. Wee muſt therefore alwayes bewayle our ſelues, crauing forgiueneſſe of the faultes which remayne in vs. But yet notwithſtanding wee muſt inforce our ſelues to come vnto GOD, yea euen with willing ſeruice, that our heartes may bee ſo diſpoſed, as wee may take a pleaſure to bee obedient vnto him, for vntill wee bee come to that poynt, GOD will accept of no ſeruice which wee doe to him. Thus yee ſee in effect what wee haue to beare in minde concerning theſe words of Moſes.

Nowe hee addeth ; *The Lorde thy GOD hath made made thee to promiſe this daye, that thou ſhalt bee a people vnto him : and thou haſt cauſed the Lorde thy GOD to ſay, that hee ſhall bee thy GOD.* This place heere is taken in two ſortes. For the verbe which Moſes vſeth, ſignifyeth ſometyme to exalt or to ſette vppe on high : howbeeit not in his originall ſignification, but after a certayne manner : and ſometime whereas yee woulde ſaye, according to the roote of the woorde, A man is exalted ; it may alſo bee conſtrued, hee hath made himſelfe to ſaye : bycauſe it is to bee gathered, that bragging and boaſting doe make a man to ſet out and to aduaunce himſelfe highly. Therefore commonly this place is taken as if it were ſayde, the Lorde thy GOD hath choſen thee this day to bee his people, and thou alſo haſt exalted or ſette him vp to bee thy GOD. I graunt that this ſenſe maye well bee borne with. But when all is more nearelie conſidered, the naturall meanyng of Moſes is as wee haue turned it, to wit, this daye thou haſt cauſed the Lorde thy GOD to ſay, that hee will by thy GOD ; and hee hath made thee ſaye, that thou wilt bee his people. For in this place Moſes meant to ſhewe the fauour which GOD had vttered towardes the Iewes, in making his couenaunt with them. And to prooue this to bee ſo, wee ſee that the ſame thing is declared many tymes in the holye Scripture, both to the Iewes, and alſo vnto vs : that is, that GOD vſeth ineſtimable goodnes towards vs whẽ it pleaſeth him to cal vs into his church, and to receiue vs as it were into his own houſe, for then he couenãteth with vs as if two perſons ſhould meete to paſſe bondes on eyther part. As for example ; Some gift is to be made. Now hee that is the granter ſpeaketh firſt, and he that accepteth is there alſo. Then are conditions annexed ; and the partie that maketh the gift ſaith : This I except, This I reſerue, or I will haue him to whom I giue it, to bee bounde vnto mee after ſuch a maner. The graunter (as they terme him) accepteth of the gift, & bindeth himſelfe on his part, and both of them make promiſes, I (ſaith yͤ one) doe renounce all my right, & giue all ouer into this mans hand. And I for my part (ſaith the other) doe accept it with condition to performe yͭ which he requireth of me. So then like as Conueiances doe paſſe betweene men : euen ſo dealeth God wͭ vs in that it pleaſeth him to admit vs for his people, & to take vs for his owne. Now let vs ſee what honor this is, whẽ he ſtoopeth ſo vnto vs wretched creatures. We are poore wormes of the earth : as touching our bodies we are vile carions & rottennes : & as for our ſoules there is yet farre greater wretchednes in them : and yet notwithſtanding God entreth into couenants wͭ ſuch as we are : & what equal match is there betweene vs? Would an earthly king or ſome great Prince vouchſafe to come vnto a ſwineheard or ſome other man of baſe degree, & ſay, we wil couenant one wͭ another, we wil haue a Notary betwixt vs. A Prince (which yet is but a mortall creature) would think himſelf too much diſgraced, if he ſhould enter into couenãt with ſuch an abiect as in reſpect of ỹ world: and yet our God vouchſafeth to ſtoope as lowe vnto vs. And therefore we ought to magnifie ſo great a priuilege. When we heare the worde of God preached vnto vs, it is all one as if God came down hither vnto vs and ſaide; Come on. As for mee, I am readie to couenant with you, onely be you likewiſe diſpoſed on your ſide. When wee haue ſuch a neare acceſſe vnto God, and he acquainteth himſelfe ſo with vs, and woulde haue vs ſo ioyned vnto him: are wee not voyde of al ſenſe and reaſon, if this doe not moue vs, yea and inflame our heartes to giue our ſelues wholly ouer vnto God, who vſeth ſuch & ſo incredible gentleneſſe towardes vs? So then it is not without cauſe that Moſes ſayeth in this place: *This daye the Lorde thy God hath made thee to giue thy worde*, that is to ſaye, hee hath made thee to couenant with him, that thou wilt bee his people, and thou haſt made him to couenant with thee, that hee will bee thy God. Thou haſt this libertie, or rather this priuiledge to ſpeake with thy God. Goe to then, let vs couenant togither, let vs haue our mouthes open to demaunde and to aske, ſeeing our Lorde ſtoopeth ſo lowe vnto vs. It is verie true that hee can owe vs nothing, but yet neuertheleſſe, of his meere liberalitie hee will haue vs to aske him, that wee may bee his; hee will haue vs to require him that hee may bee our God, and we his inheritance; hee our King, and we his people: wee his children, and hee our father. Seeing then that wee may come ſo farre; ought not the great pitifulneſſe which our Lorde ſheweth vnto vs, to make vs aſhamed? What a ſhame were it if wee ſhoulde remaine ſo blockiſh as to bee nothing at all mooued, after that God hath ſo allured vs, and after that hee hath ſo preuented vs afore hande with his infinite goodneſſe?

Nowe then to the intent wee may profite our ſelues the better by this place, let vs note once againe this worde, *To day*. For Moſes alwayes putteth the Iewes in minde, that when the law was publiſhed, God was preſent with them, and called them to enter into couenant with him as I will declare anon. But nowe as touching vs, wee haue the Goſpel, wee ſee the time ſeaſonable, we ſee the dayes of ſaluation, wee ſee the acceptable time of God; let vs therefore make haſt, let vs enter in whyle the doore is open, while the way is readie let vs goe forward in it, let vs not foreſlowe it; for if God perceiue that Ioſu.24.20. wee deſpiſe his grace, doutleſſe hee can well ynough skill howe to withdrawe it, as hee alſo threateneth to doe. Let vs not therefore delay the time vntill to morrowe, to followe whither God calleth vs; but whyle he ſpeaketh let vs be attentiue to heare him. Thus yee ſee what wee haue to beare in mynde vppon this woorde, *To daye*.

Moreouer it is true, that in ſubſtance God maketh no other couenant with vs nowadayes, than hee made in olde time with the Iewes: but yet hee ſpeaketh much more familiarly vnto vs; hee ſheweth him ſelfe to bee our God, and our father, and hath made vs a farre greater aſſurance thereof in our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt, than the Iewes coulde haue vnder the ſhadowes and figures of the lawe. In deede the auncient fathers were ſaued by no other meanes, than by that which wee haue, to wit, that they were the people of God; for this betokeneth as much, as that God held them for his childrẽ: & they had their ſaluation grounded in Chriſt Ieſus, as wee haue: but that was after an obſcure manner, ſo as they behelde the thing afarre off which was preſented vnto them. As for vs, ſeeing God is come ſo neere vnto vs in the perſon of our lord Ieſus Chriſt, that wee be vnited vnto him, and haue the trueth and ſubſtance of the ancient figures: wee bee ſo much the more ſurer ỹ God maketh vs to ſaye that wee are his people, and that we make him to ſay that he is our God. And how doth he make vs to ſay it? Truly altogether of his owne good will, without beeing tyed or bound vnto vs. For God hauing adopted vs for his children, certifieth vs that the inheritance of heauen is made readie for vs, and behold hee giueth his own ſonne vnto vs for a pledge of his loue, & whatſoeuer our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt hath is all ours, with all the fulneſſe of riches which wee reade was giuen vnto him. And why? Euen vnto the ende that wee ſhoulde bee enriched by them. The obedience which hee yeelded vnto his father is our righteouſnes. To be ſhort, hee hath nothing whereof he maketh not vs partakers. Seeing that he is ours, and that hee is giuen vnto vs, how ſhall not all the reſt which hee hath be giuen vnto vs alſo with him, as S. Paul ſaith in the eighth to the Romanes? Rom.8.32. Seeing thẽ that we haue this, and that wee may make our God ſay that he is our ſauiour, and that nothing can be wanting to vs after hee hath receiued vs into his fauour and loue: let it lift vs vp vnto heauẽ, ſo as euery of vs may forget & renounce him ſelfe. Let vs bid the world farewell, and let vs be rauiſhed to giue our ſelues ouer altogither vnto him, who ſheweth himſelf ſo liberall & fauourable vnto vs. And let vs note, that ſeeing we make God to ſpeake ſo, that is to ſay, to graunt vs libertie to come vnto him, & to require him to accompliſh his promiſes; we muſt at leaſtwiſe be mutually bound vnto him, & he take promiſe of vs, that we wil be his people, that is to ſay, that becauſe hee hath redeemed vs by the bloud of his onely ſonne, we will liue no longer after our own luſts & fleſhly deſires, but be ruled by him; & that as he is our father ſo we wil be his children, ſo as none of vs wil yeld to do wickedly, but hold faſt the ſeale of our adoption which is the holy ſpirite to be gouerned by him. There muſt (ſay I) at leaſtwiſe be this mutual bonde betwixt vs, that ſeeing God bindeth himſelfe ſo vnto vs, we alſo muſt come and ſubmit ourſelues wholly vnto him.

Now herewithal we ought to wey wel this word which Moſes addeth. He ſaith twiſe *As the Lorde hath ſaid vnto thee*, whereby he ſheweth, ỹ when we come vnto God, we muſt not come vnto him with ſtoutnes & pride,as though he were beholden vnto vs;but we muſt know that we come becauſe he calleth vs. What mortall man will preſume to preſent himſelfe before God & ſay, bind thy ſelfe vnto me, & let vs couenant here togither, yͭ thou wilt be my God,& that I ſhalbe of yͤ number of thy people?Were not men ſtark mad if they ſhoulde preſume to ſpeake ſo vnto God? Now then let vs note,yͭ it is for him to open our mouthes,& to giue vs ſuch warrant.And that is the cauſe why Moſes ſayeth (& that not once only,but with a dubble repetition)that it is God which hath ſpoken. Therefore if men ſhould of their own mind come vnto God & ſay,bind thy ſelfe vnto vs;it were a diueliſh raſhnes:but let vs wait vntil our Lord cal vs. And when it pleaſeth him to offer ſpeech vnto vs, then let vs knowe yͭ it is no preſumption worthy to bee condemned to ſay,wel Lord,ſeeing we know thy wil,we will vſe the liberty which thou offereſt vnto vs.That is the maner of proceeding which wee muſt obſerue when we come vnto God. But herein wee ſee how the wretched world hath bin blinded wͭ horrible abuſes.When we ſpeake of the certeintie of our ſaluation, the Papiſtes ſay it is a preſumptuouſnes:& that we muſt always ſtande in ſuſpence & dout of it. Their beleefe is , that no man ought to aſſure himſelf of his ſaluation,but that he ſhould only weene & ſuppoſe it.Neither is it yͤ ignoranteſt ſort which ſpeake thus;but it is the reſolute determination of all their diueliſh ſchooles. But in the meane while what do they? Euery of thẽ bindeth God at his own pleaſure: and looke what they haue forged & deuiſed, yͭ wil they haue God to admit for good, although he neuer ſpake word of it. Theſe are two extremities which are too exceſſiue.For on yͤ one ſide the Papiſts ſtand always in dout ſaying,I cannot tel in what caſe I am with God: in deed I thinke I ſtand in his fauor,but I know not how yͤ matter goeth. And what is the cauſe[why they vſe ſuch maner of ſpeaches?] Forſooth they are afrayde of preſumptuouſnes. Is it preſumptuouſnes to hang wholly vpon the goodnes of God;& to doe him the honor to beleeue his worde; and to anſwere Amen, as ſoone as he ſpeaketh;and to account al theſe things vtterly vnfallible? Is that preſumptuouſnes? Nay, it is rather true obedience; & obedience importeth humblenes. In deede there is in this behalf a kind of boldneſſe; and S.Paul alſo ioyneth thoſe two togither in 3. Chap. to the Epheſians, ſaying, By faith which we haue in Chriſt Ieſus, wee haue truſt giuen vs with boldnes & hardines to come vnto God.

Epheſ.3.12.

Faith therfore engẽdreth boldnes:but this boldnes proceedeth not of pryde;but rather thereby we learn our humblenes in that we receiue quietly that which God telleth vs, & accept it,as a thing wherof we ought not to dout. That is the firſt extremitie , which raigneth too too ſhamefully among the Papiſts.But what do they in the meane time? They haue their deuotions euery man after his own fancie. I wil do this , & I will do that.I muſt win heauen; I muſt make ſatisfaction for my ſinnes in ſuch wiſe & ſuch . God is iuſt,& think we that ſeeing he is iuſt, he wil deny vs our hyre when wee ſhall haue ſerued him? And although we ſerue him not in full perfectnes,yet he wil like of that which wee ſhal doe, or elſe he ſhould be cruel & vniuſt, if he ſhould not accept of our ſeruice:and if there be any default in it,we wil make an amends for it: for we haue meanes to ſatisfie him.Nay we wil do more than he hath cõmanded vs; wee wil take vppon vs to keepe his law,but yet wil wee haue ſome farther deuotion in ſtore , & it cannot bee but yͭ all this muſt be taken into our accounts;for whatſoeuer is done vpon a good intent cannot be bad: neither ought God alſo to reiect it.See how the Papiſts plead with God , not onely as with their match,but alſo as with ſome little play fellow:& if he like not of al yͭ they do, & account it good, he ſhalbe condemned although he declare that he diſliketh of it al & ſay,I wil not put it into my account; Deceiue not your ſelues,it is vtter abomination vnto me. No ſir(ſay they) you will like of it welynough for al that; you cannot but accept of it, ſeeing we think it to be good. After that maner do the Papiſts talke. In deede they wil not vſe thoſe very woordes;but yet is it the very effect of their doctrine,without adding one ſyllable thereunto. And ſurely it is a diueliſh preſumption, when men take ſo highly vpon them as to make God beleeue that whatſoeuer they haue deuiſed,is good,& that he muſt needes receiue it: & againe,when they wil binde him vnto them,as who would ſay , God will receiue me, I haue purchaſed yͤ kingdom of heauen, I muſt be receiued thereinto for my deſert , & if God will not admit me for his pities ſake,yet muſt he do it for his iuſtice ſake : for it is not his ſimple mercie that I ſtande vnto,I will not bee ſaued by his mere grace,but I will haue him to take mine account , and as he ſhall find me worthy , ſo let him deale by me . See how the deuil bewraieth himſelfe, and lifteth vp his horns againſt God. But wee for our part are taught heere an other leſſon . For Moſes ſaith it is the Lord which hath ſayd it . And he doth expreſly repete this kinde of ſpeach to do vs to vnderſtand,that it is not for vs to ſue God or to make any couenãt with him: but he muſt firſt call vs and we muſt ſtand aloofe without preacing to come at him , vntill he of his owne good will do ſeeke vs . Notwithſtanding yͭ we be thus ſhaken off,our God telleth vs that he will haue acquaintance with vs , and yͭ although we haue bin his mortal enimies, yet hereafter we ſhalbe of his houſhold . And that wheras we haue bin bondſlaues to ſatan & holden captiue vnder the bondage of death; he will make vs his children & heires. Doth our Lorde once ſay ſo ? O then there remaineth nothing for vs to doe but to come vnto him ; for then haue wee leaue & libertie to ſet our ſelues forward.But here there is nothing of our owne: all is becauſe we are called from aboue,yea,euen of his meere grace,ſo as wee bring nothing . It is not ſaid,becauſe thou haſt done this or that, or becauſe God hath founde in thee ſome cauſe why he ſhould ſhew thee ſuch fauour. No, but according as he hath ſpoken , according as the Lorde hath ſaid it. The purpoſe of God therefore

fore muſt haue all the preheminence in this caſe. And when he hath decreede yͤ thing in him ſelfe, & openeth his holy mouth to declare his will vnto vs; then let vs accept of it, let vs take there our ſure grounding, & let vs depend wholy thereupon; let vs not bring with vs our owne flickering fancies; but let vs onely walke as the Lorde hath directed vs by his hande, and as hee himſelfe hath declared vnto vs. And when wee haue ſuch humbleneſſe as to haue skill to confeſſe, yͭ vntil God drawe neare vnto vs, we are far off from the hope of ſaluation: then ought boldnes to follow, & to keepe his courſe & way; & we muſt come vnto that which is here declared by Moſes: *This day thou haſt made the Lorde thy God to ſpeake.* Therfore when wee haue this warrant of the fatherly loue which god beareth vnto vs; thē may we make him to ſpeak. For do we any thing elſe in al our prayers, than charge God with his promiſes? In deede wee come not to pray as the heatheniſh ſort of mē do, & as al thoſe do which are vnpatient, when they come vnto God: for if he grant them not their requeſt at yͤ firſt chop they defy him. But wee come not to pray after yͤ maner: for we proteſt on the contrary, that his wil ought to be done. But yet notwithſtanding we cannot pray vnto God, but we muſt ſay, Lord thou oweſt vs nothing, but that which thou haſt promiſed vs. Neuerthelatter wheras thou dideſt not owe vs any thing, thou haſt bound thy ſelfe vnto vs of thine owne good will, wherein thou ſheweſt thy ſelfe moſt liberal: and therefore our comming as now is vppon truſt of thy promiſes to pray thee to perform them. Seeing then that in all our prayers we alleage vnto God the couenant & contract which he hath made with vs, by that meanes we make him [as it were] to ſpeake, & to ſay that hee is our God. And vnder this ſpeach (as I haue already told you) all the good things which wee can hope for, or wiſh for, are contained. For ſeeing yͭ God giueth himſelfe ſo vnto vs, what can we farther deſire? Is not he the fountaine of al wiſedome, righteouſnes, vertue, life, ioy, & glorie? Is there any good thing to bee deſired, which we may not find in our God? Al yͤ euer he hath is ours: he communicateth himſelf ſo vnto vs, yͭ he will haue vs partakers of al thoſe good things which are in himſelf; not yͭ we haue yͤ ful poſſeſſion of them at the firſt, but that wee poſſeſſe thē by hope, vntil yͤ day that the fruit of them ſhalbe layd open vnto vs. Now therfore let vs marke wel, yͭ when we are once taught in yͤ word of the goſpel, thē we may make our God to ſpeake, then wee may come familiarly vnto him, & require him to ſhew himſelf ſuch an one as he hath always promiſed to be: and let vs aſſure our ſelues that we ſhal not be diſappointed, when he hath once giuen vs the warrant of his loue, which is more than if we had al the deedes of record in the world. And in this caſe we need not to ſeeke for notaries or ſignets or mennes ſeales, we haue yͤ bloud of our Lord Ieſus Chriſt, which is yͤ ſeale of this couenant that God hath made with vs, declaring yͭ he is our God. Alſo we haue the holy ghoſt, by whome the promiſe is better warranted vnto vs, yea, euen in our harts. And ſo we ſee now, that it is not for nought, that Moſes hath ſo magnified this greate goodnes which God vſeth towardes vs, & this priuiledge which he giueth vs in drawing vs vnto himſelfe, & in chooſing vs to be of his houſe, and of his church. But we muſt alwayes haue an eye vnto yͤ end for which our Lord graunteth vs this libertie, to wit, that he alſo may be at a point with vs & haue vs for his people. For if we be not anſwerable on our part with our obedience: is there any reaſon that he ſhould keep his promiſe, when we haue broken the league? In deede he muſt be faine alwayes to fight againſt our ſtubbornnes & to ouercome it: for we are euery day vnfaithful vnto him, and hee continueth faithfull vnto vs; but howſoeuer the worlde goeth, yet when wee reiect his couenant, and let light by it thorough our wicked life, wee may not looke that hee ſhoulde bee any longer bounde vnto vs. For why? For hee is become our God vppon this condition, yͭ we alſo ſhoulde be his people. And how ſhall wee be his people? It is not by ſaying ſimply with our mouth, Wee are the people of God: for the verieſt hypocrites will boaſt as much as that; yea, and they bee ſo farre paſt ſhame, that they will needs occupy the chiefeſt places and hyeſt roomes in the church: but wee muſt ſhewe by our deedes, that we are the people of God, in that we obey him, hearkening to the voyce of that ſhepeheard which he hath giuen vnto vs, When wee liue quietly vnder the guyding of our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt; then do wee make certaine proofe that wee keepe the couenant of our God, without falſifying of the faith which wee promiſed vnto him. And in this ſenſe hath Moſes ſpoken it. So then foraſmuch as the Goſpel is preached vnto vs, let vs knowe that our Lorde draweth ſo nigh vnto vs, as hee deſireth nothing but that wee ſhoulde bee as it were gathered vnder his winges. And here withall let vs conſider the contentes or ſubſtance of this doctrine which wee haue touched, namely, that our Lorde hauing ſought vs out, giueth him ſelfe vnto vs, yea, and that in ſuch wiſe, as that hee is after a ſorte bounde as it were by ſolemne couenant; by reaſon whereof wee may freely come vnto him, and require him to perfourme his promiſes. And after that rule ought al our prayers to bee directed. But therewithal let vs alſo vnderſtande, on what condition it is that hee is ſo bounde vnto vs. For when we be once bounde after that faſhion; if wee make little reckoning of ſo ineſtimable a benefite, or if wee reiect it and diſdayne it; thinke wee that ſuch contempt of ours ſhall remayne vnpuniſhed? Woe bee vnto them therefore which haue the knowledge of the Goſpell, and vnto whome GOD hath ſo communicated him ſelfe, if they bee not aunſwerable thereunto in true obedience, and humbleneſſe, and ſubmit not themſelues vnto him, and that in ſuch ſorte, as they may ſhewe by their deedes euen in their whole lyfe, that they holde him for their God, and bee alſo of his flocke, that is to ſay, yͭ they bee willing to giue them ſelues fully and wholly vnto him.

Now let vs kneele downe before the maieſty of our good God, with acknowledgement of our faults, praying him to make vs feele them more and more, and that in ſuch wiſe, as that beeing beaten down in our ſelues, we may receiue that remedie which he offereth vnto vs: that is, to be renewed by his holy ſpirit. And moreouer to imprint in our hearts the certeintie of his promiſes which are contained in his worde, ſo as wee may not dout but that if we hang vpon him, hee wil ſhew himſelfe our ſauiour euen vnto ẏ ende, and that as hee hath once redeemed vs by the death and paſſion of his only ſon, ſo if we haue our truſt ſettled on him, he wil neuer forſake vs, but haue a care of the gouerning of vs, in ſuch ſort that hee will not ſuffer the thinges to periſh which he hath committed to the keeping of our Lord Ieſus Chriſt, but preſerue them all ſafe vntil the latter day. And ſo let vs ſay. Almightie God heauenly father, &c.

On Thurſday the xxvii. of Februarie, 1556.

The CXLIX. Sermon which is the firſt vpon the ſeuen and twentith Chapter.

18 19 And the Lord hath ſet thee:

The xxvii. Chapter.

THen Moſes with the Elders of Iſrael charged the people ſaying, Keepe all the commaundementes, which I commaund you this day.

2 And when ye be paſſed ouer Iordan into the land which the Lord thy God giueth thee, thou ſhalt ſet thee vp great ſtones, and plaiſter thē with plaiſter.

3 And ſhalt write vpon them all the wordes of this lawe when thou art come ouer, that thou maiſt go into the land which the Lord thy God giueth thee: a land that floweth with milke and hony, as the Lord God of thy fathers hath promiſed thee.

4 Therefore when ye are paſſed ouer Iordan, ye ſhal ſet vp theſe ſtones which I command you this day in mount Ebal, & thou ſhalt plaiſter them with plaiſter.

5 And there ſhalt thou buyld an altar vnto the Lorde thy God, euen an altar of ſtones: vpon which ſtones thou ſhalt lift vp no yron toole.

6 Thou ſhalt make the altar of the Lord thy God, of whole ſtones, and offer burnt offrings thereon vnto the Lord thy God.

7 And thou ſhalt offer peace offrings, & eat there, & reioyce before the Lorde thy God.

8 And thou ſhalt write vpō the ſtones al the words of this law wel & plainly.

9 And Moſes & the Prieſts ẏ Leuites ſpake vnto all Iſrael ſaying, take heede & heare O Iſrael; this day thou art become the people of the Lord thy God.

10 Thou ſhalt hearken therefore vnto the voyce of the Lord thy God, and do his commandements & his ordinances which I command thee this day.

IN yeſterdayes Lecture Moſes hauing exhorted ẏ people to ſerue God, declared ẏ the couenant which hee hadde made with them was to their great profite. For the more that God beſtoweth on vs, the more particularly are we, (if wee bee not voyde of all ſenſe and reaſon) bound to giue our ſelues ouer wholly vnto him. But yet for all that, though wee ſee that God is ſo liberall towardes vs, are wee mooued to offer our ſelues in obedience vnto him? [Noe verily]. For this cauſe Moſes ſayde vnto the Iewes: *that they were choſen to bee in praiſe, in name, and in glorie, as people ſhouled out from the reſt of the world vnto God.* Wheras ſome expound this, that they were in praiſe & glorie, to the end ẏ God might be glo-

be glorified: it is a harde & forced expoſition. The thing they ſay is in deed true in it ſelf, as it is ſaid often times in yͤ holy ſcripture, that God had choſen this people for his own name, as the end wherunto he hath created al things. And yͤ church was builded ſpecially to the intent that the name of God ſhould be exalted, as it is ſayd
Eſa.43.7. in the Prophet Eſay: & as S. Paul alſo leadeth vs
Ephes.1.6. vnto the ſame conſideratiō in the firſt Chapter to the Epheſians, where he treateth of yͤ thing more at large. Therfore it is true in it ſelf yͤ God adopted the Iewes to the intent yͤ they might know his exceeding fauour & goodnes, & that yͤ glorie which was due vnto him therefore might be yelded vnto him. But in this place Moſes had an eye vnto yͤ which we haue alreadie touched, to wit, that yͤ people might be the more moued & enflamed to diſcharge their ducties, becauſe God hath called them for none other reaſō, but to vtter foorth the infinite treaſures of his mercies. And therfore he ſaith: *Thy God hath placed thee this day in honor & in renoune, & in glorie,* according to this which hath bin ſaid afore in the fourth Chapter, What nation is ſo noble and of
Deut.4.33. ſuch dignitie, which hath his God ſo neere vnto him, as thy God hath made himſelf familiar vnto thee, to gouerne thee? This then was a dignitie which God had vouchſafed vppon yͤ Iewes aboue the reſt of all the world. And it ought to haue bin a cauſe to ſtirre them vp ſo much the more to bee obedient vnto the will & worde of God. And in deede if all be wel conſidered, wee ſhal finde that God can hope for nothing at our hands, nor receiue any thing of vs, but that wee hold al things of him. I pray you, when we haue taken neuer ſo great paines to exalt the name of God; ſhall it bee any whit increaſed thereby? What is it that we do vnto him? Surely, wee of our owne nature cannot but blaſpheme his name, and wee are the cauſe why it is blaſphemed: and if hee will drawe any good out of vs, hee himſelfe muſt firſt put it in vs. But when God hath once graunted vs the grace to glorifie him, doe wee bring any thing vnto him; or doth hee receiue any profite of vs? Doutles no. Yet in the meane time he powreth out his benefites, ſo as wee holde all of him, as I haue alreadie tolde you. So then not without cauſe doeth Moſes declare vnto the Iewes, that they were called to glorie, to renoune, and to praiſe, to the ende hee might vpbrayd them with their vnthankefulneſſe, if they enforced not themſelues wͭ all their power to ſerue God; who ſhewed him ſelfe ſo liberall towardes them. And this toucheth vs alſo nowe adayes. For ſeeing it pleaſeth God to imprint his image in vs; is it not a preheminence which hee giueth vnto vs aboue all the creatures in the worlde, to be called vnto the company of the Angels, and to bee members of our Lord Ieſus Chriſt? Foraſmuch then as hee ſo preuenteth vs with his goodnes; what remaineth but that wee ſhoulde giue our ſelues wholly vnto him, and ſhewe, that ſeeing hee hath filled vs with his glorie, wee will not cauſe his name to bee ſet light by, nor the doctrine of ſaluation which hee hath giuen vs, to be reproched, that the vnfaithfull ſhould make a ſcorne of it? Let vs therefore giue all diligēce hereunto: as we ſee we be warned in this place. And that is the verie thing alſo whereat Moſes aimeth when he addeth: *That when the people hauing paſſed Iordan ſhall come into the lande which was promiſed vnto them, and haue it in full poſſeſſion, they ſhall then ſet vp great ſtones, and write vpon them an abridgement of the lawe.* And ſecondly that they ſhal erect alſo an altar, to giue thanks vnto god, and to teſtifie that hee had fulfilled the promiſe which hee had made in former time vnto their fathers. This (I ſay) is the intent & meaning of Moſes, namely that yͤ people ſhould not only for one time giue thanks vnto God, but that they ſhould do it afreſh when they come into yͤ lande which was promiſed vnto them: and that they ſhould ratifie that which they had before confeſſed, yͭ is, that they owed al homage vnto God for that land, becauſe it was giuen vnto them of his free beſtowed goodnes, & not gottē by their own power, not befalne vnto them by any kind of chaunce, or by the gift or helpe of men.

But we haue to note the maner & faſhion of yͤ ſpeach which Moſes vſeth; he ſaith, *That he & the Elders of Iſrael commanded the people ſaying, Doe that which I command thee.* I grant that this might be referred vnto Moſes, becauſe he was yͤ chiefe ſeruant of God in publiſhing of the law; but it is certaine yͭ both he & the Elders ſpeak in yͤ name & as it were in the perſon of God. And yet it would ſeeme at the firſt bluſh that this ſentence were not wel framed. Moſes and the Elders ſay vnto the people, *Do that which I command thee:* but they are many, & yet here is mention made but of one alone. Yea, but (as I haue alredy told you) it was requiſite that yͤ Iewes ſhould be taught yͭ theſe things proceeded not from men but from God, who ſpake by their mouth. Wee ſee then yͭ Moſes and the Elders come not heere in their owne perſons as attributing any thing to their owne worthineſſe, neither ſtep they foorth vppon their owne heads, ne to charge the people with any lawes: but were the inſtrumentes of God to deale foorth faithfully whatſoeuer was committed vnto them. Nowe if Moſes which was the excellenteſt of all Phophets (as we ſhall ſee hereafter) did neuertheleſſe reſtrayne him- Deut.34.10. ſelfe with ſuch modeſtie, that he vſurped not the authoritie to ſpeake any thing in his owne name: what ſhall we ſay of them which gouern the Church nowadayes? Wil they ſay that they exceede Moſes? Let vs note then that Paſtors are not appointed to ſet foorth whatſoeuer doctrine ſhall ſeeme good vnto themſelues, nor to bring mennes ſoules in ſubiection and bondage to them; nor to make lawes and articles of faith at their owne pleaſure: but onely to bring to paſſe that God may beare rule, and that his worde may bee harkened vnto. Let that bee noted for one poynt. Wee ſee then that all the traditions of men which are nowe adayes in the Popedome in ſteede of the pure worde of God, are but vaine things: and that they muſt bee all beaten downe, and that the true gouernement which God liketh of, muſt be eſtabliſhed againe in his Church: that is, that men hearken vnto him, that they ſubmit themſelues vnto him, that both great and ſmall receiue that which is deliuered in his name, & that men paſſe no farther. Let this be wel noted. But withal wee muſt alſo note, that when they which are appointed miniſters of the word of God, do their office faithfully; then they may ſpeake with maſterly authoritie, as they ſay. And in deede we heare how Moſes with the reſt of the Elders ſayeth, *I commaunde thee this day, keepe my ſtatutes.* It is not for a mortal creature to aduance himſelf ſo hy: no, but becauſe Moſes bringeth nothing of his own, but is a faithful miniſter of God, & doth nothing but expound the law euen as it is giuen & committed vnto him, therefore hee ſticketh not to ſpeake as from an high, as one hauing all power & authoritie. Therefore when we bring nothng but the pure doctrine of God without falſifying of it, or without adding any thing thereunto of our owne: then may wee bring into captiuitie all the loftineſſe of men as S.Paul ſayth, 2.Cor.10.4. ſo as no man may exempt himſelfe from the doctrine which is put forth vnto him, but that euen they which are the greateſt muſt ſubmit themſelues vnto it. The ſeruants of god then muſt ſo behaue themſelues as they may not be of a fearful mind 1.Tim.1.7. to yeeld to the world whē it rebelleth, & wil not be willingly ſubdued: but that they muſt holde their own with inuincible conſtancie, challenging to their maſter the honor of ſoueraintie, & the ouerruling of al the world. This is the thing which wee haue to beare in minde concerning this place.

But let vs come now vnto yͭ which is ſaid. The Iewes are commanded, *To gather great ſtones, & to whitelime them ouer, & ſo to engraue the law of god vpon them, that the letters might be eaſily read,* & ſecondly they are commanded *To buyld an altar on the hil of Hebal, & there to ſacrifice vnto God.* As touching yͤ altar we haue already ſaid, yͭ it was a ſpecial witnes of yͤ peoples doing homage vnto god for yͤ land which they knewe they helde of him. For in deed yͤ law was there ingraued, to yͤ intēt yͭ the remembrance thereof ſhould be renewed, & that yͤ doctrine therof ſhold be laid open and made cōmon vnto al men; & yͭ at their firſt entrance into yͤ land they might haue a marke to put them in mind, to ſay: This is a land dedicated vnto God. And like as princes ſet vp their armes & their enſignes in yͤ endes & borders of their ſeignories & kingdoms: euen ſo yͤ armes of God were ſet vp in yͤ place, that men might ſee not a puppet or ſome ſuch other thing: but yͤ law of God written, to the intent yͭ men might ſay, Behold it is the liuing God that hath dedicated this people vnto himſelf, & choſen them for his ſeruice, yͭ he might be honored & called vpō of thē. Thus ye ſee in effect what we haue to beare in mind. But before we paſſe any farther, let vs conſider why it is ſaide yͭ they ſhall not make or buyld yͤ altar of carued or pulliſhed ſtones, and yͭ they muſt not lift vp an hammer or any other toole vpon it, but yͭ the ſtones muſt be taken as they come to hand, without any fitting of them, by reaſon wherof it ſhold be but as a rude heap. This place hath without cauſe much troubled many men, neither could they in the ende finde out yͤ meaning of it without ſome allegory, ſaying, yͭ when God commanded to haue the altar made of rough & vnhewen ſtones, it was to ſhew yͭ he taketh no pleaſure in any inuentions of mē, & that he will haue no curious workmanſhip in his altar, to the intent we ſhould be warned, yͭ to ſerue him aright wee muſt make no mingling wͭ our own deuiſes, as in deede we ſee it is not lawful for mē to forge at their own pleaſure any ſeruice of God, for he liketh of obedience aboue al things: & ſo this ſenſe of theirs is in it ſelf true, but it is nothing to the meaning of the place. Moſes hath an eye vnto another thing, to wit, that there ſhold be but one altar to ſacrifice vnto God. And in verie deede wee ſee that when yͤ two trybes & the halfe were returned home after yͤ conqueſt of the land of Chanaan, & had erected an altar, Ioſua.22. they were in danger to haue bin vtterly deſtroyed & rooted out for it. For when newes therof came to the reſt of yͤ Tribes, they ſayd: What meaneth this making of a double altar vnto God? And therupon they went al forth to battel to deſtroy yͤ Tribes which dwelt beyōd Iordan, & to put them to horrible ſlaughter: and that was becauſe God had cōmanded, that they ſhould make but one only altar. And the reaſon hereof was to maintaine the vnitie of faith & agreement among yͤ Iewes. We know yͭ although yͤ law containe the perfect doctrine of ſaluation: yet notwithſtanding it faileth not to be darke, as we haue alreadie ſeene. Therefore it behoued yͤ Iewes to be as it were inured to yͤ doctrine, that they might not wander. For wee ſee how fickle mē are, ſo as they be eaſily turned aſide to make diuerſe ſects, & euery man hath his deuotion a part by himſelf. God therefore minding to preuent that miſchiefe, wherunto he ſaw men ouermuch giuen by nature, would there ſhoulde bee but one ſingle altar. But now if they ſhould haue made an altar of hewen & ſquared ſtones, it would haue laſted for euer. And what would mē haue ſaid hereupon? This is the altar whereon they ſacrificed vnto God. And thereuppon they would haue thought it to haue beene a ſeruing of God to haue ſacrificed there ſtill: and they which ſucceeded a long time after, woulde haue thought that the ſacrifices which had been offered there, would haue been of the more worthines, and that had beene an ouerthrowing of the order which God had eſtabliſhed among that people: it had bin the next way to bring in a general confuſion. We ſee what befel of the hil of Samaria, as the woman which ſpake to our Lord Iohn 4.20. Ieſus Chriſt declareth. What? (ſaith ſhe) did not our fathers ſacrifice on this mountaine? Becauſe Abraham, Iſaac, & Iacob had dwelt there, yͤ Samaritans bare themſelues in hand yͭ their tēple was more excellent & more holy than yͤ temple of Ieruſalem. Yea: but it was built againſt yͤ wil of God, it was an heatheniſh place, it was more ful of filthines & vncleanes than any brothelhouſe. Not but yͭ the people had thought they did wel, but we muſt alwais conſider whether god liketh of that which we do: if he do not, wo be vnto vs.

So then because men will needes without reaſon followe the examples which they heare, it was requiſite that there ſhould be no altars made of pulliſhed ſtones, for they would haue remained in their eſtate, & there would haue bin ſacrifices offered. Nowe ye ſee what abhominations proceeded therof in Iſrael, Ieroboam intending to
1.Kin.12.28 maintain his eſtate, erected an altar in Bethel, & wold haue God worſhipped there, & ſacrifices to be offred there vnto him. He ſayth vnto thẽ, wel, behold, we ſacrifice vnto God, which brought vs out of the land of Egypt. He proteſteth yͭ he will ſerue no Idols, & yet notwithſtanding he ſerueth thẽ. Yea verily: for it was Gods will to haue his temple built in Ieruſalẽ where it was, & we haue ſeen heretofore yͭ he reſerueth the authority vnto himſelf to ſay: Thou ſhalt call vpon me in that place which I haue choſẽ to haue my name called vpon there. For it is not for men to ſay, let vs
Deut.16.2. worſhip God in this place; but they muſt keepe thẽſelues vnto yͭ which he hath cõmãded in that behalfe. Ieroboã therfore in making a ſecond tẽple brought the ſeruice of god wholy out of kind. He corrupted & falſified yͤ true religion. In deed he made a faire proteſtatiõ (as I haue told you) yͭ he wold change nothing in the ſeruice of God: but we ſee what the meaning of God is; namely yͭ when they were come into yͤ lande of promiſe, they ſhould ſacrifice vnto him on the hill of Hebal, & there ſet vp an altar wͭ ſuch ſtones as came next vnto their hands, wͭout vſing any workmãſhip, to the intent it might be aboliſhed & that no mention ſhould remaine of it, to drawe yͭ into an euerlaſting rule which was done but for one time onely.

Now albeit that this Ceremonie ſerue not vs nowadaies: yet may we gather a very profitable doctrine of this place. And firſt of all let vs note that we muſt not ground ourſelues vpon yͭ which God hath cõmanded for a certaine time, as if it ought to be obſerued for euer. For vnder the law it was Gods wil yͭ men ſhold ſacrifice bruit beaſts vnto him; but nowadaies there is no ſuch thing. He required yͭ there ſhould be perfumes made, and lights ſet vp, & fire alwayes burning vpõ the altar. Theſe thinges are now done away, & if any man renew thẽ, they are but dung as we ſee how they are yet vſed in popery. When the Papiſtes côm & perfume their idols noſes, they beare thẽſelues in hand, yͭ it is an acceptable ſacrifice vnto God. And when they haue cõſumed much waxe on their torches & tapers & candles, O here is a wonderous great deuotion thinke they. And yet it is but a meere mocking of God. For it was his will to be ſo ſerued vnder the law: But if we ſhold now go & inlighten the ſun, yͭ is to ſay, if now after the cõming of our Lord Ieſus Chriſt into the world, we ſhould yet ſtil vſe thoſe lights as in the night & in the darke; it were a peruerting of the whole order of nature. The antient fathers walked vnder darke ſhadowes & therfore they ſtood in neede of thoſe aydes. And when they had a light, it was to ſhewe them, yͭ they came not to worſhip God at all aduentures, or at randon. but that they were guided & directed by the word of God, & by his holy ſpirit. And ſo they were held brideled, to the intent they ſhould not preſume vpon any thing on their own fancies. But as now we haue no need of al theſe things: for why? The
vaile of yͤ temple is rent in ſunder; & god ſheweth Matt.27.51
vs his face in yͤ goſpel, euen in yͤ perſõ of his ſon, ſo as we may now walk as at noone day. So then let vs conſider what is euerlaſting & what is but for a time; yͭ we make no fond & fooliſh confuſiõ ne do as the papiſts do. For yͭ is the fountain frõ whence ſo many ſuperſtitions haue riſen. When the Papiſtes baptiſe, they take ſpettle. And why? Forſooth becauſe Ieſus Chriſt did ſo. Yea but wold he haue it drawen into conſequence & that men ſhould make a rule of it, and yͭ his miracle ſhould be mocked at in baptiſme? Wil they make a young infant to ſpeake, by their ſpitting vpon his lips? Againe, they haue the annealing of the ſicke, and yͭ is a ſacrament with them. And why? Forſooth the Apoſtles vſed oyle when they healed yͤ ſicke. Yea, but yͭ gift ſerued but for yͤ begining of the goſpell, & now after yͭ we know yͭ miracles are ſeaſed, will we vſe the ſignes ſtill? Is not yͭ a mocking of God? By like then, the truth & ſubſtance of things muſt depart & the ſigne muſt remaine; yͭ were a goodly matter. Again, they haue retained other like things, as is lent. This is the faſt yͭ is to be kept, ſay the Papiſtes. The reaſon forſooth is, becauſe Ieſus Chriſt faſted. Yea, but did he which is yͤ fountaine of all perfection, and the mirror of all holines faſt euery yere? No: he faſted but once in his life. The Papiſts ſay yͭ wee muſt faſt euery yeere, and yͭ there is great deuotion & holines therin. Yea, but therin they would exceed Ieſus Chriſt. But in deed it is a diuiliſh ſuperſtition, to faſt 40. dais after yͭ maner, vpõ opi-
niõ yͭ by this means we may make ourſelues like Matt.4.2.
to Chriſt. For we know yͭ our Lord Ieſus ment to 1.King 19.8
ſhew thereby, yͭ he was then exẽpted frõ al condition of man, as the ſame was done in Elias by miracle, & likewiſe in Moſes, when hee publiſhed the law. And did yͤ Iewes follow Moſes and Elias therein? Or did any of ſo many holy prophets euer faſt yͭ faſt? No: for they knewe wel it was not cõmanded thẽ of God, and yͭ he made no cõmon rule of it, nor would haue yͭ thing drawen into example which he had once ordained for yͤ authoriſing of his law. So then we ſee yͭ it is very profitable to conſider what God hath for one onely time cõmanded, to the intent we peruert not al, nor deſire without any difference to do whatſoeuer is contained in yͤ holy ſcripture, wͭout knowing firſt whether it concerne vs & be ſpoken vnto vs or no. This is one point to be noted.

A ſecond point to be obſerued is yͭ we ought, as much as we may poſſibly to maintaine vnitie & agreemẽt among vs; as ſhal by & by be declared. It was Gods will there ſhould be no mo temples but one. And why? To yͤ intent it ſhold be as a bond to hold the people together in yͤ purenes and ſoundneſſe of faith. We haue one only God which is called vpon among vs, wee muſt come into one certaine place to ſacrifice vnto him, all of vs muſt there gather ourſelues together. It is true in deede yͭ we are not nowadaies tyed vnto any ſuch bondage; but howſoeuer it be, yet yͤ ſubſtance is remaining ſtill vnto vs. Let vs therfore take heede vnto all thoſe ayds which we haue to holde vs in this communion of faith, and in this vnitie which God requireth, let vs keepe them well, and let no man turne aſide from them. And as touching the outwarde order, we kno we that our Lorde Ieſus chriſt would haue men to aſſemble them ſelues together. I graunt wee are not bound to be al in one place, & mē alſo preach in diuers churches of one toune. And why? Bicauſe al the worlde can not heare one ſermon: but yet for all that, becauſe of our ſlowneſſe wee are ſo bounde that we muſt gather our ſelues together in the name of God. He that wil keepe him ſelfe in his howſe, deſpiſing the cōmon order, and will ſay, I can reade at home & edifie my ſelfe ſufficiētly there: ÿ man aſmuch as in him lieth breaketh in ſunder ÿ vnitie of faith & teareth in pieces the body of our Lord Ieſus Chriſt. We know ÿ baptiſme was ordained to ÿ intent it ſhould be as a cōmon ſeale ÿ we are the church of God, & are gouerned with his ſpirit. Now if euery man wil haue his baptiſme a part, what a wicked diſorder were it? The holy ſupper of ÿ Lord alſo is diſtributed as a cōmon food to ÿ intent we ſhould all cōmunicat of it. We are warned by it that we are one body. And as one loafe is made of many graines of corne, which are ſo mingled together ÿ they make but one ſubſtāce; euen ſo ought we to be knit together, if we will be accoūted for the children of God. Therefore if euery man ſhould haue his priuate ſupper, were it not a ẘdrawing of ourſelues frō the agreement & brotherhoode which Ieſus Chriſt would haue vs to keepe? In Popery euery mā muſt haue his altar & his chappell. Yea & they were of opinion, that God was much bound vnto thē for ſo doing. There ſhould haue bin one cōmō table (for I wil not ſay ÿ they haue turned ÿ cōmunion table into an altar to ſacrifice vpō, which thing in it ſelf is a diueliſh abhominatiō) but in ÿ meane time although they retain the word, yet wil they not haue a cōmon table for all the church. For euery man thruſteth in himſelf to ſay, O I wil haue a chappel, & there I will haue my deuotion by my ſelfe. When men be come to ÿ point, it is an horrible waſting of the Church of God; & the building of ſo manie ſeueral altars hath bin ÿ cauſe of the bringing in of ſo many ſectes & diuiſions. Although ÿ papiſts had placed no Idols in their churches, & althogh they had not ſuch a nūber of ſuperſtitiōs & Idolatries as wee ſee they haue; yet in doing of this one thing they haue broken ÿ vnity which chriſt hath ſolemnly ſet betweene his mēbers, & in the whole Church. What muſt we do then? Let vs indeuor to keepe ourſelues in brotherly agreement and vnder the ſignes & tokens which God hath giuen vs, and let vs continue therein, and make al thoſe meanes which he hath giuen vs, to ſerue vnto that ende. That is the doctrine which we haue to gather vpon this place.

But let vs returne now vnto ÿ which we ſayde in the beginning; that is, ÿ God hath here required of his people a ſolemne acknowledgement, how much they were bound vnto him. We are therſore exhorted to acknowledge ÿ benefits of God, yea & to occupy ourſelues therein, ſo as we neuer forget thē. The people in deed had already giuen thanks vnto God after they were come out of Egypt, in the wildernes, where they ſacrificed continually vnto him, but yet after they are paſſed ouer Iordā, they muſt begin to giue thāks again. And why? Becauſe mē would alwaies diſcharge their dutie towards God by halues: and they haue ſoone forgotten it, & thinke no longer what they owe vnto God. And ÿ is the cauſe why they muſt be occupied continually in ÿ ſelfſame thing. So then let vs note well, ÿ euen all ÿ time of our life we muſt apply our whole indeuour to magnifie & ſet foorth the name of God. For although we be not lodged in this land of Canaā; yet ÿ fauor of God ought to be aſmuch, or more eſteemed of vs, than ÿ earthly inheritāce which was giuen to ÿ children of Iſrael. For god hauing plucked vs out of the dungeons of death, & out of ÿ bondage of Satan, declareth ÿ we are bleſſed of him, and ÿ we are a roial prieſthood. 1.Pet.2.9. And who is he ÿ can diſcharge himſelfe in magnifying ſo great & ſo ineſtimable a goodnes of God? So thē becauſe we are ſlow & ſlacke to giue ÿ glory vnto God which is belonging vnto him; and becauſe ÿ when we haue once done it, we thinke it ynough & we are loth to do it again; let vs beare in mind this leſſō which is taught vs here, that is, ÿ according as God increaſeth his giftes in vs, & as hee confirmeth & ratifieth them, ſo ought we on our part to be ſo much ÿ more moued & ſtirred vp to yeelde him praiſe, declaring thereby, how much we are bound vnto him, and proteſting ÿ we are wholly his, and ÿ we will dedicate our whole life vnto him. This (ſay I) is ÿ thing which we haue to beare in minde as touching this place, where mention is made of ſacrificing vnto God.

Now after that Moſes hath named *The whole burnt offring*, he addeth, *Thou ſhalt offer alſo the peace offeringes vnto the Lord thy God*. Nowe before he ſhewed ÿ the peace offerings ſerued for thanks giuing, ſo as if God had deliuered his people, if he had giuen thē any victorie againſt their enemies, if he had deliuered thē frō famine or any other calamitie; then they ſacrificed, in witnes ÿ this benefit deſerued, not to be forgotten. We ſee then ÿ Moſes aimeth altogether at ÿ which wee haue alredy declared: namely, ÿ the people ſhold make an acknowledgement of this benefit vnto God after ÿ they were come into the land of Canaan. And whereas Moſes ſayth ÿ it was a Land flowing with milke & hony (as we haue already ſeene afore) it is to ÿ intent ÿ the people ſhoulde be the more ſtirred vp to giue glory vnto God, when they ſee ÿ the land was ſo fertill, and that God had ſhewed himſelfe ſo liberall towardes thē. We know ÿ at this day it is not ſo fruitfull a land, neither was it ſo fertill before their cōming thither, and ÿ is a wonderful thing. And yet notwithſtanding ÿ wicked haue taken occaſion hereupon, to blaſpheme, as ÿ wicked heritike which was puniſhed here, mocked both Moſes and the prophets ſaying, ÿ when they praiſed the land of Chanaan, they did but fable. Yea but he ſheweth himſelfe (as all deſpiſers of God & ſuch enraged folke whom Satan poſſeſſeth vſe to do) to skorne Gods benefits which men may ſee ẘ their eyes.

Neither conſidered he, ỹ (as it was ſhewed vnto him, notẘſtanding ỹ he continued in his wilfull ſtubbornnes) God did expreſly threaten to ſowe Pſal.107.34. ſalt vpon ỹ land, that is to ſay, to make it baren: & at this day alſo men ſee it deſolate & waſt. So as it is a dreadfull thing to beholde, what ỹ ſtate of ỹ countrey is at this day, in cõpariſon of ỹ it is knowen to haue bin heretofore. For our Lorde hath ſheweth by effect, ỹ which is ſaid in the 107 Pſal.107.37 Pſalme: namely, ỹ when it pleaſeth him to bleſſe a land with fruitfulnes, it ſhalbe fat & ful of al maner of fruits; and contrarywiſe ỹ when he liſteth to make it barren, it ſhalbe cleane withered. We ſee this to be true in the lande of Chanaan. So then let vs note ỹ Moſes meant to ſhewe heere more particularly the fauour which God ſhewed to his people, in nouriſhing thẽ in ỹ land for the which he made it as a man wold ſay to flow with milke & hony, ſhewing therby ỹ that was done euen by miracle. Now for our part it is true ỹ we ſhall not be fat fed as in reſpect of our bodies: but yet in feeling the ſpirituall benefites which God beſtoweth largely vpõ vs, we ought to be moued & ſtirred vp to this conſideration, that when we haue proteſted as ſolemnely as is poſſible, ỹ wee are his, and ỹ we owe all vnto him; yet we are not diſcharged of the hundredth part of our dutie.

And as touching ỹ which is added cõcerning the great ſtones, wheron God cõmanded his law to be written; according vnto ỹ which wee haue already touched; let vs note, ỹ God ment to hold his people vnder his obedience by al ỹ means he might. For men by reaſon of their infirmitie, had neede to be held in awe: and to be called backe vnto God, to the intẽt they ſwarue not aſide frõ him. I haue already brought a cõpariſon from ỹ armes of Princes; in ſteed whereof God woulde haue his law to be writtẽ. And why? For his lawes are his true armes: & his worde the liuely image wherin we ought to behold him. And ỹ is ỹ cauſe why he ſayth, ye ſhal come & preſent yourſelues before my face, when they preſented thẽſelues before the arke, wherein ỹ law was encloſed. For God would not haue any other ſhape wherby to be repreſented vnto men, than only the cõtinuall inſtruction of his worde, according vnto that Deut.4.12. which we haue already ſeene in the fourth chap. where it is ſaid, remẽber ỹ you ſawe not ỹ ſhape of man, or of any creature whatſoeuer, but you heard the voice of your God. Take heed therfore how ye coũterfeit any thing in this behalf. Now foraſmuch as we haue ỹ vnderſtanding hereof, let vs note ỹ when our Lord vouchſafeth to haue his word preached in any place, and lodgeth vs quietly as it were with his owne hand; it is to the intent we ſhould do him double homage. As many as liue in ỹ worlde & are fed and ſuſtained by God, ought therefore to confeſſe ỹ he is worthie to haue all ſoueraintie ouer them. But ſeeing we haue ſuch a ſpeciall priuilege of God, as to be ſeparated frõ the reſt of the worlde, & to haue his word preached vnto vs, & to haue libertie to call vpon his name purely: ought wee not to enforce ourſelues to do him double homage for it? Surely this ought now adaies to be throughly cõſidered of. For how great fauour doth God ſhewe vs, in that we may vſe his ſacraments with all liberty, and haue our eares euery day filled with the doctrine of ſaluation; ſo as he ceaſeth not to call vs vnto himſelfe? Wee ſee on the other ſide many wretched people which are held in bondage vnder the tyranny of ỹ Pope, & dare not once open their mouth or make ỹ leaſt countenãce of worſhipping God purely, they haue neither churches to reſort vnto, nor any means to be taught: the world ſees this. So then we ought in deede to haue the armes of God, wherby ỹ lawe ſhould be preſented. But we ſee the cleane contrary; for as ſone as any man cõmeth neere vnto vs he ſhold perceiue a wonderful chãge in vs by our ẘdrawing of ourſelues frõ the defilements of the vnbeleuing; but whereas men ſhould ſee ỹ God raigneth & beareth rule among vs, & hath his ſeat & throne with vs; they may ſee vs as looſe in liuing as the very ignoraunteſt in all the worlde, nay a man may ſee ỹ God is defied of ſome of thẽ, vnto whom the goſpell is preached, & that there are worſe diuels & more wicked among thẽ, than in the deepeſt dungeon of poperie. And this deſerueth double woe. For it is not only to the Iewes that Moyſes hath ſpoken, but it is to ſhew vnto all in generall, ỹ as God vouchſafeth vs the fauor to be his, euen ſo we ought to remoue al corruptions frõ among vs, ỹ men may know ỹ we are in deede his people. Yet notwithſtanding, this importeth not ỹ they which liue in popery are to be excuſed. Although they be neuerſomuch threatned, & can not make a free confeſſion of their faith ẘout danger of death: yet they are alwaies guiltie of offending God, in ỹ they haue not honored him. Now if there be no excuſe for them, how great ſhall our condemnation be? For there is nothing to hinder vs from ſeruing of God, ſaue only our owne wickednes & negligence. So then let vs be diligent to diſcharge our duetie, not as touching the outward ceremony of great ſtones which is cõmanded here: but as in reſpect of the thing which God had a ſpecial eye vnto; namely that euery of vs ſhould not only yeeld ourſelues vnto his obedience, & dedicate ourſelues to follow his will; but alſo ỹ with one cõmon accorde, we ſhould ſhewe ỹ he is our ſoueraigne king and that we are vnder his gouernmẽt; and ỹ becauſe he hath plãced vs in ſuch a place where his name is openly called vpon, & where there are Churches for vs to come together to make our cõmõ prayers, & to confeſſe our faith in; we alſo do indeuor to walk in ſuch ſort, as men may in deede know, ỹ thoſe places are not defiled, but reſerued vnto ỹ glory of him who hath choſẽ thẽ to ỹ vſe.

Now for the end & concluſion let vs note that our Lord will not haue his armes blaſed in ſuch ſort as men like of, but ỹ hee will haue his owne Image to be knowen in them: and ỹ is the cauſe why he ſpeketh purpoſly of ỹ law. *The words* ſaith he, *of the lawe*. The Papiſtes haue chappels, they haue croſſes, they haue gay paintings, & they bere thẽſelues in hand ỹ God is repreſented by them: but he liketh none of all thoſe thinges. What is to be done then? We muſt returne vnto ỹ word, which is the meane whereby God openeth himſelfe vnto vs, & thereby will he be knowen. Let men therfore content thẽſelues ſimply therwith. Now as touching that which he ſaieth, *Let theſe wordes bee well engraued*: hereby we are taught, yͭ God gaue not his law for a few people, but ment yͭ it ſhold be a cõmon doctrin vnto al, both great & ſmal, euen to yͤ moſt Idiots: and yͭ all ſhould be inſtructed by it. And if it were ſo in yͤ time of the law, by greater reaſõ ought it nowadaies to be in force among vs. For of the goſpell it is ſaid yͭ it Mar.16, 15. ſhould be preached vnto al creatures. God therfore will not haue his doctrin locked vp, and that none but the clergy ſhould thruſt their noſe into it: but he will haue vs all to be his ſcholers, & the law ſo written, yͭ euery mã may read it. And why? To the intent yͭ all men ſhould receiue inſtructiõ by it. Let none therfore exempt himſelfe frõ the reading of it, as we ſee many do, which ſay, O I am no clerke, I neuer went to ſchoole: it pertaineth not to my occupation. I grant in deed yͭ it is not euery mans occupation to be a teacher. But who may exempt himſelfe frõ being a ſcholer in yͤ word of God? It is all one for a man to renoũce chriſtianity, & to ſay, ô as for me, I know neither A nor B; what can I tel what yͤ law of God or any holy ſcripture meaneth? Neuertheleſſe, yͤ will of God which is declared to vs in his word, is written in letters big ynough, & albeit yͭ noweadaies there be not any heape of ſtones ſet vp for yͤ law of God to be written & engraued thereupon; yet notwͭſtanding our Lord ment to ſhew vnder this figure, yͭ whẽ he hath deliuered his word, it is to yͤ intent yͭ we ſhould be taught, & ordered by it, & yͭ the doctrine thereof ſhould be cõmon vnto al. And truly we haue no leſſe neede to nouriſh our ſoules with yͤ word of God, thã to ſuſtaine our bodies with bread & other daily food. Seeing then it is ſo, let euery of vs labor yͤ way, & let vs be attentiſe to harken vnto our God whẽ he ſpeaketh vnto vs by yͤ mouth of the miniſter; & whẽ we haue his holy ſcripture, let euery man endeuour to be taught by it: they then which haue no skill to reade thẽſelues, let them heare it read, yͭ we may ſhew, yͭ ſeeing our Lorde ſpeaketh vnto vs, we on our ſide are ready to receiue yͭ which he ſhal ſay, & deſire nothing elſe, but to profit vnder him; & yͭ in ſuch ſort, yͭ his word be not only engraued in ſtone & chalke but alſo imprinted in our hartes, ſo as in our whole life we ſeeke to followe it, and giue our ſelues wholely vnto it.

Nowe let vs kneele downe in the preſence of our good God with acknowledgement of yͤ great nũber of faules & offences which we ceaſe not to cõmit daily againſt his maieſtie, praying him to make vs feele thẽ better thã we haue done: yͭ we may endeuor to amend thẽ more & more, vntill we be cleane rid of them, and yͭ foraſmuch as we obtaine pardon for thẽ by the meane of our lord Ieſus Chriſt, we may alſo increaſe & be cõfirmed in al righteouſnes & holines, yͭ ſo we may in deed confirme our calling: and yͭ foraſmuch as he hath choſen vs for his people, yͭ it may pleaſe him alſo to withdraw vs frõ al the defilements of yͤ world, ſo as we may be vnto him an holy people in the name of our lord Ieſus Chriſt. That it may pleaſe him to grant this grace not only to vs but alſo to all people and Nations of the earth, &c.

On Fryday the xxviij. of Februarie, 1556.

The CL. Sermon, which is the ſeconde vpon the ſeuen and twentith Chapter.

11 In that day Moſes commaunded the people, ſaying:

12 Theſe ſhall ſtande vpon mount Garizim to bleſſe the people when ye paſſe ouer Iordan: Simeon, and Leuy, & Iudath, & Iſſachar, & Ioſeph, & Beniamin.

13 And theſe ſhall ſtand vpon mount Eball to curſe Ruben, Gad, and Aſher, and Zebulan, Dan, and Naphtaly.

14 And the Leuits ſhall ſpeak & ſay vnto all yͤ men of Iſrael with a loud voice:

15 Curſed be the man that ſhall make any carued or molten Image, which is an abominatiõ vnto the Lord, the worke of the hands of the crafteſman, & putteth it in a ſecret place: and al the people ſhal aunſwere and ſay: ſo be it.

WE ſaw yeſtarday how God mẽt that the fauour which he ſhewed vnto yͤ people of Iſrael ſhold be reknowledged firſt by ſolẽn ſacrifice, & ſecondly by a monument ſet vp, to the ende yͭ it might be knowen, yͭ this land was not purchaſed by mãs hand or by any power of man, but that it was giuen of God vnto yͤ people for an inheritance. But now we haue an other cõmandement whereby God ment to binde yͤ people vnto him after an other maner. In deede he had done it already; but becauſe men are ſo harde to be tooted, and yͭ they can not be bound with too many bandes & cordes to hold thẽ vnder obedience; it is not without cauſe yͭ God would ad further that which is ſet downe here, to keepe thẽ the better vnder obedience. Wee haue alreadie treated that when God gaue his lawe, it was a mutuall couenaunt: and like as he bounde himſelfe vnto the children of Iſrael to be their God, ſo alſo the people of Iſraell bound thẽſelues to be his people. But here is yet another confirmatiõ added, to ratifie that firſt bonde the better; which is, that God ordained yͭ when they were paſſed ouer Iordan, yͤ people ſhould part thẽſelues in twaine, and that ſixe tribes ſhould keepe thẽſelues vpon the mount of Garizim, and the other ſixe tribes ſhoulde ſtande vppon the hill of Heball right againſt them, ſo as the Arke of the couenant and the prieſts ſhould ſtand in the middeſt, and that they which were on the part of Garizim ſhould bleſſe & thoſe which were on the ſide of Hebal ſhould curſe. Now this curſing & bleſſing is referred vnto ẏ which we ſhall ſee hereafter, which ſhalbe anon touched in this chapter. For God to incourage his people the better, did not only declare vnto thẽ his wil, & ſay, You ſhal walke thus: but alſo added by & by, you ſhall not ſerue me in vaine, your paines ſhall not be loſt: for I wil cauſe you to proſper, it is for your owne welfare that I would haue you to be ſubiect vnto me, I ſeeke after no profit or auantage therby, but it is for your owne benefit & cõmodity, ẏ you ſhold cleaue vnto me, in keeping of my cõmãdements. Lo what bleſſings God gaue, to ẏ intent the people ſhould ſerue him wͭ a willing mind & not through force or conſtraint. Again, becauſe men are ſo ſtifnecked, ẏ they ſtoop not but with much ado, and becauſe on ẏ other ſide their luſts cary thẽ ſo headlong away, that they quickly forget what it is to ſerue God, & play the wild horſes which are broken loſe; here are threatnings added: Take heed how you offend mee, for vengeance is ready for them ẏ deſpiſe my lawe. Thus ſee you what the curſings are which we ſhall ſee more fully in the 28. chap. but Moſes toucheth thẽ here as it were by way of example. Now it were ynough if God had but pronounced & ſaid, Whoſoeuer ſerueth me in keeping my law, he ſhalbe bleſſed, & I will make his whole life proſperous vnto him. Seeing God hath once promiſed to recõpẽce thẽ which ſerue him, it ought wel to ſuffice vs. What neede men to ſpeake in their owne behalfe? Likewiſe ſeeing God pronounceth ſentence of cõdemnation vpon them ẏ tranſgreſſe his law, foraſmuch as ẏ Iudge himſelfe hath ſpoken; no man ought to reply. What neede is there then ẏ we ſhould ratifie ẏ which God hath ſaid, as if his word were not of ſufficient ſtrength & authoritie in it ſelfe? True it is ẏ god deſerueth wel to be harkned vnto, & ẏ thing which he ſaith is as an vnchãgeable decree: but yet he wil haue men by outward witneſſing to allow ẏ which he willeth vs to followe, he will haue vs to acknowledge the fauor which is offered vnto vs, & to declare ẏ we are aſſured by faith, ẏ he will not deceiue vs in promiſing vs proſperitie when we indeuour to liue according to his word. God therefore will haue vs ſo agree with him, ẏ we alſo confeſſe in hũblenes & feare, ẏ there is great reaſon why hee ſhould puniſh all thoſe ẏ deſpiſe & ouerthrow his righteouſnes, & cõmandements. And when he threatneth them, we may not thinke ẏ it is in vain, but ẏ in the end they ſhall feele the execution of ẏ ſentence. God therfore in this reſpect wil haue vs to ſay Amen, both to the promiſes which he maketh vnto thẽ ẏ keepe his lawe, & vnto the threatnings which he denounceth againſt all thẽ ẏ are rebels & deſpiſers of him. So thẽn we haue now made a good enterance vnto the vnderſtanding of this place. As touching the bleſſinges and curſings, we ſhall more fully treate of them in ẏ chapter folowing: and we ſhall do better to keep thẽ to be handled there, becauſe the place is more fit for thẽ. It ſuffiſeth to knowe in a worde, ẏ when God offereth his fauour vnto thoſe ẏ obey him, it is to the end they ſhoulde ſerue him, not through conſtraint, but of a free good will: knowing ẏ it is for their owne cõmoditie, & welfare, and againe ẏ on the other ſide ſuch as are of their owne nature giuen ouer to their luſtfull deſires, & take to thẽſelues a lawles libertie of liuing il, muſt be withheld by feare ſith they ſee ẏ they ſhall not eſcape ẏ hand of God, but ẏ in the end they muſt come to their account. Thus ye ſee what we haue to beare in minde in a worde vntill wee come to handle the matter more at large.

Moreouer let vs note well ẏ which wee haue ſaid, namely ẏ God thinks it not ynough to haue ſpoken himſelfe; but he will haue vs alſo to agree as it were in one melodie with him. And ẏ is to ſhew the faith which we haue in his word, which conſiſteth in theſe two points: namely, ẏ we imbrace his promiſes & hang wholy vpon thẽ: and ſecondly ẏ we tremble, as oftẽ as he giueth vs any ſine of his wrath, ſo as we be not blockiſh, nor drouſie, nor ſo hardened that he muſt be faine to ſtrike vpon vs with maine blowes, before we can feele his anger: but ẏ we preuẽt it by indeuoring to obey him, & eſchew his vengeance as much as we can. Now then bleſſings in this place are conditional, to wit, bleſſed is hee which obſerueth ẏ law of God, which maintaineth his ſeruice purely, which is not giuen to ſuperſtitions nor Idolatries, which abuſeth not his holy name, which obſerueth the day of reſt, & al the other ceremonies, which honoreth his father & mother. This bleſſing (I ſay) is matched with condition, ſo ẏ if we ſerue God, he will ſhew himſelfe liberall vnto vs, & we ſhall not looſe our time: but yet doe all theſe bleſſinges depend hereupon, ẏ God of his free goodnes had choſen this people: ſo ẏ they might not reſt on this point, to ſay, Bleſſed is he which ſerueth God. And who is ẏ? For none diſchargeth himſelfe of this duty (as we haue already declared) & ſhall ſee further in ẏ ende of this chap. Seeing then ẏ we are all ſinners, yea euen the faithfull, inſomuch ẏ when they indeuour to walk vprightly they make many falſe ſteps; what ſhall become of vs then? It is certaine we ſhould be all depriued of the hope of ſaluation, if we had nothing elſe to leane vnto thã our owne righteouſnes. But (as I tolde you) ẏ promiſes which import a condition depende hereupon, ẏ God hath receiued vs for his people, & will haue vs to take him for our father. Now this thing is grounded on nothing elſe but vpon his mercie. So then we muſt be throughly perſwaded, ẏ God will take pitie on vs, though wee bee wretched ſinners, & deſerue not to be pitied: he will receiue vs for righteous & accept of vs, although we deſerue to be reiected of him. And althogh we can hope for nothing but vtter cõfuſion, yet notwͭſtanding we ſhalbe aſſured of the inheritance of ſaluation becauſe we are his children. We muſt be throughly perſuaded as touching this point. And ſecondly it remaineth ẏ ſeeing God hath chooſen vs our, & ſet vs apart for his ſeruice, we may not take libertie to all maner of wickednes, but indeuor to obey him. For this cauſe we muſt be quickened vp and pricked forward by his promiſes to ſerue him. Thus yee ſee howe the conditional promiſes ſhall not be in vaine in reſpect of vs:

namely, when they are referred vnto the freebeſtowed goodneſſe of God, whereby he receiueth vs although wee be not worthy to be receiued: and ſecondly he imputeth not our vices vnto vs: but although there be many ſtaines and corruptions in vs, yet he hydeth them and will not call them to account. And ſo we ſee now in what ſort God incouraged the people of Iſraell to bee of good comfort. For if hee had begun thus with them and ſaid: Serue me & you ſhal be well recompenſed for your labour, if God ſhould ſpeak this ſimple worde vnto vs, alas what ſhould wee do? For when we would thinke to ſerue him, we ſhould be very farre frõ the perfectnes which he cõmandeth vs: they which ſhould run beſt would be but in yͤ midway, when they ought to be come to their waies end. We ſhould therfore al be diſcoraged rather than haue any good hart. But we muſt ioyne both theſe things together, to wit, yͭ he will not deceiue vs in any thing, & ſecondly yͭ he bindeth vs to ſerue him, & declareth yͭ he wil beare with vs in our infirmities, & not deale ſeuerely with vs to pay vs as we haue deſerued, but vſe a fatherly goodnes. Now hereupon we may be of good cõfort to ſerue him, whẽ we may ſay, Surely it is true Lord, yͭ I diſcharge not my ſelf of yͤ hundredth part of my dutie towardes thee, but howſoeuer yͤ world goeth, yet thou wilt not faile to accept me becauſe thou reſpecteſt not what I doe, but takeſt a pleaſure in me as in thine owne childe. Ye ſee then how God pardoneth vs, and regardeth not our faults & imperfections which are in the ſeruice yͭ we yeelde vnto him. So wee ſerue him not hypocritically, but of an vnfained good will, he liketh of all yͭ we do, and rewardeth vs for it. Sith we heare this, let vs beſtowe our paines, let vs receiue the bridle into our mouths (as they ſay) and let vs go on; & although we be hindred by yͤ vices of our fleſh, yet let vs inforce ourſelues to go on further. And why? For we ſhal not looſe our labour. Thus ye ſee what the meaning of God is; whereby we perceiue his ineſtimable goodnes, in yͭ of his owne good wil he offereth his promiſes ſo vnto vs, whereas he is nothing bound vnto vs, as we haue ſeene heeretofore: but his will is to win vs vnto himſelfe by all the meanes that he may. Now he repeateth this point againe, and yͭ is done becauſe of our ſloth and negligence. For yͭ cauſe he addeth this aide, and all for our profit, for what is he aduantaged therby? Shall he gaine any thing by our ſeruice? Let vs defie him to the vtmoſt, what ſhall yͭ hurt him? but he wil poſſeſſe vs for our owne welfare.

And herewithall hee ſheweth vs alſo, what minde is requiſite for the obſeruing of his law in ſuch ſort as is required, to wit, if we come willingly and yeelde our ſelues vnto him, and place our whole felicitie & ioye in the ſeruing of him, and put this ſentence in vre, yͭ where our treaſure is, there will our heart be alſo. Ye ſee what we haue to note as touching yͤ firſt point of the bleſſings. What is it thẽ in effect, yͭ we haue to do? Althogh nowadaies we haue not the Ceremony whereof mention is made in this place, yet muſt the ſubſtance thereof be in force among vs, which is yͭ in ſeeking to ſerue God, we muſt haue an eye alwayes vnto his promiſes. Behold, our God calleth & allureth vs vnto him. And how? He might cõmande vs in one word, and ſay: You owe al vnto me, ſee therefore yͭ ye diſcharge yourſelues: but he beareth with vs, & vttereth a fatherly goodnes towards vs, in ſaying: My children, I will not haue your ſeruice vnrecõpenſed. In deede I owe you nothing, but yet neuertheleſſe I will be ſo bountiful aboue yͭ I need, yͭ if you ſerue me, your life ſhalbe happy, you ſhal proſper in all thinges. And beſides that, there is a ſouerain bleſſing for vs as touching the life euerlaſting. For all yͭ wee can deſire or looke for in this worlde, is nothing in compariſon of that ſaluation which wee hope for through faith; and all the bleſſinges which God promiſeth vs, & offereth vnto vs as touching the life to come. Therefore all this ought to make vs the readier & better diſpoſed to ſubmit ourſelues vnto God. For what? Seeing our lord ſeeketh nothing but our welfare in our obeying of him, & offereth vs a reward for our ſo doing; are we not too too wretched if wee enforce not ourſelues to ſerue our god? Ye ſee thẽ how we ought with our good conſent to ratifie all the promiſes which are contained in the holy ſcripture; that whereas others thinke it were but loſt time to do well, wee may alwayes haue this imprinted in our heart, that there is nothing better than to cleaue vnto God. The heatheniſh ſorte doe thinke themſelues very happie in following of their owne luſtes. When lecherous and couetous perſons haue ſcraped together on all ſides, they thinke all is well gained, and they triumphe in their dooinges. If the fornicatours who are brutiſh in their fleſhly luſtes, can enioy their pleaſures, they welter in them, they are drunken with them, they are wholly bewitched by them. If a vaine glorious man be in any dignitie, and be aduaunced to any authoritie among men; he thinketh there is no other ioye nor happineſſe, but to be in high eſtate. At the ſame point are all the deſpiſers of God. And in the meane time the poore faithfull ones are mocked: they are poore perſons, they are ſet at naught, they hang their winges, they doe nothing but droppe and pine away in this worlde. Theſe wretched ſoules (ſay ſome) are not well aduiſed to take ſo much paines they knowe not why; for what profite haue they for all their trauaile? It ſeemeth therefore that they which ſeeke to ſerue God are greatly beguiled, and that the wicked beare the whole ſway. But we muſt on the contrarie ſide be throughly reſolued heerein as it is ſayde in the prophet Eſay, Say ye; Yet there is fruit for the iuſt men, for they ſhall eat the fruits of their labours. The prophet Eſay would haue vs to fight againſt this temptation. Inſomuch yͭ although the worlde laugh the Godly to ſkorne, & the wicked triumph ouer them: yet for al that the faithfull ſhould not be aſtonied; but cõclude with thẽſelues, and ſay: No no: the righteous mã ſhall not looſe his labor; he ſhall not be deceiued of his expectatiõ when he depẽdeth wholy vpõ the promiſes of God. The thing then which we haue to gather vpon this place is, that as often as we reade the promiſes in the ſcripture where

it

Matt.6.21.

Eſa.3.10.

Pſal. 112. 1. Pſal. 119. 1. Matt. 19, 29 it is ſaid: Bleſſed is the man which feareth ỹ lord, they which ſhall walke in the obedience of his word ſhal be bleſſed: bleſſed is he which walketh vprightlie, and ſoundlie with his neighboures: but ſpecially they which renounce the worlde becauſe they haue a better inheritance in heauẽ: as often (I ſay) as wee reade theſe thinges, wee muſt be confirmed in our faith, and aunſwere with a good courage Amen, Lorde, it is ſo: wee replie not againſt that which thou haſt ſaide, we imbrace thy promiſes in this place, and truſt aſſuredly vnto them. Thus ye ſee howe euerie man ought to enforce himſelfe to ſerue G O D, euen becauſe hee beareth ſo gently with vs, & commaundeth vs not ſo preciſely as hee might, hauing all authoritie ouer vs, but applyeth him ſelfe to our rawneſſe to winne vs, and to enioye vs. And aboue all let vs bee mindefull of this generall promiſe, when God calleth vs vnto himſelfe as his children, when hee ſpareth vs and beareth with vs, and entreth not into any extremitie of rigour with vs, but although there be many faultes in our workes, yet they hinder not him to accept of them, ſo as if wee offende we alwayes find pardon at his hande, and when we ſwarue aſide, he bringeth vs into ỹ way, and none of al theſe thinges is imputed vnto vs. Ye ſee then what we haue to beare in minde as touching the firſt point.

Nowe as touching the ſeconde, let vs alſo note that the threatenings of God are verie neceſſarie for vs. For wee ſee howe great pride & rebellioufnes is in al vs: inſomuch that although we bee not rebellious of ſet purpoſe to ſet our God at nought, and to caſt off his yoke: yet wee are ſo bleare eyed, that we thinke not on him, ỹ intiſementes of the worlde ſeduce vs in ſuch wiſe, that we paſſe not for the receiuing of any warning that God giueth vs. If hee call vs by gentleneſſe hee can get nothing at our handes: and therefore hee is fayne to vſe threatninges. Hereby we ſee how he letteth paſſe nothing that is meete to hold vs in awe vnder his obedience. On the one ſide hee vſeth mylde and louing maner of ſpeach vnto vs, (as I haue told you) & ſaith, Come ye vnto me my childrẽ: Indeed I owe you nothing, but yet I wil bind my ſelf vnto you: I promiſe you that if you ſerue me, it ſhall be for your profite. Thus our Lorde ſpeaketh vnto vs, as a father that flattereth his childe to win him to be ruled by him & to employ himſelfe in his ſeruice with a freeharted affectiõ. Howbeit, God perceiuing that that is not enough to mooue vs, vſeth threatninges, and ſayeth: Take heede, if yee thinke to caſt away my worde, and yet to remaine vnpuniſhed, yee deceiue your ſelues, I muſt cal you to accoũt for it, I wil not ſuffer my children ſo to mock mee: I muſt be their Iudge: & looke not for any pardon, when you haue abuſed my patience: I muſt double your puniſhment, and my vengeaunce muſt fall more horribly vpon you. Therefore when God declareth that our ſinnes are vnpardonable, and yet wee continue in them, and make none account of ſubmitting our ſelues vnto him, ſpecially when hee applyeth himſelfe euerie way vnto vs, to the intent wee ſhoulde remayne in his obedience, and not periſh: Sith we ſee he hath ſuch a care of our ſaluation; muſt it not needes bee that wee are too too ſtubborne, or rather verie beaſtes if wee be not mooued to fare the better, by the fatherly care which hee ſheweth towardes vs? Yes: And therefore being ſtirred vp by the goodneſſe and gentleneſſe of God, whereof I ſpeake euen nowe, let vs alſo quicken vp our ſelues with his threateninges. When we ſee that our fleſhe is ouer wanton, and that it draweth vs vnto euill, let vs ſay, Alas: And ſhall wee ſhake off his yoke like wilde beaſtes? What hath God pronounced? Let vs tremble therefore when wee heare the threateninges of our God. For if the anger of an earthly king bee the meſſenger of death (as Salomon Prou. 16, 14. ſaith,) what ought wee to thinke of the anger of God, when it is denounced againſt vs? So then, let vs learne to tame our ſelues with feare. When the tentations of Satan might preuayle agaynſt vs, and that our ſinnes might bee as baytes to deceiue vs: let it come into our minde to ſay, What? Shal I vnder the pretence of ſome pleaſure which will ſoone vaniſhe, goe and prouoke the anger of my G O D, and ſo periſhe for euer? After that manner (I ſay) ought wee to call Gods threateninges to our remembraunce; and then to aunſwere thereunto Amen, and ſay, yea Lorde, it is euen ſo, it is no childrens game. When thou pronounceſt condemnation vppon the wicked; thou arte readie to execute it: and when thou haſt once pronounced the worde with thy mouth, it is all one as if wee ſawe the fire alreadie kindled to conſume vs. After that manner (I ſay) ought we to receyue all the threateninges which G O D denounceth againſt vs. For that is ỹ beſt meanes to teach vs to obſerue the Lawe, I meane ſo farre as our weakeneſſe will ſuffer. For (as I haue tolde you) it is not poſſible for vs to come to perfectneſſe indeede, as long as wee are incloſed in this fleſhe of ours: but yet neuertheleſſe wee may wel dedicate our ſelues vnto God, and bee helde in his feare, if on the one ſide his promiſes bee in force with vs, & againe if on ỹ other ſide we giue eare vnto his threatnings.

But nowe let vs come vnto the order which is obſerued is this place. *Moſes with the Prieſtes of the Trybe of Leuie, commaunded the people ſaying, Sixe Trybes ſhall ſtande on the Hyll of Heball, and ſixe ſhall ſtande on the Hill of Garizim.* And afterwarde hee ſaith, *Keepe my Statutes and Commaundementes which I commaunde you this daye, for yee are made a people vnto your G O D.* This hath beene alreadie expounded: but it is good to beare that alwayes in minde which hath beene ſaide concerning it; to wit, that G O D ſpeaketh by the mouth of his Prieſtes as if hee were there viſibly in his own perſon. And that is to the intent his wordes ſhoulde bee receiued with the greater reuerence. For when wee ſee but mortall men as wee bee: wee are of opinion that what ſoeuer proceedeth from them, may verie well bee reiected; and if there bee no account made of it, of it, wee thinke the matter is not great. And thus wee ſee howe the worde of God is oftentimes little eſteemed. For when wee ſee none ſpeake but creatures like vnto our ſelues, wee thinke that ẏ which they pronounce is nothing but a ſound of wordes. But God will haue the maieſtie of his word to be knowen: & although men bring it, and be the meſſengers thereof, yet will hee not haue the worthines thereof to bee diminiſhed, ſo as men ſhould not giue audience vnto it: but he will haue euerie man to ſtoope to it and to receiue the yoke which hee putteth vpon them. God therefore ſpeaketh in this place of Moſes and by the Prieſtes: but yet in ſuch a language and kinde of ſpeach, that he will haue people to lift vp their mindes more higher, and to knowe, that although they bee taught by the meane and miniſterie of man, yet they ought to confeſſe that God is the authour of that worde which men preach vnto them, and that they ought to receyue it as from God himſelfe & ſo be ſilent to heare it, and make no replie or gaynſaying againſt it: for ſuch contempt is not done to a mortal creature, but God himſelf is diſpiſed by it. And therefore let vs note well all the places whereby God authoriſeth his worde, to the intent we may learne to holde our ſelues vnto it and to bee ordered thereby: ſo as euery of vs do bowe downe his heade, as often as men ſpeake vnto vs in the name of God. And moreouer we ſee alſo the order which God hath appointed in his Church: he will haue all the worlde to aunſwere Amen: for wee ought al to be partakers of ẏ doctrine. It muſt not bee kept in ſtore onely for great men, but the ſmalleſt alſo muſt be inſtructed by it, to the edifying and profiting of them ſelues. But howſoeuer the caſe ſtande; there were alwayes Prieſtes to ſpeake, who were ordeyned to teach the people according as it is Mal.2.7. ſaide in the Prophet Malachie; the law ſhall bee in the Prieſts mouth, and he ſhall be the meſſenger of the liuing God, and they ſhall ſeeke for knowledge at his lips. We ſee then that God in all times appointed ſome in the office of teaching the people, and of bearing abroade his worde. And ſo nowe adayes wee ſtand in neede of ſuch an order, and wee knowe what Saynt Rom.12.6. Paul ſaith as touching this point, both in the 1.Cor.12.28 12. Chapter to the Romanes, and in the 12. of Epheſ.4.11. the firſt Epiſtle to the Corinthians, and in the fourth to the Epheſians. And it is prooued vnto vs alſo throughout al the holy ſcripture, that God will haue certayne lawes eſtabliſhed, and certaine men appointed to beare abroade his worde, and to bee teachers in his Church, to inſtruct the people in his name. Hereby wee gather, that when God hath appoynted ſuch order; all thoſe which can not ſuffer thẽſelues to bee taught by this common order with the whole bodie of the Church, may well proteſt, that they bee Chriſtians: but they come to the Church as holy as horſes, bearing themſelues in hande, that it is enough for them to haue graunted in a woorde, that the Goſpell is the worde of God. But contrariwiſe we ſee here, that if we wil be of the bodie of the Church, and haue God to take vs for his children, we muſt heare the worde of God as it is miniſtred vnto vs, by the miniſterie of men. But becauſe this point hath beene handled largelie heretofore, I do nowe but as it were glaunce at it by the way.

Alſo there is this point: *To day thou art made the people of God, if thou keepe his commaundementes.* Therefore like as our Lorde receyueth vs into his houſe, ſo muſt wee alſo wholy giue our ſelues vnto him, knowing that to this ende hee hath ſhooled vs out from the reſt of the worlde, and will haue vs to bee his owne, and as it were his peculiar inheritance. It is time indeede that all men are bounde to ſerue him: but yet notwithſtanding, when hee calleth vs vnto him, & ſheweth himſelfe our father, doth he not binde vs vnto him, with a double bonde? Yes verily. Are we not then without all ſenſe and reaſon, & altogether bewitched, if we be not mooued to yeelde our ſelues ouer to his will, ſo as hee may guide vs and beare rule ouer all our whole life? Then let vs wey well theſe woordes: *To day thou art made the people of the Lorde thy God, and therefore keepe his commaundementes.* Howe are wee made thẽ people of God, but by beeing his Church, and by hauing the vſe of his ſacramentes, and that is all one as if hee appeared among vs? For wee may not looke that GOD ſhould come downe from heauen in his owne perſon, or ſende his Angels vnto vs. But the true marke whereby he will bee knowen to bee among vs, is the preaching of his worde purely vnto vs: for no doubt but then he beareth rule in the middeſt of vs. So then let this thing profite vs, that we knowe that our Lorde receyueth vs vnto himſelfe & will haue vs to be of his owne houſeholde. Seeing it is ſo, let vs take paines to obey him in all our life, and to keepe his commaundementes: let vs not wander like brute beaſtes as the wretched vnbeleeuers doe, becauſe they neuer knewe what it was to bee of the houſe of God.

But nowe let vs come vnto the rehearſall which Moſes maketh of the curſes: he ſaith firſt of all, *Curſed bee hee which maketh anie Idoll or anie molten Image, or anie carued Image: all this is abhomination vnto God: and curſed is hee which putteth it in anie ſecrete place. And all the people ſhall ſay Amen.* Let vs note that Moſes doth not ſpecifie in this place al the curſes, euery one by himſelfe, but he ſetteth downe certain examples, to ſhewe that all they which ſwarue aſide from the law of God, ſeeke nothing elſe but to runne wilfully into vtter ruine and deſtruction. The effect therefore of all this is, that if we will proſper, we muſt drawe neere vnto God, ſeeing that hee is the fountaine of all happineſſe, and proſperitie. Whereas on the other ſide all they which depart from him doe goe and caſt themſelues into vtter deſtruction: but al they which caſt off the yoke of God, that is to ſay, which yeeld not themſelues to followe his law and his word, all they departe from him, and doe as much as in them lyeth, to baniſhe themſelues from his preſence. And ſo it is all one as if they did caſt them themſelues into the bottome of hel, and ſought nothing elſe in this preſent life, but to prouoke the vengeance of God againſt them,& ſo to ſeek their owne woe.Behold what we haue to beare in minde. Now God beginneth with his owne ſeruice: and not without cauſe: for (as we haue Deut.5.22. & 10.3. declared afore,)the lawe is diuided into two tables: to ſhewe vs that men ought firſt of all ſo to behaue themſelues as God may be honoured:& this is the firſt and principall dutie which wee ought to performe,becauſe we are his creatures, & becauſe he hath faſhioned vs vnto his glorie: let vs tend vnto that end,and let our life bee referred thereunto, ſeeing the firſt table ſheweth vs ſo briefly howe wee ought to behaue our ſelues towardes our God.That is the cauſe why God ſaith now in theſe curſes; *Curſed be he which maketh any Idol.* But I haue tolde you that Moſes rehearſeth only certaine ſorts;and that is to cōprehend the whole in one part, as we haue ſeene examples thereof. In effect therefore when it is ſaid: *Curſed be he which maketh any Idol,* it is al one as if Moſes had ingenerall pronounced a curſe vpō them,which falſifie and corrupt the ſeruice and worſhip of God, as if he he ſhoulde ſay: You knowe howe and after what manner our God will bee worſhipped of vs; whoſoeuer inuenteth anie maner of Idolatrie, whoſoeuer deuiſeth any maner of ſuperſtition, he maketh Idols.And that is not to ſerue yͤ liuing God, but rather to follow their owne fancies and imaginations:and therefore they are all accurſed.Ye ſee then howe wee ought to expound this place. And Moſes meant to ſet downe vnto vs in this place ſuch a particular,as wherein we might moſt euidently ſee an intollerable corrupting of yͤ worſhip of God. For when God is ſo miſhapen in any painting, or in any puppet,or in any other peece of wood or ſtone,that men wil there repreſent his Image & ſay, It is a reſemblance of him: it is too groſſe and outragious dealing. Indeede men think not ſo;as we ſee in poperie, how they ſay, Lo yonder is God, and a remembrance of him. And are they not ſo brutiſhe that they thinke there is no diuine maieſtie in heauen, vnles it be repreſented there in the ſhape of an Idol?But they which haue any taſt what GOD is, and haue hearde any ſyllable of his worde, where it is ſaid yͭ God Iohn.4.24. is an immortall and infinite ſpirit,the fountaine of life: do know that hee hath too great iniurie done vnto him, to be repreſēted by a dead thing and by a corruptible creature, and to haue his name giuen vnto a puppet as if hee were but a creature, & leſſe than we. They therefore which haue but a ſmall taſt of this doctrine,do abhorre the ſetting vp of an idol,and the imagination of ſeruing God by going thereto,& that any ſhould pray to a dead thing;or looke for health from yͤ, which can doe nothing, neither good nor bad. Therefore if this were well marked,wee ſhoulde finde that Moſes meant in this place to make Idolatrie more deteſtable,according to that rule which we haue heretofore expounded. Yet notwithſtanding we haue two things to note in this place: the one is,that God can not ſuffer his infinite maieſtie to bee repreſented vnder ſtone, woode, painting or in any other creature in the worlde. What muſt we doe then when the caſe concerneth the worſhippe of GOD? Wee muſt lifte vppe our mindes aboue the worlde, and knowe that wee may not ſticke faſt here belowe, nor make anie Idol or puppet vnto him: for he can not abide it. That is one point to bee noted. Secondly we haue alſo to note, that God will not be ſerued nor worſhipped after our own maner,but he will haue vs to walke according to his word,without putting any thing thereunto, or taking any thing from it, ſo as all the inuentiōs which men haue forged,are al one as if they had ſet vp as many Idols. Indeede they make themſelues beleeue that God wil like wel of that which they do: but it is but a bare geſſe of them, while they haue not a eye vnto yͭ which hee liketh. Therfore they ſerue their own fācies,& not the liuing God,who hath giuen them ſuch a rule as he wil haue obſerued. And therefore at a word all the worſhippings of God (as they terme thē) wherein men are ſo deuout after their owne fancies,and whereof they haue no warrant of the worde of God, to ſay, This he hath commaunded me: are nothing but Idols of their owne forging. Let this be well noted.

Now let vs conſider howe God ſaith, *Curſed is he which forgeth Idols.* It is true that the Papiſtes when they take paynes to trudge from altar to altar, to mumble their prayers before their Images, to ſet them out with waxe candles, and to doe their other dotages: if a man tell them that God diſliketh of all their dooings, it ſpiteth thē to bee tolde ſo, and they fall to rayling againſt God himſelfe.But yet for all that, whereas they thinke they win a ſcore of heauens, euerie ſteppe which they ſet foorth, is a caſting of themſelues into the gulfe of hell. And why? Make they neuer ſo faire replies; yet yͤ Iudge giueth this ſentence vpon them; *Curſed are all they which make Idols.* Let them goe ſeeke their wages at the diuils hande: our Lord hath already pronounced yͤ ſentence which is here contayned, to wit, curſed are al Idolaters. If any ſay it is no ſuch great harme for a man to do a thing of good intent, and to ſay I thinke it is good, I beleeue it is well done: Yet not withſtanding God deteſteth euerie whit of it,becauſe it is a forging of a newe God,when men turne themſelues from the pure ſimplicitie of the worſhip of God, to deuiſe this or that. Although they thinke to doe well, yet notwithſtanding they are accurſed. And why? For God diſliketh and condemneth that which they doe. And it is not for a mortall creature to promiſe this or that vnto himſelfe, but God muſt promiſe, and we muſt anſwere Amen. And likewiſe when he threateneth, we muſt bee confounded,and euery mouth muſt be ſtopped before him: he muſt haue audience, and wee receiue his threates and confirme them, as I haue told you. And here is purpoſely mention made of a ſecrete place to ſhewe that although a man be not conuicted before the worlde, yet hee ceaſeth not to be guiltie before God, and that the heauenly Iudge will finde him out well enough. Therefore let vs not beguile our ſelues, and thinke we ſhal eſcape and remaine vnpuniſhed,when men reproue vs not,ne conuict vs of the euil that we haue done. For we may wel ſeek ſtartingholes, but yet will God finde vs out,ſeeing he ſaith: *Curſed is hee which maketh an Idoll, and putteth it in a ſecrete place.* And againe hee ſaieth, *It is an abhomination vnto the Lord,* to ſhew,that mẽ muſt not beguile thẽſelues,by ſtanding vpõ their own opinion, or vpon ÿ iudgement of the world: It is ynough that God ſaith,ſuch a thing diſpleaſeth me. Although the world like of vs,yet gaine we nothing therby.So then let vs take heed that we frame ourſelues ſo vnto the will of God, as ÿ this world carie vs not away, and that wee ſerue not our owne nor other mens luſtes, but ſubmit ourſelues always vnto our heauenly Iudge.Thus ye ſee what we haue to beare in mind.For when God is to be ſerued,we muſt not looke whether there be any witneſſes of our doings here below; for although we may deceiue the whole worlde, yet God ſeeth vs,& wee cannot eſcape his ſight. What lurking places then ſoeuer we haue,let vs knowe that our condemnation is ready at hand. And thereupon let vs order our life ſo as GOD be ſerued and honoured, not only with our feet, our hands,and our eyes,but alſo with the ſeruice of our hearts, that is to ſay, with all our affections,and with al our thoughtes giuen ouer vnto him.And (to conclude) wee are taught that the Iohn.4.24. ſeruice of God is not without cauſe called ſpirituall: whereby we may vnderſtand,that it is not ynough for vs to do him reuerence before men, by kneeling downe, and by vſing of ſuch other Ceremonies,or by abſteining from ſeruing of Idols in the ſight of men;but alſo in ſecret when euery man is withdrawen into his ſecret places: euen then muſt we auowe him for our God, and all our affections muſt be held vnder his obedience, and wee muſt haue the pureneſſe which Saint Paul ſpeaketh of,namely the obedience of faith,by the which euery of vs may dedicate and Rom.1.5. conſecrate himſelfe wholly vnto God.

Now let vs kneele downe before the Maieſtie of our good God, with acknowledgement of our faultes, praying him that wee may bee touched more and more with true repentaunce, to be diſpleaſed with ourſelues, that in applying our whole ſtudie in the minding both his promiſes and his threatenings, we may not bee ſo froward as to caſt off his yoke,but rather bee helde backe alwayes by ſuch meanes as are fitte and conuenient for vs:and that we may yeelde vnto him a willing ſeruice,to the intent that as hee of his free goodneſſe hath called vs vnto him,ſo he alſo wil guide and gouerne vs by his holy ſpirit, that we may giue ourſelues ouer vnto him, and ſerue him in humblenes and feare, embracing his promiſes,and trembling at his threatenings: and that in the meane time he wil make vs feele that if we be ſo giuen to his ſeruice,he will make vs to proſper,and wee ſhalbee moſt happy, and that eſpecially,becauſe he hath ſet before vs the inheritance of the kingdome of heauen, which he hath purchaſed vnto vs in the perſon of his onely ſonne. That it may pleaſe him to graunt this grace not onely to vs, but alſo to al people and Nations of the earth,&c.

On Wedneſday the iiii. of March, 1556.

The CLI. Sermon which is the third vpon the ſeuen and twentith Chapter.

16 Curſed be the man which curſeth his father and his Mother: And al the people ſhall ſay, Amen.

17 Curſed be he which remoueth his neighbors boundes: And all the people ſhall ſay, Amen.

18 Curſed be he which maketh the blind goe out of the way: And all the people ſhal ſay, Amen.

19 Curſed be he which wreſteth the right of the ſtranger, the fatherleſſe, and the widowe: And all the people ſhall ſay, Amen.

20 Curſed be he which lyeth with his fathers wife, for he diſcouereth the skirt of his fathers garment: And all the people ſhall ſay, Amen.

21 Curſed be hee which lyeth with anie beaſt, And all the people ſhall ſay, Amen.

22 Curſed bee he which lieth with his ſiſter, the daughter of his father or mother: And all the people ſhall ſay, Amen.

23 Curſed be he which lieth with his mother in lawe: And all the people ſhal ſay, Amen.

WE haue ſeene already whereat God aimed in appointing ſuch ſolemnitie, that the people ſhoulde meete together on Mount Eball which is ouer againſt Garizim; to pronounce the curſes that are ſet downe here. For when God hath once vttered his wil vnto vs, it is good reaſon that euerie of vs ſhoulde conſent thereunto, and confeſſe that to ſticke vnto his worde is the rule of all righteouſnes. For the cheefe honour which God requireth of vs as though Iohn.5.33. it were a ſetting of our ſeales vnto it, is to declare that there is no gaynesaying or replying to that which he ſpeaketh, but that it is altogether ſure and ought to be ſticked vnto. Furthermore wee ought to marke alſo, that the condition of mens agreeing vnto Gods worde is ſuch, that if they doe the contrarie in their liues, they condemne themſelues with their own mouthes. For it is not enough for vs to profeſſe, that whatſoeuer God ſaith is rightfull and reaſonable: but wee muſt alſo ſhewe by our deedes, that his doctrine hath full force and authoritie among vs. So then, hee that yeeldeth ſuch confeſſion with his mouth, is his owne iudge without any other proceſſe, if hee follow not that which is taught him, and which hee knoweth to bee rightfull. Nowe we haue ſeene howe God ſpake of Idolatries and conſequently of al ſuperſtitiōs. And thereupon I haue told you, that it is enough for vs to haue here ſome examples touched, to ſhewe vs that God requireth the full obedience of his lawe at our handes, as ſhall bee declared for a concluſion in the ende. Yee ſee then that God ratified his whole ſeruice. Nowe hee commeth to the ſecond table, and beginneth with the honour and ſubiection that is due to the father and mother. *Curſed ſhall that man be* (ſaith he) *which curſeth his father or his mother*. Now this curſe importeth verie much. For it comprehendeth all that is repugnant to the honour, obedience, and helpe, which children owe to their fathers and mothers. Therfore whoſoeuer yeeldeth not honour to his father and mother, is here curſed of God. We haue well ſeene Deut.21.18. heretofore the puniſhment that was appointed for them: Inſomuch that if any man had diſobedient children; being brought before the Iudges, they were (vppon his ſingle witneſſe) to be ſtoned to death, and ſo ſuch infection was to bee taken away. For it is an vnkindly and accurſed thing, that the children ſhould ſet themſelues againſt thoſe which brought them into the world, and haue brought them vp; and haue taken ſo much paine and care for them. For wee knowe that a father occupieth as it were the roome of GOD towardes his owne children and offſpring. It followeth then that hee that ſo lifteth vppe himſelfe againſt his father or his mother, doth manifeſtly diſpiſe God; euen as if he were a contemner of all religion. Now heere by ẏ way, God telleth vs that although Iudges and Magiſtrates do not their dutie, or if he ẏ hath done the wrong to his father and mother bee borne with; yet is he not therfore eſcaped. For many crimes lie buried in this world, which notwithſtanding God reſerueth; and early or late they muſt come to account.

Let vs marke well then, that heere is no more ſpeaking of the execution of Iuſtice which is to bee done by meane of law; for that hath beene ſpoken of afore: but God declareth ẏ although they which haue offended through diſobedience, be not puniſhed here in this world; or that their faultes be not knowen, or that no ſuch examination bee made of them as they deſerue: yet they gayned nothing thereby; becauſe there is a heauenly Iudge, which forgetteth not any thing, but keepeth all thinges regiſtred before him, and he in the ende will ſurelie doe his office. Therefore let vs thinke well vpon this doctrine; and although men finde no fault with vs; nor any man vexe or trouble vs: let vs not thereuppon fall aſleepe, but rather euerie man ſummon himſelfe, according to that which is tolde vs here, & conſider that we muſt come before the iudgement ſeat of God. And therefore let vs learne to walke in ſuch wiſe, as hee may accepte of vs when wee come there, and as wee may not ſtande in feare of the curſe which is vttered here. Not that anie of vs canne performe the Lawe (as I haue declared more fullie heretofore:) but that it behooueth vs to tende thereunto, and to put our indeuour to it. For although wee bee not altogether cleane before GOD, but contrariwiſe guiltie of manie of the faultes that are conteyned here: yet doeth not hee lay them to our charge, ſobeit that wee miſlike of them, and giue not our ſelues ouer to them, ne let the bridle ſlacke. Wherefore let vs learne to reſtrayne our ſelues, and to bee ſory, ſeeing wee be not ſo perfect as were requiſite. But yet therewithal (as I haue declared alreadie,) let vs ſtreine our ſelues to pleaſe our Lord God and to obey him: and let vs haue ſuch a recorde in our owne conſciences, as wee may freely and with open mouth ſay; Curſed bee hee which hath not followed the doctrine of ſaluation in ſuch ſorte as it is ſhewed vnto vs. To make anie long diſcourſe of the honour which euerie man oweth to his father and mother, it is not needefull as nowe, becauſe the lawe hath beene expounded alreadie heretofore. It ſufficeth as nowe [to know] that in this text GOD declareth that all diſobedience, as well againſt fathers and mothers as againſt all ſuperiours whome he hath ſet in authoritie in this worlde, is intollerable in his ſight. For hee will not haue vs to liue here diſorderlie like beaſtes: but hee will haue order and gouernment obſerued among vs. And that canne not bee doone, except we ſtande in awe of ſuch as beare anie office for the common gouernment of men. Whoſoeuer then breaketh Gods order, let him looke to bee acurſed, accordingly alſo as Saint Paul

Rom. 13. 4. telleth vs, that in ſo dooing wee reſiſt not creatures or men; but we make warre againſt God himſelfe, when wee goe about to ouerthrowe the ſuperioritie which hee hath ordeyned and commended vnto vs. Marke that for one point.

Now it is added afterward, *Curſed ſhall hee bee which plucketh vp his neighbours buttelles*, [*Meeres, or Landmarkes.*] Wee muſt alwayes beare in minde that which I haue tolde you alreadie; namelie that here vnder one kinde, G O D comprehendeth all. And I expounded therewithal, that if the bounds of mens Landes bee not kept certayne, no man ſhall bee Maiſter of his owne poſſeſſions, but all ſhall goe to ſpoyle and hauocke. And ſurely the hauing of iuſt weightes and meaſures, the maintayning of lawfull monie, and the keeping of bounds and buttelles vnchaunged; are thinges that haue beene euer priuiledged. For howe might men buy and ſel, or vſe anie trade among them; if the coyne bee not lawfull? Againe, if weightes and meaſures be falſified; in what taking are we? To what purpoſe ſhall Iuſtice ſerue any more? To what end ſhall all the lawes in the worlde ſerue? As much is to bee ſaide for boundes, buttelles, meeres, & landmarkes. So then, vnder this ſaying God meant to ſhewe, that it behooueth vs to obſerue equitie and vprightnes in dealing one with another. True it is that lawes are made for the puniſhing of ſuch offences; inſomuch that if any man doe ſhift or remooue his neighbours buttell, he ſhall not be diſcharged by ſetting it in the right place againe, and by making amendes for the harme that he hath done; but he ſhall be openly puniſhed alſo as for a hainous crime. As much is to bee done for the falſifying of weightes, and for the hauing of wrong meaſures. As touching the counterfeiting of Coyne, if a man haue vſed it, it is not enough that hee pay backe that which hee hath wrongfully taken; but hee muſt alſo die for it; and good reaſon. For otherwiſe (as I ſayde) all lawes were to be aboliſhed. And it were better for vs to be wilde beaſtes, than to liue without thoſe meanes which God hath ordeyned and nature alſo hath taught vs. But put the caſe that ſome man do defraude his neighbour, bee it by falſe meaſure or by ſome other wicked practiſe, and that he ſeeke to aduantage himſelf by an other mans loſſe, & the magiſtrate knoweth nothing thereof, by meanes whereof it ſcapeth vnpuniſhed: yet is it ſhewed vs here, that in the ende it muſt needes come to account before the heauenly Iudge. If a poore man bee put from his right, or oppreſſed by authoritie, violence, or otherwiſe, and dare not ſay a word to it; ne findeth anie aduocate to tender his caſe in this worlde: yet is God his warrant, and thoſe which thinke themſelues greatly benefited by inriching themſelues by hooke or by crooke, ſhall at length finde that it were much better for them to haue had but one bitte of breade to eate, than to haue had neuerſomuch to glut themſelues withall, and in the meane time to abide the curſe that is ſet downe here. For God hath no neede of mans helpe. Put the caſe that all men dealte amiſſe here, and that all thinges were confuſed and out of order: yet ſhal not this ſaying fal to the grounde, *That the man ſhall bee accurſed which plucketh vp his neighbors buttell*, but that God muſt needes doe his office. True it is that hee will haue them to vſe the ſworde, into whoſe hande hee hath put it, and hee hath ordeyned that they ſhoulde do ſo; and if they bee ſlacke and ſlowe in doing it, hee will ſhew them that he appointed them not in vaine to puniſhe crimes and offences. But yet cannot mortall men preiudice him. When an earthly Iudge diſchargeth not his duetie; it followeth not that Gods power is weakened therby, or that he is bereft of fit meanes to execute his office, or yͤ he is idle. For he is not like worldly Princes, which truſt to their officers, & are wel cõtented to play yͤ blind perſons, when things goe amiſſe. As for me [ſay they,] I vnderſtand yͭ al things go wel, & foraſmuch as I haue mine officers, my wil is that they ſhould behaue themſelues faithfully as I haue commaunded them. A Prince thinkes it enough for him to haue ſaide the worde: but God ouerlooketh them, and controlleth them. And although offenders & tranſgreſſers ſcape the handes of men: yet ſhall they bee puniſhed at his hands in the end. So then, let not our care bee, leaſt wee ſhoulde bee ſpyed, or leaſt men ſhoulde take vs tardie in working any deceyte; but let vs bee mindefull of this ſaying, *Curſed ſhall hee bee which pulleth vp his Neighbours Landemarke.* Men perchaunce ſee it not a whit; but yet God beholdeth it; and wee can no more eſchewe his eyes, than his hande. Wherefore let vs beware of all fraude and falſe dealing; aſſuring our ſelues that our Lorde watcheth ouer vs, yea and that in ſuch wiſe as hee will not ſuffer the poore to bee wounde in, nor the ſimple to bee outraged or eaten vp, and that thoſe thinges ſhall abide vnpuniſhed; but that he will ſhewe in the ende howe it is not without cauſe that hee claimeth to himſelfe the title to be the Iudge of the world.

Now it is ſaid further, *Curſed ſhall hee bee, which cauſeth the blind to ſtray out of his way or to ſtũble in his way.* Here is yet a crueltie euẽ againſt nature. For yͤ more neceſſitie a man is in, yͤ more ought other men to pitie him & to ſuccour him. There is a poore blind man, mẽ ſee him readie to take a fall, & they withhold him not from it. They yͭ take pleaſure herein, muſt needs be altogether of a leawd and corrupt diſpoſition, ſo as there is not one droppe of common kindneſſe in them. To bee ſhort, they muſt needes bee louers of al crueltie and miſcheefe. For euen the Heathen did greatlie abhorre that thing; in ſo much that in ſome places, ſuch a deede was as greeuouſly puniſhed, as murder, Thefte, or ſuch other like thinges. Howebeit, commonly men made not a lawe for it. And the reaſon that was yeelded for it, was, yͭ it ſeemed yͭ euerie man ought to be ſufficiently learned in yͤ behalfe of himſelf; ſo as it had beene a ſuperfluous thing to haue ſaide, If a man ſee a blinde man, let him ſette him in his way. Neuertheleſſe (as I haue declared afore) wee haue to note that God extendeth his matter and doctrine yet further. And in effect his meaning is to ſay, Curſed ſhall he bee which ſuffereth his neighbour to goe aſtray, for want of good Counſell. For as a blinde man ruſheth againſt things, ſtumbleth, and goeth aſtray if he be not led, and guided in his way: ſo alſo when wee want Counſell and good aduice, ſurely we be in the ſame plight that blinde men are, vnleſſe we be ſuccoured. Yea and although a man haue eyes, yet if he be in a ſtrange and vnknowen Country, and go quite and cleane from his way, and runne wandering heere and there, and men let him alone: it is all one as if they had made a blind man to goe out of his way, and ſo did the heathen men themſelues conſter it. It is not for vs to ſeeke excuſes and to ſay, Why ſo? God ſpeaketh but of blind men onely. Yea, but euen they which had neither the lawe nor the Goſpell, could well skill to ſay ſo, and haue ſhewed vs our leſſon; namely that whoſoeuer ſheweth not the way to a traueler when he ſees him out of his way, is a very monſter, and a deteſtable creature: and ſo is he alſo which is nigardly of ẏ light of his candle. I ſee a poore man whoſe candle is out, and he commeth to me to light it againe. The dooing therof coſteth me nothing, and yet I ſay vnto him, ye ſhall haue none of me: and are ſuch folk worthy to liue vpon the earth? So then let vs marke well Gods meaning: where hee curſeth all ſuch as ſet the blinde out of the way, or cauſe them to ſtumble. And let vs gather that together which I haue touched heeretofore; which is, that heere God doeth vs to vnderſtand, that if any of our neighbours haue neede of our helpe, I muſt helpe him if I be of abilitie and haue opportunitie to doe it, ſpecially if it be no coſt or charge to me. Nay, though it ſhould be ſome coſt vnto vs, yet are we bound to help ſuch as are in neede and diſtreſſe: and what ought we then to do, when we ſhall but open our mouth to do it? In that caſe we be not to disburſe any thing, we bee not in daunger to looſe either time or mony, as they ſay; the thing is to be done of free coſt. And ſhall we be ſo cruell, as to let a poore man ſuſtaine harme through our naughtyneſſe? What a dealing were that? Do not ſuch folke deſerue to be confounded? But (as I ſaid afore) this place treateth not of puniſhment to be executed by the earthly Iudges. God telleth vs that although ſuch dealing bee borne with, and that it bee but laughed at: yet it ſhall come to account before him. Nowe ſith it is ſo, let euery man looke to himſelf. And firſt let vs beware, that when our neighbours are in any extremity; we alſo be pitiful moued with compaſſion to ſuccour them. Therefore looke as any man ſhall haue neede of our helpe; let vs be preſt and ready to reach out our hand and to lende it him. And ſpecially if our Lorde graunt vs the grace to bee able to ſerue our neighbours turnes, without ſtreyning of our ſelues for the matter, or without coſt: let vs vnderſtand that hee doeth vs great honour. For whoſoeuer releeueth him that is in neede, is the miniſter of GOD. Thus GOD imployeth vs in his ſeruice, and therewithall promiſeth vs that our labour ſhall not be loſt; and ought not wee then to bee the more prouoked thereunto? Marke this therefore for a ſpecial point, ẏ ſuch as are ſuccourleſſe, are here commended vnto vs by God. And moreouer let vs knowe, that if we be bound to guide the blinde, leaſt they ſhould ſtumble or ſtray out of the way: we ought to be much more foreward and readie to aduiſe a man, when we ſee he hath neede of counſell, and is like to fall into ſome daunger for want of our aduiſe. But yet much more ought the way of ſaluation to bee priuiledged: in ſo much that if wee ſee a man ouerſhoote himſelfe, and is going into deſtruction; wee muſt not diſdayne to warne him, ſaying; Wretched creature, whither goeſt thou? What wilt thou doe? Wilt thou needes thus wilfully periſh? And ſpecially when he doeth it of ignoraunce: If wee then ſpare our tongues in that behalfe, ſo as they be not vſed as inſtruments of ſaluation to ẏ poore ignorant ſoule, who would faine be taught: ſurely ſuch rechleſneſſe ſhal not abide vnpuniſhed, nor be forgotten before God. Although neither Lawe nor Iuſtice proceede againſt it; yet ſhall this curſe bee ratified vppon it. To bee ſhort, let vs marke, that our Lorde meant by this threat, to induce vs to pitie and compaſſion, in ſuccouring al ſuch as haue neede of vs: And ſpecially in imploying our ſelues when wee ſee poore ignoraunt perſons deſtitute of counſell, and that wee our ſelues are of abilitie to bring them backe agayne into the ryght way. Thus much concerning that point.

Nowe followeth immediatly concerning crueltie: *Curſed bee hee that wreſteth the right of the ſtraunger, the widowe, and the fatherleſſe.* True it is that to the vttermoſt of our power wee muſt mayntayne euery mans right. Neuertheleſſe, our Lorde in this place as afore, ſpeaketh of Wydowes, fatherleſſe, and ſtraungers, bycauſe they lie open to a great number of iniuries and outrages, and no man ſettes himſelfe in their defence; nay, feawe haue any care at all of them, bycauſe they be not able to make any recompence. Looke mee vppon a Straunger, ſee howe hee ſhall be fleeced, howe he ſhall bee vexed, howe hee ſhall be wronged, yea and that openly; and yet it ſhall be winked at. And why? For euery man will bee freendly to his owne neighbour; and as for that man, hee is not of the ſame country, he is not of the ſame Citie, he belongeth not vnto vs. Thus yee ſee howe the poore man ſhall be left deſtitute. In lyke caſe are Wydowes and Fatherleſſe Children. For as for the fatherleſſe childe, men looke not that hee ſhould acknowledge what is doone for him to day or to morowe. Sometimes he lies in his Cradle, and knowes not who dooes him good and who dooes him euill, bycauſe he hath no diſcretion: hee cannot requite the pleaſure that is done vnto him: and therfore euery man letteth him alone. In the ſame caſe do wydowes ſtand, ſpecially when they be poore, & are of no great countenaunce to the worldward: for then euery man ſhrinks from them; and ſo they bee left vp as it were to the ſpoile. Now bicauſe theſe things come commonly to paſſe, God doth purpoſely

poſely take ſuch folke into his protection, ſaying that if any man doe wreſt or hinder the right of the ſtraunger, the widow and the fatherleſſe, he wilbe reuenged thereof: inſomuch that although it be not accounted of before the world, but rather the dooers of ſuch outrages be well liked of; yet will he call them before him, and ſhew that he had a care of thoſe whome he had taken into his ſafekeeping. And ſo vnder one kinde, God meant to ſhewe breefely, that if we tread vppon ſuch as haue no credite, nor meane to defende themſelues, nor any ſtud to leane vnto, as in reſpect of the world, hee reſerueth to himſelfe the puniſhing thereof. That is the thing which wee haue to gather vpon this text.

Now, *to wreſt or hinder the Right,* is nothing elſe but vniuſtly & without cauſe to oppreſſe yͤ feeble and weake, and ſuch as haue no body to ſupport and maintain them. Truly that maner of ſpeech is ſet downe in the holy ſcripture, which is al one with this which we be wont to ſay, *to daſh a good caſe*, but yet in generall it is as much to ſay, as, *to diſappoynt a man of his right*. Nowe therefore, when I pill a man, when I rake to my ſelfe the things that belong to him, when I ſtrip him out of his ſubſtance, when I thruſt him out of al that euer he hath, when I ouermaſter him, and I take more vppon mee than becommeth mee: then doe I hinder *his right*. And ſo we ſee (as I ſaide afore) that in this text God ſheweth that he will bee the Iudge of al the outrages which are done to ſuch as haue no meanes to reuenge themſelues, and are forſaken & forgotten on yͤ behalfe of men. But were we wel aduiſed, ſurely we wold be more afraid to haue God our aduerſarie partie, than all the whole worlde together. And in deede therein we ſhew, yͭ we giue ſmall credit to Gods word: in ſo much that if a man be of great kinred & haue many friends, if a man be rich or highly fauoured of the world: we dare not meddle with him; & although he haue moleſted vs, yet wil we ſweetely ſwallow it vp, & in any wiſe beware that we prouoke him not. Thus wil men beare wͭ all ſuch as haue wherwith to maintaine themſelues to yͤ worldward; when in the meane while they that are deſtitute ſhalbe pilled & eaten vp. Yet notwithſtanding God is their defender, and ſaith, that in oppreſſing ſuch folke, we make warre againſt him, and therefore that he alſo muſt be faine to lift vp his arme in the maintenance of thoſe whom hee hath taken into his protection. But men care not for that: and doe we not thereby bewray our vnbeleefe? For had we a true and liuely feeling that God ieſteth not heere, in telling vs that his curſe ſhall light vpon thoſe which ſhal ſo haue misintreated the feeble ſort and ſuch as haue no mainteyners: it is certaine that we would quake whenſoeuer we were tempted to do euil to any poore creature yͭ hath no ſtay, credite or authoritie in the world. I ſee this man hath no kinſfolke nor friendes; I ſee no man regardeth him; I ſee he is vndefended: now if I aduaunce my ſelfe againſt him, or if I trouble him; God ſetteth himſelfe againſt me, he ſetteth his mark vpon the poore man, and he telleth me that if I meddle with ſuch a perſon, he will take the caſe to himſelfe, and I ſhall haue impeached his owne maieſtie. If we did thinke on this, certaine it is, that wee ſhoulde bee much more reſtrained and held backe by his feare than we are by all the fauours and diſpleaſures of this world whatſoeuer. Neuertheleſſe, we ſee the cleane contrarie, we bee very dulheads in this behalfe. And therefore let vs bethinke our ſelues to bee more watchfull than we haue beene. And ſith wee dare not attempt any thing againſt thoſe which are armed with al defence, & haue wherewith to vpholde themſelues in this world: let vs much leſſe doe any outrage or iniurie to thoſe whome God doeth as it were broode vnder his winges, and of whome he declareth himſelfe to bee the protector: and let vs alſo conſider well, that though the world ſay not a woord to vs, but rather allow of vs for it, Gods vengeance muſt light vppon vs double, ſpecially when through ſuch cōtempt we ſhal haue taken greater libertie to doe euill. For it is certayne that the cruelty which is committed againſt poore folke which haue no ſtay to leane vnto, is a manifeſt contempt of GOD, and an vtter ſkorning of him, as who would ſay hee were vnable to execute the vengeance which he hath threatned. Now when GOD is ſo lightly eſteemed, thinke wee that hee will beare it? Yee ſee heere firſt how this kinde of outrage is euen againſt nature. For if wee were not forepoſſeſſed with our wicked affections; ſurely euery of vs woulde confeſſe, that it is much woorſe to haue hurt or deuoured a poore weake creature; than to haue doone harme to a rich man which is well alyed and hath reſcue and power to reuendge himſelfe. All men will graunt that. Therefore is it one of the greateſt and moſt outrageous faultes that can bee among men. Agayne it is a ſkorning of GOD; which is a diueliſhe wickedneſſe when wee bee not mooued at this ſaying of GOD, I haue theſe folke in my hande, I will mayntayne them, and whoſoeuer aduaunceth himſelfe agaynſt them, muſt needes haue mee to bee his aduerſarie partie. If wee make no account of this, as though GOD had neuer ſpoken it: is it not a token that we be too hearde harted? And therefore (as I haue ſayde already) let vs learne to beethinke our ſelues better; and to haue a better regarde of him: and when wee bee conuerſant among ſuch folke as are deſpiſed to the worldwarde, without alyaunce, without freendes, without ſuccours: let vs beware that wee deale after ſuch a ſorte with them, as it may alwaies runne in our mindes that they bee Gods children, and that the heauenly Iudge will not forget the wrongs that are doone vnto them, ſpecially ſeeing hee hath tolde vs heere, that thoſe which haue bin ſo cruell to the feeble, ſhall not eſcape his curſe.

Nowe Moſes addeth further, *Curſed bee hee which lyeth with his fathers wife, Curſed bee hee which lyeth with a beaſt, with his owne Siſter, or with his Mother in law.* This place treateth of all the infamous ſortes of lecherie, yea euen of the loathſomeſt ſortes of them; whether it bee inceſt or buggerie or ſuch other infections. And it is not without cauſe that God chuſeth out thoſe kinds; for it is to the ende that wee ſhoulde bee touched with the more feare and terrour when we goe about any kinde of Lechery. God could haue ſayde ſimply in one worde, Curſed ſhall he bee which committeth any lecherie: and in very deede, that is the marke whereat this text ameth. Neuertheleſſe hee contenteth not himſelfe ſo, but (as I ſayde) hee chooſeth the examples which are moſt outrageous. And why? To the intent wee ſhould bee touched the more to the quicke. For we ſee how ſlowe we be in hearkening to the things which God telleth vs. We haue his woord; but what for that? It paſſeth away. We will not ſticke to ſay, that it behoueth vs to keepe our ſelues from breaking his Lawe. But if vices be ſpoken of but in a word or twaine, ſhall they be eſteemed as they ought to be, that is to ſay, as crymes before God which deſerue endleſſe death? Wee ſee howe euery man diſpenſeth with himſelfe, ſo as the priuie theefe maketh no conſcience of filching, till of a petie theefe, he becommeth a robber; and then (to his ſeeming) all is nothing that he hath done afore, except hee become a murtherer and a cutter of mens throates. Thus doe men proceede in degrees of Theeuerie: and as much doe they alſo in Lecherie. For they make account of it but as of a thing of nothing, vntill they fall into yͤ greateſt extremities. Foraſmuch then as we bee dulled, ſo as we bee not touched with any ſuch feare as were requiſite, when God condemneth ſinne and would plucke vs backe from it: therfore it is needefull that he ſhould ſet before vs the examples that are moſt deteſtable, euen ſuch as (ſpite of our teeth) muſt needes make yͤ haire to ſtand on end on our heads whẽ we heare them named; to the intent that no man ſhould beguile himſelf with fond flatterie, but euery man be well ware yͭ he holde himſelfe vnder the obedience of God. Heere then we ſee two things: The one is, that GOD hath condemned all vnchaſtitie, and al maner of Lecherie: and ſecondly we ſee how hee hath purpoſely choſen the thinges that are moſt ougly, as Inceſtes, and vncleanneſſe againſt kinde, as the medling euen with brute beaſtes. And why is that? To the ende that men ſhould haue occaſion to bethinke themſelues the better, and not to doe as they bee commonly wont, which is to hearken and to lay down their eare to it and to ſay, All this is verie true; and yet to make no account of it, but to fare as folke amaſed, as though a man had knocked them on the head with a beetle. Thus much concerning the firſt point.

And wee ſee howe God ſtandeth much vppon Inceſtes, when he ſayeth, *Curſed ſhall hee bee which lyeth with his mother in law, the wife of his Father, or with the daughter of his father, or of his mother, or with his owne daughter in law,* and ſuch other degrees. And why? Herein wee ſee how men haue in all ages ouerſhot themſelues in this behalfe. For God could well skill to apply remedies according to mens diſeaſes. Therefore it is not for nought that he ſtandeth ſo much vpon thoſe things. And why? For in as much as he ſaw that men had neede to bee held ſhort; and that ſuch kindes of wickedneſſe would haue raigned, if he had not ſet himſelfe ſtoutly againſt thẽ, & caſt barres in their wayes, as if he ſhould haue ſayd, ſtay there, and play not the looſe colts; if he had not ſo prouided afore hand, that men might not ruſh foorth into ſuch vices: ſurely al had gone to confuſion. And if this wickedneſſe were in thoſe daies; certeſſe we be not exempted from it nowadaies. And therfore let vs vnderſtand, that the more earneſtneſſe our Lorde hath vſed heere in this behalfe; the more doth he warne vs to occupy our ſelues in the minding of thoſe things, ſo as we bethinke vs of them day and night, earely and late, to the end we may walke in ſuch chaſtitie and ſobrietie, as our life may not breake forth into ſuch beaſtly ſinnes; but as we may be giuen to God to ſerue him purely. That (ſay I) is the thing which wee haue to gather vpon this place. And let vs not flatter our ſelues: for God knoweth well what is meete for vs; or elſe hee would not haue ſpoken heere of thinges that are ſo ſhameful, that we may be aſhamed euen to name them. And what then? Had not God a regard thereunto? Yes that had hee: but he knew that the heart of man is a dreadful dungeon, and that we muſt be reſtrayned as it were by force, or elſe he ſhould neuer be able to compaſſe vs. Nowe then, let this prouoke vs the more to looke neerly to our ſelues, that we ouerſhoot not our ſelues one way nor other, but that wee bee vigilaunt to dedicate our ſelues to the ſeruice of God with al pureneſſe, as I ſaide afore.

And moreouer let vs vnderſtand, that lecherie in it ſelf is ſo loathſome a thing before God, that although men make no great account of yͤ puniſhing thereof; yet ſhall wee not therefore make the better market, at leaſtwiſe when wee come before the heauenly throne. For it is no ſmall thing, yͭ god baniſheth all whooremongers and lechours out of his kingdome, as is ſayde thereof both in the firſt Epiſtle of Saint Paule to the Corinthians, (as we haue ſeene not long ſince,) and alſo in the Epiſtle to the Hebrewes. 1.Cor.6.9.& Heb.13.4. That is the thing in effect, which wee haue to beare in minde: namely that God will not haue men to exceede in their fleſhly luſtes, by companying together like brute beaſtes; but that euerie man ſhould liue chaſtly in marriage, and haue ſuch regard of honeſtie in that behalfe, as nature be not forgotten by the companying of the ſonne in lawe with his ſtepmother, or of the father with his owne daughter, or wͭ his daughter in lawe, or by the marrying of the brother with his owne ſiſter, but that thoſe degrees bee obſerued. For without ſuch order, what woulde come of it? Wherein ſhoulde wee differ from Bulles and Aſſes? Thus yee ſee what wee haue to gather vppon the firſt poynt, in that our Lorde hath heere condemned all maner of vnchaſt dealings, and wil not haue men to behaue thẽſelues as lawleſſe in thoſe caſes, but to dedicate themſelues vnto him, & conſider that their

bodyes

1. Cor.6.15. 19. bodies are the Temples of the holy Ghoſt, and members of our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt; and therefore that they muſt repreſſe their wicked affections. Marke that for one point.

Secondly (as I haue noted already) God hath ſet downe ſuch examples heere before our eyes, as ought to make vs afraide, in that he ſpeaketh of ſuch as againſt nature doe ſo company with their owne mothers, their ſtepmothers, or their Siſters. Hee ſpeaketh of them expreſly, to the intent that from the one we ſhould come to the other, as we ſee hee doeth in all his Lawe. And this hath beene declared more at length heeretofore. When hee will condemne hatred, hee ſpeaketh of murder. And why? If a man tell vs that no man ought to hate his brother; wee eaſily graunt it to be ſinne; but yet wee make no conſcience to doe it. But when God ſayeth, 1.Iohn.3.15 that hee which hateth his brother is a murtherer: then are wee the more abaſhed and reſtrained. Likewiſe in this text, for as much as ẏ ſkorners doe but ieſt at whoredome; they doe alſo beare themſelues in hand, that God ought not to call them to account for it. And this vice is not of this daies or of yeſterdayes breeding: we ſee it hath beene in all ages, as Moſes reporteth heere. And therefore God nameth the deteſtableſt kindes of lecherie, to the intent that thereupon wee ſhould conclude thus, that if wee liue not chaſtly, wee ſhall fall from one euill to another, vntill we bee fallen into ſuch a bottomleſſe gulfe, as ſhall bee horrible to thinke on. That is the thing which wee haue to remember vpon this text. But wee ought to make our benefite of this warning, conſidering the blockiſhneſſe that is in vs. Wee thinke our ſelues to bee very ſharpe witted and apt to conceiue: and yet wee vnderſtande not any thing in the doctrine of God; wee bee ſo dulheadded, that hee is fayne to chawe thinges aforehande to vs, or elſe wee woulde not bee mooued with them. To bee ſhorte, wee haue leſſe witte and reaſon than young babes haue. Let men commend themſelues as much as they liſt, and let them glory vppon opinion that they bee very able: yet are they ſo dulheaded, that wee ſhould play the very bruit beaſtes, if our Lorde did not chawe thinges rudely vnto vs. And what is the cauſe thereof? Forſooth that wee bee forepoſſeſſed with our fleſhly affections, and none is ſo deafe as hee that will not heare, as they ſay. Sith wee ſee this, let vs bethinke our ſelues the better, and when men chawe thinges groſſely vnto vs, let vs not thinke they doe vs wrong, as ſome doe, who bee ſo nice, that if a man vſe a rough ſtyle to them, Oh, ſay they, I vnderſtoode all this by a woord or twaine, by like I am a little babe. To bee ſhorte, they be weary if a man bring them not matter of great ſharpeneſſe: for they fondly preſume in their owne imagination, that euen at the firſt daſhe they knowe all that is neceſſarie. But beholde, God ſpeaketh heere in another ſtyle and language. Why doth he ſo? He ſeeth there is need. So thē let vs ſuffer our ſelues to be taught according to our capacity; & ſeeing we be ſlowe; if our Lorde waken vs, let vs receiue it meekely, and learne to doe our ſelues good by it. And ſo yee ſee what wee haue to gather vpon all theſe textes.

Now whereas heere is mention made of *ſtriking [or ſmyting] ones neyghbour ſecretly*: it is ſpoken againſt all hatred and rancour, and ſerueth for a concluſion. A man myght demaunde heere howe it comes to paſſe, that GOD doeth here curſe thoſe whoſe offence is in thinges whereof no mention is made in his Lawe: for I haue tolde you heeretofore, that it is ynough for a man to haue obſerued the thinges that are contayned in the ten commaundementes; and alſo that the full perfection of our lyfe is ſet down there. But no mention is made there concerning the blind. And how happeneth it then that God doeth heere denounce vengeaunce againſt the thing that is not forbidden in his Lawe? Verily heerein wee ſee (as it hath beene expounded alreadie) that our Lorde in his Lawe requireth all thinges that concerne charitie; as, that wee ſhould ſuccour one another, and that there ſhould bee ſuch a common league among vs, as that euery man ſhould ſpend himſelfe in helping his neighbour. Whatſoeuer is contrary to this, is forbidden and condemned by the law of God. And therefore it is ſayde heere now; *Curſed ſhall he be which ſmiteth his neighbour ſecretly*. Vnder this ſaying, our Lord hath comprehended all the miſuſages that wee can offer to our neighbour: inſomuch that if we giue him but a phillip, it is as a kinde of murthering before him. And we ſee howe that the man which doeth but grinde his teeth at his brother, is condemned to hel fire: & Matt.5.22. what ſhal then become of him which ſhal haue lifted vp his fiſt? Surely, euen to ſtirre a mans tongue againſt his neighbour; is a ſin worthy of greeuous puniſhement. If wee doe but grunt in way of ſkorne or diſdayne; it is forbidden. Howe much more then ſhall wee bee blamed, if wee goe aboute to outrage them any maner of way? Let vs marke therefore, that here vnder one particular, God doeth generally comprehende all outrage, violence, and miſdemeanors which wee can vſe towardes our neighbours. And hee ſayeth expreſſely; *in ſecrete, or priuilie*, to the intent wee ſhoulde bee ſtill put in minde of that which I haue toulde you heeretofore; namely that in this behalfe, the caſe ſtandeth not vppon the yeelding of account vnto men. Put the caſe that wee haue offended in breaking all the commaundementes, and yet notwithſtanding that no man chalendgeth vs for it, but rather that authoritie it ſelfe allowe of our dooinges, and that when wee bee accuſed for it, wee bee acquit of it, or that no man dare complayne of the miſorders which wee haue committed: let vs put the caſe it bee ſo: yet doeth GOD ſpeake otherwiſe, ſaying; that if wee haue doone our neighbour any harme priuilie, his bloud ſhall crye out againſt vs for vengeance, euen when wee thinke our ſelues eſcaped.

And

Gen.4.10. And we ſee what is ſayde of Abell: although no man gaue information againſt Cain, nor any proceſſe went out againſt him; yet did the bloud of him that was murdered, ſpeake. God ſaith not, I haue hard ſay; but, the bloud of thy brother crieth vnto me, againſt thee. Heere then wee ſee that God threateneth vs not with any puniſhement to bee ſuffered at mans hande: but rather telleth vs that wee muſt walke before him and in his preſence. And although wee feare not any earthly Iuſtice; yet wee ought not to forbeare to brydle our ſelues ſhort, for as much as hee doeth his office, and the vengeaunce which hee hath ſpoken of heere, muſt needes bee executed vppon all ſuch as haue eſcaped by fauour, or cloaked their crymes, yea or offended ſo cunningly as no man coulde come to the knoweledge of it. Seeing it is ſo, let vs looke that wee enter into our owne conſciences, and that wee haue Gods Lawe written there, ſo as wee haue not an eye to men, as who woulde ſay, I haue not beene blamed or reprooued: but rather conſider that our GOD watcheth ouer vs, and vnderſtande the office of his word to bee ſuch as is written in the epiſtle to the Hebr.4.12. Hebrewes: that is to wit, that when it is preached vnto vs; then all thinges muſt come to tryall, and it muſt enter in, euen to the ſecreteſt thoughtes of our hearte. Nowe if Gods woord haue ſuch power: let vs aſſure our ſelues that much more it hath the office which is attributed vnto it. Wherefore let vs bee reſtrayned by this meanes, and when wee haue ſerued God with our heartes, let our life bee ſo aunſwerable therunto, that when we ſhall come before our Lord Ieſus Chriſt, we may ſhew that wee were truly minded to ſerue him, and not to pleaſe mortall men.

Nowe let vs fall downe before the Maieſtie of our good God with acknowledgement of our faultes, praying him to vouchſafe to giue vs true repentaunce of them; and moreouer to beare with vs vntill hee haue ridde vs quite and cleane of all our ſinnes, and of all our ſpots; and to make vs ſo to profite by the things which wee heare, as we may learne more and more to renounce ourſelues, and to repreſſe our wicked luſtes, vntill he haue clothed vs agayne with the puritie of that righteouſneſſe whereunto he calleth vs. And ſo let vs all ſay; Almighty GOD heauenly father, &c.

On Munday the ix. of March, 1556.

The CLII. Sermon, which is the fourth vpon the ſeuen and twentith Chapter.

24 Curſed bee hee which ſmiteth his neighbour priuily: And all the people ſhall ſay, Amen.

25 Curſed be he which taketh gifts to ſmite the ſoule of guiltles bloud: And al the people ſhall ſay, Amen.

26 Curſed bee hee which confirmeth not all the words of this law by dooing them: And all the people ſhall ſay, Amen.

WE vnderſtande by this text, that the thing which hath beene ſayde afore is very true; namely that God meant to teache the people of olde tyme, that it was not ynough for them to diſcharge thēſelues before men, or to ſcape blame and puniſhment here: but ẏ they muſt looke vp higher, and conſider that there is a Iudgement ſeate in heauen, before the which wee muſt one day aunſwere and make our account. That is the place whereon we muſt thinke, if we will diſcharge our ſelues of our duetie. For wee may wel beguile men in making a faire countenance; and againe we may ſo order our liues, as no man may finde any fault in vs, as touching our outward deedes: and yet in the meane while, if our heartes bee full of wicked luſtes, if it greeue vs to be helde in awe, if we grate our teeth againſt GOD: what obedience is that? Therefore let vs note, that whereas in this text it is ſayde: *Curſed ſhall he be which ſmiteth his neighbour priuily:* God condemneth not only the faults that come to knowledge before men; but alſo the crymes that lye hidden. And therefore if a man haue liued in ſuch wiſe, as he cannot be rebuked of the worlde, but rather is prayſed and commended: he muſt not thereupon fall aſleepe, but he muſt examine his heart, and conſider well whether there be any lurking hole or backe nooke there within. For if the thoughtes bee euill; although men perceiue them not; yet will God alwayes doe the office of a Iudge. 1.Ioh.3.20. And if our own hearts reproue vs (as ſaith ſaint Iohn:) God ſeeth much more clearely.

So then this text ſerueth wel to humble vs. And in deede, we ought to remember this other ſentence of Sainct Iohn where it is ſayde, that

1.Iohn.3.15 whoſoeuer hateth his neighbour priuilie, although hee cloake his hatred ſo as it be not perceiued, or rather make a ſhew of loue: that man fayleth not to be condemned before God. And ſo ye ſee in effect what we haue to beare in mind. Let vs not buſie our heades about mens reports. Although a man bee well reported of heere in this world, yet let him not flatter himſelfe therefore; but let him ſummon himſelfe before God, and conſider whether he bee faultie in his heart. Let not men bring hither their owne opinions and fancies; for all ſuch things ſhall bee refuſed, they will ſerue to no purpoſe. And therfore let vs walke with vnfayned heart before God. For we know hee regardeth not the outward apparance, according as it is ſade in the firſt booke of Samuel; but he requireth the heart & truth, as is 1.Sam.16.7. Ier.5.3. ſayde in the fifth chapter of Ieremy. And looke what is ſaid heere concerning murders and fightinges, the ſame muſt wee extende to all other crimes. For if God cal thē to accoūt which haue done any outrage to their neighbours; although the ſame be vnknowen to the world: thinke wee that robberies, and treaſons, and fraudes, and raylings, and ſlaunderings, and ſuch lyke things ſhall paſſe away vnſpoken of? And therefore let vs learne that we cannot by any meanes eſchew the hand of God, nor ſcape his vengeance, if we foſter vices in our hearts, which be not apparant vnto men. And that we may the more benefite our ſelues by this doctrine, let euery of vs examine himſelfe aright in his heart, when he commeth to heare the worde of God. For it behoooueth vs to be reproued inwardly, as Saint Paul ſpeaketh thereof in the foureteenth Chapter of the firſt Epiſtle to the Corinthians. Euery man 1.Cor.14.25 (I ſay) muſt ſearch his own thoughts and affections to the very bottom. Alſo it is the peculiar office of Gods word to bee a ſharpe ſworde, and Hebr.4.12. to deuide aſunder our thoughts from all our affections and lykinges; and to enter euen into the marow of the bones, and to leaue nothing vndiſcouered. Seeing it is ſo; let vs preuent GODS iudgement, and not tary till he curſe vs, and ban vs for the guiltles bloud which crieth out againſt vs: but let euery of vs condemne himſelfe as ſoone as hee hath offended, and let him be ſory in his heart, and beſeeche GOD of his infinite goodneſſe and mercie, to deliuer vs from the curſe which is denounced againſt all ſuch as haue ſo misbehaued themſelues in ſecret, and not beene conuicted thereof before men.

It followeth; *Curſed ſhall hee bee which ſhall haue taken gifts to doe any wrong to his neighbour, and ſpecially to ſmite the ſoule of the innocent bloud*. For ſo doth Moſes ſpeake word for worde. Neuertheleſſe, the word *Soule* meaneth life. And bicauſe the bloud is the proper ſeate of life: therefore is it ſayde *the Soule of the Innocent blood*. Surely although a man be faultie, yet were it not lawfull to buy & ſel his life. But I haue told you already, that God hath ſet before vs the crimes that are moſt deteſtable, to the intent to waken vs the better, bicauſe wee bee not ſufficiently mooued when he ſpeaketh of common faults. For thoſe thinges ſlippe away, and wee beare our ſelues in hand, that it is no heard matter to get forgiueneſſe of them. Now for as much as there is ſo great ſlackneſſe in men: therefore in this place God hath choſen the offences which euen of nature we ought to abhorre. For if the life of an innocent perſon bee bought and ſolde: it is an horrible matter; euerie man will ſay, that ſuch wicked conſpiracie is not to bee ſuffered. Thus doe wee nowe ſee the meaning of God. But although this thing bee ſufficiently condemned with full mouth: yet doe not men ceaſſe to put it too much in vre. And for proofe hereof, looke vpon the practiſes that are wrought continually to oppreſſe the poore and ſimple ſort. True it is that they ſhall not alwayes bee in daunger to haue their throtes cut: but yet for hurting of them, what in their perſons, and what in their goods, men are ſtill gilty of murder before God. And as for the ſeeking of bywaies to diſappoint the right of the innocent, and the practiſing of deuices againſt ſuch as ſeeke to liue in peace and concord, it is too common a thing: and therfore this law is no more than needeth. True it is (as I haue ſayde afore) that at the firſt puſhe we can wellynough ſay, that there is no reaſon why we ſhould continue in ſo great and ſo exceſſiue frowardneſſe; euery man will ſay by and by, it is againſt nature: but yet the common vſe and cuſtome is cleane contrarie. And therefore let vs marke well the doctrine that is ſet downe heere; namely that God cannot abyde ſo great a crime vnpuniſhed, as the diſappointing of the right, whereby the partie that hath not offended ſhold bee oppreſſed againſt all right and reaſon. And truely God ſpeaketh here, as well of Iudges that haue beene corrupted to oppreſſe a poore man; as of thoſe that haue ſolde themſelues or haue ſet themſelues to hyre to murder, beate, or ſtrike men; as theſe ſquaring Ruffians doe, which ſeeke to bee ſet a worke in beating men or in quarelling with them: all theſe kindes of offenders hath God vtterly condemned in this text. And vnder one particular he comprehendeth generally all, as I haue ſayde afore. And ſo the thing in effect which wee haue to gather, is, that Couetouſneſſe muſt not leade vs to hurt any man at all. Wee ſee nowe that this doctrine extendeth it ſelfe verie farre. For what is the cauſe of the committing of ſo many couſinages, oppreſſions, outrages, and iniuries; but onely the ſeeking of ſelfe profite? I woulde faine pleaſure a man that is in authoritie, bycauſe that to my ſeeming hee is able to requite mee againe: and hereupon I for his ſake doe fall to oppreſſing one, and to tormenting another. And afterwarde that is not ynough; vnleſſe I vſe other manner of dealings, ſo as the matter groweth to bee endleſſe & out of all meaſure. So much the more therefore doeth it ſtande vs in hande, to marke well this doctrine where it is ſayd: *Curſed ſhall he be which taketh reward to doe men wrong*.

And hereunto anſwereth that which is ſayde in the fifteenth Pſalme: namely, that if wee will be Gods houſhold folk, and dwel in his Church, Pſal.15.5. wee muſt beware of taking rewardes to hurt the guiltleſſe. If God baniſh all ſuch out of his kingdome,

dome, and from the company of the faithfull, as haue gone about to miſbehaue themſelues, after that faſhion, by ſetting themſelues to ſale and hire through their couetouſneſſe: what remaineth for them but vtter curſedneſſe? For when God once diſclaymeth vs,& acknowledgeth vs no longer for any of his: needes muſt we be accurſed. Wherein lyeth all our happineſſe? Pſal.33.12. It is ſayde in the pſalme, Right happie bee thoſe folke whoſe God is the euerlaſting. The way then for vs to bee happie, is to be taken of God into his flocke: And if hee caſt vs out; needes muſt all miſcheefe light vpon our heades. Sith it is ſo, let vs learne ſo much the more to reſtraine our ſelues, and let euery of vs bee contented with that which he hath, and let vs not ſeeke to aduaunce our ſelues by vnlawefull meanes; leaſt the profite which wee haue gryped to our ſelues, become as Cudgels or rather as ſtabbes with a dagger to yͤ poore, whom wee ſhall haue wounded by raking ſo to our ſelues by hooke or by crooke. Therefore let vs learne to haue both our heartes and our handes cleane from all anoyance and miſdealing, if wee will bee bleſſed of God, and taken to bee of the number of the faithfull. Thus yee ſee in effect what this ſentence importeth.

Nowe for a concluſion it is ſayd; *Curſed ſhall hee bee which confirmeth not the wordes of this lawe by performing them.* Heere wee ſee yet better the thing which hath beene declared heeretofore: namely that GOD meant to authoriſe his whole Lawe in generall, without excepting any one point of it, notwithſtanding that hee haue ſet downe but ſome particular examples thereof. The point then whereunto the ſolemnitie redoundeth which God cauſed to be made vpon Mount Eball, and likewiſe oueragainſt it on Mount Garizim; is, that the people ſhould know that this Lawe is the Rule of all perfection, and that God who is the authour thereof is not to be dallyed with; but rather that it is to bee receaued with all reuerence, yea and that euery man ought to proteſt with his mouth, that it is good reaſon that GOD ſhould be obeyed; and that all the tranſgreſſours of his will ſhoulde condemne themſelues, without making any reply in their owne excuſe; and willingly acknowledge themſelues woorthie of death and of all miſcheefe, vnleſſe they ſubmitted themſelues obediently to the ſeruing of God. For this cauſe therefore it is ſayde; *Curſed ſhall hee bee which confirmeth not the woordes of this Lawe.* Hee ſpeaketh not heere of ſome one commaundement or twayne, or of ſome parte of them: but of the whole Law, and of euery parte and parcell thereof, without any exception. And indeede, wee ought to bethinke Iames.2.11. vs howe Saint Iames ſayeth, that hee which hath forbidden to ſteale, hath allſo forbidden to commit adulterie: and that hee which hath forbidden Murder, hath alſo forbidden falſewitneſſing. Wee muſt not then rent Gods Iuſtice in peeces. After what ſorte ſoeuer we offende, ſurely wee violate GODS Lawe, and deſpyſe his maieſtie. But hee will bee acknowledged in his Lawe throughout in all poyntes, and not in part, as I haue tolde you afore. Seeing it is ſo, let vs marke that God hath knit his commaundementes together, to ſhewe vs that it is not for man to put them aſunder, as wee ſee many doe, who will needes indent with GOD to abſtayne from ſome one ſinne, and doe beare themſelues in hande that they bee diſcharged when they can ſay, Well, yet haue I not offended in all poyntes; Indeede I am blameworthy for ſuch a ſinne; but as for in all the reſt, I haue obeyed God. The theefe will boaſt that hee is no whoremonger; the murderer will ſay hee is no ſwearer; the whorehunter will likewiſe haue his excuſe, that hee ouerſhooteth not himſelfe in other thinges, as that hee is not cruell, or ſuch like. But what? As I ſayde afore, God will not haue his lawe to be canteled after that faſhion into peeces and gobbets: it is a righteouſneſſe which conſiſteth of ten commaundementes knitte together in one bonde. God therefore muſt be hearkened vnto, both in the firſt word and in the laſt, and as well in the fourth as in the ſecond. Seeing it is ſo, let vs remember how it is ſayd heere, that God will haue vs to confirme the wordes, that are conteyned in his Lawe: ſo as it is not ynough for a man to haue diſcharged himſelfe of ſome peece; God will not content himſelfe with that, neither will hee take ſuch ſeruice for payment: but hee will haue men to giue themſelues wholly vnto him. And with what condition? Lord, ſeeing that thy will is conteyned in thy Lawe: let our lyfe be conformable thereunto. For it belongeth not to vs to part them aſunder, we haue no ſuch libertie. Alſo (as I haue declared afore,) it is too groſſe a folly to thinke that wee can beare God in hand that we haue a good will to honour him, and in the meane while deſpiſe him in one thing or other.

And it is ſayde heere, *To confirme the woordes by perfourming them.* Heere Moſes ſheweth after what ſort we accept the doctrine which is deliuered vs in the name of GOD. It is not in laying our eare to it, or in confeſſing with our mouth that it is true & rightfull: that is not ynough. For all is but hypocriſie if our lyfe bee repugnaunt thereunto: And it will fall out accordyng to this ſaying of Saint Paule, Titus.1.16. that whereas wee confeſſe with our mouthes that wee beleeue in GOD; wee denye him in our lyfe. Wherefore let vs marke well, that the true tryall of our fayth and obedience, is to haue our lyfe aunſwerable thereunto, and to ſhewe by our dooinges, that wee haue not beene taught in vaine. That is the thing which wee haue to marke vpon this ſpeach where Moſes ſayth, *That we muſt confirme the wordes of this Law by performing them*; yea verily, *by performing them*, not by onely proteſting yͭ they bee good and rightfull, (for that were but a ſmal matter;) but by ſtraining our ſelues to ſerue God, by applying our whole indeuor that way, & by faſhioning all our woorkes according to his will. That is the good confirmation: that is the way for vs to proteſt that God is righteous, &

that he hath giuen vs a good, ſure, and infallible rule, ſuch as wee ought to obſerue. Nowe wee ſee in effect the contents of this ſentence; wherby wee muſt vnderſtand, that God hath not inioyned vs a peeced obedience; but will haue vs to receiue his law to the vttermoſt in all pointes without exception. Wee ſee likewiſe that it is not ynough for vs to ſay, that GOD hath not commaunded any thing which is not righteous; but that we alſo muſt ſhewe an accord and conſent thereunto in our life, by framing it after all his commaundementes.

Moreouer it behoueth vs nowe to ſee in what taking wee ſhould bee, if this Curſe ſhould take place vpon vs. Certaine it is that all men are heere denounced accurſed. And this curſe importeth as much as if it were ſayde, that all are damned, all are loſt, all are forlorne. Take the righteouſeſt perſons that euer were in the worlde; and by this ſentence they deſerue to be caſt away. There is neither Abraham, nor any of the patriarkes: nor Dauid, nor all the Prophets, that can be exempted from this condem- Ezech.14.16 nation. God by his Prophet auoucheth Iob, Daniell, and Samuell for the righteouſeſt, and for ſuch as were in maner vnblamable: & yet muſt euen they alſo bee wrapped in this ſame curſe. Pſal.143.2. And as for Dauid, he confeſſeth it with his owne mouth, ſaying: Lorde, enter not into account with thy Seruaunt, for no man liuing ſhall bee iuſtified in thy ſight. There Dauid ſpeaketh not of the common people onely; but hee putteth himſelfe alſo in the number. True it is that in other places hee declareth ſufficiently, that it was his whole ſeeking to ſerue God; and that his deſire tended that way: yet notwithſtanding he acknowledged that he came far ſhort of diſcharging himſelfe, or of hauing ſuch perfection as were requiſite. If he yeelded himſelfe guiltie as well as other men: what ſhall we doe now? But heere is a dreadfull ſentence, and ſuch a one as ought to make the haires ſtand ſtiffe vppon our heads: *Curſed ſhall he be which performeth not all the words of this law*. And who is he that ſpeaketh this? It is God. Then is it ſuch a definitiue ſentence, as admitteth no appeale from it. For he wil haue al men to confeſſe it to be ſo; yea he wil haue euery man to cōfeſſe it with his own mouth. And what remaineth then for vs to do? Where is the hope of ſaluation? Hereby wee ſee, that if we had but the ten commandements of the law: we ſhould vtterly be vndone & periſh; and ẏ it behoueth vs to haue recourſe to his mercy, which out- Iam.2.13. goeth his iuſtice, as ſaith S.Iames. Gods goodnes then muſt take place towards vs, to deliuer vs frō the confuſion wherin al of vs ſhould haue bin, if the ſaid ſentence ſhould ſtand, and ẏ there ſhold be no grace to outgo it. And truly S.Paule in the Gal.3,10. third to the Galathians proueth by this text, that wee cannot become righteous by our workes, but that it behoueth vs to bee made righteous by fayth onely; that is to ſay, by the meere grace of God, bicauſe we be cōdemned euerichone of vs, if God enter into account with vs. For why? Curſed ſhall hee bee which performeth not all the wordes of the lawe. If a man reply, yea, but if a man doe performe them, why ſhould he not become righteous thereby? And why ſhould hee not be payde his hire at Gods hande, according to his deſertes? Saint Paule preſuppoſeth that there was neuer yet any man found, nor any can poſſibly be found, which performeth al the words of the law, and all that euer God commaundeth. Indeede it hath beene a common ſaying, That GODS Lawe is not vnpoſſible. And at this day when the Papiſtes reaſon againſt vs, they thinke it an vnuincible argument to prooue their freewill. Why ſhould GOD haue commaunded vs to loue him with all our hearte, if we bee not able to doe it? It were too repugnaunt, that GOD ſhould exact more of men than they are able to doe: nay, [in ſo dooing] hee ſhoulde bee vniuſt and cruell. After that maner doe the Papiſtes reaſon. But Saint Paule on the contrary part ſayeth, Curſed ſhall he bee which performeth not all the Commaundementes. And he preſuppoſeth (as I ſayde afore) that no man performeth them, and that it is vnpoſſible for to finde any ſuch man. Whereupon he inferreth his concluſion, Then is all mankinde vndoone, if they enter into examination of workes ſo as men muſt bee puniſhed according to their deſeruinges: GOD muſt needes caſt them off and vtterly damne them. And ſo wee haue an excellent leſſon in this text. For it is as much as if GOD ſtrake downe all the Children of Adam with one blowe of a beetle, yea and thundred downe vpon them to fling them into ſuch a dungeon of confuſion, as they might perceiue that in themſelues they are all damned and periſhed. But wee tary not there. For when God hath once humbled vs; he giueth vs the fitte meane of deliuerance from the condemnation, as ſhall bee ſhewed more plainely heereafter. But eare we proceed ſo farre, let vs conſider howe the Papiſtes deceiue themſelues. They ſee wellynough that no man performeth ẏ law of God: and although they forge the fantaſticall arguments which I ſpake of; ſaying that God commaundeth not any thing which is not in the power of men to doe: yet are they conuicted euen by their owne experience, that all men are ſinners; that all men haue doone amiſſe, (as the holy ſcripture alſo telleth vs;) that there is not any man liuing vpon the earth (as Salomon ſayeth) which ſinneth not; and that all men haue neede of the grace of God. The Papiſtes then although they well ſee this; yet do they wrangle ſtill, ſaying that that is before wee be regenerated againe by Gods ſpirite. Neuertheleſſe, if they be preſſed, they muſt needs confeſſe in the ſecond place, that euen the holyeſt folke are ſtill vnperfect, and ẏ there is ſome frailty in them. And though they would not confeſſe it, yet doth the holy ſcripture ſhew it, and euery man feeles it in himſelfe. Now then, wherfore do the Papiſts ſo greatly mayntaine the righteouſneſſe of works, & beare themſelues in hand that we deſerue well to be recompenced, and that we purchace or earne ẏ kingdome of heauen? How cōmeth it to paſſe that they be ſo brutiſh and ſo beaſtly? It is bicauſe they imagine that although we performe not the law: yet neuertheleſſe we faile not to merite or deſerue; & this they terme a righteouſneſſe in part. They ſay that all men doe amiſſe in deede; that is true: and that in that reſpect they be faultie before God, and through rigour doe well deſerue to be condemned: Neuertheleſſe, yͭ when they haue the righteouſnes in part, that is to ſay, when they doe partly obey the law: that doing of theirs is worthie to be accepted, and to be put into the account and reckoning. And that is the thing wherein they glorie ſo much. After that maner then there are deſeruings in men, though they performe not the whole law. That is for one point.

Againe they haue another diueliſh imagination; which is, that when they haue doone amiſſe, they can make amendes vnto GOD by their owne ſatisfactions, and can raunſome themſelues, ſo as they ſhall goe ſcotfree, at leaſtwyſe in their owne ſeeming. They will well confeſſe in one woorde, wee bee indaungered: but yet doeth it not followe that wee haue no meane to ſhifte it off, and to make GOD to accept in exchaunge, whatſoeuer wee bring vnto him. Heereuppon haue they founded all their good deuotions as they terme them, as Pilgrimages, Maſſes, and Yeremindes, with all their freewill deuotions, as their faſtinges and diuerſe other thinges; in ſo much that euen their Shrift is put among their woorkes of ſatisfaction. Againe the pratling of ſome Paternoſters, the babling before a Puppet, the chaunting of ſome Maſſe, the ſetting vp of ſome Tapers, and ſuch other things, are all of them ſuch recompences as GOD can not finde any fault at all with them, howbeit, bycauſe they ſee themſelues ouercharged with thoſe thinges: they forge a ſort of petie inuentions, wherewith to play with GOD. And therefore they haue deuiſed veniall ſinnes; in ſo much that if a man be tempted to wicked deſires, yet he ſhall not haue offended God, vntill he be willing and perfectly conſenting to yͤ performance therof. If a mā be tempted in himſelf, if a man bee mooued to doe euill; all this is no deadly ſinne, ſay the Papiſts; it is but veniall ſin, and one ſprinkle of holy water is ynough to waſh it cleane away. But contrariwiſe, wee knowe Deut.10.12. howe it is ſayde; O Iſrael, what is it that thy GOD requireth of thee; but that thou ſhouldeſt loue him with all thy heart? Heere yee ſee howe the righteouſneſſe of the Lawe is, that a man loue GOD with all his heart. But hee that hath offended is accurſed. And all of vs offende; and are not all of vs then in daunger of death? There is not that man vpon whome GOD pronounceth not this curſe. Nowe when men haue thought euill, ſo as they haue beene prouoked to doe naughtily: it is no ſinne (ſay the Papiſtes,) they bee righteous ſtill for all that. See how the Papiſtes do fully mocke God, in that they thinke yͭ by ſome fond ceremonie, or by a *Meaculpa*, they be diſcharged of their ſins, & make account of thē as of a thing of nothing. Theſe are the ſtartingholes which they haue to mocke God withal as a yong babe; and that is a dreadfull thing. But yet is it put in vre in al their ſchooles. Neuertheleſſe, we muſt not goe to worke after that faſhion; but we muſt rather bethinke vs howe the Apoſtle ſayeth, Heb.10.31. That it is a dreadfull thing to fall into the hands of the liuing God. Therefore we muſt not in this caſe breake the bondes and yoke which hee hath layde vppon our neckes: we muſt not play the wilde beaſtes: we muſt not thinke to beguile him by ſome faire ſhow in making countenance to ſerue him, hauing in the meane while no good will to ſerue him indeede. For in the ende hee will ſhewe that his vengeance ſhall light vppon al ſuch as haue liued like hypocrites and dubble hearted diſſemblers before him. What is to be doone then? We muſt frankely refuſe this gloſe of righteouſneſſe in part, which the Papiſtes haue forged: for it is a deuice of Sathans, and euen they themſelues will well confeſſe, that wee cannot merite by any inwarde worthineſſe which is in our woorkes. They ſay that all the worthyneſſe of our woorkes commeth onely of this, that God is acquainted with vs; inſomuch that when men haue doone all that is poſſible, yet will there euer bee ſome fault to bee founde in their woorkes, when they come before GOD. Not that all Papiſtes are of that minde, there is not paſt one of a thouſande that thinketh ſo: but there is yet a farre finer and ſubtler doctrine of Poperie; which is, that woorkes are not worthy of themſelues, but bycauſe of the promiſe of the Lawe. But what maner a one is this promiſe? Let vs come to that point. Beholde, GOD offereth himſelfe to all men, and ſayeth that whoſoeuer performeth the Lawe ſhall bee bleſſed; and contrariwiſe that they ſhall bee curſed which ſtep away from it. Thus ye ſee that the perfect righteouſnes is the performing of yͤ law. But as I haue told you already, no man performeth it; and therefore God is quitte of his promiſe towardes vs. Seeing that wee on our ſide fayle in our condition; hee for his parte oweth vs nothing. After the ſame maner alſo ſpeaketh S. Paule thereof, ſaying; If righteouſneſſe depende Rom.4.14. vpon the workes of the lawe, then is the promiſe to no purpoſe. Saint Paule in that place toucheth the matter to the quicke. For why? Who performeth the Lawe of God, that he can ſay, I haue attained vnto perfect righteouſneſſe in my workes? There is no ſuch man to bee founde. Then is there no more certaintie in the promiſes ſaith he: & ſo conſequently we be all damned, if wee will needes ground our ſelues vppon our woorkes. After that maner ſpeaketh hee thereof, as well to the Romanes as to the Galathians. Rom. 4. Gal. 3. And ſo let vs marke, that God denounceth vs to bee all condemned by this ſentence, where he ſayth, Curſed ſhall he bee which performeth not all the thinges that are contayned in the booke of my Lawe. As for the pelting traſhe which the Papiſtes call ſatiſfactions, they bee but mockeries. For GOD will bee ſerued with obedience. Moreouer the releaſing of our ſinnes is free beeſtowed, as the holye Scripture ſheweth. And as for all the

Satisfactions (as they terme them) which men haue forged; they ſerue to no purpoſe, neither doeth GOD accept any of them. When wee fall to breeding of our owne lykinges in our owne braynes, hee refuſeth euerywhit of it. Therefore let vs holde vs to the grace of our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt, knowing that wee bee waſhed and clenſed by his bloude: and it is the onely remedie that GOD ſetteth foorth vnto vs.

Thus haue wee two thinges to marke: the one is, that if wee ſhould bee iudged by the Law of God, there needed no more but this foreſaide ſentence to damne vs all, yea euen the holyeſt Saintes that euer were in the worlde. For no man hath ſatisfied GODS Lawe; and therefore are wee all condemned. For if the holy fathers which had an Angelicall holyneſſe in this worlde, were notwithſtanding faultie before GOD: what ſhall become of vs? Let vs nowe make compariſon betweene vs and them. Howe farre off are wee from the holyneſſe of Abraham, the pureneſſe of Dauid, the ſoundneſſe of Iob, and the perfectneſſe of Daniel? When theſe may bee condemned, what ſhall wee bee? And therefore let vs learne to ſhrinke in our hornes, and let euerie of vs keepe his mouth ſhutte, as ſayeth Rom. 3.19. Saint Paule when hee bringeth vs to the righteouſneſſe of fayth, and to the mercie of God. The thing then which we haue to beare in mind is that God hath bereft vs of all righteouſneſſe, to the intent to rid vs of al preſumption & pride, and that we ſhould no more pretend to come to account with him, to bind him vnto vs, but that we ſhould willingly condemne our ſelues. Let that ſerue for one point. Nowe heereupon wee haue to conſider the remedie which God hath left: which is that yet neuertheleſſe we be righteous by meanes of our Lord Ieſus Chriſt. For hee hath deliuered vs from the curſe which was due vnto vs: and for that cauſe was hee hanged Gal. 3.13. vppon tree, as ſayth S. Paule. We haue ſeene heeretofore in the one and twentith chapter, that as many as were hanged vpon tree were all accurſed. Now when GOD made that Lawe, knewe hee not what hee had ordayned afore concerning his owne only ſonne, who was to be hanged on tree? Surely it was an vnchaungeable decree, made euen before the creation of the worlde. Seeing it is ſo; wee bee redeemed from the curſe by our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt; and wee muſt nowe match this ſentence with the other which wee haue ſeene in the one and twentyth Chapter. Whereas it is ſayde heere, Curſed ſhall hee bee which performeth not all theſe ſayinges: yee ſee well that for want of performing them, wee bee confounded and of ryght as good as damned. But yet heerewithall, wee muſt alſo imbrace our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt, who was curſed for our ſakes. And if that this Curſe bee not in vaine, then muſt wee nowe bee needes ſette free. What a thing were it, that the ſonne of GOD ſhould bee curſed without cauſe; and yet no fruite redounde thereof to vs? That hee which is the fountaine of all bleſſedneſſe, ſhould bee accurſed; and yet wee not knowe wherefore, but that it ſhould bee vnprofitable? Nowe then ſeeing that the curſe which Ieſus Chriſt ſuffered in his owne perſon, is not vaine and to no purpoſe: let vs knowe that by the ſame meane wee bee deliuered before GOD. And ſo yee ſee howe wee ought to make thoſe two textes to agree.

Furthermore wee knowe alſo that hee became ſubiect to the Lawe, Gal. 4.4. to the intent to performe all maner of obedience to the full, as it were in our perſon. And the righteouſneſſe which hee hath gotten in himſelfe, is at this day allowed vnto vs, as if euery of vs had diſcharged our ſelues towardes God. The way then for vs to bee deliuered from our curſedneſſe, is this: After wee haue beene aſhamed and as it were plunged in deſpaire; wee may take heart againe to vs to bee aſſured of our ſaluation, and offer our ſelues before the Maieſtie of our God, with aſſured truſt that hee will accept vs for his children, and alſo like well of vs: and moreouer that ſeeing our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt hath fulfilled the Lawe, and not fayled in any one point or iote therof: now we be clothed againe with his righteouſnes, and the ſame is allowed vnto vs as our owne. And therefore let vs go boldly before God, and call vpon him as our father: yea verily, ſo wee put not our pureneſſe in our owne woorkes, nor imagine that GOD oweth vs any thing, nor pretende to bring any deſert or merite of our owne: but that beeing vtterly emptie, wee call vpon GOD to vouchſafe, not onely to fill vp that which wanteth in our ſelues in parte, by the meanes of our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt: but to giue vs the righteouſneſſe wherof we be vtterly deſtitute and vnpurueyed. And let vs marke further, that when we be once ſo receiued into fauour; then ſhall our workes alſo bee accepted. The way then for vs to ſerue God to his lyking, is that being iuſtified by faith, that is to ſay, that hauing obtayned forgiueneſſe of our ſinnes, yea and hauing obtained it bicauſe that dayly yea and all the tyme of our life wee haue neede thereof: and alſo hauing recourſe to GODS attonement with vs of his owne free goodneſſe by meanes of the death, paſſion, and ſacrifice of our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt offered vp vnto him: wee hauing ſo doone, bee then alſo deſirous to ſerue God; for then ſhall wee doe well, and then will hee accept the ſeruice which we yeelde vnto him; whereas without that, wee can haue no fayth in Ieſus Chriſt. But when we indeuour to ſerue GOD; although there bee ſomewhat amiſſe, and our affections turne vs nowe one way nowe another: yet doeth not our God ceaſſe to allowe our life. And why? Bycauſe our ſinnes are not imputed vnto vs. True it is that in very rigour, this ſaying, (Curſed ſhall hee bee which performeth not all theſe words,) will ſtand in force: but behold, Ieſus Chriſt is our borow, and payeth for vs out of hand, deliuering vs from our curſednes, and making ſatisfaction to God his father. For we know yͤ his death & paſſion are accepted for the price and raunſome of our ſaluation, that by that meanes we ſhould be reconciled vnto God. Yee ſee then how that on the one ſide it behooueth vs to feele our own curſednes, that we may be afraide of Gods iudgements: and that on the other ſide we muſt take courage, not doubting but that ſeeing our Lord Ieſus Chriſt anſwereth for vs, we ſhalbe receiued for his ſake, and God will accept vs together with our works, notwithſtanding that they bee not ſo exquiſite as they ſhould be, but haue ſome blottes and blemiſhes in them, ſo as they deſerue to bee condemned & vtterly reiected. To be ſhort, the faithfull being iuſtified by the grace of God, haue therewithall this benefit and priuiledge, that God accepteth their woorkes, and chargeth them not with this curſe which they haue deſerued. After that manner then ought we to put this text in practiſe.

But I haue tolde you that on the one ſide wee muſt mourne and bee afraid at the ſight of our curſedneſſe before God: and that on the other ſide we muſt truſt in ẏ grace which Ieſus Chriſt offereth vs. For if we ſhould ſooth our ſelues bycauſe God forgiueth vs our ſinnes; what a dealing were that? Wee ſhoulde ſtill enter into the ſayde parting of ſtakes which men weene to make, when they think to diſcharge themſelues towardes God in part. Now then, it behooueth vs to be ſorie for all our ſinnes: and if wee perceyue any vice in vs, wee muſt not ſuffer it to raigne. True it is that wee come ſhort, I ſay not in ſome one part onely, but in all. There is not any one poynt of the law, wherein we fayle not. As for him that thinkes himſelfe cleare from couetouſneſſe, and to bee a deſpiſer of worldly goods: ſurely he hath yet ſome other affection in his heart, which holdeth him backe in the world. He that is chaſt and honeſt of his body, hath yet ſome vanities that will cary him away. He that foſtreth not any hatred or rancor in his heart, is not ſo vtterly cleere from all wicked affection, that he liueth ſo perfectly as he ought to do. To be ſhort, we ſhalbe found guilty, not in one or two points onely, [but in all:] ſo as there is not any part or peece of the law, wherin God might not condemne vs. And therfore (as I ſaid) ſeeing we perceiue ſuch vnperfectneſſe in vs, we muſt not ſtand in our own conceits, but mourne before God: and hauing mourned, we muſt indeuor to giue our ſelues ouer vnto him, prayng him to increaſe in vs the power and grace of his holy ſpirite, that we may ſo manfully fight againſt our ſinnes, as we may ſubdue them, ouercome them, and get the vpper hand of them, to triumph ouer them once when we be quite and cleane rid of them. Thus ye ſee how we ought to proceede in that behalfe.

And this ought to make the faithfull to reioyce; that although they perceiue their owne imperfections, yet muſt they not therfore ceaſſe to imbrace Gods promiſes with gladneſſe, aſſuring themſelues that they ſhal not be diſappointed of them. And why? Bycauſe they haue the inioying of all good thinges in our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt, by whom and by whoſe meanes the curſe that was due to them is done away. Ye ſee then howe that on the one ſide it behoueth the faithfull to be vtterly caſt downe: and againe that on the other ſide they bee lifted vp againe in our Lord Ieſus Chriſt, foraſmuch as they know that looke what they haue not in themſelues, they ſhall finde it, if they ſeeke it there, whither God ſendeth them. And therefore let vs not beguile our ſelues any more with the fanſies of Sathan which raigne in the Popedome, of being deſirous to offer our owne merites vnto God, and to indent with him as though wee had perfourmed his lawe: aſſuring our ſelues that on our part, all the couenants which are made in the lawe, are vtterly vaine; and that al the promiſes which import any condition of well doing & of holy conuerſation, ſhoulde bee vnauailable towardes vs, and neuer come to effect; vnleſſe wee reſorted to this free promiſe, Whoſoeuer beleeueth that Ieſus Chriſt dyed for our ſinnes, and that God by his power hath raiſed him againe to make vs righteous, beleeuing the ſame in his heart and confeſſing it with his mouth; ſhal be ſaued. And thereunto alſo doth S. Paul bring vs backe in the tenth Chapter to the Romanes, which is the verie expoſition that will giue vs the vnderſtanding of this place. The righteouſneſſe of the law ſheweth vs that we be all accurſed, & that there is not any maner of way to ſaue vs, ſo long as we ſtay there. What are wee to doe then, that wee may haue acceſſe vnto God? Let vs with our heartes beleeue vnto righteouſneſſe, and with our mouthes confeſſe vnto ſaluation, that wee put our whole truſt in him which hath acquitted vs towardes God his father; and let vs imbrace the righteous obedience which he hath yeelded vnto God, and likewiſe his ſuſtaining of the curſe which was due vnto vs, to the intent to ſet vs free from it.

Rom. 10. 9

Now let vs fall downe before the maieſtie of our good GOD with acknowledgement of our ſinnes; praying him to make vs feele them better than we haue done, that we may be more & more touched with the true repentance which mortifieth all our fleſhly affections: and to draw vs from the delightes of this world, and to lift vs vp into a true deſire of giuing our ſelues wholly to his lawe, ſo as wee may dayly profite thereby, knowing that the true perfection of all faithfull folke, is to know how farre they be off from perfection; to the end that all mouthes may be ſtopped, and none acknowledged for righteous but onely God; and that when Chriſtes righteouſneſſe once ſhineth vppon vs, we ſhall not bee bereft thereof, aſſuring our ſelues that therin lyeth all our perfection. That it may pleaſe him to graunt this grace, not onely to vs, but alſo to all people and nations of the earth, &c.

On Tewſday the x. of March, 1556.

The CLiij. Sermon, which is the firſt vpon the eight and twentith Chapter.

IF thou obey the voyce of the Lorde thy God, in keeping and doeing all his commaundementes which I commaunde thee this day, then will the Lord thy God make thee head ouer al the nations of the earth.

2 And al theſe bleſſings ſhall come vpon thee, and incloſe thee round about, if thou obey the voyce of the Lord thy God.

WE haue ſeen heretofore, howe God hath couenanted with his people, of purpoſe to bynde them: that euerye one ſhold know his duetie, and bee the better diſpoſed to doe the ſame. Now he ſpeaketh as a Iudge hauing all authoritie. It ſkilles not whether folke doe pleade guiltie or no, when they haue doone amiſſe: for God giueth heere his determinate ſentence, though they conſent not thereunto. Neyther doeth the caſe concerne altogether the condemning of thoſe that offend the lawe; but he beginneth with another matter, to wit, with right amiable promiſes: therby to allure and to win mens heartes vnto him. Thus therefore doeth he ſay: If ye hearken vnto my voyce to obey my commaundementes, and bee carefull to keepe them: you ſhalbe bleſſed all maner of wayes, and yee ſhall be enuironed through my fauour, with all maner of welfare and proſperitie. I haue already tolde you, that GOD ſheweth great goodneſſe towardes men, when hee goeth about by ſuch meanes to winne them: for it were ſufficient for him to ſay, This is your duty: and al creatures ſhould tremble at his ſpeaking. Therefore when hee addeth any promiſes, hee forbeareth part of his right, and therein humbleth himſelfe, that wee ſhould bee the more inclyned and better diſpoſed to ſerue him. If wee had doone all that wee can, yea and more than wee are able: is GOD bound to recompence vs? Surely no. Wee muſt alwaies reſort to that which our Lorde Ieſus alleageth in Saint Luke, namely: That if a man Luke.17.7. haue a bond ſeruant, and he ſend him to labour in the feelde all the day long, when the ſeruant commeth home at night; wil he ſay: Wel, nowe muſt I doe my turne; thou ſhalt ſit downe at the Table, and I will prepare thy ſupper, and giue thee thy meate and drinke, bycauſe thou haſt laboured for mee, and my courſe is nowe come to ſerue thee? Will the Maiſter ſay ſo? No truly. But when the ſeruant is come home, the Maiſter will ſay vnto him, Couer the table, dreſſe my ſupper, and giue me drinke. Euen ſo ſayth Ieſus Chriſt, When you haue doone all that is poſſible for you to do: thinke not in your ſelues, that God my father oweth you aught at all, or that hee is beholden vnto you: but proceede on ſtill, and acknowledge, that all that euer yee can doe is but duetie towardes him. And indeede ſeeing that God hath made vs, what is hee that can do too much for the ſeruice of him? We ſee then ẏ God might ſay playnly: Thus it it pleaſeth me, & this is my will, follow you ẏ way. And therfore whereas he telleth vs ẏ we ſhalbe bleſſed & not looſe our labour, but haue rewarde for our ſeruing of him: It is not to be doubted, but ẏ in ſo dooing, hee forbeareth ſome part of his right. In the meane whyle, wee may ſee that he playeth the good and kinde hearted Father to win his Children. For although a father woteth well that his children are bounde to obey him to the vttermoſt; and that hee for his part, is not any way bounde to them: yet will hee not refuſe to ſaye: Loe, I loue you, and I deſire but your owne welfare: doe but ſo as I may haue lyking of you, and I will not forſake you. A father will be liberall of promyſe, ſaying: Goe to, yee knowe that all that euer I haue is for you: for whome elſe doe I trauayle? And to what other ende? And if I ſee you take good wayes, I will vſe you accordingly. Thus doeth the father that humbleth himſelfe in his authoritie. And wherefore? Bycauſe hee woulde that his children ſhoulde ſerue him of free good will, rather than bee compelled thereunto by rigorous extremitie. Let vs marke therefore, that all the promiſes contayned in holy Scripture, be as it were ſo many teſtimonies of the fatherly loue of our GOD; ſhewing himſelfe to haue a care of our health and welfare, in that hee vouchſafeth thus to apply and faſhion himſelfe vnto vs. By meanes whereof the Lawe of GOD becommeth the more amyable vnto vs; for as much as wee ſee that in keeping of the ſame wee bee not diſappoynted of a good rewarde, yea farre greater than we can wiſh. For vnder this woorde Bleſſing, is comprehended all manner of proſperitie.

Moreouer whẽ God doeth make vs to proſper in this world: it is for none other purpoſe,but to giue vs a taſt of his loue towards vs.Howbeit,this is not the cheefe point whereupon hee woulde haue vs to ſtay: but he leadeth vs euer further: Inſomuch that when we feele his goodneſſe in this preſent life, and that hee hath care of vs,& that hee reacheth foorth his hande to prouide for vs al thinges that are neceſſarie: wee ought thereuppon to conclude much more ſtronglie, that when hee hath taken vs out of this preſent worlde, hee will then powre vppon vs the Riches of his goodneſſe, in other manner of ſorte than wee be nowe able to comprehende. Indeede wee haue in this life ſome ſmall ſhewe thereof, but the aboundant accompliſhment of the ſame ſhall bee in the kingdome of heauen. Thus ye ſee what wee haue to conſider, in that our GOD deliuereth foorth his promiſes to traine vs the better to ſerue him of free good will.

Neuerthelatter, howſoeuer the worlde goe, let vs marke, that all the promiſes which God maketh vs vppon condition,ſtand vs in no ſteed (as it was told you yeſterday) if wee ſtay there. For why? Truely, God is faithfull: and his ſpeaking is not to deceyue vs: but yet let vs looke to our ſelues. What is hee that ſo diſchargeth him of his duetie, that hee may hope to bee bleſſed of God? It is not ſaide: You ſhal bee bleſſed in keeping part of my law: but it is ſaid in the text: *If you heare my voice, and be diligent in keeping all my commaundementes, and fulfill them all: then I will bleſſe you.* Nowe that men endeuour themſelues in all that is poſſible to keepe the lawe of God, I ſpeake not of their owne power or naturall motion. For ſo farre off are they which bee not regenerate by the holy Ghoſt, from atteyning to ſerue God, that they canne no ſkil ſo much as to conceyue a good thought. What is the inclination of man, but a ſtriuing againſt God, and all his righteouſneſſe? So Gen.6.5. long as men followe the leading of their owne Rom.8.7. ſpirite, they doe nothing elſe but fight againſt 2.Cor.3.5. God, as vtter rebelles to his whole wil. To bee ſhort, we bee not apt (as Saint Paul ſayeth) ſo much as to thinke to doe well. To thinke is a verie ſmall thing: and yet Saint Paul cutteth vs off from that power, and ſheweth that wee bee ſo corrupted and frowardely bent, that in all thinges wee drawe contrarie to that which God commaundeth vs. Inſomuch that euen when God hath reformed vs by his holy ſpirite, and changed our malice and rebellion, whereunto wee bee wholie inclined: yet can it not bee ſaide that wee proceede to the obeying of him in all perfection: for there is alwayes ſome infirmitie to let vs: ſo that in ſteede of running wee doe but halt, and trayle our legges after vs: in ſteede of going right forwarde, wee reele from one ſide to an other: and it happeneth often to vs, to trippe and to ſtumble, as euerie man may well finde in himſelfe. Howe then can wee hope to bee bleſſed of our GOD, beeing ſo farre wide from keeping of his lawe? That is the cauſe why I ſayde, that all the promiſes which bee vppon condition are vtterlie vnauaylable, and ſhall neuer come to their effect, if God ſhoulde reſt vppon that point. Indeede this matter was expounded yeſterday, and this place was expreſly alleaged by Saint Paul, where it is ſayde, that if ſaluation come by workes, and the inheritaunce proceede of the Rom.4.14 lawe: then ſhall there bee no performance of the promiſes. For wee doe faile on our part, and therefore the couenant is voide, that God hath made with vs: yet may it not hereby bee concluded that God mocketh vs, in ſetting downe theſe promiſes: as the Papiſtes doe at the firſt daſh, ſtarting out of their boundes, and playing the madde men. For when it is ſaide, that all the promiſes conteyned in holy ſcriptures, bee not effectuall, otherwiſe than by meane of the forgiueneſſe of our ſinnes through the free goodneſſe of God, and that wee are iuſtifyed by faith onely: What (ſay they?) Seeing it is ſaide, I wil bleſſe you, ſo you ſerue mee and honour mee: it ſeemeth that God vſeth but hypocriſie, and maketh a daliaunce with men. To what purpoſe (ſaith he ſo?) Thus do the Papiſtes accuſe GOD of falſehoode, and blaſpheme him, if they be not able to deſerue the promiſes which hee hath made them. For otherwiſe [they thinke] it is but a mockerie, to make men beleeue that he woulde bleſſe them. But let vs beware of ſuch maddeneſſe, and let vs rather vnderſtande to what ende God hath giuen his promiſes vnto men: and wee ſhall ſee that it is not in vaine. I ſaide heretofore, that God hath ſhewed his great goodneſſe, in humbling himſelfe ſo louingly vnto vs. We perteyne wholy to him, wee are altogether his, and yet woulde hee not ſimplie commaund; but commaunde with promiſes, and gentleneſſe to win vs. If a man doe hereupon replie and ſay, What doeth it profite vs? Truely it profiteth vs nothing at all, if wee ſtay there: but wee muſt goe further. When wee heare the promiſes that God hath offered vnto vs, & ſee that all his ſeeking is to winne vs through loue, and that hee meaneth not to enforce vs through neceſſitie, it condemneth vs of vnthankefulneſſe, if we bend not ourſelues wholy towardes him. But wee cannot doe it. Wherefore? Are wee then excuſed? No. For it is our owne naughtineſſe that doth let vs. Euerie man ſhal condemne him- Iames.1.14 ſelfe, ſaith Saint Iames, becauſe there is nothing that prouoketh vs to euill, but the concupiſcence of our owne fleſhe. Seeing then that the fault is in vs, wee muſt make no more allegations, and here yee ſee wee bee confounded before God. Thus then haue wee cauſe to bee twiſe the more lowely. Firſt of all, for that wee bee ſo leawde, that Gods goodneſſe mooueth vs not to come neere him, and to put our ſelues vnder his leading: And ſecondlie for that we ſearch not out the bottome of the ſinne that is in vs, after this manner: Alas, ſeeing I haue euerie day ſo innumerable thoughtes, ſo many deſires and motions, ſuch ſtore of affections, which ſerue altogether to turne mee away from that good whereunto God doeth call mee:by reaſon whereof I ceaſſe not to offende God in all thinges, ſo as nothing can bee drawen from mee, but vtter euill, all offence, and al iniquitie: alas in what taking am I? Men, when they ſee this, muſt needes feele themſelues double confounded. And when they haue well examined themſelues, [they muſt needes bee driuen to thinke thus,] Well, God hath layde before mee all the meanes that I can wiſh, for to attayne ſaluation, if I were not altogether corrupt and peruerſe. And now cannot I pleade ignoraunce, ſeeing that the lawe is giuen vnto mee, and the way ſhewed mee, howe I ought to gouerne mee and howe to leade my life. And to the ende that I ſhould bee the more willing thereunto; my God trayneth mee to it by gentleneſſe, promiſing that I ſhalbee rewarded for ſeruing him. Is it ſo? What is then to be done? I muſt not in this caſe make any further proteſtation, nor ſtande pleading any more againſt GOD: for I am too much too blame already. Now when men finde themſelues thus condemned, then are they forced to ſeeke their ſaluation out of themſelues, and to reſort to this ſecond remedie; Alas Lord, if the caſe were ſo that I ſhoulde obteyne ſaluation by ſeruing of thee, thou haſt giuen mee thy lawe, and alſo ioyned thereunto thy promiſes; howbeit theſe thinges auaile mee nothing: I muſt therefore forſake my ſelfe, acknowledging that I am quite ſhutte out of all hope of life, vnleſſe I finde ſome other better helpe. See heere I ſay, how wee bee ledde to our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt, and made to embrace the grace which is offered vnto vs in him: that by obteining forgiueneſſe of our ſinnes, wee may be ſure to bee bleſſed of God. When wee haue once gotten that fauour, that God is at one with vs by meanes of our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt; then doeth hee accept our vnperfect woorkes, as though we had accompliſhed all the lawe. Although the good which the faithfull doe, bee not woorthy to bee receiued of God: yet doeth hee accept it in good woorth. And wherefore? For he of his owne goodneſſe wipeth away all the faultes that are in them. So then, when wee labour to doe well, notwithſtanding that it lyeth not in our power to attayne to perfection, becauſe of the ouermuch frailtie of our nature: yet wil God receiue our ſeruice as acceptable, as though hee had nothing to ſay againſt it: and ſo are wee made partakers of the bleſſinges that are heere mentioned. As howe? We haue not fulfilled all: It is true: but yet God paſſeth it in his accounts, as if al were performed, forſomuch as wee bee made cleane by the bloud of Ieſus Chriſt. And like as wee bee cleanſed, ſo be our workes alſo, and when they come before God, hee accepteth them, as though they were thorowly good, righteous and perfect. Here therefore wee perceiue that the promiſes bee not giuen in vaine, but that they haue their effect in the faithfull: not at the firſt daſh, but when we come thereunto by degrees, and circumſtances, for then wee ſhall feele the effect and force of them. As concerning the misbeleeuers, the promiſes ſtande them in no ſteade; but to make them the more vnexcuſable before God in the laſt day. For what ſhall they be able to pleade, ſeeing that God hath ſo familiarly offered himſelfe vnto them, requiring nothing but to haue the fruition of their whole life: that they might obey him: and yet they continue hardhearted? See yee not howe they bee double confounded? And therefore the promiſes and threateninges of the lawe, bee alwayes good and righteous, neither ſhall they bee vnprofitable, if a man can skill to take them as it were meete they ſhoulde. But this ſhalbee better perceiued by the diſcourſe which I ſhall make thereof particularly. Now let vs proceede to expound the wordes that Moſes doeth vſe. *If thou wilt heare the voyce of the Lorde thy God, and bee carefull to fulfill all the commaundementes which I commaund thee this day: all theſe bleſſinges ſhall come vpon thee and compaſſe thee rounde about.* As touching the firſt point, Moſes ſheweth that which wee ſawe before, namely, that the beginning to liue well, is to hearken vnto God. For men muſt not haue the rule ouer themſelues, ſaying, I will gouerne my ſelfe after mine owne liking: wee muſt not take ſuch libertie: For hee that taketh too much vppon himſelfe, ſhall at the laſt bee reiected of GOD, for not yeelding him this obedience, which is the foundation whereon wee ought to builde. Let vs marke therefore, that all they which followe their owne fooliſh deuotions (as they cal them,) are miſliked of God. For this text of the Prophet Eſay muſt take place. *Who hath required theſe thinges at your handes?* Let vs acknowledge Eſa.1.12. therefore, that it is an ineſtimable benefite when God ſheweth vs his will, and that the ſtate of the Papiſts is accurſed. For when they intend to doe well, they knowe not which way to turne them, but euery one followeth his owne fancie with, I hope it wilbee well, for my meaning is good: and againe common cuſtome alloweth it, and our holy mother the Church doth commaunde it: but in the meane while the lawe of God remaineth forgotten. Whereby we may learne that there is nothing but confuſion in the life of man, in which is nought elſe but a mingling without order, vntill they bee taught of God, as wee ſhall ſee hereafter. This is the way, walke in it. It is ſaid *that we muſt be carefull.* This word was ſet downe once afore by Mo- Deut.30.15 ſes, and not without cauſe is it here againe repeated, For we be warned by it, that vnleſſe men bee very heedeful in obeying God, and inforce themſelues thereunto, and ſet their whole ſtudie thereon in good earneſt, they ſhal neuer atteine to keepe the lawe. And we ourſelues ſee what weakeneſſe there is in vs, yea euen albeit that God doe gouerne vs, and although we be reformed by his holy Spirit. For as for the vnfaithful, they bee ſo caried away and ſo furious in their wilfull ſtubborneſſe, that a man woulde thinke they ſhould runne madde againſt God. Yea and although that wee bee gouerned by the holy Ghoſt; yet are we ſo frayle as is pitie to ſee. God requireth a great perfection, when he willeth vs to loue him with all our heart, to eſchue all the vanities of this world, and all our fleſhly luſtes; and (to be ſhorte,) to forſake our ſelues, and to be altogether changed. This is a matter ouer high and difficult. Now let vs conſider what Sathan doth deuiſe and practiſe to turne vs away from the ſeruice of God: how many ſorts of tẽptations be there? They be infinite. Againe, how ſore are the aſſaultes that Sathan prepareth againſt vs? When we haue conſidered of all this; wee may well conclude, that it is not without cauſe, that God ſayth, *that we muſt be carefull*, that euery one of vs muſt ſtrengthen himſelfe, and gather all our forces together; and not thinke to ſet foorth negligently to the ſeruice of our God. For when we ſuppoſe to march one ſtep foreward, we ſhall goe an hundred backward, if we bee not very ſtoute and couragious, holding our ſelues in awe and reſtreyning our ſelues, & gathering our wits to vs in ſuch ſort, as we bend our mindes wholly thereunto, and euen as yee would ſay) labour for breath in trauelling about it.

And moreouer ſeeing we be forlaide with ambuſhes on euery ſide, and ſhoulde bee ſoone ſurpriſed, ſo as we ſhould fall into the ſnares of Satan ere we were aware: let vs take heede and be watchfull. That is the thing whereof we be warned. And would God we could well cary away this leſſon. For then, whereas we now apply all our power, and all our endeuours to thinges not onely friuolous, but altogether hurtfull, tending to none other ende but to deceiue vs to our deſtruction: euery of vs woulde be vigilant to walke in the obedience of GOD, and to giue himſelfe wholly thereunto. And ſeeing that wee bee warned thereof, there is no excuſe. Will we then obey our God, and ſhewe that our affection is ſo bent without diſſembling? Let euery one of vs incline to that which is giuen him in commaundement: namely to bee carefull, vigilant and attentiue.

Nowe he addeth: *To keepe all the commaundementes which I ſet before thee this day*, or which I ordeyne for thee. Although Moſes be the ſpeaker hereof: yet taketh hee the aucthoritie and power to commaund, and to ſubdue men not to any thing of his owne forging, as who ſhould ſay, it ought therefore to bee receiued without gaineſaying: but to God, becauſe GOD ſpeaketh by his mouth, and for that hee himſelfe doeth faithfully deliuer the doctrine that was to him committed. Therefore ſpeaketh hee in ſuch a high ſtyle, inſomuch as he ſaith, that they ſhould keepe his ordinaunces. It lieth not in the power of a mortal man to binde folks conſciences. And yet is that yͤ thing which wholly corrupted the Church; in that men haue vſurped the office of God in making lawes and ſtatutes, for ſpirituall gouernement of mens ſoules. And that is a point of high treaſon to Godward. For the creature vſurpeth to himſelfe the thing which appertaineth to GOD onely, whom the Prophet Eſay termeth the lawgiuer, and in likewiſe Saint Iames, to the ende that wee ſhould learne to hearken vnto him, and wholly to depend vpon his worde. Let vs marke wel then, that it is not lawful for men to inioine lawes vnto mens ſoules. But whereas Moſes ſaith, *I ordeine vnto thee*, he preſuppoſeth that he preferred not any thing of his owne, ne forged any law of his owne brayne, or added any thing to that which God had committed vnto him: but foraſmuch as hee did his office faithfully, he might well ſay, *I ordeyne for thee*. As when wee ſet forth the pure word of God, the ſame very worde is a ſoueraigne commaundement. Now it is not meant hereby, that we ſhould vſurp any dominion or ſoueraintie ouer mens ſoules. But that in dooing ſeruice to GOD, wee may commaund in his name and in his perſon. Thus wee ſee heere what the meaning of Moſes was. And in deede, doth it lie in vs to promiſe men life euerlaſting, or to denounce vnto them the vengeance of God? And yet wee doe it neuertheleſſe. Yea verily, howbeit no further foorth than the worde of God is put into our mouth, and that wee haue the teſtimonie of him, being his witneſſe bearers and his heraulds: his witneſſes (I meane) to aſſure the faithfull of the grace and ſaluation which is promiſed vnto thẽ; and his heralds to pronounce and to publiſh his ſentence againſt al the vnbeleeuing ſort and rebels. Therefore to be ſhort, God meant to ſhew forth the maieſtie of his word, when he appointed Moſes to ſpeake in that manner. And it was to the end that we ſhould receiue the woorde of God with ſo much the more lowlineſſe and reuerence, when it is preached vnto vs: not reſpecting the perſon, as who would ſay, hee is but a man that ſpeaketh, he is like vnto vs, and as wee are, ſo is he: but as though we thought thus with our ſelues, It is God that ſpeaketh by the mouth of this man: therefore let vs tremble at his preſence, let vs ſtoope, and receiue that which hee ſaith: and ſeeing he calleth vs before him, let it ſerue to bring vs to ſuch obedience, that we may doe him homage; thereby to ſhewe that we embrace that which proceedeth from his maieſtie. This is the ſumme of that which wee haue to keepe in memorie touching this text.

Eſa. 33.22.
Iam. 4.12.

Now here might a queſtion be moued, why it is ſaid: *When you haue kept al my commandementes*: For it is impoſſible for vs to fulfil the law, ſo long as we ſtand cloathed with this mortall fleſh. As I ſaid afore, we ſhal euer be ful of vices and imperfections. It ſeemeth then, that it is to no purpoſe for God to require ſuch a fulfilling of the lawe, ſeeing it is impoſſible. But here we muſt remember what hath bin ſpoken of afore: To wit, that God in his law reſpecteth not our might, power, or abilitie, but our dutie, & after what maner our life ought to be gouerned. And yͤ ſame ought to ſuffice vs, inaſmuch as we ſay yͭ a man ſhal neuer attaine to yͤ perfect obedience of God, but yͭ we be euer farre from the end of our way: the cauſe whereof, is our corrupt nature, being ſo infected through original ſinne, yͭ when we think on God, we be troubled with many euil fanſies: & whẽ we haue any good motiõ, we are by & by pluckt back from it, & we neede not any other thing to draw vs to the cleane contrarie. But nowe by the way, doth the impoſſibilitie of dooing it, diſcharge vs of our ſeruice which wee bee bound to doe vnto God? No. For the euil commeth of ourſelues. It is no maruel then, that God in his lawe ſhoulde haue no regard to mãs abilitie or vnabilitie, but rather to the dutie which we owe him, or that he ſhoulde require the right that belongeth vnto him: for who is he ẏ can denie it him? Hee muſt not change his nature. If wee bee froward, what hath he to do to meddle with our ſteines & fylthines? But he ſetteth forth ſuch a righteouſnes, as we are not able to replie againſt. And in his law he ſetteth not down ſuch a righteouſnes as is in himſelf, he hath not reſpect to his own righteouſneſſe, but vnto the righteouſneſſe that ought to bee in his creatures, namely, ſuch as is in his Angels. If wee had continued in our integritie, and not beene peruerted and corrupted through ſinne, then ſhould we haue beene able to haue diſcharged all that God requireth of vs in his lawe. That is certaine. Now then we ſee how it is not without cauſe that God will haue vs to keepe his whole law. And yet we be not able to performe it. It is true: but the default proceedeth of the ſinne which dwelleth in vs, as I haue ſhewed heeretofore.

Now herewithal we haue to mark, that ſeeing God promiſeth nothing, but vnto thẽ that haue obeyed al ẏ law, it were too doltiſh follie to ſuppoſe that we can merit or deſerue by doing this thing or that thing: we muſt firſt of all haue kept al the law, which is impoſſible. And whereas the Papiſts prate of their merits, enabling thẽſelues to purchaſe the kingdome of heauen; they think that whẽ they haue done anie good to their own ſeeming, God is bound to them. Oh (ſay they) I haue beene deuoutly at Maſſe. It is certaine that they prouoke the wrath of God by ſo dooing: for we know that it is a diueliſh abhomination. Againe, I haue ſerued ſuch a Saint my Patron (ſay they,) I haue builded ſuch a Chappell: and they beare themſelues in hand that in ſo dooing they earne heauen. Truely al theſe things are but a ſpiting of God: they bee diueliſh ſuperſtitions, whereby the ſeruice of God is quite defaced. But put the caſe that the Papiſts did wel in their dalying ſo with ſuch pelting ſtuffe: were God euer the more bound vnto them for it? It woulde behoue them to conſider firſt before what notarie that euidence did paſſe. For it is not for vs to bridle him, or to tie him to ẏ ſtake, or to ſubdue him to our fantaſies. It muſt proceed of his own good wil. Now then, what ſaith hee? When you ſhal haue kept al my cõmandements, thẽ ſhal theſe bleſſings come vpon you. Let euery of vs looke how he hath kept ẏ cõmandements of God. Let ẏ Papiſts brag as much as they liſt, can they ſay ẏ they haue accõpliſhed ẏ hundreth part of thẽ? If they haue kept one of Gods cõmandements, they haue offended him in a hundred ſins for it: & if there be but one fault cõmitted, though it be neuer ſo litle a one, they be faultie in al, according as S. Iames ſaith: he ẏ faileth in any one only point, is a breaker of ẏ whole law. Seeing then ẏ they bee offenders, they are depriued & baniſhed from al the bleſſings ẏ God hath ſet forth, yea euen ẏ concerne but this preſent tranſitorie life: much leſſe therefore are they able to win ẏ kingdome of heauen (as they imagin) being not able to deſerue one morſel of breade to put into their mouth. Thus are they ſhut out of al. And why? For God hath not promiſed any thing but vnto them that keepe al his whole law. How ſhal we do then? We muſt heare God ſpeake after an other faſhion: to wit: we muſt harken vnto him ſpeaking of the free promiſes which hee offereth vnto vs in our Lord Ieſus Chriſt. God in ẏ holy ſcripture vſeth a double ſpeach: And whẽ I ſpeake of double ſpeach, I meane not ẏ he doubleth on his part, or ẏ he is contrarie to himſelfe, or ẏ one ſaying of his is repugnant to an other: for God keepeth alwaies at one ſtay, and (as I haue ſaid afore) hee changeth not: all ẏ ſpeeches ẏ proceed from him do very wel agree together, without any contradictiõ. Neuertheles, as touching his law, there he hath ſpoken as a Iudge & not as a father. In his law he ſpeaketh as a Iudge, ſaying: He ẏ liueth as he ought, ſhal not bee deceiued, he ſhal not leeſe his labor: for when you haue done me ſeruice, I wil cauſe you to proſper. After ſuch maner doth God ſpeake in the perſon of a Iudge. And when wee haue receiued this word, behold we are confounded, howſoeuer the caſe ſtandeth. And wherefore? For that in ſtead of abilitie to obteine the grace ẏ is offered vnto vs, wee ceaſſe not to kindle Gods wrath againſt vs; and therefore we be all damned. What is to be done then? God commeth ſpeaking as a father, and ſaith: Well then, I am contented to forbeare this rigour of mine, which I might execute vpon you by my law; howbeit ẏ the ſame is not ouer great: for I haue applied my ſelfe ſo far vnto you, as to promiſe that which is not your due: I haue bin willing as it were to entice you by amiable meanes: but I haue wonne nothing therby, becauſe of your frowardnes. What remedy then? I come now to tel you, ẏ if you wil beleeue in my Son, I wil releaſe you of al your debts. If you will receiue him for your Shepheard, ẏ he may guide you quietly, you ſhall perceiue ẏ I deſire not to win you otherwiſe thã by gentle & friendly dealing, as if I ſhould ſay, Come vnto mee, & I will forgiue you al your ſins, & accept you into fauor. And albeit ẏ you are miſerable creatures, deſeruing vtter damnatiõ: yet wil I quite forget & bury al your offences: when I haue ſo doone, I promiſe to beget you anew, by my holy ſpirite: and this grace ſhalbee giuen vnto you by meanes of mine onely ſon, if you labour to come vnto him. And therupõ although you be driuen to ſtriue againſt many temptatiõs, and ẏ at ẏ firſt encounter ye haue not ful victorie ouer them, but that ye be encompaſſed with many ſpottes and vices ſtill: yet will I not lay any of al theſe thinges to your chardge; I forgiue you your ſinnes: and the good ẏ you doe, ſhalbee acceptable to mee thorow my fauour, although it deſerueth it not. Loe heere the ſecond order of ſpeeche that God vſeth vnto vs in the holy Scripture.

Iames.2.10.

Let vs marke therefore, that when we heare the voyce of our GOD, and knowe what wee owe vnto him, and haue hearde the promiſes that he hath made vs in his lawe:we muſt needes reſt there confounded and condemned, forſomuch as none of al thoſe things can auaile vs by reaſon of our vnthankfulnes:wherupon we muſt haue our refuge to the free mercie which is offred vnto vs in our Lord Ieſus Chriſt:& hearken vnto God when he ſpeaketh vnto vs,which thing he doth both in the Law,in the Prophets,and in ẏ Goſpell,ſaying, I of mine owne mere goodnes am become your Sauiour:& you muſt ſeek your ſaluatiō frō ſomewhere elſe,than in yourſelues. For the redeemer which God promiſed, was euer had in mind,ẏ men might reſt thē vpō him. And for ẏ cauſe were the ſacrifices ordeined in ẏ time of the law.For although Chriſt was not yet vttered openly to the worlde: yet did the Iewes vnderſtand ẏ all the hope of their ſaluation depended vppon their reconcilement to God by meane of the ſacrifice ẏ was to be offered. They brought brute beaſts to the Temple:was that to cleanſe ẏ vncleannes of their ſoules?No:for what can corrupt bloud doe,what ſhal ſtinking greace do,can thoſe things purge ẏ ſoule of her iniquitie?No truely.But vnder thoſe figures the Iewes ſaw how they ſhould be deliuered from the curſe of God,& admitted into his fauor, and ẏ al their life ſhould be acceptable vnto him. And nowe haue wee a more ſure teſtimonie thereof in the Goſpel,for there we ſee the thing it ſelf fully accompliſhed vnto vs:namely ẏ although we haue not kept ẏ commaundementes of God,yet Ieſus Chriſt hath kept thē.And wherefore was it? Becauſe hee was ſubiect to it?No. But hee became ſubiect to the law:yea, but ẏ was for our ſakes.So then let vs haue our recourſe vnto our Lord Ieſus Chriſt,and let vs heare God ſpeaking in ſuch a phraſe,whereby he doth not only ſay, theſe be the things ẏ I commaund you,and if ye do them thē you ſhal proſper & be bleſſed;but alſo where hee ſaith,Beholde I am your father, come vnto me,but come in the name of my only Son, whō I haue appointed to be your mediator:& acknowledge ẏ there is nought elſe in you but corruptiō: and truſt not in your own power,nor in your own freewil:but caſting away all fooliſhe fantaſies of vaine preſumption,come with lowlines to ſeek ẏ grace of my ſpirit:and then ye ſhalbe ſure ẏ I wil alwaies vphold you by my goodnes,& from day to day confirme you in my feare, and make you to walke in my waies, ſo as I wil not lay to your charge ẏ faults of your works,they ſhal not hinder my bleſſing toward you:not ẏ you ſhould not confeſſe your tranſgreſſions,& alwaies acknowledge before me ẏ you are faultie; but that your ſins ſhal not bee laide to your charge, although there be occaſion why that they ſhould bee called to reckoning,and to be reproued by me.Loe there the ſecond voice of God, to the which we muſt hearken,if wee deſire to become partakers of the bleſſings ẏ be here conteined. But by the way we haue to note for a concluſion,ẏ although the faithful be exempted from the curſe of God, and that he wil not deale rigorouſly with them, but rather vphold them and make them to inioy the bleſſings which he hath promiſed in his law, as though they had fully accompliſhed ẏ ſame: yet ceaſſe they not to ſuffer many ſtripes of his rods,& our Lorde chaſtiſeth them continually, exerciſing ſome after one maner,and ſome after an other,ſo ẏ al are ſmitten.And al the chaſtiſements which God ſendeth vs, bee curſes euerychone of thē,I meane as to outward apparance. If we be ſick,if we be hungrie or thirſtie,if we be tormented in this preſent world, if we be troubled and perſecuted:al theſe are ẏ curſes of God. Our enemies ſcoffe at vs, we bee in reproche,in pouertie,in vexation,& in many anguiſhes: one is troubled in his houſe by his wife, an other by his children,and an other by his neighbor: finally,the faithful be many waies depriued of ẏ bleſſings of God. It is ſure ſo.Howbeit this letteth not but ẏ we be euermore bleſſed of him,by reaſon ẏ we haue a continual taſt of his goodnes, to allure vs vnto him.Let vs therefore note well, ẏ when he cutteth off his bleſſings, and giueth thē not as we do wiſh,the ſame is for our profite: becauſe he ſeeth we haue need of ſome quickening vp to make vs to come vnto him.And foraſmuch as euery of vs do fal aſleepe in our ſinnes:God is faine to waken vs, and to make vs feele,that ſo ſoone as we withdraw vs from his ſeruice, he wil in likewiſe abſent himſelfe from vs, and that his grace ſhalbe taken away from vs, and wee ſtand diſpoſſeſſed of the ſame;howbeit neuer ſo vtterly,but ẏ the bleſſing of God ſhal alwais ſurmoūt, ſo as we may ioy therein,acknowledging him to be merciful,& wayting vpon his fatherly goodnes,more amply to be ſhewed when he ſhal take vs hence againe to himſelfe. Thus ye ſee howe we may poſſeſſe and enioy the bleſſings of God, which are ſet forth for vs in his lawe,inſomuch that although our Lord doth enterlace the ſame with many afflictions,and many corrections, as though he had curſed vs: his ſo doing is but to prouoke vs day by day to repentance, & to keep vs from falling aſleepe in this preſent worlde: as we wel know ẏ our delightes make vs drunken & vnmindful of God,except hee conſtraine vs by pricking and ſpurring vs foreward. Thus yee ſee how the thinges which at the firſt ſight ſeemed contraries,agree very wel.And in ẏ reſpect doth Moſes ſay ẏ theſe bleſſings ſhal light vpon vs,& encompaſſe vs round about,as if hee had ſaide ẏ we ſhal alwaies be ſure of Gods fauour,yea euen ſo ſure of it that it ſhal neuer faile vs,if wee ſerue him.For the word *Encompaſſe*,or to light vpon vs, doth import that ẏ grace of God is not fleeting, as though it fel at al aduenture, & as though we could not catch it ſoone ynough.No(ſaith hee) *You ſhalbe encompaſſed therewith.* And therefore let vs aſſure ourſelues of the goodnes of our God, and ẏ it ſhal neuer faile vs,ſo that we for our part do come vnto him.But let vs note well,that wee can neuer come there, vnleſſe he drawe vs vnto him.And that forſomuch as we bee ſubiect to ſo many infirmities and vices, he by his bearing with vs, ſheweth vs ẏ we muſt haue our recourſe to his free goodneſſe,for the forgiueneſſe of our ſinnes by the reconciliation that hee hath made in our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt: and that we in ſtreyning ourſelues to doe well, ſhall perceiue that the goodneſſe of God ceaſſeth not to bee free vnto vs, without owing vs any thing at all.

Nowe let vs fall downe before the Maieſtie of our good God, with acknowledgement of our ſinnes, praying him to make vs feele them better than wee haue doone, that beeing beaten downe, yea and as it were drowned in deſpaire, wee may bee drawen to the faith in our Lord Ieſus Chriſt; and knowing that wee bee altogether emptie and naked of al goodneſſe, let vs beſeech him to renue vs by his holy ſpirit, euen till wee be fully chaunged, and that wee may bee more and more encreaſed in his graces, ſo that wee may haue teſtimonie that GOD regardeth vs, and is neere vnto vs, yea and dwelleth in vs: & that we may bee ſo confirmed in his adoption, that wee may alwaies waite for the heauenly inheritaunce, and not be weary in this worlde to walke in his obedience: That it may pleaſe him to beſtowe this grace not only vpon vs, but alſo vpon al people and nations of the earth, &c.

On Wedneſday the xj. of March, 1556.

The CLIIII. Sermon which is the ſecond vpon the eight and twentith Chapter.

2 And they ſhall come vpon thee, &c.

3 Thou ſhalt be bleſſed in the Towne, and bleſſed in the fielde.

4 The fruite of thy wombe ſhalbe bleſſed, and the fruite of thy grounde, and the fruite of thy Cattell, and the encreaſe of thy kine, and of the flockes of thy Sheepe.

5 Thy basket ſhall bee bleſſed, and thy ſtore.

6 Thou ſhalt bee bleſſed at thy comming in, and bleſſed at thy going foorth.

7 The Lorde will make thine enemies to fall before thee, which doe riſe vp againſt thee: if they come forth againſt thee one way, they ſhall flee before thee ſeuen wayes.

8 The Lorde will commaund his bleſſing to bee with thee in thy Cellers, and in all that thou putteſt thy hande vnto: and he will bleſſe thee in the Land which the Lorde thy God giueth thee.

IT is to bee meruelled, that men cannot bee perſuaded that they ſhall proſper by well dooing. But it proceedeth of vnbeleefe, becauſe they doe not acknowledge their life to be in the power and direction of GOD, and that it is his peculiar office to gouerne vs. For if wee were well aſſured that all creatures bee in the hand of God, and alſo that hee hath care of vs: it is certeine that euery of vs woulde reſt vppon him, wayting to receiue all goodneſſe from him, which is the thing that ſhoulde encourage vs to ſerue him, and to direct ourſelues after his will. But although euery man ſeeke and deſire his owne eaſe, yet wee vnderſtand not that GOD is hee from whom wee muſt looke for it. Wee can ſay it well ynough: but the thing it ſelfe ſheweth that wee can not iudge nor conceiue it to bee ſo. Euery man woulde bee riche by leawde practiſes: euery man ſetteth his felicitie in offending God. Wee muſt needes therefore bee without ſenſe and reaſon, ſeeing that this article, wherein wee ſhould bee reſolued, cannot bee imprinted in our mindes, to witte, that all welfare proceedeth from the hande of GOD, and that there is no meane to proſper, but by giuing ouer our ſelues vnto him, and vnto his ſeruice. Yet notwithſtanding, GOD hath alwayes left this engrauen in the heartes of men, that the wretchedneſſe and miſeries whereunto wee bee ſubiect, doe proceede of the corruption of mankinde, inſomuch ẏ the very Paynims haue had the ſame opinion common amongeſt them. It is certaine that they were not taught concerning the fall of Adam; they vnderſtood not howe all mankind was accurſed; for the diuel through his wilineſſe, had put that out of knowledge. Yet notwithſtanding, it was vnderſtoode among them, and written, and theſe thinges were common vnto them, namely that all the ſickeneſſes and wretchedneſſe that men indure, all the famines, and plagues, and ſuch like things, proceeded of this, that men will needes robbe GOD of more wiſedome than is belonging vnto them. They knew not ẏ this came from the tree of the knowledge of good & euill: they wiſt nothing of that.

Neuertheleſſe God hath not permitted that knowledge ſo wholly to be buried, but that it remained amongſt the Heathen, and Infidels, ſo as they vnderſtoode, that becauſe man woulde haue vſurped vnto himſelfe more knowledge than was lawfull for him, that now all thinges are confounded in this worlde, and the life of man is become miſerable, and ſo ſubdued to ſo many aduerſities as is horrible. Now, this is ſufficient to make vs altogether vnexcuſable: but yet will God haue vs, (vs I meane whome God hath choſen to be of his houſholde) to bee more familiarly taught. This doth god ſpeak as it were mouth to mouth: and looke what the Infidels had but by imagination, the ſame doeth he tell and teſtifie vnto vs: I ſay, he telleth it vs, that we might know it familiarly: & he teſtifieth it vnto vs, that we ſhoulde be thereof aſſured. That is the cauſe why hee ſaith that he woulde make all maner of felicitie to reigne vpon vs, ſo we would hearken to his voyce. Wherby he ſheweth, that if it were not long of our ſelues, he were readie and forwarde to entreate vs as a father doth his children: and that hee delighteth not to vex vs with multitudes of euils, but that hee meaneth rather to make vs feele his goodneſſe in all reſpectes. Let vs therefore be aduiſed to walke in the obedience of our God, if wee meane that he ſhould powre vpon vs the treaſures of his grace, in ſuch wiſe as all our life may bee bleſſed. Neuertheleſſe, it is certaine that God oftentimes afflicteth his people for other cauſes, than their ſinnes: as we ſee it happened to Iob, which is a notable myrrour for vs. Wee ſee the like in the holy Patriarks, who although they did endeuour and trauaile to ſerue God, yet were they in as great troubles and griefes as could be. The ſame is yet more manifeſt in the newe Teſtament. For ſeeing that God hath reueiled more fully, what is the perfect happineſſe of men: It behooueth the faithfull to bee exerciſed vnder many aduerſities in this tranſitorie life. But let vs marke firſt of all, that if God doe not puniſh the ſinnes of the faithfull, hee doeth it to preſerue them, as the Phyſition that waiteth not alwayes till the ſickeneſſe do appeare, but if hee perceiue any likelyhood that a man is in daunger, he will preuent it. God then, in not puniſhing the ſinnes that be preſently committed by his children, doth vſe chaſtiſements towardes them, as preſeruatiue medicines. It may euery day fall out, that a man hath not offended againſt God in ſome particular ſins. But what? If he were alwayes in proſperitie, he woulde forget himſelfe: God therefore doeth cure ſuch diſeaſes by withdrawing his bleſſings: hee will not ſuffer the fat to blinde mens eyes, or to hinder our comming vnto him, leaſt it ſhoulde ſtay vs too long in this worlde: he will not ſuffer vs to bee ſo intangled in our delightes, as to fall altogether on ſleepe in the ſame.

There is yet a ſeconde point, to wit: that when God forbeareth to puniſh vs for our ſins, it is not for that hee hath not alwayes iuſt cauſe ſo to doe if he liſted. Let the perfecteſt folke in the worlde bee choſen out, and yet if GOD woulde deale with them by rygour, he ſhoulde lay many harde knockes vppon their pates. But truely wee thinke it not ſo: for wee bee not ſo ſharpe ſighted, as to knowe the faultes which God doth marke. But yet muſt wee aſſure our ſelues, that GOD vttereth his patience and goodneſſe in that hee ſpareth men, and puniſheth them not, I meane, the moſt righteous that can bee founde. As for example, when Dauid was cruelly perſecuted of Saul and of all his enimies; when Abraham was ſtinged and vexed ſo many wayes; likewiſe when Iſaac and Iacob, and al the Prophets were afflicted by the wicked and by the deſpiſers of God, euen to the verie death: and finally when the Apoſtles and all the faithfull [were cruelly delt with,] it was not for their ſinnes. No verily. But had it pleaſed God to haue called them to account, hee might haue puniſhed them an hundred times more, and they ſhold haue had no cauſe to haue accuſed him of crueltie. Hee ſpared them, and in ſo doeing hee did them the honour to ſuffer for his name: or rather hee tried their obedience, killed their carnall affections, and drew them neere vnto himſelf. As for example, wheras it pleaſed God to make Iob a myrrour of patience, yet neuertheleſſe he made him acquainted with his owne frailtie: but howſoeuer it were, yet was it his intent to make him to ſerue for an example to vs all. Wee perceiue then that God hath other meanings in afflicting his people, than onely to puniſh their ſinnes; neuertheleſſe he ceaſeth not to vpholde them, euen by his own meere grace. And yet muſt wee on our ſide reſort backe to this point, that the originall of all the miſeries that we ſuffer in this preſent world, doth proceede of ſinne. And why ſo? For were not this corruption in our nature, which God condemneth, and of the which alſo wee be conuicted: wee ſhoulde inioy heere a bleſſed life: all this whole worlde ſhould be vnto vs an earthly Paradiſe. For we muſt not thinke that Adam was cooped vp in a little corner for himſelfe alone, but that all the whole earth was bleſſed of God, and that we ſhould haue felt the ſame to the end of the worlde. But where is the earthly paradiſe nowe? It is no where at all: For in verie deede, the earth is accurſed. It was the ſentence that God pronounced vpon Adam & vpon all his offſpring. And therefore we muſt vnderſtand, that all the miſeries whereunto wee be ſubiect in this preſent worlde, doe growe from this roote, that we continue not in the perfection, wherein Adã was created. And that God reformeth vs, when wee haue done amiſſe, or rather beholdeth the vices wherof he intendeth to purge vs by fit medicines, & tarieth not til we haue offended him and prouoked his vengeance, but preuenteth vs and miniſtreth the remedie in ſuch ſeaſon as he knoweth beſt. And in very deede, when hee afflicteth vs for ſome other conſideration, than for our ſinnes; the ſame is a great honour, and a ſpeciall preeminence vnto vs: and wee haue cauſe to praiſe him in that hee vouchſafeth to marke vs, and to make his adoption apparant in vs by making vs to ſuffer for the Teſtimonie of

Gen.3.17.

his trueth, and to receiue wrongfull perſecution at mens handes, vnder any colour or occaſion, whatſoeuer it be.

Moreouer let vs marke, that it is not in vaine that God promiſeth that they which ſerue him ſhall leade a happie life euen in this worlde. Not that they ſhall bee exempted from all aduerſitie, for that is impoſſible, yea and alſo againſt our ſaluation. But hee will ſo diſpoſe our life as wee ſhall perceiue that hee meant not to feede vs with a vaine hope, when hee ſaide that he wil cauſe all them to proſper that harken vnto his voice. But by the way we muſt remember, that the bleſſings which bee heere contained, ſerue not to ſhewe what the ſoueraigne felicitie of men is: but to giue vs a taſt of the heauenly life, to the ende wee ſhoulde ſeeke for the celeſtiall inheritance which is promiſed vs, there to ſet our reſt. This muſt bee laide foorth more particularly, or elſe it will be darke. It is true, that there is difference betwixte vs and the fathers that liued vnder the Lawe: For God did there entreat them as little children: and it was meet ſo to bee. For they had not yet our Lorde Ieſus, who hath nowe ſet open the gates of heauen to bring vs into the life and glorie of heauen. Indeede they had as good part therein as we, but they were faine to walke in ſhadowes and figures to vnderſtande it; therefore they had neede of ſome aide, whereof we at this time haue no neede at all; neither may we thinke our ſtate to bee therefore the worſe; as many doe complaine at this day, becauſe that God doeth not dandle them, and that they bee not (as ſeemeth to themſelues) ſo much at their eaſe as the olde fathers were: ſurely they deceiue themſelues in this compariſon. For if any one of vs ſhoulde recken vp what he ſuffered all the dayes of his life, and therewithall looke vpon the ſtate either of Abraham or of Dauid: doubtles he ſhal finde himſelfe to be in better caſe than were the Heb.11.13. holy fathers: For they (as ſaieth the Apoſtle) did but ſee the thinges afarre of, which wee beholde before our eyes. God promiſed to be their Sauiour, he had choſen them, to be, as it were, of his houſholde; But where was hee in the meane while that was promiſed to bee the redeemer? Where was the doctrine that is made ſo manifeſt vnto vs in the Goſpell concerning the reſurrection? They knewe the ſame a farre off: but nowe it is declared vnto vs in the Goſpel, in ſuch maner, as we may indeede ſay, as our Lord Ieſus Matt.13.18. Chriſt gaue vs alſo to vnderſtande, That bleſſed be the eares which heare the things that are tolde vs concerning him, and the eyes that ſee the things which we ſee: for the holy kinges and Prophetes haue longed for the ſame, and coulde not obtaine it. Wee therefore haue a much more excellent ſtate, than they had which liued vnder the lawe. This is the difference whereof I ſpeake, which had neede to bee ſupplied by God, for the imperfection that was in the doctrine concerning the reueiling of the heauenly life, which the fathers knewe but by outwarde tokens, albeit that they were deare vnto God. Nowe that Ieſus Chriſt is come downe hither, and hath ſhewed vs howe wee ought to followe him, by ſuffering many afflictions, as it is tolde vs, and that we muſt be faſhioned after his image Mat.16.24. Rom.8.29. in bearing pouertie and reproch, and all ſuch like thinges; and to bee ſhort, that our life muſt bee as a kinde of death: foraſmuch as we knowe all this, and the infinite power of God is vttered in his raiſing vp Ieſus Chriſt from death, and in his exalting of him to the glorie of heauen; ſhoulde not wee thereuppon take good courage? And ought it not to bee a ſweetening to all the afflictions that we can ſuffer? Haue not we cauſe to reioyce in the middeſt of our ſorrowes? Let vs note then that if the olde fathers were more bleſſed of God than wee bee, as touching this preſent life, wee ought not to wonder at it at all. For the reaſon thereof is apparant. But howſoeuer the worlde goe, yet is this ſaying of Saint Paul alwayes verified, That the feare of GOD 1.Tim.4.8. hath the promiſes not onely of the life to come, but of this preſent life alſo. Let vs walke therefore in the obedience of God, and then ſhall we bee aſſured that hee will ſhewe himſelfe a father vnto vs, yea euen in the maintenance of our bodies, at leaſtwiſe ſo farre forth as concerneth the keeping and preſeruing of vs in peace, the deliuering of vs from all euils, and the ſuccoring of vs in all our neceſſities. God (I ſay) will make vs to feele his bleſſing in all theſe things, ſo that we walke in his feare.

Yet notwithſtanding wee muſt returne to this point, that God, in making vs to taſte of his fauour heere, meaneth not that wee ſhoulde be ſo glutted therewith, that wee ſhoulde forget the euerlaſting reſt whereunto hee inuiteth vs. And ſo all the benefites of GOD which belong vnto this tranſitorie life, muſt ſerue vs for ladders to mount vpwarde, and not for Cuſhions to fall a ſleepe vppon in this worlde. When God giueth a man wherewith to liue, indewing him with health, and ſuffering him not to bee vexed of his enemies; what elſe ſhoulde ſuch a man doe but bee drawen by the grace of God, to endeuour to ſerue him ſo much the more, and not miſbehaue himſelfe in this worlde; but go on foreward, vſing that which is giuen him, as though he vſed it not at al, ſo as no 1.Cor.7.31. thing ſtoppe him from keeping on his way ſtill vnto God? But wee doe all things cleane contrarie, and therefore wee ought to bee wakefuller. When we heare the promiſes that be heere contained, let vs not thinke, that the meaning of God was to pamper the olde people in their tranſitorie pleaſures: but rather that the ſame ſhoulde bee a meane, to drawe them vp on high as hee meaneth nowadayes towardes vs: For all the good that wee receiue of him, hath this end and intent, that our mindes ſhoulde alwayes bee raiſed vp to the heauenly life. Doth God giue vs breade to eate? Therein hee ſheweth himſelfe to bee our father. Yea, but yet for all that wee beeing his children, ceaſe not to bee as wanderers in this worlde, hauing alwayes one foote lifted vp, and we haue here no reſt. Therefore let vs haue an eye to the inheritance of the kingdome of heauen, and let the bread breade which we eate to nouriſh vs, be a meane to direct vs thither. After the ſame manner is it with all other thinges. Nowe let vs come to that which is heere contained in the text of Moſes, and then in the ende we ſhall the better vnderſtande what hath beene ſaide. Moſes ſaith heere, *That God will bleſſe his people both in the towne and in the fielde, he will bleſſe them in the ſeede of their bodie: he will bleſſe them in their cattle, hee will bleſſe them in the fruite of their lande, hee will bleſſe them in their baskets and in their ſtores and in their Graineries, he will bleſſe them in giuing them victorie againſt their enimies.* We knowe that the happineſſe of this preſent life, that is to ſay, ſuch happines as may be in this worlde, is for men to haue wherewith to maintaine themſelues quietly, and to be preſerued from their enemies. Here God ſetteth downe both the one, and the other: For touching the one he ſaith, *Thou ſhalt bee bleſſed aſwell in the towne as alſo in the field: and ſhalt be bleſſed in the fruite of thy wombe, and in the fruite of thy lande, and in the fruite of thy cattle.* It is certaine that the chiefe bleſſing which wee can deſire of GOD, is in our owne perſons: that hee prouide vs of ſuch thinges as are requiſite for this tranſitorie life. And that is the cauſe why hee beginneth at our perſons, and then commeth to our children, and from thence deſcendeth to our cattle, to the fruit of the earth, and to all prouiſions. It ſeemeth here at the firſt ſhew that God meant to pamper his people, as though he woulde ſet them vp in a ſtye, and there cram their bellies, as it were to lay them a ſleepe at their eaſe, and to be ſhort, that they ſhoulde be heere as in a Paradiſe. But I haue told you heretofore, that it behoued God to beſtowe his benefites more largely vpon the fathers that liued vnder the Lawe, becauſe they coulde not otherwiſe be drawen vnto him, ſeeing that the promiſes of the Eternall life, were yet obſcure vnto them. Howbeit wee haue to note herewithall, that when God ſpeaketh after this manner, hee meaneth not onely to giue men hope that they ſhal be bleſſed in al reſpects; but alſo to admoniſh vs, that nothing letteth vs from enioying a ſoueraigne and perfect felicitie in this world, whileſt we waite for the life of heauen, but only that wee bee wrapped in vices and corruptions. And ſo did God thereby meane to traine the faithful, that they ſhould thinke thus with themſelues: Let vs ſerue God, and wee ſhall want no maner of thing: And if we bee vexed, and haue not all our deſires, if the earth doe not yeelde ſuch fruitefulneſſe as may content vs, or if our cattle proſper not as wee woulde; let vs vnderſtande that this commeth to paſſe, becauſe we be wretched creatures, and cannot abide the bleſſing of God ſo perfect as it might be amongſt vs, by meanes whereof he is faine to withdrawe his hande, and to giue vs but a portion of his bleſſings, becauſe that if wee ſhould haue ſo much, as he could finde in his heart to beſtowe vppon vs, it ſhoulde glutte vs, and in the ende wee ſhoulde be choaked therewith. This is the cauſe then why God doth heere ſo greatly magnifie his bleſſinges; it is doone, not for that men haue euer beene bleſſed in all manner of reſpectes, without feeling of any euill to vex them: this (I ſay) neuer happened. And wherfore then doth God promiſe it? As wee haue ſaide afore, it is to make vs vnderſtande, that whenſoeuer our life is not ſo bleſſed as we couet, wee ſhoulde conſider that God knoweth vs to be vnable to receiue the fulneſſe of his benefits, and therefore is faine to diſtribute them vnto vs by peece meales, after the manner of ſicke folkes or little children, which for want of diſcretion, are faine to bee gouerned by others. But we be leſſe aduiſed than the infants, or ſicke folkes: for we woulde deuour the bleſſings that God doeth ſende, if hee helde vs not in order, for our luſtes are miſerablie corrupted. God beſtoweth his bleſſings vppon vs ſufficiently: but we like ſicke folkes doe refuſe good meate, and fall to foule feeding, which cannot but hurt vs: thus are wee caried away by our wicked affections, and are neuer able to direct the vſe of Gods benefites, nor to gouerne them as behoueth; for wee woulde infect and defile all, if hee prouided not for it aforehande. Let vs marke therefore that God doeth heere warne vs to call our ſinnes to remembrance, and to bewaile them as often as wee enioy not ſuch fulneſſe of his bleſſings, as is heere mentioned: Neuertheleſſe hee woulde haue vs to hope, that by ſeruing of him wee ſhall proſper, and haue ynough for our contentment.

And indeede, wee ſee howe all the faithfull haue in that behalfe behaued themſelues. It is ſure (as wee haue ſaide) that Dauid was diuers wayes in perplexitie, and afflicted: no man more: but did hee in all that while murmure againſt God? No. True it is that hee vttered his griefes and paſſions: but that was with all meekeneſſe: and yet in the meane while hee omitted not to ſay, that the anger of GOD laſted but a little while, and that when hee afflicteth Pſal. 30.6. his people, he hath done in yͤ turning of a hand: but his goodneſſe laſteth long, and continueth vnto life. As howe? If wee looke into the whole life of Dauid, what ſhall wee finde therein? Beholde, in his infancie hee was brought vp as a Shepheardes ſonne of the countrie, and God 1.Sam.16.11. ſaieth that hee tooke him from the flockes, as hee was among his cattle. When hee came to the court of Saul, it is certaine that, beyond 2.Sam.17.8. all hope and opinion of the worlde, hee was aduanced to bee the kinges ſonne in lawe: but it had beene better for him to haue continued ſtill a ſhepeherd in the field, than to haue beene in ſuch trauaile and miſerie, ſo long time as we perceiue he was: they ſought his death by al means, and his life did not onely hang as it were by a thred, but he was alſo had in reproch. In ſo much that they counted him the moſt wicked caitife in the worlde, a Traitor to his Prince, a diſloy- 1.Sam.25. all man to his King. Yee ſee then that Dauid 10. was as it were, abhomminable to euerie bo- 2.Sam.16.7. die. And when God had ſet him at peace 2.Sam.11. [that way] then was hee vexed with forraine 2.Sam.21.15 2.Sam 15. warre, inſomuch as hee had no ſooner done 2.Sam.16.5. with one people, but hee was faine to turne him about to another; and to make vp the meaſure, his owne naturall ſonne chaſed him out of his kingdome, meaning no leſſe than to cut his throate: and we ſee what other conſpiracies hee ſuffered, as the conſpiracie of Semei. Yet did Dauid always confeſſe without faning, that all the chaſtiſements, miſeries and afflictions that God ſent him, were nothing vnto him, and that they laſted but the turning of a hand, or for a minute of an houre, whereas his bleſſings endured for euer. For why? Dauid had not in him ſuch vnthankefulneſſe as we haue. Wee imbace Gods gracious dealinges and make no account of them: of euery little harme wee make a great mountaine: when God chaſtiſeth vs, wee ſhrinke away our ſhoulders, making great complaints and outcries. But let vs learn to eſteeme better of Gods goodnes towards vs, in ſuch wiſe as we bee not founde vnthankfull for his grace. This is the cauſe (ſay I) why wee conceiue not the value of the bleſſings that are contained here: For why? If God ſende vs any vexation, we ſhut our heartes againſt it, inſomuch that there is none of vs which fretteth not againſt him. And though wee murmure not in ſpeech, yet faile wee not to haue ſome bitterneſſe lurking in our heartes: there needes but one affliction in all our life, to put the grace of God quite out of taſt with vs. And when he hath done vs all the good that can be deuiſed, yet doth it euer runne in our rememberance, we ſaying: yea but I haue ſuſteined ſuch a harme: and our minde is neuer off, of it.

Thus are Gods benefites vnſauerie to vs, ſo as we paſſe them ouer or let them ſlip. Contrariwiſe therefore, when our Lorde afflicteth vs, let vs receiue the comforts that he giueth vs to moderate our heauineſſe: and then ſhall we continue to walke on our way. And albeit we be faine to endure many thinges, and that by reaſon of our frailtie and feebleneſſe, wee be not able to ouercome the temptations at the firſt blow: yet notwithſtanding through the grace of God wee may get the vpper hande. And when wee bee ſo oppreſſed with our miſeries, then wil wee eſteeme of Gods grace in ſuch ſort that euen in the middes of darkeneſſe wee ſhall perceiue what light God giueth vs, ſo as wee ſhall alwayes feele him to bee our father. Now when wee finde this, to wit, that God is our father; it is out of doubt that hee will ſufficiently bleſſe vs, ſo farre foorth as is fit for our ſaluation. Thus yee ſee what wee haue to doe and to practiſe, if wee will rightly vnderſtande, that GOD hath not ſaide in vaine, that hee will bleſſe his people, *So they harken to his voice.*

Moreouer wee bee warned heereby, not to ſeeke any thing that wee deſire, but at the hande of GOD. And this alſo is another verie profitable admonition. For wee ſee howe men doe erre, when they deſire to bee at their eaſe. It is the naturall inclination of all men, to couet to be this and that, but in that while, what courſe holde wee? No doubt, but wee turne our backes on God, and kicke againſt him. Hee that meaneth to bee rich, vſeth rauin and crueltie, deceites and wicked practiſes: hee that deſireth to attaine to credite and authoritie, practiſeth treaſon, indirect wyles, and other ſleightes. To bee ſhort, Ambition ruleth him altogether: and finally hee that woulde compaſſe any other luſtes of his, cannot but prouoke the anger of God. See at what point wee bee. And thus doeth our faithleſneſſe diſcouer it ſelfe euery way, as I haue ſpoken heere before. Therefore haue wee neede to bee mindfull of this leſſon, to wit, that if wee will proſper, yea euen in this preſent life, there is none other meane for it, but to put our ſelues vnder Gods guiding, who hath all goods in his power to beſtowe on whome it pleaſeth him: hoping alſo that hee will not be nigarly in diſtributing his gracious gifts vnto vs, at leaſtwiſe, ſo *wee hearken vnto his voice*. For (as I ſaide euen nowe,) ſeeing that wee be his children, can we thinke that he taketh pleaſure to vexe vs? Moreouer hee diminiſheth not; bee hee neuer ſo liberall towards vs, yet hee feareth not that hee ſhall haue aught the leſſe, or that hee ſhall feele any want. For hee is a fountaine that can neuer bee drawen drie.

Let vs therefore bee perſwaded, that our life ſhall alwayes bee accurſed, vnleſſe wee returne to this point where to Moſes leadeth vs, namely, to hearken to the voyce of our God, to be thereby mooued, and continually confirmed, that hee hath care of our ſaluation, yea not onely of the eternal ſaluation of our ſoules, but alſo to maintaine vs in the ſtate of this earthly life, to make vs to taſt preſently of his loue and goodneſſe, in ſuch ſorte as may content and ſuffice vs, waiting till wee may haue our fill thereof, and beholde the thing face to face which we be faine as now to looke vpon as it were through a glaſſe and in the darke. That is one thing more which wee haue to remember vppon this texte, where it is ſaide that wee ſhall bee bleſſed, if wee harken to the voice of the Lorde our God.

1.Cor.13,12

And this is to bee applied to all the partes of our life: as for example when a man woulde proſper in his owne perſon, ſo as hee is deſirous to imploy himſelfe in the ſeruice of God, and to obtaine ſome grace, to the ende hee may not bee vnprofitable heere, but that GOD may bee honoured by him: let him bethinke himſelfe thus, Lorde I am thine, diſpoſe thou of mee, beholde here I am readie to obey thee: for that is the point whereat wee muſt beginne, if wee deſire that GOD ſhoulde take vs to his guiding, and diſpoſe of vs to ſerue him, in ſuch wiſe as his bleſſing may appeare and lighten vppon vs, and vppon our perſons. So is it concerning euery mans houſhold.

When a man is deſirous to liue in peace and concorde with his wife, or to haue children in

whom to reioyce; let him vnderſtande that all this is in the hand of God, and that it lyeth not in our owne power nor ſkill to order our houſeholde after our heartes deſire. For they that thinke to compaſſe it by their owne power, deceiue themſelues very much, and commit ſacriledge in robbing God of the honour that hee hath reſerued to himſelfe. It is ſaide that the
Pſal.127.3. fruite of the wombe is a ſpeciall gift of God, and ſo is euery thing els that pertaineth to houſeholde: According whereunto it is ſaide, to be but
Pſal.127.1. vanitie for a man to build vnleſſe God builde alſo with him. They therefore that will poſſeſſe a quiet ſtate for themſelues and their children, let them turne vnto God, and commit themſelues wholy vnto him and to his guiding: knowing that there is none other meane, to attaine to the ſame, but by his bleſſing: ſo is it alſo, as concerning cattle, foode, and all other thinges. For wee ſee heere was nothing forgotten. And God meant to make vs to perceiue his infinite goodneſſe, in that hee declareth that hee will deale with our ſmalleſt buſineſſe, which one of our own equals would be loath to meddle withall. If wee haue a friende, wee woulde be verie loath, yea, and aſhamed to vſe his helpe, vnleſſe it were in a matter of ſome importance. But ſee heere, God goeth into our ſheepefoldes and into the ſtalles of our Kyne and Oxen, and hee goeth into our fieldes: yea hee hath care of all things elſe. For as much then as wee ſee him abaſe himſelfe ſo farre, ought not we to bee rauiſhed to honour him and to magnifie his bountie?

Moreouer let vs conclude, that whereas God ſaith, *that he will bleſſe vs in the fruite of the earth, that he will bleſſe vs in the fruite of our cattell*: it is a moſt ſure argument that hee will not forget the principal. Theſe thinges be contemptible and of ſmal reputation, and many times mortal men doe diſpiſe them; and yet wee ſee that God notwithſtanding taketh care of them. Seeing that it is ſo, will hee forget our ſoules, the which hee hath created after his owne ymage, the which alſo hee hath ſo dearely redeemed with the ſacred bloude of his ſonne? Surely no. Firſt of all therefore let vs acknowledge Gods fauour towards vs, in abaſing himſelfe ſo farre as to direct and to gouerne euery thing that belongeth to our life and ſuſtenance; and from thence let vs mount vp higher, and vnderſtande that hee will not faile vs in the thinges that ſurpaſſe this preſent life: but rather that in the chiefe things that belong to our life, yea euen in this worlde, God will ſtretch forth his hande to furniſh vs alwayes with all things that are needefull.

There is the ſeconde point: which is; *that we ſhalbe vpholden againſt our enemies*. Wee haue ſaid, ẏ the firſt point is, that God prouideth for vs, ſo as we want not any thing that is requiſite for the paſſing of our life in this worlde. But if our Grainers were neuer ſo full, our Cellers neuer ſo thorowly furniſhed, and our purſe neuer ſo well ſtuffed, ſo as we want no manner of thing: yet if in the meane while our enemies be able to ſcratch out our eyes, and we be as people ſet out to the ſpoyle, ſo as wee bee dayly aſſaulted, and haue no defence; what booteth vs our great aboundance? Therefore it was Gods will, ſhortly to ſhewe heere, that his bleſſings ſhoulde extende themſelues ſo farre and wide in all caſes and all reſpectes; that nothing ſhould be miſſing to ſuch as doe him honour and ſeruice. But let vs marke, that God hath not exempted vs quite from our enimies, neither did hee exempt the people of olde time. For why? It is impoſſible for vs to liue in this world without ſome vexation at other mens hands. True it is that as much Rom.12.18.
as in vs lyeth wee ought to procure peace, for our part. But foraſmuch as the diuell is Prince Iohn.16.11.
of this worlde, hee will not leaue Gods children in reſt. And hee hath ſupporters ynowe to ſerue his turne: for al the diſpiſers of God, al the wicked, and all the hypocrites that be in this world; the number of whom is in maner infinite, are ſatans darts, ſwordes, and arrowes.

Seeing then that wee muſt dwell amongſt the contemners of God, and amongſt the wicked; let vs make our reckoning that wee ſhall be troubled, and haue enemies, let vs endeuour to appeaſe them ſo much as we can, and let vs giue them none occaſion of hatred: but yet in the meane while let vs not be vnprouided, howſoeuer the matter ſtandeth. Thus much concerning that one point. For God hath not ſaide, I will vtterly roote out your enemies, ſo as you ſhall haue the worlde by your ſelues, wherein to leade a happie and quiet life, and to haue all the felicitie that can bee wiſhed: hee ſaieth not ſo: but hee ſaith, Albeit that you bee compaſſed rounde about with your enemies, yet will I not ſuffer them to haue the vpper hand ouer you.

Nowe hee ſaieth further, *that if our enemies come foorth by one way, they ſhall flee ſeuen wayes.* Whereby hee giueth vs to vnderſtande, that our enemies may well conſpire by great numbers, ſo as it may bee like that wee ſhoulde bee ſwallowed vp of them; but yet they ſhall bee filled with feare, as ſhalbe ſhewed more at large in another text. Heere wee haue to marke, that the ſuſteining and maintaining of our life is in the hande of God, and that our reſt and quietneſſe depende alſo of him. And although that men doe continually deuiſe to hurt and annoy vs, yet is God euer ſtrong ynough to diſappoint them when hee hath once receiued vs into his protection, and to hinder them, ſo as they ſhalbe able to attempt nothing againſt vs, but the ſame ſhalbe ouerthrowen. That is a thing which we haue to beare in remembrance. Nowe when God permitteth vs to haue enemies, thereby he calleth vs vnto himſelfe, & we ought to be the more prouoked to call vpon him when wee ſee our ſelues driuen thereto by neceſſitie. For if the worlde ſhoulde laugh on vs, and reioyce at vs on all partes: it woulde ſeeme vnto vs, that wee had no more neede of Gods protection. But when we be beſet with perils and daungers, and ſee that men lye in waite for vs, ſeeking nothing elſe but to come in to vex vs; it ſtandeth vs in hande to reſort to

God, and to commit vs to his tuition, praying him to be our ſhielde and fortreſſe, and (finally) to be our defendour. Let vs marke therefore that God, in permitting vs to haue enemies, doeth thereby drawe vs vnto him, that wee ſhould pray him alwayes to ſuccour and defend vs.

But to conclude, we muſt remember that God is mightie ynough to maintaine vs. As howe? If our enemies came vpon vs with great fierceneſſe, it were ynough to daunt vs and to put vs out of courage: but howſoeuer we fare, although hee ſuffer them to riſe againſt vs, and to bee as furious as wilde beaſtes; yet ſhall they not know what to doe, but bee as folke amaſed. And although they haue neuer ſo greate aduauntage at the beginning, and bee neuer ſo full of craft and wilineſſe; yet will God ſtoppe their eyes, ſo as they ſhall caſt themſelues wilfully into the ſnare, and there bee taken. Againe, euen when they bee armed with malice and boldeneſſe to ſet vppon vs, God will in the end confounde them, no man can tell howe: hee will deſtroy all their deuiſes and attemptes, yea and when they bande themſelues againſt vs, & haue neuer ſo great multitudes on their ſides, yet wil God ſcatter them. Like as when we ſee a cloude threatening raine, and it ſeemeth that all ſhoulde bee drowned; God ſcattereth it, and the tempeſt is gone; euen ſo will hee deale with our enemies. Thus yee ſee in effect what wee haue to remember concerning this text, where it is ſaide that wee ſhall bee defended againſt all ſuch as ſet themſelues againſt vs, and that our God will make them flee before our faces, if we doe him the honour to acknowledge him to bee the Lorde of hoaſtes, and that his power is infinite, and that therefore the whole worlde can nothing preuaile againſt him. Finally, what haue wee nowe to doe but to ſubmit our ſelues vnder the obedience of our God? Alſo let vs vnderſtande, that all the misbeleeuing, and all the deſpiſers of Gods maieſtie (albeit that for a time their life may ſeeme happie) are appointed to perdition, and that all the goods which they poſſeſſe, ſhal become a curſe vnto thē, ſo as they muſt needs be in a forlorn ſtate: according to this ſaying, yͭ their very Table ſhalbe turned into ſnares and gynnes wherewith to take them, and all the benefits of God ſhall become deadly poyſon vnto them. Lo what wee haue to carie in minde.

Pſal.69.23.

Moreouer ſo often as wee bee afflicted, let vs humble our ſelues, and acknowledge our ſins, & bewaile them before God: and in the meane ſpace let vs not omitte to qualifie our griefes, knowing that amidſt the afflictions which hee ſendeth vs, there alwayes appeareth a certaine teſtimonie of his goodneſſe, and that it is neceſſarie that he ſhould ſo holde vs in awe. Yet notwithſtanding, we muſt not be caſt downe nor be diſcouraged, when we bee vexed and troubled though we be enuironed with neuer ſo many miſeries. And why? Becauſe God faileth not for all that, to ſhew himſelfe a father towards vs. That is the thing whereon we muſt altogether reſt, ſo as al the afflictions of this world may quicken vs vp to aſpire to the heauenly heritage: and when we haue bewailed our ſins, let vs not doubt, but God of his mercy will bleſſe vs, euen in Ieſus Chriſt the fountaine of al goodneſſe and bleſſedneſſe, by whom all curſes are quite taken away. To proue that it is ſo: what may bee the chiefe curſe that is falne vppon mankinde, but death? And yet wee ſee that the ſame is become an entrance into life. And wherefore? For that in the perſon of Ieſus Chriſt it is nowe made bleſſed. Wherefore let vs learne to reioyce, ſith wee ſee that God hath ſo prouided for our ſaluation, that although he make vs to feele our ſins, and would haue vs touched with ſome ſorrowe, thereby to bring vs to repentance, yet hee ceaſeth not amidſt all theſe to ſhewe himſelfe a father euermore, & by al meanes to aduance our ſaluation.

Now let vs humble our ſelues before the maieſtie of our good God, with acknowledgement of ſinnes, praying him to touch vs to the quicke more and more, that we may miſlike them: and that acknowledging the euill which is in vs, wee may ſeeke his mercie: not onely to forgiue vs the ſins that we haue alredie committed, but alſo to mortifie vs, and by the power of his ſpirite to giue vs grace ſo to forſake our ſelues, as wee may ſeeke his righteouſneſſe, and more and more profite therein, vntill it be perfect in vs, at ſuch time as hee ſhall haue taken vs out of this world: And ſo let vs al ſay, Almightie God, heauenly father, &c.

On Thurſday the xij. of March, 1556.

The CLV. Sermon which is the third vpon the eight and twentith Chapter.

9 The Lorde thy God will make thee a holy people to himſelfe, as hee hath ſworne vnto thee, if thou keepe the commaundements of the Lord thy God and walke in his wayes.

10 And all the nations of the earth ſhall ſee that the name of the Lorde is called vppon ouer thee, and they ſhall bee afraide of thee.

11 And the Lord thy GOD will make thee to abound in ſubſtance, in the fruite of thy wombe, in the fruite of thy cattel, and in the fruit of thy ground, in the land which the Lord thy GOD hath ſworne to thy fathers to giue thee.

12 The Lord thy GOD will open vnto thee his good treaſure, euen the heauens, to ſend downe raine vpon thy land in due ſeaſon: and to bleſſe all the worke of thy handes, and thou ſhalt lende vnto many people and borrowe of none.

13 The Lorde God will make thee the head, and not the tayle: And thou ſhalt be onely aboue, and not beneath, if thou obey the commaundements of the Lord thy God, which I commaund thee this day to keepe and to doe them.

14 And that you ſwarue not, neither to the right hand nor to the left, from any of al the wordes which I commaund you this day, in walking after other gods to ſerue them.

MOſes continuing the matter which was handled yeſterday, ſheweth vppon what condition GOD choſeth vs, when hee taketh vs to bee of his Church: that is, that wee ſhould bee ſeparated, and ſet far off from the common curſe of mankinde. True it is that Gods goodneſſe extendeth ouer all the men of the worlde, wee ſee how all are fedde and maintayned by his liberalitie: but in the meane while wee ſee to how many miſeries men be ſubiect. For this cauſe it behoueth vs to bee ſundered, and that God watch ouer vs, and beare vs a ſpeciall loue, as to his owne children: for without that, all our lyfe is confuſed, as it is ſeene howe the wretched infidelles, albeeit that GOD beſtowe neuer ſo many bleſſinges vppon them, yet can they not profite by them, but they ſtand alwayes in doubt; and not without cauſe. For wherevppon may they repoſe their hope, ſeeing they bee not certifyed of the loue of GOD? How can they holde him for their father? Therefore it is a worde well worth the marking, where Moſes ſayth that GOD hath ſeparated vs from all other nations of the worlde. It is certaine that this worde holyneſſe doth importe, that the image of GOD ſhoulde ſhine forth in vs, and that wee ſhould ſerue him purely in vertuous conuerſation: but yet from thence hee proceedeth farther, as hee doth in this text; namely that God will giue vnto his people a certeine marke, to ſhewe that they bee priuiledged aboue all other folke. Therefore in beholding what the ſtate of man is in this preſent lyfe, let vs learne to reſorte alwayes to this promiſe, that God hath not onely created vs after the common courſe of the brood of all Adams children: but that hee hath alſo choſen vs to himſelfe for his heritage. And let vs not doubt at all, but that he watcheth ouer vs, and wil make vs to perceiue that wee be of his houſholde, and that he is nigh vnto vs to ſuccour vs: let vs bee well reſolued in this.

Moreouer Moſes addeth, *Other people ſhall ſee that the name of the Lorde thy GOD is called vppon ouer thee, and they ſhall be afraide*. It is certaine that the Idolaters can vaunt themſelues enough of the name of God: and we ſee howe they pretend it, euen in their fighting againſt him, when they caſt off all doctrine: Inſomuch that being as fierce as wilde beaſtes, yet they looke to bee counted of the Church. But Moſes dooth here take the worde *call vppon*, for naming, or calling vpon: yea and that in trueth; meaning that the people were truely and in deed called after God his name; or named his People. If wee walke in the feare of our God, and frame our life after his calling, then ſhall it be ſeene how it is not in vaine that hee calleth himſelfe our God, & auoweth vs to be his people. Now it is certain that this word dooth preſuppoſe that wee haue our recourſe to God, as being vnder his protection. For it is ſayd that a man is called vppon or named after the name of a prince, when hee is become his ſubiect, and is vnder his tuition. Euen ſo it is ſayd, that the faithfull haue GOD his name called vppon ouer them in proteſting that they bee his, and that, there they bee all ſafe vnder his winges. And this cannot bee vnleſſe we call vppon GOD, and haue our refuge vnto him in all our neceſſities. But whence commeth ſuch boldneſſe, that wee glory in this: that wee belong vnto God, more than any other? For wee know that the ſtate of men is alyke by nature. Wherefore then be we preferred before them that are deſcended of the ſelf ſame race? It commeth through Gods election: It may not begin of vs. For what is he yͤ can aduaunce himſelf to come nigher vnto God, thã others come? What deſert can any man bring wͭ him? [None at all.] Thẽ muſt God make choice of vs through his own meere goodnes: & whẽ he clared himſelfe to be our God, then may wee alſo of our parte bee bolde, in all aſſurance and without doubt to call vppon his name. Nowe wee ſee what is the effect of this ſentence. And Moſes meaneth to declare, what preheminence G O D giueth vnto thoſe whome hee hath adopted for his children: to wit, that albeit they be mingled amongeſt men, and encompaſſed with many miſeries; yet be they preſerued, as being vnder his hand and protection, euen becauſe hee doth holde and auowe them to bee of his houſhold: not for any other cauſe than onely his own good pleaſure. Let vs therfore courageouſly defie Sathan, when wee ſee that hee practiſeth all that hee poſſibly can againſt vs, and let vs count our ſelues aſſured againſt all the dangers of this world, ſeeing that God hath done vs ſuch fauor, as not to leaue vs to fortune, as the vnbeleeuers doe imagine. And why? For wee bee vnto him a holy people. And from whence ſhall wee fetche this preeminence? Wee haue it becauſe hee hath teſtified vnto vs that hee is our G O D. If wee had not gotten this worde of him, we ſhould bee alwayes in perplexitie, wee ſhoulde ſtill doubt, through queſtioning of this and that, and our lyfe ſhould hang as it were by a threed; as wee ſhall ſee in this Chapter. But ſeeing that God hath vttered his fatherly loue vnto vs, and it hath pleaſed him to open his mouth, to make vs to vnderſtand that hee hath giuen vs familiar acceſſe vnto him: ſeeing (I ſay) that wee haue ſuch aſſurance: let vs call vppon him (that is to ſay) let vs not doubt to glorie in this: that hee is our Sauiour: and that ſeeing we are his, wee cannot periſh. Howebeit let vs beware that wee call not vppon the name of God falſly, as all they doe which abuſe it, and yet in the meane while doe make a mocke of him, and are deſpiſers of his maieſtie. If wee clayme the name of God, let it bee, becauſe we be grounded vppon his promiſes, and haue receiued them through faith: and then let vs call vppon him, let him bee our refuge, and let vs not giue our ſelues to fond bragging as they doe which thinke it enough for them to beare the bare name of Chriſtians. Nay, let vs followe the call of our G O D: as Moſes ſheweth here; ſaying: *If thou wilt keepe the commaundementes of thy G O D, as I doe ſet them afore thee this day*. For it is good reaſon that ſeeing God hath ſo bound himſelfe vnto vs, wee in lykewiſe for our parte ſhould yeelde our ſelues to his direction. And that wee ſhould not onely profeſſe with our mouthes that wee bee his people, but alſo ſhewe it by framing our whole lyfe agreeable to the ſame, and by keeping his commaundementes, make it apparant that we haue receiued the grace which hee offered vs: For that is the true proofe thereof.

Now hee ſayth moreouer, *That other people ſhall ſee how the name of God is called vppon ouer vs, and that they ſhall feare vs*. It is not enough for vs that G O D doe promiſe vs to make vs to feele that wee bee in his keeping: but he ſaith, that euen the Paynims our mortall enemies, and the deſpiſers of his maieſtie ſhall bee made to know the ſame. Now it is certaine that the Infidels knowe not the arme of G O D, in ſuch wiſe, as it ought to bee knowen vnto vs: they come far ſhort of it. For in ſeeing, they ſee not a whit: and how then ſhould it be poſſible that they ſhould perceiue that G O D hath bleſſed vs, that we liue of his fauor, and that we be nouriſhed at his coſt? For they bee blockiſh, and thinke not that any thing commeth vnto them from the hand of God. Wee ſee well how the Infidels be fedde and cloathed, they enioy the light of the Sunne, yea, and they haue aboundance of goods. But as for the worſhipping and ſeeking of God, there is no tidinges at all among them thereof. And if beſides their deſpiſing of the benefites of their God, they haue no vnderſtanding whence they come vnto them: howe ſhould they then knowe that the name of God is called vppon ouer vs? Their knowing of it is not through any perſwaſion of minde, or through any ſuch true vnderſtanding of it, as we ought to haue: but Moſes ſayth that they ſhall haue it proued to their faces: as for example, wee ſee the wicked grinde their teeth when they behold the faithfull to proſper, and ſee that God vpholdeth and keepeth them. And whence commeth that? Truely they ſhall be aſtoniſhed at it: and they ſhal not be able to think otherwiſe, but that God fauoreth the contrarie parte: not that they doe ſettle vppon it, or bee rightly reſolued thereof in their heartes: but for that they be confounded in their owne ſelues.

Hee ſayth, *that they ſhall perceaue that Gods name is claymed* [*or called vppon*] *ouer vs: and that it ſhall put them in feare*. For albeit that they feare not God: yet doth he bridle them ſecretly, inſomuch that when they would practiſe any thing againſt his people, they cannot, for they feele their courage broken. This is to be wondred at, that God ſometimes doth giue the wicked the bridle ſo far as to caſt out the fome of their rage againſt vs: they deuiſe what they can, and worke their ſpite. But haue they once done that: then ſhall it appeare that they are vnderlings to him, and cannot withſtand him. And what is the cauſe thereof? If God ſhould ſuffer the faythleſſe to haue their owne will, it is certaine that the worlde ſhould not laſt three dayes, but that they would beare downe all things before them. Therefore it is neceſſarie that hee ſhoulde reſtraine them with ſome ſecret bridle, and not ſuffer their headyneſſe to haue full ſcope. And we ſee it before our eyes. Whereof comes it that we haue not bin ſwallowed vp a hundred thowſand times within theſe twentie or thirtie yeeres laſt paſt? Onely of Gods defence, which conſiſteth not in ſignes that may be ſeene, but in his ſecret holding of the wicked as it were in priſon, maugre all the miſchieuouſneſſe that is in them. By reaſon whereof, when they haue deuiſed any thing, they waſh away lyke water, & all their thoughtes doe vaniſh, and they ly as with their armes broken, and though they vndertake great thinges, yet can they not attaine to their purpoſe. And ſo yee ſee what Moſes meant in ſaying, that the wicked, (forſomuch as they bee our enemies) ſhall perceiue that the name of God is called vppon ouer vs, and thereby bee ſtricken in feare. Whereby wee ſee, that there is no ſuch fortreſſe nor defence as to haue our recourſe to God. So long as hee taketh the care vpon him to ſaue vs, let vs boldely truſt that wee ſtand in ſafetie, yea albeit that the wicked conſpire againſt vs, and lye in waite and watch for vs: yet ſhall we be as in an inuincible fortreſſe, ſo we can call vppon the name of our GOD, and be throughly aſſured in ourſelues that he auoweth vs to be his people, whereof wee haue good warrant, ſo wee breake not our faith which on our part we haue plighted vnto him. But wee muſt feele the protection of GOD otherwiſe than the wicked doe; that is to ſay, in hearing his woorde, wee muſt embrace the grace which is preſented vnto vs, and reſt wholy vppon it. After that manner muſt we bee aſcerteyned that the name of God is called vppon ouer vs.

Now Moſes doth repeate againe that which he had ſayd concerning the fruite of the womb, of Cattell, and of the Earth. Truely it had bin ſufficient, to haue promiſed at once, ȳ al bodily bleſſings proceede from God. But on the one ſide we ſee the miſtruſt that is in men, how that when God ſpeaketh vnto them, they ceaſe not to argue and to reply; Yea, but ſhall I be ſure of it? And therefore to reſolue vs the better, God confirmeth the matter which he had ſpoken of. Againe we ſee our vnthankfulneſſe to be ſuch, that we attribute the thinges to Fortune, and to our owne skill and trauel, which God hath done for vs. Therefore he calleth vs vnto him, and ſheweth that it is he which doth it: and on the other ſide he would haue vs to vnderſtand, that if we intend to proſper in all pointes, wee muſt hearken to him and obey him. For all men, yea euen the wickeddeſt in the world are deſirous to haue iſſue of their owne bodies, increaſe of cattell, and great reuenewes. But what? In the meane while wee deſpiſe God the author of all goodneſſe, and ſeeme as though wee laboured of purpoſe to thruſt his hand far frō vs: which is aſmuch as if I ſhould aske a man an almes, and giue him a whyrret on the eare: or as if hee ſhould come to ſuccour mee, and I ſhould ſpit in his face: euen ſo deale wee with our God. God therefore perceiuing ſuch a malice in vs, and that wee cannot be taught at the firſt, but doe ſtop our eares againſt that which he ſaith; repeteth the ſame thinges againe which he had ſpoken to vs before. Whereby hee warneth vs, that if wee want any thing, wee muſt lay the blame thereof vppon our owne ſinne, and not vppon him. Why ſo? Becauſe hee is ready for his part, to bleſſe vs as well in iſſue of our bodies, as in reuenue of land, and in cattell, and is liberall and rich enough for vs, neither will hee bee ſtreite laced towards vs of the bleſſings that be in his poſſeſſion. Let vs therefore acknowledge, that the fault is in vs, when hee withdraweth his benefites, and giueth them not vnto vs ſo largely as wee would.

Moreouer it is a notable manner of ſpeach, when he ſayth, *That God wil open his good treaſure, namely the heauen, to giue vs rayne, that the earth may bring forth foode.* Here Moſes ſetteth forth the order of nature which wee ſee with our eyes, that wee might the better vnderſtand how God is our father and our nouriſher: and that although the ſuſtenance whereon wee feed is gathered from the earth: yet is it onely God that ſendeth all thinges. How ſo? The earth in deede hath nature giuen vnto it, to bring forth fruite; but if it ſhould continue dry, what woulde come of it? Wee ſee that vnleſſe there fall both rayne and dewe, the earth dooth open, as though it would cry out that it were a thirſt, and it dryeth vp for want of moyſture. And therefore Dauid intending to vtter his earneſt deſire of Gods grace, vſeth this ſimilitude, ſaying: Lorde I am vnto thee as a dry grounde. Pſal.143.6. Wee ſee before our eyes how the earth becommeth barreine and parcheth for want of moyſture, and finally hath neither ſtrength nor ſubſtance. Had it ſo pleaſed God, coulde not hee haue giuen propertie to the earth, to haue of it ſelfe ſubſtance enough? For as wee reade in Geneſis, there was not ſuch raine in the beginning as wee haue in theſe dayes: Gen.2.6. but GOD cauſed a certaine vapor to riſe vp to moyſten the earth: and cannot hee doe the ſame now, or elſe that the earth ſhoulde haue ſome certaine moyſture proceeding from vnderneath? And in deede, wherehence commeth the rayne? If yee aske the Philoſophers, they will ſay that the rayne commeth of the vapors that aſcend out of ȳ earth, which being drawen vp into the ayre, bee ſent downe againe vppon the earth. Thus then, after ȳ opinion of the Philoſophers, the vapors doe aſcend: But now wherefore commeth it, that GOD cannot make the heauens to yeelde rayne except it come firſt out of the earth: or the earth to keepe ſtill that moyſture which it hath, ſo that it may alwayes haue ſtrength and ſubſtance of it ſelfe? What is the cauſe of this riſing vp of the vapors, that when the earth hath yeelded them forth, they bee held vp in the ayre as in Bottles: as is mentioned in the Pſalme? What is the cauſe of all this? It is Pſal.18.12. for that he ſeeth vs to be ſo blockiſh and groſſe, that although hee ſhewe as with his fingar, that it is at his hand that wee receiue all goodneſſe; yet is it his meaning to make vs to perceiue it in a more viſible maner. And that is the cauſe alſo why hee ſayth, That he will heare the heauens, Oſee.2.21. and the heauens ſhall heare the earth, and the earth ſhall heare the corne, and all the ſeedes ȳ be committed vnto it. When the husbandman ſoweth his graine well, he layeth it vp as it were in priſon: & it ſeemeth to be as at the mercie of the earth. The earth then muſt cōceiue ȳ corne, nouriſh it, & make it to ſpring, & in likewiſe giue it ſubſtance. But doth ȳ earth heare the Corne? It is deafe: that is to ſay, it hath no power to make it to proſper, except it be heard of others. And how is that? The earth as I haue ſayd, looketh vp to heauen, and after a ſort openeth her mouth, it cleaueth when it feeleth extreme heate, and is not watered as it woulde. The heauen then muſt bee faine to aunſwere to the earth. The heauen? What can that doe? Can the heauen giue water? It hath none except G O D drawe it vnto it by his ſecrete power. In very deede wee ſhall ſee hereafter Leui.26.19. Deut.28.23 how God threatneth to giue a braſen heauen: It is needefull then that God do heare the heauen, and that we repaire thither. So then, as often as it reineth, wee muſt vnderſtand that God openeth his Treaſures, which are elſe ſhut vp. God (as I haue ſayd) could euen without rayne or deawe) cauſe the earth to bring forth fruite: but hee vſeth ſuch meane, as he knoweth to be conuenient for our dulneſſe: and hee doth ſo, to the intent that we ſhould haue the leſſe excuſe: that if we be vnthankfull vnto him, and cloſe our eyes againſt ſo apparant a matter: wee ſhould be ſo much the more blameworthie at the laſt day, and bee ſure to yeelde account for our wilfulneſſe in refuſing to knowe the thing which ought to bee throughly knowen vnto vs. Thus yee ſee what wee haue to beare in minde.

Whereupon Saint Paul ſpeaking of the ig- Act.14.16. norance which was in the olde world, before the Goſpel was preached: ſayth that all people went aſtray lyke brute beaſtes: And what was the reaſon? Becauſe the doctrine was not yet taught, which is the true light to ſhewe vs the Deut.30.15 way of ſauing health: as we ſhall ſee in the thirtith Chapter. Notwithſtanding he addeth, that Act.14.17. God neuertheleſſe leaſt not himſelfe without witneſſe. And his vſing of this manner of ſpeach *Hee leſte not himſelfe without witneſſe*, is as much as if hee ſayd: Wherefore? For hee hath ſent rayne vppon the earth in due time and ſeaſon: hee hath ſent faire weather alſo. Theſe be Gods witneſſes, which declare, that as hee hath created the world, euen ſo hee doth vpholde and preſerue it: theſe bee the witneſſes that ſpeake with a lowde and cleare voyce, ſaying that wee muſt looke vnto G O D for all the nouriſhment that hee giueth vs. And that is the cauſe, why I ſayd, that we ſhould marke well this ſaying: *that God wil open his Treaſures*. For although wee ſee what great riches God hath ſet in this world, what ſundry ſortes of beaſtes, what hearbes, what trees, and what a number of all other thinges: yet ſhould all theſe thinges go to decay, vnleſſe God ſent vs dayly from heauen the thinges that are requiſite for the preſeruation of this lyfe. Could wee abide three dayes without the light of the Sauiour? If God gaue not the naturall vertue to euery ſeede, what were it? Wee ſhould quickly periſhe. And if there were none other matter, but that whereof I ſpake euen nowe concerning the earth, it woulde ſoone dry vp, vnleſſe God remedied it. Theſe therefore be the good Treaſures, which God beſtoweth on vs. And when it is his will to ſhewe himſelfe a father towardes vs: he layeth the heauens before vs, that wee might ſee it there. And it is aſmuch as if God ſhould lift vs vp by the chin, and ſay; Poore creatures, when ye ſeeke to bee fedde; you looke whether you haue laide corne enough into the ground or no. Indeed that is a thing which you muſt looke vnto: but yet you muſt firſt of all goe higher, and lift vp your eyes to mee, and euen nature it ſelfe doeth compell you ſo to doe. For ye knowe that without rayne the earth cannot proſper. And therefore forget not the thinges which I ſhewe you day by day, and whereof you bee conuicted by experience. This is the good Treaſure whereof Moſes ſpeaketh: & he expreſſely addeth, *The heauen*. For what cauſe? For if hee had ſayde, G O D will vtter his bountifulneſſe, both from aboue and from beneath; truely it ought well to haue contented vs: but yet bycauſe of our infirmitie, wee ſee howe God is fayne to expreſſe the matter more plainely: as hee alſo ſheweth that wee muſt come vnto him, and looke vp to the heauens bycauſe hee calleth vs thither, and hath ſet ſuch order that he will haue vs to thinke our ſelues to be as barraine and hungerſtarued folke, vntill hee hath powred his goodneſſe vpon vs from aboue.

Nowe hauing ſpoken of this good Treaſure, hee ſayeth: *Hee will giue rayne in dewe time, and will bleſſe the woorke* [or labor] *of thy handes*. By ſpeaking of due ſeaſon, hee ſheweth vnto vs that this Gods giuing of rayne vnto vs in due time, proceedeth of a ſpeciall care. For ſometimes rayne is verie hurtfull, as wee ſee before our eyes. Whereuppon wee muſt conclude, that if G O D had not the power and ſkill to ſtay the rayne, the fruites of the earth and alſo the bodyes of men ſhoulde rotte. What doeth the raine of it ſelfe? It engendereth but rottenneſſe. On the otherſide wee ſee that the raine refreſheth in ſeaſon, & giueth ſtrength vnto the ground:, whereby wee ſee that it is the Treaſure of God for to giue vs ſuſtenance. And why is that? Bycauſe God knoweth it is good for vs, that hee cauſe it to raine. Let vs therfore when wee ſee it rayne out of ſeaſon, let vs marke how G O D ſheweth vs that it is verie requiſite for vs that he doe watch ouer vs, and that no drop of rayne fall without his commaundement; according to this which we haue heard before, namely: Pſal.18.12 That he holdeth the waters aboue, as it were in bottles. The cloudes be dreadfull bottles. But the Prophet woulde haue vs to conſider, that it muſt needes be a wonderful power whereby the rayne is ſhut vp there, or elſe wee ſhoulde bee drowned out of hand: at leaſtwiſe it would ſerue but to rotte vs, as I haue ſayde alreadie. And here by the way wee be admoniſhed, as ſhall be ſayde hereafter, to conſider our ſinnes and treſpaſſes: and to thinke that when God giueth vs extraordinarie raines, they be as puniſhmentes for our offences. Moreouer when the raine commeth in ſeaſon, let vs acknowledge that there falleth not one drop but by Gods appointment, aſſuring our ſelues that it is neceſſarie for vs. That is the cauſe why Moſes did expreſly adde that ſaying.

Afterward he ſaith that *God will bleſſe the labor of our handes*: Pſal.127.2. to doe vs to vnderſtande (as hee hath ſhewed in another Text) that it is not our owne labour and trauell that feedeth vs, as Deut.8.17. wee haue ſeene in the eyght Chapter, where he ſaieth thus: When thou art come into the land which G O D giueth thee, remember that by the ſpace of fortie yeeres thou waſt fed with Manna that fell from heauen, to the end thou ſhouldeſt not ſay: It is mine owne labor that findeth me. Let vs therefore learne by theſe texts that when wee haue traueiled, and beſtowed our labour to till the earth, and conſideration is had of al that we ſee requiſite yet neuertheles wee muſt lift vppe our eyes, and not ſtand in our owne conceit to ſay, I haue doone this, it is mine owne labor and policie: but acknowledge that it is Gods office to giue increaſe, and that without that, all our labor is in vaine: as we might wel enough breake our armes and our legges, and yet in ſteade of going foreward wee ſhould ſtill goe backewarde. The ſumme of the matter which God meant to ſhew vs, is that we ſhould labor in al lowelineſſe, and that when euery of vs hath trauailed for his liuing, wee ſhould vnderſtand, that it is not in vs to giue the ſucceſſe, but that GOD muſt wholly guide it, and giue it good iſſue: not onely to ẏ harbage of the earth, but to all things els in generall. So then, when a man applyeth him to any kinde of labor, let him not go about it preſumptuouſly; but let him call vpon GOD to helpe him, ſaying, Lorde it is thy pleaſure that I ſhoulde take paine: well, I goe about it; but I knowe that I ſhall not preuaile, vnleſſe thou guide me, & vnles thou giue me good ſucceſſe: Through thy meere grace and goodnes, let my labor proſper. That is the thing whereof wee bee admoniſhed in this text. Let vs not then thinke, that mans care & skill, or his trauell and endeuour can make the ground fertile: but that the bleſſing of GOD ruleth all. Yet notwithſtanding it putteth vs in mind of our dutie, to wit, that GOD will ſo helpe vs, as wee may not bee idle: for wee bee not made as logges of wood: men muſt (I ſay) imploye them ſelues when GOD promiſeth them his bleſſing. For theſe two poyntes goe together, namely that the Lorde will bleſſe thee, and yet neuertheleſſe that he will haue thee alſo to labor. It is certaine that GOD canne feede vs, though our armes were broken, he coulde make vs to liue without any care, and without hauing regarde to maintaine our houſhold: GOD (I ſay) coulde giue vs foode of free coſt: but it is his pleaſure to exerciſe vs, with care and trauel, and that euery man according to his vocation, ſhould apply himſelf to that which he ſeeth meete for him. I ſay that Gods matching of his bleſſings with our trauell, is to ſhewe that hee will not haue vs to bee ſluggerds, ſo as euery man ſhoulde ſitte on his taile, and neither deale with tilling of the ground nor with any other trade of occupying, & take the bridle in our teeth: but that we ſhould doe this honour vnto GOD, to ſay, Lorde, albeit we haue doone what we can, yet is it nothing, vnleſſe thy gratious goodneſſe rule it. But this is ill put in vre. For we ſee how men are giuen to darken the grace of God vnder colour that they doe ſome thing of themſelues: for ſo they beare themſelues in hande.

And this deuilliſh arrogancie is not onely in matters concerning the nouriſhment of our bodies, but alſo touching the ſaluatiō of our ſoules. Whereupon is it, that freewil is grounded? Euen vppon this, that God requireth men to ſtudie and labour to doe good, to withſtand temptations, to haue ſuch a feruent zeale as to giue thēſelues wholy vnto him, & to forſake themſelues. Foraſmuch as God requireth all theſe thinges, it ſeemeth that we can doe them. Yea but we conſider not, that God for all his commaunding, ſayth alſo that hee worketh by his holy ſpirite, ſo as he is faine to write his lawes in our harts, & to engraue them in our mindes, and to make vs walke according as he commaundeth. O it is true, but yet therewithall, we alſo muſt doe our endeuor. And whence commeth that endeuor? Theſe wretches doe not vnderſtand, that it is God that driueth vs foreward and ſtirreth vs vp, and that all the endeuoring wherewith men indeuor, is that they be inſtrumentes of the holy Ghoſt. Now then, foraſmuch as vnder this colour of working wee ſeeke nothing elſe but to darken the grace of God, ſo much the more diligently ought we to note this doctrine, whereby GOD doth ſtirre vs vp, and would haue vs to worke, and yet ſheweth vs therewithall that we cannot profit, vnleſſe he giue vs good ſucceſſe. Truely there is great difference betwixt ẏ handy worke, and that which the faithful do in indeuoring to liue well. For (as I haue ſayd) men are created to labour by nature: but wee be ſo wicked & froward, that in ſtead of obeying god, we be borne to nothing but to offend God, vntill he hath reformed vs, and made vs new creatures. So then God doth not onely bleſſe our labor, when we endeuor to ſerue him, through the grace of his holy ſpirit: but we labor alſo through his only vertue, according as he doth guide and gouerne vs. This is the ſumme of that which we haue to beare in minde concerning this text.

Iere. 31. 33
Ezech. 11. 19
& 36. 27.

Now it is alſo ſayd, *That God will make them the head and not the taile*, namely them that indeuour to ſerue him: hee will ſet them aboue, and not beneath. This is as it were the toppe of all proſperitie. Now ſurely it was more behoouefull (as it was treated of yeſterday) that the olde fathers vnder the lawe, ſhould haue moe promiſes concerning the tranſitory lyfe, than we haue. For they had not ſuch opening of the heauenly lyfe as is giuen vs in the Goſpel. Therefore it was Gods will to drawe them after that faſhion lyke little children. For inaſmuch as an infant is not of capacitie to vnderſtand the goodneſſe of his father: therfore to encourage him, he will ſay vnto him; I will giue thee a trim cappe, and I will buy thee a gay newe cote: this is agreeable to the capacitie of the childe, and becauſe his heart is tender, ſuch talke is vſed vnto him: howbeit the father meaneth to lead him on farther. Euen ſo did God deale with the olde fathers: He did ſet forth his benefites which they ſhould enioy in this worlde: meaning to drawe them from thence to a higher hope, namely, to the hope of the heauenly heritage. And ſo the Iewes were made as a head when the kingdome floriſhed amongeſt them, when they ouercame their enemies, and when God ſhewed himſelfe to fight for them. As nowadayes wee muſt not loke to haue either kingdomes or principalities as they had; neither haue wee in lyke manner the temporall kingdome of Dauid: it is ſufficient for vs that Ieſus Chriſt is giuen vs, and that we reigne with him, and ỳ he being our king, cauſeth vs to floriſh vnder his conduction: I ſay it ought to ſuffice vs, that we bee a kingly Prieſthood 1.Pet.2.9. vnder our head; which is the ſonne of God Neuertheleſſe, our Lorde hath made promiſe to all the faithfull, that if they walke in his obedience, they ſhall not be oppreſſed by the tyrannie of men, but bee mainteined in libertie, which is alſo a bleſſing as much to be deſired as any can be in this world. Knowing therefore that this is a ſpeciall gift of God, as it is here ſhewed, let vs learne to ſerue him and to giue him the whole authoritie ouer vs: that by his gouerning of vs, we may bee ſet free from bondage of men. Wee ſhall ſee hereafter in this preſent Deut.28.37 Chapter, how hee threatneth them that will not feare him nor ſhrinke at his terribleneſſe, Pſal.105.38 accordingly as is ſayd in the pſalme; God muſt needes lay the feare of men vppon all them that will not feare him, and be his willing ſubiectes. Let vs marke therefore, that if in caſe we yeeld to the reigning of God ouer vs, wee ſhall bee maintained by him, in ſuch ſorte, as men ſhall not bee able to oppreſſe vs. And if at any time the wicked haue their ſcope, and ſeeme to ſet their feete as it were vppon our throtes; let vs vnderſtand that God doth bring vs lowe, becauſe wee haue offended him, and becauſe wee haue not rendred him the praiſe that belongeth vnto him; and that hee chaſtiſeth vs according to our deſertes. But yet muſt wee euer come backe to this point, that if we caſt not off GOD, wee ſhall bee receiued of him, in ſuch wiſe as hee will be vnto vs as an armie, and make vs able to walke with Pſal.3.4. our heades vpright: as it is ſayd in the third pſalme. So then, this bleſſing ſerued not onely for the fathers that liued vnder the lawe, but it continueth alſo vnto the end of the world, and wee ſhall vnderſtand that it is not vaine, ſo wee followe in lykewiſe that which is added here: *Keepe the commaundementes which I ſette before thee this day*, (ſayth Moſes) *that thou ſwarue not neither to the right hand nor to the left, to goe to ſeeke ſtraunge Gods and to worſhip them.* Wee ſee how GOD doth euer put vs in minde of obedience to his worde: and that is to the end wee ſhould ſerue him, not in hypocriſie, whereunto wee bee too much enclined. Let vs remember therefore this leſſon, which is, that to worſhip our GOD ſyncerely, we muſt euermore begin at the hearkening to his voyce, and of giuing eare to that which he commaundeth vs; for if euery man goe after his owne way, wee ſhall wander, wee may well runne, but wee ſhall bee neuer a whit the neerer to the right way, but rather the further off from it. And God will not onely bee heard, but alſo obeyed of all men without exception, yea euen without adding any thing to his worde, or without taking any thing from it. And this is expreſly ſayd: For that men dare be ſo bold as to bring in their newe manner of ſeruing GOD, and to doe that which they ſuppoſe to bee good. Contrariwiſe let vs vnderſtand that when GOD hath once ſhewed what he will haue vs to doe, wee muſt ſimply holde vs there, without preſuming to adde thereunto or to diminiſh it by any meanes at all. But aboue all thinges hee would haue vs to acknowledge him to bee our GOD. For the very cauſe that maketh men to ſtray, and altogether to vaniſh in ſo many ſuperſtitions and idolatries, is that they knowe not what GOD they ought to worſhip. Wee haue therefore profited greatly in the Goſpell, in the Lawe and in the Prophets, when we haue the skill to ſay, This is the GOD that ſhewed himſelfe to Abraham, the GOD that ſhewed himſelfe by Moſes, the God that laſtly ſhewed himſelfe fully in the perſon of his onely ſonne, and the ſame is hee that is our God. As it is alſo ſayde in the Prophet Eſay, where hee ſpeaketh of the manifeſtation of our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt. Loe, this is hee; Loe, Eſa.25.9. this is our GOD. Then let vs haue a ſetled faith, that wee be not rouers; let vs not bee like vnto little children, nor lyke wauering Reedes that are caryed euery way; but let our faith be well ſtayed, by taking roote in our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt.

Nowe let vs fall downe before the Maieſtie of our good God with acknowledgement of our ſinnes, beſeeching him ſo to teach vs with true repentance, that we may bewaile them, and be heartily ſory for our corruption, to the end to withdrawe vs more and more, and therein to reforme vs. And foraſmuch as we bee not onely fraile but alſo altogether froward: it may pleaſe him to bring vs home againe vnto him, and to vnderproppe our weakeneſſe with his mightineſſe, ſo as we may ouercome all the hinderances that ſerue to turne vs from him; and that we may with perfect conſtancie go on to the marke whereunto he calleth vs, vntill we attaine to the perfection of all righteouſneſſe. And that in the meane while, it may pleaſe him to vpholde vs in ſuch ſorte, as that albeit we ſhould faile, yet he ceaſe not to take vs ſtill for his children, and make vs to vnderſtand more and more, that he dooth confirme vs in the truſt of our ſaluation. That it may pleaſe him, to graunt this grace not onely to vs but alſo to all people and nations of the earth, &c.

On Friday the xiij. of March, 1556.

The CLVI. Sermon which is the fourth vpon the eight and twentith Chapter.

15 But if thou wilt not obey the voyce of the Lorde thy God, in keeping and doing all his commaundementes and ordinances, which I commaund thee this day, then ſhall all theſe curſes come vpon thee and take holde of thee.

16 Thou ſhalt bee curſed in the citie and likewiſe curſed in the feelde.

17 Thy basket ſhalbee curſed and thy ſtore.

18 Curſed ſhalbee the fruite of thy wombe, and the fruite of thy lande, the increaſe of thy kyne, and of the flocks of thy ſheepe.

19 Thou ſhalt bee curſed in thy comming in, and curſed in thy going out.

20 The Lorde will ſende vppon thee curſedneſſe, trouble, and deſtruction in all that euer thou putteſt thine hande vnto, and in all that thou doeſt, vntill hee hath deſtroyed thee, and thou quickely periſh, becauſe of thy euil inuentions, through the which thou haſt forſaken mee.

21 The Lorde will make the peſtilence to cleaue vnto thee, till it hath conſumed thee from the lande, which thou goeſt to poſſeſſe it.

22 The Lorde will ſtrike thee with ſwellings and with the feuers, and with whote diſeaſes, and with burning ſickeneſſes, and with drought, and with ſworde, and with blaſting windes, and with the yellowe Iaundis, and hee will purſue thee vntill hee haue vtterly deſtroyed thee.

23 And the heauen which is ouer thy head, ſhalbee braſſe, and the earth vnderneath thee ſhalbee yron.

24 In ſteede of rayning vppon the earth, the Lorde will giue thee duſt and aſhes: and hee will come downe from heauen vppon thee, vntill thou bee deſtroyed.

WE haue ſeen theſe other dayes paſt, howe God entreated his people by promiſes: nowe on the contrarie part hee addeth threatenings. And that is not without cauſe, for we ſee what ſlowneſſe is in vs, when the caſe concerneth the ſubmitting of our ſelues to the obeying of God. Our feete are ſwifte ynough to runne to euill, as the Prophet Eſay ſayeth, and as it is ſpoken in the Prouerbes; but God cannot make vs to ſet foorth one ſteppe, to behaue our ſelues as becommeth vs: and therefore wee muſt bee compelled to it, as of force. Neuertheleſſe, it is certaine that God beginneth with gentlenes and goodneſſe. And that is the cauſe why hee keepeth this order of ſetting foorth his bleſſings vnto them that ſerue him. Hee mought very well haue begunne with threateninges, but hee did it not. And why? Hee tryeth to ſee whether wee bee apt to bee taught, by ſhewing himſelfe fatherly towards vs, and by making it to bee ſeene, that hee ſeeketh nothing but our benefite and welfare, proſperitie, and quietneſſe.

Iſay.59.7.
Prou.1.16.
Rom.3.14.

Thus wee ſee howe God doeth firſt make a tryall of vs: and if that preuaile not; then hee vſeth threatenings; and it behoooueth thoſe two to goe ioyntly togither. For to what purpoſe is it, if wee ſerue not God with a free will? Albeit that men cannot fynde any fault with vs: yet, if wee goe to it vnwillingly, all our life is deteſtable. For the cheefe poynt is that wee haue a pure and free good wil, to giue our ſelues ouer vnto God. For wee muſt not haue our eye to the rewarde: and therefore doth it much more followe in reaſon, that if we goe to it by conſtraynt, all our life is curſed. Yet notwithſtanding, this deſire of ſeruing God becauſe it is not loſt labour, is not all that wee haue to do. For when wee bee come to that poynt, wee are but at the halfe way. Although a man receiue the promiſes which bee heere contayned, and offer himſelfe to God to ſerue him: yet his ſo dooing is vnperfect, and deſerueth to bee caſt off. Wherefore? Becauſe (as I haue ſayde) wee may not bee hyrelings: but our yeelding of our ſelues vnto our God, muſt bee becauſe wee bee his, and becauſe hee is woorthie to haue our lyfe employed in his obedience, and ſpecially for that hee is our father. Hee beginneth at the promiſes becauſe of our infirmitie, to ſet vs the more forwarde. And when hee hath brought vs on ſo farre, then he manifeſteth vnto vs a greater perfection.

But to be ſhort, we haue to marke, that there are three ſorts of people which keepe the law of God in outwarde ſhewe. One ſort dooth it by compulſion, with gnaſhing their teeth at it, and they doe diſcharge it after a faſhion. And wherefore? Becauſe they knowe well that they cannot eſcape the hande of God, they feare his anger and his vengeance; and therefore doe they ſerue him; but that is by compulſion. But as I haue ſayde, all this is reprooued. Another ſort takes the middle way: for they knowe that God is faithfull, and that ſuch as ſerue him ſhall not loſe their labour: theſe harken to the promiſes which bee expreſſed in holy Scripture. And ſo a great many doe yeelde themſelues to ſerue God, becauſe hee allureth them thereunto by promiſing them reward, as we haue ſeene before. But, as I ſayde, wee may not ſtay there; but wee muſt rather conſider, that foraſmuch as God hath made and faſhioned vs, redeemed vs, and is our father, the ſame ought to ſuffice vs although we had no reſpect vnto that which hee promiſeth vs: and foraſmuch as hee hath preuented vs with his mercie: and ſheweth him ſelfe ſo bountifull towards vs: his ſo doing ought to inflame vs with an ardent affection to ſerue him. This is one of the principall poyntes of our life. But (as I ſayde afore) our Lorde in his lawe hath reſpect to our rawneſſe: and therfore hee promiſeth to rewarde vs, to the intent wee ſhoulde haue the better courage. And in deede though wee ſerue God with affection neuer ſo pure and freely imployed, yet muſt wee alwayes wayt for that which is promiſed vs, and ſtaye thereupon. Wee muſt (I ſay) hope for his bleſſing, when we haue ſerued him with a good courage: but wee may not doe it to that end: wee muſt not bee drawne by this reſpect onely. For (as I haue ſayde) wee muſt bee his children, and honour him as our father. And as it is hee that doeth vpholde vs: ſo muſt wee aſſure our ſelues that it is not for vs to imagine any merite in our ſelues, but that hee accepteth vs of his owne onely infinite goodnes; and therefore that wee for our parte, muſt ſeeke nothing but to vowe and dedicate our ſelues wholly vnto him. Howſoeuer the caſe ſtand, let vs learne, that when God hath ſet his promiſes before vs, hee muſt alſo bee fayne to ſpurre vs forwarde. Wherefore? Becauſe our nature is full of rebellion againſt him: wee bee not onely ſlowe: but alſo there is in vs an inclination to drawe quite backewarde from that which GOD commaundeth vs. If there were no more but ſlouthfulneſſe, yet were that ſuch a vice as were woorthie to bee corrected, and therefore wee ſhould haue neede of the threatenings that are mentioned heere. But ſeeing wee be ſo frowarde to bee ruled, that wee bee alwayes kicking, ſo as God cannot reclayme vs nor inure vs to his yoke: it appeareth that the manaces bee double neceſſarie. And heerein there is very iuſt cauſe to condemne vs, ſeeing that God cannot winne vs to loue, but is fayne to ſhewe himſelfe dreadfull, to make vs afrayde, without the which wee woulde lye ſtill aſleepe. Seeing then that God doeth ſo litle preuayle with vs, when hee traineth vs gently, ſeeking nothing but to make vs to followe him with a willing heart; let vs acknowledge our frowardneſſe and condemne our ſelues: and therewithal let vs alſo confeſſe the fatherly care that God hath of our ſaluation, ſeeing he vſeth all yͤ meanes which hee knoweth to be meete for vs. For it is all one, as if hee ſhould (as yee woulde ſay) transfigure himſelfe. His onely reſpect is to reclayme vs. One whyle hee ſmyleth on vs; and another whyle hee frowneth at vs. But yet all tendeth to this poynt, namely, that we may bee drawen vnto him, to giue ouer our ſelues to his ſeruice.

Now will ſome man ſay, Seeing that it is ſo yͤ our life diſpleaſeth God, & that he reproueth yͤ ſame when we ſerue him by compulſion: if the threatnings leaue vs there, what do they auaile? It were better that God ſhould forbeare them. But let vs marke that he trayneth vs by degrees according as he knoweth it neceſſary for vs. It is certaine, yͤ if nothing but feare doe bring vs to ſerue god, it is nought worth: howbeit it is a good preparatiue, yͤ leadeth vs farther on, after hauing begun at it. As for example: before yͤ God hath meekened vs, we be ful of pryde, & our fleſh is altogither rebellious: & to be ſhort, wee be as coltes that were neuer ſadled nor bitted. God muſt be faine to prepare vs & to bring vs in order, which thing to do, he vſeth threatnings. But this (as I haue ſaid) were nothing at al, vnleſſe he inured vs to a voluntarie obedience & ſubiectiō afterward. And when we tend thitherwarde, we haue greatly profited in yͤ this pryde of ours is beaten down, & we be no more ſo wyldheaded, but yͤ we know yͤ there is a Iudge before whome we muſt make account; & that the ſame conſideration reſtraineth vs from vſing ſuch looſenes any more, & from being ſo heady in doing euil, as we haue bin. This is a beginning, & in deede it is but a beginning; in ſo much yͤ if we ſhold ſtay there, wee were not yet plucked out of the mire. But when we haue thus begun, then doth yͤ lord match his threatnings with a taſt of his goodnes in ſuch ſort as we be drawn vnto him. And in ſo doing he ſheweth himſelf to be our father. Now when we vnderſtand yͤ God in deede is ready to rewarde vs when wee haue ſerued him, albeeit that wee bee not able to deſerue any thing, but rather doe prouoke his wrath: thereuppon wee muſt haue our refuge to his mere mercie, to obtayne remiſſion of our ſinnes, as it is offered vnto vs in our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt, and as hee hath purchaſed it for vs by his death & paſſion. When we be thus reformed, and rid of all truſt in our owne woorkes, then ought wee to offer vp our ſelues willingly in ſacrifice vnto GOD, as Saint Paul alſo doth exhort vs in the twelfth Chapter to the Romanes. Hee ſetteth vs forth no rewarde, but ſaith: I beſeeche you brethren, by the mercie and compaſſion that God hath ſhewed towardes you, that euery one of you renounce this worlde, and alſo himſelfe, that you become liuely ſacrifices vnto GOD: for that is your reaſonable ſeruice. Rom.12.1.

But yet ſome man will reply againe and ſaye: If threatenings make vs readie for the promiſes of God, it ſeemeth that they ſhoulde bee placed in the firſt ranke, and that the promiſes ſhoulde followe them. But the anſwere to this dout is: that God will holde vs more conuicted before him, when hee beginneth with vs by his promiſes. For wee cannot ſay but that there is a ſhamefull thankleſnes in vs, ſeeing that wheras our Lorde ſeeketh onely to winne vs by loue, wee notwithſtanding deale frowardly with him, and drawe backewarde, when hee commeth ſo louingly towardes vs. Yee ſee then howe the promiſes are ſet before vs in the firſt place, that wee might bee the better reprooued of our frowardneſſe. But hath God ſhewed vs that his goodneſſe would not auayle vs, except he threatened vs? then doeth he vſe rigour, and ỹ ſame rigour doeth profite vs, forſomuch as wee bee touched therewith, and our hearts are daunted. I meane not all; for there be many that take the brydle in their teeth to ſtryue againſt God: but I meane the faithfull. Thoſe are they that bee prepared for ỹ promiſes of God, through threatninges. Afterwarde God turneth yet agayne, and allureth them newe agayne with his goodneſſe, as is ſayde afore: in ſo much that when he hath ſtoong them with his threateninges, to tame the ſtubbornneſſe of their fleſh; (as ſurely it is requiſite that God ſhoulde ſhewe ſome ſigne of his wrath:) thereuppon hee ſetteth before vs his mercie, which is the accompliſhment of al, to the ende (as I haue ſayde) that wee ſhoulde learne to yeeld our ſelues wholly vnto him with a free diſpoſed affection.

Nowe let vs come to the wordes that bee ſet downe heere. *If thou wilt not obey the voyce of the Lord thy God, to keepe his commandements & ſtatutes which I ſet before thee this day: all theſe curſes ſhall come vppon thee, and take holde of thee.* Heere Moſes ſpeaketh expreſſely to ſuch as haue been trayned in the worde of God. True it is that they which offend without the lawe, ſhall periſh neuertheleſſe, as Saint Paul ſayth in the ſecond Chapter to the Romanes. Rom.2.12. And in verie deede wee ſee that the ignorant and blynde ſcape not vnpuniſhed at Gods hande. Albeit that they might pleade that they were not taught: yet are they faultie vnough. But let vs note, that heere our Lorde doeth double his curſe vppon thoſe vnto whome hee hath ſhewed ſuch fauour, as to manifeſt his wil vnto them, and to ſhew them the waye of ſauing health, had they obeyed him, and yeelded themſelues vnto his doctrin. This then is not generall to all men. But God doeth firſt of all ſhewe, that when hee hath giuen his lawe, and publiſhed it abroade. The fault is in the people that they vnderſtande it not. This is the cauſe why Moſes doeth expreſſely ſay: the commaundementes and ſtatutes, which I ſet before you this day. When hee ſayeth, *Commaundements and ſtatutes*, it ſerueth to ſhewe that they conteyne a ſufficient inſtruction, accordingly as wee haue tolde you heere before; that God hath not ſpoken by halues: but that hee hath ſo taught his people, as they cannot reply and ſay, Wee wote not what theſe things meane. Loe heere the *Statutes & commaundements which I ſet before you*, ſayeth Moſes. If you applye your indeuour to them, you cannot doe amiſſe. And therefore let vs beare well in mynde, that according as God hath deliuered vs his worde, our vngodlineſſe is doubled before him, and our puniſhment muſt bee ſo much the more grieuous, if wee bee not willing to doe good, yea, and alſo profite therein, and from day to day bee eſtabliſhed in his obedience. That is the thing which wee haue to conſider vppon that ſaying.

Moreouer when hee ſayeth: *If thou wilt obey the voyce of the Lorde thy God*: it ſerueth to touch vs throughly to the quicke. For ſeeing that God vouchesafeth to ſpeake vnto vs: is it not meete that wee ſhoulde at the leaſt giue eare vnto him? And if wee play the deafe folkes, is it not a matter contrary to nature? For if wee woulde not heare our equall, hee woulde take it in diſdayne, and much more woulde our ſuperiour. And whereas God hath all ſoueraigne dominion ouer vs, and hath done vs the fauour to deliuer vs his worde, and acquainteth himſelfe familiarly with vs, if hee fynde vs ſtubborne againſt him, diſdayning to heare him; is it not meete that hee ſhoulde auenge him of ſuch a contempt? Specially when hee ſeeth ſuch a villaynous ſtatelyneſſe in vs, which bee but wormes of the earth. The thing then which wee haue to remember vppon this text, is that heere Moſes intended to condemne the vngodlineſſe of men that doe ſtill continue hardhearted, notwithſtanding that God giue them the meane to returne, by ſetting his woorde before them.

Nowe, when hee ſayeth that theſe curſes ſhall take holde of vs; it behooueth vs to remember that which was ſpoken of here before. Deut. 28. 2. For in ſpeaking of the bleſſings of GOD, hee ſayde; Thou ſhalt bee compaſſed round about; and nowe hee doeth in like wiſe ioyne the curſes in the ſame manner, ſo that wee may not thinke to eſcape the hande of God. Howe ſlye ſo euer wee bee, wee ſhalbee alwayes entrapped, it wil not boote vs to ſeeke ſtarting holes, according to this ſaying of his by his Prophet, If thou goe into thy houſe, and ſhut thy doore and double barre it, yet ſhall the ſerpent come in and ſting thee there. Amos.5.19. & 9.1.2.3.4. If thou goe into the feeld, & ſeek means to eſcape, thou ſhalt meet wͭ a lyon vpon ỹ way: if thou ſlip aſide from ỹ lyon,

a Beare ſhall meete thee, and to bee ſhort, whatſoeuer men doe, when God is againſt them, & is become, as it were, their enimie, they muſt needes fynde that they bee ſurpriſed, caught, and entrapped, and enuironed rounde about with theſe curſes, without any hope to get out. Therefore, let vs not deceiue our ſelues in ſeeking worldly meanes to ſaue vs: for if the hand of God bee lifted vp againſt vs, (as wee ſhall ſee in the ſong heere at hande) Hee hath his ſtore-
Deut.32,23 houſe full of roddes, and not of three or foure ſortes onely, but of infinite: and if wee ſuppoſe that wee are eſcaped, when wee haue ouercome ſome one euill; then wee deceiue our ſelues: for God hath by and by an hundred moe. Let vs then looke for all manner of woe, if wee obey not Gods lawe. But it were a miſerable appeale if wee ſhoulde come vnto God by compulſion, onely for feare of his puniſhments. What muſt wee then doe? Wee muſt ſubmit our ſelues willingly vnto him, praying him to keepe vs from procuring his wrath, and from warring againſt him, and from inforcing him to come to defie vs. That were as if ſome petie lorde woulde attempt warre againſt a great Prince; hauing neither ſtrong towne, nor munition, nor ought els: and yet woulde needes preſume to defye one that is able to ſwallowe him vp, if hee did but lift vp his finger againſt him; and were not that a madneſſe? Likewiſe, when wee prouoke our God, by ſetting our ſelues againſt him wittingly, hee muſt needes beſette vs, and holde vs as in priſon. Wherefore, let vs pray him not to ſuffer vs to bee ſo farre ouerſeene, as to fall to defying of him: but that wee ſimply obey him, ſo as wee may bee crowned and encompaſſed with his bleſſings; according as it is ſayde in the two and thirtith Pſalme. Hee that put-
Pſal. 32. 10. teth his truſt in God, ſhalbee crowned with his benefites: that is to ſay, God will make him to poſſeſſe his bleſſings rounde about him, and hee ſhalbee ſo throughly fenced on all ſides with his ſauegarde, that hee ſhall not neede to feare. Albeit that wee bee layde open to neuer ſo many dangers, yet ſhall wee be preſerued through his goodnes. Now as touching that which he addeth; we haue expounded here before.

Concerning the curſes, he ſayth: *Thou ſhalt bee curſed in the towne, thou ſhalt bee curſed in the feelde, thy comming in ſhalbee curſed, thy going forth ſhalbee curſed, the fruite of thy wombe ſhalbee curſed, and the fruite of thy cattle and of all thy flockes.* Hereby are wee againe done to vnderſtande, that all the euil which wee ſee in this worlde, proceedeth from the hande of God. By the worde *euils* I vnderſtande all the puniſhmentes, and all the wretchedneſſe whereunto wee bee ſubiect, according alſo as he ſpeaketh thereof by his Pro-
Eſa.45 7. phet Eſay, ſaying: I am the Lorde which made both light and darkeneſſe, which haue in my power both life and death, and which doeth both the good and the euill. Hee vſeth this kinde of ſpeeche purpoſely: not that the euill, whereof wee bee faultie, doeth proceede from God, nor that it ought to bee imputed vnto him: it is not ſo. But hee meaneth that all the miſeries and calamities which wee ſuffer in this worlde, be as it were ſo many chaſticementes: wee may not attribute them to haphazarde, as ſhalbee more plainly touched hereafter; where God ſayeth, Leu.26. 23.
If you will needes come againſt mee at all aduenture, I will in like wiſe come againſt you at al aduenture. Hee vſeth the ſame verie woordes. And wherefore? Becauſe that men doe bleare their owne eyes, and ſaye; Loe, what miſfortune is befallen me? When they be any wayes afflicted, they caſt out ſpyteful ſpeeches againſt God and ouerſhoote themſelues, not conſidering that God is a Iudge, and gouerneth the worlde by his prouidence; they are not able to perceiue that, ſo dull and ſenſeleſſe bee they. And that is the cauſe why Moſes vſeth this kind of declaration, and ſo large in this text. And it ſerueth to bring vs to that which I alleged euen nowe out of the Prophet Eſaye; where GOD ſheweth that hee made both light and darkeneſſe, and did both the good and the euill. Wee may not heere conceiue vayne thoughtes, ſaying, Whence commeth this vnto mee? It is a misfortune. Woulde God it were not ſo. But wee muſt acknowledge the hand that ſmyteth vs; for that is greate wiſedome. And for the ſame cauſe doeth God complayne thus by his other Prophete: This people haue not regar- Eſa.9.13.
ded the hande that ſmote them. Yee ſee then howe wee muſt vnderſtande that all the afflictions and miſeries which wee endure in this worlde, bee verie ſtrokes of Gods owne hande. And euen in that reſpect is it ſayde by the Prophet Amos: Is there any euill in the city which Amos. 3.6.
God hath not done? That is to ſaye, can there happen either warre, or peſtilence, or famine, or diſeaſes, or pouertie, or any other calamitie whatſoeuer it bee, that commeth not to you from God? Wretched people, bee you ſo fooliſh and beaſtly, as to imagine, that God which created the worlde, doeth leaue it at randon, and hath no care to watche ouer his creatures, or to beſtowe on them, that which hee thinketh meete for them, ſometimes to ſhewe his goodneſſe, and ſometimes to make them feele that hee is a Iudge, and to puniſh mens ſinnes, and to make them to knowe what his office is? Thinke you that hee dwelleth ydle in heauen, and that he vttereth not his vertue, or that the worlde is not guyded and gouerned by his prouidence? So then, like as heretofore God hath ſhewed that wee cannot proſper, but through Deut. 8. 18.
his grace and loue that hee beareth vs, in that hee hath choſen vs for his children, and wil alſo accept our ſeruice; ſo nowe hee ſheweth in like wiſe, that if there bee any affliction, pouertie, or other miſerie, they come not by happehazarde: but are very puniſhmentes of Gods ſending: and therefore when thinges fall not out after our liking, wee muſt fall to conſidering & examining of our ſinnes. If wee bee grieued with any manner of thing, ſo as one is troubled with his houſholde, an other with the loſſe of his goods, another with ſome diſeaſe, another with ſome vexation of mynde, and an other with the forgoing of ſome thing that he loued:

let vs acknowledge, ſaying; Loe, it is our God that hath lifted vp his hand, & holdeth it vp ſtil. And wherefore? Becauſe that wee haue offended him. The firſt point then is, that men may not flatter them ſelues when God viſiteth them: but they muſt know, that by this meanes they are made to vnderſtande their offences, to the end to humble themſelues, and to bewayle them. Thus much for one point.

The ſeconde poynt is, that wee muſt not thinke to eſcape the ſcourges of God, bee wee neuer ſo ſubtile; but that wee ſhall euer bee caught by the backe, if God bee againſt vs. And well may wee make vs ſheeldes, and rampyres: but when wee haue practiſed what wee can: yet will not our Lorde miſſe to finde vs, he needs but to blowe vppon all our defences whereby wee thinke to garde our ſelues againſt him. It is not like as if wee ſhoulde haue to doe with creatures. Againſt them wee might fortifie our ſelues both behynde and before; but God will knocke vs on the pates from heauen. Wee can haue neither ſhielde nor rampaire againſt him, in hope thereby to ſtoppe his hande from touching vs, when it pleaſeth him to puniſh vs.

Againe, to what ende ſhall all the fortifications ſerue that wee are able to buylde againſt him, but to ouerthrowe our ſelues? Let vs therefore vnderſtande, that all that euer men can do againſt God, ſhall turne to their owne confuſion, and vtter ouerthrowe. That is the thing which Moſes meant, when hee ſayde, *That wee ſhalbee curſed in the towne and in the feelde, that wee ſhalbee curſed in our going foorth, and in our comming in, if wee obey not the voyce of our God*. And as hee ſayde afore, that God will open his good treaſure from heauen, to giue vs rayne in due time; ſo nowe he ſayth, That *God will make our heauen as Braſſe, and our earth as Iron, and that in ſteede of rayne hee will ſende vs drought, he will ſende vs duſt and aſhes, and there ſhalbee nothing but barrenneſſe amongeſt vs.* Here wee muſt cal againe to mynde the leſſon that hath beene layde out breefely before: that is, that according as euery one of vs is viſited by the hande of God, wee ſhoulde benefite our ſelues thereby and euery man applye that to his owne vſe which is heere mentioned. For God vſeth many wayes to chaſtice vs. One is puniſhed in his owne perſon with diſeaſes, reproche, and I wote not what elſe: an other hath ſome ſecrete heartbyting, ſo that although hee bee whole in bodye, yet hee ceaſeth not to bee tormented in minde: another is plagued with his wife or with his children: and another is troubled with his ſubſtance. According therefore as euery one fyndeth him ſelfe afflicted, ſo let him reſort to this that is tolde vs heare, ſaying: Alas, I ſee howe my God calleth mee vnto him, I may not nowe prouoke him: for what ſhall I winne by vſing many wyndlaſſes as the worldlinges doe, who deſire to fall a ſleepe in their miſeries: and the onely comfort which they ſeeke, is to haue no regarde to God. Nowe if wee doe ſo; then muſt that which is ſpoken in the two & thirtith Pſalme bee practiſed vppon vs, to wit, that God will deale with ſturdie and hardharted folkes Pſal.32.9. as with reſtiue horſes, and madde moyles. As hereafter wee ſhall ſee more at length. So then yet muſt wee come to the ſayde poynt of feeling of Gods hande, according as euery one is afflicted, firſt in his owne behalfe, and then in common. When we ſee a drought, let vs not accuſe the heauen nor yet the ayre, ſaying it was the diſpoſition of them. Let vs not doe, as the fantaſticall folke doe, which looke no higher than the ſtarres; but let vs thinke vppon the hande of God: that as many afflictions as fall vppon vs, may bee vnto vs as viſible ſignes and markes that God executeth the office of a Iudge towarde vs: and that although hee condemneth vs, as often as hee puniſheth vs, yet the ſame is not a condemnation to the death; but a ſummoning of vs to appeare before him, there to frame newe proceſſe againſt vs. This is a poynt which wee ought to marke well. Therefore when wee feele any euill or greefe; let vs vnderſtande that we haue offended God: but let vs thinke therewithall, that God neuertheleſſe meaneth not to execute a finall ſentence vppon vs; when hee calleth vs againe vnto him. To what ende then is it? Is it to condemne vs without mercie? No: but hee doeth vs this fauour, that wee might bee our owne Iudges. When hee doeth ſummon vs, it is to the ende that euery one ſhoulde plead guiltie of his owne good will, and thereupon aske him forgiueneſſe, and flee for refuge to his mercie. Loe heere an ineſtimable priuilege. And ſo let vs benefite our ſelues both priuately and publikely by the things that are tolde vs heere: That when wee ſee the heauens burning hote, and wee aske rayne, and yet goe without it, ſo as the fruites doe fayle vppon the grounde, and the heate dryeth vp all thinges: let vs vnderſtande that it is the hande of GOD which viſiteth vs, and let vs confeſſe our ſinnes with one common accorde. And if any man feele anye houſholde vexation, let him confeſſe; Well, GOD doeth waken mee by this viſitation, becauſe I haue offended him. Thus the cheefe ſtudie, wherein God woulde haue the faithfull to exerciſe themſelues, is the examining of their ſinnes, after this manner: whereby it will come to paſſe, that (as Salomon ſayeth) Bleſſed is the man which doeth trouble and quicken vp himſelfe, Pro.28.14. not that wee muſt ſo trouble our ſelues, as to fall into vnmeaſurable deſpaire: but wee muſt quicken vp our ſelues with feare, becauſe the diuell ſeeketh nothing elſe, but to make vs dull and blockiſh, to the ende wee ſhoulde offende God, and bleare out our tongues againſt him like as wee ſee theſe deſpiſers doe; which ſet themſelues againſt him, daſhing at him with their hornes, and vomiting out their blaſphemies. To the intent therefore that wee come not to that paſſe, wee muſt quicken vp our ſelues with feare and trembling: which can not bee done, vnleſſe wee profite vnder the correction of our God, and conſider, that when hee viſiteth vs, it is to call vs vnto him.

It is to the ende that wee ſhould make our owne inditement, and not tarry the laſt laying of his hande vpon vs, but preuent him, that (as ſayeth Saint Paul) they which condemne themſelues, may not bee condemned of him. 1.Cor.11.31.

Nowe finally it is here declared vnto vs, that the courſe of nature, as we call it, is nothing but the diſpoſition of the will of God, and that hee beareth ſuch rule ouer both heauen and earth, and ouer raine and faire weather: that he changeth them at his owne pleaſure, and yet ſendeth them not without cauſe. If there were a permanent order in nature, it woulde ſeeme vnto vs that God medled not with it; wee woulde graunt that hee hath made the worlde, but yet woulde wee ſay that hee doeth not gouerne vs: wee woulde thinke thus: What? when the ſpring time commeth, wee ſee that the reſt of the yere goeth on in one egall courſe, as did the yeare laſt before paſt. It is always one. But we ſee one winter longer, and another winter later, and an other rather, and laſt longer: wee ſee one winter raynie, and another drye: we ſee abundance of ſnowe in one yeare, and another yeare none at all: one yeare whote, and another cold. Nowe, doeth not ſuch inequalitie make it manifeſt that God muſt needes woorke? For the Sunne doeth his office in one yeare aſwell as in another, and euer keepeth his iuſt compaſſe, better than the beſt ruled clocke in the worlde. And how then commeth ſuch a varietie? It is Gods dooing to call vs vnto him. Truely the Philoſophers doe ſeeke out the cauſes (as they terme them) there is ſuch a meeting of ſtarres (ſay they,) and this proceedeth of ſuch coniunctions. But whence commeth all this? Euen from the hand of God. Wee muſt euer reſort to the firſt cauſe. And in deede, they bee more than beaſtes, if they will not yeelde to that. Yet is it not ſufficient to knowe that God guydeth all his creatures, and that hee holdeth them brydeled to make them to bowe, as a horſe man maketh his horſe to turne on this hande and on that hand, to ſtoppe, & to runne. All reſteth not in knowing that God looſeth & holdeth, and ſendeth ſuch changes as him liſteth: but we muſt vnderſtande further that God doth nothing without cauſe. For if wee ſay that God gouerneth the worlde, and know not wherfore hee doeth plague vs, wee ſhalbee quickely enclyned to murmure againſt him: and in the meane whyle wee ſhall not profite vnder his chaſticementes and corrections, but continue ſtill dulled in our ſinnes. So then let vs marke, that in ſhutting vp the heauen ſo as it yeeldeth no rayne, and in drying vp the earth, as it were Iron: thereby hee doeth ſhewe vs our ſinnes, & that hee is our Iudge. This is it that wee haue to beare in mynde as concerning the courſe of nature, according as it is heere declared vnto vs.

Neither is God contented to ſaye that the heauen ſhalbee as braſſe, but hee ſayeth alſo, *That hee will ſende vs aſhes and grauell or ſande in ſteede of raine*. Like as wee ſee the Caterpillers that eate, marre, and deſtroy all that is on the earth: there needeth but one blaſting or mildewe to eate the corne and to conſume it within. And it is more than if God ſhoulde ſowe ſalt. And theſe blaſtings or mildewes come not but of the dewe or elſe of the rayne, at leaſtwiſe they bee none other ſubſtance. But God needeth not but to make a little change, and to ſende a little ſharpe colde, and the ſame colde will make cleane riddance of all. When wee ſee ſuch thinges, let vs euermore take warning by this doctrine, and let vs bee no more intangled in our follies, to ſaye: Ah euill fortune, euill fortune: but let vs vnderſtande that our Lorde doeth call vs backe vnto him, and hath his hande ſtretched out: and let vs knowe that it is hee that ſmyteth; as if hee ſhoulde ſaye: I haue gone about to drawe you vnto me by faire meanes, but you haue not humbled you before mee. Seeing then that you will not be brought to it willingly, I will now compel you, as though I drewe you by the hayre of the head. Let vs (I ſay) bee admoniſhed by this teaching, that is here mentioned, to preuent the wrath and vengeance of God, ſo often as hee giueth vs aduertiſement of the ſame.

Againe, when God maketh the earth fruitful, let vs acknowledge it to bee his worke, and that there ſpringeth not a blade of graſſe, but hee hath put thereunto his hande. Let vs then take our dayly foode of him: that is to ſaye, let vs not cramme our ſelues like bruite beaſtes, which fill their bellies, not knowing whether there bee a Creator that cauſeth the earth to bring them foorth foode: but let vs vnderſtande that God bleſſeth the earth, and cauſeth it to yeelde fruite for our nouriſhment and ſuſtenance; let vs beare it ſo in mynde, that aſwell in affliction as in proſperitie wee may turne our eyes euermore vnto God. And it is expreſſely ſayde further, *That God will make the peſtilence to cleaue vnto vs, and that hee will ſende other diſeaſes, and that they ſhall continue vpon vs, vntill we bee conſumed by them.* This ſhoulde yet a little better waken vs, ſeeing that God ſtriketh not (as it were) a blowe, and away; but that his curſes ſhal followe vs, and cleaue vnto vs, vnleſſe wee forſake our ſinnes and wickedneſſe. Finally let vs learne, that they which indent with God, and fleete away againe from day to morrowe, doe deceiue themſelues. As for example, wee ſee many which when God doeth ſende them any affliction, will haue ſome regarde of it: but they haue doone with it by and by. They doe but ſhake their eares, and thinke they haue ouercome it. And like as a dogge that hath a yerke with a whippe, they turne their backe and runne away, bearing themſelues in hande that they may pacifie God by ſome ſhift. Thus dealeth the worlde. But let vs beware of ſuch blockiſhneſſe. For wee ſee what is ſayde expreſſely in this place. After that God hath ſpoken of his curſes, and added that they ſhal be hemmed in with thē; he cōcludeth ẏ they ſhal cleaue vnto vs. And wherefore? If we cleaue to our iniquities, ſo as they raigne in our bones and in our marow, and be fixed in our heartes and mindes; then muſt the curſes of God followe vs alſo. When a man will not doe away his euill affections, but is delighted in them and continueth ſaping in them, God for his part muſt needes ſhut him vp in it, and when we doe ſo; he muſt needes ſende vs his curſes to ſticke faſt vnto vs like a leproſie that it may conſume vs vtterly; ſo that it ſhal be to no purpoſe to lay playſters thereunto, for the healing of that which is to deeply rooted within and is become in manner vncurable. Therefore lette vs bee afraide at the hearing of theſe thinges. And ſo we ſee nowe to what purpoſe Moſes addeth that the curſes of God ſhal cleaue vnto vs: namely to warne vs, that if the miſchiefe haue taken roote, we muſt ſtraine ourſelues the more in praying to God, to ſhewe to vs the fauour that his holy Spirite may cleanſe vs, as to 1.Cor.14.25 whom it belongeth to ſearch the bottome of our ſecrete affections; that it may pleaſe him to reproue vs, in ſuch wiſe, as this feare may ſerue vs for a maruellous purgation, to expulſe our ſinnes from vs, and that we may no more be ſo wedded vnto them as we haue beene.

And therewithall let vs knowe, that when diſeaſes beginne to reigne, or any other afflictions, it is not for vs to hope for any ende thereof, vnleſſe we ceaſe to offende our God. It is ſayde in a common prouerbe, that diſeaſes come on horſebacke, that is to ſay very quickely, and that they returne againe on foote; that is to ſay verie ſlowely. But we conſider not the cauſe though it be neuer ſo apparant. And that is (as I haue ſayde afore) becauſe we looke not to the hande that ſmyteth vs; neither can God winne vs vnto him with the firſt ſtroke, when he puniſheth vs. Surely wee will make him fayre proteſtations. When a man is ſicke, hee will proteſt that his whole deſire is to ſerue God, and that if he may recouer his health, the worlde ſhall ſee him a newe man. But all is quickely forgotten. Therfore it is no wonder though in ſteede of mitigating our puniſhmentes, God doe diuers times increaſe them, and ſuffer vs to languiſhe in our aduerſities. It is becauſe he ſeeth that our diſeaſes be deepe rooted, that he muſt come again oftener than once or twiſe to purge vs of them. And therefore let vs learne to pray vnto him, to vouchſafe to cure our faultes in ſuch wiſe, as they may not proceede to the extremitie here expreſſed: but that ſo ſoone as wee feele a litle ſtroke of the rod of his hande, the ſame may be ſufficient to bring vs againe vnto him: yea euen with ſuch repentaunce, as may ſhewe that we deale not fainedly: but that it be done in ſimple trueth, and we alſo continue therein to the ende.

Now let vs fall down in the ſight of our good God, accuſing our whole life of the malice and rebellion that is therein: beſeeching him to vouchſafe to chaſtice vs in ſuchwiſe with gẽtleneſſe, and to ſpare vs in ſuch ſorte, as wee be not caſt downe into diſpaire; but that we may rather be brought home againe vnto him. And therewithall, foraſmuch as wee ceaſe not to offende him: and it is alſo neceſſarie that he ſhould daily call vpon vs, and waken vs, that we may fare the better by his corrections; let vs continue to lament and mourne, vntill the time that he haue ridde vs from all the corruptions of our fleſh, & haue brought vs to the perfect righteouſneſſe, wherein lyeth our true reſt: to wit, the heauenly bleſſedneſſe which we hope and looke for. And foraſmuch as we can not obtaine any ſuch matter, but by the meanes of our Lord Ieſus Chriſt: it may pleaſe him to reconcile vs to God his father, by his death and paſſion, and in the meane ſpace ſo to mortifie our old Adam, that his owne Image may be reſtored in vs, and his glory ſhine forth in ẏ ſame. That it may pleaſe him to grant this grace, not onely vnto vs, but alſo to all people and Nations vpon earth, &c.

On Wedneſday the xviij. of March, 1556.

The CLvj. Sermon which is the fifth vpon the eight and twentith Chapter.

25 And the Lorde will cauſe thee to bee beaten downe before thine enemies: Thou ſhalt goe foorth one way againſt them, and flee before them ſeuen wayes, and thou ſhalt be carried away into al the kingdomes of the earth.

26 And thy carkeſſe ſhalbe meate vnto all the foules of the ayre, and to the beaſtes of the earth, and no man ſhall skarre them away.

27 And the Lorde ſhall ſmite thee with the Botch of Egypt, with the Emerodes, and with ſcabbes, and with itch, whereof thou canneſt not be healed.

28 The Lorde alſo will ſtrike thee with madneſſe, and with blindeneſſe, and with aſtoniſhment of heart.

29 And thou ſhalt goe groping at nooneday, as a blinde body gropeth in the darke, & he will not make thy life proſperous: and thou ſhalt but ſuffer wrong and pollinges all day long, and no man ſhall deliuer thee.

IF we were threatned by a mortall man, as God threatneth vs in his lawe: ſurely we would be moued, albeit that hee had no great power ouer vs: wherein our vngodlineſſe is to be ſeene, inſomuch that although we endeuor to cloke it, yet it bewrayeth it ſelf, in that we attribute more power to mortall creatures, than we doe to the liuing God. But heereby God intended to try the honour and obedience that we beare him: to wit, namely in this, ỷ hee aſſureth vs of his loue, we ſhould reſt all wholely thereupon, and hold ourſelues contented therewith. And in likewiſe on the contrary ſide, that when he giueth vs any certaine token of his anger, we ſhould quake thereat. Let vs take good heede therefore of the thing that is heere mentioned: namely that we be not ſo blockiſh as to make a ſkorne of gods wrath. But let vs returne to that which hath beene ſayde already, to wit, that his hande muſt needes be againſt vs, if we liue not according to his lawe. It is certaine that men will naturally giue libertie to their luſtes, to doe whatſoeuer God hath forbidden thẽ, and that they will not ſticke to make warre againſt him. In deede they will not ſay ſo, yet doeth the thing ſhewe it ſelfe to be ſo. For when wee on our part haue defied him and aſſaulted him; is it not reaſon that he ſhould arme himſelfe againſt vs? True it is, that ſo long as we liue in this preſent worlde, the infirmitie of our fleſh is ſuch, as wee are not able in all reſpectes to ſatiſfie the lawe of God. Neuertheleſſe when men paſſe their bounds ſo farre that good and euill is to them all one; and that they ſtriue not at all againſt their luſtes: they ſhew themſelues open enimies vnto God. And to that end alſo is it that Moſes ſpeaketh. Albeit that wee doe our endeuour to reſiſt the euill, and that the feare of God doth brydle vs, yet ceaſe we not to deſerue to be chaſtized of him: as wee ſee the faithfull be not exempted from many afflictions: and that God reclaimeth them much rather than he doth the deſpiſers of his maieſtie. For as they be his children, ſo hath hee the greater care ouer them: and therefore doth he chaſtiſe them the more earneſtly. Howbeit Moſes in this place ſpeaketh but of ſuch as harden themſelues in ſtubbornneſſe, flinging out of courſe in ſuch wiſe, as they make no conſcience at all to doe euill. They neuer thinke that there is a Iudge in heauen, vntill he make them to feele his hande. And therefore he ſaith not; God will chaſtiſe you as a father doeth his children: but God will ſtrike you mainely; you ſhall feele his hande, ſo roughly and liuely, ỷ you ſhall not be able to abide it: and that not for one day but continually til ye be conſumed and periſhed. Seeing then that we heare ſuch threatninges; let vs vnderſtande that they be prepared for ſuch as are hardened in euill, and be not reſtrained with any feare, to ſigh when they feele any euil temptation in themſelues: but goe on, taking the bridle in their teeth, and make a mocke of God. And what ſhall followe of that? Ouer and beſides the thinges which we haue ſeene heere before; Moſes addeth, that God will ſmite ſuch deſpiſers with diuerſe plagues. Firſt that he will ſende them enemies; and giue them power, to deſtroy and to conſume them, inſomuch that they ſhal perſecute them euen in their dead carcaſſes, ſo as when they be diſcomfited, hee will not do them the honour to ſuffer them to be buryed, but leaue them for meate for the crowes, and for the beaſtes of the earth: and moreouer that he hath diuers other means to plague them in their bodies; by ſending them diuerſe diſeaſes, as cankers, and other bottes and ſcabbes, wherby they ſhall be brought to ſuch an afterdeele, that they ſhall not haue as it were any more vnderſtãding, but be vtterly out of their right wit, ſo as they ſhall grope at nooneday, as the blind doe in the darke. And ſurely the ſoreſt point of Gods vengeãce, is when men be ſo ouerthrowen that they haue no more the heart to returne vnto him, ne be able to recouer themſelues to acknowledge their faultes, and to perceiue that when the hande of God doeth viſite them, there is no helpe, except they make their refuge to his mercie: but abide aſtoniſhed as men beſides thẽſelues. By which meanes God ſheweth himſelfe to be mortall enemie vnto them.

Now as touching that which Moſes ſpeaketh here of enemies: we ſee againe howe God holdeth the heartes of men in his hande: ſo that if we be in peace and anon warre is made againſt vs, and we wote not wherfore: (as I haue already ſhewed) it is becauſe God is angry with vs: and that foraſmuch as wee haue ſpited him, hee muſt alſo warre againſt vs. He hath ſouldiers ynowe. As ſoone as he maketh any ſigne (as ſaith Eſa.5.26. the Prophete) all the earth is moued; yea euen though a litle while before, no man thought to haue ſtirred. Let vs therefore vnderſtand, that when warres are towarde in the worlde, God ſheweth tokens of his wrath. It is certaine, (as we haue already ſayde) that albeit we ſerue God faithfully, and ſtande in his protection: yet wee ſhall not ceaſe to haue enemies. For it is his will to exerciſe vs by that meanes: and it is the ſtate of the Church, as it hath alſo alwayes bin. But this good commeth thereof, that God will maintaine vs againſt our enemies. When they haue deuiſed wonders againſt vs, yet ſhall they not bring their purpoſe about. They ſhalbe diſappointed. And though they be as fierce as lyons, and full of deſperate rage: yet will GOD tame them at the laſt: and though they continue in purpoſe to deuour vs, yet they ſhall not haue the power to doe it: But (as hath beene ſayde afore) Deut.28.7. if they come againſt vs one way, they ſhall flee ſeuen wayes. But nowe it is ſayde contrariwiſe that althogh we be of power aboue our enemies, and doe ſet vpon them in neuer ſo good order: ſo as the victory may ſeeme to be already gotten on our ſide, (as we ſee howe the wicked be enflamed with pride and preſumption) yet when wee thinke our ſelues to haue gotten the goale, God will touch vs with ſuch a feare as wee ſhall not knowe which way to runne faſt ynough, but euery of vs ſhall be at his wittes ende. Let vs vnderſtande hereby, that when God ſtirreth vp warres to chaſtice vs, though wee be neuer ſo well furniſhed, and haue all the meanes that may be to reſiſt; yet muſt we needs periſh if God be againſt vs . . For victorie is not obtained by the force and valure of men, but by the power of G O D, Iſa,1.24. who for that cauſe is called the Lorde of hoſtes. And there is none other helpe for vs, but to bee at peace with God, that he may broode vs vnder his winges: accordingly as he vſeth the ſame ſi- Mat.23,37. militude, that he wil play the part of a henne towardes her chickinges. For then ſhall we be ſafe though all the world conſpired our deſtruction. And albeit that our enemies be neuer ſo mightie and ſtrong, and fully minded in their malice to deſtroy vs vtterly: yet is it ſufficient ẏ God doth warrãt vs: and ẏ albeit we haue no ſuccour of mé, yet are we ſufficiétly fortified by his only power. But if we proceede to offende him: and he ſeeth that when he hath ſpared vs to recouer vs vnto him; we haue leauer to be aduerſaries vnto him and to continue in our rebellion: then after hee hath borne with vs long ynough, he muſt needs bring vs to this point of being conſumed by the hande of our enemies. And although others ſeeme as wicked as we, & that God doe not proſper them more than vs: let not that deceiue vs. For God will ſometime giue victory to the wicked, which be no better than we, but paraduenture worſe; yet will hee not faile to deſtroye vs by their handes, and yet they ſhall haue their turne as well as we. But in the meane while, we muſt not thinke that this threatning is deliuered in vaine. Therefore let vs not compare our ſelues with others, ſaying, O, are not they offenders aſwell as we? And hath not G O D good cauſe to puniſh them? Yes, hee hath ſo: but he knoweth the due time and ſeaſon, and he can vſe them as ſeemeth good to himſelfe: but let vs prepare ourſelues to abide his blowes, if we ſtoppe our eares againſt his threatninges, and ſleepe when he would waken vs. For if we giue no credit to his threatninges, wee muſt feele by effect, that hee which pronounceth them, hath power to put them in execution, and that he ſpeaketh not, as they ſay, to ſcarre litle children. It is certaine that G O D will threaten often, before he execute iudgement. But Pſal. 86. 15. therein let vs conſider his long patience in tar- Rom.2.4. rying for vs. And if we abuſe the ſame; it will be nought elſe but a heaping vppe and a doubling of Gods wrath towardes vs: inſomuch that it had beene better for vs that hee had rooted vs out the firſt day, than ſo long to haue forborne vs. Let ſcoffers ſay, that reſpit is worth golde. But there is no reſpit ſo long which we would not redeeme with a hundred deathes, if it were poſſible, when wee haue beene ſo ſtubborne againſt our G O D, and ſo diſobedient to his worde, that we haue made but a laughing matter of his giuing of ſome token of his anger. Let vs therefore conſider, that whileſt that G O D doeth ſpare vs, hee giueth vs leaſure to returne vnto him: and that if our enemies haue forborne vs, it is of his fauour ſhewed vnto vs, that we might preuent his wrath. But if wee will not heare him when he ſpeaketh, nor receiue his warninges: it behoueth vs to giue eare to theſe his threatninges heere denounced, and he muſt be faine to ſende vs to an other ſchoole. It is the wonderful goodneſſe of our God, that when we haue thus prouoked him, as we ſee; yet hee forbeareth vs, and all to recouer vs vnto him, not by forcing vs with mayne ſtrokes, but by alluring vs after a louing manner, beeing ready to receiue vs to mercie, as though hee were not a Iudge to vexe vs and to condemne vs. But what? When wee haue contemned all this, it muſt fall out in the ende (as I haue ſayde afore) that our Lorde muſt ſtirre vs vppe other maiſters, ſo as the wicked may riſe vp againſt vs, and ſeeke to make a ſlaughter of vs by butcherly murthering of vs, beeing in verie deede the executours of Goddes vengeaunce, whereof wee were warned long aforehande, and made but a laughing game of it, continuing ſtill in our ſinnes and wickedneſſe. That is the cauſe why I ſayde, that ſo long as G O D ſpeaketh vnto vs, and wee condemne ourſelues, and acknowledge our ſinnes, and ſeeke attonement with our G O D that wee may liue in peace in this worlde: although it be Gods will, that wee ſhoulde haue enemies and be kept occupied with warres, yet notwithſtanding he holdeth vs ſtill in his keeping, and wee be maintained and defended by his power and goodneſſe.

Nowe as touching that which Moſes addeth, *That the dead carcaſſes ſhould be eaten of crowes and of wilde beaſtes, and that there ſhall be no man to driue them away*: it ſeemeth to be a vaine threatning: for it is no matter whether it bee ſo or no. If a man be buried when hee is dead, what is he either the better or the worſe for it? It ſeemeth then at the firſt bluſh, that this ſhoulde not be greatly regarded. But G O D ment to ſhewe that he will make his wrath felt euen in the bodies of them that be dead. And in verie deede buriall is a priueledge that G O D hath giuen to mankinde for a warrant of the reſurrection. Lette vs not thinke that the vſe of burying the dead is proceeded of a fooliſhe ſuperſtition, or that men deuiſed it. It is true that the heathen haue vſed it, and that was a witneſſe againſt them: And at the laſt day they ſhall be conuicted by their vſing of that Ceremonie, which ſhould haue taught them to looke for the laſt reſurrection; and their not conſidering of it is vnexcuſable. For our buriall ought to be vnto vs as a liuely glaſſe or portrayture, to ſhewe vnto vs, that wee bee not created to goe after ſuch a ſorte in corruption, as though there were not an other life, and that we ſhoulde not be reſtored vnto a newe ſtate. And it ſerueth alwayes for a larger declaration, that mankinde periſheth but for a time, and that their bodies ſhall be renewed. Nowe foraſmuch as buriall is as a memoriall of the Reſurrection as I ſayde afore; therefore is it giuen to men as a prerogatiue, to be buried: in reſpect whereof there is vſed an honeſt comelineſſe, as who ſhoulde ſay that wee which remaine are taught as it were by eyeſight to looke continually for a ſeconde life. For the dead alſo doeth beare a certaine marke in his body, that he is as it were layde vppe in ſafe keeping, vntill the day come that GOD will rayſe the dead againe. Nowe on the contrarie ſide: whereas it is ſayde that men ſhall not be buried, but that they ſhall be eaten of beaſtes and foules: it is as much as if God ment to depriue them of the common benefite, that he hadde graunted to all mankinde: and as if he had ſhewed openly that both in life and in death they were accurſed of him. And that is the cauſe why it is ſayde: Thou ſhalt be Ier.22.19. buried with the buriall of an Aſſe: which thing was ſpoken by the Prophet to a King, euen the King of Iudah. But yet, becauſe he would not be corrected, and that whereas GOD hadde giuen him the honour to beare in his life time the figure of Ieſus Chriſt: yet notwithſtanding forasmuch as he had abuſed the ſame and giuen ouer himſelfe to all vngodlineſſe: thou ſhalt be buried with the buriall of an aſſe (ſayeth the Prophete.) Wee be heereby warned to haue verie great regarde of all the corrections that GOD ſendeth vs: yea euen of the verie leaſt: that wee may be alwayes ſtirred to feare. For what is the cauſe, that wee paſſe ouer ſo many chaſtiſementes of GOD, without profiting by them? Becauſe wee ſhutte our eyes wilfully, and vnleſſe we be compelled by vtter force and neceſſitie, we are contẽted to beare ourſelues in hande, that it is not GOD that chaſtiſeth vs: and (as we ſhall ſee heereafter) we fall to ſuch blockiſheneſſe, as to attribute all to fortune. Lette vs therefore be admoniſhed to marke all the corrections which GOD ſendeth vs, both vppon ourſelues, and vpon our neighbours, that we may receiue warning by them. It ſeemeth to be but a ſmall matter, not to be buried: yea but yet will God haue it noted, and to be vnderſtoode that it is his hande, and that he ſheweth himſelfe a Iudge againſt ſuch as haue offended him. Seeing that GOD will haue his Iudgementes knowen in ſo ſmall thinges: lette vs bee aduiſed to haue more witte and diſcretion. As often as GOD giueth vs (as yee would ſay) but a ſilluppe, let vs be moued to thinke on him and not tarrie vntill hee drawe his ſworde, or bende his bowe to hit vs with a mortall wounde: but let vs by all manner of meanes humble ourſelues vnder his hande. Moreouer wee haue heere, a Teſtimonie of the life euerlaſting. True it is that this point was not ſo plainlie declared in the lawe, as it is to vs in the Goſpell, neither that we ſhould riſe againe to the heauenly glory, nor that we ſhould liue with God after our death. But yet for all that, the olde fathers did not leade the life of beaſtes, neither did God leaue them in ſuch ignoraunce, as to haue their faith cloſed vppe in this preſent worlde and in this tranſſitorie life. For heere we haue a recorde, that when we haue finiſhed the courſe of this life, there is yet a greater Iudgement prepared for all men. And if GOD doe forebeare vs heere, and notwithſtanding that wee eſcape all the curſes mentioned in the lawe, euen to the ende: yet muſt we come to a greater reckening. For it were a needeleſſe matter, for GOD to ſpeake of depriuing menne of their buriall, if (as I ſayde euen nowe) he had not a farther meaning in it. Therefore lette vs ſo vſe this doctrine, as we may be prouoked to haue an eye to the life that is yet hydden from vs, and which wee looke for by faith; and let vs not thinke it ſhall greatly auaile vs, when GOD puniſheth vs not in this worlde. For it is farre better for vs to linger heere beneath, and to be alwayes in miſeries: than to enioye our eaſe and delightes, and that in the meane whyle GOD ſhould but tarrie for vs, to thunder vppon vs when he hath taken vs out of this worlde. Thus yee ſee whereto this Texte of Moſes doeth ſerue vs, where he ſayeth, *That the birdes and beaſtes ſhall eate our carceſſes, and that no man ſhall driue them away.*

Nowe if God giue ſuch tokens of his wrath on the bodyes that haue no feeling: what ſhall become of the ſoules, wherein is the verie ſeat of euill, and the kingdome of Sathan? For our handes, our feete, our eyes, and our eares, offende not of their owne proper mouing; but by the direction and prouocation of our wicked thoughtes and affections. And where ly all thoſe things, or whence proceede they but from our ſoules? Seeing then that the bodyes which were but inſtrumentes, doe feele the wrath of GOD, and doe aunſwere to the ſame as we ſee: lette vs not ſuppoſe that the ſoules goe quit. Lette vs therefore looke euermore higher than to this tranſitorie life for to waken vs, and to make vs to walke in ſuch obedience, that after we haue fought againſt ſinne, and againſt Sathan, and haue beene exerciſed in patience, and in diuerſe afflictions in this worlde, hauing doone our endeuour to ſerue GOD with all diligence, our ſoules may be taken vp to reſt, and that our Lorde in likewiſe may ſhew the ſelfe ſame fauour vppon our dead bodyes. Notwithſtanding, this fauour and bleſſedneſſe of hauing their bodyes buried, doth not alwaies happen to the faithfull, whereas it falleth out that many of the wicked are verie honourably buried; howebeit that the ſame is nothing to them, neither is their ſtate any whit bettered thereby. We ſee what is ſayde in the Pſalme concerning them that haue faithfully ſerued Pſal.79.3. GOD: namely, that their bodies were layde out for a praye to the foules, and the beaſtes: and yet were they the children of GOD. And albeit that this bee a teſtimonie of Gods wrath vpon the wicked: yet may it oftentimes come to paſſe, that our Lorde will vſe the ſame manner of chaſtiſementes vppon his owne people: And yet it ſhall bee nothing to their hurt.

True it is, that wee muſt euermote humble ourſelues, when ſuch a thing happeneth, and we muſt vnderſtande that ſuch thinges bee as it were markes of Adames ſinne, and of the corruption that is in vs, and alſo of the offences which we haue committed: and yet for all that our Lorde in the meane ſpace turneth this euill to good, when he permitteth the faithfull to be depriued of buriall. We ſee what is ſayd of the wicked riche man and of Lazarus. It is Luke.16.22. ſayde, that the riche man dyed and was buryed: beholde howe the worldely pompe is beſtowed on the reprobate. It ſeemeth that his ſoule ſhould haue beene receiued into paradiſe when his body was ſumptuouſly caryed and vſed with great ceremonies. And what of Lazarus? He dyed too. But what mention is there of his buriall? None at all. Whereby our Lorde Ieſus doeth vs to vnderſtande, (for it is he that ſpeaketh it) that we muſt not ſtay altogether vppon theſe viſible thinges. But yet this threatening (howe ſo euer the caſe ſtandeth) is not in vaine. What is to be doone then? Lette vs gather generally (as we haue ſayde) that buriall ſerueth to leade vs to the hope of the heauenly life, and of the reſurrection which wee muſt hope for. Thus much concerning that point.

When we burie them that be dead before vs, lette it ſerue alwayes to prouoke and to ſtirre vs to vnderſtande that wee bee not created to liue onely in this worlde: but that there is an other better life prepared for vs. And againe, when when wee ſee that our Lorde depriueth any of their buriall, let vs vnderſtande that he therein ſheweth his wrath. Neuertheleſſe it is better ſometimes for a man to bee deuoured of beaſtes and birdes, and to bee chaſtiſed of GOD after that ſorte in his bodie for the ſparing of his ſoule, and to haue a temporall condemnation, than to periſhe for euer more: It is better ſometimes for a wicked man to bee hanged, than to dye in his bedde. For howe manie doe we ſee to gnaſhe their teeth againſt GOD, when he hath patiently tarryed for them, and giuen them ſo many playne and apparant tokens of his wrath for their conuerſion; and yet neuertheleſſe they make a mocke of him, and ſtill continue obſtinate in their rebellion? When a wretched ill doer is condemned by men, hee is aſhamed of it and caſt downe in himſelfe, and acknowledgeth and bewayleth his ſinnes. This condẽnation then, which he beareth in his body, albeit that it is an execution of that which is heere ſpoken by Moſes: doeth ſerue to his ſaluation; and therefore let vs beare away theſe thinges. Moreouer when the faithfull, euen the very martyrs bee burned, and their bodyes conſumed to aſhes, ſo as they haue not yͤ which ſhould bee common to all mankinde: let vs vnderſtande that GOD conuerteth the ſame to their welfare, and that their glorie is thereby doubled. As howe? It is certaine that this is a threatning of God, as be alſo all diſeaſes. But when our Lorde ſayeth ſo, hee meaneth that they be the ordinarie meanes, which hee vſeth to correct our ſinnes: but yet neuertheleſſe hee fayleth not to chaſtiſe thoſe ſo with his owne hande, which haue not offended him: or at leaſtwiſe whome hee meaneth not to purſue with rigour. This is in ſumme that which we haue to beare in minde concerning this Text.

Nowe let vs come to that which Moſes ſayth farther. *He ſayeth that GOD will ſtrike the deſpiſers of his lawe with many diſeaſes.* He hath ſpoken heeretofore of feuers, and of the whotte diſeaſe, and of the yelowe iaundis, and of ſuch others: nowe hee ſpeaketh of the Itch and canker *and of other wormes and ſcabbes*. Where alſo mention is made of the Emorodes, as ſome doe expounde them; all theſe foreſayde thinges be the weapons of GOD, to puniſh the offenders of the Lawe. To be ſhort, they be his men of warre to incounter with vs, when he ſeeth that we take heart of graſſe againſt him. And truely when we fauour our owne luſtes to violate his righteouſneſſe, and to breake the order which he hath eſtabliſhed among vs: and when hee ſeeth our luſtes to bee ſo inordinate which are theeues and robbers: he armeth his people and ſubſtitutes which bee the diſeaſes that are heere ſpoken of, and other ſortes. Lette vs therefore learne, that whatſoeuer diſeaſes we ſuffer in our bodyes, the ſame be all meſſages of GOD to make vs to feele his wrath, becauſe wee haue offended him: but ſpecially the extraordinarie diſeaſes, as when GOD ſendeth vppon vs the ſickeneſſes that are not vſuall amongſt men, for the curing whereof they can hardely finde any meane, or elſe it is altogether impoſſible to doe it, by reaſon of the ſtraungeneſſe of the thinges: then meaneth GOD to make vs to feele his anger towarde vs double, and to ſhewe vs that wee haue prouoked him too too much. But we thinke verie ſlenderly of this. For contrariwiſe concerning the common diſeaſes, the ordinarie hauing of them maketh vs to thinke that they proceede not from God. They ſaye: there is a man that hath a feuer: and there is an other that hath the murre & the poze, or ſome ſuch other diſeaſe. Wel, theſe be thinges wherein we be hardened. As howe? By cuſtome. And muſt God in the mean while leeſe the poſſeſſion of his right? If he doe ſtill ſhewe himſelfe a Iudge towards vs, in chaſtiſing vs: is that a reaſon why wee ſhould forget him, and haue no regarde of his hande? But howſoeuer the caſe ſtandeth, ſuch is our blockiſhneſſe. I woulde God that the examples therof were not ſo notorious as they be. But let euery one looke to himſelfe, and ſee if the cuſtomableneſſe of ſickeneſſes cauſe vs not to turne our backe vpon God, & to haue the leſſe regarde of his iudgements and of our owne ſins, ſo as none of vs findeth any fault with himſelfe. Thus much touching the cõmon and vſual ſickneſſes. And as for the extraordinary diſeaſes, we ſee howe men are hardened by them alſo. I pray you haue we not ſeene that God within theſe fiftie yeares hath brought vp new diſeaſes, againſt whoredome? Whence commeth the pockes and all theſe other filthy diſeaſes, which are not to be reckened vp at this time? Whence come all theſe thinges but from GOD, who vttereth ſuch vengeaunce as earſt was neuer knowen? The worlde wondered at it, and for a time, men were greatly afrayde of it: but yet of all this whyle they haue hadde no conſideration of the hande of God. And at this day it is become ſo ordinarie a matter, that the deſpiſers of GOD, I meane the lecherous ſort and the whore hunters, which giue ouer themſelues to all leaudeneſſe, doe but wring their groines at it. Though GOD ſmyte them with that kinde of leproſie (for it is a kinde of leproſie in very deede) ſo as they be eaten with the fretting thereof and with other filthyneſſe; yet they ceaſe not to folowe their trade ſtill and to mocke at it: and truely it ſeemeth a verie ſtraunge caſe, that ſuch a puniſhment of GOD ſhoulde be ſo turned to a ſcoffe. What a ieſting make they nowadayes of their baudry when they bee thus puniſhed at the hande of God? How commeth it to paſſe, that they themſelues doe make a ieſting and ſcoffing at it, as it were in ſpite of God, and that whereas hee calleth them to humble themſelues in ſackecloth and aſhes, they doe but blurt out their tongues at him, and are ſo farre from being aſhamed of their dooings, that euen as it were in ſpite, they make a ſporte of their owne filthineſſe and miſeries. Wee ſee then howe frowarde men be, ſeeing that they can profite no better in Gods ſchoole. I meane not in the ſchoole of his doctrine, where hee ſpeaketh vnto them, but when hee ſmyteth with heauy ſtrokes, and alſo raiſeth vppe warres and troubles, which ought to make menne beſides themſelues for feare: but yet in the meane whyle this is not written in vaine. Let vs therefore be better aduiſed: and when GOD ſendeth vs any ſtraunge diſeaſes; lette vs vnderſtande that our ſinnes be multiplyed, and that GOD muſt therefore be more moued than euer he was. Wherefore let the ſame bring vs to repentaunce, and let vs not double our iniquities: for in the ende, wee ſhall finde the thing by experience, which we ſawe euen nowe; namely, that when the euill ſhall ſticke vnto vs, yea euen in our marrowe and in our bones, vntill we be vtterly conſumed. Beſides this God hath other manner of meanes to puniſh vs, and when he perceiueth that the vſuall meanes preuaile not, then hath he other roddes layde vp in his ſtorehouſes; as it is ſayd in the Canticle. Yea and we ſhall ſee what it is to walke at all aduentures againſt him: namely that in the ende hee will ouertake thoſe folke ouerthwartely with a crooked meaſure, which playe the ignoraunt fooles after that faſhion, and doe nothing but ſcoffe and ſhake their eares, when he hath puniſhed them one way or other. Lette vs not tarry therefore till GOD vſe ſuch extremitie towardes vs: but beeing warned afore hande by that which is mentioned heere, let vs looke to it, and conſider that looke howe many ſortes of diſeaſes he ſendeth vs, ſo many witneſſes he ſendeth to prooue that we'haue ſinned againſt him: that we might thinke thereon and turne to him againe with all lowlineſſe.

I ſayde erewhiles, that the verie vttermoſt of all, is this which Moſes addeth in the ende: to witte, *That GOD will ſmite vs with aſtoniſhment, and that we ſhall be blinde groping at full midde day, as the blinde in the darke, and that our heart ſhall be amazed*. Hitherto wee haue ſeene that God ſheweth a ſingular fauour towardes men, in afflicting them in their bodyes, when they haue their mindes ſtill in quiet, that they may be patient. For they feele their ſinnes and bewaile them, and they ceaſe not to call vpon him that chaſtiſeth them. And in verie deede it is ſometimes ſeene, that the grace of GOD is much more manifeſted towardes ſuch people, than if they hadde no ſuch great afflictions. As for example: If GOD ſpare a man, and he ſerue God: wee ſee that God bleſſeth him. When we ſee a ſounde and holy life in one, we will ſay, heere is a man that ſerueth GOD, and God alſo ſheweth himſelfe gratious towardes him. Againe we ſee an other that is viſited with great diſeaſes, euerie man hath pitie and compaſſion on him; he pineth continually, and hath vehement paines, he is vexed with diuerſe maladies, and the verie remedies that are giuen him be ſo greeuous that nothing can be more: yet notwithſtanding this man ceaſeth not to hold himſelfe in quiet, confeſſing his ſinnes and crauing pardon of GOD: wee ſee ſuch a patience as mooueth vs to glorifie God; and the partie continueth ſtill in prayers and ſupplications. When a man is thus mortified, and GOD holdeth his heart ſtill in awe, ſo as the partie continueth in obedience vnder his hande; then perceiue we a great grace of GOD in the middeſt of thoſe chaſtiſementes. But when we be without reaſon in our ſickneſſe, and play the madde bedlems, and ſtande chawing vppon the brydle and wote not which way to turne vs; and of all the while neuer make any countenance of fleeing vnto God for reliefe, it is euen the full meaſure of all miſerie.

Therefore it is not without cauſe, that Moſes hauing ſpoken of the ſickeneſſes and griefes that GOD ſendeth vppon mennes bodies, and in likewiſe of extraordinarie chaſtiſementes, which conſtraine men in ſpite of their beardes, to feele their ſinnes, addeth heere; *God will ſtrike thee with blindeneſſe, yea and hee will ſo ſtrike thee, that thy wittes ſhall be amazed: thou ſhalt grope at noonedayes as in the darke: thou ſhalt haue no more ſenſe or feeling in thy hearte: but thou ſhalt be altogether blockiſhe*. And heere wee be warned againe, that the chaſtiſements which happen to vs in our mindes ſhoulde be more dreadfull vnto vs, than all that we can ſuffer in our bodyes. It is true that our nature draweth vs cleane contrary; for wee be ſo tender and nice in our bodyes, that as ſoone as wee feele anie griefe, by and by we cry out, and leeſe our patience; and therein we ſee a part of our brutiſhneſſe. For if we hadde any droppe of ſtayed vnderſtanding, we would a hundreth times bee more afrayde of the chaſtiſementes that God threatneth to our ſoules, than of all that euer we can endure in our bodies. In what caſe is a man, when he is forſaken of GOD, ſo as he ſeeketh him not any more, but indeuoreth by al meanes to hyde him from his preſence? Surely when we come to that point, if we coulde plucke God out of his ſeate, we would gladly doe it. Hee that ſeeketh ſuch hydingholes to conuey himſelfe,

ſelfe from comming vnto God; doeth what hee can to robbe him of his maieſtie, and hee is loath to come to preſent himſelfe before ſuch a Iudge.

And truely, although a man haue no further harme than this blockiſhneſſe, ſo as hee feeleth not his owne miſerie; is it not a token that God hath alreadie giuen him ouer to a reprobate mind? Yes: for there is not a more euident ſigne of reprobation, than to bee without remorſe or ſcruple of conſcience. Moreouer, when a man is frighted and out of his right wittes, in ſuch wiſe as he woteth not which way to turne him, and hath no more taſte or feeling of God, nor can any skill to lament for his ſinnes, or to aske forgiueneſſe of them, and to repent him of them: but gnaſheth his teeth, and byteth the brydle like a Mule: is not that a dreadful thing? When wee beholde ſuch glaſſes, our hayres ſtande vp right, and euen nature forceth vs to it. And yet for all that, if wee thinke not vpon it, that wee may ſtande in awe, and walke in feare and humilitie, is it not a tempting of God? Let vs learne therefore not to harden our ſelues in ſuch wiſe as God ſhoulde bee forced to fall to this rigour, wherewith he doeth here threaten his people: namely, *that hee will make them grope as the blinde in the darke, and that they ſhall haue neither vnderſtanding in them nor diſcretion*: that hee will make them to fall in ſuch a feare, as they ſhall not knowe whether they be liuing creatures or no: nor perceiue whether there bee a God that will receiue them to mercie, and whether they ſhall preuaile in calling vpon his name, or not. Let vs not tarrie till ſuch euil doe come vppon vs. For it is a deepe pitte, out of the which verie fewe can get foorth. In deede God will ſome times bring his people to that poynt that they ſhall not knowe where they be, and they ſhalbee ſo greatly afrayd, and ſo troubled therewith, that they ſhall become dull & blockiſh: this is well ſeene. But hee lifteth them vp againe after that hee hath brought them lowe. Howbeit for as much as this example is very rare, let vs not tempt our God; but when hee afflicteth vs in our bodyes, let vs vnderſtande that hee ſpareth vs greatly, and that hee mitigateth the rigour of his wrath, and let vs bee no more ſo impatient as wee haue bin wonted to bee. Albeit that the griefe bee hard and bitter to vs, yet let vs confeſſe: alas: but yet God hath not touched mee in my ſoule. Let this come alwayes in our rememberaunce, to the ende that wee acknowledging the goodnes of our God in that hee doeth forbeare vs: may returne vnto him; and not dout, but that hee is readie to take pitie vppon vs, when wee ſeeke vnto him vnfaynedly. Let that ſerue for one poynt which wee haue to remember in this leſſon, where mention is made of the ſayde blockiſhneſſe.

Nowe Moſes ſayeth expreſſely, *that the tranſgreſſors of Gods lawe, ſhall grope at noone day*. As if he ſhoulde ſay: notwithſtanding that God giue them many occaſions to reioyce, yet ſhall they be frighted in ſuch ſort, as they ſhall not take hold of any grace, but be as blinde wretches. Seeing it is ſo, let vs mark farther that although God doe mitigate our greefes, and comforteth vs; yet doeth that ſerue vs to no purpoſe, if he giue vs not the wiſedome to vnderſtande his goodneſſe. And we muſt vnderſtand, that wee are not able to enioye the good that GOD offereth vnto vs, when wee be deſtitute of his holy Spirite. And this is one execution of that threatning that is here mentioned. True it is that we ſhoulde alwayes returne to this poynt, that our Lorde deſireth not the vtter confuſion of ſinners: but yͤ forſomuch as ſuch miſeries doe happen oftentimes, we ſhould not tarie till they light vpon our heads; but rather ſeeke the remedie, to the end that God haue not occaſion to withdrawe himſelfe from vs. Howſoeuer the caſe ſtandeth, let vs firſt of all marke, that God directeth this doctrine to ſuch as haue bin trained in his worde, as we haue already ſayd. It is certaine that he is Iudge of the world: yet notwithſtanding wee well deſerue to bee chaſtiſed, after a more boyſtrous faſhion, when wee haue beene taught at his mouth, and haue reiected his will, and bee ſo farre foorth corrupted that wee make but a ieſt of his word: and that whereas hee ſought to retayne vs as his people; wee haue deſpiſed him. It is verie meete therefore that wee ſhoulde bee grieuouſly puniſhed, and therefore let vs thinke, that ſeeing God doeth vs the fauour to let vs haue the pure doctrine of the holy ſcripture, the ſame ſerueth to bereaue vs of all excuſes, and alſo to quicken vs vp to walke ſo much the more in feare.

But herewithall let vs marke farther, that God doth not onely vſe threatnings towards vs, but alſo dayly exhort and allure vs vnto him, to reconcile vs to him: ſhewing that for his parte, hee is readie to come to attonement, ſo wee condemne our ſinnes, and returne to his mercie. What elſe is the Goſpell, that wee heare euery daye, but a meſſage of reconciliation, as Saint Paul calleth it in the ſeconde to the Corinthians? 2.Cor.5. Seeing then that God ſendeth vs a herault to declare peace vnto vs, and to ſhewe that he is ready to doe away all our offences, let vs take heede, that wee vſe this time of our Saluation, to receiue yͤ grace that is offered vnto vs in due ſeaſon, as the Prophet Eſay telleth vs, and as Saint Paul ſayth, vſing the ſame teſtimonie: 2.Cor.6. Againe when we haue bin ouermuch hardened, and that God hath patiently wayted for vs, and wee ſtill continue in our ſinnes: let vs not thinke that he in the end hath either giuen ouer or forgotten his office. We muſt needs yeeld an account of ſuch vnthankfulneſſe. When wee forſake the Saluation whereunto he called vs, and deſpiſe him out of meaſure: ſuch wilful ſtubburneſſe muſt of neceſſitie come to reckening. Then let vs ſtande in feare: and as often as wee heare ſpeaking of the grace of God which is offered vnto vs in our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt, let our heartes be enclined to receiue it: and let vs giue way vnto God to come in. And when wee goe vnto him, let it bee doone with bewayling our ſinnes, and with yeelding ourſelues guiltie, not onely in worde of mouth, but alſo with ſuch griefe of heart, as may prooue that the euil diſpleaſeth vs. And when wee thus miſlike of our ſelues, let vs not abyde till our Lorde put in execution the threatenings that hee ſetteth foorth heere, but let vs turne them to our commoditie. And when wee heare the promiſes of the Goſpell, let vs remember the threatenings alſo: that wee may bee ſo much the more prouoked, and euery man make haſte to receiue the good which is offered vnto vs to enioy and to poſſeſſe, vnleſſe the fault bee in our ſelues.

Nowe let vs caſt downe our ſelues before the maieſtie of our good God, with acknowledgement of our ſinnes: beſeeching him to make vs to feele them yet better, vntill wee bee vtterly beaten downe in our ſelues; and ſeeke for the remedie whereunto hee calleth vs: namely, that beeing guyded by his holy ſpirite, wee may increaſe and profite more and more in all holineſſe and righteouſneſſe, and that wee may endeuour ſo to glorifie him in all our whole life; as in the ende wee may attayne to that ſame euerlaſting glory, vnto the which hee calleth vs: And ſo let vs all ſay: Almightie God heauenly father, &c.

On Munday the xxiij. of March, 1556.

The CLVIII. Sermon, which is the ſixt vpon the eight and twentith Chapter.

29 And thou ſhalt alwayes ſuffer iniurie and oppreſſion, and no man ſhall deliuer thee.

30 Thou ſhalt mary a wyfe, and an other man ſhall lye with her: thou ſhalt buylde a houſe, but thou ſhalt not dwell in it: thou ſhalt plant a vyne, but thou ſhalt not gather the fruite thereof.

31 Thyne oxe ſhalbe killed before thine eyes, but thou ſhalt not eate of it: thyne Aſſe ſhalbee taken away before thy face, and it ſhall not be reſtored vnto thee: thy ſheepe ſhalbe deliuered to thyne enemies, and there ſhalbe no bodie to ſaue them.

32 Thy ſonnes and thy daughters ſhalbe giuen to another people, thyne eyes ſhall ſee it, and daſle at it all the day long, and thy hande ſhall haue no ſtrength.

33 And a people which thou haſt not knowen, ſhall eat the fruite of thy land, and all thy labour: and thou ſhalt doe nothing but ſuffer reuylinges and oppreſſions alwayes.

34 And thou ſhalt be amaſed at the ſight of thoſe things which thyne eyes ſhal beholde.

35 The Lord wil ſmite thee with a ſore ſwelling in the knees, and in the legs, of the which thou ſhalt not bee healed from the ſole of thy foote to the crowne of thy head.

VE ought well to rememember the meaning of Moſes, whereof wee haue ſpoken heeretofore; namely; wherefore hee continueth in vttering ſo many curſes: For wee are ſlowe to bee mooued: when our Lorde doeth threaten vs, wee make a game of it: and albeit wee confeſſe that wee ſhoulde thinke thereon, yet doeth it eſcape vs. And furthermore, wee ſuppoſe that wee ſhall alwayes fynde ſtarting holes, and that if God doe followe vs one way, wee by flying another way ſhalbee able to void his blowes. Thus doe men deceiue themſelues, and thereuppon waxe hardhearted. Nowe Moſes (or rather the ſpirite of GOD ſpeaking by his mouth) perceiuing that men be ſo careleſſe, and that they ſhrinke not at the firſt, when the iudgement of God is ſet before them, continueth his matter ſtill and addeth threatenings vppon threatenings. Againe, on the other ſide, perceiuing alſo that men ſeeke ſtartingholes, and thereby deceiue themſelues, bearing themſelues in hande, that they can ſaue themſelues by flinging ouer the Fenne (as they ſay:) hee ſheweth that God hath infinite meanes to puniſh vs withall, both aboue and beneath, before and behynde, on the right hande and the lefte, and that wee ſhalbee ſo hemmed in on all ſides, that it ſhall not be poſſible for vs to eſcape his hand.

Nowe after the threatenings, which we haue ſeene heere before, hee preſently addeth that they which ſo reſiſt God *ſhalbee afflicted and tormented, ſo as men ſhall ſpoyle them, and they ſhalbee layde open to all vyolence for euer, and no man ſhall deliuer them.* Wee ſee heere that God ſerueth his owne turne by the wicked, and that although their intent bee nothing ſo, yet doeth hee apply them to a good vſe, when hee liſteth to puniſh vs. Whereas there bee theeues and robbers, albeeit that they bee giuen ouer to Sathan, yet fayle they not to ſerue Gods purpoſe; yea truely, for wee ſee in this text that our Lorde leaueth them not at randon, to robbe and to ſpoyle, whether hee will or no: but hee threateneth his people, ſaying, They that diſobey mee, ſhalbee vexed and robbed. And whence proceedeth that? It muſt needes, come from him.

Nowe albeit that God ſuffereth oppreſſions, robberies, and violence to bee done, hee can very well condemne them, according as hee is righteous, and muſt needes hate Iniuſtice: yet notwithſtanding, by his wonderfull wiſedome which to vs is incomprehenſible, hee turneth thoſe things to his owne ſeruice: ſo that when wee haue offended him, he muſt needs puniſhe vs by the hand of the moſt wicked: which is the more to our reproche. For if he himſelfe ſhoulde haue puniſhed vs, and we ſawe before our eyes, ỷ he reuengeth him of our iniquities, wel would wee ſay, ſeeing that wee haue offended him, it is good reaſon that wee ſhould come to account for it. But when hee ſturreth vppe leawd folke, and deſpiſers of his maieſtie, and ſuch as are giuen to all naughtineſſe, and maketh them our Iudges: it is to make vs ſo much the more aſhamed. Let vs therefore conſider, that whenceſoeuer the euill commeth, wee haue euermore to deale with GOD: and wee muſt thinke that there is nothing done in this worlde but by his direction. And thereupon let vs enter into the examination of our faults. For it is not ynough to know that God ruleth al things: but euery one of vs muſt alſo make his owne inditement, and conſider that all afflictions and aduerſities, are tokens of Gods wrath. Nowe when wee ſpeake of his wrath, wee muſt in like wiſe remember his iuſtice; and thereuppon conclude that wee verie well deſerue to bee puniſhed. But yet he threateneth vs before hee ſtrike, to the ende that wee ſhoulde not ſtand gaping til the things were come to paſſe; but rather preuent them aforehande, as Saynt Paul alſo doeth admoniſh vs. 1.Cor.11.31 Whileſt God ſpareth vs, let vs bee aduiſed, ſo to walke in his feare, that wee prouoke him not to ſtirre vp theeues to torment and vexe vs: but that rather (if men attempt ſuch iniuries againſt vs) wee may ſtande in his protection, according as hee promiſeth to vpholde all them that walke in his obedience. Then let vs ſee that wee doe ſo; and let vs remember that which is ſpoken by the Prophet Eſaye, to wit, that they which haue robbed, muſt bee ſerued with the ſame ſawce. Eſa.33.1. And that is the cauſe why violences and extortions doe ſo continue in the worlde.

Men wonder to ſee that the miſchiefe growes woorſe and woorſe: but they ſhoulde note the cauſe thereof. For they that beare chiefe ſway and preheminence, doe let themſelues looſe, ſeeking nothing but to enriche themſelues, and to ſwallowe vp other mennes ſubſtance. But haue they robbed? God muſt ſende a reuolution, ſo as other robbers ſhall come and bereaue theſe of their booties: and afterwarde, a thirde ſorte muſt ſtep vp to ſpoile them againe. And ſo there is neuer any ende. And why? Becauſe the worlde neuer ceaſſeth to prouoke the wrath of God. And for ſo much as wee bee headſtrong, it is reaſon, that our Lorde ſhoulde continue to ſhewe himſelfe our Iudge. But (as I ſayde euen nowe) let vs bee well ware to walke in ſuch wiſe, as innocent bloud crye not out for vengeance againſt vs. Let vs not doe iniurie or outrage to any perſon, that our Lorde may bleſſe vs for ſo dooing, and not pay vs with like meaſure, according as wee ſee howe our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt ſayeth, that it ſhall come ſo to paſſe. Matt.7.2. Let euery of vs therefore brydle him ſelfe in ſuch wiſe, as this curſe come not vppon vs, to bee robbed for vſing of robberie and extortion againſt the innocentes. But for as much as men imagine that their aduerſitie ſhalbee ſhort, and that they ſhalbee ſoone ridde of it: Moſes addeth, *That it ſhal bee for euer, and that when the hande of God is againſt vs, no man ſhalbee able to ſaue vs.*

It is certayne, that like as God is ſlowe to anger, ſo is hee ſoone pacified; but that is but towardes the faithfull. Pſal.103.8. Pſal.18.27. As for the wicked, hee muſt holde on with them, and they muſt feele their burden euery day heauyer than other. And wherefore? According as they harden their heartes againſt God, they muſt in like wiſe feele him the harder againſt them. And albeeit that this is not alwayes, yet doe wee ſee it often come to paſſe, God will at ſome times withdrawe his hande after hee hath menaced the wicked; or elſe when hee hath giuen them ſome ſtrypes with his rodde, hee will let them goe againe: and that is, as it were a reſpyte, that they may haue leaſure to turne to repentance. Notwithſtanding, becauſe hee knoweth them to bee vnrefourmable: that dealing of his muſt of neceſſitie bee turned to their ſorer condemnation. If GOD then do ſpare the deſpiſers of his lawe, and them that bee obſtinate in malice, it doeth not therefore followe, that they ſhall bee ſaued: but it is to the ende that the plague ſhall come double vppon their heades, for their abuſing of his patience after that manner. For when hee hath waited for them, and they proceede ſtill from euill to woorſe: hee muſt needes put to his hande at the laſt. Howſoeuer the caſe ſtandeth, it is not in vayne that Moſes telleth vs heere, that when GOD is our enemie, our life ſhall not bee miſerable only for a day, or yet for a little while; wee muſt not limit our ſelues any terme in that caſe: but we muſt looke for one miſchieefe to drawe another, and that there ſhall bee none ende, vntill hee hath layde vs quyte vnder foote, vnleſſe wee turne to him to obtayne mercie. Wherefore let vs weye well this woorde which Moſes addeth, where hee ſayeth, that if GOD doe beginne to ſmyte vs for deſpyſing of his iuſtice: it ſhall not continue for a little whyle, but wee muſt bee miſerable for euer. And why? For in as much as the maieſtie of God is euerlaſting, he muſt needes take endeleſſe vengeaunce of them that deſpiſe his iuſtice. Therefore ſo ſoone as wee ſee the blowes come neere vs, let vs bee afrayde, and let euery of vs make haſte to returne vnto him, whome wee haue offended, to wit, our GOD, to obtayne forgiueneſſe of our treſpaſſes. That is the onely remedie, without which there will bee neyther ende nor meaſure of our afflictions, except wee take order to reconcile our ſelues to our God.

Nowe where hee alleageth, *that none ſhall ſaue them*: That is to cut off all the vayne hopes which men doe forge to them ſelues in their owne braynes, when hee puniſheth them. They looke hither and thither, and if they finde any comfort in this worlde, it ſeemeth vnto them, that they ſhall make a ſcappage againſt God, and that they ſhall bee able to winne the goale in the ende. In deede they will not ſay ſo; for it is a blaſphemie which all of vs doe holde accurſed; but yet wee bee ſo doltiſh, that wee hope to turne away the hande of GOD when wee finde any helpe heere: in ſo much that if men beare vs any fauour, and wee bee ſupported in any thing, wee arme our ſelues therewith againſt God. But Moſes telleth vs heere, that it is in vayne for men to ſeeke dyuers ſuccours after that faſhion, when GOD warreth vppon them. For why? All creatures are in his hande, and without him they can doe nothing. More ouer, that which is for our benefite, ſhall become our bane, and all thinges ſhall redounde to our confuſion. Let vs not therefore looke to bee ſaued by anye meanes that may bee, when our Lorde taketh parte againſt vs: but let vs returne vnto him, ſeeing that there is none other remedie but that, and let vs ridde our ſelues of all ſuch thinges as may hinder vs to come to repentance.

Let vs then bee quickened vp by theſe two ſayings of Moſes, that wee ſleepe no more in our vayne fantaſies, as wee haue beene earſt too much accuſtomed. But what? There are very fewe which thinke vppon that. For euery man martyreth himſelfe, if his griefe continue, and hee fynde no helpe in men. In all our afflictions, wee can complayne welynough: but wee conſider not that GOD withholdeth mennes helpe from vs, when hee intendeth to puniſh vs, in ſuch wiſe that wee ſhall (after a ſorte) bee vtterly ouerwhelmed. And againe, if our ſorrowe continue; it is, becauſe wee haue perſiſted too much in our ſtubbornneſſe. Wee thinke not a whit of all this. But yet are not theſe thinges written in vayne. And therfore let vs learne to profite better thereby, than wee haue done in times paſt.

Finally, Moſes ſetteth foorth by this threatening, howe wee ſhalbee vexed and robbed, if wee offende againſt the lawe of God. Hee ſayeth: *Thou ſhalt marry a wife and not lye with her: Thou ſhalt buylde a houſe, and not dwell therein: Thou ſhalt plant a vyneyarde, and not gather the fruite thereof. Yea, they ſhall take thy Beefes and thy Muttons, and kill them, and thou ſhalt continue ſtill a hungred: and not onely all thy cattell ſhall bee made a praye and a bootie: but thy verie children alſo ſhall bee deliuered into the handes of thine enimies, and thou ſhalt yerne after them, and thine eyes ſhall daſle for verie greefe and ſorrowe, & in the meane whyle, thy hande ſhalbee without ſtrength or power to recouer them.* It had beene ynough to haue ſayde in one worde, *Thou ſhalt ſuffer robberies, extortions, and wronges:* but becauſe men are ſlowe, it behooueth them to bee ſo much the better touched, and to beholde the thing as it were before their eyes. That is the cauſe why Moſes ſpeaketh heere of houſes and vyneyeardes, of wiues and children, and of cattell. As if hee ſhoulde ſay: Some ſhall bewayle the taking away of their houſes which they had builded, the putting of them from their vyneyeardes and their other poſſeſſions, the ſpoyling of their goods, and the driuing away of their cattell: And otherſome ſhall bewayle the wrong that is done vnto them in their children, and in their very wiues. But wee bee to conſider that all theſe thinges bee the ſcourges of God, wherewith hee puniſheth vs for our ſinnes.

It is certayne (as I haue ſayde alreadie heretofore) that GOD at ſometimes, for the exerciſing of the faithfull in patience, doeth ſende them the verye chaſticementes heere mentioned, and yet puniſheth them not for their offences. For Iob was not puniſhed for his ſinnes: Not that GOD had not iuſt cauſe ſo to doe, but for that hee had no reſpect to that: howe ſo euer the caſe ſtand, ſurely it is an ordinarie matter.

In deede wee may alleage many examples of men that are tormented and vexed by the wicked, ſo as they bee driuen from poſt to piller, and robbed of their goods : ſuch examples doe happen euery day : but this prooueth not, that this doctrine taketh not place, and that it is not true in it ſelfe, as an ordinarie rule, to wit, that God puniſheth mens ſins by ſuch meanes. Nowe when wee haue walked in the feare of God, and endeuoured to ſerue him : and yet notwithſtanding, our ſubſtaunce is taken away, and the robbers poſſeſſe it : let vs conſider, that if this bee not doone for our ſinnes, our Lorde giueth vs a great preeminence. For firſt of all, of whome was it long that wee offended him not? We were preſerued by his holy ſpirite. And moreouer, notwithſtanding any good affection and zeale that wee haue had to liue vprightly and vncorruptly ; yet wee ceaſe not to be guiltie before God. But what for that? Hee ſpareth vs, and yet hee meaneth to trye our patience, for to humble vs. When it is his will that wee ſhall beare the miſeries, which bee puniſhmentes for them that deſpiſe his lawe, and that wee muſt feele them: well, wee muſt ſtoope. And thereby hee tryeth vs, howe pliable wee bee vnder his hande to yeeld vnto his gouernement, as ſhall ſtande with his good pleaſure. Moreouer, this alwayes taketh place, (as wee haue ſayde afore) that our Lord puniſheth the offences and transgreſſions of his lawe, by the things that are ſpecified here. So then, when a man buildeth, let him take heede that hee buylde not with extortion, pilling, polling, and robberie, vnleſſe it bee his meaning to haue his houſe taken from him, according as it is ſpoken by the Prophet Abacuc. For the Prophet bringeth in the walles ſinging and anſwering one another. For in as much as mens Palaces and houſes, bee oftentimes buylded with bloud, robberie, extortion, and wicked practiſes : and the verie walles them ſelues doe crye out that they were buylded with pilling and polling : it muſt needes waken vp Gods wrath and vengeance againſt ſuch buylders. Deſire wee then to bee harboured in peace? Let vs looke that wee buylde without doyng wrong to any body, whatſoeuer hee bee.

Abac. 2, 11.

And moreouer let euery of vs in his dwelling, dedicate himſelfe in ſuch wiſe to God, as hee may dwell with vs. For they that are driuen out of their dwellings, haue commonly driuen God out before : that is to ſay, they haue followed ſome lewde trade, ſo as GOD hath not reigned there. Is it then any wonder, if they bee driuen thence in the ende? No: For why? Shall GOD bee thruſt from his right; and wee in the meane while poſſeſſe euery man his dwelling in reſt? Were that reaſon? Therefore, when wee ſee ſuch changes to happen, as they bee to bee ſeene in the worlde: let vs vnderſtande that GOD driueth them out, which earſt woulde giue him no lodging : and let ſuch examples admoniſh vs to ſtande in feare of the threatenings heere ſpecified. And let vs not tarrie till our Lorde baniſh vs from the place where wee bee harboured : but let vs rather endeuour to ſerue him, ſo as hee may continue alwayes with vs to maintayne vs. And if it come to paſſe, that wee bee driuen out, let vs vnderſtande that the ſame is for our ſinnes: for it is better late than neuer. Moreouer, if we bee driuen out for any other cauſe, as at this day wee ſee the poore faithfull people, in ſtate like a byrde on the bough, as though the earth coulde not beare them : as Saint Paul ſpeaketh of his time, and as it is knowen at this preſent time that the children of God bee as vagabondes, hauing not a hole to hyde themſelues in : when wee beholde theſe things, let vs vnderſtande, that foraſmuch as our Lorde leadeth vs this walke, hee doeth vs great fauour that the ſame is not becauſe of our ſinnes, but for his names ſake, and for our better eſtabliſhment in the hope of the heauenly inheritance, ſeeing that there is nothing ſure nor ſtable in this preſent worlde, but that wee muſt alwayes aſpire to the eternall life, and to the reſt that is prepared for vs on high. Let vs then acknowledge the good that hee doeth vnto vs in this poynt. But in any wiſe, let vs take good heede that wee prouoke not his wrath againſt vs in ſuch ſort as I haue ſaide afore.

1.Cor.4.13.

Nowe, whereas hee ſayth: *Thou ſhalt marrie a wife, and another ſhall lye with her* : let euery man take heede to walke in ſuch chaſtitie, as hee drawe not vppon him this curſe of God, in ſuch wiſe as to bee depriued of the wife that he thinkes to haue : and the wiues in like caſe of their husbandes. Wee ſee howe men bee giuen ouer to all vnchaſtitie, and God muſt needs yeelde them their rewarde accordingly. Dauid himſelfe was not ſpared in this caſe. Wee heare howe it was ſayde vnto him : Thou haſt done this in ſecrete, but that ſhalbee done openly. Hee was fayne to abyde reproche before all the worlde, in hauing his wiues rauiſhed openly. Sith it is ſo then; let vs take good heede, that wee walke in ſuch chaſtitie, that when men take wiues, they may ſo liue together as they may feele the bleſſing of God, and that their marryages bee not broken through the committing of any offence. For, as I haue ſayde : it is no wonder that there bee ſo confuſed changes in the worlde at this day, becauſe men doe more and more kindle the wrath and vengeance of God. It is euen in like caſe with adulteries. For what is the cauſe that they reygne ſo ryfe, and are come (as yee woulde ſay) to their full pryde? It is becauſe wedlocke is ſo little regarded, and that there is no feare of God : there is neither faith nor trueth : and therefore muſt men needes plunge themſelues in all misfortune, ſo that in the ende there will bee nothing but diſorder. So much the more therefore ought wee to take warning to walke ſo in all cleanneſſe of life, as euery one may keepe him to his owne wife, and the Lorde bleſſe their marryages and mayntayne

2.Sam.12.12

them in quietnes.

Moreouer, ſeeing that God is matched with vs in the perſon of his onely ſonne, and woulde haue vs to keepe faſt the faith of wedlocke towardes him, according to the ſimplicitie of his Goſpell: let vs ſticke throughly to that which hee hath commaunded vs: and to bee ſhort, let vs be halowed vnto him, and followe his holy calling. For if wee doe ſo, our Lorde will graunt vnto husbandes the grace to liue quietly with their wiues and houſholds, and vnto the wiues that they ſhall learne to liue in good agreement with their husbandes. For wee muſt marke, that if man and wife doe not ioyne in one mynde, there muſt needes bee diſcorde in the whole houſe, and one ſhall byte and ſnatch at another like dogges and cattes, and the one woulde wiſh the other a hundred foote vnder the ground, ſo as they ſhall liue in continuall miſerie and diſquietnes. And why? Becauſe that neither the one nor the other hath any regarde to God, to yeelde themſelues to his direction. Therefore let vs learne, not to prouoke any more the vengeance of God in this caſe.

As concerning the landes and poſſeſſions he ſayeth: *That the tranſgreſſours of the law of God ſhall plant vines, but they ſhall neuer gather the fruite of them*. Nowe wee ſee that they which haue thus offended God, bee the ſtouteſt and boldeſt ſort, bearing themſelues in hand that no harme can come neere them. And that is the cauſe why wee ſee that the greateſt getters, & the doers of greateſt enterpriſes, are thoſe which wilfully giue them ſelues to pilling and polling by hooke and by crooke, hauing no care what polling and extorſion they commit, and offending both God and man without ende or meaſure. Such perſons as theſe therefore muſt afterward yeelde an account. [They beare themſelues in hand] that when they haue plãted vyneyeards, they ſhall inioy them without controuerſie: and that when they haue buylded houſes, they ſhall dwel in them without putting out againe. Thus do men hardẽ thẽſelues againſt God. But Moſes cõtrariwiſe declareth: *That when they haue planted vines, other men ſhall gather the fruite of them*. And in deede, whereas wee ſee at this day ſo much theeuerie in the worlde; let vs vnderſtand, that it is becauſe there bee ſo fewe that haue cleane handes, and are able to proteſt that they haue not encroched vppon the goods of other men by vniuſt meanes. Soothely there is ſo vnmeaſurable diſorder nowadayes, that the children of God bee fleeced though they abſtayne from all manner of iniuries. But we muſt euermore haue recourſe to the ordinarie courſe whereof I haue ſpoken, to wit, that our Lorde will not fayle to puniſh the ſinnes that breake out after that faſhion like a waterfloud. As for them that haue landes and poſſeſſions, they will not goe to ſteale otherfolkes goods, nor to picke a fewe grapes: they will not go filchingly to cut down a patche of medowe: it is for beggers to doe ſo: and wee ſee in theſe dayes, that the moſt parte of poore folkes are pilferers, filching and ſtealing all that euer they can finger. But yet they that haue landes and poſſeſſions, bee the greateſt theeues: for the things which they poſſeſſe, they get by vnlawfull meanes. It is no wonder then, if God do requite them with the like; and that they bee ſo vexed in their goods and poſſeſſions. God therefore ſheweth vs by experience, that his vttering of ſuch ſpeeches is not in vayne; but wee thinke not thereon. Men can well ynough complayne, as I haue ſayde afore: but they haue no regarde to the principall poynt, which is; that GOD putteth the thinges in execution which hee ſpake by the mouth of Moſes. Let vs therefore bethinke our ſelues; and whereas wee ſee ſo much ſtealing, both of vynes, of corne, and of ſuch other things; let vs vnderſtande that our Lorde puniſheth the rauenouſneſſe and extortion that is committed both in marchandize, and in all other trades of occupying: and let vs not tarye till GOD doe puniſh vs in verie deede; but let vs walke vprightly, if wee will haue him to defende vs. For although that all places bee neuer ſo full of theeues; yet will our Lorde keepe our goods in ſafetie, if wee walke in his feare, and abſtayne from all manner of euill doing. That is the thing whereunto we muſt haue our recourſe; and wee muſt not thinke to eſcape euill, by euill doing: but wee muſt vſe the remedie which our Lorde ſetteth foorth in this text. As much is to bee ſayde of our cattell, and alſo of our children. Yea, and Moſes proceedeth ſtill with inlarging, to the ende that men ſhoulde ſo much the better perceiue, what the effect is of this ſpeeche which hee vſeth: namely, *that this ſhalbee for euer*. As if hee ſhoulde ſaye, that the hande of God ſhall euer waxe heauier and heauier. In ſo much that if a man which is driuen from his dwelling, doe thinke to remooue to his poſſeſſions, and to his landes; GOD will perſecute him euen there: and if hee thinke to cheere himſelfe with his wife, ſhee ſhalbee taken from him by force: and if hee thinke to fynde ſome comfort in his children, they ſhalbe deliuered into the hands of his enimies; and if hee thinke to haue any recourſe to his cattell, they ſhalbee all ſtolne or taken away by force. Moſes therefore beſetteth vs heere on all ſides, to the ende wee ſhoulde learne to reſort vnto our God; foraſmuch as it is in vayne, for vs to labour to eſcape by any other way. This is the matter in effect which wee haue to beare in minde of this text.

Nowe hee addeth moreouer, to the increaſe of the miſcheefe; *That the fruits of the earth and the labour of our handes, ſhalbee eaten by a people which wee haue not knowen: and that wee our ſelues ſhalbee diſtraughted by reaſon of the miſeries which ſhall ſo light vppon vs*. That is to ſay, wee ſhalbee as out of our wittes, beholding the miſchiefe before our eyes; and beeing amazed thereat, whereby wee ſhalbee enforced to perceiue that the hande of God is againſt vs. That is in effect the matter which hee meant to ſay in this text.

Nowe I haue tolde you that the miſerie is ſo much the more greeuous to beare, when a people vnknowen commeth to ranſacke all. Truely if we be robbed by our owne neighbours, and by them that ſhould bee at amitie with vs: the ſame is verie harde to beare. But if there come a ſtraunge people, there is leſſe mercie. For when men bee ſo ſeparated one from the other, and haue no intercōmoning at al: there is the leſſe likelihoode of any meanes of ſafetie. And wee ſee howe this repetition heere is often founde in the Prophetes: inſomuch as it is ſaide
Iſa.33.19. ſometimes, that the people which ſhall perſecute vs, ſhall be a barbarous people without language whereby to haue any talke with vs: by reaſon whereof, when we ſhall aske them mercie, and cry alas, it ſhall ſeeme vnto them that wee curſe them; and that ſhall be an increaſe of their crueltie. So then lette vs marke, that his ſpeaking thus of a ſtraunge people, is to make vs to vnderſtande, that GOD will ſende vs ſuch chaſtiſers as will haue no pitie nor compaſſion of vs, vntill they haue quite and cleane rooted vs out.

And nowe by the way we be warned, that although the plague be not yet come neere vs, we muſt not therefore fall aſleepe. For wee doe alwayes meaſure Gods threateninges, by our owne conceiuing of them, and by the thinges that offer themſelues to our ſight. When men ſpeake of warre, and doe threaten vs with the Turke, But how can he come at vs ſay we? He is too farre off. Againe, can ſuch a Prince inuade vs? Tuſh, he ſhall be letted by ſuch a meane: the plague can not come that way, by reaſon of ſuch a cauſe. He may be dealt withall by ſuch a meane: it can not be. When wee haue ſuch kinde of worldely ſhiftes to defende our ſelues withall, thereupon wee deſpiſe GOD, not in worde, but in deede, for wee continue vnreformable and frowarde, and feare not that the plague can come at vs. Therefore ſayeth God, that he will ſtirre vppe ſtraunge people againſt vs, euen people of farre Countryes. When men doubt it leaſt, then ſhall they wonder to ſee howe GOD will come in vppon them on that ſide which they neuer thought of, and bring them enemies to ſpoyle them. Lette vs then marke by this texte, that Gods ſcourges lye ſometimes hidden, and breake out vppon a ſuddaine, ſo as men are taken tardie by them, ac-
Ier.9.24. cording to this ſaying, that they be like to a woman that is childe bearing. For a woman that is with childe, is vtterly abaſhed when her houre is come; euen ſo fareth it with them that are puffed vp with their iniquities, and delight in them: they forecaſt not that the hande of God
1.Theſſ.5.3. is neere them. It commeth vppon them like a tempeſt; when they ſay, Peace and all is ſafe, then commeth their ruine and vtter deſtruction. Therefore whereas we be tolde of ſtrange people, lette vs learne to looke farre beefore vs when GOD doeth threaten vs; for like as faith muſt aduaunce it ſelfe aboue the worlde to take holde of Gods promiſes, that it may reſt altogether vppon them: ſo likewiſe when GOD threatneth vs, our fayth muſt looke further off than we can ſee with our eyes, and we miſtruſt the thing which wee ſee not at all: like as wee may perceiue that Noe tarryed not till the floude brake out, and that GOD
did vnlocke the Raine of heauen, and opened Gen.6.22.
the waterſpringes of the earth: but as ſoone as hee hearde the woorde, hee did nothing but thinke vpon the vengeaunce of GOD: and by vertue of that worde, he behelde the floude as if it hadde beene preſent: and hee liued in ſuch feare and carefulneſſe, as if he had ſeene the rayne both euening and morning to deſtroy all thinges before his eyes. Euen ſo ſhould we doe and we be warned thereof by this ſaying, where God ſpeaketh of farre countries.

Moreouer wee bee therewithall warned to liue in peace and concorde. For ſeeing that GOD hath aſſociated vs and wee be intermingled together: we muſt learne to liue in ſuch vnitie, as our Lorde neede not to bring ſtraunge enemies to chaſtiſe our churliſhneſſe in reſembling cats and dogs. For when men which ought to agree together, doe vexe one another, it cauſeth GOD to ſtirre vp ſtraungers to bee their enemies; becauſe that the neerer that our Lord commeth vnto vs, the more would he haue vs giuen to doe good one to another. And if wee doe the contrarie, then muſt GOD ſtirre vp a people to come to ſpoyle vs, becauſe we haue not liued in peace like brethren, ne knitte our ſelues together like fingers of one hande. This is the thing which wee haue to beare in minde touching this text.

Nowe where he ſayeth, *And you ſhall be amazed at the ſights which you ſhall ſee*: it is according
to that which was ſayde before; namely: that Deut.28.29.
men ſhold be diſtraughted, and grope at noone day, as doeth the blinde in the darke. For if wee be borne withall ſo farre as to gather and plucke vppe our ſpirites to call vppon GOD, and to bee patient in our afflictions; it is a great grace, and ſuch a one as can not bee ſufficiently eſteemed. But if our Lorde incourage vs not to repentaunce, ne giue vs wherewith to aſſwage and diminiſh our ſorrowes, but all hope is taken away, and we be as folke already forlorne, ſo as we bee beſides our wittes to ſee the naked ſword continually before vs, hauing no meane of remedie or ſuccour at all: that is a dreadfull threatning. Neuertheleſſe it is not ſent without cauſe, conſidering the hardeneſſe of hearte which is to bee ſeene in all men. For vntill GOD haue brought vs to this ſtraughtedneſſe, we be altogether blockiſh, and we haue the contrarie vice, which is, that we can verie well complayne when any thing doeth trouble vs: yea, and ſometimes we lye as beaten downe, but yet doeth not that make vs to come againe to God: for we ſee howe euery man taketh the bridle in his teeth, ſo as they ſhake off all feare, and neuer thinke vpon that which is ſet downe heere. And ſo we ſee howe men become blockiſh. Now our Lorde would faine drawe them to repentance,

taunce, at leaſtwiſe if they were teacheable, that is to ſay, if they were not wilfull ſtubborne. For he tryeth all manner of wayes to drawe vs vnto him. This is the cauſe why hee doeth correct vs gently, and as it were within compaſſe, as with his litle finger. But when hee ſeeth that that will nothing preuayle; then muſt he bring vs to this kinde of woodneſſe. For vntill he hath left vs as men diſtraughted, we wil neuer haue our minds peaceable and obedient, we will neuer be wunne.

Therefore let vs marke well that this threatning is directed to ſuch as ſtoope not at the firſt blowe when GOD hath warned them, but goe on from euill to worſe: for then muſt they of neceſſitie come to this woodeneſſe. Nowe he ſpeaketh expreſly concerning the ſightes of the eyes. For men doe blinde themſelues (as I haue ſayde heeretofore) perſuading with themſelues that they can eſcape by ſome mean: inſomuch that although wee ſee the euill at hande, yet ye woulde wonder to ſee howe wee holde on our courſe, and care not for it, according as the prophet Eſaie ſpeaketh of the wicked: Iſa.28.15. ſaying that when the ſcourge paſſeth ouer the whole earth, and the ſtorme ouer taketh them all, they bee not any whit mooued thereat. After that manner doe the deſpiſers of GOD ſpeake, and the number of them is infinite. So then, when men doe thus blinde their eyes, and haue no reſpect at all to the plagues whereunto they be ſubiect: but notwithſtanding that they fall into infinite troubles out of the which they can not get out againe, yet they holde on ſtil: foraſmuch as they be ſo frowarde, Moſes ſayeth expreſſely in this texte: *You ſhall haue a ſight before your eyes*: that is to ſay, after that you haue beene a long while hardened in your vaine fantaſies, and haue flattered yourſelues in your ſinnes, imagining that GOD ſhould ſpare you and that you be (as it were his mates, and haue made a league with death and Iſa.28.15. with the graue, according as the Prophet ſpeaketh of it: when as you haue beene thus a long while vntouched with any awe, and haue deceiued yourſelues in bearing yourſelues in hande that your plague ſhall not laſt: *There ſhall come a ſight that ſhall make your eyes to dazle* in beholding the infinite miſchiefes which you muſt bee faine to endure: and which way ſo euer you turne your eyes, whether it bee vpwarde or downeward, foreward or backeward, you ſhal ſee Gods hande continually purſewing you; by reaſon whereof you ſhal be driuen into a madnes. Let vs learne therefore to conuert this text to our benefite: and whyle GOD doeth forbeare vs, or at the leaſt ſo moderate his plagues that wee be not thereby altogether ouerthrowen; let vs feare him, and lette vs bethinke ourſelues howe ſundrie wayes wee haue offended GOD: inſomuch that if he liſted to deale rygorouſly with vs, we ſhoulde then periſh euerie minute of an houre. And therewithall lette vs not tarrie till hee thunder downe vppon vs, and powre out his curſes vppon vs in ſuch ſorte as they may ſinke into our verie bones: but let vs returne to him and to his goodneſſe. And aboue all thinges when hee giueth vs the grace to foreſee his plagues afarre off, ſo as wee may ſay that others bee puniſhed for our inſtruction: lette vs take warning by their example, and in ſuch wiſe by faith receiue Gods corrections wherewith he threatneth vs, as it may preſerue vs from that ſight whereof Moſes ſpeaketh heere: to the intent that our Lorde ſtrike vs not with ſuch feare, as we can not in anie wiſe thinke to receiue any recorde of his goodneſſe by reaſon of our ſinnes. Nay rather, that by putting this leſſon of obeying him and of ſubmitting our ſelues vnto him in vre, wee may eſchewe this foreſayde amazedneſſe, and not bee ſo oppreſſed as wee ſhoulde become like folke that were out of their wittes. Let vs not come to ſuch an extremitie, neither let vs compell GOD to execute ſuch Threateninges againſt vs.

Nowe let vs fall downe before the maieſtie of our good God, with acknowledgement of our ſinnes; beſeeching him to vouchſafe to make vs ſo to vnderſtande them, as euery one of vs may be his owne iudge, and turne to him, before we be thereunto conſtrayned: and that hauing willingly condẽned ourſelues & bewailed our ſins, we may ſeeke to return to his obedience in ſuch wiſe, as the ſame may be to dedicate vs wholely vnto him. And that in the meane while it may pleaſe him yͤ like as he hath ſent vs the meſſage of reconciliation by his goſpell, he will alſo giue vs yͤ grace to obtaine mercie of him, & forgiuenes of all our ſinnes in the name of our Lord Ieſus Chriſt: and that reſting thereupon, we fayle not to walke alwaies in feare: and that his bearing with vs through his fatherly goodnes may not cauſe vs to ſleepe in our ſinnes, and to flatter ourſelues in them: but yͭ euery of vs may quicken vp himſelfe, vntill we be quite and cleane rid of them. And that forſomuch as wee are to paſſe through ſo much filthines in this world, we may be taught to amende our miſdoinges continually vntil that we be throughly ridde of them, for the full vniting of vs to himſelfe, and to make vs pertakers of his heauenly glorie. That it may pleaſe him to graunt this grace, not only to vs but alſo to all people and nations of the earth, &c.

On Tewſday the xxiiij. of March, 1556.

The CLIX. Sermon, which is the ſeuenth vpon the eight and twentith Chapter.

36 The Lord wil carry thee and thy king which thou ſhalt haue ſet ouer thee, to a people which thou haſt not knowen, neither thou nor thy fathers: and there ſhalt thou ſerue other gods, of wood and of ſtone.

37 And there ſhalt thou be a gazing ſtocke, a skoffing ſtocke, and a byworde to all people, to whom the Lorde ſhall bring thee.

38 Thou ſhalt lay much ſeede in the grounde, and ſhalt gather litle: for the graſſehoppers ſhall deuour it.

39 Thou ſhalt plant a vineyearde and dreſſe it: but thou ſhalt not drinke the wine of it, nor gather any fruite of it: for the wormes ſhall eate it.

40 Thou ſhalt haue Oliue trees in all thy coaſtes, but thou ſhalt not annoint thyſelfe with the oyle of it: for all thine Oliues ſhal be ſhaken off.

41 Thou ſhalt beget ſonnes and daughters, but not to thy ſelfe: for they ſhall goe into Captiuitie.

42 The worme ſhall deſtroy all thy trees, and the fruite of thy lande.

43 The ſtraunger which dwelleth with thee, ſhall riſe aboue thee very high: and thou ſhalt ſtoope vnder him verie lowe.

44 He ſhall lende vnto thee, and not thou vnto him: he ſhalbe the head, and thou ſhalt be the taile.

45 And all theſe curſes ſhall come vpon thee and followe thee and take holde of thee, vntill thou be vtterly rooted out, becauſe thou haſt not obeyed the voice of the Lorde thy God, by keeping his commaundementes and ordinaunces which he hath commaunded thee.

1.Sam.8.20.

WE know when the people of Iſrael choſe thẽ a king, with what affection they were led; euen of pride, for that they would not bee inferiours to their neighbours. Moteouer they thought to be very ſure, by hauing a head ouer thẽ, that ſhould haue the whole authoritie. And ſo ye ſee that the children of Abrahã could not content themſelues with their libertie, but deſired to haue a king. Becauſe they ſawe the Egyptians, the Syrians, the Moabites, yea and the Tyrians, and other like people to haue kinges: they bare themſelues in hand, that if they alſo might haue a head, all would goe well with them. Now like as pride and ambition was the cauſe that they choſe a king in Iſraell: euen ſo became they hardhearted thereupon, ſuppoſing themſelues to be out of all perils, by hauing ſuch a defence: by meane whereof we ſee that they deſpiſed the prophetes, vnder pretence that they thought themſelues well fenſed. The ſpirite of GOD foreſeeing this (albeit that it was not yet come to paſſe) ſayde in this Text, *That the king which they ſhall appoint ſhould be lead captiue into a ſtraunge countrey:* As if God ſhould haue ſayde that they might well ſeeke ſtartinghooles to ſaue themſelues: but they ſhould ſtande them in no ſteede at all againſt his hande. This is the thing that we touched yeſterday; namely, that when God is our aduerſarie, we may not thinke to maynetaine ourſelues againſt him by the meane of creatures, knowing that he will ſurely apply thẽ to our deſtruction. Therefore let none of vs deceiue himſelfe, neither let vs make our defence of that which is nothing but ſmoke and leaſing. It is true that the king which was firſt choſen by the people of Iſraell, namely king Saule, was not brought to captiuitie: howbeit that he dyed in battayle: but the ſucceſſours of Dauid were handled cruelly & with great reproch, notwithſtanding that God had ordained them, yea and that they were a figure and Image of our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt. And it is a horrible thing, that the kingdome which GOD had dedicated vnto himſelfe, (as witneſſed the annoynting) ſhould be layde foorth to ſuch a reproch. Yee ſee howe the ſucceſſours of Dauid which hadde receiued the promiſe that their ſeate ſhoulde be euerlaſting, and in the meane while

1.Sam.31.4.

were as the figures of our Lorde Ieſus Chriſte: were handeled on ſuch a ſort that they were led priſoners in chains, were arrained as offenders, had their eyes put out, hadde their childrens throtes cutte in their owne preſence, were caſt into a deepe dungeon, there to rotte or to bee eaten to death with vermine: and that, as you ſee is a verie ſtrange matter. But the vengeance of God was to extende ſo farre euen of neceſſitie, becauſe of the frowardeneſſe of the people, whereof was none other remedie. And the more that God had ſuffered them and patiently waited for them, the more were they to bee brought to the extremitie of all confuſion, for deſpiſing ſo great goodneſſe, and for beeing ſo frowarde and hardhearted againſt it. Nowe we may heereby gather a good warning, to witte, that (as was declared yeſterday) albeit that according to the worlde, we ſeeme to ſtande in no perill: yet doeth it behooue vs to ſeeke to haue Gods fauour: for if he be not on our ſide, and we vnder his ſauegarde, curſed are all the helps which we ſuppoſe to haue of creatures; for they ſerue rather to ouerthrowe vs. And therefore lette vs take heede that wee put not our confidence in the greatneſſe of Princes, or in any other defences; for wee ſee howe they bee but meanes to blinde ſuch as might elſe turne to GOD, and obtaine foregiueneſſe of him: and that in the ende it ſhall ouerthrowe them vtterly. Let vs then bee better aduiſed, and though we ſeeme to be neuer ſo wel garded to ÿ worlde: yet let not that be a lette vnto vs to walke alwayes in the feare of God, knowing that all the fauor which we are able to purchaſe in the world is nothing at all; and that if God doe but blowe vppon it all vaniſheth away in the minute of an houre. That is the thing which we haue to mark vpon this text.

Nowe it is ſayde expreſly, *That as well the king as the ſubiectes ſhall ſerue ſtraunge Gods*, yea *euen of ſtone and of woodde*, that is to ſay, puppettes and Idolles. No doubt but that God by theſe wordes ment to vtter how dreadfull puniſhment was to come vppon the Iewes. For albeit that the nouriſhment that God giueth vs, and in like wiſe, all the Teſtimonies of his fatherly loue and goodneſſe appertayning to this tranſitorie life, bee to bee highly eſteemed: yet the moſt ſingular benefite that we receiue as long as wee liue in the worlde, is that we haue Religion well ordred, that his ſeruice be pure amongſt vs, that we call vppon him, and that it bee lawefull for vs to claime him as our GOD, and that wee be not berayde and defiled with ſuperſtition and Idolatrie. That (ſay I) is the principall good thing whereunto the faithfull ſhould aſpire: and we be verie blockes and beaſtes, if wee preferre not the ſame before all manner of riches and pleaſures, and before all our eaſe and commodities. Nowe then on the contrarie parte, the plague which ought to be moſt dreadfull to vs, and the horribleſt calamitie that can fall vppon vs, is to be depriued of Gods ſeruice, and to haue our mouth ſhutte, ſo as wee can not call vppon him: and not onely that, but alſo through Tyrannie to be compelled to honour Idolles, and to defile ourſelues with their abhominations, and to peruert that which GOD hath ordayned for the magnifying of his name amongeſt vs. When thinges be thus confounded, let vs vnderſtande that GOD is departed from vs, and declareth himſelfe to bee our mortall enemie, and hath quite forſaken and refuſed vs, and is loath that wee ſhould thencefoorth haue anie token or inkling at all, either of his preſence or of his fauour. And ſo, whereas Moſes ſayeth in this Text, *That the Iewes ſhall ſerue ſtraunge Gods*, he meaneth to threaten them more dreadfully than before. As if he ſhould ſay; Right greeuous will it be vnto you when you ſhall be famiſhed and want bread to eate, and water to drink, when your enemies ſhall robbe you of all your ſubſtaunce, and make hauocke of all your poſſeſſions, when ye ſhall pine away in griefe and ſorrowe, without any meane to helpe you: ſurely theſe wil be verie hard thinges for you, ſpecially when you can obtaine no fauour of your enemies, who ſhall be as wilde beaſtes againſt you: but yet is all this nothing in compariſon of the other curſe, that whereas in ſteede of honoring the liuing GOD, and of confeſſing that he hath choſen you to be his people, (which is an immeaſurable bleſſing) in ſteede of ſuch thinges I ſay, you ſhould ſerue Idolles, and bee conuerſant amongeſt the ſuperſtitions of the Paynimes, and haue no more prayers neither Pſalmes nor Sacrifices, but be diſperſed and forlorne.

Nowe ſeeing that wee perceiue the naturall ſenſe of Moſes, let vs vnderſtande that amongſt all the bleſſinges of GOD which we enioy in this preſent life, this ought to be preferred aboue all the reſt: namely, to haue libertie to ſerue our GOD, and to make confeſſion of our faith, and to declare that wee bee his people, of his Church and of his flocke. Truely it is ſlenderly knowen: howbeit, it is not in vaine that we be admoniſhed thereof. Seeing then, that it hath beene the will of God to plant his Church amongeſt vs, and that we ſhould haue his worde and his ſacramentes, by the which he declareth that he dwelleth amongeſt vs: lette vs accept ſuch a bleſſing according as it is worthye: It will ſerue vs to a double vſe. Firſt of all, when wee fare the better by the doctrine that is preached vnto vs euery day, ſuch a treaſure periſheth not but through our owne vnthankefulneſſe: as wee ſee that manie folke thinke it ynough to bee at ſermons, and it ſeemeth vnto them, that God hath his duetie, ſo they haue vſed ſome ceremonie. But in the meane while the ſeede of life doeth periſh without yeelding any fruite. To the ende therefore that we may apply the bleſſing that GOD beſtoweth on vs, to this vſe: when as wee haue libertie to heare his doctrine, and to bee trayned therein, and haue the Sacramentes for an eſtabliſhment of our faith, and may declare that it is the liuing God whome wee worſhippe and that hee gouerneth

neth vs: I ſay, let the ſame profite vs; and ſo will it, if we acknowledge that our Lord can not beſtowe on vs any greater bleſſing than that is. And in the meane whyle we will take it patiently if other thinges doe faile vs: as where many want their commodities, let them not be greeued at the children of this worlde, which haue their delightes, and do triumph, weltring themſelues in their earthly pleaſures; if the children of God haue not the ſame, let them knowe that they enioy a thing which recompenſeth double, yea an hundreth folde: that is, that they can ſerue God. For to what purpoſe is it, that theſe wretched people which dwell in papiſtrie may lye ſlumbring in their neaſtes, and in the meane while be baniſhed from the kingdome of GOD, and that Chriſt Ieſus himſelfe and his worde be baniſhed from the countrey wherein they dwel? What auayleth it, that they bee ſerued in their houſes, and in the meane while bee not ſuffered to ſerue GOD? What auayleth it, that they haue whereof to eate and drinke till they burſt, and in the meane while be ſtarued for want of ghoſtly foode? What auaileth it, that they be in honour and credite, and in the meane while be conſtrayned to defile themſelues with theſe trecherous dealinges whereby GOD is deſpiſed, and his honour ſpoyled, and conueyed ouer to Idolles, and they be guiltie thereof? Alas: is not this a curſed ſtate? Let vs therefore take it patiently, albeit that we we be had in contempt to the worldewarde, and counted as vnderlings and caſtawayes, not hauing our eaſe, nor that which our fleſhe deſireth: ſeeing that GOD giueth vs this ſpecial libertie, that we may purely worſhippe him and ſerue him, and be deliuered from this curſed ſeruitude of Idolles; let vs be contented, and eſteeme this ſayde benefite, according as it is worthie, ſo as wee be not grieued towarde them that enioy the goods of this worlde, and in he meane while are deſtitute of the grace of God, which remaineth amongſt vs.

Beſides this, heere is a warning that ſeeing God hath put vs in poſſeſſion and fruition of this libertie, we muſt take good heede that wee bee not depriued thereof through our owne leaudeneſſe: for this threatning which was made to the Iewes, is in likewiſe directed vnto vs. Let vs vnderſtande therefore, that ſeeing we haue the Goſpell preached vnto vs, if it preuaile not with vs, God muſt deliuer vs into the handes of other teachers when wee ſhall haue refuſed to obey him. And in verie deede, wee may not thinke that the horrible confuſion which is in the Popedome, befalleth for any other cauſe, than that whereas they haue beene taught the pure doctrine of the Goſpell, yet they haue beene rebelles to God, and haue not bounde their neckes to beare his yoke; and therefore GOD could not otherwiſe doe, than deliuer them ouer to ſuch Tyrannie as wee ſee. And truely the ſame was tolde them aforehand by Saint Paule: It is good reaſon (ſayeth hee) that the worlde, ſeeing that it will not beleeue the truth, ſhould obey lies: and that they which would not be ſubiect to the liuing God, ſhoulde be obedient to the creature, euen to the Idolles, which be nothing. Beholding therefore the examples before our eyes, and hearing the threatning as it lyeth heere: let vs learne, whileſt GOD doeth keepe vs in his ſchoole, ſo to walke in his feare, and awe, as we may not bee bereft of the welfare which we nowe enioy; but that God may rather augment it, and cauſe it to preuaile. Moreouer let vs marke that they which doe ſerue Idolles, ſhall not bee excuſed therefore, although the ſame be a puniſhment of God. We knowe that one ſinne is puniſhed by an other, according as it is ſpoken in diuerſe Textes of ſcripture: and as we ſee it ſpecially auowed in the firſt Chapter to the Romanes, That they which ſerued not GOD in giuing themſelues wholely to cleanneſſe of life, ſhall be ſhaken off and giuen ouer to al maner of ſhamefull luſtes, and haue no more vnderſtanding to diſcerne betwixt euill and good, than brute beaſtes, but ſhall runne into all manner of infamie. Hereby Saint Paule doth very well ſhew that when GOD giueth vs heade to bee plunged in the depth of our iniquities, it is for that we ſhould be the more guiltie before him. They therefore which worſhippe Idolles, notwithſtanding that they be compelled thereto, and doe ſigh and would faine be at libertie: yet ceaſe they not to offende God: and thereby they ſhould vnderſtande the better, howe haynous their ſinnes bee, ſeeing that they muſt receiue ſuch correction for them. As howe? Whereas I ſhould glorifie my God, I muſt offende him, he is faine to caſt me off, becauſe I am not worthie to ſerue him, and he muſt depriue mee of the liberty and mean to dedicate my ſelfe wholly to his obedience. Let all them therefore that be in the captiuitie of poperie and mingled amongſt the ſuperſtitious, vnderſtande that the vengeaunce of GOD lieth vppon them, and that they ſhalbe more and more guiltie for their ſeruing of Idolles. It is a poore reply for them to ſay, we doe it not willingly, wee wiſh that it might pleaſe God that the right and pure Religion were ouer all: but for all this, our Lorde doeth not exempt them from condemnation. And he is the competent Iudge. Let vs therefore reſt vppon his worde: and ſeeke no more ſtartingholes, but let them that indure ſuch a ſtate, vnderſtande that it is nowe time or neuer, to turne to God, foraſmuch as they bee as good as drowned therein, and haue a token of his wrath, againſt them, in that he is gone farre away from them. Therefore let them thinke thereuppon, and bee moued therewith to the quicke: according as the meaning of GOD is in this Text, and as we haue touched it heretofore.

.Theſſ.2.11

Rom.1,24.

Nowe Moſes ſayeth: *That this people ſhall bee a gazing ſtocke, and an example, and a byworde, and a skoffing ſtock vnto the nations, amongeſt whom they ſhall bee diſperſed.* Heere our Lorde ſheweth that as his goodneſſe ſhoulde be knowen in the people of Iſraell, and euery man ſhould reioyce in the ſeede of Abraham, ſo ſhoulde the verie ſame people be abhorred and deteſted. The promiſe was thus: Al Nations ſhall be bleſſed Gen.22.18. in thy ſeede. The trueth is that we muſt reſort to our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt, which is the verie bonde of the ſeede of Abraham; or elſe this bleſſing hath no place, nor grounde to ſtande vpon. Yet notwithſtanding, they which were deſcended of the race of Abraham, ſhoulde haue beene bleſſed of GOD, ſo as they might haue been an example, that euery one deſiring grace might haue ſayde, O God take pitie vppon me, as vpon the children of Abraham, whome hee hath choſen and adopted. Such was the promiſe. See heere the threatning that was layde againſt it, that ſeeing GOD did ſmite ſo rigorouſly vpon the people whome hee hadde choſen, men might bee aſtoniſhed at it and thinke thus with themſelues: Is it poſſible that they whome GOD hath choſen, ſhould now be caſt off, and be perſecuted and throwen vnder foote with all manner of reproch? And hereuppon men may ſay: O God keepe mee that I fall not to ſuch caſe as this people is in, or elſe when they intende to curſe, they might ſay, GOD doe vnto thee as hee hath doone to theſe vile Iewes. This much is to be vnderſtoode of this place.

Nowe let vs marke that whereas the holy ghoſt ſpake thus by the mouth of Moſes, it was not his meaning that this doctrine ſhoulde ſerue onely for two thouſand yeares or thereabouts, which time the law laſted vntill the comming of our Lord Ieſus Chriſt: but ẏ we at this day muſt apply the ſame to our owne vſe: that inſomuch as God is come nigh vs, wee muſt walke in his feare in deſpite of Sathan, ſo as his goodneſſe may ſhine in vs, and be perceyued to remaine vpon vs: and contrariwiſe that when wee bee vnthankfull, and our God is as it were mocked of vs, it behoueth vs then to thinke thus: Wel may wee ſhrinke backe, but wee ſhall gaine nothing by all our ſhiftes: for in the ende wee ſhall not faile to come to ſhame. Verily wee ſee how Eſa.52.5. it is ſayde that the name of God ſhalbe blaſphemed amongſt ẏ miſbeleeuers, becauſe that they which were counted faithfull before, bee ſo caſt downe, as GOD may ſeeme to haue falſified his promiſe and to haue deluded them, ſo farre foorth muſt the vengeaunce of GOD extend. Nowe ſeeing it is ſo, let vs learne to ſubmit ourſelues to our Lorde while hee allureth vs vnto him with gentleneſſe, and ſo to holde vs vnder his obedience, as we may not become a byword and a ieſting ſtocke to all the wicked, which ſeeke nothing but to blaſpheme GOD and to make a mocke of vs. Let vs (I ſay) looke well to that.

Moreouer, where Moſes ſayeth, *That GOD will thus diſperſe his people:* it ſerueth ſtill to confirme his matter, to the ende that the Iewes, ſhoulde not thinke that they were carried away by a ſtorme, as it were by happe hazarde; but that they ſhould vnderſtande that it is the hand of GOD that is vppon them: and that foraſmuch as this threatening preuayled not with them, therefore the thing that is happened vnto them ſhould ſtande vs in ſome ſteede. For looke what vengeance we heare GOD ſpeake of in this place; the ſame we ſee executed before our eyes. Is it not a horrible thing that the Iewes be abhorred at this day throughout the whole worlde? Yet were they the people whom GOD hadde ſanctified for himſelfe, they were his heritage, they were the royal prieſthoode, according as they bee termed in Exodus, and Exod.19.6. they were the bleſſed Generation, and yet for 1.Pet.2.9. all this, they be reiected of all men, inſomuch that men doe as it were ſhudder to behold them as though they ought to be cutte off from mankinde. If it be ſayde, O this may verie well happen to the faithfull, and the like befell euen to the holy Patriarkes; it did ſo in deede, howbeit after an other ſorte. For the faithfull may well be put in feare, according as it is ſayde in the prophet Eſay, that folke ſhall point at them Eſa.8.18. with the finger, and ſhunne them afarre off: and that is becauſe GOD is not knowen, and his grace is deſpiſed. But whereas we ſpeake of the Iewes at this day, it is very well ſeene that God is againſt them: for they be as rotten members, and their bodie is torne in peeces, and there remaineth not any token of this bleſſing which God hadde beſtowed on them. Therefore when we beholde ſuch a lookingglaſſe, let vs learne to make our commoditie thereof, and lette the example of them ſerue to ſeale this doctrine and to ratifie it, that wee tempt not GOD, and that wee continue not hardehearted ſo long till he bee faine to wrappe vs vp in reproch with all the reſt of the nations of the worlde. After this, Moſes returneth to that which hee hadde touched afore: which is, *That the people hauing* Deut.28.38 *tylled their groundes and their poſſeſſions, ſhall not drinke of the wine of their grapes, nor eate of the corne of their harueſt, nor enioy the fruites of their trees.* This hath beene ſpoken afore: but there is heere a certaine difference to be noted. For therefore God had ſhewed, that when the Iewes had laboured for corne and wine, the enemies ſhould come and take all away, and that all the ſame ſhould be made a pray: but nowe he ſayth, that without any force of man, and without any troubles of warre, they ſhould neuertheleſſe not faile to bee famiſhed, and to bee deſtitute of all thinges that might doe them good. Why ſo? Becauſe that wormes, beaſtes, Caterpillers, locuſtes, and all other thinges ſhall eate vppe the fruite of the earth. Loe what armies God ſtirreth vp againſt the wretched. Againe, on the other ſide, there ſhal come blaſting and ſindging, ſo that all muſt needes periſh: albeit that men touch not the Iewes, but let them alone in reſt, yet ſhall they vnderſtande that GOD hath other meanes to puniſh them, and that hee is alwayes armed infinite wayes. That is the thing which GOD meant to declare. And therefore lette vs take warning by this Text, that when wee haue eſcaped one plague, GOD will finde out an other for vs: and if we ſtep aſide to the left hand, & he neuertheles is armed againſt vs, and before wee haue gone three paſes, hee ſtoppeth vs of our way. Loe how men preuaile, when they ſeeke lurkingholes; according as we Esa.29.15. ſee how the Prophete Eſay mocketh them that thinke by their ſubtiltie to eſcape the hande of God. Dreame on, dreame on your fill (ſaith he) yet ſhall the curſe always ouertake you. And in like caſe, althogh we haue no enemies to trouble vs, & to riſe vp againſt vs to ſpoile our ſubſtance: yet let vs vnderſtand ỷ God hath other meanes, which we know not, for to bereaue vs of ỷ which he hath put into our hands, and that we ſhall be abaſhed, to thinke how wee haue wherewith to ſatisfie vs, and yet that the bread ſhall be pluckt out of our mouthes: and that when we thinke to drinke, we ſhall be drie. And whereof commeth that? Euen of this, that it is our Lorde which giueth increaſe to the corne when it is ſowen in the ground: It is he that ſendeth the Grapes; It is hee alſo that cauſeth all thinges to proſper for our nouriſhment. We be taught by this text, firſt of all, that when we till the fieldes, ſowe them & reape them, we muſt make prayers alwayes vnto God to bleſſe the earth, that wee may be fed through his grace; and wee muſt holde it for a certayntie, that it is his peculiar office to feede vs like as a father doeth his litle children. Thus much concerning that poynt. Whereof becauſe I haue treated more at large heretofore, it ſufficeth as nowe to touch it in one word.

Now furthermore let vs marke, that whereas God ſpeaketh here of *Locuſtes, wormes, Caterpillers, & other beaſts*, & wheras he ſpeaketh of blaſting & of *burning which cõmeth therof*, hee ſheweth ỷ he hath men of warre of a ſtraunge ſort, when hee vouchſafeth not to doe men good: & this alſo ſerueth to pull downe the pride of men. For if we be ſpoyled by the enemies: verie well (will men ſay) this was doone by violence and plaine force. As for example when warre is, the whole countrie is ſpoyled, the richeſt foolke become beggers: and all this is wited vppon the warre, man is not blamed for it. But when it commeth to paſſe by other accidentes, ſo as men wote not by what meane their ſubſtãce is waſted, though they ſee it melte away before their eyes, one yeare by haile, an other yeare by froſt, and one while one way & another while an other, ſo as al thinges conſume betwixt their handes; God by this meane maketh it more manifeſt vnto men, that hee meaneth to confounde them vtterly. Exod 7.8.9.10. And indeed if we marke the courſe that he kept with the Egyptians, wee ſhall perceiue it much better. For we diſcerne Gods iugdementes better in other men than in our ſelues. If God had ſtirred vp a great armie againſt the Egyptiãs, in ſteede of the lyce and vermine: they would ſtill haue continued in their pride and preſumption: and albeit that they had beene a hundred times diſcomfited, yet woulde they not haue fayled to haue beene ſtiffenecked ſtill. When they were perſecuted with lice, and that there were ſuch Souldiers in Egypt; they ſhoulde haue beene aſhamed. Therefore let vs well note, that God by ſending men ſuch chaſtiſementes as be ſet downe here doth warne them to thinke on their frailtie. If Herod had beene ſlaine with a thunder bolt from heauen; it had not beene ſo fit a puniſhment for the blaſphemie which he committed in ſuffering himſelfe to be called a God, Act.12.23. and not a man, as when God cauſed him to bee eaten and conſumed with vermine, till hee was as rotten as coulde bee, inſomuch as hee was compelled by that diſeaſe to ſay (as hee that liued at that time and was his familiar beareth Ioſeph. de Ant.17.lib. witnes:) Oh ſee here a goodly God, which is ſo rotten that he is inforced to feele that the hand of God doeth perſecute him for his pride. Let vs therefore marke well, that God, after he had threatened the Iewes to ſende them enemies, which by violence and force of armes ſhoulde ſpoyle the countrie of all manner of foode: now hee addeth moreouer that although they were not vexed nor troubled at al by mans hand, nor anie thing were attẽpted by man againſt their poſſeſſions and lands; yet notwithſtanding they ſhoulde not boote themſelues by their labours, nor by the well tilling of their groundes. And why? Becauſe the vermine ſhall waſt all. And hee ſaith againe expreſſely, *Thou ſhalt ſow much and gather nothing*, whereby hee ſheweth that when men make neuer ſo good prouiſion aforehande, thinking vndoubtedly that all ſhall goe as they woulde wiſhe, yet ſhall they bee neuer the better for it. And it ſerueth to this end that we ſhoulde not fall aſleepe when wee ſee fayre likelihoodes, according as wee bee commonly woont to deſpiſe God: as who ſhould ſay, that if there bee a good ſeedtime, wee are paſt danger, and God had no more to deale with the thinges that bee vppon the earth, or if we haue reapt and laide vp the Corne in our barnes, it ſhoulde make vs to be the more proude, becauſe we ſee no likelihoode of any more daunger. But in ſteade of this, wee ſhoulde euermoe haue an eye to Godwarde, ſaying, Lorde, beholde, the earth waiteth for raine as though it were a thirſte, and when thou giueſt it, it is to make it to bring foorth ſuſtenance for our nouriſhment. Againe, ſuch ſtormes might fall from heauen as woulde waſhe away all from vs, and one warre woulde be enough to bereaue vs of all that wee haue. Thus is all in thy hande O Lorde, and wee muſt depend vppon thy mercie, and bee all our life long in thy cuſtodie; or elſe we muſt periſhe, and all the prouiſions that we haue ſhall profite vs nothing. Thus then muſt we call vppon God with diligence, and walke in his feare, ſeeing he is ſo gratious as to bee our forſterfather, and vouchſafeth to ſtoope ſo low vnto vs. Therefore hath Moſes verie wel declared in this text, ỷ wee muſt not be beguiled by the goodly likelihoods & faire prouiſions which we are able to haue. As for example, when we ſee ỷ corne to bee faire vpon the ground, we muſt not bee too luſtie as though all were won, no not euen when the corne is gathered in. For God will be then called vpon, according as we are bound to make our dayly ſute vnto him, ſaying, Giue vs our daily breade O Lorde, that day by day hee may feede Matt. 6.11.

vs. For albeit we haue neuer ſo much to day, yet to morrowe we may ſtarue. For when it pleaſeth God, he is able not only to deſtroy ÿ corne and wine in the fieldes; but alſo he can make thẽ to bee worth nothing, euen when we haue them in our garners and Cellers. Nay, we heare the threatnings that he maketh, ſaying, You ſhall carie corne to the mill by meaſure, and ÿ bread to the ouen by weight, and yet for all that, you Ezec.4.16. ſhall be ſtil emptie and hungrie, when you haue eaten neuer ſo much, there ſhall be no vertue at al in the meat, neither ſhal you be ſufficed therewith. Seeing our Lord telleth vs that he hath ſo manie wayes to famiſh vs, let vs not bee harde hearted: but let it rather waken vs, that we may altogether depende vpon him, and walke in his feare, and be his children, if we intend that hee ſhall ſtill continue to do the office of a father toward vs. That is the effect of the thinges which we haue to remember. Here againe Moſes repeateth theſe threatenings, whereof he had ſpoken afore, ſaying: *That the Iewes and their linage ſhall be caried away into captiuitie.* Now certainly there can nothing more bitter happen vnto men, than to ſee their children taken away by force, eaten, and deuoured by the enemies, and cruelly dealt withal: they had rather to haue buried them a hundred times. Now then let vs marke in fewe words that God meant to declare in this text, that although he haue beene neuer ſo bountifull towardes vs, and filled vs with his bleſſinges, ſo as we be fenced in on all ſides: yet he can verie well bereaue vs of them all againe, and that plague ſhal be much more greeuous vnto vs, than if we had neuer knowẽ, what his goodneſſe meaneth. Wherefore the largelier ÿ God beſtoweth his bleſſinges vpon vs, yea euen thoſe bleſſings that concerne this tranſitorie life, let vs looke that wee bee alwayes ſo much the more prouoked to honour him and to ſerue him. For he for his part, will not ceaſe to do vs good, ſo we turne not tayle, & giue him ouer. But ſeeing he allureth vs ſo gentlie, if we be willing to come vnto him; let vs aſſure our ſelues that his hande ſhall euermore be ſtretched forth to augment the giftes and bleſſinges that we haue receiued of him.

In the end he returneth to the matter which we ſaw heretofore. *All theſe curſes ſhal come vppon thee, they ſhal ſeaſe vpon thee, & thou ſhalt be caught and beſieged by them on all ſides, vntill that God hath quite conſumed thee: euen becauſe thou haſt not hearkened to his voice, to obey his ſtatutes and commandementes, which he hath giuen thee.* I haue tolde you herebefore howe that Moſes hath oftentimes ſhewed to the Iewes, that no euill or aduerſitie came vpon them but by the hande of God. But it behooueth vs alſo to knowe the cauſe. True it is that ſometime God doth viſite vs, and we cannot perceiue the cauſe thereof: for hee doeth it not for our ſins, not for that he might not doe it, but for that he ſpareth vs. Yet is this alwayes to be looked vnto, that when we ſuſteyne any afflictions, we muſt thinke on our ſins, & enter into examination of them to condemne our ſelues before God: yea & we muſt not tary ſo long: but we muſt benefit our ſelues by al manner of calamities which we ſee throughout ÿ worlde, knowing ÿ God puniſheth mens ſins by ſuch meanes: and thereupon bridling our ſelues from the like. The matter then whereunto Moſes doth nowe returne, is, that hauing ſhewed vs howe it is the Lord that withdraweth all maner of bleſſinges from vs, it is he that curſeth our poſſeſſions, and the fruites of the earth, it is he that ſendeth vermine, ſtormes and tempeſts, to deſtroy all: it is he ÿ giueth power to our enemies: hee ſheweth wherfore all this is done: to wit, becauſe we haue rebelled againſt him, becauſe we haue deſpiſed his law. That is ÿ verie cauſe why theſe plagues of vengeance do ſo purſue vs. Now then, let vs beare in minde the doctrine which hath beene ſufficiently ſet foorth hereaboue: which is, that when God doeth afflict vs, we muſt ſhutte our mouthes from replying or entring into plea: for we ſhal win nothing by ſtanding in contention with him. Nay rather we muſt condemne our ſelues, confeſſing that hee dealeth iuſtlie. Although it be his will to proue our patience, and to trie vs to the vttermoſt; yet notwithſtanding we muſt yeeld ourſelues as guiltie before him, & vnderſtand that our ſinnes deſerue to bee thus roughly handled at his hands. Here is wherwith to cauſe all ÿ blaſphemies, murmurings and cõplaints to ceaſe which are daily heard in ÿ world. Whẽ there happeneth any aduerſitie or anie other afflictiõ, it is to the end we ſhold think on ÿ ſinnes that we haue committed. Marke that for one point. And whereas mention is made of the commandements and ſtatutes which God hath ordeined, the ſame expreſſely and purpoſely cõcerneth vs. For albeit that the Papiſtes haue the law, yet is it buried in them: the Iewes (as ſaith 2.Cor.3.14. Saint Paul) haue a vaile before their eyes, ſo as they vnderſtand nothing. The Turkes walke in their owne ignorance, ſo doe all the reſt of the heathen. Now our Lord doth inlighten vs, and ſhew vs the way. There is therefore a more vilanous rebellion in vs, when we do not according as we be taught, and alſo wee deſerue that God ſhoulde vſe greater rigor toward vs, and powre vppon vs the plagues of vengeance which bee here conteyned. Therefore let vs benefite our ſelues by the things that are ſaide here, concerning the commandements & ſtatutes that God hath ordeined. And ſeeing it is ſo, ÿ hee ſpeaketh dayly vnto vs, declaring vnto vs his wil ſo familiarly: let euerie of vs ſubmit himſelfe obediently therunto. And whereas Moſes ſaith further, *That theſe curſes ſhall catch holde vpon vs, and that wee ſhalbe hemmed in round about by them, vntil they haue conſumed vs:* it is a warning to vs ÿ we ſhould not be ſelfe willed againſt God: for wel may we ſeeke ſtarting holes: but it ſhal nothing boote vs, (as hath beene ſaide heretofore) for the end ſhal be euer vnhappie for vs. And therfore let vs remẽber the complaint that God maketh by his Prophet Eſay. He ſaith in that text (as we heard yeſterday) Iſa.1.6. that from the crowne of the heade to the ſole of the foot, God muſt needs ſmite hard vpon all them that haue rebelled. And hauing ſpoken ſo by his Prophete Eſay, he ſaith: What may I doe more? I haue not ceaſed to chaſtice my children: inſomuch that from the crowne of the head to the ſole of the foote, I haue ſo beaten them, that there is no whole nor ſounde place, and yet they continue hardhearted ſtill. Alas, what ſhall I doe? I muſt cruſhe them and breake them all too peeces. Then let vs be afraid to ſtande ſo wilful froward againſt our God, and let vs preuent the condemnatiō here pronounced. And ſo ſoone as God beginneth to correct vs, let vs beſtirre vs to returne vnto him, yea and let vs not tarie ſo long neither, but being admoniſhed by his worde, let vs fall to bewaile our ſinnes, and to be ſorie for them, and moreouer let vs aske forgiueneſſe of them in the name of our Lord Ieſus Chriſt.

Now let vs fall downe before the maieſtie of our good God, with acknowlegement of our ſins: beſeeching him not to ſuffer vs to bee ſo blinded in this mortall life, as not to know that al yͤ miſeries & wretchednes which we ſuffer, be warnings giuen vnto vs, to make vs to thinke vppon ourſelues & vpon our liues: & alſo to moue vs to repentance. And therfore that if we be afflicted at his hand, it may not make vs to blaſpheme his holy name, nor moue vs to impatiencie: but rather taine vs, ſo as we may fare the better by al his corrections, and turne againe vnto him. And that for aſmuch as we ſee the wretched world at this day to be ſo full of wretchednes and miſeries, as is horrible, and alſo do behold the wrath of God for the ſinnes that raigne therein: it may be a meane to hold vs in awe, praying God not to vſe any ſuch rigour toward vs: but rather that we fleeing for refuge to his mercie in the name of our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt, may be touched with true repentance: & increaſe and proſper more and more therein, vntill that, beeing deliuered from all our imperfections and ſins, our God do cloath vs with his righteouſnes vnto the which wee bee daylie called. That it may pleaſe him to graunt this grace, not onely to vs but alſo to all people and nations of the earth, &c.

On Wedneſday the xxv. of March, 1556.

The CLx. Sermon which is the eight vpon the eight and twentith Chapter.

46. And theſe things ſhalbe for tokens and woonders to thee and to thy ſeede for euer,

47 Becauſe thou haſt not ſerued the Lorde thy God with ioye, and with a good heart, for the aboundance of all maner of thinges.

48 And thou ſhalt ſerue thine Enemy, whom the Lorde thy God will ſend againſt thee: I ſay thou ſhalt ſerue him in hunger and thirſt, in nakedneſſe and in all maner of want. And he will lay a yoke of yron vpon thy necke, vntill he haue rooted thee out.

49 The Lord will bring a people vpon thee from a farre, and from the end of the earth, which ſhal fly as the Eagle: a people whoſe language thou ſhalt not vnderſtand.

50 A people of a ſhameles countenance, which wil not reuerence the perſon of the aged, nor take pitie vpon the young.

BEcauſe that things bee ſo greatly confuſed in this worlde, that it is heard to diſcerne who they bee whome God meaneth to puniſhe for their ſins; or to whō hee meaneth to ſhewe his loue: Moſes ſayth expreſſely, that God will ſend ſuch apparant tokens vpon them that bee ſtubborne againſt him, as ſhall bee wonderfull to them: Inſomuch as they ſhall be compelled to vnderſtande, that the ſame commeth to paſſe neither by fortune, nor by common meanes; but that they bee extraordinarie thinges, and that God doth ſhewe foorth his power therein. It is true (as wee haue ſaide heretofore) that at the firſt ſight it cannot bee well diſcerned, who they be whome God loueth, and who they bee whome hee miſliketh: becauſe that (as Salomon ſaith) both the good and the euil is common vnto all. Hee that ſerueth God doeth ſome times proſper; and oftentimes hee is afflicted: And ſo is a deſpiſer of God alſo. This is the cauſe ſaith he yͤ men become hardhearted, for it ſeemeth vnto them yͤ they win nothing by ſeruing of god: or rather that it is but loſt labor. Moreouer it is oftē Eccle.9.a.

ſeene that the children of God bee ſometimes more hardly handled than the moſt wicked in ẏ worlde, and therefore it is to bee gathered after carnall capacitie, that it is much better to deſpiſe God. Pſal.73.2. Dauid confeſſed, that hee ſtaggered as vpon the Ice, when he beheld the courſe of thinges to be ſuch as that the good, and they that endeuored to walke in all maner of integritie, muſt be conſtrayned to drinke the water of troubles, to eate the bread of heauineſſe, and to moiſten themſelues with teares: and in the meane while the wicked, which ceaſe not to doe euill, to liue at their eaſe and in pleaſure: whereby it ſhould ſeeme that God loueth them. And what a dealing were that? But our Lorde declareth in this place, that in the ende he will make it apparant to thē that be corrected at his hand, that their ſinnes are the cauſe why they ſuffer ſmarte, howbeit that it be not ſo quickely perceiued. We haue ſeene heretofore among other Deut.28.44 curſes which Moſes denounced, ẏ they which caſt off the worde of God be conſtrayned to borow, and to be euer in neede: and that the others which ſhoulde borowe of them, haue wherewith to help thēſelues. But we ſee how al the children of God fall into neceſſitie, and find not any ẏ wil comfort thē: they make many turns before they meete with a man that wil vſe gentlenes toward them: and this ſeemeth cleane contrarie to the other. But yet doeth God exerciſe his people after ẏ maner: and in that reſpect it is that I ſaid, that when we bee afflicted, whether it bee with pouertie, or with ſickeneſſe, or anie other way, we muſt not fail to enter into accoūt with God, that is, to examine our life, and to ſee whether wee haue not committed manie faultes or no: & then ſhal euerie one of vs finde himſelfe faultie.

Againe on the otherſide, if wee perceiue not the cauſe why that God is mooued to vſe rigour towardes vs: let vs content our ſelues, that hee knoweth the ſame to be profitable for vs: and ẏ if we had not alreadie offended him, yet were we in way to do it: and he hath preuented it: and that all theſe corrections bee to bring vs lowe, to the end that we ſhoulde walke vnder him in feare, and that our fleſhe ſhoulde not be ouerluſtie, as it is thereunto enclined: for God doeth ſome times foreſee the pride of a man, and then he taketh away the occaſions and the obiectes. Beſides this he knoweth that a man will be too iolie in his pompes and delightes; and therefore he cutteth off the occaſion aforehande, whereby the partie is letted, ſo as hee cannot doe as hee woulde. Seeing that our Lord prouideth aforehand for our welfare after ſuch manner, let vs thinke on the faultes which we haue earſt committed. Moreouer if there were no further meaning in it, than to exhort vs to repentance; euen that were much: but we haue alwayes to conſider, howe God cannot too much prouoke vs to come vnto him: for euerie ſtrawe is enough to ſtay vs in this world, and in the meane while wee haue no minde of the heauenly life; or if we thinke thereon, it is ſo coldly, that our trauelling towardes it is not with ſo earneſt affection as it ought to be; and therefore God is faine to deale with vs by manie afflictions. After this manner ought euerie of vs to behaue himſelfe toward him. As touching others, we may not at the firſt daſh condemne them whome God doth puniſhe: but we muſt remember that which is ſaide in the Pſalme; Bleſſed is the man that deemeth wiſely of ẏ afflicted in the day of his trouble. Pſal.41.1. But wee be wonderfull haſtie in that point. As ſoone as wee ſee a poore man in miſerie and wretchedneſſe, O ſay wee, God plagueth him, and he hath deſerued it: we be in that caſe verie raſhe Iudges. If God ſmite vs; after that he hath beſtowed many ſtripes vppon vs, we will hardely remember that wee haue ſinned: but as concerning others, our tongues be verie quicke to condemne them. But we ſhoulde much rather encline to gentleneſſe: as for example, when we ſee the faithfull to ſuffer, we ſhould thinke thus: Behold howe God dealeth with his children, inſtructing vs thereby, that there is no reſt in this world, and that our happineſſe is in heauen, and it is thither that wee ought to lifte vp our hearts. And againe, if this happen to the greene Luk.23.31. trees, what ſhall become of the drie wood? If God ſpare not them which haue indeuoured to followe his worde, as appeareth vnto vs, what Eſa.51.21. ſhall become of the ſkorners thereof, as ſayth the Prophet? If iugdement beginne at the houſe of God: miſerable then ſhall they be which haue hardened themſelues againſt him. Saint Peter 1.Pet.4.17. alſo doeth admoniſhe vs to put the ſame in vre. And ſo yee ſee howe wee ought to deale in this matter. Moreouer, if wee haue patience, and meekeneſſe and bee apt to bee taught, it is certaine that wee ſhall euermore feele a taſt of the goodneſſe of God in the middeſt of the afflictions which hee ſendeth vs. True it is that oftentimes wee ſhall bee put in feare by them. There will be a kinde of vnquietneſſe in vs which will ſo vexe vs that we ſhall thinke our ſelues vtterly forlorne vnleſſe G O D withdrawe his hande very quicklie. If he prolong our afflictions; then we be altogether blancke, our courage faileth vs: ſo that if we be not held in with ẏ feare of God, and with patience, to be altogether quiet vnder his hande: we be euermore wandering. But if we holde vs ſtill there, then ſhall wee vnderſtand ẏ he chaſtiſeth vs in his mercie and goodneſſe: according as it is ſaide in the Prophet Abacuc, Abac.2,4. That the faithfull after they haue beene in heauineſſe, doe in deede vnderſtande, that God doeth neuertheleſſe vphold them, and forgetteth them not but doeth alwayes temper & mitigate their afflictions, ſo as they feele his fatherly goodnes towardes them, and therewithall doe comfort themſelues, and can well ſay with Dauid, Lord if thou wilt bee angrie, it Pſal.30.6. is but for a little while: but thy goodnes endureth all our life long. Beholde (I ſay) here wee may alwayes haue matter wherewith to cheere our ſelues, and to reioyce in the middeſt of our afflictions: ſo as we may perceiue indeede that our Lorde will not faile to be mercifull vnto vs, notwithſtanding that hee vſeth ſome rigour towarde vs, to trye our patience, and to quicken vs vppe to come vnto him, and to labour to the celeſtiall life. But we muſt euermore haue an eye to the ende, according as Dauid ſaith. Pſal.37.1. And therfore in the pſalme 37. hee exhorteth vs not to be greeued at ẏ proſperitie of the wicked: for he knoweth that our eies be as it were daſled. When we ſee a wicked body to be at eaſe and to haue all wiſhes, we ſtreight waies conclude that God hath no regard to deale with mē according as they be worthy: by meanes wherof we ſtagger and are in ſuch perplexitie as we wote not what ſhal becom of vs. Now Dauid ſaith, that in thinking ſo, he played the beaſt, and was out of his wittes, and hee confeſſeth that hee was in that point, bereft of reaſon and iudgement, affirming Pſal.73.22. that he did wrong to al the generation of Gods children, vntil he had looked into the Sanctuarie. It is true, that in the thirty & ſeuenth Pſalme which I alleadged here before, he ſaith, I paſſed by and ſawe the wicked floriſh and growe high like a Cedar tree of Lebanon: and after that I had turned me about, he was cut downe as a tree that had no more left but ẏ drie ſtocke vpon the earth: ſo as there remained no ſigne of him at al. Such changes do we ſee in this world; but put ẏ caſe we ſawe none: yet muſt we enter into the Pſal.73.17. Sanctuarie of God, as it is ſaid in the threeſcore and thirteenth Pſalm. And there we muſt wayte patiently till God make it apparant vnto vs that al afflictions be profitable for his children: and that hee ſendeth them as medicines for their health: and contrariwiſe, ẏ the proſperitie which he permitteth to the contemners of his law and iuſtice, ſhall bee conuerted to their great confuſion. We muſt therefore learne to hold our wits and ſenſes in awe, that we wander not in the afflictions which God doth ſend vs.

But to returne to the purpoſe of Moſes: let vs note well howe hee ſaith that the puniſhmentes which God ſendeth vppon them that haue rebelled againſt him to the vttermoſt, and woulde not be corrected: *ſhall be as tokens and wonders to them and to their poſteritie:* that is to ſay, he wil puniſh them after a ſtraunge faſhion, and as hath not beene wonted amongeſt men: ſo as they ſhal be compelled in ſpite of their teeth to ſay: This is the verie hande of God. And indeed can there be a more beaſtly contempt of God found, than that which was in Pharao? Hee was a man not onely drunken with pride, but altogether ſenſeleſſe: he was a man that deſpiſed the maieſtie of God, and a man ſo rebellious, as was not in any wiſe to be dealt withall. When he heard Moſes and Aaron ſpeake, he laughed them to ſkorn: his feeling of the firſt ſtrokes coulde not make him to yeelde. And in the ende hee needed not a Prophet to admoniſh him: for he himſelfe could Exod.8.19. ſay, Surely this is the finger of God. Wee ſee therefore howe God doeth oftentimes expreſſe his power in ſuch wiſe, that euen the moſt fierce are conſtrained to perceiue and to thinke that there is ſome maieſtie in heauen, which afore that time they had not accompted of, and thereupon to enter into conſideration of their ſinnes and to confeſſe them, and to be the more liuely touched therewith. That is it which Moſes meaneth here concerning ſignes and woonders.

This matter is worthie to be marked. For (as I haue ſaide) if God beginne to puniſh men, it is euermore ſaide to be fortune, this is agreeable to our ſtate, (ſay they:) we know that mans life is ſubiect to much wretchednes, and in ẏ meane while the hand of God is not regarded. And though he double it, yet do men continue dull, & ſeeme as though they could euermore hide them, & ſcape away, becauſe they enter not into their conſciences to ſearche out the ſinnes that be there, but are loath to knowe them, as if a man ſhould goe hide himſelfe in a darke corner of ſet purpoſe to ſhun the brightneſſe of the ſun at noone days. Euen ſo doe we in al the chaſtiſements which God doth ſend vs to warne vs of our ſins and to drawe vs to repentance. But in the end God doth augment his puniſhments in ſuch ſort, as they become miracles: that is to ſay, they exceede the common meaſure, order and courſe of nature, ſo as we might be rauiſhed with aſtoniſhment, and thereby perceiue that God doth then ſhewe himſelfe, as though his hand appeared vnto vs frō heauen. And that is the thing which he declareth more fully in the xxvi. Chapter of Leui. For after he hath pronoūced the ſentence vpon them that reiect the doctrine of ſaluation, he ſaith, I will ſend vpon you ſeuentimes as much, if I perceiue that nothing Leuit.26.8. do preuaile with you: If my puniſhing of you amend you not, I will ad there to ſeuentimes as much. And hee repeateth this ſentence againe in the end; & ſaith, If you will walke at al aduenture againſt me, I will walke alſo at all aduenture againſt you. Now this word, Aduenture, hath relation to the blockiſhnes that is in vs, which we haue touched here before. For we ſee very well the aduerſities that doe befall vs in this worlde, & wading yet further we confeſſe that it is God that puniſheth vs: but to thinke thereon in good earneſt, and to iudge euerie man himſelfe by calling our ſinnes to remembrance ſo often as God giueth any incling of them; it is the furtheſt part of our thought. Let euery man looke to himſelfe: How many afflictions haue we in the yere which ſhold be teſtimonies vnto vs of ẏ wrath of God, & as it were ſummons of apparance before him, warning vs to ſue to him for pardon, and to haue pitie vpon vs? Scarſely doth any one day paſſe, but that a man is warned fiue or ſixe times as if God ſhould ſay vnto him; Wretched creature, why haſt thou no minde of thy ſoule? Why haſt thou no care to beſeech me to receiue thee to mercie? But ſcarſe once in a moneth wil a mā enter into examination of his life to condemne himſelfe; and if we doe it, it is but coldly. But we ought to be ſo aſhamed and ſo vexed at the feeling of Gods wrath as though we ſaw hell lie open before our eyes. But wee ſee that very few doe thinke thereon: for euerie of vs forgetteth himſelfe. That is the thing which God meaneth by this worde of walking at all aduentures againſt vs. Yet doe wee follow on our courſe ſtill, as though no harme had touched vs, we ſwallowe vp our afflictions. They indeede trouble vs, when they pinch vs, at do we nothing but ſhake our eares (as they ſay) and followe ſtill our owne way . Then goe wee at all aduentures, yea euen with exceſſiue ouerweening, when we acknowledge not the hande of God, ne perceiue that hee is a iudge, to the ende that we might miſſelike of our ſinnes, and euerie man labour and indeuour to withdrawe himſelfe therefrom. Our Lorde therefore ſaith, I will come againſt you at all aduentures, as if he ſhould ſay, I will croſſe you and ouertwhart you, & thinke not to gaine anie thing either by your hardening of your heartes, and by your kicking againſt me, or by your dulneſſe in that yee perceiue not howe it is my hande that muſt bring you againe: No no, (ſaith hee) I will bee as ſtout and headſtrong as you, yea and more ſtout and headſtrong to. For I will come at all aduentures, I will let my plagues runne out at randon, ſo as I will breake your neckes, and beate you both backe and bellie, and that without pitie. Nowe we ſee howe much this word ought to wey with vs, where Moſes ſaith: *That the plagues ſhall bee for tokens and wonders*, to all skorners: inſomuch that when they haue bleared out their tongues at the threatenings of God, and haue nodded their heade againſt the firſt corrections which he ſendeth them, & haue bitten on the bridle: he proceedeth on ſtil & ceaſeth not to wring them, but driueth them in the end to come to a reckening do the worſt they can, & to ſay openly, It is the hand of God that preſſeth vs; theſe are the miracles, they be no ordinarie things nor according to the courſe of nature.

Now therfore, let vs learn, not to prouoke Gods wrath ſo far againſt vs; but let vs ſuffer ourſelues to be tamed by him; and let vs yeelde our ſelues conformable & gentle ſo ſoone as he hath ſummoned vs, let vs yeeld ourſelues guiltie without vſing any ſtartingholes: for we ſhall win nothing thereby. There is nothing better than to enter into pure and free confeſſion, ſaying, Lord what wilt thou do to theſe frail & wretched creatures? It is true yͤ we haue a hundred folde deſerued to be suncken: but yet for all that, wee flee vnto thy mercy: wherefore haue pitie vpon vs. When we haue thus condemned our ſelues, it is a meane to pacifie the anger of God, which thing will not be done by hardening of our hearts. For then he will euer more proceede farther, vntill hee haue brought vs to theſe ſignes and wonders, that be here mentioned. Again God muſt needs do the like alſo in reſpect of mens ſlouthfulnes & negligence, or rather vtter ſenſeleſnes. If wee could be ſubdued at yͤ firſt blow: God would take no pleaſure in laying plague vpon plague. But when he ſeeth that there is ſuch a kinde of ſtoutnes, and ſuch a preſumption in vs, that we wil not ſtoope nor bow our necks: he muſt needs hold on vntil he make vs to feel in very deed & after a ſtrange aner, that it is he before whom we muſt yeeld account. Let vs therfore marke wel how the ſtinate malice of the worlde is the cauſe why d ſendeth ſo ſtrange corrections to put vs in And if we conſidered well the ſtate of the at this day, it would make yͤ haires of our o ſtand vpright. Certainely they doe all ſigh at the feeling of the ſtripes, and they complain, howbeit not to any amendmẽt, but rather they bite on yͤ bridle: Inſomuch that when thoſe which be not altogether blockiſh do make compariſon of the preſent ſtate, with that which we haue ſeene before the wrath of God was on this wiſe prouoked; they ſee it as it were a ſeagulfe: & that ought to make vs afraid. And ſo let vs come backe againe to that which Moſes declareth, to wit; that God muſt needs haue found the world very rebellious & hardhearted when he augmẽteth his puniſhments in ſuch ſort: for it ſhoulde neuer come to that paſſe, were it not that men were otherwiſe vnreformable. Let vs not accuſe God of crueltie, when we ſee his rigor to exceed in puniſhing vs: but let vs acknowledge that our ſtubbornneſſe is ſo great, that our Lorde muſt needes handle vs after that faſhion: for otherwiſe he ſhould neuer ouermaſter vs.

That is the thing which we haue to beare in mind. Howbeit that is not al: for we muſt alwaies feare that which is to come. And ſith we ſaw that God hath thus increaſed his puniſhmentes not vpon one man only, but vpon the whole world: let vs bethinke vs to call our ſelues home again before he fal to ſtriking of vs with maine blowes to our confuſion and vtter vndoing, without giuing vs any more reſpit to come to the acknowledgement of our ſins. For it is the ſoreſt point of Gods wrath, when ſinners be taken after ſuch a ſort out of this world, yͭ they cannot haue remẽbrance of their ſins, nor take breath to reſort vnto God, or to aske him forgiuenes. Let vs beware leaſt Gods vengeance proceede ſo farre. And forasmuch as we ſee yͭ the aduerſities of theſe daies be verie great, let vs acknowledge that we haue prouoked God verie much, & that it is not for vs to abuſe his patience any longer. Thus ye ſee in effect what we haue to beare away: ſpecialy whẽ we ſee yͤ ſin doth ouerflow, ſo as all the world is infected with corruption. Although a man doe good, yet neuertheleſſe foraſmuch as it is euermore mixed wͭ ſin, he ſhalbe chaſtiſed, howbeit, not at the firſt daſh: for as I haue ſaid afore, God doeth ſpare the wicked and tarrie for them, and in the meane while puniſh the good that ſeek to walke a right: but yet in the end he alwayes plagueth the diſpiſers of his law & maieſtie. And as touching the good, he will make thẽ to feele his grace to their ioy, ſo that although hee exerciſe thẽ with manie chaſtiſements & aduerſities: yet notwithſtanding, they ſhal not faile to know him to be their God & father ſtil, & to reſt vpon him. As for the wicked they be not diſpoſed to taſt or to feele the loue & goodnes of God: but are rather wood againſt him. But when iniquitie is become as a maine ſea, & al men are corrupted: thẽ the vengeance of God muſt alſo ouerflow, ſo as none may be free from it. We haue ſeen already yͤ threatning yͭ was made here before, namely yͤ yͤ people ſhould be led into captiuitie with their king. When this came to paſſe, were none caried away into captiuitie but the wicked, and ſuch as ſtroue againſt the Prophetes, and ſuch as deſpiſed the good doctrine, and ſuch alſo as were headſtrong againſt God like wilde beaſtes? Deut.28.

Yes,there was Ieremie himſelfe who had called vppon the people fiftie yeeres together and neuer ceaſſed to crie:What do ye,ye wretched people? Yet notwithſtanding wee ſee that while others ſported them,he wept and wailed:and not contented with that, ſaide; Who can turne my Ier.9.1. heade into teares, ſo as my braine may bee as a fountaine guſhing out continually, that I may bewayle the ſinnes and calamities of my people? See how the holy Prophet, (after that he had laboured in the ſeruice of God,and fought againſt al the wicked,and made warre againſt all maner of iniquitie and ſtubbornneſſe:) is faine to be led away captiue aſwell as the reſt, and to be put to reproch,not of being caried to Babilon, for that had beene the beſt that could haue bin wiſhed at that time: but God gaue him not the fauour to be brought thither,but he was faine to be harried into Egypt: Ier.43.6. yet had hee ſayde, Curſed bee they that goe into Egypt: goe ye into Babylon and ſerue the king of Babylon; be quiet and obedient there, Ier.42.15. and beare patiently this puniſhment of God, and in the ende he will take pitie on you. The holy Prophet had not the ſame libertie. So then wee ſee, that when calamities come for the generall corruption of all men,the good are wrapped vp amongſt the euill. And why is that? Bycauſe it is not almoſt poſſible to walke amongſt ſuch infections, and not to bee ſomewhat ſpotted therewith. Albeit that Ieremie reſiſted the euill as much as he coulde: yet ſauored hee of the publique corruptions of the people, and therefore it behoued him to be puniſhed with the reſt; howbeit God did not execute ſuch vengeance vpon him, as he did vppon the deſpiſers of his lawe,no not by a great deale. For Ieremie had alwayes a good teſtimonie,that God did guide him; and when he was in Egypt, he was by a ſpeciall priuiledge free from ẏ curſe that hee had pronounced vppon all them that would goe into Egypt: for they drewe him thyther by force. Ye ſee therefore howe God wrappeth vp his people amongſt the rebels, but yet he ſaueth them after a maruailous maner,which giueth them continuall cauſe of comfort in him. As much is to be ſayd of Daniel. Daniel is ſet forth vnto vs as a myrror of integritie.Ezechiel Ezec.14.14. ſpeaking of him,putteth him for the third of the moſt holy that could be choſen; yet was he caried to Babylon;and was it for the ſinnes of others? He was an hypocrite and had lied vnto God,if it had not bin for his owne ſinnes.For he ſaith Dan.9.5. expreſly in the ninth chapter, I haue made confeſſion as well of mine owne ſinnes as of the ſinnes of my people.He ſayth euen at the firſt,Lord we haue offended thee, & bin diſobedient, we haue rebelled againſt thee, both wee and our fathers, our Kings and Rulers: which wordes of his are ſpoken generally: It may be ſayde, that he put himſelfe in the number with the others. But,to the end that nothing ſhould be replyed thereunto, Dan.9.20. he goeth further and ſayth, I haue confeſſed my ſinnes and the ſinnes of my people. Whereby we ſee that Daniell, whatſoeuer integritie and perfection was in him,was neuertheleſſe ſtained with the common vices,and therefore deſerued to feele his part and portion of the puniſhments that God ſent vppon all the people. Heereby wee are alſo the better warned, to ſtand in feare and to walke in the more warineſſe when we ſee the world ſo corrupted; aſſuring our ſelues, that in the ende wee muſt feele by experience, that God hath ſpoken in good earneſt, where hee ſayeth,that hee will come ſtubbornly againſt vs, if we continue in going ſtubbornly againſt him. This is in effect all that wee haue to remember in this Text, where Moſes ſpeaketh of Signes and myracles. Wherefore let vs open our eyes in this caſe, and let vs not linger vntill GOD compell vs to come to him by force, and ſtretch out his mightie arme againſt vs: but let vs receiue his worde,and let it ſerue vs for Spectacles to beholde his iudgementes afarre off, and let vs not tarie the executing of his extreme rigour.

Nowe he addeth therewith, *Bycauſe thou haſt not ſerued thy God with a good will, and cheerefully when thou haddeſt aboundance of all manner of things.* Heere doeth hee reprooue the Iewes, for that they coulde not abyde that God ſhould intreate them gently. And it is not all onely to them that hee ſpeaketh, but alſo vnto vs. We haue therefore a generall doctrine to bee gathered of this ſpeeche; namely, that God of his owne nature,is inclyned to allure vs vnto him by gentle and louing meanes, like as a father goeth about to winne his children, by beyng merrie with them, and by giuing them all that they deſire. If a father coulde alwayes laugh with his children, and fulfill their deſires, all his delyght ſhould ſurely be in them: ſuch a one doeth God ſhew himſelfe to be toward vs. In deede he is not paſſionate as men are:we may not thinke ẏ God is like vnto vs;but in ſo much as we comprehend not his maieſtie,bicauſe it is too high, he is faine to humble himſelfe,and to vſe a kinde of ſpeech fitte for our rudeneſſe and for the weakenes of our wittes. Neuertheleſſe it is certaine that the propertie of God is to winne vs gently, as a father endeuoureth to win his children. What is it that God requireth? That wee ſhoulde ſerue him with a franke and free heart, yea and euen with gladneſſe. In what manner? Verily that bicauſe he dealeth gently with vs, and giueth vs al thinges that we neede,we therefore ought to be quiet and well contented, if we be not vnthankfull. And ſo let vs conclude, that all the calamities, troubles, wretchednes and miſeries,which happen in this world, be the fruits of our ſinnes, and that wee driue God to handle vs with ſuch rigor. He is faine (as ye would ſay) to transforme himſelfe,and to forſake his nature to ouermaiſter vs,bicauſe hee ſeeth that ſinne is exceeding great in vs,and that we can no skill to turne the good to our benefite, which he is readie to doe vs. Howbeit (as I haue ſaid afore) God doth not alwayes tarie till we haue offended him:we muſt needes graunt that he preuenteth our ſinnes: he ſeeth that we be in danger to fall, and he doeth remedie it in due time. Yet notwithſtanding,all the corrections which we endure in this world, proceede of our ſinnes: and the filthines that is

Pſal.47.
Pſal.16.11.

in vs,is the cauſe why God ſendeth vs not abundance of good thinges according to our deſire. And if there were nothing elſe , but this , ẏ men fall aſleepe , & ſape themſelues in theſe earthly pleaſures, ſo as they be not able to looke to the place which Dauid doth call them to;namely,to ſatisfie our ſelues with the ſight of God, & to reioyce in his preſence. Seeing ẏ men cannot attaine thereunto , but are euer wedded to theſe baſe things:doe not we deſerue that God ſhould withdraw ẏ plenty ẏ he was ready to giue vs, for ẏ he perceiueth that it wold burſt vs:and in ſtead of ſuſteining vs it would ſo ouerload vs ẏ it wold beare vs down to the ground.This is ẏ cauſe why our Lord vſeth not ſuch liberality toward vs as we deſire. For he for his part is not dreined dry, neither doeth hee feare to bee impoueriſhed,by ſending vs plenty of al manner of good thinges. We know he is a fountaine ẏ can neuer bee drawen dry : but when he ſeeth that we waſt & deuour his benefites,and be worſe than drunken,& that beſides the riotouſnes which wee vſe,we be alſo vnthankfull as not onely to fall into forgetfulneſſe, but alſo to ſpurne againſt his maieſty,& to turne our backes vpon him : inſomuch that if wee haue wherwith to maintaine our ſelues well, we fall to Gluttonie, pompouſneſſe,whoredom, and other looſeneſſe, and to be ſhort,the abuſes which we commit in the vſing of Gods bleſſings, are as an vnmeaſurable ſeagulfe : therfore when he ſeeth ſuch things,he withdraweth his hand & ſheweth not himſelfe ſo liberall toward vs . This is the Summe of that we haue to beare in mind. And therefore , ſeeing that God for his part is alwayes readie to multiply vs, & to giue vs plentie of all good things,were it not that we be not able to brooke it : we muſt vnderſtand that wee are as ſicke folke , which muſt haue a ſmall pittance allowed vnto them, and be conſtrained to a diet. And why? Bycauſe they bee not able to brooke their foode. Whereupon we ought well to vnderſtande that which Moſes ſpeaketh to our reproche. For what a ſhame is it , that wee cannot abide that God ſhould vſe vs gently and after a fatherly ſort? Behold , God offereth himſelfe,not onely in woordes , but alſo in deedes: and he offereth to giue vs all that wee deſire. But what ? Hee ſeeth vs not diſpoſed to receiue him, wee deſpiſe him , and thruſt away his grace; muſt there not bee then a horrible frowardnes in men ? Let euerie one of vs excuſe himſelfe as much as he will : yet muſt this ſaying needes bee verified,and when we haue kicked and ſpurned neuer ſo much, yet ſhall wee at the laſt bee conuicted of this maliciouſneſſe, that we could not finde in our heartes to ſuffer G O D to deale gently with vs, *ne haue ſerued him ioyfully and with a merrie heart* . Therefore let vs not woonder though hee doe handle vs as wee deſerue,when wee bee ſo rebellious againſt him. For when hee ſeeth that wee kicke againſt him , hee muſt needes breake vs , and deale with vs after ſuch a faſhion as wee may vnderſtande that hee is our maiſter : not that they which bee puniſhed, doe ſerue G O D : but for that they vnderſtand that hee hath the maiſterie ouer them , when the puniſhmentes come ſo farre that they are become ſignes and wonders. When G O D appeareth vnto them as it were in a viſible manner from heauen ; then doe they perceiue , Alas I cannot flee nor ſcape the hande of G O D. Then doe they vnderſtande that hee hath the Lordſhip ouer them , not that they willingly yeeld themſelues thereunto , but that they lye languiſhing and aſtoniſhed therein, as men locked vp in priſon . The thing then which wee haue to remember, is that ſith wee coulde not bee contented , that God ſhould handle vs gently by bowing vnder his hand, that he might guide vs , turne vs and returne vs which way he liſted : wee muſt bee forced by trouble and ſorrowe,to vnderſtand that he hath full ſoueraintẏ ouer vs, and that his vtter breaking and ouerthrowing of vs,is bycauſe wee could not abide to bee gouerned by his hande, when hee was ready to guide vs . This is the matter that we haue to note in the ſecond place.

Gen.1.26.
Gen.3.18.

Wee ſee the very ſame in all mankinde; not only touching the afflictions of this preſent life; but alſo wee haue this reproch layde vppon vs, that we bee ſtill as it were, famiſhed for want of ſpirituall bleſſinges . For our father Adam was created in ſuch ſtate , that the worlde was an earthly Paradiſe : The whole earth yeelded him all good thinges to his wiſhe : hee endured neither heate nor colde , nor any greeuous want . Thus was our father Adam appointed Lorde and Maiſter ouer all the worlde, all the Elementes and all the beaſtes of the earth ſerued him quietly ; and all fruites ſerued his taſt and ſauour . What was hee in his perſon ? Hee bare the Image of God, and was of ſo great nobleneſſe and worthineſſe that hee was as the Angels of heauen : and hee had dwelled in this worlde , with all his lynage, as in a place where hee ſhoulde haue had no troubles but hee could not abide to bee ſo gently entreated . When God had thus enriched him with his benefites, hee muſt needes miſtake himſelfe, hee could not ſerue God with a good heart nor with ioy . What could haue greeued him? For God ſhewed him a ſweete and a gratious countenance,and powred out the treaſures of his fatherly loue towards him;but Adam could not abyde that,but through his vnthankfulneſſe he alyenated himſelfe from God . And in what caſe are wee nowe ? We muſt ſerue God in hungar and thurſt , in nakedneſſe and reproche, for the earth is curſed vnto vs . When we haue tilled it , it muſt bring vs foorth thiſtles and thornes . Wee ſee the ſeaſons contrary ; when we waite for a good yeere, we ſee hayle or froſt, drought or rayne,which ſerue to pluck the bread out of our mouthes, and to diſappoint vs of our foode . We ſee the ayre troubled, and infections which oftentimes engender diſeaſes . Great is the toyle of men . For when they haue gotten foode with greate diſtreſſe ; yet want they wherwith to cloath themſelues.See there (I ſay) in what taking we be . And wherefore ? Bicauſe wee would not ſerue our God cheerefully and with a good hart,when he gaue vs abundance of all maner of bleſſings. But this is not the cheefe matter, (as I haue ſayde heeretofore:) for wee are deſtitute of the righteouſneſſe of God. Our very true ornament, was that wee could haue faſhioned our ſelues to all manner of right; and nowe we be ſpoyled thereof. As then wee had reaſon and vnderſtanding: but nowe bee wee become beaſtly, for the brightneſſe that ſhoulde ſhine in vs, is but darkeneſſe. Againe, wee bee couered with reproche: and whereas the Image of God ſhoulde ſhyne in vs, now we haue the markes of ſinne; ſo that euen our very bare bodyes muſt giue vs to vnderſtand of the ſame: inſomuch that if a man bee naked, hee is aſhamed of himſelfe. And why? God doeth by this meane ſhewe vnto vs what infection there is in our ſoules, in that wee bee fayne to hyde vs, as not beeing worthy to bee numbred amongſt his creatures. Finally wee bee like dry earth. Trueth it is that wee bee ouer fruitefull in euill: but of goodneſſe, what is founde in vs? Seeing wee bee thus vnfurniſhed of all graces, it is good reaſon that wee ſhoulde languiſh in this fraile lyfe, bycauſe wee could not ſerue our God with ioy and a good heart, at ſuch tyme as hee had powred out all his riches moſt perfectly vpon vs.

Nowe ſith wee beholde the euill that is in all mankynde; let vs alſo apply the ſame particularly to our ſelues. Therefore when as our Lorde viſiteth vs, and maketh vs to feele afflictions that bee ſtraunge vnto vs; let vs caſt down our heads, and enter into ſuch examination of our ſelues as this: Goe to, whereas GOD hath giuen vs wherewith to ſerue him, howe doe wee diſcharge our ſelues thereof? If there come an ill yeere that bringeth dearth of Corne or wine, ſo that famine doth threaten vs; let vs looke howe wee honoured GOD in the tyme that hee gaue vs plentie. If wee ſee there is aboundaunce of wine, then drunkenneſſe hath his full ſcope, ſo that men cannot bee reſtrayned from breaking out into all maner of diſorder, and (which worſe is,) they ſticke not to blaſpheme the name of GOD, and to ruſh out into al diſorder, and to take leaue to ſurfeitting and glutting of themſelues out of all meaſure. In aboundaunce of Corne wee ſee the lyke; men bee ſo proude therof that they cannot abyde either warning or diſcipline, but they kicke againſt GOD, and their pryde is moreouer matched with crueltie, ſo as euery man taketh to himſelfe; hee that hath the moſt, will if hee can playe the Tyrant ouer his neighbours, in taking no pitie vppon them that bee in want. At this poynt are wee in the tyme of plentie. Therefore is our Lorde fayne to chaunge his Copie, and to manyfeſt his Maieſtie vnto vs, and to compell vs to vnderſtande what ſoueraintie and dominion hee hath ouer vs; ſeeing wee cannot finde in our heartes to ſerue him with a cheerefull heart and with a good will, nor to giue ouer our ſelues vnto him. Are wee in reſt? All our indeuour is howe to plucke out one an others eyes, and to torment our ſelues lyke Cattes and Dogges. And if wee warre not with men, wee fight againſt GOD, which is farre worſe. And if wee holde on, let vs not bee greeued that wee bee confounded altogether, ſeeing wee ſet vp our ſelues agaynſt the Maieſtie of him, vnder whome wee ought to bowe. Nay, wee ſee that moſt commonly men make warre againſt GOD, when hee giueth them reſt: wee ſhall ſee both generally and particularly that they which bee at leaſure to doe euill, doe perſecute the Church, and torment the poore faythfull ones. As ſoone as GOD giueth them any reſpite, they ſeeke nothing but occaſion to doe hurt and to exerciſe their crueltie. And this is to be ſeene, not onely in the enemies of the Church, but alſo in all others: inſomuch that both greate and ſmall, when GOD hath left vs in reſt, and wee haue made an ende of warring one againſt another, wee fall to deſpiſing of GOD one way or other. Let vs not wonder therefore, if when a warre is finiſhed; it beginne againe immediatly. For it is needefull that GOD ſhould deale with vs in ſuch maner. otherwiſe he cannot rule vs.

And let vs marke well howe it is ſayde heere moreouer, *That GOD will raiſe vp a barbarous people againſt ſuch as woulde not bee obedient vnto him.* Such is Gods raigning ouer vs, that hee deſireth to bee as a father vnto vs, rather than to bee a dreadfull King or Prince ouer vs. It is true that wee muſt doe him homage as to our ſoueraigne Lorde, and that wee muſt behaue our ſelues as his people in all ſubiection and humilitie, ſubmitting our ſelues vnder his obedience: but yet therewithall hee doeth the office of a father towarde vs, and will bee knowen to bee a father. For hee ſpeaketh after an amiable maner, inſomuch that although his commaundementes be harde vnto vs, bicauſe of our malice and rebellion as concerning the fleſhe: yet notwithſtanding after hee hath declared his will vnto vs, hee exhorteth vs, he warneth vs, he rebuketh vs: and all theſe things hee doeth with ſuch myldeneſſe, as wee muſt needes ſhewe our ſelues to want both witte and reaſon, if wee bee not benefited by the goodneſſe hee vſeth. But will wee not hearken to our GOD when hee ſpeaketh vnto vs in ſo gentle and gratious a manner? Then wil hee talke with vs with maine ſtrokes of halbardes, pykes, and hagbuts. Wee ſhall there vnderſtande nothing, the language of them will bee very ſtraunge vnto vs. And wherefore? Bycauſe wee had no eares to heare when GOD ſpake gratiouſly vnto vs, yea and when hee ſtooped ſo lowe, as to teache vs lyke little children, that are taught their A, B, C. Go too then, let vs vnderſtande that when wee bee ſo deafe againſt God: hee muſt talke with vs in an other language, and hee muſt ſtirre vp ſome barbarous and braſen faced people, that haue neyther reuerence, reaſon, nor equitie: to whom when yee ſhall pray for pitie and compaſſion: it ſhall be but in vaine, they will giue no eare vnto you, you ſhall goe that way in ſpite of your beardes. And what is the remedie of all theſe euils? Let vs enter, let vs enter into our conſciences, let vs not grynde our teeth at men, as wee are wont to doe, let vs not ſtriue with them. For our combate is not there. But let vs vnderſtand that God meaneth to chaſtiſe vs by men, bycauſe wee haue beene ſtubborne towardes him, and would not bee edifyed by his woorde, according as his meaning was. And therefore let vs benefite our ſelues by all theſe warninges, and corrections which GOD doeth ſende vs. And let vs not abyde till wee feele the knockes; but whenſoeuer GOD doeth vs the fauour to teach vs at other mens coſt, let vs receiue profite thereby: and when he ſpareth vs, let vs not abuſe his patience. And for as much as the meane to reconcile vs vnto him, is to accept the promiſe that hee offereth vs in the Goſpell, let vs imbrace our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt, which is our peace, to the ende that wee may be entreated after a fatherly ſorte; at the handes of our God. Eph.2.14

Nowe let vs fall downe before the Maieſtie of our good God, with acknowledgement of our miſdeedes, beſeeching him to make vs to perceiue them yet better; and therewithall to beare with vs in ſuch ſort, and that his chaſtiſements and corrections may bee ſo fatherly and meaſurable towarde vs, as wee may bee reduced to the obedience of his righteouſneſſe, and that he will euermore ſo comfort vs, as wee may haue whereof to reioyce in him, and to glorifie him, for his procuring of our ſaluation by all meanes. And ſo let vs all ſay, Almightie God heauenly father, &c.

On Thurſday the xxvj. of March, 1556.

The CLXI. Sermon which is the ninth vpon the eight and twentith Chapter.

49.50 The Lord will ſtirre vp, &c.

51 The ſame ſhall eate the fruite of thy Cattel, and the fruite of thy land, vntil thou bee rooted out, and hee ſhall leaue thee neither Corne, wine, nor Oyle, nor any fruite of thy Cattel, nor of the flocks of thy ſheepe, vntil he haue brought thee to nought.

52 And hee ſhall beſiege thee in all thy Townes, vntill hee haue caſt downe thy high and ſtrong walles, wherein thou dyddeſt put thy truſt throughout all thy lande: and hee ſhall beſiege thee in all thy Townes throughout al the lande that the Lord thy God hath giuen thee.

53 Thou ſhalt eate the fruite of thy wombe euen the fleſhe of thy ſonnes and daughters, which the Lorde thy God hath giuen thee, in the ſiege and diſtreſſe wherewith thine enemie ſhall ſtraiten thee.

54 In ſo much that the man which is tender and exceeding daintie among you ſhall bee grieued to looke vpon his brother, and vpon the wife in his boſome, and vpon the reſt of his children that be left,

55 And ſhall not giue vnto them of the fleſh of his children, whereof hee himſelfe eateth, for feare leaſt he ſhould leaue nothing at al for himſelfe, by reaſon of the ſiege and ſtraitneſſe wherewith thine enemie ſhall diſtreſſe thee in all thy Cities.

56 Yea and the woman that is ſo tender and nyce among you, that ſhee will not venter to ſet the ſole of hir foote vppon the grounde, bicauſe of hir tendernes and nyceneſſe, ſhall bee grieued to looke vpon the husband that lyeth in hir boſome, and vpon hir ſonne and vpon hir daughter,

57 And vppon the afterbirth which is come out from betwixt hir legges, and vpon the babes which ſhee hath brought forth: for ſhee ſhall eate them priuily for want of all manner of things, in the ſiege and ſtraitnes, wherewith thine enemie ſhall diſtreſſe thee in thy Cities.

58 If thou doe not keepe and perfourme all the wordes of this Law, which be written in this booke, and feare this glorious and dreadfull name of the Lorde thy God,

WEe muſt remember what was touched yeſterday, and alſo what Moſes doeth ſtill continue to ſpeake of: that is, that if men bee rough and cruell vnto vs, God doeth ſtirre them vp thereunto: bycauſe he hath found vs rebellious towardes him. And therefore whenſoeuer men deale not ſo myldely with vs as we woulde, let vs looke whether we haue anſwered God, & whether wee haue meekely imbraced all that he hath commaunded vs: for if any of vs doe finde himſelfe to haue made warre and to haue ſet vp himſelfe againſt God; it is not to be wondered at, if God pay him with the like againe, on the behalfe of men. But wee ſhall neuer be perſwaded of this doctrine, vnleſſe we vnderſtande, that God holdeth the hearts of men in his hand to ſoften them, when it pleaſeth him be they neuer ſo hard hearted; and on the contrarie part to harden them, though they bore vs neuer ſo much good will before. Let vs not therfore truſt to ẏ loue of men, vnleſſe we walke in the feare of God. For it lieth in him ſo to change their hearts as they ſhal beare rancor toward vs, & be quite & cleane ẇdrawen frõ vs for leſſe than nothing, in ſo much as the worlde ſhall ſee ẏ they which were moſt foreward to helpe vs, ſhall become moſt againſt vs. And on ẏ otherſide let vs vnderſtand, ẏ our Lord can well qualifie al malice, yea though they be as fierce as a Lion, he will make them mylde & friendly towardes vs. There was neuer nation ſo proude & cruell as ẏ Egyptians: and in ſpecial, how ſpiteful were they againſt the children of Iſrael? It ſeemed ẏ this poore people ſhould neuer haue founde any mercy. And yet God wrought in ſuch wiſe, ẏ the Egyptians gaue them all their treaſures, & all that euer was excellent in their houſes, there was neither ſiluer nor gold ſpared. And whereof came that? Before ẏ time they had held the Iewes in bondage, they had vexed them out of all meaſure: they wold haue plucked ẏ bread out of their mouths, yea & haue cut ẏ throtes of thẽ all. A litle afore
Exod.1.16. they had killed their children as ſoone as they came out of their mothers wombs, of purpoſe to haue deſtroyed ẏ whole ſtock of them: & wherof then came this ſoudaine myldnes ẏ euery man
Exod.11.2. brought them ẏ things ẏ were moſt precious in his houſe? It was god ẏ cõuerted their harts. And
Ioſua.11.20 likewiſe on ẏ cõtrary ſide, it is ſaid ẏ he hardned the hearts of kings, when ẏ people were to enter into ẏ land of Canaan: whereas they ſhold haue bin ſuffered to paſſe, there were many gaineſayers ẏ reſiſted them. Whence came that? Euen of this, ẏ they had reſiſted their God. Let vs therefore learne (as I haue ſaide heretofore) ſo to behaue our ſelues in obedience towardes God, ẏ men alſo for their partes may be friendly vnto vs. For there is none ſo great nor ſo mightie, but he ſhal finde ſome miſerie to riſe vp againſt him, when he wil needes play the ſtout fellow in ſtriuing againſt God. And we haue ſeene that they which are drunken ẇ their owne greatnes, muſt in ẏ end bee puniſhed, not by ſuch as are in any authoritie, or by ſuch as are of eſtimation in this world: but by raſcals & naughtipacks: ſuch folke muſt euen ſpit in their faces. And ſuch examples are to be ſeen euen in princes, & men of greateſt ſtate. For when they yeelde not themſelues to be gouerned of God, he is faine to ſtirre vp gouernours to ẏ contrary, to ſhame ſuch as wil not be obedient vnto him. Yet notwẏſtanding when men yeeld not thẽſelues tractable; then muſt we vnderſtand ẏ god manageth the matter by a ſecret meane; and that he doth it to make vs to ſtoope. Therefore let vs not deceiue our ſelues in the creatures, ſaying; What fortune is this? In deede we may ſay ſo, but wee muſt go yet one ſtep farther: & we muſt vnderſtand ẏ it commeth not to paſſe without ẏ direction of God. And thereupon wee muſt repaire to ẏ remedie, that is to wit, wee muſt ſtoope vnder the word & hand of God, and conſider, ẏ if it pleaſe him, he can turne ẏ minds of men ẏ were ſo ſpitefull againſt vs, & make thẽ to become friendly to vs. And ẏ is a thing more than neceſſarie. For when wee haue to doe with them ẏ be rough & intractable, we be by and by out of heart, & would, (if we could poſſibly) ridde our ſelues of all troubles, and be ſet free from thẽ at the firſt daſh. But we ſhould rather returne vnto God, acknowledging ẏ thoſe things proceede from his hand. And ſo, when men ſhew thẽſelues ſo vnfaithful and cruell towarde vs, handling vs ſcornefully & opprobriouſly, ſo as we cãnot get one whit of right or reaſon at their hands, but we ſee how their whole ſeeking is to ſet their feete on our throtes, & they haue ſuch a beaſtly ſhameleſnes (as it is ſaid here,) ẏ they be not aſhamed of any thing ẏ is ſaid vnto them, but they take ẏ bridle in their teeth, & play the wilde beaſtes, ſo as there is neither grace nor honeſtie in them; when wee ſee ſuch barbarous beaſtlineſſe, let vs learne to reſort vnto our God, & to acknowledge ẏ we deſerue to be ſo tamed by him. Moreouer ẏ onely meane to appeaſe ſuch furie, & to aſſwage thoſe which are ſo hot and haſtie; is to call vpon our God, and to pray him to touche thoſe inwardly with his holy ſpirite, which are ſo cruell and cannot yeelde to doe vs good, bycauſe wee haue ſet vp our ſelues againſt our God. That is the thing whereof we are admoniſhed in this Text.

Nowe Moſes repeateth that which hath beene touched heeretofore: namely, *That God will bring vs enemyes from a farre Countrie, and that they ſhall flie as Eagles*, to the intent wee ſhoulde not thinke that GOD needeth to make any preparation long aforehand. As if a man ſhould threaten vs: we would looke whether he had a ſword in his hand, and whether he be in readines to execute ẏ which he hath ſaid. But if God doe but whiſtle (as he often ſpeaketh by his Prophets,) by and by hee hath his men of warre in Eſa.5.26.
readines; he needeth not to make muſters, or to inrolle them, or to ſounde the drum: he needeth none of al this: onely at his whiſtle (for he vſeth that ſimilitude;) all the whole earth muſt needes bee moued. Therefore let vs not looke whether things be in a readines, nor whether any hurt or harme be done vs. Let vs not looke whether any worldly meanes bee prepared thereunto: but

let vs vnderſtand that ere we can conceiue what euill may happen vnto vs, we ſhall be preſently ouerthrowne. And wherefore? Bycauſe it is God that ſpeaketh, which maketh men to flye as birds, euen from yͤ one end of the earth to the other. There is neither ſea nor mountains able to ſaue vs from the experience of yͭ which we neuer beleeued. Howbeit God hath ſo diſpoſed things, yea & euen amongſt the heathen is oftentimes ſeene incredible ſpeedines, when God is diſpoſed to chaſtiſe the greateſt part of yͤ world: inſomuch that ſome one man hath riſen with a ſmal number of people, to chaſtice an infinite multitude yͭ did ſet themſelues againſt him: and that not for one time onely, but twiſe or thriſe one after another, with taking of Townes & Fortreſſes, which ſeemed to be ſo wel appointed, yea and ſtrong by naturall ſituation, that they could not be approched vnto, & yet haue they bin ſacked as if God had meant to renue a great part of the worlde. It hath bin in likewiſe ſeene, that a people without renoune or eſtimation, haue riſen and made the moſt mighty to tremble. In this dooing God giueth examples of that which is written heere: to wit, that he can ſurely bring our enemies vpon the ſoudayne, and that they ſhal make ſuch diſpatch, as if they came ſwifter againſt vs than by poſt: and that when we ſuppoſe to haue ſome reſpit, by truce for one moneth, for one yeere or for al our lifetime, we ſhal be ſoudenly ſurpriſed in a morning before we thinke thereon. Let vs therfore vnderſtand, that as ſoone as God ſpeaketh, wee muſt haue an eye vnto the infinite power (that is in him, yea and which is incredible to mans vnderſtanding,) & to tremble at his very word, and to yeeld vnto him: knowing well that if we delay from day to day, wee may be preuented, & then will it be too late. Let vs therfore be aduiſed to humble our ſelues in due time, and to craue pardon when we haue offended him.

Moſes ſayeth expreſſely, *That they which are diſobedient vnto God, ſhal be beſieged & ſhut vp within their walles, vntill all their fortreſſes in which they truſted, be beaten downe.* Here we ſee how God reproueth the falſe and curſed preſumption wherby men deceiue themſelues, in thinking themſelues to be well fenced againſt him. It is a ſacriledge whereby God is robbed of his honor, whē we attribute vnto the creatures, yͤ meane to vphold vs. It is certaine yͭ God ſerueth himſelfe by meanes, & we muſt alſo apply thē vnto our vſe: but in the meane while to ſettle our truſt vppon them, were a robbing of God of his maieſtie. For he wil haue vs to hold al things of him, and to do him homage for them. So then it is an intollerable preſumption for vs to put our truſt in creatures & to ground our ſelues on them: and yet there is no fault more common in yͤ world. We can ſay wel ynough, yͭ it is not lawfull, & that we ought not to doe it: but in the meane while euerie one doth it. Now let vs remēber our ſelues, for there is nothing yͭ God holdeth more deare, or whereof he maketh greater account than his honour. Neither is it ſufficient for vs to leaue him the title & name of God: but he muſt alſo be knowne as he is, yͭ is to ſay, that al power lieth in him, that he is the fountaine of all manner of grace & goodnes: that it is his proper office to maintaine and preſerue vs: that our life is in his hand, & all things that belong therto. When we haue well thought vpon this, let vs take order to gather our wits ſo about vs, as we be not grounded vpon creatures. Surely the miſchiefe is double when we ſhield our ſelues with yͤ creatures againſt God, & therby to become ſtubborne whē he threateneth vs, & to hold on ſtill when he vttereth forth tokens of his diſpleaſure: let vs conſider that the offence is then much more grieuous. But yet is this ouer common. For whileſt we perceiue not any daunger towardes, as in reſpect of the world; doe not wee continue in our ſinnes? And doe we not abide in ſtubbornneſſe? God ſpeaketh: but we regard him not. So yͭ men doe fauour vs, & ſo we haue wherewith to fortifie our ſelues, we thinke that yͤ hand of God can not come at vs. And therefore it is not without cauſe yͭ our Lord reproueth the frowardnes of al ſuch as are diſobedient towardes him: that is to ſay, that they put their truſt in their fortreſſes, in their high walles, in their munitions, and in ſuch like things. Now foraſmuch as we bee ſubiect to theſe things, it were better for vs yͭ we had neyther hedge nor aught elſe, than to be wel fenced with walles and bulworkes. For they ſerue but to blinde our eyes, that haue no more reſpect to our God: but be bewitched by Sathan to put our truſt in things which ſhalbe our confuſion. Howſoeuer the caſe ſtandeth, let vs aduiſedly holde this rule in generall; that is, yͭ God be euermore our fortreſſe: as we ſee he promiſeth by his Prophet Eſay, aſwel in the 12. Chapter, as alſo from yͤ 55. vnto the end: for it tendeth al to this point. And it is ſo commō a doctrine in the holy ſcripture, that we can ſcarſe turne a leafe, but we ſhal ſee ſome text, wherein God telleth vs yͭ he wil be our rampyres, our wals, our ditches, yea & double ditches, our towers, and whatſoeuer elſe is needefull for our defence. And why? For (as I haue heretofore ſaid,) our mindes do forthwith ſlide into vanitie ſo as God is not able to hold vs backe to himſelfe; and to make account that we will put our whole truſt in him. What muſt wee then doe? Firſt of all, if we bee deſtitute of mans aide, let vs vnderſtand that God alone is ſufficient, if wee returne vnto him, [& ſay:] Ah Lord, it is certaine yͭ we are ſet for a pray, we haue not wherewͭ to ſaue our ſelues, for all the world doth faile vs: but yet it is ynough yͭ thou art our ſuccour. After yͤ maner ſhould wee learne to reſort vnto him. And ſo ſhoulde wee take occaſion to yeelde our ſelues wholly vnto him when the things of this worlde doe fayle vs. And by the way, although wee haue walles, and artillerie, money and munition, and all that wee can wiſh for, yea and people alſo, and all thinges elſe: yet let vs vnderſtande that wee muſt in the meane while ſo vſe them, as our Lorde may bee alway our truſt, and we giue him euermore this honor, that it is his office to defend vs, and that thereupon wee wade no farther. It is certayne that wee may ſerue our turne with the things which hee putteth into our handes: but yet in the meane

Eſa.12.&

meane while, our hearts and mindes muſt bee rayſed vp aboue all the worlde, and hee alone muſt bee our ſhooteanker. Thirdely, wee muſt not vaunt our ſelues of the force ot the helpes that he giueth vs: for a ſpeare of a bramble (as they ſay) is enough to make vs beleeue that wee bee inuincible. What [ſay wee?] Is it poſſible that they ſhould preuaile againſt vs? All this is nothing: no not worth the pill of an Onyon, as they ſay: yet will wee needes ſtreine our wittes to giue it price and the glory. Nay contrariwiſe, let vs acknowledge our debilitie and weakeneſſe, that we may repaire vnto God, and let nothing hinder vs from yeelding our ſelues wholy vnto him and vnto his protection: let vs not deceiue our ſelues with ſuch vaine confidence, as the Iewes had in their high wals. Nowe heerewithall hee ſheweth alſo that all that euer wee can deuiſe for our ſtrength and ſafegarde, can doe nothing againſt his power: but that wee ſhall continue beſieged, vntill wee bee altogether waſted. Yea and wee may gather by this Text, that it were much better for vs to bee deliuered at the firſt into the handes of our enemies, than to haue meanes to reſiſt, whereby wee may bee made to languiſh in ſuch wiſe as wee may not dye a ſimple death [out of hand]: for the poore people that be abroad in the fieldes, are ſpoyled at the firſt, and ſo are diſpatched of it. Surely it is a pitious caſe, to beholde their throates cut and all ſet on fire: but yet for all that, by that meanes they are deliuered from their miſeries, ſo as they pine not away in them. But as for them that are in ſtrong Townes, they muſt bee faine to abide a long ſiege, they muſt languiſhe and pine away by peecemeale, not for a moneth or two, but euen vntill they can holde out no more: and that is aſmuch as if they ſhould paſſe a hundred deaths. Thus doth our Lorde reuenge himſelfe of them that thinke themſelues to bee diſpatched, when God doth not roote them out at the firſt. No, ſaieth hee, bethinke your ſelues whether of theſe fruites doe ſpeede beſt; they that are brought to the market in their prime, and eaten out of hand; or they that are kept for a time, and in the ende doe rotte? It were better then for you to bee ouercome and vanquiſhed by your enemies at the firſt. Let vs therfore conſider well, that when wee haue wherewith to defend vs to the worldeward, where it ſhould profite vs, it ſhall turne to our double confuſion if wee truſt therein: for wee muſt grone a great while vnder the burden, and bee waſted by little and little. For when wee bee diſobedient and wil not be reformed, our Lorde wil neuer leaue vntil he haue vtterly brought vs to nought, as he ſheweth here ſo oftentimes. And ẏ is yet better expreſſed by this that Moſes addeth. *The man* (ſaith he) *that is tender and delicate among you, ſhall bee greeued at his brother, and at the wife which lyeth in his armes, becauſe hee cannot bee ſuffered to eate his owne children alone.* The woman which is ſo nice that ſhee dare not touch the ground with her foote (for ſo are the very woordes of Moſes) ſhall ſeeke to deſtroy and to ſpoile her own children; yea, they ſhall no ſooner bee borne out of her wombe, but ſhee ſhall bee deſirous to deuoure them; and if ſhee haue brought them vp to ſome bigneſſe, ſhee will ſpare them neuer the more. Theſe bee dreadfull thinges: for it is not ſayd alonely, You ſhal bee beſieged, and tarie a long while in famine, ſo as you ſhall bee driuen to eate, Horſes, Rattes, mice, ſhooeleathers; yea and the very doung of byrdes (as it hath bin ſeene) and all theſe thinges ſhall bee your **2.Kin.6.25.** meate. Neither is it ſayd that men and women ſhould bee eaten: but that euery man ſhall eate his owne children. Seeing that God ſpeaketh in this maner, were it not enough to make our hayre ſtand vpright? Yes verily; and yet here is nothing declared by Moſes, which hath not bin ſeene in execution. It is not for a man to ſay, it is not credible, it is repugnant to nature, a man would plucke the bread out of his owne mouth, when hee is in extremitie, to giue it vnto his children, he would dy to helpe them, inſomuch that wee ſee that Agar could not abide to ſee the death of her childe, but ſhee left him alone, and **Gen.21.16.** wiſhed her owne death. But wee neede not to alledge examples of theſe thinges: for the common affection doth ſufficiently declare, that euery man would rather dy, than eate his owne children: but yet was ſuch crueltie ſeene among the Iewes. They which were inſtructed in ẏ lawe of God, and ſhould haue had much more humanity and compaſſion, than the Paganes and infidels, euen they forgot al maner of honeſtie, and were ouercome with this madnes. It was meete that this blindeneſſe, whereof the Prophets had **Eſa.6.9.& Deut.28.** ſpoken, and which wee ſee here before touched alſo by Moſes, ſhould bee then accompliſhed in them, and that they ſhould bee rauiſhed of their wittes: For when GOD taketh away all reaſon and vprightneſſe from men: then hee leaueth them to a kinde of madneſſe. Such furie then muſt needes be in them, when they did eate their owne children.

Hereby wee bee ſpecially warned, that they which bee reſerued for the laſt caſt, bee in no better caſe than they, whom God hath chaſticed long afore. And this is a profitable warning. For ſo ſoone as God ſtriketh ſome, and forbeareth otherſome: And why not theſe alſo, ſay we? Haue not theſe deſerued aſmuch? We haue not the patience to ſuffer God to execute his iudgementes in ſuch order as ſeemeth good vnto him ſelfe: but wee ſurmiſe, that thoſe whome hee dooth reſpit, and whom hee for a little while forbeareth, bee priuiledged more than wee. But it is contrary: for it had bin better for them to haue bin puniſhed ſooner than to be ſo reſerued. And therefore let vs not enuy them becauſe that God forbeareth them for a time, as though they were exempted from all plagues, but let vs tary till God fetch them about at their turne: for it had bin farre better for them, to haue bin diſpatched out of hand. And therewithall let euery of vs looke to himſelfe. Let vs not truſt to the patience that God vſeth toward vs, to deceiue our ſelues therewith. In deede when God hath bin patient, and forborne vs, it ſhoulde giue vs the better diſpoſition, to reſorte vnto him, and to hope to finde him pitiful, to forgiue vs our faultes and treſpaſſes. But we muſt not fal aſleepe thereupon, to dally with him, and to ſay: O, hee hath taried for vs, he will yet doe the lyke hereafter; as wee ſee the wicked doe, which doe but ſhake their head at it: when they ſee that God hath ſpared them, they thinke they be diſcharged. Let vs beware that. For wee ſee how he ſaith, that when we be well appointed, and haue fortreſſes as it were inuincible, all muſt fall on our heades, and wee ſhall be ſo much the more grieuouſly puniſhed. Thus much haue we to remember touching this text.

Now let vs marke further, that when we forget our God, wee muſt alſo forget all the courſe of nature, and he muſt needes bereaue vs of our
Epheſ. 3. 15. wittes: for it is hee on whom all fatherhood dependeth, he is the welſpring thereof. We ſhould not knowe what the duetie of the parents is towarde their children, nor what reuerence children doe owe to their parentes and ſuperiors, vnleſſe God did beare the ſouereintie. If we referre not all vnto him, he wil make vs to become blockiſh, ſo as wee ſhall not vnderſtand what this fatherly affectiō toward our children ſhould meane. Thus much for one poynt.

But by the way wee haue to note, that the men which did ſo deuour their owne children, were not ſo blockiſh but that they were pinched with terrible heartbitings, and vexed with ſuch furious fearefulnes, as made them euen to abhor that which they did. True it is that they were caryed away by force, and had no reaſon in them; but yet for all that they had certaine ſecret ſtings and prickinges inwardly, and God held them as it were vppon the racke or torture, as if he ſhould haue ſayd vnto them, What wilt thou doe; thou wretched creature? It had bin better for thee to haue bin borne afore thy time, and ẏ the earth had ſwalowed thee vp a hundred times, than thou ſhouldeſt haue cōmitted ſo terrible a fact: but yet muſt neceſſitie needs get the vpper hand of thee. Let vs marke therefore, that when wee be not meekened by the hand of God, wee muſt then fall into ſuch a woodnes, as ſhall ouermaiſter vs, and make vs torment our ſelues without the helpe of any other executioner, ſo as euery of vs ſhall execute Gods vengeance vppon himſelfe, which he had skorned afore and ſkoffed at. I haue ſayd, that here is nothing ſpoken of, which hath not bin ſeene in effect: to wit, that the fathers haue eaten their own children, and in lyke caſe the mothers. But like as the Iewes had moſt exceedingly prouoked God; euen ſo came they to the fulneſſe of iniquitie, and conſequently it behooued God ſo to vtter his wrath toward them with extremitie, as it was ſeene when they were beſieged with their enemies; for then did they eate Pygions doung, and bought it by golde weight; yee ſhall ſee that they committed actes againſt nature in eating one another. But when they had once reiected the ſonne of God, & had vtterly cut themſelues off from the hope of ſaluation by forſaking the redeemer vppon whome were grounded all the promiſes which had bin made vnto them concerning the goodneſſe of God; then was it of neceſſitie that thoſe thinges ſhould bee the more accompliſhed. For if yee reade the hiſtories, euen of them that were of the ſame nation, and which were preſent witneſſes of the matter; yee would thinke that yee heard dreames or fables; and yet for all that, thoſe thinges were then notoriouſly knowen, and noted to bee true, and God intended as it were to ſet vp ſcaffoldes, that it might be ſeene how his threatning of his people after that manner, was not in vaine, as wee ſee, and that all men ſhould take example thereat. For they bee horrible thinges, and ſuch as may make our hayres to ſtand vpright, when it is ſayd that the husband ſhall deceiue the wife and ſteale away the children iſſued of the bodies of them both, and that ẏ wife lykewiſe ſhal ſeeke ſome ſecret place to cut the throat of her childe in, as if ſhee ſhoulde ſay, I will locke vp this for my ſelfe: and that both the husbandes and the wiues ſhould bee ſo madde as to ſay, I will eate mine owne childe. Seeing that all theſe things were accompliſhed; and that our Lord hath executed ſuch vengeance: let vs vnderſtand that wee ought not to reade theſe thinges at this day without trembling, euen as if GOD ſhould lay forth his foredenounced vengeance before vs in a paynted table. Moreouer let vs vnderſtand, that when God had pronounced ſuch ſentence againſt the Iewes, it was not executed at the firſt day. For he waited for them with ſo long patience, that it ſeemed that no miſchief ſhould light vppon them. But when the ſore was burſt, then was the rottenneſſe perceiued which lay hiddē afore and the diſeaſe was the more deadly. Alſo let vs marke, that if God doe beare with vs, and afterward do diuers wayes correct vs, and yet not ſtrike ſo roughly as to come to extremitie: wee muſt not thinke that wee are thereby eſcaped his hand, but we muſt returne vnto him, and not tary till hee ſee our diſobedience vnreformable, and ſo be faine to proceede to the extremitie of his threatninges. Thus much haue wee to remember touching this text.

Now finally Moſes ſayth: *If thou keepe not all the wordes of this lawe for to doe them, and feare not this dreadfull and glorious name: that is to ſay the eternall thy God*. Verily it ſeemeth at the firſt ſight, that Moſes requireth of men aboue meaſure, that which is not in their power: for who is hee that can fulfill all the lawe of God? And againe, though a man miſſe in ſome certaine poyntes, ſhould GOD vſe ſuch rigor? I haue tolde you heretofore, that hee directeth this talk towardes them that be altogether giuen ouer to euil, and to ſuch as bee deſpiſers of God to break his lawe by all meanes they can. To what ende then dooth hee require ſuch a perfection? Let vs firſt of all marke that GOD will not haue his law chopped into peeces & gobbets: for therein he ſetteth forth his righteouſnes vnto vs. Men therefore muſt not make a parting of ſtakes in this caſe at their own pleaſure, as who wold ſay, I wil, for Gods honor, abſtain from whoredome, Iames.2.11. but yet I will ſteale: I will abſtaine from murther, but yet I will bee a blaſphemer: No, but ſeeing that he which hath forbidden to robbe, hath alſo forbidden to kil; and hee which hath forbidden fornication, hath in lykewiſe forbidden to blaſpheme: let vs learne to obey him in all poyntes and all reſpectes, let vs reſtreine our ſenſes, and bridle our affections, and to bee ſhorte, let vs come to the poynt to giue ouer our ſelues wholy to the ſeruice of our God. So ought we to doe: and that is the thing alſo whereunto Moſes hath reſpect. For if we miſſe in any one poynt, wee be accurſed of God, and deſerue the rigor which is mentioned here. Neuertheleſſe he of his mercie ceaſeth not to beare with vs: yea and he will neuer vſe the great ſeueritie that is ſpoken of here, but towards ſuch as ſet themſelues altogether ſtubbornely againſt him. Yet notwithſtanding, it is not without cauſe, that Moſes dooth here exhorte the Iewes to the perfect obſeruation of the law. A Phiſition preſcribing an order, giueth not the bridle to the appetite of his patient, to doe any thing amiſſe how little ſoeuer it bee: but he ſaith, I will haue you to doe thus, and thus. Now if the ſicke man doe ſtep any whit aſide, very well, hee is not yet incurable, the Phiſition will haue a care of him ſtill. But if hee will needes ſet all at ſixe and at ſeuen (as they ſay,) and caſt off all order, and play the madman; well, hee ſhall haue his payment as hee deſerueth. And in like wiſe will our Lorde haue vs at his commaundement in all caſes: and good reaſon. Howbeit there is ſo great infirmitie (I meane euen in them which bee gouerned by the holy Ghoſt, and which ſtreine themſelues to bee obedient vnto him) that they faile in many reſpectes: but yet howſoauer the world goe, ſinne ouermaiſtereth them not, they ſtriue not of ſet purpoſe to tranſgreſſe the Lawe; but they proceede and go foreward ſtil: and albeit that they do it limpingly, yet doe they hold on ſtill toward God. As touching theſe they bee borne withall. True is that GOD will chaſtiſe them: and in what Sam.7.14. maner? Euen in forgiuing them: according to this ſaying of his, If thy children tranſgreſſe my commaundementes, I will viſite their iniquities; but it ſhall bee with the rodde of men, and not with extremitie: I will not deale with them as with enemies, I will not take away my mercie from them, albeit that I doe correct them. Thus doth God deale in that behalfe. But if our hearts bee vtterly hardened: then will hee warre vpon vs, and deſtroy vs without ſparing: & although hee beare with vs, yet ſhall all turne to our confuſion. That is one thing that wee haue to remember concerning this Text.

Alſo it is a notable poynt to bee obſerued, where Moſes ſpeaketh of the yoke of yron. For hee ſaith, *That the Lorde will lay a yoke of yron vpon the necke of all miſbeleeuers vntill they bee altogether conſumed*. And that is to the ende wee ſhoulde learne to receiue the correctiõs which we heare of, and not kicke againſt them. For wee ſee er.28.16. what befell to Ananias, when hee mocked at the threatninges of Ieremy, and came to breake the yoke which hee had vppon his necke, which was a yoke of wood and of cordes. The Prophet did weare that yoke, to moue the people to conſider that they ſhoulde all become captiues, and ſo to beholde their owne ſtate in the perſon of the Prophet. Now this wicked one that was poſſeſſed of the diuel, (to make the worde of God to bee naught ſet by) came to breake the bandes of Ieremy, and ſayd, euen thus wil God breake the yoke of Nabuchodonoſer: and albeit ỹ he beſiege you, and doe what hee can to cary you away captiues into a ſtraunge land: yet ſhal you bee preſerued by the grace of your God. God threatned, and this fellowe mocked all his threatninges: and thereto tooke the ſhadowe of the name of God to abuſe the people. Well then, what wanne hee by ſuch rebellion? It was ſayd to the Prophet, Take a yoke of yron: for Ier.28.14. whereas the bondage ſhoulde haue bin gentle and tollerable; it muſt now be ſo cruel, as they ſhal not be able to endure any more. See here how hee dealeth with all ſuch as harden their heartes againſt GOD, and will not abide to bee meekened by his hand. Then let vs bee afraid of this yoke of yron. Firſt of all wee know that Gods yoke is amiable vnto all ſuch as willingly yeelde themſelues vnto it, and ſuffer thẽſelues to bee gouerned by the hand of our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt. Wee haue the teſtimony of the ſonne of GOD, My yoke (ſayth hee) is eaſie, Matt.11.30. and my burden is light. Come to me, and learne that I am lowly and meeke. Seeing that our Lord Ieſus declareth, that they which be teachable and obedient ſhall perceiue that there is neither burthen, nor weight, nor griefe in his yoke, to ouerpreſſe them withall: it ought to moue vs to yeeld our necks vnto it and to pray God, to put vs vnder it, and alſo to ſuffer him to chaſtice vs whẽ we haue offended him. In deed the ſtrokes wil be greeuous vnto vs, as ỹ Apoſtle ſayth, and we ſhall neuer finde the corrections Heb.12.11. pleaſant during the time ỹ God ſtryketh vs. We bee lyke little children when they bee corrected; wee feele it greeuous, becauſe our nature doth repugne againſt it. But howſoeuer wee lyke of it, yet God will vſe that fatherly meane, and by little and little teach vs to returne vnto him. But if wee will needes tempt his patience to the vttermoſt, hee muſt then vſe the yron rodde to breake our heades withall, as it is ſayd in the Pſalme: Wee ſhall bee driuen to feele the yron, Pſal.2.9. which ſhall ſerue, not to reclayme vs withall, but to breake vs in peeces and to conſume vs vtterly. And iuſtly. For wee doe heare what is ſayd here: *If thou wilt not feare the glorious & dreadfull name of the eternall thy God*. Whence come the deſpiſing and contempt of good doctrine, and the boldneſſe that wee take to ſinne, but of this, that wee are deafe to all admonitions? In deede if wee could yeelde our ſelues obedient to our God, with a good heart, and with a good affection, and abide at that point continually: wee ſhould no ſooner heare theſe threatnings but wee ſhould conſider thus: Alas, haue wee not deſerued a greeuous curſe at Gods hand, ſeeing wee haue thus ſtriuen againſt him? We ſee then that all the euill deedes and diſobedience which is committed, doe ſpring of ignorance and of the contempt of GOD, for that wee haue not regarded his maieſtie. Certainely this kinde of ſtubborneneſſe is not alwayes directly of ſet purpoſe and foredetermined malice: but yet is there ſuch rudeneſſe in vs, that wee yeelde not ſuch a reuerence to God, as is requiſite, nor the obedience whereby wee ſhould indeuour to ſubmit our ſelues to his worde. And becauſe wee bee ſo dulheaded that nothing can quicken vs vp, when wee be called vppon to ſubmit our ſelues vnto GOD: Moſes ſayth expreſly, *This dreadfull name, this glorious name*, to wit, *The eternall*, thy God. Whereas he ſayth, *The eternall* or *Euerlaſting*: that woorde importeth all glorie and Maieſtie; and therefore ought to rauiſh vs with aſtoniſhment: yea truely; for wee ſhoulde not haue this name of GOD alonely to vſe it coldely, for to ſay, GOD, GOD, as they doe which haue it continually in their lippes, and afterward doe let it vaniſh, as though it were a thing of nothing: but wee muſt ioyne both twaine together thus, GOD, euen the ſame that created vs; the ſame that holdeth all thinges in his hand, the ſame that is honored of the Angels, the ſame that is of glory infinite, the very ſame whome all the principalities of heauen cannot abide, at the ſight of whome all manner of creatures muſt be faine to caſt downe their eyes, euen the ſame which with one onely worde can make all the earth to tremble, the ſame that can remoue mountaines with his onely blaſte, that ſame that giueth being to all maner of creatures, finally the ſame that maintaineth and gouerneth all thinges, and ordereth all thinges wel, righteouſly, and with wiſedome: the ſame is hee that ſpeaketh vnto vs. And ſo yee ſee after what manner we vſe the wordes of Moſes, where hee ſaith, *The eternall thy God*, this is hee that ſpeaketh nowe vnto thee. Let vs therefore heare him ſpeake, in ſuch ſorte, as his maieſtie may poſſeſſe all our wittes, and that thereby wee may bee ſo humbled vnder the ſame, that when wee haue worſhipped him, wee may ſo remaine vnder his hand, as wee ſuffer our ſelues to bee gouerned by him, to followe the rule that hee hath deliuered vnto vs.

Nowe let vs fall downe before the Iudgement ſeate of our God, acknowledging the infinite faultes whereof wee bee guiltie, if hee liſted to execute the office of a Iudge againſt vs: and therewithall let vs pray him, not to omit to bee our father for our Lord Ieſus Chriſtes ſake: And that forſomuch as wee bee guiltie of many offences: wee may ſuffer our ſelues to be dayly cutte off from our ſinnes, ſo as nothing may hinder our comming to him to yeeld our ſelues in ſuch ſorte vnto him, as wee may renounce all our wicked affections more and more, vntil wee bee throughly ridde of them, and bee clothed with his heauenly righteouſneſſe. And ſo let vs all ſay, Almighty GOD heauenly father, &c.

On Fryday the xxvii. of March, 1556.

The CLxii. Sermon which is the tenth vpon the eight and twentith Chapter.

59 Then will the Lorde make thy plagues marueilous, and the plagues of thy ſeede, greate plagues and ſure: euill and ſure diſeaſes.

60 And hee ſhall turne vpon thee all the plagues of Egypt, the preſence whereof thou diddeſt feare, and they ſhall cleaue vnto thee.

61 Alſo all the diſeaſes and all the plagues which be not written in the booke of this Lawe, the Lorde will cauſe to come vpon thee, vntil thou be deſtroyed.

62 And where as thou waſt in multitude as the ſtarres of heauen, thou ſhalt bee fewe in number, becauſe thou haſt not obeyed the voyce of the Lorde thy God.

63 And it ſhall come to paſſe, that like as the Lorde thy God reioyced ouer thee to doe thee good, and to multiplie thee: euen ſo will the Lorde reioyce ouer you to deſtroy you, and to bring you to nought: and thou ſhalt bee rooted out of the land to the which thou goeſt to poſſeſſe it.

64 And the Lorde will ſcatter thee among all people, from the one ende of the earth to the other ende of the earth. And there thou ſhalt ſerue other goddes, which neither thou nor thy fathers haue knowen: euen goddes of wood and of ſtone.

I Haue ſhewed here before, how ſlowe men are to bee taught by the chaſtiſementes which God doth ſend them. For vntill they perceiue the hand of God, and be driuen to vnderſtand, that it is hee with whome they haue to doe: of themſelues they waxe hardhearted: and which worſe is, they labour to cloke that which they ought to feele and ſee as it were before the eye: namely, that they bee ſmitten for their ſinnes. Foraſmuch therefore as men doe neuer willingly come to the knowledge of themſelues: GOD is faine to enforce them to it. This is the cauſe why Moſes, ouer and beſides that which hee repeateth afore, doth adde, *That God will make the plagues of the deſpiſers of his Lawe, wonderfull.* That is to ſay, they ſhall bee ſo notable, that euen in ſpite of their teeth, they ſhall be afraide of them as of thinges that were neuer knowen, nor in vſe. For wee ſee that accuſtomed thinges are deſpiſed: and euen ſo is it alſo with Gods benefites. Foraſmuch as the Sunne doth dayly riſe to lighten vs: who is hee that thinketh of the change and intercourſe which GOD maketh betweene the night and the day? according to the ſaying of the nineteenth pſalme, Pſal.19.2. that it is as if God ſhould waken vs vp euery morning, and tell vs with a lowde voyce how it is good reaſon, that his infinite goodnes, wiſedome and power ſhould bee knowen. But wee haue no eares to heare. What is the reaſon? It is becauſe the ſunne appeareth euery day in lyke order, by meanes whereof wee bee hardened with it: and becauſe it is ordinarie, we make none account of it: euen ſo is it concerning puniſhmentes. For the more our Lorde prouoketh vs to come vnto him, the more doe we take heart to become vnreformable. And therefore it is needefull for vs that his plagues ſhoulde bee woonderfull vnto vs, that wee may bee made afraide of them ſpite of our teeth. And againe hee addeth, *That they ſhall bee great and certaine.* The laſt worde that Moſes vſeth, dooth ſignify true or faithfull. Whereby GOD dooth vs to vnderſtand, that his plagues ſhall holde on ſtill, lyke as hee ſayd alſo that they ſhoulde cleaue vnto thē that were rebellious and could not bee wonne by gentleneſſe: theſe plagues muſt bee rooted in them: and for that cauſe dooth hee terme them *Certaine.* Here haue wee to conſider our owne hardneſſe, that euery of vs may bee the more vigilant in looking to the hand of GOD and conceiue the better thereof. Foraſmuch as wee bee ſo dull of nature, we muſt learne to ſtirre vp our ſelues. And let vs feare leaſt GOD ſhould accompliſh that which is pronounced in this text: Namely that when his accuſtomed puniſhmēts profit vs not, then hee muſt needes proceede againſt vs after ſuch a ſtraunge and horrible manner, as ſhall make vs afraide, and cauſe the hayre of all them to ſtand vp which doe but heare ſpeake of it: yea, and (as the Prophet r.19.3. Ieremy ſayth) to make mens eares tingle, whē the reporte thereof commeth into foraine Countries.

Let vs bee afraide therefore, leaſt God doe worke after that maner, when hee perceaueth ſuch ſtubbornneſſe in vs, as hee cannot winne vs by meaſurable and tollerable corrections. And therewithal let vs alſo take warning by this word *Of ſure plagues*; that when God hath followed vs to reduce vs to the way of ſaluatiō, and we haue ſtill fled from him, the plagues muſt alſo continue to the vttermoſt both vpon vs and vpon all our lynage, inſomuch that when wee thinke to ſee an end therof, we ſhal not haue yet begunne. Let vs not therefore make account to eſcape, when the plague hath laſted a while: for accordingly as wee proceede on in our naughtineſſe; ſo muſt God proceede with his rigor and augment it more and more, according as hee ſeeth vs to waxe worſe and worſe. Then let vs not doe as we ſee moſt men doe, which cry out and ſtorme at it, ſaying: And when ſhall this haue an end? How happeneth it that God taketh no pitie on mee to eaſe me of my paynes? But in the meane while haue they any minde to reconcile themſelues to God? Do they cōfeſſe their faults and bewaile them? Nay rather they be at the very poynt to defy him. Yet doe they talke of their afflictions, and make complaintes: but in the meane while no man looketh to the ground of the miſchief to amend it. Therefore when we haue bin ſtubborne againſt our God, let vs not thinke it ſtraunge, that he ſhould purſue vs with ſuch rigour: but let vs acknowledge that it is expedient for vs. In the meane ſpace, let vs not forget this that is written here: namely, that God threatneth ſinners, to the ende to bring them backe againe, notwithſtanding that they haue bin as folke forlorne and paſt hope of recouery. For God ſpeaketh not to ſuch as had committed but one onely fault, or ſome two or three faultes, or to ſuch as hauing done amiſſe, did not wholy giue themſelues ouer to wickedneſſe: but he ſpeaketh vnto ſuch offenders, as had made warre long time againſt him, and deſpiſed his word, and bin deafe to all his warnings, and had made but a mock of them. Yet notwithſtanding he doth not ceaſe to threaten them ſtil. And to what end and purpoſe? Euen to winne them by his amiable goodnes. So then although we haue bin miſaduiſed for a time, yet is it better for vs to turne late than neuer: and ſo ſhall wee fare the better by that which is ſhewed vs here by Moſes. Now conſequently hee ſayth, *That God will cauſe the plagues of Egypt to turne vppon the Iewes.* Wee vnderſtand that God did ſo afflict the Egyptians, as that they were a terror vnto his own people, inſomuch that the Iewes themſelues were aſtoniſhed thereat, notwithſtanding that they were exempted from the euil. When the Egyptians were oppreſſed to the vttermoſt, thereby the Iewes vnderſtoode that God ſpared them, and that hee held them in his protection, becauſe hee ſmote their enemies, and in the meane ſpace did keepe thē in peace and reſt. And this wee ſee chiefely in his killing of all the firſt borne of Egypt: For GOD had commaunded, that the doore poſtes of the

Exod.12.7. houſes ſhould be marked with the bloud of the Paſchall Lambe. There God gaue a ſingular teſtimonie vnto the Iewes that hee woulde ſpare them; and during that while he turned his wrath and vengeance againſt their enemies. But now he ſaith here cleane contrary, *That God will cauſe thoſe very plagues to returne backe*. For the worde that Moſes vſeth doth importe as much as if he ſhoulde ſay, Thy fathers ſawe howe God turned his wrath againſt the Egyptians, but nowe they muſt returne backe againe vppon thee, becauſe thou makeſt none account to honor and ſerue him, which hath loued thee ſo much, and to whome thou art ſo greatly bound. By this ſaying we be admoniſhed, that when God hath forborne vs for a time, and moreouer for the loue that he beareth towardes vs, hath puniſhed our enemies, and ſhewed himſelf a contrarie partie againſt them for to maintaine vs: wee muſt not therefore flatter our ſelues, but rather bee more diligent to walke in his feare. For when we will not acknowledge ſuch grace, but rather abuſe it quite contrarie: it is good reaſon that our Lorde ſhould cauſe the thinges to returne backe vppon vs, which hee had ſent vppon our enemies, thereby to ſhewe vs that hee held vs in his defence and ſafegarde. It is ſayd that the people of God ſhall be as a fyre kindled to conſume all the wicked and vnbeleeuers. And God will ſhewe the ſame in very deede. But if we will needes kindle his wrath through our ſinnes and tranſgreſſions: then the fyre that ſhoulde haue bin vppon the vnfaithful, muſt fall backe vppon our ſelues, and we muſt periſhe therewith. Let vs therefore conſider well of this worde, and let this which is recited concerning the land of Egypt be vnto vs a myrror and a learning, that we at this day may apply it to our owne vſe; according as all theſe thinges bee written for vs. Let vs marke (I ſay) what our Lorde did in olde time for the Iewes, and let vs vnderſtand that thereby he gaue record what loue hee beareth to his Church. But yet therewithal, let vs take warning to yeelde our ſelues in ſuch wiſe obedient vnto him, as he may continue to doe vs good, and that this couenant may be confirmed betweene Exo.23.22. him and vs, Namely, I will bee a friend vnto thy friends, and an enemy vnto thyne enemyes. It is certaine that this promiſe was giuen to Abraham: howbeit, to the ende that wee alſo ſhould inioy the ſame. Now if we cãnot ſuffer God to be our friend, but rather wil make war againſt him, and breake the faith and aliance that is eſtabliſhed betwixt vs: then whereas afore, hee did ſet himſelfe againſt our enemies, now hee muſt be faine to fall vpon vs, and to make vs to feele his infinite power, vntill wee be quite confounded and brought to nought. Therefore while our Lorde ſpareth vs, let vs acknowledge his goodneſſe, and not prouoke his wrath to make vs to feele his power in ſmiting vs. And moreouer, when as we ſee, that whereas the vnfaythful ſhoulde be ſtriken at his hand, wee feele the firſt blowes: let vs acknowledge that it is meete it ſhould be ſo, becauſe we haue broken the peace which he had made with vs. Let vs not thereupon be diſcouraged, howſoeuer the worlde goe, but let vs ſtick to him ſtil. Furthermore let vs not tary till he proceede to extremitie. And if we be not ſo wiſe as to haue that diſcretion at the firſt, yet at leaſtwiſe let vs benefite our ſelues by the aduertiſements which are ſet down in this place. After that manner ſhoulde wee put this text in vre.

Now Moſes ſaith expreſly, that the Iewes feared the plagues of the Egyptians, and that they had good cauſe to ſtand the more in dread of them, for that in beholding them vpon their enemies, they were then aſtoniſhed at them, & therefore it was good reaſon that they ſhould magnifie the goodneſſe of God: but howſoeuer the caſe ſtoode, the plagues which God ſent vpon the Egyptians, were ſo great and ſo horrible, that the Iewes muſt needes be amazed at them, albeit that they themſelues were free from thẽ, becauſe they beheld ſuch an alteratiõ of nature. Nowe if they feared the wrath of God whileſt it was vppon their enemies, and had therein a teſtimonie of his loue & goodneſſe: what ought they then to doe when God ruſheth vpon their heades, and that they muſt be faine to feele the ſelfe ſame plagues which came vppon the Egyptians? Muſt they not needes be doubly diſmaied? Yes: and therefore we ſee that this threatning is not ſuperfluous; but ſerueth to waken them, according as we haue ſayd herebefore, and as experience ſheweth that we be too much deafe, yea and as it were ſenſeleſſe, when God doeth warne vs; and that he muſt ſmite vppon vs as it were with a hammer, or elſe will wee neuer vnderſtand what he ſaith. And ſo ye ſee the reaſon why this word is expreſly ſet downe. Now when we ſee that God puniſheth the wicked, let vs learne to haue ſuch feare of his vengeance, as we doe not tarie till he wrappe vs vp amongeſt thoſe whom wee haue ſeene puniſhed afore vs. This is the thing that S. Paul meant in ſaying, Deceiue not your ſelues, neither let any man abuſe you with vaine words: for the wrath of God Eph.5.6. hath bin woont to fall vppon the vnbeleeuers & diſobedient for ſuch offences. Hereby S. Paul ſheweth to the faithfull, that they ſhoulde not feare the hand of God alonly when they ſee it armed againſt them, and when it toucheth their perſõs: but they ought to vſe the opportunitie in reforming thẽſelues, euen when God is ſo good vnto them as to puniſh the reprobates & rebels before their eyes. Let vs therfore be afraid when God puniſheth the wicked, and let vs be aduiſed to acknowledge him for our Iudge aforehand; and that we haue wel deſerued to be handled as ſeuerely as they, were it not that he of his goodnes forbeareth vs. Let this touch vs to the quick, that we may be brought to repentance. Thus ſhoulde we yet further put this ſaying of Moſes in practiſe.

Nowe hee addeth, that God (ouer & beſide all this which he hath declared,) will ſende yet other aduerſities and afflictions vpon the Iewes. In deede Moſes did recken vp many ſortes of plagues heretofore, and hee thought it not ynough to haue ſaide at once, God will chaſtiſe thee after ſuch and ſuch manner: but he redoubled it, becauſe he ſawe men ſo groſſe and heauy that they bee not ſo moued at the firſt, as were to be wiſhed. But our Lordes intent heere, is to declare that hee hath meanes of vengeance incomprehenſible, and moe than can bee vttered by wordes; inſomuch that if a man ſhould make a Roll of them, and rehearſe a whole million of ſeuerall ſorts of them, yet ſhoulde he not comprife them al: for God hath other hidden means vnknowen to men, wherewith to puniſh them that doe ſtill rancle in malice againſt him. And that is according as wee ſhall ſee in the two and thirtith chapter, in the ſolemne ſong that Moſes maketh there. Theſe thinges are laide vp Deut.32.34 in my Treaſurie (ſaith the Lord) ſo as I haue my whole Cheſtes full of horrible plagues, ſuch as neuer were imagined nor vnderſtood by men. As much is ſaide in this text.

And ſo let vs remember two thinges, to wit, when wee haue had experience of the power of God by his doings, or reade the threatenings that he hath made againſt the tranſgreſſours of his lawe, and doe beholde the practiſe and execution thereof: let vs bee amaſed thereat and ſay, How now? What a thing is it to prouoke the Lorde? For if hee ſpare vs on the one ſide, hee can well aſſaile vs on the other; and when wee bee deliuered from one hundred of afflictions, he hath three hundred others readie for vs: and when wee haue eſcaped all thoſe, yet haue wee gotten nothing. Let vs therefore thinke vpon theſe thinges. Nowe let vs looke what a ſort of threatenings there are in the holy Scripture, howe many ſortes of deathes there bee that God hath denounced againſt the deſpiſers of his maieſtie, and againſt all them that deſpiſe and ſet light by his worde: it woulde wearie vs to recite them. And in reading the hyſtories, wee ſee the examples that God hath giuen vs of his wrath: and that not in one ſort; wee ſhoulde needes bee at our wittes ende if wee ſhoulde thinke but vppon the tenth part of them. And if wee ſhoulde ſet our mindes to marke and to note them all: what a thing were it? The firſt thing therefore which wee haue to doe, is to be diligent to cal to rememberance all the threatnings whereby God woulde tame our wicked affections, and holde vs enbridled: and therewithall to compare the thinges that are ſet downe vnto vs, howe that God hath not threatened in vaine, but hath accompliſhed whatſoeuer hee hath ſaide. Let vs thinke on that. And moreouer let vs vnderſtand, that beſides the meanes which are contained in the holy ſcripture, God hath yet a great many of other meanes to puniſh men; and we ſee how he doeth dayly bring vp newe. If we had eyes, or rather woulde open them, wee might well ſee that God doeth daily ſende newe kindes of his wrath: and that is to the end which I haue touched heretofore, namely to make his plagues wonderful, that men may be inforced to thinke vppon them becauſe they ſee that God worketh not after the ordinary courſe of nature: but after a ſort that hath not bin earſt knowen. When euery of vs hath well ſtudied all the leſſons that be declared vnto vs in the holy Scripture; and made our cõmoditie of the examples & puniſhments yͤ bee there mentioned; let vs conclude yͤ God hath yet a great many mo meanes than be expreſſed, which men neuer thought vpõ. And yͤ thing he hath made manifeſt euer ſince yͤ the law was written: and he doth not yet ceaſſe to do the ſame ſtill, that al maner of excuſe may be taken from vs. If a man looke vpon the diſeaſes that bee at this day in the worlde, hee ſhall ſee that there be many which were not expreſſed in the law of Moſes, or in yͤ dayes of our fathers. Howe hath whoredome bin puniſhed by diſeaſes that be come vppe of late? Who knewe the pocks a hundred yeres ago? That is one horrible plague which God hath ſent vpon yͤ worlde. And it is aſmuch as if hee had ſtretched his arme out of heauen, and ſayde, No, they knowe mee no more to be their Iudge, they harden their harts againſt al the plagues yͤ men did know & receiue afore time, they make but a figge at it; but now I will make them to vnderſtand; that in my Coffers, and in my ſtorehouſes there are yet other roddes that be incomprehenſible to them. God ſheweth this: and wee perceiue that wee cannot take a better courſe to profite by this doctrine, than to feare the rods and puniſhments, which be not written in the booke of the lawe: otherwiſe, it is meete that we vnderſtand that GOD is ſtil our Iudge, howeſoeuer the world goe.

Now he addeth: *That albeit they were as many in number as the ſtars of heauen, God would waſt them in ſuch wiſe as there ſhould but a handfull of them remaine.* Here muſt we remember that which was ſpoken of herebefore. For whereas God vſeth this ſimilitude of the ſtarres of heauen, he hath reſpect to the promiſe which he had made to his ſeruant Abraham: namely yͤ his ſeede ſhould be in number like the ſtarres of heauen. So God ſpake. But now, to the end yͤ the Iewes ſhould not preſume to thinke yͤ God was alwayes bound to multiply them, he ſayth, No, I wil conſume you whatſoeuer come of it, and you ſhalbee but a handfull of people. It ſeemeth at the firſt ſight that here is contrarietie. For where as God promiſed ſo great a ſeed vnto his ſeruant Abrahã, it was not grounded vpon the mirites of men. And why? For ſeeing that the promiſe dependeth vpon the free goodneſſe of God, muſt it not be kept, albeit that men be wicked? Yes in deede. But we haue to conſider, that God doeth not alwayes accompliſh his promiſes after our faſhion, nor according to our carnall capacitie: he hath means incredible to vs, & which we vnderſtand not, vntill they appeare by effect. Whereas he promiſeth to multiply his Church, that is to ſay, to make it to proſper, if he ſee that vnder colour thereof the hypocrits take libertie to doe euil, he withdraweth his hand. Let vs therefore conſider wel, that foraſmuch as the Iewes were puft vp wͭ a fooliſh preſumption, and thought it impoſſible for God to diminiſh them, ſeeing he had ſpoken the worde that he woulde increaſe them: foraſmuch I ſay as they abuſed the goodnes of GOD and falſified his promiſe through their hypocriſie, hee conſumed them and brought them to a ſmall number. Neuertheleſſe, of that ſmall number, there came a great ofſpring againe, yea and ſo great a one, that men might ſo much the better perceiue his trueth and mercie, howbeit after an other maner. Therefore ſaieth hee by his Prophet E- Eſa.10.22. ſay in the tenth Chapter: Although you were as the ſande of the ſea; (for he did alwayes ſend them backe to the promiſe made to Abraham,) although thy ſeede (as I ſaide) be as the ſande of the ſea; yet ſhall but a ſmall remnant bee ſaued. But when ye are altogether conſumed, yet ſhall that little remnant bee diſperſed ouer all the earth, as if out of a little fountaine ſhoulde iſſue forth a greate riuer, or a great lake, wherewith verie many lands ſhold be watered. So ſhal it be. Nowe then wee perceiue, that although GOD puniſh the hypocrites which abuſe his promiſes, yet faileth hee not to performe his ſayings ſtill, howbeit by an extraordinary meane; as we haue ſeene it in the Popedome, and as is to bee ſeene yet ſtil. For the Papiſts haue ouerflowed the whole worlde with ſuperſtition and ydolatrie, and all manner of euill: yea and moreouer thy harden their heartes in pride, and ſcoffe at God with open mouth. Howe nowe, ſay they? Are not we the church? Is it not ſaid that Ieſus Chriſt Matt.28.20 ſhalbe with vs vnto the end of the worlde? Can he forſake his Church? Yet do they continually crucifie him as much as in them lieth, they ſpit in his face, and doe him all the reproch in the worlde; they make him as if hee were a priſoner or a bondſlaue amongſt them: and they conſider not that ſuch a horrible deſtruction happeneth throughout ẏ whole worlde, through Gods iuſt vengeance for the ſhameleſſe hypocriſie which hath beene in them that haue rebelled againſt the Goſpel: yet notwithſtanding, GOD hath not omitted to ſaue his people, as it were vnder the earth. And in our dayes he hath raiſed his Church, as if ẏ bones of rotten bodies ſhold recouer fleſh and ſtrength againe. For what were we through our vnbeliefe? Yee ſee howe it is a meruailous reſurrection that God hath wrought in that behalfe. Marke well therefore that when our Lorde promiſeth to maintaine his Church and to preſerue it, the ſame belongeth nothing to them that abuſe his name falſely, nor to them that come to deſpiſe him vnder colour that hee is gentle and mercifull. For they ſhall euermore be diſappointed of that fauour which God hath ſo reſerued vnto his people: for they bereaue themſelues thereof through their owne malice and vnthankfulneſſe. Yet notwithſtanding howſoeuer the caſe ſtande, God is euer faithful, and wil find incomprehenſible meanes to giue place to his trueth, by fighting againſt the malice of men. That is the thing which we haue to remember concerning this text, where he ſaith: *That he will waſt the Iewes though they were as the ſtarres in the skie.*

And in verie deede the ſame appeared euen in Ieſus Chriſt the head of the church. And therfore we ought not to thinke it ſtraunge that the members of the bodie ſhould be faſhioned like vnto him. Whence came Ieſus Chriſt when God his father ſent him to be the Redeemer? The Prophet Eſay ſaieth that hee ſhoulde ſpring from a ſtocke, as if a tree were hewen Eſa.11.1. downe and there remained but the ſtub within the grounde, in ſuch ſort as men might tread vpon it. It is not ſaide that hee ſhould come out of houſe of Dauid, but out of the houſe of Ieſſee, who was a Neatheard and a man deſpiſed. The ſame was I ſay the father of Dauid a man of no eſtimation. Albeit that Dauid was ſo excellent a king, that he was choſen of God to be magnified to the skies; yet the Prophet ſheweth, that when Ieſus Chriſt ſhoulde come into the worlde, it ſhould not bee with any ſhewe of that royal maieſtie that was in Dauid, but he ſhould come out of the houſe of Iſay, as if he ſhould come out of a heard. And that euen then alſo hee ſhould not come of a tree, but of a ſtocke, that were cut off. And in what manner? And after what faſhion? As a little braunch, ſaith he. Nowe ſeeing that God did thus to the head of the church, we muſt vnderſtande that all the bodie muſt be ſutelike: but this maketh not that the hypocrites ſhall be partakers of that which God reſerueth to his elect, and whom he hath choſen, and indeed doe ſhewe themſelues to be his children, and bee obedient vnto him, as to their father: which alſo come not alonely with all confidence, but alſo are drawen with a right affection to honor him. And wheras we perceiue ẏ God doth at this day ſende horrible deſtructions into the worlde; let vs vnderſtande that he practiſeth that which is heere declared: yet let vs not doubt, but that he doth euermore preſerue his Church: let vs not doubt but he doth vpholde vs as oft as wee haue our recourſe to him, according to this ſaying, that whoſoeuer calleth vppon the name of the Ioel.2.32. Lord ſhalbe ſaued, yea euen amiddeſt the greateſt troubles that may be. Though heauen and earth ſhould run together, yet are wee ſure that by calling vppon the name of God, we ſhall bee preſerued. But let vs take heede, that wee abuſe not his name, to make thereof a fained cloake: for he can waſt vs well ynough. And if we boaſt that wee bee of his Church; when he hath cut vs off, he can quickely rayſe him a new people: and augment them in ſuch wiſe as his trueth ſhall not be defaced, and yet we ſhall periſh.

After that Moſes hath thus ſpoken, he addeth: *That like as God had taken pleaſure in dooing good to the Iewes, euen ſo he woulde take pleaſure in perſecuting them, vntill he had conſumed them and vtterly rooted them out.* Heere Moſes doeth firſt of all ſhewe what affection GOD beareth towardes theſe whome hee hath choſen out for himſelfe, and meaneth to take for his flock. It is certaine that God is not ſubiect to any humane paſſions: yet can not he ſufficiently manifeſt either the goodneſſe or the loue that he hath towards vs, but by transfiguring himſelf, as if he were a mortall man, ſaying that he woulde take pleaſure in doing vs good. Let vs vnderſtand therefore that God holdeth vs ſo deere as if a father ſhoulde ſhoulde delight and reioyce to doe good to his children. When hee ſeeth them according to his minde, and to doe him honour, and to bee obedient vnto him: then his feeding of them, and his clothing of them, is a comfort to him, and it doeth him good to ſee them in their brauerie; for that is the very felicitie of a father. GOD likeneth himſelfe to mortall men, and ſaieth that hee will delight to doe vs good. And therefore wee cannot magnifie the ineſtimable goodneſſe of our God too much, ſeeing hee ſtoopeth ſo lowe as to tell vs, that his whole delight is in making vs to inioy his benefites, and in demeaning himſelfe in ſuch wiſe towards vs, as wee may haue cauſe to praiſe him, and finally, in yeelding to all our deſires. But what? Wee cannot away with it: we are not able to apprehende that, for wee bee not able to conſider it.

Wee ſee that God is (as yee woulde ſay) waywarde towardes vs, wee ſee that hee doeth not onely bereaue vs of his bleſſings, but is alſo angrie with vs: and to be ſhort, wee perceiue in him nothing, but all manner of rigour. And what is the cauſe hereof? Verily that wee ſhut the gate againſt his goodneſſe, and will not ſuffer him to vſe (as yee would ſay) his naturall diſpoſition. Loe heere a thing that ſhould make vs the better to acknowledge our faultes, and not to accuſe GOD of any acceſſiue crueltie, when hee dealeth not with vs after our lyking. For it is certaine that hee will take pleaſure in doing vs good: but on the otherſide let vs conſider alſo, that hee muſt in likewiſe delight to doe vs euill. And why ſo? Verily becauſe that he is iuſt. In deede, if wee did ſuffer GOD to vſe his owne inclination towardes vs; he would beſtowe infinite benefites vppon vs, and we lyuing in this worlde ſhoulde bee as in Paradiſe: but becauſe of our ſinnes, wee muſt liue heere like wretched wanderers, wee muſt languiſh in many miſeries, wee muſt dwell in continuall feare and in doubt, and wee muſt grone in great vnreſt: it muſt bee euen ſo. And wherefore? Becauſe God is iuſt.

This is the verie pleaſure that is ſpoken of in this texte. According whereunto it is ſaide, Eſa.1.24. that GOD will reioyce and bee gladde, when hee hath puniſhed the wicked, and maintained his maieſtie againſt them, for that they haue deſpiſed him and ſet him at nought. Neuertheleſſe, it is likewiſe true that hee ſaieth by his Prophet Eſay, that hee doeth it vnwillingly. Alas (ſaieth hee) muſt I needes reuenge mee of mine enimies? GOD crieth there alas, as if hee were in ſorrowe and anguiſh for it. I muſt (ſaieth hee) take comfort in auenging mee of mine enemies. Thoſe whom hee termeth his enemies, are the children whome hee had adopted, and which boaſted themſelues to bee his people. And howe doeth hee comfort himſelfe in them? Euen by giuing them ouer, and by driuing them away. But in the meane while, hee ſheweth that it is againſt his will, when hee muſt ſo beate men downe with maine ſtrokes, howbeit that hee can none otherwiſe doe. Yet notwithſtanding, in verie deede God is able to tame the heartes of men without any great violence: for (as wee haue ſaide) hee is not ſubiect to our paſſions. But heereby we be to conſider howe his intent is to declare, that our vnreformable naughtineſſe is the cauſe why hee is faine to purſue vs after ſuch manner as is ſpoken of heere, and that hee is faine to take pleaſure in doing vs harme, wherein the order of nature is after a ſort quite altered and chaunged: but all is through our owne fault, and wee our ſelues are to blame for it, and it is not for vs to ſeeke any other reaſon thereof than our owne ſinne, which hath kindeled his vengeance to the vttermoſt. Thus much concerning that ſentence.

Nowe for a concluſion it is ſayde, *That God will roote out this people from the lande wherein hee had planted them, and that he would diſperſe them amongeſt all the nations of the world.* And that there this wretched people, (which were earſt in a countrey of freedome, wherein God had ſette them to the ende that his ſeruice and pure Religion ſhoulde dwell there) *ſhall ſerue ſtraunge Gods, euen ydols of Wodde and Stone*. Firſt we ſee that albeit the Land of Chanaan was giuen in Inheritance to the people of Iſrael, yet they failed not to bee put out and baniſhed, when they abuſed the fauour that had beene ſhewed vnto them. GOD had planted them there, euen as though hee had ſet them at his owne hande. Loe (ſaide hee) heere is my reſtingplace and yours: hee intended to dwell amongſt them himſelfe, and thereuppon hee promiſed to Pſal.132.14 giue them reſt there, inſomuch that although all other people ſhoulde bee diſplaced and remoued too and fro, yet ſhoulde the children of Abraham inioy the heritage of that lande ſtill. Notwithſtanding, this letted not God to driue them out againe, and to ſcatter them abroade with the winde, becauſe they had defiled that lande, which ſhoulde haue beene kept holy to his name.

Nowe ſith it is ſo, let vs not thinke it ſtraunge though God at this day doe ſende many changes into the worlde: for he hath giuen no ſuch priuiledge to any Nation as to ſay vnto them, You ſhal inhabite this lande, as the Lande of Chanaan was giuen to the linage of Abraham. But wee ſee howe GOD is offended, wee ſee mens miſdoings as haynous as can bee. Nowe then if GOD remooue men, let vs vnderſtande that it is for their ſinnes. Moreouer, let vs returne to the eternall reſt, whereunto the Apoſtle leadeth vs in the Epiſtle to the Hebrues, Hebr.4.9.& & 11.26. Hauing ſpoken of the reſt of the land of Chanaan, hee ſaieth that wee muſt looke vnto a reſt that is higher. For the children of GOD are commonly as wayfarers in this worlde, as Sainct Paul termeth them, putting himſelfe in the number: but let vs euermore direct our courſe and indeuour to this heritage, which is promiſed vs in heauen: for wee 2.Cor.5.6. ſhall not bee diſappointed of that heritage, ſo wee continue in our vocation whereunto

God hath called vs. Neuertheleſſe it is ſaid, that Exod. 32. 34 they which giue themſelues ouer vnto wickedneſſe ſhalbe wiped out of the booke of life. Not that Gods choſen ſhall euer periſh: but it is ſpoken in reſpect of ſuch folke as thinke it ynough for them to beare ẏ name of Gods children, and to haue beene baptiſed, and to receiue the Lords ſupper, and ſuch like thinges: and make no further regarde. But our Lorde telleth vs that although it ſeeme for a time that they be written and enrolled in his Regiſter, becauſe they bee taken to be of the company of the faithfull: yet ſhall they not faile to be wiped out. So then let vs aduiſe our ſelues, and ſo long as it ſhall pleaſe God to keepe vs in this worlde, let vs walke ſo vnder his obedience, as his hande may euer bee ſtretched out to preſerue and maintaine vs: Let vs ſo ſticke vnto him as wee may haue libertie to honour and ſerue him. For it is a dreadfull deſolation which Moſes ſpeaketh of heere, namely to be no more of the body of the church nor to haue any more the ſhewe or ſhape of Religion: and yet is this ſeene throughout the worlde at this day. Therefore let vs marke, that one of the greateſt benefites which GOD can beſtowe vppon vs in this tranſitorie life, is to let vs haue ſome little corner wherein to aſſemble our ſelues in his name, to call vpon him and to profeſſe our ſelues to be his people. This ought to be more eſteemed amongſt vs than either meate or drinke or any thing elſe. Howbeit verie few do think thereon. Yet notwithſtanding we muſt needs confeſſe, that albeit we haue ſufficient foode, and in the meane while forget God, our ſtate is miſerable. And if we think not thereon, we bewray our owne beaſtlyneſſe: for God telleth vs that this benefite which is ſpoken of here, is farre greater than all the reſt, that is to wit that we may worſhip him in pureneſſe, & be gathered together vnder that head which he hath appointed vnto vs, namely our Lord Ieſus Chriſt. And therefore while wee haue ſuch priuiledge to heare the worde of God, to call vpon his name, and to walke according to his Goſpell: let vs harken vnto it, for feare leaſt God diſperſe & ſcatter vs abroad in like ſort as he hath diſperſed the Iewes. And ſpecially let vs ſtande in feare of this threatning, namely, to bee made ſuch beaſts, as to honour ydols againe, as we ſee it is become of others, who are a good preſident to vs of the vengeance of God, whereof wee our ſelues alſo haue felt our part. For wee haue beene as bondſlaues vnder ydolatrie, and vnderlings vnto the abhominations of the Popedome; and that was for our ſins, and for the ſins of our fathers. Seeing we haue earſt felt the blowes, yea, and beene as looking glaſſes vnto others: ſhoulde wee nowe be ſo brutiſh, to prouoke our God in ſuch wiſe, as he ſhoulde bee forced as it were, to depriue vs of the grace that he hath giuen vs? Let vs then vſe this benefite and treaſure of the Goſpel, whileſt our Lord giueth vs place where to hide vs as it were vnder his hand while he doeth gouerne and guide vs, and while we be knit together in one bodie: that hee may bee magnified amongſt vs with one accorde not onely with the mouth, but alſo ſpecially with our life: to the ende that vppon our indeuouring of our ſelues to honour him, hee on his ſide may continue his good doing towardes vs: and that this threatening bee not executed vppon our heads, that is; to bee diſperſed heere and there, and to bee conſtrained againe to worſhippe ydoles, and other deade and ſenſeleſſe things.

Nowe let vs fall downe before the maieſtie of our good God, with acknowledgement of our ſinnes; beſeeching him to touch vs with ſuch repentance, as being aſhamed of our ſinnes, wee may ſeeke altogether to put our ſelues wholly into his handes, and that by obtaining forgiueneſſe of him, we may alſo feele that hee hath reformed vs, and that wee bee in his fauour, to giue ouer our ſelues altogether to his holy will. And that albeit there is alwayes much to bee amended in vs, and that our luſtes and affections doe drawe vs quite away from that which hee commaundeth vs; yet neuertheleſſe wee may not ceaſſe to ſtriue againſt them, and to yeelde our ſelues wholly vnto him, and to inforce our ſelues thereunto more and more, knowing that the ſame is our ſoueraine welfare: and that although hee ſhewe vs nowe and then ſome tokens of rigour in correcting vs, yet wee may learne to profite thereby, to the amending of our ſinnes, ſo as wee may bee brought to the perfection wherunto hee dayly calleth vs. That it may pleaſe him to graunt this grace not onely to vs, but alſo to all people and Nations of the earth, &c.

On Saturday the xxviij. of March, 1556.

The CLXIII. Sermon, which is the eleuenth vpon the eight and twentith Chapter.

65 Amongeſt theſe people alſo ſhalt thou haue no reſt, neither ſhall there bee any reſt to the ſole of thy foote. Moreouer the Lorde wil giue thee a trembling heart, and dymneſſe of eyes, and a heauineſſe of minde.

66 And thy life ſhalbe hanging before thee: thou ſhalt be afeard day & night, and be vncertaine of thy life.

67 Thou ſhalt ſay in the morning,O that it were night: and at night thou ſhalt ſay, O that it were morning: becauſe of the fearefulneſſe of thy heart,wherewith thou ſhalt bee afraide, and becauſe of the ſight of thine eyes, which thou ſhalt ſee.

68 And the Lorde will make thee to returne into Egypt by ſhippes, by the way, whereof I haue ſaid vnto thee, that thou ſhouldeſt not go about to ſee it any more: and there ſhalt thou bee ſolde to thine enemies for bondmen and bondwomen,and none ſhall bye thee.

AMongſt the benefites that we deſire in this preſent life, one is to haue ſome reſtingplace and ſome harbor to lodge in. Though a man be poore yea and troubled on all ſides: yet if he haue ſome little hole to hide his heade in, that he may reſort thither: he careth not for all the reſt. But if we knowe not where to become, nor haue any friend to receiue vs,nor any nooke nor corner wherein to reſt vs; our ſtate is then extremely miſerable. That is the cauſe why Moſes now (after hee hath declared that God woulde driue away and baniſh the Iewes out of the lande which hee had giuen them to inherite and to reſt in for euer) addeth,that they ſhall be as vagabondes and haue no certaine dwelling place, but be toſſed from poſt to piller.

Nowe it is certaine,as we haue alreadie ſaide yͤ this ſhal oftentimes happen to the faithful,but it is for another purpoſe:& God doth in yͤ mean ſpace comfort them, & it is behoueful that their patience ſhould be tried after that maner. For the thing wherein wee ſhewe our obedience towarde God; is when as hee mingleth vs among the wicked, ſo as wee ſeeme not to differ a whit from them,but all goes to hauocke (as they ſay) and yet notwithſtanding we continue ſounde in heart,and commit our ſelues into the handes of our God, knowing that hee hath not forgotten vs,though hē ſuffer vs to be ſo toſſed. Contrariwiſe all deſpiſers of the Lawe doe beare their mark, as if they were burned with a ſearingyron in their hearts, and do know that God is againſt them, and that their ſinnes doe reproue them. Albeit that men doe not accuſe them, yet doe they feele a ſufficient teſtimonie in themſelues to confound them withall. And that is it that Moſes doth farther adde,ſaying: *That vnto ſuch as are hard hearted againſt Gods worde,God will giue a trembling heart, a ſorowfull minde, and daſeling eyes, ſo as in the morning they ſhall ſay: May I ſee night? And when night is come: Alas,how ſhall I paſſe it ouer? Can I continue vntill the morning? Inſomuch that their life ſhall as it were hang before them, and they ſhalbe in miſerable vnquietneſſe.* That is the thing wherein the faithfull doe chiefly differ from the deſpiſers of God, and wherein their ſtate doth varie. For albeit that yͤ faithfull do ſuffer much trouble in this worlde, yet haue they euermore wherewith to comfort themſelues: according as our Iohn.16.30. Lorde Ieſus ſaieth in Saint Iohn. You ſhalbee vexed in this worlde (ſaieth hee) but yet ſhall ye not faile to haue comfort in me. Wee muſt conſider what is the grounde of our comfort; namely that they which ſtande aſſured in the protection of God,do euermore commit their life into his hands, as we ſee Dauid did when hee was beſet on all ſides. When he was threatened with a hundred deaths,he ſaid, Lord,I commend my ſoule vnto thee, thou art faithfull and thou haſt Pſal.31.6. redeemed mee. He knewe that God had maintained him euen vnto that houre; and that indeede without the marueilous power of him,hee coulde not haue liued ſo long. And thereupon he concludeth thus:becauſe that God is faithful, hee will ſurely haue pitie on mee: and therefore I commit my ſoule to his keeping. Loe at what point the faithfull are. They verie well perceiue the daungers wherewith they be beſet:they perceiue that their life is but a ſmoke that might vaniſh away out of hand: they ſee there bee many ambuſhes laide for them, inſomuch that all the worlde is againſt them, and that they cannot ſafely ſteppe forwarde one ſtep without incountring of ſome miſerie. The faithfull vnderſtande all this: ouer and beſide, that they bee ſubiect to all the chaunges of this humaine life, and that they bee fraile as all the children of Adam bee, they ſee well there is no reſtingplace for them heere. But yet heerewithall they knowe that God hath care ouer them, and that hee is their protector. That is the thing which they reſt vppon. Hauing ſuch a ſtay,they holde on their way forward:but yet are they not careleſſe; for we muſt not be ſo blockiſh as to caſt no perils: for we coulde not call vppon God if wee ſawe not the perils wherein we bee. And it prouoketh vs to ſeeke vnto our God,when wee ſee that without him wee ſhoulde periſh euerie minute of an houre. The faithfull then muſt not be without feare, but reſting vppon the tuition of God,they muſt ſticke vnto him,& aſſure themſelues that he will neuer forſake them. That is it wherein they reioyce. Yea and they goe yet farther. For although they be to go among thorns; although they bee driuen to make many leapes, although they catch now & then ſome knocks; yea and although they bee altogether ſhut vp & haue no way out: yet notwithſtanding through the power of faith they euermore reioyce euen in the midſt of all their ſorowes & perplexities. On the contrary ſide, the deſpiſers of God be as blind as is poſſible,and do cloſe their eyes, leaſt they might ſee their infirmities, & ſo do harden thẽſelues. Yet for all this,God compelleth them to look vnto thẽſelues,& then are they vndone: they be ouerraught with feare & amaſedneſſe. It is not their manner to make their recourſe vnto God. For they vnderſtand nothing of his protection, nay contrariwiſe they ſhunne him, & flee as far from him as they can, bycauſe they conceiue nothing in him but dreadfull maieſtie, which putteth them quite out of hart. As for the wicked therfore, and all ſuch as haue rebelled agaynſt God; they after long hardening of thẽſelues, when God waketh them, know not where to become. For they paſſe not of comming vnto him, but doe rather vtter their rage by ſpyting him and by gnaſhing their teeth at him. And becauſe they finde no ende of their miſeries, nor haue any reſt, this terrour which God caſteth vppon them is an incurable diſeaſe. As for to call vppon him, or to betake their liues into his hands, they haue no power: but rather foraſmuch as they knowe that they haue warred againſt him, they bee likewiſe driuen to vnderſtande, that in ſteede of helping them, hee will ſurely vexe them. That is the thing which we ſee heere in this text, where Moſes ſaieth, *God will giue thee a trembling heart, a ſorowful minde, and daſeling eyes.*

Nowe here may a queſtion bee demaunded. For we perceiue that Gods children, euen they that bee moſt deare vnto him, and which haue ſerued him in the righteſt and ſoundeſt manner; euen verie they are oftentimes in ſuch diſtreſſe, as doth amaſe them & make them beſides them ſelues. What complaints maketh Dauid? That Pſal.6.7. his eyes are forworne; that he is as good as conſumed with mourning, that the marowe of his bones is dried vp; that all his ſtrength is faded; that he is in ſo great feare, that to his owne ſeeming hee was ſwallowed vp into a bottomleſſe gulfe. This happeneth ſomtimes to Gods children. How ſo? This threatning is made to them that deſpiſe him, to them that cannot by any good meane bee reclaimed, and which haue alwayes withſtoode God. I haue tolde you already heeretofore, that God to trie his people to the quicke, ſuffereth them to bee altogether in like caſe as the wicked, inſomuch that euen they themſelues doe thinke ſo too. But yet doth God therewith reach them his hande, and although he doth not qualifie their griefes at the firſt, yet he holdeth them at ſuch ſtay that they ſhall not quaile. There lyeth ſtill ſome ſeede of Gods ſpirite hidden in them, which at length vttereth it ſelfe more fully, ſo they ſee well that God ſuſteined them in the middeſt of thoſe extremities, and in the end it appeareth vnto them, as it were in a viſible manner. Let vs marke it well then, that when the children of God bee toſſed and troubled with afflictions and haue ſo grieuous and harde temptations as were able to make them thinke, that God is their enemie, ſo as they dare not open their mouth to call vpon him, but are vtterly aſtoniſhed: inſomuch that although he alledge vnto them the promiſes of his grace; yet they cannot taſt of them, but doe ſomtimes euen refuſe them like the vnbeleeuers, as though they were fully determined to ſhut themſelues out of all hope of ſaluation: when they bee at this point, then doeth our Lorde worke in them, in ſuch wiſe as he ſuffereth them not to bee quite ouerthrowen with temptation. And that is Saint Paules mea- 2.Cor.4.8. ning where he ſaith, We be afflicted, but we periſh not, wee bee oppreſſed, but yet howſoeuer the worlde goe, wee bee not ouercome: for wee beare the mortifying of Ieſus Chriſt in our fleſh. Whereas hee ſaieth, that the faithfull may indeede be pent vp in afflictions, he ſaith alſo that yet notwithſtanding they quaile not for euer: albeit that they are made to ſtoope vnder the burden, and to grone as though they were cruſhed and broken; yet notwithſtanding, al thoſe heartbreakings breede not any deadly fall. Hee addeth the reaſon. Namely that it is the mortifying of our Lord Ieſus Chriſt, that they beare. As if hee ſhould ſay, that God doeth euermore ſeparate them from the misbeleeuing and reprobates, and from the deſpiſers of his maieſty, and that hee printeth in vs the marke of his only ſonne. It is true, that in this caſe they ſeeme as dead, but the ſame death is holy, for God ſanctifieth it, for that they bee members of our Lord Ieſus Chriſt: and thereby they attaine to the reſurrection. True it is, that Saint Paul ſpeaketh not alonely of the laſt reſurrection, but he beginneth at the comfort which GOD giueth preſently to his children to trayne them on ſtill to the port of ſaluation. Now then, they enter into the middes of death, euen while they bee aliue. And therefore let vs marke, that although God doe now and then ſo afflict ſuch as haue walked in his feare and haue put their truſt in him, that they bee ſtricken with terror and toſſed with vnquietneſſe: yet notwithſtanding hee holdeth them vp by the ſecret operation of his ſpirit: and moreouer comforteth and gladdeth them in the ende, accompliſhing that which he ſaith in an other text: That the more they were 2.Cor.1.5. diſtreſſed, the more doeth hee ſet their heartes Rom.5.5. at libertie, that they may freely come vnto him: and ſo conſequently maketh them to vnderſtande that he neuer forſooke them. Lo howe our Lorde tempereth the troubles, and afflictions of the faithfull: ſo as although they indure neuer ſo great paines, and doe euen pant in comming vnto him, as folke ſcarce able to open their mouthes to call vppon him: yet when they haue ended their conflict againſt their tẽptations, albeit that at the firſt they cannot get the vpper hande, yet ſhall they get the victorie in the end. But as for them that haue played the reſtie iades, they remaine pent vp in their miſeries, without any remedie, becauſe God doeth ſtill ſet himſelfe againſt them more and more vntill they become frantike, and gnaſh their teeth at him, and finally fall into vtter deſpaire. To be ſhort, we ſee that which is ſpoken by the Prophet Eſay, dayly accompliſhed: namely, that there is no peace for the wicked; but that Iſa.48.22. their mindes are toſſed like the waues of the ſea: when there is any ſtorme, the waues bee troubled and the water is full of mudde: and euen ſo is it with them that deſpiſe God. Becauſe they make warre againſt him, therefore muſt he alſo trouble them: Inſomuch that euen without enemie, yea and without any body to fray Prou.28.1. them, they of themſelues be frighted, and beate and bounce themſelues, as if they were at warre within themſelues, ſo as there is no calmeneſſe at all in them, but all is full of trouble and diſorder. For whereas the faithfull be inlightened in the middeſt of their darkeneſſe, and GOD doth ſtill reſort vnto them to giue them ſome litle ſparke of light, in ſuch wiſe as they may beholde him; and albeit they attaine not thereunto at the firſt, yet notwithſtanding they ſtill ſtreine themſelues and holde on their way thitherwarde: in ſteede of this, the misbeleeuers are troubled at the very heart roote, and can none otherwiſe conceiue, but that they muſt needes periſh in deſpaire: and when they bee at the laſt caſt, then fall they to ſpiting of God, and blaſpheme him with open mouth. To be ſhort, here wee ſee that the grieuouſeſt curſe that God can ſende vpon men in this tranſitorie life, is that they cannot reſt vppon him, to acknowledge him to bee the keeper of their life: but contrariwiſe, are caſt vp at aduenture, by reaſon whereof they bee euer in doubt of their liues, and bee ſo caried away with miſtruſt, that they wote not where to become. When men be in this caſe, it is the greateſt curſe that can light vpon them. Not without cauſe therefore doth Moſes declare heere for a concluſion as it were in way of ſumming vp the reſt of all the curſes which wee haue heard of heertofore, that there is nothing ſo dreadfull, as when men are become blockiſh, ÿ there is in them no vnderſtanding, as who woulde ſay, God maketh not any more reckening of them as of his creatures, but they may well perceiue that hee doeth not guide nor gouerne them any more. When men are come to this point, and that their life, (notwithſtanding that it bee allowed of men,) is neuertheleſſe hainous and deteſtable before God, and moreouer they haue no taſt of his fatherly loue, nor of the care that he hath of other men, but they be as in the dungeon of deſpaire: when men (I ſay) bee come to ſuch an extremitie, it were better for them that they had beene borne before their time, and that they had neuer enioyed this preſent life. And euen that is the verie cauſe why wee heare it threatened that they Luk.23.30. ſhal ſay, O ye mountaines fall vpon vs; and that they ſhall wiſh that the bottomleſſe pittes had ſwallowed them vp. And why? For they finde that all creatures bee againſt them, when they haue no more acceſſe to God. When men perceiue once that hee will not maintaine them, but ſheweth himſelfe to bee armed againſt them: then do they vnderſtand, that al creatures be their enemies, and it grieueth them to behold the ſunne: then be they ſo poſſeſſed with feare, that they wiſhe there were no worlde at all: or rather that they were rooted out of it.

Nowe ſith wee heare ſo horrible threatnings, let vs learne to walke in the feare of our God: for there is no other way to liue in reſt, and to bee comforted in the middeſt of our ſorrowes and aduerſities, but to come with a free will to yeelde our ſelues obedient to our God, and to doe him ſuch reuerence as is due vnto him. For when we acknowledge him to be our iudge, wee will not play the Rebels; but bee willing to bee reclaimed, that we bee not in the ende comprehended and wrapped vp in the number of them that haue reſiſted him. Yee ſee then howe the way that wee ſhoulde keepe is that we muſt willingly hearken vnto God when hee menaceth vs, and that wee muſt bee moued thereat, and bee touched therewith to the quicke: and that thereuppon wee endeuour to ſerue him, and to obey his worde. For it may well bee that we ſhall ſometimes bee vexed with feare and vnquietneſſe: but yet will GOD deliuer vs from them. It is certaine that wee ſhalbe weakened by that meane, and it is good for vs ſo to bee: but yet howe ſoeuer wee fare, God will ſo keepe vs that wee ſhall not fall into vtter deſpaire. Moreouer, when wee ſomtimes feele any vnquietneſſe in our ſelues, and wee haue not power to call vppon God, but are tormented with diſtruſt: let vs vnderſtande that it is the fruite of our ſinnes, and let vs deſire God to make vs to perceiue that we haue not kept touch with him as wee ought to haue done, and that therefore hee caſteth vs into that vexation and diſtreſſe. But let vs not ſo tempt our God, as he ſhoulde proceede to this rigour that is here mentioned: namely, wee ſhoulde haue no power to commit our life into his handes. So then, whereas heere is mention made of a trembling heart, let vs conſider wherein our true reſt doth remain, namely euen in this ÿ God is our father, and that wee be his children. Likewiſe whereas mention is made of daſeling or ſunken eyes; let vs vnderſtande that we muſt looke vpwards, as often as wee be in any feare: and that there is no other remedie to qualifie our griefes, but to lifte vp our eyes to heauen. For as long as men looke downewarde, what ſhall they finde there but an infinite maſſe and maſe of miſeries able to ſcare them out of their wittes, ſo as they ſhall not knowe where to become? Let vs therefore ſeeke vnto this meane: that is to lift vp our eyes to heauen, knowing that God hath his hande ſtreatched foorth, to vpholde them that returne vnto him. Where mention is made of a ſorrowfull minde; let vs vnderſtande that it is the proper office of GOD to ſet our heartes at libertie, to the end that no temptation may vtterly vanquiſh and ouerwhelme vs. And this ſhalbe treated of yet more fully.

Let vs come to that which Moſes addeth; Namely, that in the morning they ſhall ſay, *What is hee that will make mee ſee the night: and at euening, howe ſhall wee attaine to the morning? For thy life* (ſaith hee) *ſhalbe hanging before thee, as at a threede.* Heere we ſee yet better that which hath beene ſaide afore. For what is the cauſe that men bee thus in a continuall feare, but that they cannot commende their life into the hand of GOD? In verie deede and to ſpeake properly, the liues of vs all are euermore, as it were hanging at a Threede, but yet the deſpiſers of God doe moſt peculiarly finde it ſo; and well worthie, for that they haue warred againſt him that ſhoulde haue ſet them in reſt and ſafetie. Their life is as it were hanging by a threede, becauſe that in ſteede of life there is euermore this feare of death in their heartes, and reaſon good. For what is the life of man? A ſmoke that paſſeth and vaniſheth away. And moreouer let vs ſee howe many deathes beſet vs on all ſides. So then as long as wee remaine in our naturall ſtate, without hauing reſpect to GOD, our life is alwayes, as it were hanging at a Threede. Yea ſurely. Though wee bee neuer touched outwardly, how manie diſeaſes beare wee in vs? A man needes not to goe out of himſelfe, nor to ſeeke farre, to learne to howe many miſeries and wretchedneſſe hee is ſubiect: for euen in his owne ſelfe hee ſhall foorthwith finde an infinite number of deathes. Seeing then that it is ſo, let vs knowe, that vntill wee haue learned to reſt vs in the prouidence of God, our life muſt of neceſſitie bee as it were flittering before our eyes, and altogether vncertaine: and to bee ſhort we beare it continually as it were in our hands: Iob.13.14. according as it is ſaide in Iob and in the hundred Pſal.119.109 and nineteenth Pſalme.

Nowe when it is ſaide that wee carrie our life in our handes, it is to ſhewe, that where as life ſhoulde beare the man, the man beareth the life: that is to ſay, the life is left vp to the hazarde of all misfortune. Euen ſo it is with al men naturally, and as we haue alreadie ſaide, the verie faithfull are not free from it, and that doe wee ſee by example in Iob, and Dauid. Notwithſtanding, the deſpiſers of God are they that feele moſt howe their life hangeth by a Threede. And wherefore? For God euen ſpite of their teeth inforceth them to perceiue the perils that beſet them: they ſee it is good reaſon, that all manner of creatures ſhoulde become their enemies, by reaſon whereof they ſtart when they heare but the falling of a leafe, and they bee afraide when no bodie purſueth them, as it is ſaide in another Prou.28.1. place of the Prouerbes. Thus doeth God open the eyes of them that are puffed vp with pride, and are drunken with the delightes of this worlde, and ſpecially which haue hardened themſelues in ſtubbornneſſe againſt him. Hee openeth their eyes, that they may knowe howe their life is leſſe than nothing, and that all theſe ſhadowes, leaſings, and vaine hopes whereupon men are wont to reſt, are but baites to beguile them. See heere I pray you whereunto they come which doe ſkorne God and his worde, and are wholly giuen to this worlde, repoſing their truſt on earthly meanes and on the creatures. Needs they muſt at the laſt be caught with ſuch feare as will teach them double and trebble to vnderſtand their owne ſtate.

Nowe when Moſes hath ſpoken thus, hee addeth what they then ſay. *Who ſhall aſſure vs to ſee the morning? Howe ſhall wee ende the day?* When men vnderſtande once howe fraile they bee, and with howe many perils and miſeries they bee enuironed: then haue they no more happineſſe. In deede wee can well ſay, that there is nothing more certaine than death, nor any thing more vncertaine than the houre thereof: but in the meane while wee regarde it not, vntill God doe wring vs, and driue vs thereunto by force. For then they which did beare themſelues in hande that their life ſhould laſt without ende: (as we ſee howe men deceiue themſelues by fancying an immortalitie in this worlde, imagining that they ſhall liue a hundred yeares after they bee deade;) [doe finde the contrarie.] And therefore becauſe men are ſo blockiſh, God doeth ſtill conſtreine them to beholde preſent death continually pinching them and holding them at a bay. Thereupon they bee in continuall feare; and albeit that they vtter nothing with their mouthes, yet doe they ſay thus in their heartes, Who can aſſure mee to ſee the morning? To bee ſhort, to their thinking, the very earth ſinketh vnder them. And albeit that this doth not alwayes appeare, yet notwithſtanding the deſpiſers of God doe feele that this threatening is not in vaine nor without effect. Wherefore let vs not linger the time vntill God doe execute ſuch iudgement vppon vs, but let vs rather preuent it, by hauing that ſame willing feare which is ſpoken of in this wiſe: Bleſſed is the man (ſaieth Prou.28.14. Salomon) which feareth in his heart, that is to ſay, which calleth vppon himſelfe, and taryeth not vntill God inforce him whether hee will or no. When euerie of vs doeth ſtirre vp himſelfe, it is the greateſt benefite that wee can haue. Therefore where as the worldlings make themſelues dull heades, and wander away after their owne vaine imaginations, and fling beyonde the moone as they ſay to the intent to liue in peace and reſt without feeling of any griefe or trouble, whereas they (I ſay) would thus fall aſleepe; let vs looke to our ſelues, and gather our wittes into ſome feare, and let euery of vs quicken vp himſelfe. And if wee doe not ſtirre vp our ſelues in this manner, then muſt God needes torment and vex vs, and make vs a liuely portraiture of that which is mentioned heere. For in verie deede, after that the deſpiſers of God haue plaide the madde beaſts, and bleared out their tongues at all manner of doctrine, and ſet light by all threatenings, and like chafed bulles haue ruſhed againſt God and all his iudgementes: they muſt at the laſt feele themſelues vexed and troubled with vnquietneſſe: as wee ſee howe the great Tyrants that make all the worlde to ſhake vnder them, haue their part hereof without meaſure: inſomuch that where as they make others to drinke a little glaſſe of feare and terrour, they themſelues muſt drinke vp a whole potte full, and ſuppe vp the dregges, according to the phraſe of the Prophets, when they ſpeake of the greateſt puniſh- Eſa.51.22. ment that God ſendeth: Namely that when thoſe whom God chaſtiſeth, haue drunke more than their fill, in ſwallowing vp great ſtore of ſorowes; then they which haue liued at their eaſe and in pleaſure, muſt drinke the leeze, which is the bittereſt, and will make them to burſt. And in deede, we haue an example of a heatheniſh

Tyrant, who hath verie well prooued and declared that all his whole life was a continuall torment, yea euen by his owne witneſſe. For being flattered of one that ſaide vnto him, O ſyr, howe happie is your ſtate? Yea (quoth hee) and I will make thee to vnderſtande it thy ſelfe. And thereuppon hee made him a feaſt, and when hee had ſet him at ỹ table, he put a ſworde ouer his heade, hanging by one onely hayre, to ſhewe vnto him, what manner of ſtate that was, which hee had counted ſo happie. The man ſeeing himſelfe in that perplexitie, ſaide: Let this kingly ſtate be taken away from mee: for I had leuer die a hundred times than to be in ſuch vnquietneſſe and perplexitie. This I ſay, was the confeſſion of a heathen Tyrant: as if GOD ſhoulde haue helde him vpon the Torture, that it might bee a generall leſſon againſt all ſuch as make warre with God, and trouble the worlde with terrour: they muſt ſpite of their teeth bee made afraide themſelues, and finde no reſt. After many toſſings and turmoylings, hell muſt euermore waite for them, they muſt ſee their graues open which they are to fall into, and they muſt beholde the great gulfes readie to ſwallow them vp, and in the meane while can haue no recourſe nor refuge to God, but doe ſtil flee from him, where as he is the onely perſon to whom they ſhoulde haue ſought for ſuccour.

Nowe ouer and beſides that which wee haue ſaide already, namely, that we ought to preuent this threate, by fearing God of our owne accorde: let vs vnderſtande, that foraſmuch as we be all wretched ſinners, and there is not one, be hee neuer ſo well and rightly minded, which ought not to vnderſtande that hee is greatly indaungered vnto God: yet when wee haue our Ephe.2.14. Lorde Ieſus Chriſt, who is our peace, and when wee can by his meane reſt vppon the fatherly goodneſſe of God: then may wee be ſure that he holdeth vs for his children, and that hee watcheth ouer vs, and procureth our welfare. And Rom.5.1. that is the cauſe why Sainct Paul ſaith expreſly, that when we bẽ once iuſtified by faith, then we be at peace with God. He ſaieth that we muſt be iuſtified by faith, that is to ſay, that wee muſt haue imbraced the grace which is offered vnto vs by the Goſpel: knowing that God forgiueth vs our ſinnes, and is mercifull vnto vs; in that hee beareth with vs for our Lorde Ieſus Chriſts ſake. Vntill we come to this, we muſt needes be alwayes in doubt and in perplexitie: but hauing knowledge once that God hath buried all our ſinnes, ſo as wee put our truſt in the death and paſſion of our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt; then wee bee at peace, yea in peace and not in dulneſſe like as the vnfaithfull and the deſpiſers of God may haue ſome peace for a certaine time, as we haue ſaide afore: but foraſmuch as they forget themſelues, and do ſtill followe on their wicked traine, they vtterly beſot, and bewitch themſelues. But Sainct Paul ſaieth that wee haue peace with God, that is to ſay, that we acknowledging our ſelues vndone without him, may boldly preace vnto him and ſay: Seeing GOD is my father and hee hath ſhewed himſelfe ſo gracious to mee in this preſent life, as to giue me ſome reſt heere: ſurely there is a more bliſfull reſt prepared for mee, when as our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt ſhall come to meete vs, for to guide vs, and to bring vs vp, that wee may ſeeke our God; as in deede that is the place which wee muſt come vnto, if wee intende to haue a place to reſt vs in. And in that reſpect is it that the Prophets in likewiſe ſpeaking of the kingdome of our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt, doe alwayes ſay, that euerie man ſhall then ſleepe vnder his owne Mich.4.4. figge tree and vnder his owne vine: and nothing ſhall make him afraide. Nowe then concerning the threatenings which Moſes hath ſet downe heere; the Prophets as true expounders of Moſes, and as renuers and bringers of the Lawe to rememberance againe, hauing ſhewed vnto the people the vnbeliefe and rebellion which they ſawe in them, and hauing ſhewed the vengeance of God which was readie to light vpon them for it, did bring thoſe back againe vnto Ieſus Chriſt, which erſt were altogether vnreformable. And albeit that it behoued them to ſuffer ſmart for a time becauſe of their ſinnes; yet doe they giue them hope that God will make a couenant with them, and that then they ſhall ſleepe euery man in his vyneyarde and vnder his figge tree: doing them to vnderſtande that although they ſlept not in a locked chamber, but lay in yͤ middeſt of the fields, yet they ſhould be ſafe ynough becauſe they were vnder the protection of their God, by reaſon whereof they might ſleepe at eaſe and in ſafetie.

Foraſmuch then as wee haue ſuch aſſurance, wee ought to bee well ſetled in our mindes: and ſith wee haue vnderſtanding of the reconciliation that is made in our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt, wee haue nowe good cauſe to reſt vs in our God, and to be ſtill and quiet; howbeit, ſo as we forget not ſo great a benefite. And wee ſee that our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt is minded to raigne among vs. Let vs therefore ſuffer our ſelues to bee gouerned by his hande, and as Ewes and Lambes let vs followe our ſhepeherde, and then ſhall wee do that which our Lorde hath appointed for vs, ſo as nothing may hinder vs, but that we may attaine vnto him. Although wee ſee thinges turmoyled in this worlde, ſo as all goes to hauocke, yet ſhall wee bee able to take breath againe, and to ſay; Yet hath my God ſtill ſhewed mee the way: inſomuch that whereas other men haue beene poſted to and fro, I haue euermore ſtoode faſt: and although I haue beene diuerſe wayes troubled and vexed, yet doe I knowe Lorde that thou doeſt euermore gouerne thy people. Thus yee ſee that being ſtayed in our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt, wee may bee aſſured that GOD will neuer faile vs. Seeing it is ſo, let vs returne vnto him, and pray him to defende and delyuer vs from all euill. The way then for vs to bee ſure of our life, is, that although wee ſee nothing but continuall warre, yet wee muſt inforce our ſelues to fight, and perſeuere vntill we haue obtained the victorie, and if hee take vs away to himſelfe, hee will then bee the keeper of our ſoules. He will guide vs in this preſent life, ſo as both day and night wee ſhall feele his grace. When the euening commeth, albeit that the night doe bring neuer ſo much feare with it, yet ſhall we be in ſafetie. Why ſo? For God is that while our fortreſſe, and we ſhall not be forſaken of him. Therefore let vs tarie vntill the morning. Thus doe wee euer more referre our life vnto him. And although we be not ſenſeleſſe, yet ſhall we haue continually whereupon to ſtay vs when wee ſee our owne infirmitie. As for example, when a man perceiueth that hee is not able to ſtande, but his legges quake and folter vnder him; hee either leaneth to ſome thing, or ſitteth downe in a chaire, or elſe ſtayeth himſelfe vpon ſome ſtaffe; euen ſo is it with vs. For wee haue not the ſtrength of Gyants, wee bee not of ſuch power as to be able to defie our enemies, for wee ſee well that wee bee too too weake. But in the meane while wee ceaſſe not to ſtay vppon God, and that is our refuge. Neither haue we this affiance for this preſent life onely; but wee haue it alſo for the life to come: inſomuch that although our Lord doe put vs into the handes of our enemies, yet will he not miſſe to be our ſauiour euen in the middeſt of death. Let vs not doubt, but that he will ſafely conuey vs not onely from the morning to the euening, and from the euening to the morning; but alſo that euen in the middeſt of the darkeneſſe of death, we ſhall alwayes be lightened with his goodneſſe, and hee will ſhewe vs that the life which hee hath promiſed to his people, ſhall neuer faile. Therefore doth Dauid vſe this maner of ſpeach. Lorde (ſaieth he) thy ſtaffe or elſe thy ſhepeherdes hooke. He taketh the ſimilitude of a ſheepeherd, that hath his ſtaffe or his hooke. Lorde (ſaith hee) ſo long Pſal.23.4. as I ſee thy ſtaffe before me, I am ſafe, inſomuch that if wee were to goe into the darkeneſſe of death, yet being in that dark and yrkſome dale, yea euen in ſuch ſort as I might ſeeme to be caſt into hell: I woulde not ceaſſe to reioyce. After this manner muſt we practiſe this doctrine.

Nowe laſtly it is ſaid, *that God will cary his people by the waie, concerninge the, which it was ſaid: Thou ſhalt neuer ſee it againe: & that they ſhould bee caried in ſhippes: and that being come into Egypt, they ſhould bee ſet to ſale as ſlaues, & yet no body ſhould buy them.* They ſhould not be eſteemed, but as a people vtterly caſt away, and euery body ſhoulde diſdaine them. Now this was al one as if God ſhould haue meant to cut them off, ſaying, Remember how I merueilouſly deliuered you out of the lande of Egypt, when I made you to paſſe through the wilderneſſe, and in like wiſe to goe through the red ſea, or the ſea of Bulruſhes, (which they call yͤ red ſea: but properly it is the ſea of bulruſhes, becauſe of the Bulruſhes that growe in it) for I cauſed that arme of the ſea to ſhrinke back, that you might paſſe on drie foote. But nowe ſhall you returne thither in ſhippes; you muſt paſſe againe that way, yea, albeit that I forbade you, and inioyned you expreſly, that you ſhould not goe that way any more: yet ſhall you returne thither ſpite of your teeth. In deede at the other time that you were in Egypt, you ſorowed for the oppreſſion which you ſuffred, and I tooke pitie of you, and tooke you out of it. But at this time, when you ſhall require any bodie to buy you to bee their ſlaues, and to yeelde your life to the moſt miſeries that may bee: you ſhall haue no buyer at all. As if hee had ſaide, Seeing you haue deſpiſed the deliuerance that was wrought for you, and haue forgotten ſuch a benefite; it ſhalbe well knowen that you bee an vnhappie and a curſed people, and that I haue forſaken and refuſed you vtterly. This threat coulde not bee but exceeding terrible to the Iewes. And when the Prophetes expounded Moſes, wee ſee likewiſe howe the people gnaſhed their teeth againſt them. Howbeit, no whit were they meekened thereby, but rather they doubled their coufuſion: inſomuch that it was alwayes caſt in their teeth that their iniquities proceeded to ſuch extremitie as was intollerable. It is ſaide, that, notwithſtanding all the manaces of the Lawe were pronounced vnto them, yet they regarded them not, but helde on ſtill, and became ſo much the more hardharted, as though they had ment of ſet purpoſe to make warre againſt God. Soothly it is a horrible thing and againſt nature, that they which were the houſholde of God, the holy generation, the children of Abraham, and which from the beginning had beene trained vp in the doctrine of the lawe, and had had the ſayings alwayes laide before them which were written by Moſes, ſo as their eares were continually beaten therewith: ſhoulde yet notwithſtanding fare neuer the better for it, but ſtill goe on from euill to worſe. Was not that a horrible thing? Yes verily: and yet wee ſee the like example. Let vs make our benefite thereof, and beware that we wax not ſo hardharted, leaſt wee be poſſeſſed of Sathan, and forſaken of God, ſo that whatſoeuer is tolde vs & ſhewed vnto vs, we be touched with no manner of feare, but become like wilde bores which of their owne wilfulneſſe doe caſt themſelues into death. Let vs take heede that we prouoke not our God in that manner.

And moreouer whereas it is ſaide heere, that God woulde bring this people whom he had redeemed, into a double captiuitie and more reprochfull than was the firſt: let vs repaire vnto that redemption which was once wrought by our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt: and that we may be partakers thereof, let vs freely ſerue him which purchaſed vs ſo deerely. And ſeeing that our God hath redeemed vs in the perſon of his ſonne, to ſuch a ſtate that now we be franke and free from the bondes of ſinne and Sathan, let vs hencefoorth feare him and ſerue him all the dayes of our life, according as Zacharie ſpeaketh in his ſong, recited by Sainct Luke. Luk.1.75. Seeing then that the caſe ſtandeth ſo, let vs learne to walke in ſuch obedience to our God, as hee may make the redemption auailable which is wrought by our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt; and let vs ſerue him in all holineſſe and righteouſneſſe, that wee bee not bereft of the fauour which hee hath purchaſed for vs as wee ſee this people were, who after they had beene ſetled in the lande of Chanaan, were put out againe for their vnthankfulneſſe. Therefore let vs bee well ware that God diſpoſſeſſe vs not of the grace which he hath beſtowed on vs: but let vs learne to take ſuch profite thereby, as all the whole may yeelde fruite to his glory, to the intent he may make vs to vnderſtand, that as well in life as in death, hee is euermore our Sauiour and our redeemer, and yͭ we may make our boaſt that he hath not redeemed vs in vaine, but with condition, that we ſhoulde henceforth liue in libertie in deſpite of the diuell and of death, according as wee haue example thereof in Sainct Paul.

Nowe let vs fall downe before the maieſtie of our good God, with acknowledgement of our ſinnes, beſeeching him to touch vs more and more to the quicke, that being ſtriken with ſuch a feare, as may make vs to ſee that of our ſelues we bee deade and forlorne; we may yet for all yͭ not faile to flee for refuge to his mercie. Let vs therfore ſeeke the way thither, which is, that we acknowledge our ſelues to be recōciled by Ieſus Chriſt, and that hee is our peace vnto the ende, according as he doeth continually declare and teſtifie vnto vs by the doctrine of his Goſpell. Eph.2.14. And that in the meane while it may pleaſe our good God, to giue vs the ſpirite of mieldneſſe and meekeneſſe, to the ende wee rebell not againſt him any more, nor haue our affections any more, ſtriuing and rebelling againſt his Lawe, but rather that wee may commit ouer our ſelues to his guiding, and bee confirmed in the aſſurance which hee hath giuen vs, that hee holdeth vs for his people; ſo as he may ſhew by effect, that hee watcheth ouer vs, and that hee will continue with vs to the ende to preſerue vs both in life and in death. That it may pleaſe him to graunt this grace not onely to vs, but alſo to all people and Nations of the earth.&c.

On Munday the vj. of Aprill, 1556.

The CLXIIII. Sermon which is the firſt vppon the nine & twentith Chapter.

THeſe bee the wordes of the couenant which the Lorde God commaunded Moſes to enter into with the children of Iſrael in the lande of Moab: ouer and beſides the couenant which he had made with them in Horeb.

2 And Moſes called all Iſrael, and ſaide vnto them: you haue ſeene all that the Lorde hath done before your eyes in the land of Egypt, to Pharao, and to all his ſeruants, and to all his Countrie.

3 The great trials which thine eyes haue ſeene, and the great ſignes and wonders.

4 And yet the Lord hath not giuen you a heart to vnderſtand, eyes to ſee, and eares to heare, vnto this preſent day.

WHen GOD hath once ſhewed his wil vnto mē it ought to ſuffice for euer. For what would wee more, when wee vnderſtand yͭ we ought to walke in the obedience of our God: euen of him who hath formed and created vs; to whome wee belong, and who hath ſo dearely bought vs? Needs then muſt men be wonderfully vnthankful, whē they can forget that which God hath taught them. And that is the cauſe why it is ſo often times tolde vs that wee muſt not turne away from the trueth when it is once knowen vnto vs. But we ſee howe God was faine to ratifie his Law againe the ſecond time, to the end it might be receiued, yea euen of that verie people whom he had choſen; and yet we ſee that at that time the Iewes ought to haue beene ſufficiently reclaimed to obey God: for hee had brought them lowe with long affliction, and ſurely it is a thing that ought to make men yͤ more pliable to learn, when they haue bin beaten with the ſcourges of God and their pride bin long puniſhed in them, ſo as they haue beene driuen to flie vnto God to pray him to take compaſſion of their miſeries. It may well ſeeme that this ſhould make them as gentle and meeke as lambes. The people of Iſrael were in that caſe, but they did foorthwith forget the miſeries which they had ſuffered, they kicked againſt their God, and they coulde not finde in their harts to receiue the yoke that was laide vpon their necke. Therefore we haue here a faire lookingglaſſe of the naughtineſſe and frowardnes of our nature: for this is not written to this ende onely that we ſhould blame the Iewes: but much rather that wee ſhoulde conſider that we our ſelues doe nothing differ from them, vntill God haue reformed vs by his holy ſpirite. Here then in yͤ perſon of the Iewes, God ſheweth vs what we are of purpoſe to humble vs.

Therefore he ſaith, *that God commaunded Moſes to make a couenant the ſeconde time with the children of Iſrael in the Land of Moab*, yea ouer & beſides that couenaunt which hee made in Horeb, where the law was firſt deliuered. It is certaine yͭ Gods declaring of his law was to the intent that euerie man ſhoulde remember this leſſon both night and day, and for that cauſe was the law ſet downe in writing. For it is not ynough for vs to haue had God ſpeake once; but the fathers muſt alſo teach their children, and euerie man muſt exerciſe himſelfe in that which he hath heard, yͭ he may frame himſelfe thereafter frō day to day, & bee the better edified. Gods intent then was yͭ this people ſhoulde bee dayly furthered, and for that purpoſe alſo were the Prieſts ordained. For I haue tolde you for what purpoſe our Lord had choſen them from among the people: It was not for the ceremonies of the Temple onely: but (as it is touched in the Prophet Malachy) it was to Mal.2.7. ſowe good and profitable doctrine throughout all the whole lande: and to that ende alſo were they diſperſed euerie where, that the people might be retayned in the purity of Religion, and in obedience to the lawe. But the queſtion here concerneth the ſolemne couenant. When God Exod.19.16 Exod.20.18 publiſhed his law in Horeb, we vnderſtand that the lightnings did flie foorth, that there was a ſounde of trumpets, that the heauen moued, that the mountaine flamed, that mens minds were afraide, and to bee ſhort, that God there ſhewed his preſence with ſuch maieſtie, as all men muſt needes know that obedience was due vnto him. Marke heere the ſolemnitie that was kept to make the Lawe autenticall. I haue ſaide that this ought to ſuffice vs to the ende of the worlde. Shoulde wee then looke to haue him to doe it againe the ſeconde time? Seeing that God hath fully certified vs that the lawe proceeded from him, and yͭ it is not a doctrine of mans deuiſing, but Gods owne vnchaungeable wil, and the rule that hee meant to haue kept without breaking, not onely of them that lyued at that time, but alſo from age to age ſo long as the world ſhould laſte; ſeeing (I ſay) that God did ſo ſhew forth his power to his creatures, ought not the rememberance of ſuch a deede preuaile to rule vs, without any opening of our lippes againſt the doctrine conteined in the Lawe? Yes ſurely. Needes then muſt it be that the people were verie leawd, yea and very rebellious, ſeeing they coulde ſo ſoone forget that which God had ordained to cauſe his lawe to bee receiued with all reuerence.

And that is the cauſe why it is ſaide, *beſides the couenant that was made in Horeb*. Here Moſes reprooueth thoſe that ſhoulde teach their children and poſteritie, vpbraiding them that they had forgotten God, and not profited themſelues by the woonders which they ſawe at the publiſhing of the lawe, but compelled God to renue it againe at the ende of fourtie yeeres, as though they had not knowen whence the lawe came, but had caſt doubtes of it ſtill, and woulde make none account thereof, vnleſſe they were ſubdued againe by maine force, and fetched home againe by God like a ſort of ſtray cattell. That was a token of great malice. But let vs marke howe God hath turned the euill vnto good, by making it to ſerue to our ſaluation. For by this meane wee bee the better confirmed in the doctrine of the Lawe. If it had beene publiſhed but onely once in Horeb, it ought to haue beene more than ynough to vs. And ſeeing that God gaue forth his voice in the aire, inſomuch that if a beaſt had come neere the mountaine, it ſhould Exod.19.13. haue dyed; and men heard dreadfull things and all their wits were troubled; the reciting of theſe thinges vnto vs ought to make vs to caſt downe our eyes, and to yeelde our ſelues pliable to receiue that which is contained in the Lawe of God. But nowe ſeeing it is ſaide that God began againe, and that there was a double confirmation, whereby the lawe was ratified anewe, and God auowed himſelfe to bee the author thereof, and no mortal man: ought not the hearing of ſuch thinges, to aſſure vs ſo much the more to ſtay vpon the doctrine thereof without any replying? If we doe it not, double condemnation will lye vpon vs. And thus we do ſee that the rebellion of the Iewes profiteth vs by that which fell out vpon it, inaſmuch as it was an occaſion that God did yet better confirme the authoritie of his lawe.

Nowe let vs conſider whereat Moſes doeth beginne. He ſaith: *The Lorde hath wrought dreadfull woonders before your eyes in the Lande of Egypt, there were tentations to trie you: you knowe what hee did vnto Pharao and to all his ſubiectes: yet notwithſtanding, you haue not conſidered any of all thoſe things; you haue had neither wit, nor eares, nor eyes, you haue bin deafe and blind, ſenſeles & beaſtly*, and ſo ye ſee how al gods myracles haue nothing auailed you, becauſe of your dulnes. Iuſtly hath Moſes begun here with vpbraiding, and iuſtly doth hee blame yͤ people for that they had not bin more attentiue to vnderſtande and to marke the teſtimonies that God gaue them: yea verely. Whereunto tendeth that, but vnto this which hee addeth for a concluſion, *My will was that you ſhoulde haue knowen that I am the euerlaſting your God*? Lo howe God declared that his intent was to reforme his people, as if he ſhould haue ſaid, hold ye to me: know ye that ſeing I haue taken yͤ charge of you, your life ſhalbe happy, & I will haue care of you: therfore honor me, put all your truſt in me, ſettle your affection vpon me, & glorifie me in al your life. That was gods purpoſe, when he ſhewed his wonderful power in deliuering yͤ people of Iſrael out of the bondage of Egypt. Seeing then that all this profited them not, muſt it not needs be that they were too too froward, in burying ſo many teſtimonies of Gods preſence, ſpecially ſeeing it was for their welfare and felicitie to haue yeelded themſelues in ſubiection vnto God? Seeing then that they were ſo wildheaded, and

woulde

would not by any meane bee reclaymed. it is a ſigne of too diueliſh malice. It is al one as if Moſes ſhold ſay thus: Look to your ſelues: For there is no excuſe why you ſhould be thus deafe, blind, and ſenſeleſſe. Whereas God hath wrought ſo mightily in the land of Egypt for your deliuerance, it was to the ende that you ſhould be ſtabliſhed in the truſt of his goodneſſe and power, and bee ſtayed vppon the mightie ſtrength which hee ſhewed vnto you in ſo excellent maner: But you haue doone no ſuch thing: and therefore yee be more than guiltie, becauſe nothing hath hindered you to knowe your God, which hath thus ſhewed himſelfe vnto you, but your owne vnthankfulneſſe in refuſing al maner of vnderſtanding.

In deede it ſeemeth at the firſt ſhew, ẏ Moſes doth in this place diminiſh the fault of the people, by ſaying, *God hath not giuen you eares to heare euen to this day, neither eyes to ſee, nor minde to vnderſtand.* For hee ſheweth that it was not in the peoples power to haue either reaſon or vnderſtanding, vntill the ſame were giuen them from aboue. Nowe if men bee ſo brutiſh that they cannot bee taught, vntill God call them vnto him; what can they ſay, but ẏ they are to be pitied, and that he ought not to condemne them for the ſame? It ſeemeth therefore that Moſes went about here to cloake the iniquitie of the people, in ſaying, that it was long of GOD. For it was in Gods power to haue inlightened that people if hee had would, but he did it not. And he ſayth preciſely, *God hath giuen thee neither eyes nor eares.* Whereby hee ſheweth that it is a ſingular gift of God, to bee able to beholde his workes and to diſcerne aright of them, that wee may be inſtructed by them. If we be deſtitute of the ſpirite of God, then are we altogether brutiſhe: inſomuch that although God ſpeake, yet we heare him not: and although he ſtretch forth his mightie hand, yet we perceiue it not a whit. Shold not this ſerue mẽ for ſome excuſe of their ignorance? And in very deede, they that woulde waſhe their handes, wil alwayes ſay, Why? If I haue libertie to doe well, I am to be blamed if I diſcharge not my ſelfe: but of whom is it long that I haue it not, but of God who depriueth me of his grace? Thus doe men pleade their cauſe, and it ſeemeth to them that they be iuſtified and acquited, ſo they can declare that it lyeth not in them to doe wel, vntil God do aſſiſt thẽ. And ſo ſaith Moſes. But yet is all maner of excuſe taken away, inſomuch that although men be not able to attaine to well doing, no nor (which more is) to conceiue one only good thought towards it: yet ſhal they ſtil abide condemned before God, neither can they haue any colour of excuſe for their infirmitie, or of the faultineſſe which is in their nature. Moſes (as I haue already declared) doth here plead the cauſe of God againſt ẏ people. The people therefore muſt reſt in their cõdẽnation, & be ſhut out frõ al maner of ſhifts. And what ſaith he to thẽ? *The Lord hath not giuen thee eyes to ſee,* yea euen to this people that is depriued of the grace of God: and yet are condẽned here neuertheleſſe. Let vs therefore marke it well, that the vices which bee in vs, ſerue not to diſcharge vs, ſo as God ſhoulde not alwayes haue his right to reproue vs, yea and alſo to condemne vs, if we folowe not his trueth when it is offered vnto vs. For the better vnderſtanding whereof, let vs conſider that this is not ſpoken of the Iewes onely, but generally of all men. For through the offence of Adam, we be ſo alienated from God, that al our powers be corrupted and faultie. By the powers of the ſoule I meane the vnderſtanding, reaſon, will and iudgement: All theſe thinges are vtterly peruerted by Adams turning away from GOD. And for proofe thereof, the reaſon and wiſedome which the firſt man had, were not in himſelfe, ſauing in that hee was faſhioned after the Image of God: and therefore as ſoone as hee was ſeparated from his creator, who is the fountaine of all goodneſſe, hee coulde not but be depriued of all the graces that GOD had earſt beſtowed on him. Yee ſee then howe Adam did ſo baniſh himſelfe from the kingdome of GOD, that in ſtead of the ſpirituall riches wherewith hee was firſt endowed, there is nothing in him now but al manner of wretchedneſſe. For the heritage which wee haue from him is to bee altogether ſequeſtred from Gods grace. In deed there doe yet ſtill remaine in vs certaine prints of them: to the intent wee ſhoulde not be like the brute beaſtes, I meane euen by nature. Although the Paynims bee not reformed by the ſpirit of GOD, yet are they not as Oxen, Aſſes, or Dogges. Wee therefore doe ſtill beare ſome marke of that Image of God which was imprinted in the firſt man: howbeit that wee haue corrupted it altogether. For although that wee can iudge betwixt good and euill, yet is not that able to leade vs to perfection of true doctrine; neither is it able to make vs to knowe our God, to honour him ſyncerely as we ought: but whereas wee haue a certaine ſeede of knowledge that there is a GOD, wee bee dazeled in our thoughtes, and forge vaine dotages to our ſelues. Thence come all the idolatries, that euer were in the worlde. For albeit that men doe very well vnderſtand that there is a certaine diuine maieſtie which ought to be honored, yet are they not able to attaine thereunto: but doe beguile themſelues with certaine imaginations, notwithſtanding the light which is in them: whereby they ſhewe, that becauſe of ſinne, they be bereft of all good vnderſtanding, ſo as they bee not able to ſette one foote forewarde to march one ſteppe in the right way. To be ſhorte, all the vnderſtanding and reaſon which wee haue, ſerueth but to make vs ſo much the more vnexcuſable; Rom.1.20. for wee cannot pleade ignorance.

Nowe then wee perceiue that there is no vnderſtanding in men that they ſhoulde ſay they knowe GOD, though hee haue opened himſelfe vnto them. Therefore ſayth Saint Paul that the naturall man is not able to vnderſtand the thinges which belong to the ſpirit. 1.Cor.2.14. Hee ſaith not, that men be ſo frowarde that they wil not vnderſtand: but hee ſaith that they cannot at all: the power or abilitie thereof is not in vs. And why? Becauſe of the corruption that is crept into vs through the ſinne of Adam. Nowe then like as our will is frowarde, ſo is our vnderſtanding darkened, ſo as we neither diſcerne ne deeme as were requiſite for our ſaluation. Whereas wee knowe both the good and the euill, wee encline to the euill rather than to the good. What cauſeth that? Becauſe wee bee captiues vnder the ſeruitude of ſinne, and 2.Cor.4.4. the diuell who is Prince of this worlde, reigneth ouer vs, vntill wee be deliuered out of his bands and Tyranny, through the grace of our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt. And like as the will is frowarde in vs, euen ſo is our ſpirite wrapped in much ignorance, ſo that God muſt inlighten vs by a ſpeciall grace, or elſe we ſhall neuer iudge of his word or works, as becommeth vs. Now therfore we ſee here, that God doth ſo accuſe the Iewes, as that by that meane he ſheweth vnto vs, that we be all deafe, blinde and ſenſeleſſe. We muſt marke theſe three thinges; that vntill God giue vs eyes, eares, and ſpirite or heart, we can not but goe cleane contrarie to his will. Seeing it is ſo, let vs learne not to come with a fooliſh preſumption, thinking our ſelues meete to bee admitted to the knowing of Gods ſecretes: but rather let vs referre our ſelues vnto him, that when his word is pronounced vnto vs, it may pleaſe him to giue vs the ſpirite to receiue it: and to worke before our eyes, that we may be ſo inlightened as we may fare the better for his workes, by taking hold of his maieſtie and glorie, and by ſtooping vnto him. I ſpeake aſwel of his word as of his workes: and not without cauſe. For when we come to heare Gods worde, we ſee that many doe returne from it as they came to it, and beare nothing away; or if they can rehearſe aught, yet are they neuer a whit edifyed thereby. Whence commeth that? Euen of this, that GOD giueth eyes and eares to whome hee thinketh good. Therefore, let vs not imagin that we be ſufficient and capable to diſcerne well, when wee haue bin onely taught, but let vs referre our ſelues vnto GOD, knowing that all light, all reaſon, all skil, and all diſcretion proceede from his ſpirite. In deede wee vſe that kinde of praying before our Sermons: but yet there are very many which doe vſe it but as a ceremony, and are not touched with it at all. But looke how often wee deſire God to inlighten vs with his holy ſpirite; ſo oft doe wee make ſolemne proteſtation, that wee come thither as wretches that are blinde, deafe, and altogether blockiſh, vntil God haue reformed vs, & drawen vs to himſelfe. Then lyke as GOD ſpeaketh vnto vs outwardly by the mouth of men whome hee hath appointed: euen ſo muſt he alſo ſpeake inwardly by his holy ſpirit. Truely it is a grace that is not to be deſpiſed, when as wee haue the pure doctrine vttered vnto vs: but yet ſhall it not auaile vs, vntill GOD hath alſo touched our heartes and our mindes.

If wee will be edifyed in the word of God, we muſt bee drawen with this inwarde grace when wee be taught at the mouth of a mortall man. For lyke as the ſunne yeeldeth light, and yet the blinde ſee neuer the more for it: Euen ſo the worde of God is preached vnto vs without edifying, vnleſſe our Lord giue vs eyes wherewith to behold his countenance as it ſhineth forth in the perſon of our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt. So much for that poynt.

Now as concerning the workes of God, it is alike. We doe continually eate the bread which hee giueth vs: wee take our fill of his benefites; but yet for all that wee reſorte not vnto him, neither doe wee any way thinke to come neere him, vntill hee haue giuen vs wiſedome and diſcretion, that ſo being nouriſhed by his goodneſſe, wee may yeelde him thankes, for that hee hath a fatherly care ouer vs. Lykewiſe wee ſee the puniſhmentes and corrections which hee ſendeth vppon the wicked, wee be blockiſh, and paſſe them ouer, vntill hee haue wakened vs and made vs to vnderſtand, that it is for our ſinnes, that hee hath his hand ſo ſtretched out. To bee ſhorte, whether GOD ſpeake gently to drawe vs vnto him; or whether hee correct vs, and ſhewe vs ſome token of roughneſſe, to make vs to ſtoope: yet all this ſerueth to no purpoſe, vntil God giue vs eyes to ſee, eares to heare, and heart to vnderſtand. Are wee thus reproued? Let vs learne to miſlyke of our ſelues, and let vs not counterfeite thoſe that kicke againſt God, as if their ſinnes ſhould ſerue them for a buckler: let vs beware of ſuch blaſphemies. For wel may wee reply and ſay, I cannot tell what to doe, my nature is ſo corrupted in Adam: and I am thereby diſfurniſhed of all manner of power to attaine vnto goodneſſe: but when wee haue well debated our cauſe, it is certaine that wee ſhall continue ſtill in our condemnation. And why? For the euill commeth of vs. Is it not enough for a man that hee may bee his owne witneſſe, and needeth not to haue any inditement preferred againſt him by otherfolkes, nor any information againſt him? If a man enter into himſelfe, although he bee a ſlaue vnto ſinne, and be altogether compacted of naughtineſſe; and is not any way able to attaine vnto goodneſſe: yet is it ſo, that of his owne proper motion, and of his owne free will (as they terme it,) hee is alwayes drawen vnto euill, howbeit, hee is not forced thereunto. It is certaine that it is not poſſible for him to doe good: and yet neuertheleſſe the ſinne which hee committeth proceedeth not from any where elſe, than of his owne inclination: his will is ſo. Now ſeeing it is proued that we ſinne not otherwiſe than of our own freewill; is not that enough to ſtop our mouthes? To what purpoſe ſerueth it vs to ſpurne againſt God, ſeeing that wee muſt needes come to this condemnation? Therefore on the one ſide let vs learne to magnifie the grace of GOD towarde vs; and therewithall caſt downe our eyes, for that wee can doe nothing elſe but ſinne againſt him.

Sith wee ſee ſuch dulneſſe in vs, that the workes of God doe paſſe before our eyes, and wee perceiue them not: let vs ſigh and ſay;

Alas, muſt it not needs be that we bee very frowarde, ſeeing that God ſheweth vs here, howe familiarly he offereth himſelfe, and that his power is open vnto vs, and yet notwithſtanding we remaine worſe than wilde beaſtes? After that manner ought wee to lament; and ſeeing that God doeth vs to vnderſtand, (as I haue ſayd afore) that the puniſhementes which he ſendeth vs; be for our warning: if we profite not our ſelues thereby, let vs impute it to our owne hardheartedneſſe & ſay, needs muſt I be too too wicked, ſeeing that God calleth me to his ſchole, & driueth me thither ẇ his rod, & yet his word profiteth me nothing, but I continue ſtill in my wilfulneſſe: what a dealing is ẏ? Although then ẏ we be both deaf & blinde; yet let vs learn always to giue glory to God by condemning our ſelues willingly for ẏ we reſort not vnto him, and for ẏ we vſe not the meanes better which he profereth vnto vs to bring vs backe againe into the way of ſaluation. Thus much for one poynt.

Nowe on the other parte, when God hath ſhewed vs the fauor to make vs ſee his works to our benefite: let vs alſo looke vppon his very face in the doctrine of the Goſpell, that we may bee transfigured into the ſame, and let vs magnifie ſuch goodneſſe, aſſuring our ſelues that wee attaine not vnto faith by our owne power or policie, as who ſhoulde ſay, we were able men, and had well marked Gods woorkes, and well conſidered of them. Nay let vs acknowledge that all this commeth of him, and that otherwiſe wee ſhould haue remained ſtill in our beaſtly ignoraunce, as we ſee many doe.

There is yet more, for when we ſee that God worketh in vs, and that in the meane while hee ſuffereth a great many others to remaine deaf & blinde; ẏ ſame ought to leade vs to a far greater conſideration of his goodnes, to ẏ end wee may perceiue our ſelues to be ſo much ẏ more beholding & bound vnto him. Dauid did acknowledge ẏ whẽ he was wel tamed through Gods chaſtiſements, it was a ſpecial gift, & likewiſe when God did reforme him by his holy ſpirit. And when he ſpeaketh of the vnderſtanding that he hath of the ſecretes of God, and of all the doctrine of ſaluation, hee attributeth the ſame to the holy Ghoſt: ſhewing that it behoued him to proceed alwayes in profiting more and more. And therefore he hath his recourſe to the heauenly grace, confeſſing that there is not ſo much as one drop of knowledge in him, but by the gift of God. And when he is to treate of his obedience towardes God: he ſayth that it is the worke of God to opẽ Pſal.40.7. his eares, and to ſubdue him throughly vnto him. We ſee then by this, how he by his owne example teacheth vs to doe our homage vnto God for all manner of wiſedome and diſcretion, for all the light of faith which he hath giuen vs, and for all the good affection and deſire that we haue to worſhip him. But as I haue ſayd heretofore, when God dealeth not alike with all men, but whileſt he draweth vs vnto him, he leaueth others in their vnbeleefe; therein hee magnifyeth his goodneſſe yet the more. And when we ſay that God giueth not men the hart to vnderſtand, or that he doth giue it them: our meaning is that he draweth ſome & letteth otherſome alone, according to his owne chooſing of them, Act.13.45. as it is ſayd in S. Luke. Yee ſee how S. Paul preached: and yet all beleeued not his doctrine, neither were they wonne to the knowledge of Ieſus Chriſt. And what is the cauſe thereof? Whence commeth this diuerſitie? Euen of this, that God calleth and draweth thoſe vnto him whome hee hath choſen, as S. Paul treateth as well in the viii. Cap. to the Rom. as hee doth more at large Rom.8.&9. in the ix: but he deriueth this argument from the calling; namely that after God hath choſen men, he conſequently calleth them vnto him. Lykewiſe doth he aſwel in the firſt to the Epheſians, Ephe.1. 5. as in other places; where hee ſheweth that God doth then teſtifie that he hath choſen and adopted vs for his childrẽ, when it pleaſeth him to drawe vs vnto him through his goodneſſe. That is the thing which we haue in effect to remember. When we heare Moſes in this place reproue the people of Iſrael, that they vnderſtood not the miracles of God: and yet ſaith: *That God had giuen them neither eyes, neither eares, nor heart.*

Now if it be demaunded why Moſes vouchſafed not to expreſſe the cauſe why God gaue not his ſpirite vnto the ſaid people; (for it ſeemeth that he might in one word more grieuouſly haue condemned the people, if hee had ſayd: Thou haſt not harkened, thou haſt not diſcerned:) There are two cauſes thereof. The one is to doe the people to vnderſtand that they were ſo froward, that although God had wrought a million of miracles mo than they had ſeene already; yet had it bin vnpoſſible that they ſhoulde haue bin conuerted by the ſame. When men ſee that they be ſo leawdly diſpoſed and froward, that although God ſhould create a hundred worlds before their eyes, yet woulde it ſtand them in no ſtead: ought they not to bee the more aſhamed of themſelues? Yes ſurely. And again let vs mark farther, that Moſes meant to exhort the people to pray vnto God, for that in deed is the onely remedy, when we find ſo groſſe and ſo exceſſiue brutiſhneſſe in vs, that wee forget all manner of good doctrine, and all manner of admonitions which God hath giuẽ vs, yea euen when he ſtretcheth out his hand effectually to make vs to feel his power. Whẽ we haue buryed al theſe things, let vs reſorte to the remedy, which is, that wee pray vnto him to giue vs wiſedome and diſcretion to iudge better hereafter. Moſes therefore did ame at thoſe two ends, as if he ſhould ſay, Wretched people, looke to your ſelues: for to preſume any thing of your own wiſedome, or of your vertues, what were it? Sith experience doth ſhewe that you bee altogether giuen to euil, & that although God work neuer ſo mightily in your preſence, yet it ſerueth you to no purpoſe. Therfore acknowledge your ſelues to be ſtarke blind, and no better than wretched brutebeaſtes. Forget all your glorying, put away al ouerwening, & flatter not your ſelues, as if you had this or ẏ: For you haue power to do nothing but euil. So much for ẏ point. Secondarily again he ſayeth vnto thẽ, Go to, what is to be done? As for to inforce your ſelues, you be not able, for all your indeuoring is but vnto wickednes. But wil you thẽ yeld your ſelues wholy vnto God? Knowe yee that it is his office to open mens eyes and eares. Therefore confeſſe your faultes, and deſire him to prouide for you, and to reforme your mindes in ſuch wiſe, as yee may from henceforth well conſider his workes, and that hauing conſidered them, ye may be edifyed in his feare and obedience, ſo as you may haue eares to receiue the doctrine which is offered vnto you in his name. That is it whereat Moſes amed. Thus wee ſee that they which giue themſelues to ouermuch curioſitie, doe peruert the doctrine of God, and falſly abuſe it. When it is preached that in ſtead of freewill (as they terme it,) men haue but a curſed and a corrupt will, and are ſo blinde, that all their reaſon is but brutiſhneſſe, and that they cannot attaine to the doctrine of ſaluation, vntil they bee haled thereunto: they fall to making of erroneous diſputations. But the meaning of the holy Ghoſt is much differing from them. For it is to humble men, that they may learne to miſlyke of themſelues, yea and vtterly to condemne themſelues, when it is declared vnto thē that they can doe nothing. And furthermore wee be prouoked to pray, ſeeing that God muſt bee faine to worke in vs. And when we feele our feebleneſſe and infirmitie, wee bee driuen to reſorte vnto him and to deſire him to keepe vs vnder his obedience, forſomuch as it pleaſed him once to elect vs. Let vs therefore take heede that wee doe not wilfully wander either this way or that way: but as often as it is tolde vs, that we haue not yet bin taught of the holy ghoſt, nor bin reformed by him: let vs ſigh, at the beholding of our naughtineſſe which ceaſeth not to make vs euer guiltie. And thereupon let vs reſorte to our God, and pray him to haue pitie vppon vs, and to prouide remedie for all our faultes, and to giue vs henceforth both eares, eyes, and heart, to ſee, heare, and to vnderſtand the thinges which he telleth vs.

Now then foraſmuch as we haue here an inſtruction in the perſon of the people of Iſrael: let vs acknowledge our vnthankfulneſſe. True it is ẏ God hath ſo wrought, as there is none of vs which can excuſe himſelfe, that he hath not bin inſtructed ſufficiently at ſome time of his lyfe, to walke in the feare of God. In very trueth, we ſaw not the giuing of the law in Horeb, we heard not ẏ thunderclappes, wee ſaw not the lightenings, neither heard we the Trumpets ſound: but yet doth God dayly worke in ſuch maner, as he leaueth not himſelf without witnes, yea euē though there were none other thing than ẏ hee cauſeth Act.14.17. the Sunne to ſhine, and ſendeth vs rayne and faire weather: as S. Paul ſayth in the Actes. Behold, ẏ heauen & the earth, & the thinges which we ſee are witneſſes vnto God. And yet for all ẏ, God ceaſeth not to doe notable actes & worthy of memory, which ought to waken vs although we were neuer ſo blockiſh. Had a man liued but onely fifteene yeres in this worlde, it were time long enough to make him knowe Gods wonderfull workes. But when we haue continued here a fortie or fiftie yeres and more, and God in that time hath renewed the memory of his workes, one while comforting vs, and another while chaſtiſing vs: inſomuch that we are forced to perceiue his power ſo many wayes, and to knowe ẏ he hath deliuered vs from ſo many and ſo apparant daungers, & that he hath reached vs his hand to pluck vs, (as it were) out of the bottome of the graue, yea euen when we were as good as drowned in death; if wee notwithſtanding ſuch inſtructions, doe ſtil remaine deafe and blinde; ſhall we not bee condemned by this text? Yes truly. And let vs not in this caſe ſay, O the time ẏ I remained in papiſtrie; I was thē a blind wretch, but yet I ſinned not: let vs beware of ſuch ſhifts: for they wil ſerue vs to no purpoſe. But let vs vnderſtand, that we be alwayes to bee condemned for our ignorance, for they ẏ ſinne without lawe, ſhall periſh without the lawe, as S. Paul ſaith in the ſecond to the Romanes. For in whom is the Rom.2.12 fault ẏ we ſee not the thinges which God ſheweth openly vnto vs, but in our owne naughtines? After that maner therefore muſt we condemne our ſelues, when we can not learne by any of the meanes which God deliuereth vnto vs, as when he would drawe vs to his knowledge, & that wee ſhoulde be inlightened to knowe him to bee our God & father, & that his loue might bee imprinted in our hearts, to ẏ end we ſhould come vnto him freely, & with a pure & rightmeaning mind.

But yet this acknowledging of ourſelues to be guiltie, and this condemning of our ſelues for it, is not all ẏ we haue to doe: but we muſt alſo ſeeke the remedie by praying vnto God to play ẏ phiſition in curing all our diſeaſes. And foraſmuch as he doth now ſend vs to our Lord Ieſus Chriſt, vnto whom he hath giuen this charge & office; let vs commend our ſelues vnto him. It is ſayd in the Prophet Eſay, that Chriſt at his comming Iſa.42.7. into the world ſhould make the blind to ſee, the deafe to heare, the lame to go vpright, and that he ſhould eaſe the dead. All theſe thinges hath he done viſibly, as is to be ſeene throughout all the hiſtorie of the Goſpel. But S. Matthew telleth vs that ẏ ſame tendeth to a higher purpoſe. Matt.8.17. For in healing the bodily diſeaſes, he ſheweth himſelf to be the ſpiritual phiſition of our ſoules, and ſaith that the ſame was done to the end that the ſaying which was ſpoken by the Prophet Eſay ſhould be accompliſhed, namely, that he did beare our infirmities. Now it is certaine that the Prophet ſpake not there neither of the feuer, nor of the burning agewe, nor of any other diſeaſe Iſa.53.4. that appertained to the body: he ſpeaketh of the diſeaſes of our ſoules. Seeing it is ſo, let vs then conclude that it is the peculiar office of Ieſus Chriſt to giue ſight to the blind, and to giue hearing to the deafe. And forſomuch as he hath the ſpirit of wiſedome and diſcretion in all fulneſſe, we muſt come directly to him to be inſtructed. Iſa.11.2. Wherefore let vs not doubt but that God is foreward and ready to receiue vs. In conſideration whereof let vs giue this honor to Ieſus Chriſt, to acknowledge him to be the light of the worlde, and the Phiſition of all our ſpirituall diſeaſes, & that he wil worke toward vs, according as his father Iohn.12.46. hath charged him. And to the intent wee ſhould not bee diſcouraged, Moſes doth expreſly vſe this word; *to day*, or *this day*. In deede he dooth reproue the people, for ſleeping ſo long a while. What, ſaith he? It is now fortie yeres ago ſince yͤ law was publiſhed & you deliuered out of yͤ land of Egypt: and in al theſe fortie yeeres, hath God preuailed any thing with you? Ye haue had a tabernacle, wherein to doe ſacrifice dayly: a nūber of miracles haue bin added thereto, yee haue bin fedde with Manna from heauen, you haue drunke of the water that iſſued out of the harde Rock: and yet for al that, you haue continued ſtil lyke beaſtes, yea and much woorſe: ſo as it may well ſeeme that yee haue made a diueliſh conſpiracie, to caſt off all the inſtructions that God gaue you; and lykewiſe all the chaſticementes, and puniſhmentes which hee hath ſent vppon you. Moſes therefore dooth iuſtly blame the people for continuing ſo long in their beaſtlyneſſe. But yet hee ceaſeth not to encourage them to returne vnto God, ſaying: *Vnto this day.* As if hee ſhoulde ſay: your GOD calleth you againe vnto him. For albeit that you haue perſeuered in your beaſtlyneſſe and ignorance; yet is he at this day ready to enlighten you, whenſoeuer you come to ſeeke in him the remedy that hee hath ſhewed you. The thing then which wee muſt doe, is, that hauing confeſſed our faultes paſt, wee doubt not, but that our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt will reach vs his hand, and bee ready to reforme vs. Let vs take heed therefore, that wee ſhut not the gate, lyke folke that will needes throw themſelues wilfully into hell, but let vs commit our ſelues to our God. And ſeeing he ſetteth his worde before vs, let vs pray that it bee not lyke the ſeede that falleth among the ſtones, and among the thornes: but that he will ſo manure vs by his holy ſpirite, as we may be edifyed and eſtabliſhed in his feare and obedience, and that he will ſo worke for vs, as wee may haue occaſion to prayſe him in all our lyfe, and the very infidels may knowe that hee dwelleth among vs

Luke.8.6.

Nowe let vs fall downe before the Maieſtie of our good God, with acknowledgement of our faultes: beſeeching him to voutſafe ſo to touch vs with them, as we may vnderſtand that there is nothing in vs but damnation: and that in the meane while wee may not ſeeke any ſtartingholes; but come offer our ſelues before him as our Iudge: and perceauing how wee be altogether accurſed, and haue none other remedie, but that hee through his infinite goodnes doe recouer vs and bring vs home againe vnto him. And that it may pleaſe him to reclayme vs, hauing obteyned pardon of our treſpaſſes, we may become newe creatures through the meanes of our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt, ſeeing hee hath expreſly ſent him of purpoſe to repleniſhe vs with all manner of ſpirituall good things. Therefore let not vs hinder him to finiſh his worke in vs, nor ſhut the gate againſt his grace: but rather ſet it open with all lowlyneſſe and feare. That it may pleaſe him to beſtowe this grace not onely vppon vs, but alſo vppon all people and nations of the earth, &c.

On Tewſday the vij. of April, 1556.

The CLXV. Sermon which is the ſecond vpon the nine and twentith Chapter.

5 And I lead you for the ſpace of fourtie yeeres through the wilderneſſe, and your garments waxed not olde vpon you, neither did thy ſhoes weare vnder thy feete.

6 Alſo you haue not eaten any bread, nor drunke either wyne or beere: that you might know that I am the Lorde your God.

7 And ſo you came into this place: And *Sehon* the King of Heſebon, and *Og* the King of Baſan came forth againſt vs to battell, and we vanquiſhed them.

8 And wee haue taken their lande, and giuen it in poſſeſſion to the Rubenites and Gadites, and to halfe the Tribe of Manaſſes.

PRoceeding with the matter that was begunne yeſterday, Moſes dooth here declare vnto the people, that they were too dulheaded in that they conſidered not the goodneſſe of God, which they had ſeene, and inioyed by the ſpace of fortie yeres. If God ſhould nouriſh a man but the ſpace of a three or foure dayes, without one morſell of bread; it would ſeeme to bee aboue the ordinary courſe of nature. But behold, here was an infinite multitude of people nouriſhed with a kind of meate that had not bin common. God made it to raine downe Manna frō heauen, and the people were fedde with it; for they had alwayes ſo much as was needefull, and this miracle was ſo viſible, that it could not bee called in doubt. Yet notwithſtanding, the people continued ſtill hard hearted, howbeit, not for want of knowing that they receaued that food from God. If the Iewes had bin asked that queſtion, there was none of them which woulde not haue Exod.16.15 & 17.6. anſwered thereunto ſaying, Since the time that wee came into the wilderneſſe, God hath had pitie of vs, and ſuſteyned vs; we ſhoulde haue dyed through miſeries and hunger, had he not Num.20.11. cauſed Manna to raine downe from heauen. Alſo he cauſed water to iſſue out of the Rocke, that wee might haue whereof to drinke. Euery one would in deede haue confeſſed this. But yet notwithſtanding they ceaſed not to murmure againſt Moſes and Aaron, neither ceaſed they to haue longinges after their owne luſtes, ſaying Numb.11.6. that the Manna was nothing toothſome, and therefore they coulde not lyke of it. Then fell they to fornication, and ſedition, and gaue Numb.25.1. ouer themſelues to idolatrie and much filthines. Thus dooth it appeare that this people forgate GOD. The matter therefore conſiſteth not altogether in the hauing of ſome ſleight knowledge; but it muſt bee applyed to the right vſe, that is to ſay, that GOD bee honored among vs, that wee doe him homage for the benefites that hee beſtoweth on vs, and thereby beginne to put our truſt in him, and to haue recourſe vnto him. Let vs marke then, that whereas Moſes in this place reproueth the Iewes, for not knowing the fauour which GOD had done vnto them when hee fedde them with Manna in the wilderneſſe: hee meaneth not that they had giuen forth in ſpeech, that the Manna came not to them through the goodneſſe of God: but that they ſtill continued dulheaded, whatſoeuer they did confeſſe; for that they deſpiſed their God, and turned away from his worde, and ſhut their eyes, euen knowing the thinges as altogether apparant.

But as it was touched yeſterday, albeit that Moſes doe here ſpeake to the Iewes; yet dooth it alſo concerne vs. So then wee be condemned here before God, if wee profit not our ſelues by all the benefites which wee receiue at his hand, as wee may thereby bee induced and prouoked to honor and ſerue him, and to reſort for refuge to his goodneſſe, in ſuch wiſe as wee wander not in our vaine and fraile hopes, ne ſtay vppon this preſent worlde, ne preſume any thing vppon the creatures. Now therefore let euery of vs looke into himſelfe; howe doe wee make the giftes of GOD auaileable, by yeelding our ſelues pliable to ſerue him? Nay, it ſeemeth rather that when he hath made vs fat, wee take occaſion thereby to kicke againſt him: Deut.32.15. as it is ſaid hereafter in the ſong of Moſes. In the meane while it appeareth that wee vnderſtand nothing that may auaile vs, to leade vs in the right way. For whence commeth ſo much couetouſneſſe wherewith men be caryed away, ſo that ſome are vnſatiable in their greedineſſe, ſome doe burne in their ambition to attaine to credit, ſome lyke brute beaſtes doe ſeeke to fil their bellie, and otherſome are caryed headlong to filthineſſe and fornication? Thus are wee all lyke ſheepe ſtrayed from GOD. And whereof commeth this, but that wee neuer taſte of his goodneſſe, neither doe wee vnderſtand it a whitte, where as notwithſtanding, all our wits ſhould bee applyed thereto? When the worlde caryeth vs thus away, we make it manifeſt that wee haue ſmally profited by receiuing the benefites which God with his owne hand hath beſtowed vppon vs. Foraſmuch therefore as this people was at that time blamed by Moſes for the vnthankfulneſſe which you ſee here: let vs in theſe dayes caſt down our eyes and confeſſe, that although God hath mightily wrought toward vs, yet doe we continue as doted, and all our ſenſes bee as it were, dazeled by Sathan: Inſomuch that our eyes are blinde, & our eares deafe, and wee haue no vnderſtanding nor reaſon. If a man reply, alledging that God hath not done any ſuch miracle amongeſt vs as hee did amongeſt the Iewes when hee nouriſhed them with Manna from heauen, let vs mark wel that which is ſayd by our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt in the ſixt chapter of Iohn: for the Iewes at that Iohn.6.32. time did take occaſion to deſpiſe the doctrine of the Goſpel, for that our Lorde Ieſus ſeemed not comparable to Moſes, becauſe hee alſo had not led the people through the wilderneſſe. But it is declared there, that hee hath brought vs a meate much more precious, and of more eſtimation than the Manna: and that it is no excuſe for vs, to ſay hee made no Manna to fall downe from heauen. And why ſo? For the ſonne of GOD is content not onely to feede our bodies, but bringeth vs alſo the ſpiritual food to nouriſh our ſoules: which is not ſuch a kinde of meate as Moſes did giue. For although the Prophet, (to magnifie the grace of God) doth Pſal.78.25. ſay that it was the bread of Angels, wherewith the people of olde time were fedde: yet is it nothing comparable to this foode which wee haue at this day. For what elſe is our life than the ſonne of GOD whoſe will it is that wee ſhould bee fedde with his owne ſubſtance? Seeing then that wee liue in our Lord Ieſus Chriſt, and that hee is giuen vnto vs, ſo as at this day wee are become fellowes with Angels, and bee partakers of his bodie, and bee made his members: there is no excuſe for vs if we doe not acknowledge ſo excellent and ineſtimable a benefit, to bee altogether enflamed with the loue of our GOD, to bee brought to his feare, and to truſt ſtedfaſtly in him. And therefore let vs marke well the compariſon that is made here betwixt the meat wherewith the fathers were fedde in the wilderneſſe, and the foode that is giuen vs at this day by our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt.

Hauing ſpoken thus of the Manna, Moſes addeth: *That the people did neither eate bread, nor drinke wine, or any other liquor that could make them drinken.* That is to ſay, any mingled drinke, whereof much is made in the Eaſt countries, for there they haue excellent fruites, inſomuch that they make drinke of Dates and of ſuch lyke thinges: and all the compounded drinkes which they make, they call by one common name, *Sicera*. Nowe Moſes ſayth that there was no ſuch kinde of drinke vſed among the people: but that the water which iſſued out of the Rock flowed out euery where, and accompanied them by the way, in ſuch ſorte that they were compaſſed about with the maruaylous goodnes of God, by reaſon whereof they were driuen of neceſſitie to acknowledge that hee had ſtretched foorth his hande,as if he ſhoulde haue put the meate into their mouthes . That was the meaning of Moſes. And this ſerued to make them to haue the better vnderſtanding of the groſſe brutiſhnes which was in them , in that they gaue not God his due glorie . In deede when the earth bringeth foorth corne for our foode, the ſame ought to ſuffice to make vs to perceiue that God ſheweth himſelfe a father to vs. But becauſe wee bee accuſtomed to it, our heartes are hardened by it , and wee ſee that men bee not prouoked to yeelde thankes vnto God , when thinges followe all after one common rate. For this cauſe ought this circumſtance to bee well weyed, according to this ſaying of Moſes which wee haue ſeene heeretofore, Deut.8.17. When thou art come into the lande: albeit that thou ſhalt there eate bread; yet when thou haſt tilled the earth, and that it hath yeelded thee her encreaſe ; remember that thou waſt nouriſhed with Manna, and ſay not ; It is mine owne skill or mine owne hande that hath gotten mee this foode. Looke thou beare ſtill in mynde that thy God nouriſhed thee after a ſtrange manner for the ſpace of fourtie yeares, to the ende it ſhoulde remayne with thee for a perpetuall remembrance, and that thou ſhouldeſt acknowledge it thus: The ſame God that fedde mee in the wildernes , is hee that hath giuen mee this lande, and which maketh it to yeelde fruite, that I may bee nouriſhed thereby. Let vs marke well therefore howe it is not without cauſe, that Moſes ſayeth: *Thou haſt eaten no bread, nor drunke wine nor other drinke , and yet waſt thou fedde* . Nowe a man woulde thinke at the firſt ſight, that it were impoſſible for a man to liue without ordinarie foode , becauſe wee woulde alwayes tye the grace and power of GOD to theſe naturall meanes , wherewith hee is ſerued . It ſeemeth to vs that God cannot worke , but according to our vnderſtanding, and experience. But on the contrary ſide it is ſayde here, that the people hauing not a morſell of bread to eate, did not fayle for all that to liue in wilderneſſe. And why? For God hath meanes incomprehenſible whereby to ſuſteyne his creatures, as hee ſhewed manifeſtly at that tyme. In ſo much that if neede required, God would rather turne the ſtones into bread, than forſake his people. Alſo he could as well feede them with milke as with bread. To bee ſhort, let vs marke , that the power which proceedeth from the Spirite of GOD is the onely thing that mayntaineth and preſerueth vs in our ſtate : Pſal.104.30 as it is ſayde in the hundred and fourth Pſalme . Is not bread a dead or inſenſible thing ? Howe then coulde wee receiue life thereby, but that it is Gods pleaſure? Thus doeth Moſes here put the people in mynde of the miracle of the Manna, in ſuch ſort as hee had reported it afore . For if the people had incontinently founde Manna in the wilderneſſe, they woulde haue thought that the place had brought it foorth : but they pyned a whyle, and murmured againſt God. Then came the Manna, a verie vncouth and ſtrange thing. Whereby the people were conuinced, that God had regard of their neceſſitie. And when the Manna was fallen, euery man gathered his quantitie, and they diſtributed it all among them, ſo as nothing remayned, neither wanted there a grayne of the wonted meaſure. Whereby it appeareth, that the feeding of ſeuen hundred thouſande perſons with the Manna, yea and that in ſuch certeine & foreappoynted meaſure as if a man ſhoulde ſay, euery man ſhall haue as much as hee needeth, came not of haphazarde. On the other ſide, there fell none vppon the Sabboth day, but on the day before fell double quantitie . Wee ſee therefore that God diſtributed his Manna, like as when a mans children come about their father for their foode, and hee giueth euery of them his pittance in due meaſure and proportion. Againe , if they keepe the Manna beyonde the Saboth day , it rotted: ſo as they coulde not keepe it longer than was appoynted by God, to receiue thereof any ſuſtenance and nouriſhment. Wee ſee then that God vttered his power ſo many wayes , as the people ought not to haue douted, but that they were fedde by myracle, and beyonde the common courſe of nature. That is the thing which Moſes declareth heere, in ſaying, Thou diddeſt not eate any bread.

But let vs conſider well the reaſon which hee addeth here, *That thou mighteſt knowe that I am the Lorde thy God*. Here the people bee reprooued not onely of ouerſhameful leawdneſſe and ſtubbornneſſe, but alſo of vtter vnthankfulnes. If God vtter his heauenly power , ſo as it ſhewe it ſelfe apparant vnto vs ; wee bee touched and mooued with feare, to yeelde him reuerence: but yet by the way wee may alledge that hee maketh vs afrayde, and that wee bee aſtoniſhed at his glory, which is the cauſe why wee are not able to yeeld him the honor that he deſerueth: but when God ioyneth both in one , that is to ſay, when on the one ſide hee maketh vs to vnderſtand his infinite and ineſtimable power, and on the other ſide draweth vs vnto him gently & with fatherly goodneſſe , thereby ſhewing and witneſſing the loue that he beareth vnto vs: then is there no more excuſe, we bee dubble condemned. For (as I ſayde afore) the glorie of God, ought to make vs to ſtoope, and to yeelde our ſelues pliable vnto him ; and his goodnes ought to allure vs vnto him. So that vnleſſe we be too much blockiſh, we muſt needs be throughly mooued to loue our God. Now then if there be neither loue nor feare in vs after that God hath miniſtred al meanes & occaſions of them both vnto vs, is it not an vtter condemning of vs? That is the thing which Moſes meant, ſaying, It is a wonder that you do not otherwiſe knowe your God; ẏ is to ſay, That I am the Lord who haue ſhewed my ſelfe to bee your father & redeemer, in that I haue taken you into my keeping and protection, and haue not fayled you in any thing.

Nowe this that is heere ſpoken of Manna, wee muſt apply to all the benefites of Gods hande. What then is the thing which he intendeth in ſhewing himſelf thus bountiful towards vs? On the one ſide hee woulde that wee ſhould acknowledge him to bee our onely God, and that hee hath in himſelfe the fulneſſe of all good things, and that hee is our father, and that wee ſhoulde not gadde here and there as men commonly doe, who ſwaruing aſide and fleeting too and fro, doe dayly forge to themſelues newe gods. They will eaſily confeſſe that there is one ſoueraigne GOD; but yet for all that, they cannot fynde in their heartes to reſt wholly vppon him, they hang alwayes in dout and wauering, with what is this God? What maner of one is hee? Yee ſee here howe the intent of our God is to withdrawe vs from all outleaping imaginations, and to plant in vs a welgrounded and ſettled determination, that wee might ſay, O Lorde, thou art hee which made both heauen and earth; thou haſt all thinges in thy power, and vnder thy dominion; it is to thee that all honour is due; vnto thee belongeth all power. Thus much for that poynt.

Nowe muſt wee proceede to the ſecond; which is, that wee ſo acknowledge him to bee our father that, wee aſſure our ſelues of his loue, and that hee hath care of our ſaluation. For if wee bee at no further poynt, than to acknowledge him to bee God; it doeth but leaue vs alwayes in feare: and in verie deede the maieſtie of God doeth of it ſelfe terrifie vs: inſomuch that when as wee ſhoulde drawe neere vnto him, wee deuiſe to flee away, vntill the time that hee doeth aſſure vs of his fatherly goodneſſe. The chiefe poynt therefore is, that hauing attributed all power and ſtrength vnto him, wee vnderſtande alſo that hee hath choſen and admitted vs for his people, and that hee will ſo holde vs in his cuſtodie as wee may bee able to ſay, that our life is altogether bleſſed, for ſo much as hee hath ſeperated vs from the reſt of the worlde, and giuen vs priuiledge to call vppon him, and to haue our recourſe vnto him, and to truſt aſſuredly that hee will neuer forget vs, but that hee will furniſhe vs with all thinges that bee requiſite not onely for this earthly life, but alſo for our euerlaſting ſaluation. That then is the true knowledge of God; and if wee proceede not to that poynt, then are wee deafe, blynde, and ſenſeleſſe. Let vs euermore conclude, that vntill wee haue learned to honour our God; to ſubmitte our ſelues wholly vnto him; to doe homage to his maieſtie; and to repoſe all our contentment and reſt in his gracious goodneſſe and fatherly loue; ſo as wee ſtay our ſelues altogether thereuppon, aſſuring our ſelues that our ſaluation is ſure in him: if wee bee not at that poynt, it is a token that wee knowe nothing, and that wee bee ſtill miſerable beaſtes. Wee may well ſay this and that; but to what ende? All is but confuſion. That is the thing which wee haue to remember concerning this Text.

Nowe, that this doctrine might bee of the more authoritie, Moſes ſpeaketh in the name of GOD, howbeit that it is hee himſelfe that ſpeaketh; wherein there ſeemeth ſome contrarietie and looſeneſſe of matter. For hee ſayeth, *I haue lead you through the Wilderneſſe, wee haue diſcomfited Sehon king of Heſebon, and Og king of Bazan.* Thus doeth Moſes followe this ſentence, as it were by a threed, and ſayeth: *I haue nouriſhed you in the wilderneſſe*, and yet it was GOD that did it. Meant he to vſurpe the honour that partayned to GOD alone when hee ſayeth, We did diſcomfite thoſe kings? Surely the matter is all one in that Moſes ſpeaketh in his owne perſon, and in the meane while bringeth in GOD ſpeaking alſo: this doeth rather giue vs a profitable admonition, to wit, that although GOD ſpeake to vs by the mouthes of mortall men, whome hee ordayneth for that purpoſe; yet muſt not wee therefore diminiſh the authoritie of his worde. Let vs therefore honour God, and yeeld obedience to his worde, when it is declared vnto vs by men, as if wee ſawe him preſent among vs. That is the thing which Moſes meant. In very deede, hee did acknowledge himſelfe to bee a frayle man, and hee exempted not himſelfe from the reſt of Adams children, hee was a member of the Church. But yet for all that, foraſmuch as hee was ordeyned to bee a miniſter of GOD, and was to carry the worde in his name: hee meant to authoriſe the woorde, to the ende that it ſhoulde not bee lightly regarded, nor deſpiſed, vnder pretence that hee which ſpeaketh it is a creature. The thing then in effect, which wee haue to beare in mynde touching this place, is that when wee reade the thinges that were written by Moſes, and by the Prophets, and Apoſtles, thereby wee vnderſtande that GOD did rayſe vp men to bee as inſtrumentes and woorking tooles of his holy Spirite: and yet notwithſtanding that hee will not haue our faith turned away from him vnder that pretence, but rather that wee ſhoulde take holde of his power and maieſtie by his worde, and to yeelde due obedience thereunto. Thus ſhoulde wee practiſe this place.

Nowe after this, Moſes addeth; *That their garmentes and apparell were not worne with oldneſſe, nor their ſhoes appaired for the ſpace of fourtie yeres.* This ſerueth to aggrauate the peoples vnthankfulneſſe, to the ende they ſhoulde acknowledge themſelues the more guiltie, for not hauing acknowledged the goodneſſe of GOD which had appeared ſo many wayes. Let vs then conſider well, that the more GOD doeth multiply his benefites towardes vs, and the greater diuerſitie that there is of them, hee vſing it as a meane to inſtructe vs after many faſhions: ſo much the greater and more heynous is the offence, if wee profite not thereby.

True it is, that notwithſtanding, although God giue vs a taſte of his goodneſſe and power, but in ſome one only thing, yet is that ynough to condemne vs, if wee bee not edified thereby. But when GOD multiplyeth his goodneſſe by vttering his power to our eyes, to our eares, to our handes, and to our feete, ſo as the faulte is onely in the hardneſſe of our heartes, that wee bee not exerciſed in his benefites; it maketh our ſinne ſo much the greater. Wherefore let vs beare well in mynde the meaning of Moſes, that wee may the better doe our endeuour to conſider howe many wayes God hath made vs beholding vnto him, and howe greate the diuerſitie of his gracious doings is towards vs, as in deede the number of them is infinite. Let this (I ſay) the more inforce vs to ſharpen our wittes, that wee bee not dulheaded. Whileſt God ſheweth himſelfe to bee neere vs, let vs not goe farre from him, vnder colour that wee bee turned away alreadie: but let vs gather our wittes to vs, and conſider wel howe he worketh towardes vs. And notwithſtanding that our garmentes at this day bee not preſerued after that miraculous manner; yet let vs not omit to confeſſe alwayes that wee be cloathed through the free fauour of GOD, and that if hee did not furniſh vs with woll and all other thinges that ſerue to couer vs withall, there woulde bee ſuch a want, as wee ſhoulde dye of penurie and wretchedneſſe, and there woulde bee no meane to helpe it. Let vs acknowledge this (I ſay) and let vs profit our ſelues better thereby, than wee are wont to do.

Nowe Moſes addeth more ouer, *that when the people came into the lande which was promiſed them, then Og king of Bazan, and Sehon king of Heſebon came foorth and gaue them battell, and were diſcomfited by the people.* Moſes doeth heere againe lay foorth the goodneſſe of God, ſuch as hee had ſhewed it to that people. Yet therewithall hee reprooueth them ſtill for their leawdneſſe, and vnthankfulneſſe. This meeting of them came to paſſe contrary to the expectation of the people: for they did not looke that Og and Sehon ſhoulde haue ſhewed themſelues enimies: but rather that they woulde haue ſuffered the people to paſſe. Theſe then were newe enemies that prepared themſelues on the ſoudeine; whereat the people became abaſhed. And in very deede they had deſerued to bee quite deſtroyed: for there was too ſhameful diſtruſt to bee ſeene in them. When worde was brought them that it behooued them to goe to battell; beholde they were diſcomfited before they came at their enemies; & they conſidered not the power of this promiſe, namely, I will fight for you, you ſhall ſtande ſtill, and winne the victorie by my power. Although that God had offered to bee their captayne and guyde in the warre, and had giuen them ſo good proofe aforehande, as they ought not to haue douted at all: yet were they in ſuch perplexitie, that all was forlorne and paſt hope of recouerie with them.

Exod.23.20
Numb.14.9

Nowe we knowe that if men winne one battell, their heartes bee commonly puft vp, and they take better courage to goe forwarde: and that contrariwiſe, if they bee repulſed, then their heartes quayle. To the ende therefore that the Iewes ſhoulde not bee at that poynt, it behooued God to prouide a remedie for it, and in deede ſo did hee of his ineſtimable goodneſſe. Inſomuch that Moſes nowe vpbrayding them with it, ſayeth, That ouer and beſides that God had fedde them fourtie yeares in the wilderneſſe, without bread or wine; hee had alſo fought againſt their enimies; and it was the handy woorke of God, that they had vanquiſhed the two kinges, which came foorth againſt them, and had conquered their countryes, and ſettled there the two trybes of Ruben and Gad and the halfe Trybe of Manaſſes. By meanes whereof one quarter of their people or thereaboutes were prouyded of a ſufficient portion to dwell vppon. Sith it is ſo, ought they not to haue beene wakened, though they had beene aſleepe afore? Ought not this victorie to haue giuen them both courage and ſkill howe to honour their God, who had ſo ſhewed him ſelfe towardes them, and to haue cauſed them to put their truſt in him, ſeeing his grace had beene ſo viſible? But ſeeing they continue ſtill in their ſtubbornneſſe, doeth it not appeare that they bee vtterly paſt hope of recouerie? Therefore as nowe wee ſee the meaning of Moſes. And heereuppon let vs learne, that wee muſt acknowledge the goodneſſe of God, not onely in that hee doeth preſerue and nouriſh vs; but alſo in that he doeth ſet himſelfe againſt our enemies, and ſuffereth vs not to bee made a pray. When wee be in this wiſe defended by God, and that hee is our buckler and our fortreſſe; wee ought to magnifie his mightie power in that behalfe, and to acknowledge him to bee our God and father, and to yeelde him the prayſe that is due vnto him.

True it is that wee haue no ſuch victories as Moſes ſpeaketh of: howbeit, if we did wel conſider the hatred that a great many beare toward vs, and how eager they be to deuoure vs and ſwallowe vs vp: wee coulde not but confeſſe that they bee brydled by ſome ſecrete working of GOD, ſeeing wee bee preſerued all this whyle, euen without the power of man, and without any vanquiſhing of them with our owne handes. This is a marueylous goodneſſe; which it woulde behooue vs to perceiue, and which wee doe very ſlenderly acknowledge. Nowe there are alſo ghoſtly enimies, againſt whome wee bee defended. For what ſhoulde become of vs, if GOD ſhoulde not fight againſt Sathan, and againſt all the powers of hell? There needeth no greate fighting againſt vs; (as wee ſee too much by experience) any one temptation bee it neuer ſo light, maketh vs by and by to ſlip away.

And what woulde then become of vs when wee bee aſſayled on all ſides, and when the diuell inforceth him ſelfe to the vttermoſt to entrappe vs? If G O D did not helpe vs then, what woulde become of vs? Now then, let vs haue our wittes better wakened than wee haue had them heeretofore, that wee may perfectly perceiue howe many wayes G O D ſheweth him ſelfe to bee our protectour, and that it bee not caſt in our teethe, that wee bee deafe and blynde, and vtterly bereft of diſcretion and reaſon.

Nowe in the ende Moſes addeth; *Therefore keepe the wordes of this couenant, to doe them, that thou maiſt proſper: and that in all things which thou doeſt, all may goe well with thee.* Here wee perceiue, firſt that which was more largely ſpoken of yeſterday: to wit, that whereas Moſes had declared vnto the people, that God had not giuen them eyes, nor eares, nor reaſon: his ſo dooing was not to make them careleſſe, or to rocke them aſleepe, or to diminiſh the faulte whereof they were guiltie, but rather to driue them to ſeeke remedie where it was to be found. After that manner therefore muſt wee expound the doctrine that is contained in the holy ſcripture touching the fauour which God ſheweth vs, in that hee vouchſafeth to enlighten vs, & to refourme our heartes to the obeying of him, that hee may drawe vs vnto him. True it is that many ſcorners will profite but little by this doctrine, and that they will rather take occaſion by it to blaſpheme God, and to ſay: Very well, if I cannot doe aught that is auaylable, let God blame himſelfe. For ſeeing that hee hath not giuen mee the grace to doe better, what ſhall I doe? If I inforce my ſelfe to no purpoſe: to whome ſhoulde the fault bee imputed? There bee very many dogges, that doe thus barke againſt God. There bee others that fall faſt a ſleepe in their recheleſſeneſſe, ſaying: Seeing it is ſo, I will keepe on my courſe ſtill. If God liſt to amende mee, let him doe it: I can doe nothing, it is but labour loſt for mee to goe about it. Thus doe the wicked falſely abuſe the doctrine of God.

Moreouer there bee ſome that haue their eares ſo tickeliſh, that they cannot abide that wee ſhoulde ſyncerely and plainly preache that thing which is manifeſtly declared in the Scriptures; to wit, that it is the peculiar office of God, to inlighten vs, to giue vs eyes and reaſon, and to drawe vs vnto him: and that otherwiſe wee bee ſo vntowarde, that wee cannot applye our eares, or eyes to any thing elſe than to euill, but are holden in the bondage of Sathan, Epheſ.2.1. 2.Cor.3.5. ſo as wee bee not able to ſtirre one finger, nor to haue one good thought, vnleſſe it bee giuen vs from aboue. When wee ſpeake thus, there bee ſome that are ouer dayntie, which woulde fayne that this doctrine were buryed. And wherefore is it, that they profite ſo little thereby, and that they doe thus kicke againſt the Spirit of God? Is it not wiſedome ynough for vs to declare that which wee muſt vnderſtande by the holy Scripture? We heare what ſpeach God vſeth; namely, that in man there is no goodneſſe, nor vnderſtanding of the trueth; that hee is ſo corrupted through ſinne, that all the light which wee ſuppoſe our ſelues to haue is but meere ignorance: that our luſtes bee rebellious againſt God, that wee bee ſo dull, as we vnderſtande not what is profitable for our ſaluation; but doe drawe cleane backewarde. Let vs ſpeake ſimply on that manner, ſeeing that God doeth ſo teach vs. But yet let vs vnderſtande, to what ende this doctrine muſt bee referred. It is not to the ende that men ſhoulde paſſe their boundes, or not conſider what they are; & that they ſhoulde be paſt ſhame & mocke God, as though they were not guiltie of euil: but rather that knowing themſelues to bee men, (that is to ſay wretched creatures, vnprofitable to any good, and that this ſerueth not to make them careleſſe ſo as euerie man might ſay, I can doe nothing, let God worke if he wil) they ſhould flee to him for refuge, knowing that it is his proper office, to remedie our ſinnes, and defaultes. And therefore Saint Paule ſayeth, Let vs followe our ſaluation, euen with Phil.2.12. feare and carefulneſſe. And why? Becauſe God giueth the will, and the power to performe according to his owne free goodneſſe. Loe howe Saint Paule ſayeth, that it belongeth to G O D to reforme our heartes, that wee may will well: for of ourſelues we are not able to attaine thereunto, but are altogether giuen to euill, vntill G O D doe prepare vs. Haue wee once a good will? That is not all, for G O D muſt alſo giue vs the power to doe it. His doing therof then is, not for that he is bound thereunto, not for that we on our part be readie thereto, or haue any diſpoſition or deſert in vs: but of his owne free goodneſſe. Thereupon Saint Paule ſayeth, O is it meete that euerie man ſhould take his eaſe, and bee careleſſe? Nay, clean contrariwiſe he exhorteth vs to performe our ſaluation with feare and carefulneſſe. And ſeeing that wee can doe nothing, but it belongeth to God to giue vs the good that we want: lette the ſame teache vs to ſtoope, and to call vppon our G O D, and to ſeeke all our welfare in him. For otherwiſe, in what caſe were wee? Wee ſhoulde bee quickly ſurpriſed of Satan. That then is the thing which Moſes meaneth in that hee addeth for a concluſion, *Keepe this commaundement.* And whence then proceedeth this concluſion? Euen of this, that God had not yet giuen thẽ eyes and eares, and that hee had not giuen them an heart to vnderſtande. Moſes maketh an argument thereupon, and telleth the people that they muſt bethinke themſelues to returne vnto God, and to giue ouer them ſelues vnto him; and then ſhoulde they bee wel aſſured that God woulde ſo worke, that as many as ſought him in lowlineſſe, ſhould bee gouerned by his holy Spirite.

Moreouer, let vs mark wel, ẏ where it is ſayd, *Thou ſhalt keepe the wordes of this couenant for to doe thẽ:* Gods ſo ſaying vnto vs is not to ẏ intent we ſhoulde but only be talkers of the things which wee haue learned in his ſchoole, but alſo that wee ſhoulde endeuour to practiſe the doctrine which wee haue heard. Therefore, let not our reſorting to heare the worde bee to learne onely to talke thereof: but let vs alſo vnderſtande, that it muſt refourme our life, ſo as wee may ſhewe by our deedes that wee haue not loſt our time, and that the labour alſo which is taken for to teache vs, hath not beene beſtowed in waſte. After that manner ought wee to keepe the wordes of this couenant. And hee ſayeth moreouer, *All the wordes*, to the intent wee ſhoulde put the more indeuour thereunto. For wee take ſome worde at a glaunce, and thinke that to bee ſufficient. But God will haue vs to giue ſo attentiue eare, as nothing may eſcape vs; and in verie deede there is nothing ſuperfluous in his doctrine. Is it meete then that when God doeth teach vs, wee ſhoulde haue our eares otherwiſe occupyed, or wandering hither and thither? The thing which we haue to remember (as hath beene declared more at large alreadie) is not that God woulde haue vs to learne but ſome little piece, and to bee able to talke of it, and ſo to let it ſlippe away againe: but that wee ſhoulde in all poyntes and in all reſpects be wel aduiſed to yeeld him obedience. True it is, that this ſhall neuer bee doone perfectly, ſo long as wee bee in this worlde. Hee doeth no more but ſhewe vs the ende whereunto it behoooueth vs to tende. Let vs enforce our ſelues thereunto as much as is poſſible for vs; and if God doe ſupply our infirmities, wee bee ſo much the more bounde vnto him, for that hee beareth with vs. But yet howſoeuer the caſe ſtande, let vs not flatter our ſelues, nor fall aſleepe, vnder colour that wee bee weake yea and vtterly vnprofitable; but rather let that prouoke vs to goe farther, ſpecially ſeeing wee knowe, that GOD hath not ſet downe one piece of his lawe for one man, and another for another, but will haue vs all to bee all of one faith.

As touching this worde where it is ſayde, *That thou maiſt proſper*, or elſe *that thou maiſt goe aright in all that thou doeſt*. For this phraſe of ſpeeche ſignifieth two things, as is to bee ſeene through all other textes of the Scripture. For ſometime it ſignifieth to walke wiſely, or to behaue a mannes ſelfe diſcretely; and ſome times it ſignifieth to proſper: and both theſe may bee verie well agreeing to that which Moſes treateth of in this place. For it was firſt of all declared heere aboue, that when men will needes bee wiſe in their owne conceites, and forge vnto themſelues any newe rules to liue by, then they bee blynde wretches, and doe nothing but wander from the right way. In deede there is a ſhewe of reaſon when men giue themſelues ouer to their owne brayne, and ſaye, I fynde it good. They may well pleaſe themſelues, and alſo pretende ſome proofe of the pelting traſhe which they haue inuented; according as Saint Paul ſayeth, that the traditions of men haue Col,2,23. in them a kinde of wiſedome, yea, and a kynde of gloriouſneſſe, which is counted wiſedome in the opinion of the worlde; and yet euery whit of it is but meere deceyt. For whatſoeuer is counted high and excellent in the ſight of men, is abhomination in heauen, as it is ſayde Luke 16,15. in Luke: and ſo alſo hath Ieſus Chriſt the ſoueraigne Iudge pronounced ſentence thereof. Seeing then that the caſe ſtandeth ſo: let vs conſider that wee cannot walke wiſely, nor our life bee well ordered, vnleſſe it bee wholly and throughly conformable to the will of our God, ſo as wee gad not in and out at all aduenture, nor imagine that wee may doe what wee liſt, but onely giue eare to that which God ſayeth, and holde vs to the ſame, without ſwaruing eyther to the right hande or to the left. This I ſaye is our wiſedome and our reaſon: namely, that wee yeeld our ſelues teachable vnto God, and attempt not any thing of our owne motion and raſhneſſe: but holde our ſelues contented to obey Gods ordinance. And thereof alſo commeth all manner of proſperitie. For although men beare themſelues in hande, that they gayne much by following their owne imaginations and deuiſes; and that God alſo doe often times permit them to haue aduancement and furtherance for a time, of purpoſe to blinde them: yet doeth it fall out, that our end is euermore accurſed, when wee followe our owne deuyces, and giue the raynes of libertie to our luſtes.

God (as I haue ſayde afore) doeth in deede ſuffer the backeſlyders to haue ſucceſſe in their doings; but ſurely they ſee not howe it is the iuſt vengeance of God, and that Sathan doeth carrye them away, becauſe they flatter themſelues, whereuppon when they haue all things at will, they deſpiſe GOD and become vnrefourmable. I confeſſe it commeth ſo to paſſe: but woe to them which for a time haue any ſuch proſperitie: for their laughter muſt needes be turned to weeping and gnaſhing of teeth, as it is in like wiſe accurſed before God. Luk.6,28. Will wee then haue a true and a continuall happineſſe, and that God bleſſe all our labours and all that wee goe about? Let vs then continue in that which is ſpoken in this place, namely to ſubmit our ſelues wholly vnto God, and to attempt nothing but that which hee giueth vs leaue to doe. For when the worlde deemeth vs moſt miſerable, and our caſe ſeemes to goe altogither backewarde, and that GOD tryeth our patience many wayes, ſo as wee bee at the poynt to creepe out of the way into holes: then doth God make it manifeſt that there is none other happineſſe but to ſticke vnto him, and to yeelde obedience vnto his worde. This is the thing that Moſes meant, according to that which wee ſawe heere before, namely, that our Lorde promiſed his bleſſing to the Deut.28,1. people, if they holde them ſelues vnder the yoke that hee had layde vppon their necke.
Let vs therefore marke it well, that Satan muſt needes ſcatter vs, as often as wee thinke to bee of abilitie of our ſelues. For when

wee ſhake off our God, and prouoke his wrath; then muſt hee make it apparant vnto vs,that all happineſſe lyeth onely in him; and then when wee be gone away from him, there remayneth nothing but al manner of miſerie; and although hee ſhewe it vs not at the firſt daſh, yet ſhall it appeare in the end. Let vs therefore giue place to our faith, that wee may alwayes ſticke faſt to that which is declared heere.

Now let vs fall downe before the maieſtie of our good God, with acknowledgement of our ſinnes,beſeeching him to vouchſafe to touch vs more and more to the quicke; that being beaten downe with true repentance,wee may wholy repaire vnto him, ſeeking to bee gouerned by his holy ſpirite: and that hee ſo refourme vs as we may no more liue after our wicked affectiōs, but that all manner gainſtryuing may bee quite diſplaced in vs: and that therewithall he make vs to feele the power of his grace, ſo as wee may ſtay vs altogither vpon the ſame, and not ceaſe to call vppon him, as vpon our father & ſauiour,in the name of our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt, albeit that wee bee vnworthie,becauſe there are ſo many things in vs, to make vs as ſtraungers vnto him. That it may pleaſe him to graunt this grace,not onely to vs, but alſo to all people and nations of the earth,&c.

On Wedneſday the viij.of Aprill, 1556.

The CLXVI.Sermon which is the third vpon the nine and twentith Chapter.

9 You ſhall therefore keepe the words of this couenant & do them,that thou mayſt proſper in all that thou haſt to doe.

10 You be all ſtanding at this day before the face of the Lord your God,your heades of your Trybes,your Elders, your captaines, and all the men of Iſraell:

11 Alſo your children, your wiues,and thy ſtranger which is in thy campe,euē from the clyuer of thy wood,to the drawer of thy water.

12 That thou mighteſt enter into the couenant of the Lorde thy God,& into his othe,the which the Lord thy God couenanteth with thee this day.

13 That hee may eſtabliſh thee this day to bee his people, and he to bee thy God, according as hee hath ſpoken vnto thee,and as he hath ſworne to thy fathers Abraham,Iſaac & Iacob.

14 I make not this couenant and this othe with you onely:

15 But alſo with him that is heere preſent with vs this day before the Lorde our God: and in likewiſe with him that is not heere with vs this day.

16 For you know that wee dwelled in the lande of Egypt, and that wee haue paſſed through the middeſt of the people that wee haue gone by.

17 And you haue ſeene their abhominations & their images of wood & ſtone, of Siluer & gold,which were amongſt them.

18 That there ſhoulde not bee among you either man or woman,houſholde or Trybe that would this day turne away his heart from the Lorde our God,to ſerue the gods of thoſe people: and that there bee not among you any roote to bring foorth gall and wormewood.

WE haue declared heeretofore that Moſes in this place did not handle a cōmon doctrine: but that hee recited the ſolemne couenant ỹ was made the ſecond time when the people were in the lande of Moab. And that was, becauſe that all they which were at mount Horeb,were dead in the wilderneſſe. God therfore intending that the memorie of that ſolemne couenant which he had made,ſhould not be forgotten,cōmanded ỹ the people ſhould be bound again,& that the ſame ſhould be made throughly knowen,ſo as their poſteritie might vnderſtād that they were a holy people, as wee ſee that Ioſua did at his death. And then was the third ratification.For this cauſe it is ſayde, *That they be there in the preſence of God.* True it is,that as oft as the people came into the ſanctuarie to offer ſacrifice, God ſhewed them a token of his maieſtie, Ioſ.24.25.

ieſtie, whereby they were aſſured that they ſought him not in vaine, foraſmuch as his power was neere at hande vnto them. But Moſes taketh this word in another ſenſe, becauſe there had bin at that time as it were a ſolemne couenant, and a more familiar & certain ſetting forth of Gods glorie. In effect he ſignifieth, that it behoueth them to bring a certain vprightnes and ſoundnes of hart in entering into couenant with God to ſerue & honor him. It is no ieſting matter (ſaith he,) you haue not to deale with a mortall man: thinke not ẏ this thing vaniſheth into ẏ aire. For it is not ſome notary ẏ is to take your promiſe, neither is it ſome worldly ſolemnitie or ceremony wherewith you nowe deale: but it is God himſelfe which receiueth the bond which you enter into, & for his part he is faithfull, he wil not diſappoint them whom he reckeneth for his people. Therefore be wel aduiſed ẏ you bring not with you any diſloyalty or hypocriſie: but rather ſee that ye tremble before him which is heere preſent to receiue the proteſtation ẏ you make vnto him. Nowe we ſee what Moſes meaneth. It remaineth ẏ we apply this ſentence to our owne vſe. It is true that God doth not euery day paſſe ſuch couenant as that was. But yet ſo often as we be aſſembled in the name of our Matt. 18,20. Lorde Ieſus Chriſt, he is in the middeſt of vs, as he hath ſayde: and when the goſpell is preached vnto vs, it is aſmuch as if he ſpake to vs in his own perſon: and it is our duetie to be anſwerable againe that we ſeeke nothing but to be his, and to giue ouer ourſelues vnto him. Therfore if there be any counterfaiting, let vs not thinke to hide it; it muſt needes come to reckening. For whoſoeuer cometh not to him with right ſoundneſſe, doeth plainely mocke the ſonne of God. Wherefore lette vs conſider well that wee muſt not be double minded when wee come to a ſermon, leaſt Ieſus Chriſt blame vs for falſifying our faith and promiſe, by our wicked a buſing of his worde and by turning of a thing of ſuch holineſſe and maieſtie to a ieſt and ſcoffe. For when he calleth vs to be members of his bodie, and would haue vs to doe him homage, it is an excellent benefite, and ſuch a one as can not be ſufficiently eſteemed. And therefore ſo much the more diligent ought we to be to ſubdue ourſelues vnto him. To be ſhort, as often as wee goe to the Church, if we ſteppe but one ſtep thitherwarde, whenſoeuer the bell calleth vs: it ought to come to our remembraunce, that our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt commeth thither himſelfe to receiue the obedience which we yeelde vnto him, and that wee come hither to make our muſters before him, thereby to ſhewe that wee be his people, yea and his verie body. Nowe as it importeth an infinite reioycing, when our Lorde Ieſus is neere vnto vs: ſo ought wee alſo to tremble before his royall maieſtie, which was giuen him of God his father, and to reſorte thither with a true and right meaning heart, as I haue tolde you afore. And Moſes ſpeaketh expreſſely both *of men, women, litle children, gouernours, the Elders of the people, all the chiefe of the people, and the handie craftmen, euen from them that clyued the wood to them that carryed water.* Alſo among them he comprehended the ſtraungers, which were vncircumciſed and dwelled amongeſt the people: and hee ſayeth that purpoſely to the intent that the great ones ſhoulde not thinke themſelues exempted from the common ſort. For the greateſt honour that kinges and princes haue, is to bee of the bodie of the Church, if they conſider it well. But certainely the Pompes of the worlde doe ſo blinde them that they woulde bee diuided from the reſt of men, and woulde haue a worlde by themſelues; ſo as they will not in any wiſe bowe to ſubmitte themſelues vnto God. Neuertheleſſe it is expreſſely ſhewed heere, that euerie high thing muſt ſtoope: and that when God vttereth himſelfe, then euen the higheſt ought to vnderſtande that they muſt ſhewe the way to others, and goe afore to prouoke them by their example. Thus much concerning that which Moſes ſpeaketh of Princes and Gouernours. And in likewiſe when Ioell exhorteth the people to Ioel.1.13. bewayle and lament their ſinnes, and to condemne themſelues, hee beginneth with them. Albeit that at the firſt ſight it may ſeeme to bee an vnſeemely thing, and to import a certaine ſhame that the great ones ſhoulde come to acknowledge themſelues offenders before GOD: yet becauſe that oftentimes they bee moſt faultie, the prophete ſayeth, that they muſt beginne the daunſe, and that the litle ones muſt followe their trace, when they ſee that there is none exempted, no not euen of them that bee in any authoritie. Let vs therefore vnderſtande, that Moſes in this place obſerued great order, in ſaying that the heades, and Rulers, and the greateſt of the people, were there to binde themſelues vnto GOD, that there myght bee no greateneſſe in this worlde which ſhoulde not ſtoope vnto his maieſtie.

And hee addeth, the women and children, that the people might knowe, howe there was no perſon which ſhoulde not be comprehended in that couenaunt. And foraſmuch as GOD did this fauour to their litle children to receiue them into the number of his people, it was meet that they ſhould be taught the Lawe of GOD as ſoone as they came to the age of vnderſtanding, to the intent they might knowe that they were that bleſſed ofſpring which GOD hadde adopted and choſen out of all the world. Deut.6.2. And heereuppon Moſes exhorteth the menne to haue care of their families, and to conſider that ſeeing all were dedicated vnto GOD, all ought to be referred to that ende, and it behooued men to yeelde him his due, and not to diſappoint him of his right: To bee ſhorte, husbandes were taught by this woorde to take paynes to guyde their wiues and children in ſuch order, as GOD might bee honoured in all the houſe, and that there might be one common agreement in the ſame. Yea, and hee ſayth that the verie ſtraungers which were vncircumciſed were to reſort thyther, notwithſtanding that they hadde not the marke of ſaluation. And wherefore? Becauſe God was to be honored in the Lande of Chanaan which he gaue to his people for an heritage. Albeeit then, that (to ſpeake properly) theſe ſtraungers were not of the bodie of the Church, yet behoued it them alſo to be bounde. To what end? Becauſe it was not meete that they ſhould haue leaue or libertie to mocke GOD, to vnhallow his Religion, and to peruert the order which he had appointed. That in effect was the meaning of Moſes.

Nowe muſt wee apply the ſame to our owne vſe. For we be neuer aſſembled or come together in the name of GOD, but we make proteſtation that wee be of his flocke. It is not enough that euerie man come thither for himſelfe: but the great ones muſt vnderſtande that they are to ſhewe the way to their inferiours, and vnderlinges. And they muſt conſider that they bee bounde with a ſtraiter bonde becauſe GOD hath ſet them on high to the intent they ſhould be as Lamps to giue light vnto others. And therefore if they doe not endeuour and enforce themſelues to diſcharge their dueties in that behalfe, it is certaine that they be doubble guiltie. Againe, euery man ought to bethinke him of his houſholde and family. They that will haue their wiues quiet and obedient vnto them, ought much rather to be diligent to cauſe them to ſerue GOD, and to take ſuch paynes ſo to rule their children, as God may be the chiefe father, husbande, and maſter of the houſe. That is the thing whereof we be admoniſhed heere. And if we doe not ſo, then looke how often we come into the Church, ſo manie witneſſinges haue we to reprooue and condemne vs before God, becauſe wee doe not appeare in his preſence with ſuch humilitie as is requiſite: but haue wickedly broken couenant with him.

And Moſes ſpeaketh expreſly of ſtraungers, to the intent we ſhould vnderſtande that when God hath giuen libertie to a Countrey, and ſtabliſhed the certaine order of his ſeruice there, no abhomination muſt bee committed in that place, by the inhabitours thereof. For if they ſay, my ſeruaunt holdeth not this religion: I graunt it lieth not in vs to conuert him to God at the firſt day: yet notwithſtanding, that it ſhoulde bee lawefull for him to ſkorne GOD and his worde, and to vſe ſuperſtitious wickedneſſe, and to bee diſobedient to the common rule; that is too great and vntollerable a diſorder. And therefore it is ſhewed vs heere in this Text, that if we couet to be ſerued of them that haue not yet the knowledge of GOD, we muſt keepe them in awe, and not ſuffer the name of God to be blaſphemed amongeſt vs, what ſoeuer excuſe be pretended. Thus much in effect haue we to beare in minde concerning theſe wordes of Moſes.

Nowe he ſpeaketh alſo of a Couenaunt and an othe, and ſheweth that the ſame were mutually giuen and taken betwixt GOD and the Iewes. In deede this matter hath beene partly handled heeretofore. But yet wee muſt remember, that when God maketh vs to paſſe any ſolemne bande with him; that firſt of all he bindeth himſelfe vnto vs. And it is a thing that ought to mollifie our heartes, though they were as harde as ſtones. What are wee that our Lorde ſhoulde ſtoope ſo lowe, as to enter into Couenaunt with vs, promiſing to bee our father and Sauiour, and to bee as it were a man that made a bargaine of a gift? God in deede requireth euerie of vs to conſecrate himſelfe vnto him, and to forſake all manner of libertie, and to become his ſubiectes, and to continue quiet vnder his gouernance; but ere he require this, he maketh a gift of himſelfe vnto vs. That is a matter which ought to rauiſh vs in ſuch wiſe, as wee ſhould make no difficultie fully to dedicate ourſelues to our GOD, ſeeing that hee himſelfe allureth vs thereunto by his owne example, and doeth guyde vs thither. And wee perceiue the ſame yet further as often as the worde of GOD is preached vnto vs: for that is the meſſage of Reconciliation (as Sainte Paule ſayeth) and God is come neere vnto vs, 2.Cor.5.18. to be our leader. Ieſus Chriſt ſayeth that hee was ſent vnto vs, to haue care of our ſaluation and to holde vs in his keeping and protection, and alſo to dwell in vs, that wee might liue in him. Seeing it is ſo, is it not a brutiſh blockiſhneſſe, if we come not with pure and right meaning affection, to giue ouer our ſelues vnto our GOD, who hath giuen vs the bleſſing and priuiledge to become our heritage, ſhewing thereby that he would bee poſſeſſed of vs? So then lette vs vnderſtande, that there is no excuſe for vs, if when wee come to heere the doctrine of the goſpell, we runne euerie of vs aſtray after his owne luſtes and affections, and behaue ourſelues diſorderly in our conuerſation, whereas in verie deede we ſhoulde conſider, that when we come from a ſermon, we bring ſuch a marke as can not be blotted out; that is to wit, that before GOD and in the preſence of his onely ſonne, we haue profeſſed to bee a holy people vnto him, and to be ſeparated from all manner of defilementes of this worlde: and that although it be not ſo tolde vs in expreſſe wordes, yet the order that GOD hath ſet in his church doeth of it ſelfe importe the ſame. Albeit therefore that thoſe wordes bee not vttered by mouth, yet doeth GOD holde vs faſt tyed to that bonde: namely, that wee ſhould be his heritage, and that he ſhould enioy vs quietly, as them whom hee hath taken to himſelfe to be of his houſhoulde. If it be demaunded, howe it is poſſible that men ſhoulde diſcharge themſelues of ſuch promiſe; it is eaſily aunſwered: namely, that we promiſe not any thing to our GOD as preſuming vppon our owne power, but receiue the grace which he offereth vnto vs, and thereuppon haue boldeneſſe and libertie to promiſe that we will be his people. And why ſo? For when GOD calleth vs vnto him, it is not to the ende that we ſhould bring vnto him that which we haue of nature, for that is altogether euill: but becauſe he receiueth vs with this condition, that hee will gouerne vs by his holy Spirite, and holde vs ſo in awe, as the rebelliouſnes of our fleſh ſhall be alayd by his grace, and wee ſo ſtrengthened as we may be able to withſtand all manner of temptations and encounters, and that he will ſo imprint his lawes in our heartes, according to his owne ſaying, as hee will cauſe Ier.31.33. vs to walke in his feare, by giuing vs the Spirite of holyneſſe, righteouſneſſe, and trueth. Loe after what manner GOD calleth vs vnto him.

Moreouer hee preſently addeth a promiſe, that he will ſtill beare with vs in our weakeneſſe, and in our ſinnes, ſo wee trauell ſtill towardes him. Inſomuch that although there be manie thinges amiſſe in vs, and wee come not to him with ſuch a perfection as is requiſite: yet will he handle vs with fatherly gentleneſſe, in ſuch wiſe as our ſinnes ſhall not bee imputed vnto vs. When we haue theſe two pointes, we may freely promiſe vnto GOD that we will be his people. And why? Becauſe wee ſtaye not vppon our owne freewill, neither preſume we to haue ſuch perfection, as we enter into account with him, to ſay, we be not beholding vnto him: but we preſuppoſe that he is euer mercifull vnto vs, to forgiue vs our ſinnes, and that he will ſuccour our infirmities and imperfections, holding vs faſt by his holy Spirite. Thus did the people of olde time make their othe. And ſo, wee ſee it is no point of raſhneſſe for vs to vowe vnto GOD in promiſing to ſerue him, ſo we haue an eye to that which hee ſetteth downe vnto vs on his part.

Moreouer we muſt remember, that GOD ſpeaketh firſt and wee doe followe. If a man ſhoulde beginne and putte foorth himſelfe to ſay, I promiſe my GOD to ſerue him in all pureneſſe of life, it were too greate an aduauncing of himſelfe. And why? For (as I haue already ſayde) there is nothing in vs but vtter corruption. And although GOD haue reformed vs, yet are we continually hindered from diſcharging vs of our duetie, ſo as wee doe not the tenth parte thereof, I meane euen them that haue profited beſt, which are moſt holy, and as it were litle Angelles. Moreouer when GOD hath once begunne, and hath ſayde vnto vs: No, I knowe you can doe nothing, and that you be creatures deſtitute of all goodneſſe, and that there is nothing in you but naughtineſſe and rebellion; howebeit foraſmuch as I accept you to be of my flocke, I promiſe to gouerne you with my Spirite. If we receiue that promiſe with aſſured faith, and accept the offer which GOD maketh vnto vs, wee may then ſay, Wel Lorde we come hither, not perſuming anie thing vppon our owne power, but beſeeching thee to gouerne vs: our onely deſire is that thou ſhouldeſt holde vs as captiues to make vs to foreſake our owne luſtes and affections, with all the frowardeneſſe and wickedneſſe of our owne nature. Nowe then we ſee that this othe is lawfull, and that there is no raſhneſſe nor preſumption in men.

The ſeconde point alſo is in like wiſe worthy to be well marked; that is to witte, that wee ought alwayes to confeſſe, that if GOD liſted to examine vs with extremitie, notwithſtanding that he haue giuen vs his grace, and ſtrengthened vs againſt Sathan and all the temptations of the worlde, yet ſhould wee be alwayes in his daunger, yea euen to our condemnation, were it not that hee did beare with vs. So then in making this promiſe, wee doe euermore remember that GOD will not enter into account with vs, to iudge vs according to our deſertes; but will vſe his infinite goodneſſe towarde vs, and haue pitie on our infirmities. Thus much as concerning the othe. In the Popedome, when Monkes, Nunnes, and Prieſts make their vowes, they ſweare to abſtaine from mariage, wherein they make open warre againſt GOD, and defie him. And why? Becauſe they take that vppon them which is not graunted them. They ſuppoſe that they ſhal be able to forebeare the remedie of mariage, and yet they can not tell whether GOD hath called them thereunto, or no: they haue not one worde of promiſe; God hath neuer required ſuch thinges of them. Therefore is it a diueliſhe arrogancie, and we ſee howe GOD hath puniſhed it. But it is a farre other matter, when we make no promiſe vnto GOD, but of that which he commaundeth, and which hee alloweth by his worde. Againe, wee goe not about it with opinion to bring it to paſſe by our owne power and abilitie; but becauſe hee hath tolde vs that hee will helpe our infirmities: forſomuch as wee bee euermore grounded vppon his free goodneſſe, whereof we may aſſure ourſelues in our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt. Thus muſt we make our ſolemne othe before GOD. As in deede wee bee alreadie bounde vnto him in Baptiſme, vpon ſuch condition as he maketh vs his promiſe, and wee for our parte muſt make good the ſame when wee come to the age of knoweledge. Thus yee ſee howe our Lorde continueth firme and conſtant to gouerne vs as his people, and to holde vs in his keeping to the ende: and alſo that wee in like caſe ſhall behaue our ſelues quietly towardes him, ſo as hee may wholly enioy vs. That is the thing in effect which we haue to beare in mind concerning this text of Moſes.

Nowe hee ioyneth therewithall, that the people muſt *enter into this couenaunt, that they may be adopted as the people of GOD*. This worde *Enter* betokeneth that all men be of one condition, and that inſomuch as they be the children of Adam, they are all ſtraungers from GOD, and confuſedly mingled together: and that God drawing his Church to him, ſhouleth it out in ſuch ſorte, that it is as it were a newe worlde. True it is that we muſt dwell heere beneath amongeſt the vnbeleeuers: but yet neuertheleſſe if we be the children of God, after wee bee once ioyned vnto him, we muſt withdraw ourſelues from ſuch as hee forſaketh, and who alſo turn their backs vpon him. The thing the which Moſes ment chiefly by this worde *Enter*, is that we muſt be well aduiſed that wee reſt not vppon our firſt nature, if wee intende to bee taken for

Gods children: but that wee muſt reſorte vnto him, not on our feete and legges, but with the heart carried out of the impedimentes of this worlde, in ſuch wiſe as wee faile not to dwell in the kingdome of heauen, as fellowes with the Angels and with all the ſaintes, notwithſtanding that we dwell in the middeſt of this world. Marke that for one point.

Nowe heerewithall, Moſes doeth giue the people to vnderſtande, that this couenaunt muſt be receiued with feruent affection, ſeeing that GOD did it not, but for the welfare of them that were there aſſembled. He ſayeth that the onely intent of GOD was, that Abrahams children ſhoulde bee his people, and that hee would holde them for his Church. Is there any thing more to bee deſired than that? It is ſayde in the three and thirtith Pſalme, Bleſſed is the people whoſe GOD is the euerlaſting God. That is all our felicitie and all our ioye. The onely thing wherein we may glorie, is that God ſheweth himſelfe to be our protectour, and that hee receiueth vs vnder the couering of his winges. Nowe if he offer himſelfe thereunto, and doe freely allure vs vnto him, requiring nothing but that we ſhould be his houſholde folke: ought we not to bee inflamed with ſo vehement deſire, that we ſhoulde forgette the worlde, and that nothing ſhoulde hinder vs from comming vnto him? Yes truely. The thing then which wee haue to remember concerning this Texte, is that wee bee dubble guyltie, when we will not bee prouoked to ſubmitte ourſelues to our GOD, ſeeing he ſeeketh neither profit nor aduauntage to himſelfe, nor wee are able to yeelde him any; but he would that we ſhoulde be his people for our owne welfare, and he hath no reſpect but to his owne goodneſſe and infinite mercie, by reaſon whereof, ſeeing vs to be curſed and forelorne, he accepteth vs to the inheritaunce of Saluation. Seeing then that our Lorde vſeth ſuch louing kindeneſſe towards vs, and powreth forth the treaſures of his goodneſſe vppon vs: bee not wee too leaude, if wee come not to him with all our heartes?

Moſes addeth moreouer, that GOD doeth this, for none other reſpect, but becauſe hee hadde ſo promiſed afore, *And that he hadde erſt ſworne it to the holy Patriarkes, Abraham, Iſaac, and Iacob.* Heere in effect Moſes meant to take away and to aboliſh all manner of imaginations, which the Iewes might conceiue of their owne deſertes and worthineſſe: for men are commonly giuen to beare themſelues in hande that GOD is much beholding to them; and that they haue the forehande of him, and that they were alreadie diſpoſed, and that he findeth in their perſons ſome thing to like of, or to loue them for. Forſomuch therefore as men are wonted to deceiue themſelues after that manner, by ſuppoſing that GOD hath founde them better than others when hee choſe them: heere Moſes cutteth off all temptations of Sathan, and ſheweth that GOD did not chooſe the Iewes, for that they hadde more vertue and nobleneſſe or worthyneſſe in them, than all the reſt of the worlde: but that his chooſing of them was altogether grounded vppon his owne free goodneſſe, becauſe he hadde ſo promiſed. And the ſame is common vnto vs all. And therefore lette vs learne, that if GOD doe noweadayes come neerer vnto vs than to a greate manie of other nations; it is not becauſe wee bee more worthie, or more able to receiue it than they be, which are deſtitute of his grace: but becauſe it is his good pleaſure ſo to do. Now therefore, let vs learne to put away all manner of pride and preſumption. When wee ſee that the Goſpell is preached vnto vs at this day, and that we haue ſome order in the Church: it is an ineſtimable benefite. But wherefore is it giuen vnto vs? It is not becauſe wee haue obtayned it by our owne trauayle, nor becauſe wee haue preuented the grace of GOD through our ſeruiceableneſſe; but for that it was his wil to ſhewe himſelfe kinde hearted towarde vs after this manner. Thus much haue we yet to beare in minde concerning this text.

Nowe finally Moſes addeth. *Remember yourſelues* (ſayeth he) *for you haue ſeene the abhominations of Egypt, and alſo the Idolatry that is among all the heathen through whome you haue gone: therefore be not deceiued, neither lette there be either man or woman, houſhoulde or Tribe among you, that will turne away or ſlide backe, and forſake the euerlaſting your GOD, to giue ouer himſelfe vnto Idolles.* Heere Moſes, to confirme the people in the obedience of faith, and to holde them vnder the yoke of good doctrine, doeth vſe an argument which at the firſt ſight might ſeeme ſtraunge: for wee bee eaſily thruſt out of the right way, when wee ſee the worlde corrupted and ouerthwart. Albeit that we haue ſome good motion, and be diſpoſed to ſerue GOD: yet notwithſtanding, as ſoone as any ſtumblingblocke comes in our way, by and by it maketh vs to turne heade, as we ſee examples thereof euery day: inſomuch that the man which is well inſtructed, and brought to a good point, runneth after the mockers of GOD, as ſoone as hee ſeeth them. Another which hath taſted of the trueth of the goſpell, beholdeth ſome fooliſhe toye, and ſome hypocrite ſeduceth him ſo as he is chaunged. Such lightneſſe and vnſtedfaſtneſſe doe wee ſee in many folke: and yet doeth Moſes take the ſame as a confirmation to make folke the better reſolued to ſerue GOD: as if he ſhould ſay, My friendes, you haue the lawe which is certaine and infallible vnto you, for it is the trueth of GOD which can not lye. Seeing that GOD hath reueiled himſelfe vnto you, it is reaſon good that you ſhould obſerue your faith and loyaltie towarde him. But if you ſay, Why ſo? Other people deale not after this manner; wee ſee many faſhions through the worlde, euerie nation hath his God by himſelfe; euerie man hath a religion after his owne fantaſie. Well might you be aſtoniſhed at theſe thinges (ſayeth Moſes) and well might you be offended at it, if it were newe vnto you. But you haue ſeene the abhominations of the Egyptians, you haue ſeene howe fooliſhly the heathen doe worſhippe their Idolles; and therefore if you be nowe moued and offended through the ſame, what excuſe is there? For Goddes meaning was to arme you and to furniſh you afore hande againſt theſe temptations, to the end you ſhould not be in daunger to ſlide backe. We haue a good and a profitable leſſon to gather out of this text, to witte, that the more we knowe ſuperſtition and Idolatrie, ſo much the more muſt wee eſchewe the ſame. And euen ſo it is of all other thinges that are repugnaunt to the will of GOD, namely, that we may be ſeduced by them by the ſodaine beholding of them, for want of knowing them aforehande: for wee haue not the diſcretion to keepe ourſelues from them; but are ſurpriſed for want of foreſight, by reaſon whereof wee periſh, and Satan doth foorthwith trap vs in his ginnes and ſnares. Let vs therefore marke, that when we once knowe the corruptions that bee contrarie to the ſeruice of GOD, and to the doctrine that is contayned in his woorde, wee muſt take ſo much the ſurer holde, that wee be not any whitte moued, but goe on forewarde ſtedfaſtly, following the way whereunto GOD hath called vs. As for example; If wee haue once knowen the wretchedneſſe that is among the Papiſtes, wherein wee ourſelues alſo haue beene plunged in time paſt, or if we haue ſeene the mockeries of GOD, which are there vſed, and the blaſphemies, and all the reſt of the traſh which the Papiſtes call the ſeruice of GOD: we can not but perceiue that they be the verie inuentions of the deuill, to turne vs away from the obedience of our GOD, to darken his maieſtie, to cauſe him to bee mocked, and to blind the wretched worlde. Wee haue beene ſufficiently warned thereof, yea and we haue hadde the experience thereof. Nowe if any of vs doe hence foorth turne away, and yeelde himſelfe againe to ſuch abhominations, is he not ſomuch the more vnfaithfull towardes GOD? See you not howe his wickedneſſe is ſo much the greater, ſeeing hee doth it not through ignoraunce, nor as a thing that is ſtraunge vnto him, but as one that is altogether ſaped in it? Let vs therefore vnderſtande that when GOD hath once made vs to perceiue the filthyneſſe and abhominations which are among the Idolaters, the ſame ought to ſettle vs the better, to obey him and to perſeuere in his holy calling. And I haue tolde you howe it is after the ſame manner in other vices. When GOD ſheweth vs any ſhamefulneſſe, as to bee giuen ouer to whooredome, or giueth vs examples of ſuch as are diſſolutely giuen to ſwearing, drunkenneſſe, or ſuch like thinges, and that theſe thinges bee ſo vilanous that they make vs aſhamed: if we bee ouercome of them, is not our damnation doubled? Yes ſurely. It is not therefore without cauſe, that Moſes ſayeth heere, *You haue ſeene.* For thereby hee ſheweth that wee may deſpiſe all that the worlde can doe; and that although the misbeleeuers bee more in number than wee, and doe vaunt themſelues to haue all the ſway, as concerning the worlde, ſo as wee bee but a litle handefull of people, and they triumph ouer vs: yet wee may defie them, becauſe wee doe knowe what difference there is betwixt the pure doctrine of the Goſpell, and all the abhominations and Idolatries that Sathan hath brought into the worlde: inſomuch that hauing the trueth of GOD once manifeſted vnto vs, we ought to ſtay vppon the ſame, we ought neuer to be ſhaken for anie thing that can happen vnto vs. Loe to what purpoſe this admonition ought to ſerue vs at this day. Nowe therefore when we looke vppon al the whole worlde, beholding the horrible diuiſions that be in the Popedome on the one ſide, and howe Mahomet the deceiuer hath ſeduced all his ſect, and thirdely howe blinde the wretched Iewes are: thereby we ought to be the better aſſured, that ſeeing our GOD hath called vs vnto him: and familiarly vttered his fauour towardes vs (according as our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt doeth proteſt that he will call vs his friendes and not his ſeruauntes, becauſe the ſecretes of the kingdome of heauen are reuealed vnto vs by the Goſpell): we ought thereby to learne to apply the ſame to the certainetie of our fayth, and not to regarde though the faithleſſe doe ſooth themſelues and boaſt of their abhominations, becauſe we knowe well that GOD condemneth them altogether, and that wee ourſelues may be iudges thereof, foraſmuch as we haue the worde, whereby the worlde muſt bee iudged.

Iohn.15.15.

In dooing heereof, Moſes keepeth heere a certaine manner of proceeding which is worthey to bee noted, ſaying, *That neither man, nor woman, houſe nor tribe, ought to turne away or goe to ſerue ſtraunge Goddes.* Nowe he doeth vs to witte, that when miſchiefe is begunne, and a breache made, the deuill will finde meanes, to ſpreade his poyſon farther, if it be not preuented and remedyed in dewe time and place. When ſome one man ſteppeth vppe to peruert the pure religion, it ſeemeth at the firſt to be a matter of nothing: but if it be let ſlippe, that one man will leade a whole houſe, and that houſe will leade the Tribe, and ſo at the length the whole people is peruerted. So much the more vigilaunt therefore ſhoulde wee bee, ſpecially ſeeing that the Spirite of GOD doeth ſtirre vs vppe wee ought to bee moued to keepe good watch in this behalfe, for we cannot bee too diligent therein. Nowe then let vs not foreſlowe the redreſſe of any manner of corruption bee it neuer ſo ſmall. When wee ſee a wicked man that goeth about to infect the flocke, let him not be ſuffered: for if wee ſuffer him, the corruption will foorthwith ſpreade it ſelfe both into ſmal and greate. After one man followeth a whole houſe, and after a houſe goeth a whole kinred, and woulde GOD there were not ſo notable examples thereof. But what? Albeit that GOD doe ſhewe vs this by his worde, and although experience ought to make vs wiſe; yet is it not regarded. For men doe euermore beare with ſome euill or other, and ſuffer it to ſlippe. And why? It is not yet common (ſay they,) it is not yet hurtfull. No: but they foreſee not the daunger. Neuertheleſſe there is a daunger, which I pray GOD wee feele not in the ende too much to our coſt. So much the more therefore ought we to marke well this doctrine, where Moſes ſayeth not at the firſt daſhe, Looke that all the people ſwarue not, or that one Tribe giue not ouer it ſelfe to the ſuperſtitions and Idolatry of the heathen: but he beginneth at one man alone, and then ſetteth downe the woman, and after proceedeth to the whole houſe, and conſequently to all the people. For if there be but one ſerpent, he poyſoneth all thinges out of hande with his onely byting. And if Serpents can alſo infect the ayre with their verie breath: ſurely when men are poyſoned by Sathan, they carrie abroade ſo much the more venemous corruption: inſomuch that if anie bodie come nygh them be it neuer ſo litle, it is a wonder if they be not infected and marred with the very breath of them. Seeing then that wee haue made a couenaunt with our GOD according as hee hath gathered vs into his flocke, and doth dayly make it manifeſt to our eyes ẏ we be his church; let vs continue in that obedience, and let euerie of vs firſt of all watch ouer himſelfe, according as is ſeene heereafore, where it is ſayde, Take heed to your ſoules: let vs take good heed, Deut.4.9. for euery man is commanded of God to watch ouer his owne ſoule. But yet thereuppon wee muſt yet goe further, namely, to haue care of our neighbours, that euerie man helpe to amende them that haue doone amiſſe, without any bolſtering or bearing with the euill committed. Otherwiſe it is a wonder to ſee howe that after one man hath once infected his wife or familie, the corruption will ſpread it ſelfe ouer a whole people, in ſuch wiſe as the miſchiefe can not bee holpen any more becauſe it hath gotten ſo farre.

And Moſes doeth purpoſely vſe a ſimilitude, which is worthy to bee well weyed, where hee ſayeth; *that there be not founde among you any roote that bringeth foorth woormwoode and gall.* Whereby he warneth vs, that as often as Sathan ſendeth foorth his vnderlinges to turne vs away from GOD, and wicked people goe about to bring Religion into contempt, and to bring to paſſe that all thinges may be ſo turned vpſide downe and mingled together, as there may be nothing any where but vngodlyneſſe: it is all one as if there were ſome ſecrete roote, which afterwarde will ſprout foorth, and wee muſt needes be poyſoned with the fruite which it ſhall yeelde. Nowe therefore let vs in good time plucke it vppe. We ſee whereto this ſimilitude tendeth. Let vs adde thereto the exhortation which the Apoſtle maketh in the Epiſtle to the Hebrues; for he hath reſpect to this text Hebr.12.15. and expoundeth it, and applyeth it to our inſtruction. Foraſmuch (ſayeth he) as the deſpiſers of GOD, which goe about to ſeduce the people, and to turne them out of the right way, be bitter rootes, we muſt not looke ẏ they ſhall yeelde foorth good fruite. For we can not eaſily plucke vppe an euill weede, when it is ouerſpred ſo as it hath choaked and corrupted the good ſeede, becauſe it was not taken in time. Lette vs therefore bee diligent and carefull to plucke vp euill rootes: and when wee ſee any bitter weede, although it beare no fruite, yet let it be looked vnto in due time. For GOD worketh a great miracle, when hee deliuereth his people, at ſuch time as they be careleſſe. And woulde GOD that the examples thereof were not ſo common in the worlde as wee ſee them. For then would not men giue ſo much libertie to the wicked, nor ſuffer them to preuaile ſo mightily. When they haue infected al; then men ſigh and lament, but in the meane while they ſeeke no meane to prouide for it. So then let vs marke well, that (as the Apoſtle telleth vs) wee muſt not bee careleſſe and ſlowe in this behalfe: but as ſoone as we ſee any leaudediſpoſed folke which obey not the direction of GOD, ne yeelde any reuerence to his worde: let them be cutte off. If we ſee them ſow abroad wicked matters as cockle or darnell, to make men to ſwarue which were in the good way; let vs reſiſt them with all our power, and let them ẏ be in authoritie bende all their force and diligence thereunto, and let euery man in likewiſe apply himſelfe to further the ſame, ſo as we may be the true ſeede of GOD, and continue in the puritie of his Goſpell, and bring him foorth ſuch fruite, as he may be glorified throughout all our life.

Nowe let vs fall downe before the maieſtie of our good GOD, with acknowledgement of our ſinnes, beſeeching him to make vs ſo to feele them more and more, as wee may bee touched with true repentaunce, and we come vnto him, not onely to obtaine foregiueneſſe of the ſinnes that wee haue committed, but alſo to bee gouerned by his holy Spirite, and to bee kept in ſuch ſorte by him, that albeit Sathan fight againſt vs, yet neuertheleſſe wee may continue in the ſeruice of him which hath once called vs, and purchaſed vs for himſelfe. And therfore let vs al ſay, Almightie God heauenly father, &c.

On Thurſday the ix. of April. 1556.

The CLxvii. Sermon which is the fourth vpon the nine & twentith Chapter.

that there bee not among you any roote that bringeth foorth Gall and woormewood:

19 And ſo it come to paſſe that ſome man hearing the woordes of this curſe, doe bleſſe himſelfe in his heart, ſaying: I ſhall haue peace, notwithſtanding that I walke after the purpoſe of mine owne heart, and ſo put drunkenneſſe vnto thirſt.

20 The Lorde will not agree to forgiue him: for then the wrath and Ielozie of the Lord will kindle againſt that man, and heape vpon him all the Curſes that are written in this booke.

21 And the Lorde wil wype out the name of him from vnder the heauen, and the Lorde will ſhoole him out from all the Trybes of Iſraell to miſcheefe, according to all the Curſes of the Couenaunt that is written in the booke of this Lawe.

VEe beganne yeſterday to declare, wherefore Moſes dyd put foorth this ſimilitude of the euill roote, which bringeth forth bitterneſſe and gal. For we do not perceiue at the firſt ſight, when the diuel beginneth to worke in vs, vntill wee be corrupted and marred, yea and that the thinges bee paſt remedie, which at the firſt might haue bin taken away. Therefore wee cannot be too circumſpect in keeping ourſelues, ſeeing that of nature wee bee inclined to euill, and we bee ſo fraile, that ere wee bee aware, the diuell taketh poſſeſſion, and then euery man infecteth his neighbour, and ſo the corruption is ſpred throughout all. Heere hee ſheweth the principall daunger that men ought to beware of; which is, that they become not hard hearted againſt the threateninges of GOD. For it muſt needs be that we are altogether ſenſeleſſe, when wee feele no more any remorſe or griefe of conſcience, but rather doe ſpyte God through diueliſh pride. For men to ouerſhoote themſelues, it is too ordinarie a matter; to be ſlowe when they are driuen and pricked foreward, is yet a common fault; againe, not to beleeue good counſell at the firſt, is a thing to bee ſeene dayly. But if a man become a ſcorner and take the bridle in the teeth to dally with God, perſwading himſelfe that all the threatenings, which are layde before him, bee nothing, and that all is but a fable whatſoeuer is ſayde concerning the iudgement of GOD, ſo as hee taketh leaue to doe what hee liſteth, and will bee ordered by no meanes, but followeth his owne ſwindge lyke a horſe that will not bee tamed, and reſiſteth all that may bee doone vnto him; when a man ouerſhooteth himſelfe ſo farre, it muſt needes be that hee is like a deſperate creature. Thus yee ſee whereof Moſes admoniſheth the people in this place. Let a man beware (ſayeth hee) that when hee heareth the curſes which are ſet foorth in the Lawe, hee ſay not? Well, yet ſhall I not fayle to haue peace ſtill although I giue my ſelfe ouer to all mine owne wayes, and followe my luſtes. In deede GOD ſaieth that I ſhall bee accurſed, but I ſee it not, I will abide the hazard come what will: in the meane while I will not vexe my ſelfe with melancholy, I will make meerie, come what come will. When men ieſt thus deſperately, they bee vndoone, and they become altogether vnreformable.

Nowe firſt of all let vs marke howe it is ſayde heere, that when wee haue heard the curſes that are contayned in the Lawe, it is a token of a ſpitefull and bitter minde to ſay; Tuſh I care not a whit what God ſpeaketh. Albeit that we were not taught by any doctrine: yet haue wee a witneſſe within vs which ſpeaketh vnto vs, namely our owne conſcience, whereby euerie of vs is reprooued, and driuen to vnderſtand that God is our iudge, yea, euen when wee bee abſolued by men, as they bee which eſcape by bribes, preſentes, fauour, ſleightes and ſuttelties; who being abſolued by men, faile not to beare their condemnation ſtill about them in their owne hearts. But if when God ſheweth vnto vs that we muſt come to an account, and wakeneth vs vp, by confirming and ratifying that which wee doe alreadie knowe and perceiue, concerning the difference betwixt good and euill: if wee then continue ſtill hardhearted; is it not to bee ſayd that wee bee as good as bewitched by Sathan, and that hee hath bereft vs of all vnderſtanding and reaſon? To bee ſhorte, let vs learne to walke in feare and carefulneſſe, whenſoeuer our Lorde ſpeaketh vnto vs, and quickeneth vs vp by good warnings and admoniſhmentes. Let vs beware that wee ſtand not ſtubbornly againſt him: for wee ſee what they gaine in the ende which bee ſo cankerhearted againſt GOD. Therewithall let vs call to minde that which I haue ſayde alreadie; namely that the hygheſt poynt of all wickedneſſe is when men bleſſe themſelues in their heartes, that is to ſay, when they beare themſelues in hand, ẏ all ſhal goe well with them notwithſtanding that God doe threaten to bee their enemie, and to make them to feele his wrath. And this is written more at large by the Prophet Eſay. For there GOD complayneth of ſuch as ſcorned the Prophetes; for there were in thoſe dayes the lyke ſcorners that are to bee ſeene in theſe dayes. Tuſh (ſay they) let vs make good cheere, wee ſhall die to morrowe. Iſa.22.13. They had made that ſaying a common prouerb. Therefore when the Prophetes perceiued that all things were ſo far out of order as was horrible to ſee, and that iniquitie was become lyke a waterfloud, ſo as men kindled the wrath of God more and more: they dyd not ceaſe to crie: Wo, wo, it is impoſſible that GOD ſhould forbeare vs or ſuffer vs any longer: he hath vſed ſo long patience, that now wee muſt needes periſh all of vs. They hearde nothing but dreadfull threatenings. When the Prophet ſpake to them, it was not to qualifie the plagues, but as it were to ſay, you doe not yet heare the hundredth part of the puniſhmentes that ſhall come vpon you: and for ſo much as you make none account thereof, but ſhew ſuch hardneſſe of heart and ſtubbornneſſe againſt GOD and his Prophetes, you muſt bee all confounded. Theſe Galantes ſcoffed at ſuch threateninges, ſaying: Loe, wee muſt dye to morrow, let vs therefore make good cheere to day. Loe at what poynt they were. Would GOD that ſuch ſcorning of GOD and his worde were not yet ſtill in the world. But our Lorde addeth, ſaying, I haue called you to ſackcloth and Aſhes: I required nothing but your repentaunce and amendment, Iſa.22.12. that yee might obtaine mercie. Howſoeuer the caſe ſtand, I am deſirous to ſoften the curſed hardneſſe and ſtubbornneſſe of your heartes; and you hold on ſtill, and ſcoffe out all thinges. But as truely as I am God (ſayth hee) this ſinne of yours ſhall neuer bee blotted out. As if hee ſhoulde ſay, neuer thinke mee to bee GOD; nor neuer take mee to bee the Iudge of the worlde, if euer this ſinne of yours bee forgiuen you. It is an offence not pardonable, when men doe ſo harden themſelues againſt mee. Soothly, it is a threatening that ſhould make vs to tremble, and cauſe our hayre to ſtand on end, when GOD ſweareth by his name, and proteſteth that he will be no more knowen for God, if he puniſh not thoſe ſcorners with all extremitie, which will not bow their neckes when hee would haue them to feele their ſinnes, that they might repent.

This ſentence anſwereth to the Text of Moſes where he ſayeth, *Beware that none of you hauing hearde the curſes which bee ſet downe heere, doe bleſſe himſelfe in his heart*, and that he ſay not: God will eaſily forgiue mee: and thereupon ſoadeth himſelfe with hope of eaſe, notwithſtanding that GOD denounce warre againſt him. Now therefore as ſoone as GOD ſummoneth vs to his iudgement, let vs learne to enter into our ſelues, and let euerie one of vs make his owne inditement, and let vs looke aforehand a farre off at the curſes whereof hee ſpeaketh. Albeit that they doe not appeare at the firſt, yet let vs behold them by faith, like as it is ſaid, That Noe ſawe the floud aforehand when all was at reſt, Gen. 6.3 and when men were moſt drowned in their delightes: for the world was faire and pleaſant, and it ſeemed that all ſhould goe well. But Noe in the meane whyle ſtretched out his ſight aboue a hundred yeeres before him; euen ſixe ſcore yeeres aforehand did hee beholde that which God had ſpoken. And euen ſo muſt wee doe. Let vs not tarie till GOD ſmite vpon vs with mayne ſtrokes: but as ſoone as we haue offended him, let vs by and by looke into his lawe what our ſtate and condition is. And forſomuch as wee ſee there how God declareth that he will puniſh the deſpiſers of his Maieſtie, and all ſuch as ſtriue againſt his worde; threatening ſpecially all adulterers and whooremongers, all drunkardes and blaſphemers, and condemning all extortion, deceyte, periurie and enuie: let vs beware that none of vs promiſe himſelfe peace and reſt, whyleſt he ſeeth that God exhorteth to repentaunce. For it muſt needes come to paſſe, (as he ſayeth in another place,) that when they ſay, Peace and all is ſafe, then ſhall they 1.Theſſ.5. bee ſuddenly confounded. Certainely it is a monſtruous matter and againſt nature, that men can thinke themſelues bleſſed, when they heare that GOD doeth curſe them. And heereby wee ſee howe frowarde wee are, if GOD reſtraine vs not: yea and wee ſee howe it is a common and an ordinarie faulte. For GODS threateninges bee not ſecrete, they ſound continually, and wee haue our eares beaten with them; and yet who is hee that is mooued at them? True it is that with our mouthes wee vtter not the woordes that are ſet downe heere: but yet wee neuer haue any ſuch obedience, neyther are wee euer ſo beaten downe with our ſinnes, as to bee afrayde of GODS threateninges: Nay, wee rather defye him and all his power; and to our ſeeming, all the afflictions wherewith wee bee threatened are nothing, vntill wee feele them. So much the more therefore ought wee bee warned to looke to our ſelues, or elſe wee ſhall haue our eyes and our ſenſes ſo blynded, that wee ſhall not vnderſtande any thing of all that is tolde vs. Wherefore let vs benefite our ſelues by the leſſon that Salomon giueth vs, where hee ſayeth, Bleſſed is the man that is afrayde in his heart; Prou.28.14 to the intent wee bee not deſirous to cheere vp our ſelues, as it were in deſpite of God.

Alſo wee haue heereuppon to marke that which is ſayd of *the vndertaking* or double dealing *of the heart*. This word comprehendeth all thinges that men forge of their owne fantaſie. Soothly the imagination of man is a dreadfull dungeon; and when wee be once plunged into it, there is no way to get out agayne; and yet there is none of vs all but hee ſeeketh to followe the imaginations of his owne hearte. Seeing therefore that on the one ſide, when a man giueth himſelfe lybertie to doe whatſoeuer hee hath deuiſed in his owne mynde, hee plundgeth himſelfe as in the gulfe of hell, and yet neuertheleſſe euery one of vs is drawen and driuen that way: let vs haue ſo much the better conſideration of this that is ſpoken heere. Nowe Moſes intendeth to make men aſhamed, by ſetting before them the preſumings of their hearts; Deut.30.11. together with the Rule that God hath giuen them. Wee cannot doe amiſſe in following the will of God, as heereafter wee ſhall ſee more at length: it is a ready way; and hee doeth euermore reache vs his hande, wee doe ſee whither hee calleth vs. The way is certayne and infallible, when we obey GOD. Nowe if wee notwithſtanding, doe wittingly lyke better to blinde our ſelues with our owne vaine fantaſies, and to intangle our ſelues in them, ſo as wee wote not which way to turne, but wee bee carryed hither and thither, and one miſcheefe haleth an other, without ende or meaſure; muſt it not needes bee, that wee bee too much beewitched? So much the more therefore behooueth it vs to weye well this woorde of Moſes where he ſpeaketh of the vndertakinges of the heart.

Moreouer, men followe the deuiſes of their owne heartes in two manners; the one is when they forge vnto thẽſelues a Religion after their own lyking, and thereupon wil needs ſerue God after their owne fantaſie; or elſe when they ſooth themſelues in their ſinnes, although they haue them laide open to their faces. The Idolaters thinke not that they doe yll, when they bring their owne pelting traſh vnto God; as for example when they ſet vp a puppet and kneele downe before it, they thinke that GOD is well honoured. Agayne as wee ſee amongeſt the Papiſtes, howe they trotte on Pilgrimage, and cauſe Maſſe to bee ſung, and babble before an Aultar, and carie Candelles, and faſt ſome certaine dayes; when the Idolaters doe thus torment themſelues in vaine, it ſeemeth to them that all is well, and that it is acceptable to GOD, and that he doeth them wrong, if hee take it not in good part. And yet in the meane whyle they bee but inuentions of their owne braine, ſuch as God vtterly miſlyketh and condemneth. And therefore let vs marke well that Moſes in this place meant chiefely to plucke men away from this kinde of madneſſe, which is in all Idolaters, in that they would ſerue God after their owne faſhion, hauing no reſpect to that which he hath commaunded by his worde. Albeit then that at the firſt they doe not perceiue their leawdneſſe; yet is it not to bee ſayd that they be cleare, neither can it ſerue them for an excuſe. Marke that for one point.

Nowe if they bee to bee condemned, which thinke themſelues to doe their duetie, and haue a good intent, as they terme it: what ſhall become of ſuch as weetingly prouoke the wrath of God? They knowe well it is nought, and that it ſhall not ſcape vnpuniſhed, and yet neuertheleſſe they ceaſe not to harden their heartes. And wherefore? For their luſt doeth driue them thereto, which boyleth ſo in them as they muſt needes accompliſh that which they haue imagined. Now when men do thus harden themſelues againſt God, notwithſtanding that their conſcience doeth reproue them, and they knowe that they doe yll: what is to bee ſaide to it? Let vs learne therefore to behaue our ſelues well in theſe two pointes, and generally let vs not fight againſt GOD; but when our heart draweth vs eyther one way or other, let vs vnderſtand that all that euer proceedeth from our ſelues, is contrarie to the rule that our Lord hath deliuered vs: and let vs knowe that there is none other meane to diſcerne what is good and what is euill, but by ſubmitting our ſelues to the doctrine by the which our Lord holdeth all our ſenſes, thoughtes and affections captiue. That is the effect of the matter which we haue to beare away in this place.

Nowe Moſes addeth another ſimilitude, ſaying, *That ſuch folke doe mingle drunkenneſſe and wickedneſſe together*. The wordes import as much as if it were ſayd, that they do mingle drunkennes and thirſt together: but wee will take it as it is here ſet downe. In deede this place hath bin expounded diuerſe wayes: in ſo much that ſome to play the fine headed fellowes, haue ſaid that by the phraſe which hath yͤ word *Thirſt* or *Thirſtie*, Moſes meant that part of the ſoule, which yeeldeth it ſelfe to be gouerned by reaſon, for as much as it is deſirous of knowledge and ſeeketh after it: and yet neuertheleſſe doeth intermeddle with the other which maketh hir drunken with hir owne voluptuouſnes and delightes, and hath neither meaſure nor ſtay of it ſelfe. But theſe be vaine ſpeculations which we muſt let alone: neither had I ſpoken of them, but to yͤ ende yͭ none ſhold deceiue themſelues w̃ them. Let vs come to the playne meaning of Moſes. We haue ſeene heere afore the matter which he treateth of in this place; and no doubt, but this ſerueth as an expoſition, for the better declaring and confirming of that which we haue ſeene alreadie. By the *Thirſtie* therefore or by *Thirſt*, hee meaneth the appetite of man which is alwayes hungrie: and I meane not the appetite of eating and drinking, but the appetite of all our luſtes. Yee ſee then howe man in his owne nature is as it were thirſtie, ſo as wee bee alwayes ſharpe ſet, and can not bee ſatisfied by any maner of meanes; for as ſoone as we haue beene tempted with one wiſhe, by and by wee come to another, and there is no man but he is vexed with diuerſe chaunges and ſortes of thirſtineſſe. For albeit that vices raigne more in ſome than in other ſome;yet notwithſtanding the man that is giuen to couetouſneſſe miſſeth not to haue other luſtes, in ſo much that couetouſnes is not 1.Tim.6.10. without cauſe counted the roote of all miſchief. Likewiſe a whoremonger is caried away by his affections, and wicked luſtes,and yet hath he other vices alſo therewithall. When we haue well examined the nature of man, it will bee founde that Moſes could not better compare them than to ſuch as bee thirſtie. And why ſo? For they are neuer at reſt, they bee neuer contented, they are alwayes ſharpe ſet, and they bee euermore eagre of their deſires. Hee ſpeaketh it expreſly in the Feminine gender and ſayeth, *Shee that is thirſtie*, bycauſe the preſent caſe concerneth the luſt of man. Hee putteth it in the perſon of a woman, but yet neuertheleſſe we ſee what hee meaneth. And wherefore doeth hee put in Drunkenneſſe? Bycauſe men be ſo farre out of order, that they ſeeme to haue no diſcretion at all: and when they bee once a little diſguiſed, anon they become ſtarke drunken, in ſo much that they ſeeke prouocations to drinke ſtill, and to guzzle wine,and to ſwill it in more and more. Ye ſee that when a man is once out of the way, he layeth on drinke ſtill, and the more he drinketh ŷ more he may(as they ſay)and experience ſheweth it. Now then, when man is accuſtomed and throughly nuſled in drunkenneſſe, hee becommeth a wineſacke, ſo that although hee powre in neuer ſo much wyne, yet is he neuer filled, but doeth ſtill gulp it vp without ende of drinking. Wee ſee theſe great drunkardes, how all men woonder at them, and it is a maruailous matter where they beſtowe the drinke which they take in. It ſeemeth vnpoſſible that any ſtomacke ſhould holde it. Againe wee ſee that they are paſt all ſhame, and at all their venting places doe caſt out the wyne which they had taken in. And be they once emptie, they be as readie to drinke againe as euer they were: and when they ſauour not the wine, then muſt they haue new deuiſes to procure appetite. If ŷ wyne miſlike them,though they be ready to burſt,yet muſt they eate ſome ſtraunge meate, as either a Carbonado,or the verie ſnuffe of a Candle, or a pickled hering, and I wote not what elſe; ſo that to all ſeeming they meane rather to murther themſelues,than to haue any honeſtie in them.

Nowe let vs looke to the courſe of the Text, and wee ſhall finde that this ſimilitude is ſo fit, that Moſes coulde not haue ſet foorth the luſtes of men better than by comparing them to men ouerſurfeited with drinke: for it is certaine that wee ſhall neuer bee ſo well ſtayed in our affections, but that we finde this in them, I meane vntill God hath reformed vs by his holy ſpirit. In deede we ſee ſome haue more honeſtie in them, and which leade not a diſſolute life, neither in whoredome, nor in drunkenneſſe, nor in ſwearing,nor in theft, nor in any hurtfull thing. Well then, in theſe there is ſome ſhewe of vertue,but yet it is impoſſible that a man ſhould not be vncleane in his heart,vntill God doe gouerne him: for our nature muſt needes bee euermore ſinnefull: and that which is ſayde in Geneſis muſt Gen.6.5. needes be accompliſhed in vs: namely that all that euer the heart of man doeth imagine,is froward and wicked. Now ſeeing it is ſo, Moſes telleth vs heere,that it is ouer much for vs to haue this curſed inclination by nature; and therefore wee muſt fight againſt our luſtes: like as when a ſicke man ſees himſelfe out of temper,he muſt thinke that if he fulfill his owne fantaſie,he ſhall bring himſelfe to a hotte and continuall ague, and ſo kill himſelfe. Hee muſt therefore reſtraine himſelfe. And why? For his deſire is diſorderly. Euen ſo it is with vs: and ſo muſt wee fight againſt our luſtes and affections; and it is a difficult combat. Let vs labour therein by all the meanes wee can, and yet ſhall we not ſo much preuaile, but that ſomewhat will bee ſtill amiſſe. Now if in ſtead of repreſſing our luſtes & of holding them ſtraite curbed, wee flatter our ſelues and nouriſh them: is it not a wilfull throwing of our ſelues into deſtruction? I knowe a vice that doeth raigne in mee, and I am to fight againſt it: that is my right exerciſe, vnto the which God hath called mee. Nowe I conſpire with my naturall inclination, which is wicked; I ſee it is a diſeaſe that will kill me; vnleſſe I prouide for it and keepe good order: and yet neuertheleſſe I will as it were compact with the ſickeneſſe, and followe myne owne appetite: what is to bee ſayde to it? The greateſt miſchiefe of all is this, that Moſes ſetteth downe heere: namely that men bee not content to foſter their luſtes, and to foade themſelues with vaine flatteries,but they do alſo caſt themſelues to the ſpoyle lyke madde men, and become drunken to bereaue themſelues of diſcretion; yea they become verie beaſtes, to the intent they may haue no more feeling of their euill; they caſt away all ſhame, to become like vnto brute beaſtes: they haue no griefe of conſcience, and they proceede ſo farre as to bleare out their tongues againſt all manner of admonitions that bee giuen them. When men come to that poynt, it is a right adding of drunkenneſſe vnto thirſt. But nowe let vs learne, that when our Lorde ſheweth vs our faultes, it is to the ende, that euerie of vs ſhoulde enforce and ſtraine himſelfe to correct his wicked luſtes,and beware that we maintaine them not. But aboue all thinges let vs take heede that wee tempt not GOD, ne make warre vppon him openly, ne proceede to adde drunkenneſſe vnto thirſt, that is to ſay, that wee adde not beaſtly diſtemperance to our owne wicked inclination. It is too much that wee ſhould bee allured by our deſires, and luſtes; but to become ſo drunken and beaſtly in them, as to haue no conſideration at all of them;and to bee ſaped in our naughtineſſe that we fall to ſeeking of monſtrous thinges after the manner of drunkardes: Alas, whereto tendeth it? Is it not an vtter defacing of GODS image in vs, as much as wee can? And yet is it too much ſeene in the worlde; for they that flatter themſelues in common vices, doe fall in the ende into ſo haynous and great enormities, as it ſeemeth, that they would confound heauen & earth together.

When a man hath a long while made none account of God, and is become drunken in his filthineſſe; what will he doe after he is ſo beſotted? He will paſſe the boundes euen of naturall honeſtie, in ſo much that the verie beaſtes do hold their luſtes in order: but man, not knowing at all what he is, transfigureth himſelfe: and that is it that Saint Paule meaneth in ſaying, that when men haue deſpiſed GOD, they fall into many Ro.1,24.25. concupiſcences, and they muſt needes forget themſelues, and throwe themſelues headlong into ſo ſhamefull enormities, as a man cannot tell how to woorke them greater reproche than they doe to themſelues. Wherefore let vs bee afrayde of ſuch vengeaunce, and let vs alwayes be mindefull of this drunkenneſſe whereof Moſes ſpeaketh in this place, that wee may beware of it.

Then he addeth, *That GOD will neuer bee mercifull to ſuch a man: but his wrath ſhall kindle againſt him, and his indignation ſhall bee mooued at him, all the curſes contained in the Booke of the Lawe ſhall bee heaped vppon him and reſt vpon him, and hee ſhall bee cut off from the Tribes of Iſrael to his vndooing.* This is the ſame thing which I alleaged erewhyle out of the Prophet Eſay, where God Eſa.22.14. ſweareth, that hee will neuer forgiue ſuch people, as haue ſo abuſed his patience, and made a ieſt and a ſcoffe of the warninges that he gaue them. As much alſo doeth Moſes ſay thereof here, though in another phraſe. God (ſayth hee) will neuer forgiue ſuch a man. Heereby we are admoniſhed, that although wee haue offended God, yet there is place to obtayne mercie and forgiueneſſe, ſo we be not hard hearted, but doe lament, ſpecially when we be admoniſhed, and when men ſhewe vs more plainely that we muſt repaire to the goodneſſe of God. When wee deale ſo, then there is a conuenient helpe alreadie prepared for vs. But contrariewiſe, if wee continue in our ſtubbornneſſe, and for the hauing of more libertie, doe proceede to wilfull ſtubbornneſſe againſt all counſaile, and become deafe to all the threateninges of the Scripture, bearing our ſelues in hande that there is no iudge in heauen: when wee deale ſo, let vs not thinke that our Lord wil ſuffer ſuch ſtouteneſſe, for it is too diueliſh. Needes muſt men haue vtterly forgotten what they are, when they can ſo prouoke their Iudge. GOD therefore wil neuer forgiue ſuch a man. Now then, are we called to repentance? Let euerie of vs bow downe our neckes, and bee touched with ſuch a feare of Goddes iudgement, as may holde vs in awe, and make vs to repaire to him when he calleth vs, whyle wee haue time, and whyle the gate is open let vs enter, for if GOD doe once ſhutte it, wee may knocke, and wee may Gen.27.34. wayle and howle as Eſau did: but it is too late. To bee ſhort, Moſes telleth vs, that whyleſt wee haue meane and acceſſe to returne vnto him to obtaine grace, wee ought to ſteppe to it without mocking of his woorde: and that when wee bee exhorted by it to conſider our ſinnes, wee ought to beware that wee make a right confeſſion of them, and not reſemble other men which are ſo dull that they haue no vnderſtanding of the vengeance of God wherewith they are beſet.

Moſes ſayeth farther, *That the wrath of GOD ſhall kindle, and his indignation ſhall bee mooued againſt ſuch a man.* Whereby hee ſignifieth, that GOD will neuer pacifie his wrath againſt any of thoſe that doe ſo abuſe his fatherly gentleneſſe, and haue hoorded vp the treaſure whereof Saint Paule ſpeaketh in the ſecond Chapter to the Romanes in the time of GODS long Rom.2.5. ſufferaunce. For certeſſe Gods ſparing of vs, is to giue vs leaſure to come to repentaunce. Hee wayteth for vs, and if wee make no account of returning vnto him, ſpecially when he doeth prouoke vs, but doe yet woorſe: is it not good reaſon that hee turne our wilfull ſtubbornneſſe backe vppon our owne heades? Yes: For wee doe but heape vp ſo much the greater curſedneſſe vppon our ſelues. Vppon whom ſhall it light, but vpon vs, in ſuch ſort as wee ſhall be altogether ouerwhelmed? When a man doeth thus increaſe his leawdneſſe, and ſcorneth God, and beſides all the other ſinnes which hee hath committed, outrageth ſo farre as to ſay, I will not giue ouer mine owne pleaſure, bearing himſelfe in hand that Gods hand cannot touch him, but that hee hath a couenaunt with Hell and death, as ſayeth the Prophet Eſay; when Eſa.28.15. we be at that poynt, is it not, as if we ſhould draw ſome mountaine or houſe vppon vs to ouerwhelme vs withall? Let vs learne then that our Lorde doeth here vtter forth a ſpeciall wrath againſt all them that will not bee mooued by his word, but continue vtterly vnreformable. His wrath (ſaieth he) ſhall be kindled againſt them, and his indignation ſhall be ſtirred vp.

And for the better expreſſing thereof hee ſaieth: *That the curſes of the Lawe ſhall lie vppon him.* He had ſayd afore, all this ſhall cleaue vnto Deut.28.21. thee. And here it is ſayde, that they ſhall reſt. Purpoſely is this word ſet downe, bycauſe men doe euer thinke to eſcape and to outrunne the puniſhments of God: as when a dogge feeleth a ſtripe with a cudgell, hee ſhaketh his eares; and would faine ſcape, but the blowe doubleth, and he is cudgelled well and throughly, and yet hee ſeeketh ſtill to flie away: Euen ſo it is with vs. Therefore if God puniſh vs, there is none other helpe but to ſtoope, and to lament by conſidering our ſinnes. But in ſteede of this we thinke to go quite by remouing from our ſtanding. That is the cauſe, why men bee toſſed with vnreſt, when God doeth viſite them, and they perceiue that they haue offended him: they torment themſelues, ſuppoſing that it ſhall auayle them much; whereas it is neuertheleſſe to their confuſion. Therefore ſaieth Moſes, that the curſes which be contained in the Lawe ſhal reſt vpon vs. Let vs not thinke then to caſt them behinde vs, neither let vs thinke to eſcape, whē we play the madde bedlems and kicke againſt him. That is but a folly; they muſt of neceſſitie lye vppon vs, yea in ſuch wiſe as wee ſhall not feele any eaſe. That is in effect the thing which we haue to beare in minde concerning this place.

Deut.28.15 Afterwarde he ſayeth yet farther, *That ſuch a man ſhall bee raſed out from vnder the heauens, and his name alſo*. Nowe GOD ſpeaketh not of one curſe onely: but ſaieth that when a man is not humbled throughly by one puniſhment, there ſhall come a whole doſen vppon him. Nay the number ſhall not bee certaine, but (as wee haue often ſaid heretofore) the number ſhall bee infinite, as we ſhall ſee againe in the xxxii. Chapter, that God hath incredible meanes to tame thoſe that are ſo ſtubborne againſt him. And now for a concluſion he ſaieth, that the name of ſuch a man ſhall be raſed out from vnder heauen. As if he ſhould ſay, God will roote him out from the number of his creatures, ſo as hee ſhall bee no more reckoned among men. Indeede the principall matter which wee ſhoulde deſire, is not to haue a name vnder heauen, but to haue our Luk.10.20. names written aboue in the booke of lyfe. Neuertheleſſe, Moſes in this phraſe of ſpeech, comprehendeth alſo the eternall damnation. And why? For wee knowe that our Lorde did at that time vtter foorth his goodneſſe and loue towardes the Iewes, by earthly benefites: and contrariwiſe his wrath alſo by temporall puniſhments. Moſes therefore in ſaying heere, that God will wype out the name of ſuch a man from vnder heauẽ; meant according to the ſame rule, that GOD would no more reckon him in the number of his creatures. Nowe if wee bee not woorthie to bee counted heere beneath for the creatures of God, nor to liue amongſt horſes and Aſſes: howe ſhall wee bee partakers of the glorie of heauen, to bee companions with the Angels, in the immortalitie which is prepared for all the faithfull and for all Gods children? We ſee how the meaning of Moſes is that God will ſo raſe vs out of the roll of lyfe and ſaluation, as wee ſhall not be counted woorthy to beare the place of his creatures, but this curſe ſhall appeare vppon vs euen by the thinges of this world.

And thereupon he ſayth, *That ſuch a man ſhall bee cutte off from the tribes of Iſrael to his vndooing.* Whereby it is ſhewed vnto vs, firſt that God had ſeparated that people to bee preſerued. And it is a doctrine that appertaineth to all the faithfull. In deede we haue a ſpeciall myrrour therof in the Iewes: for wee ſee that when the firſt borne of Egypt were ſlaine, the Angell touched not the houſes which were marked with the Exo.12.23. blood of the Paſchall Lambe, but it was Gods will that they ſhoulde bee free from ſuch vengeance. Although then that as long as wee liue in this world, we bee inuironed with all maner of miſeries, whereunto this humaine life is ſubiect, and that all the diſeaſes which can happen vnto men, be threatninges of death, and that wee be likewiſe ſubiect to all the miſchaunces that can happen vnto vs, by ayre, water, fyre, earth, and the heauens; which doe all ſerue to bring vs to ruine and confuſion: although ſay I that as concerning the humaine ſtate, wee differ not from them that be afflicted to the vttermoſt; yet neuertheleſſe our Lord preſerueth vs and ſhouleth vs out, as if he ſhould gather vs into a corner by our ſelues. Well may wee bee mingled among thoſe whom God hath caſt off: but yet beholdeth he vs alwayes with mercie. This is in effect that which wee haue to remember concerning this place: and it doeth import an ineſtimable comfort. For albeit that we bee ſubiect to all the myſeries of the world, yet doeth God ſo preſerue vs, that of a ſpeciall priuiledge, wee bee ſafe by his meanes bycauſe he is neere vs: ſo as the miſchiefe is euer put off by his hand which is preſent with vs, and eyther wee bee exempted from it, or at the leaſt, he giueth it ſuch iſſue, as wee haue cauſe to reioyce, and to giue him thankes for that he hath ſo preſerued vs. Thus much for one point.

But yet for all that let vs beware that we abuſe not that goodneſſe of God; for if we doe, when we be gathered to be as of his houſhold, hee can very well cut vs off againe; as it is fittely ſayde, *that ſuch a man ſhalbe cut off from among the Tribes of Iſraell*: to ſhewe that it is not ynough for vs to be receiued into Gods Church, but that we muſt continue in his obedience vnto the ende, to the intent that hee may continue his grace towarde vs, yea and to continue it in ſuch ſort, as we may bee of that Iſraell, whereof God ſpeaketh by Ezechiell, to witte, that wee may be in his ſecret Roll. For there bee many that bee enrolled before men, which neuertheleſſe be reiected of God. And therefore hee ſpeaketh purpoſely of his ſecret Roll, where they bee written that be his people indeede. That is it that Paule ſpeaketh vnto Timothie, that they bee letters encloſed vp. 2.Tim.2.19 God (ſaith hee) knoweth them that be his: and that is a decree which ſtandeth ſteadfaſt. Therfore let vs learne ſo to yeeld our ſelues obedient to our God, praying him, that lyke as he hath vouchſafed to draw vs vnto him, he will alſo purſue it, and increaſe his bleſſings: and that when we be once graffed into the ſtocke of Abraham, to be his children by faith; wee may alwaies hold on ſtil in the courſe of our adoption, that in the ende God may acknowledge vs for his children, and we bee made partakers of the glorie which is prepared for vs, ſeeing that in this worlde and in this ſhort life wee haue inioyed bleſſings, by the which hee maketh vs alreadie to taſte of his loue.

Nowe let vs fall downe before the face of our good God, acknowledging our faultes, and beſeeching him that we may bee more and more caſt downe in ourſelues, to haue ſuch a horror and feeling of our ſinnes, as wee may not fayle to runne vnto him, and to flee for refuge to his mercie, that by forgiuing vs our ſinnes from day to day, he may amend vs euermore, vntill hee hath quite ridde vs of them. That it may pleaſe him to graunt this grace not onely vnto vs, but alſo to all people and nations of the earth, &c.

On

On Friday the x. of Aprill, 1556.

The CLXVIII. Sermon which is the fifth vpon the nine and twentith Chapter.

22 Thus will the generation to come, ſay, namelie your children which ſhall ſuccede after you and the ſtraunger which ſhall come from a farre lande, when they ſee the plagues of this lande, and the diſeaſes of it wherewith the Lord ſhall haue ſmitten it:

23 The brimſtone and ſault wherewith hee ſhall haue burned all his lande, ſo as it ſhall not bee ſowed, nor yeelde fruite, nor haue anie graſſe growing thereon, as in the ouerthrowe of Sodome and Gomorrah, Adam and Seboim, which the Lord deſtroyed in his wrath and diſpleaſure.

24 Then ſhall all Nations ſay, wherefore hath the Lorde doone this to this Lande? O how fierce is his great wrath?

25 And it ſhall bee aunſwered, becauſe they forſooke the couenaunt of the Lorde GOD of their fathers, which hee made with them, when hee brought them out of the land of Egypt.

26 For they went and ſerued other gods, and bowed themſelues before the the ſame gods whome they knewe not, neither hadde they doone them anie good.

27 Therefore is the wrath of the Lorde kindled againſt this land, to bring vpon it all the curſes written in this booke.

28 And the Lorde hath rooted them out of their lande, in wrath, anger, and great indignation, and he hath throwne them out into an other land as it appeareth at this day.

29 The ſecretes of the Lord our God be reuealed vnto vs, and to our children for euer, to the intent we ſhould do all the wordes of this law.

MOſes proceedeth here ſtill with the matter which wee beganne yeſterday, namely, to declare howe deteſtable our rebellion is vnto God, when he hath once taught vs by his worde, and can not winne vs, but wee turne heade to the contrarie. For it had beene enough to haue declared in one worde, that none ſhoulde remayne vnpuniſhed: howbeit foraſmuch as men doe not ſo quickely conſider the vengeaunce of God to be mooued therewith to the quicke, therefore Moſes addeth threateninges vpon threatnings, declaring that the puniſhmentes ſhall bee ſo greeuous, that euerie man ſhall bee abaſhed at it: according alſo as the Prophet Ieremie vſeth this phraſe of ſpeach, ſaying ẏͤ al mens eares ſhal tingle at the hearing of the ſtraunge thinges which God ſhall haue wrought in Ieruſalem & the lande of Iudah. Ier.19.3. For if God chaſtiſe vs after the common order, wee regarde it not, we take it to be but haphazard, or elſe we doe linger til ẏͤ plague be paſt; but as for ſubmitting ourſelues to God, it is no part of our care. That is ẏͤ cauſe why Moſes doeth in this place inhaunce the plagues which God woulde ſende vppon that lande, to the intent that the people might bee the better inſtructed, and euerie man looke to himſelfe, and vnderſtand that if they tempted Gods patience, they muſt needes fall into this ſo horrible extremitie. In which reſpect hee ſaith, *That the generations to come, and thoſe alſo which ſhoulde reſort thither from farre countries, ſhall inquire thereof as people abaſhed.* By which woordes hee doeth vs to vnderſtande, that the puniſhmentes which God woulde ſende vppon the rebelles, ſhoulde be ſtraunge, ſuch as ſhould make all folke aſtoniſhed, and amaſed at the ſight of them, and to ſay, this is a matter that hath not beene woont to be; it muſt needes be that the hande of God hath gone this way. Nowe wee ſee the meaning of Moſes. And herein wee haue to condemne our ſloweneſſe, ſeeing that God muſt be faine to deſcribe thinges vnto vs, as it were in a painted table, the cauſe whereof is for that wee bee not plyable to receyue the admoniſhmentes which hee giueth vs. We thinke our ſelues able folke: but in ſo doing wee doe all of vs beguile our ſelues with ſelfeſoothing, vntill our Lorde doe as it were beate it into our braynes by force, that if wee proceede on to offende him, wee ſhall not eſcape his hande, yea, and that wee ſhall be handled with ſuch rigour as ſhall make all them to tremble which ſee but the tracts thereof: ſo that not onely wee that receyue the ſtrokes, ſhall be confounded, but they alſo which come from farre ſhall confeſſe, that it was the vengeance of God, which was not without cauſe, and that it muſt needes bee, that wee did committe ouer greeuous and haindous offences, ſeeing that God is thus inflamed againſt vs.

Moreouer Moſes ſheweth that God will no more ſpare a whole country, than one man: leaſt they ſhould ſhroude themſelues vnder the multitudes of people that giue themſelues to wickedneſſe, and thinke thereby to ſcape the better cheape before God. It is expreſſely ſaide that
Ezech.18. 4. if anie man ſinne hee ſhall be puniſhed; and if a whole lande be faultie, God will wrappe them all likewiſe into one fardell. Therefore let vs not bleare our eyes wilfully as wee ſee the Papiſtes doe, who vaunt themſelues this day, becauſe ẏ number of ſuch as are inclined to their ſuperſtitions is not ſmall, They boaſt them of their great multitude, making it their buckler againſt both God and men. And thereupon they doe deſpiſe vs, and it ſeemeth to them, that they may of good right condemne the pure and true religion. But contrariwiſe God telleth vs, that when a whole land hath forſaken the right way, that rebellion of theirs ſhal not go vnpuniſhed, albeit that the multitude of them which be faultie, be neuer ſo great. Finallie wee muſt beware that we followe not one an other to do euill: for if a blinde body doe leade the way, hee ſhal fal into the ditch, and likewiſe they that followe him: hee ſhall not exempt them by his fal. We muſt therefore vnderſtand, that when God calleth vs, wee muſt ſticke vnto his voyce, and obey it: and if all the worlde fall away, and euerie man goe aſtray, yet muſt not we ground our ſelues vpon the examples that wee ſee, as if wee woulde ſay, It is lawfull for mee, for manie haue this cuſtome. We may not make that a law, but we muſt ſtand ſtedfaſt in ẏ obedience of our God. This is the thing which we haue to remẽber concerning this place, where Moſes ſpeaketh not of euerie man particularly, but of the whole lande, vſing the compariſon of Sodome and Gomorrah, of Adama and Zeboim: according to the cõmon maner of the holy ſcripture, where the Prophets doe put men in mind of the dreadfull puniſhment which God ſent vppon thoſe cities. And indeed S. Iude ſaith in his Epi-
Iud.7. ſtle, that it is as it were a myrrour of the fire that is prepared for the wicked, ẏ wee might alwayes behold howe God is Iudge of the world. Therefore it is not without cauſe, that Moſes ſpeaketh here of Sodom & Gomorrah: as if he ſhould ſay, albeit that God do always puniſh ſin, yet the examples thereof be not alwayes ſo notable, as in that ouerthrow of Sodom & Gomorrah, and of the townes neere vnto them. For there it was his will to ſhew by one deed that he was not a partie to be dalied withall: and therefore it was his wil that the remembrance therof ſhould continue, and that euerie man ſhould walke warely. When men ſpeake of Sodom & Gomorrah, they ought to conſider that he which ouerthrew them with lightening and tempeſt, is at this day liuing in heauen, & that he hath not changed his purpoſe nor giuen ouer his office, but that his maieſtie is accompanied with his iuſtice and power. Therfore let vs not tempt him: but if hee vſe patience toward vs, let vs vnderſtand that when hee hath long delaied, we muſt come to reckening: and if the puniſhment be not now viſible vpon vs, as it was then vpon the ſaid townes, yet wil the time come that we ſhall periſhe. That in effect is the thing that Moſes ment to ſignifie in this place.

We haue here a generall inſtruction, which is, ẏ for aſmuch as God hath euermore puniſhed the worlde, it ſhoulde therefore be the more to our reproch, if wee profited not thereby, in acknowledging our ſelues ſo much the more guilty according to the ſaying of S. Paul who giueth ẏ verie ſame rule, in the tenth chapter of the firſt 1.Cor.10.6 &11.
to the Corinthians, namely that when God puniſheth mens ſtubbornnes, couetouſnes, vnbeleefe, ſuperſtition, fornication, and ſuch like ſins: his ſo doing is a liuelie image of his iudgement. Let vs beware that when God teacheth vs at other mens coſt, wee profit in that ſchoole. For if we become hardhearted, it ſhall be made manifeſt vnto vs at the laſt day, that it was long of no body but of our ſelues, that wee were not reduced into the way of ſaluation, becauſe we would needs wilfully miſſe it, as if we had cõſpired with Satan, to our owne deſtruction. Therefore doth he alſo ſay, that the vengeaunce of God is wont Col.3.6.
to come vpon all misbeleeuers: as if he ſhoulde ſay, let vs not tarrie till God ſtrike vs, but ſeeing we do perceiue him to be Iudge of the world, let ẏ touch vs, & let euery of vs beſtir himſelfe to repentance. Moſes hauing ſpoken ſo, addeth this further declaration, and ſaith that they which come from far countries, & the childrẽ alſo that ſhold be born after ẏ euent of ſuch a puniſhmẽt: ſhal al inquire of it as aſtoniſhed, ſaying: What meaneth this? And now he addeth for a cõfirmation, ẏ the ſhame therof ſhal remain vpon them ẏ be ſo afflicted: wherby he ſheweth, that they ſhal not yet eſcape, after that God hath taken them out of the world, but that they ſhall beare the marke of infamie, inſomuch that euen the blind ſhal condemne them, and euery man deſpiſe thẽ euen when their carkeſſes be rotten and brought to nothing, and ẏ the remembrance of them ſhal be odious to the world. For men will ſay, *It is becauſe they forgot the God of their fathers, which had brought them out of the lande of Egypt, and turned to ſtrange Gods whõ they neuer knew.* That is one point which we haue to note in this place.

And by the way Moſes doth vs to vnderſtand, that if the Iewes be not pliable afore hand, it ſhal come to paſſe that afterwarde other men ſhalbe taught to beware by their great deſtruction whether they will or no. And that is well worthie to be marked. Whenſoeuer God reproueth vs, we couer our ſinnes, and although we haue no great colour ſo to doe, yet doe wee Gen.3.7. euermore take leaues to hide vs, after the example of our father Adam. To be ſhort, wee bee ſo ſhameleſſe, that wee will rather alleadge friuolous excuſes, than yeelde to condemne our ſelues. God doeth threaten vs, but we do make none account thereof; wee offende notwithſtanding, whereby we ſhewe our rebellioufneſſe. If wee be asked, Goe too, doe you perceiue the hand of God? O ſay we, I wot not wherfore I am afflicted. Thus do men euermore goe backward: and in ſteede of appeaching themſelues, they fal to diſputing and cauelling to eſcape as they may. To be ſhort, we will neuer come willingly to the acknowledging of our ſins. What doth God then, when he ſeeth vs to bee ſo vntractable? Hee teacheth others. Foraſmuch as it is but labour loſt to apply himſelfe to vs, & becauſe we be as logs of wood, hardharted and wilful in wickednes: the exãple of vs is a good inſtruction to others, which come to read ỹ it is the vengeance of God, & ſo do acknowledge it in our perſons: & in the meane while, we be ſhut out from all remedie: for wee had not the power in time and place, to receiue the correctiõ that God ſent vs. Thus ye ſee what we haue to note in this place, where Moſes ſaith: *that they wil ſay*: It is not a matter any whit darke nor anie more to bee doubted of, that they which bee ſtubborne hearted againſt GOD and haue vſed contention to make them ſelues innocent, may very wel wrie their mouthes: but yet will GOD ſtirre vp tongues to diſcouer their iniquities, and they muſt become a common prouerbe, and haue their doings blaſed abroad; as who ſhold ſay, god hath puniſhed thẽ on this wiſe, bicauſe they forgot him. After he had deliuered thẽ by his incredible power, and wrought ſo many wonders for their ſafetie, they laid al this vnder foote, & turned thẽſelues vnto ſtrange gods. And hereby we be taught that when God giueth vs yet meanes to returne vnto him, we muſt not draw back, ſeeing ỹ we ſhall gaine nothing thereby. And moreouer, ſith it is his wil to teach vs at other folkes coſt, let vs conſider what is happened vnto the Rom,11.21. Iewes, (according as S. Paul alſo leadeth vs thither:) for they were the adopted people of God when wee were yet but as rotten. God had left our fathers in their confuſion, when in the mean while the family of Abrahã was choſen & aduãced to ỹ heritage of ſaluation. Now then, if they being ỹ firſt borne, were ſo grieuouſly puniſhed, ſhold it not make our haires to ſtand vp on end, ſeeing ỹ in compariſon of thẽ we be as children borne before their time? In deed we haue beene graffed in their place: but yet they were ỹ naturall oliue, they were the branches proceeding of ỹ ſame roote, which was dedicated in the perſon of Abrahã. But we for our part were vnholy. Now if we ſucceed in their place, thinke we ỹ God wil ſpare vs, if we folow their iniquities? We ſee how he hath dealt ŵ them, & it is a dreadful matter. Therefore let vs learne to profit thereby, & not tary till our Lorde make vs as it were a lookingglaſſe, ỹ others may be taught by vs to our confuſion. Thus ye ſee how we ought to put this place in practiſe.

Now Moſes doeth here expreſſely accuſe the Iewes, to ỹ intent to take away from thẽ al ſtartingholes; ſaying: *They forgot the God of their fathers & him that had deliuered them out of the land of Egypt, and ſet them free from that hard bondage.* By ſaying, The GOD of their fathers, he meaneth that they were reuolted without cauſe: Which complaynt the Prophete Ieremie doeth alſo vſe. Go (ſaith he) ouer the ſea, goe throughout Ier,2,10. al the countries of the worlde, ſee how conſtant the heathen are, they chaunge not their Gods, & yet they be but Idols; men did deuiſe of their owne fanſies, ỹ ſuch a religion was to bee had, & they ſticke to it, ſhewing great conſtancie & ſtedfaſtnes, albeit that it haue no foundation. But I am the true God, & you haue knowen me to be ſo by experience; & yet notwithſtãding you be euermore fickle to haue ſome noueltie, you cannot bee ſtayed nor reſtrained in my ſeruice: & is not ỹ to great an vnthankfulnes? So thẽ Moſes telleth them here, that they haue forſaken the God of their fathers. Yet notwithſtanding, it is not to be inferred hereupon, that becauſe our fathers haue helde ſome euill trade of life, therefore wee muſt follow the ſame, for the Papiſtes & Turkes haue that defence common amongſt them, namely, that it is nowe a long while ſince they haue behaued themſelues after that manner. The Turkes ſay: What? It is eight hundred yeres ago ſince that Mahomet brought vs to his law, and it hath bin kept euer ſince, our fathers haue deliuered it vnto vs from hand to hande. The Papiſtes alſo doe alledge their holy Councels; and the Traditions of auncient lawes: but (as I haue alreadie touched) it is not enough for vs that our fathers haue deliuered vs ſuch a religiõ as they thought good. But Moſeſes ſpeaking here of fathers, doeth ſeparate Abraham, Iſaac, and Iacob, from the worlde, becauſe God did ſanctifie them. Thoſe bee the fathers that deſerued to bee of dignitie and reputation aboue worldlie men: for God did ordeyne thẽ to be followed that other men might become like vnto them. That is the thing which Moſes regarded. For in deede wee ſee that Ezechiel blamed the people for following the Ezec,20.18. lawes and righteouſneſſe of their fathers: it might ſeeme at the firſte ſhowe, that here is ſome contrarietie. God on the one ſide condemneth the Iewes, for that they followed not their fathers; and afterwarde hee condemneth them, for that they followed them too much. Yea but thoſe fathers did differ verie much. For in this place the fathers bee they whome GOD hath exalted to credite, to whome alſo hee willeth vs to ſticke; that is to ſay, the holie Patriaches: They therefore ſhoulde drawe after them all their generations that there might bee a true vnion of faith, and one accorde, to prooue that they be the children of Abrahã: but in ſteed of theſe, they folowed their baſtarde fathers, as S. Steuen telleth thẽ, ſaying,

You

Act.7.51. You haue alwaies reſiſted the holy Ghoſt, as your fathers did: and againe, bee not a ſtubborne and frowarde generation, as your fathers were, which prouoked God to wrath in the wildernes: they were full of bitterneſſe. Therefore we muſt haue this difference of fathers. And if we meane now to worſhip the true God in ſuch ſort as is requiſite, we muſt haue the holy Patriarches to guide vs; ſo as we may proteſt that we be ioyned with them in true vnitie of faith. Alſo we muſt haue the Apoſtles, which bee called the fathers of the Church. For when wee followe that rule, wee cannot faile. And therewithall let vs beware that we mingle not our ſelues with them ẏ are growen out of kind from the true fathers; as the Papiſtes doe, who ſticke ſtoutly to them. For they which were backeſliders, which forſooke the pure doctrine of the Goſpel, which alſo peruerted and corrupted the religion of our auncient fathers: thoſe be the verie fathers of the Papiſtes, which haue falſely vſurped that title. Let vs therefore beware of ſuch a mingling, without any diſcretion. Marke that for a ſpeciall point. Finally, foraſmuch as God hath at all times beene reueiled vnto them that haue ſhewed vs the way of ſaluation, let that ſuffice vs: and let it ſerue to confirme our faith, that we be not hindered in the ſubmitting of our ſelues vnto him to whome we owe all manner of obedience: nor become ſo fickleheaded as to turne from that which hath beene taught vs from the beginning: for wee haue the lawe, which beareth vs witneſſe, that the religion which we hold at this day, hath beene alwayes among the Patriarches, and that it was then ratified when the people were brought out of Egypt. And we haue the Goſpel, which is a whole and a ful confirmation vnto vs, and the finiſhing vp of the lawe, from whence we muſt drawe all thinges, if we intende that God ſhall allowe of our religion.

Nowe ſecondly GOD ſpeaketh of the deliuerance of his people, that by their owne experience they might bee conuicted of their tranſgreſſions, I haue (ſaith he) brought them out of ẏ land of Egypt. Here did they feele the grace of God, and like as it was manifeſted to them by effect, euen ſo ſhould they haue acknowledged that they were ſo much ẏ more bound vnto him. Nowe then if they turne away, are they not double faultie? Yes truely. Thereby we haue yet to marke another warning; which is, to note well the giftes and benefites which God beſtoweth on vs, that the ſame may holde vs in awe, and make vs to yeelde ourſelues ſo much the more vnto him: and not to bee wauering. Howſoeuer Satan intice vs, let vs euer holde our owne ſtill, and ſay, What? Our God thinketh it not enough to giue vs his worde, but ouer and beſides that, he maketh vs to vnderſtand ẏ power of his hande, by ſuccouring vs ſo manie wayes: we knowe that he neuer fayled thoſe that ſerue him. Nowe then ſhoulde not the ſame be ſufficient to prouoke vs alſo to ſerue him? On the otherſide, if wee doe forget the benefites which we haue receyued of God, we muſt not thinke that he will ſuffer them to be buried, he will ſurely put vs throughly in minde of them, euen to our vtter confuſion: according as we ſee how he ſpeaketh here of the Iewes.

And nowe on the contrarie part he blameth them for that, *That they bee turned away after ſtraunge gods, which they haue not knowen, and which had done them no good.* This is *generally incident to all Idolaters.* For notwithſtanding that there be a kinde of wilfull opinion in them; yet are they at no certaintie. Like as the Papiſtes, which can not ſay that they bee aſſured of their religion, all is grounded vpon a ſuppoſition. True it is, that they play the madde men: for when they bee tolde of their fooliſhneſſe, they rage and ſtorme and thinke that men do them the greateſt wrong in the worlde, when they make any gaineſaying to that which they imagine to bee good: and yet howſoeuer they fare, they haue but a ſuppoſall. For all their ſaying is, Our fathers taught vs ſo: it is the order of our holie mother the Church: this hath nowe beene receyued of olde. Verie well, ſhall God bee outfaced with that? Shall his trueth, which wee ought to admitte to bee vnfallible, bee made voyde vnleſſe wee bee grounded vppon cuſtome and authorities of men? Nay, without that, there is nothing in men but vanities and lies. Hereby then wee muſt learne not to thinke that ſtraunge which the Scripture ſpeaketh, namelie that wee muſt faſhion our ſelues after our fathers, howbeit thoſe fathers which haue followed the trueth of God and none other. To bee ſhort, wee ſhall finde that there is no certeyntie in them that followe not the lawe, & that none but the children of God can talke of it vppon knowledge, according as Saint Iohn 1.Ioh.5. ſayth in his Canonicall Epiſtle. Soothly it is not for vs to bee taught by coniectures of men, when the worde of God is laide before vs: for it is good reaſon that God ſhoulde haue ſo greate authoritie ouer vs, as that when hee ſaith the worde, we ſhoulde wholy ſticke to it, and ſeeke no farther: but yet is there alwayes a true knowledge in faith, and not a wauering opinion. Contrariwiſe, all they that ſerue GOD after their owne deuotion, doe but imagine, and ſerue gods whome they know not. The Papiſtes ſay, that the Virgin Marie is their aduocate, euerie one hath his patron, ſuch as hee hath deuiſed of his owne heade; doe they vnderſtande that GOD hath giuen them theſe offices? Haue they any Teſtimonies thereof? None; but they thinke ſo. When I goe on Pilgrimage or cauſe a maſſe to bee ſung, or founde ſuch a yeares minde: O that is goodly ſeruing of God. What? Haue you authoritie for all theſe thinges, that they be pleaſing to God, and that hee alloweth them? O no ſir, but our intent is good. Yea, but that is not enough to binde God: for hee muſt bee ſerued according to his owne will: and hee will none of all thoſe things. To bee ſhort, examine all that the Idolaters doe, and yee ſhall finde that they be rauiſhed and puffed vp with a wauering opinion. Thereupon they ſooth themſelues exceedingly: but yet are they neuer aſſured of their caſe. Therefore it is not without cauſe that Moſes reproueth the Iewes, for following the gods which they knew not. And indeede howe ſhall a man knowe that which is not: for there is no knowledge, but the truth: and there is nothing but lies in all that men doe deuiſe, without the worde of God.

Againe hee ſaith yet further that the Idoles whome they ſerued, *had doone them no good.* Trulie the wretched miſbeleeuers doe beare them ſelues in hande, that the Idoles whome they ſerue, haue doone them much good: as we ſee the Papiſtes doe, ſaying: Lo, wee finde it good to goe to ſuch a Saint, for there is ſuch a miracle as ſheweth that this deuotion is not vnprofitable: after which manner wee ſee the Idolaters to haue doone at all times. Iere.44.18. When we ſerued the Queene of heauē (ſay they in Ieremie) we had our fill of meate and drinke, there was plentie of all manner of good thinges. Lo howe Satan blindeth theſe wretches, and God doeth ſuffer them to bee fedde with vaine flatteries, and to pleaſe themſelues with their owne ſuperſtitions, to their condemnation. Neuertheleſſe, that which is ſpoken by the Prophet Iſay, Iſa.44.9. ſhall bee alwayes true, namely, that Idoles haue no power to doe either good nor euill: for they bee nothing. Therefore let vs learne firſt of all to ſticke vnto the word, whereby God teacheth vs, and let vs followe our fathers, that is to ſay, thoſe whome hee hath allowed and choſen, and ſet foorth for our example to the intent that wee ſhoulde imitate them. The verie point whereat wee muſt beginne, for the hauing of a pure religion, both certaine and infallible, is the ſaid doctrine: and ſecondly that we be confirmed by the gratious giftes and benefits which God beſtowed vpon the olde fathers, yea and euen by thoſe alſo whereof wee our ſelues haue had proofe in our own perſons. Let theſe things induce vs ſo much the more to giue our ſelues ouer vnto him: and therewithall let vs ſtande in awe of his threateninges, and likewiſe of his puniſhments, which we ſee executed vpon all ẏ wicked that haue forſaken him. That in effect is that which we haue to remember vppon this place.

Nowe for concluſion Moſes addeth: *The ſecretes belong to the Lorde our God, and the things reueiled be for vs and our children for euer, to the end we ſhoulde doe the thinges that are written in this booke.* This text is taken diuerſe wayes: Some doe expounde it, that the ſecretes of our God bee reueiled vnto vs, and to our children: and that is a verie profitable doctrine; for it is ſaide, that the lawe conteineth wonders that be incomprehenſible to men, vntill time that hee hath opened their eyes. Therefore Dauid prayeth thus, Lord Pſal.119.18. lighten me that I may beholde the wonderfull wiſedome, which is in thy lawe. And indeede, we doe neuer by our naturall wit vnderſtande that which is ſhewed by the worde of God; it exceedeth all that is in man. And that is the cauſe why this grace is ſo highlie magnified in holie Scripture, that God dealt not with any nation, as hee hath doone with the Iewes: for that hee had not reueiled vnto them the ſecretes of his woorde: but left them to walke in brutiſhneſſe Deut.4.& and ignorance. It is to a good purpoſe therefore to ſay, *That the ſecretes of our God be reueiled vnto vs at this day*, that folke might be the more mooued to be attentiue to the law, knowing that God hath vſed a ſpeciall goodneſſe towarde them to whome he hath ſhewed himſelfe ſo familiarlie; as wee haue alreadie ſeene in the fourth Chapter. But albeit ẏ the ſame doctrine be verie good & profitable, yet is it ſomewhat ſtrained, becauſe of ẏ words: for the text is thus, *The ſecrets belong to our God:* And immediatly after there is a letter ſet downe, which is as much to ſay in our language, as, *And the thinges that are reueyled belong vnto vs and vnto our children.* Moſes maketh heere a diſtinction, after which manner alſo it was taken by the Iewes, which reſted vpon the letter, and they did well therein. For we muſt looke diligentlie to the letter, if we wil attain to the vnderſtanding of anie text: but becauſe they did not vnderſtande the true ſenſe that was in the ſame letter, they haue forged one that is altogether ſtraunge, and haue played the beaſtes too much, for want of hauing an eye to the naturall ſenſe of Moſes. They ſay in effect, that the ſecrete Idolatries belong vnto GOD, and the apparant Idolatries belong vnto vs, and to our children; to witte, to puniſhe them. In deede it is true that God puniſheth priuie faultes, for hee reſerueth manie ſinnes to his owne puniſhing. We ſee that Idolaters do bleare out their tongues, and make a mocke, when they haue ruſhed out into all manner of naughtineſſe: for their iniquitie is not yet ripe. Yet notwithſtanding, God taketh order that ſome crime ſhall come to knowledge, and bee iuſtly puniſhed, that they which ſee it, ſhall be compelled to ſay, that it was right. This is verie true. But Moſes meant not ſo: for that were too bare a matter for this place. The thing that he meaneth in effect is this; That God hath his ſecretes to himſelfe, and that vnto vs & vnto our childrē he hath vttered his law, which is an apparant matter: as if he ſhould ſay, ẏ we muſt put a difference betweene that which is conteined in holy ſcripture, and that which GOD hath hidden from vs, of which alſo we haue neyther doctrine nor Teſtimonie. Wee muſt put a difference betweene thoſe two thinges. True it is, (as I haue ſaid) that all the doctrine of holie ſcripture ſurmounteth our capacitie, and is too high for vs, were it not that God did inlighten our mindes. Notwithſtanding, howe ſoeuer the worlde goe with vs, yet when God vttereth a thing vnto vs, then hee calleth it an open matter. Why? Becauſe hee woulde haue vs to applie our ſelues to the ſame. And thereunto hee addeth a promiſe, that they ſhall not bee diſappointed; according to this ſaying of his by his Prophete Eſay: It is not in vaine that I haue ſaide, ſeeke mee; Iſa.45.19. As if yee ſhoulde ſay; that all they which are deſirous to be inſtructed in the worde of God ſhall knowe his will by the ſame, neither will hee ſuffer them to erre, or to bee deceiued. Thus ye ſee how all thinges that God hath reueiled vnto men, are called open matters. And why? Becauſe it is not a doctrine laide vp in huckermucker, but a matter that ought to bee knowen to all men. Nowe we vnderſtande, what Moſes meant. Vnder colour that wee muſt not bee too inquiſitiue of Gods ſecretes through too much curioſitie, the worlde becommeth brutiſhe, and is well appayed to haue ſome excuſe of ignorance: the Idolaters yea euen the verieſt idiotes of them can skill to ſay, Let Gods ſecretes alone. And to what end? Verilie to the intent that men ſhould ſeeke for nothing. O, beware, we muſt not know too much. No: but what meane you by that? For as for the thinges which our Lorde hath reuealed vnto vs by his worde, it is good reaſon that they ſhoulde bee knowen, and that wee ſhoulde giue eare to them, and bee diligent to applie our indeuour to the ſame. If we paſſe our boundes, by beeing more inquiſitiue than is lawfull for vs, wee enter into a maze. Thus ſee wee as now what Moſes meant to ſay in this place, namelie that the people ſhould not foade their owne ignorance, as men are wont to doe. My friendes (ſaith hee) be well aduiſed; for the ſecret thinges belong to our God, looke what hee woulde not haue knowen, that hath hee reſerued to himſelfe. But as for the thinges that are reueiled; hee hath imparted them to vs, & to our children for euer, to the ende that we ſhoulde doe the thinges that are written in this booke. Knowe yee (ſaith hee) that the thinges which are conteyned in his lawe, are profitable for the well ruling of our liues. And agreeably hereunto alſo Saint Paul ſaith: that all the ſcripture is profitable to teach, to exhort, to reproue & to make the man of God perfect to all good workes. 2.Tim.3.16. Sith the caſe ſtandeth ſo, let vs applie the exhortation of Moſes to our owne vſe. And firſt of all let vs marke well, that none bee exempted for their ignoraunce, that is to ſay, that none ſhal haue anie excuſe which haue diſdayned to heare God when he ſpake vnto them. And why? If they ſay, theſe be ſecret matters; I aunſwere, and hath not God publiſhed them? Yes, but they be aboue our capacitie: let vs craue the ſpirite of vnderſtanding, and it ſhall bee giuen vnto vs. But howe ſoeuer it bee, let vs not ſay, I am no clerke, I haue not beene at ſchoole; for beholde, the lawe is ſet foorth to all folke both litle and great; God woulde haue vs all to bee inſtructed therein. Therefore they be apparant matters, which muſt bee knowen to vs and to our children. And wherefore? Becauſe it is for our profite. We ſhall there finde wherewith to bee edified, and wee knowe that God woulde haue our life to bee ruled thereby. Let vs therefore bee diligent, in ſuch ſorte as wee preſume not to paſſe our boundes, when wee be deſirous to be taught in the ſchoole of God. Thus much for one point.

Neuertheleſſe God reſerueth his ſecretes to himſelfe, from the which wee muſt abſteyne with all modeſtie, and ſubmit our ſelues thereunto. Wee may not therefore doe as manie fantaſticall heades doe, which couet to knowe this and that, whereof wee haue no reuelation in holy ſcripture. Wee muſt holde vs ſtill when God hath not ſpoken of an vnknowen thing and which is not conteyned in holy ſcripture. For it is the greateſt wiſedome that can bee in men, not to bee inquiſitiue of further thinges than God hath reueiled vnto them, and ſimplie to content themſelues, with ÿ which they are able to conceyue. They (ſay I) which can thus holde themſelues within their compaſſe, be farre wiſer than all they which pretende to knowe and vnderſtande all thinges: and to bee ignoraunt of nothing. Nowe we ſee it is an excellent place, in that the things which bee conteined in holy ſcripture bee called open. And on the other ſide let vs keepe our ſelues in ſobrietie and temperance, to the ende that if our mindes be toſſed with couetouſneſſe, wee may holde them as it were captiues, and not be too inquiſitiue of the ſecretes of God more than is lawfull for vs. This matter might be diſcourſed more at length but that were an endleſſe thing. It ſufficeth to haue it in a breefe ſumme, namely that as long as wee ſeeke to be inſtructed by the worde of God, wee cannot doe amiſſe. But on the otherſide, when wee will needes preſume aboue our power, then are we out of the way, we take that vppon vs which God hath reſerued to him ſelfe, the ſecrete thinges belong vnto him. And for a concluſion, let vs take an example of that which is fitteſt for this purpoſe. It is a wonderfull ſecrete of God and ſuch a one as ſurmounteth all others, that GOD hath choſen men as ſeemed good to himſelfe, and that before hee created the worlde, hee determined in his euerlaſting purpoſe, whatſoeuer hee meant to doe, chooſing and electing ſome to himſelfe, and refuſing the others. Well then, this is declared vs in holy ſcripture, and wee ought to knowe it, notwithſtanding that theſe maſtiue dogges doe barke againſt vs, as wee ſee howe theſe wretches doe murmure againſt this doctrine, yea and blaſpheme it. What ſay they? It is too obſcure a doctrine, wee vnderſtande it not. Well admitte it bee ſtraunge vnto you, yet is it not to be graunted, that it ſhoulde therefore take no place: but howſoeuer it bee, it is God that hath ſaide it, and we muſt ſticke to this ſaying. And if wee will needes knowe wherefore, as theſe pelting roges doe, who in all matters behaue themſelues ſpitefully againſt God, ſaying, I woulde knowe what is the reaſon, vnleſſe God is vniuſt. O miſerable creature, whither runneſt thou headlong? God ſheweth that wee muſt reſt vpon his holy will, and wee bee not permitted to ſeeke anie further, but are commaunded to confeſſe that hee is righteous in all that hee doeth: and that hee hath compaſſed all thinges in iuſt weight and meaſure, ſo as nothing proceedeth from him, which is not wholie ordered with infinite wiſedome and equitie. When we bee at that poynt, wee muſt ſticke to it and behaue our ſelues ſoberlie. So then by this example, wee ſee howe men ought to behaue themſelues and what mean they ought to keepe.

It is not for vs to play the doltes as the Papiſtes doe: but wee muſt vnderſtand the things which God hath reueyled vnto vs, and then we muſt in likewiſe take heede that vnder colour that God hath reueiled his ſecretes vnto vs, we ſtie not vp into the aire, ſeeking to knowe this and that, and giue ouer our ſelues to fonde queſtions. Let vs ſeeke that onely, which GOD woulde haue vs to knowe, and let vs be ignoraunt of all the reſt, yea and let vs be willingly ignorant of it, knowing that our true wiſedome is to be learned alonely in his ſchoole. And further to the intent we may turne holy ſcripture to our more profite, we muſt haue an eye to edification, and referre all thinges to the learning of our ſaluation, as we haue ſaid alreadie.

Let vs nowe fall downe before the maieſtie of our good GOD with acknowledgement of our ſinnes, beſeeching him ſo to reforme vs, as wee may not linger vntill hee ſende foorth his horrible vengeance vppon vs, but that we may preuent it; and that foraſmuch as we haue heretofore offended him ſo many wayes, wee may returne vnto him, at the leaſt when hee prouoketh vs thereunto, ſo as hee may be merciful vnto vs for our Lorde Ieſus Chriſtes ſake; and that we may haue our eyes open to beholde the doctrine which he ſetteth before vs, and our eares vnſtopped to hearken vnto all the counſailes & corrections which he continually and inceſſantlie beſtoweth vpon vs: and that by this meanes we may be able to poſſeſſe all yͤ bleſſings which hee hath purchaſed for vs, and which hee hath prepared for his children and for all them that loue him. That it may pleaſe him to beſtowe this grace not vppon vs onely, but alſo vppon all people and nations of the earth, &c.

On Saturday the xi. of April, 1556.

The CLXIX. Sermon which is the firſt vppon the thirtith Chapter.

29 The ſecretes of the Lorde &c.

The thirtith Chapter.

WHen all theſe thinges bee come vppon thee, whether it bee the bleſſing or the curſe, which I haue ſet before thee: and that thou remember them in thine heart, among all the nations, to the which the Lorde thy God ſhall haue caſt thee out,

2 And doeſt returne vnto the Lorde thy God, and obey his voyce, according to all that I commaunde thee this day, thou and thy children, with all thy heart and with all thy ſoule:

3 Then will the Lorde thy God bring againe thy Captiues, and haue mercie vpon thee: and he will gather thee againe from all people, among whom the Lord thy God hath diſperſed thee.

4 Notwithſtanding that thou were caſt out into the fartheſt parts of yͤ hauen: from thence will the Lorde thy God gather thee, and from thence will hee fetche thee.

5 And the Lord thy God will bring thee againe to the land which thy fathers poſſeſſed: and thou ſhalt poſſeſſe it, and he will doe thee good, and cauſe thee to growe much greater than thy fathers

WE muſt remember well what was treated of yeſterday: to wit, that when GOD doeth imparte himſelfe vnto vs by his worde, wee muſt bee attentiue to receyue the doctrine that is conteyned in the ſame. For although that all that is declared vnto vs in holie Scripture, be a farre higher wiſedome than our wittes are able to attayne vnto: yet would not GOD that it ſhoulde bee kept hidden or ſecrete. Wherefore? For if we reſort vnto him with lowlineſſe, yeelding our ſelues as ſcholers, he will doe the office of a teacher, in ſuch wiſe as his will ſhal bee altogether open vnto vs, nothing of all that is profitable for our ſaluation ſhall bee darke vnto vs, ſo we ſuffer ourſelues to be inſtructed of G O D. But there bee two thinges which we muſt obſerue: the one is, that wee bee not poſſeſſed afore hande with ouerweening, as a great ſort bee, which thinke thẽſelues wiſe enough to iudge, & receiue no more of Gods worde than is to their owne liking. Let vs beware of ſuch diueliſh pride: and let vs ſubdue all our wittes to G O D. And wee muſt alſo vnderſtande, that wee ſhoulde neuer conceyue the thinges which are deliuered vnto vs in his name, and from him, vnleſſe hee himſelfe inlightened vs: for wee bee blinde wretches, and there is nothing in vs but rudeneſſe and beaſtlineſſe. G O D therefore muſt in this caſe worke by his holy ſpirite. On the other ſide, when wee reade the holy ſcripture, or come to heare the word declared vnto vs: let vs ſeeke to be edified thereby, and not goe about to ſatisfie our owne luſtes and fooliſh appetites, as manie people doe, which vnhalowe the worde of G O D: for they trouble themſelues with manie vnprofitable queſtions, and thinke that they haue doone much, when they ſhewe them ſelues ſubtill. But G O D woulde that his woorde ſhoulde profite vs, and that it ſhoulde bee expreſſed in our life. Let vs remember thoſe two pointes, and then wee ſhall ſee by experience, that our L O R D proteſteth not in vaine by his Prophete Eſay, that where hee ſaith, Seeke mee, Eſa.45.19. it is in good earneſt, and that hee will bee founde: and that when hee ſpeaketh, it is his will that wee ſhoulde vnderſtande his doctrine.

Nowe if this were ſpoken in the time of the lawe, much more reaſon is it, that it ſhoulde bee verified at this daie. For wee know that Ieſus Chriſt hath declared himſelfe vnto vs more familiarlie by his Goſpell. Therefore let vs not be afraide, that things be too obſcure for vs. For beholde our God allureth vs to profit in his ſchoole, and ſaith that it belongeth to vs and to our children, and that the things which hee hath reuealed vnto vs, are directed vnto vs, to the intent we ſhould aduiſe ourſelues to walke according to his will. This is a thing that ought to encourage vs to ſeeke God, ſo farre foorth as is lawfull for vs, according to the meaſure that he appointeth. And heerein wee ſee what the malice of the Pope and of al his is, in ſhutting out al the world from the word of God: like as at this daie they do yet ſtill exerciſe the ſame tyrannie, maintaining that the holie Scripture was made for none but Monkes, Friers, and Clergie men: ſo ſeemeth it to them. And yet haue they no care thereof. For they haue a diuinitie by themſelues, which is as it were but a brawling of beggers. As for holie Scripture they leaue it at their heeles. Albeit that they deſpiſe it, yet they take out ſome worde, as it were by peeces and gobbets, and in the meane while ſuffer not the people to enter into the kingdome of G O D. They hold the keye to keepe the gate faſt ſhutte, and like as they liſt not to enter themſelues; ſo woulde Matt.6.23. they haue all others to bee ſhutte out. They ſay it is a daungerous matter to deale with holie Scripture, that it is a noſe of waxe, that men may turne it which way they liſt, and that there bee ſo high ſecretes therein, as men may thereby enter into a bottomeleſſe pitte. In deede they haue made a playne mockerie of Gods worde; for they haue falſifyed it in ſuch wiſe, as men can ſcarcelie know the meaning thereof. If wee ſhoulde hearken vnto them, it is but a hodge podge, yet neuertheleſſe wee ſee that it is the certayne and infallible trueth of G O D.

And moreouer, albeit that the doctrine thereof bee high, and that wee are not able to attayne thereunto by our owne vnderſtanding, yet will G O D neuer fayle them, that yeelde themſelues lowelie and apte to learne. Hereby therefore wee ſee, howe the diuell reigned altogether in the Popedome, ſeeing they vnderſtoode not what Moſes meaneth in this place: namely that the doctrine of G O D which is deliuered vnto men, is not a hidden nor an obſcure matter, but open and manifeſt, and that it is the lampe which muſt giue vs light, and the true myrrour wherein wee may beholde the face of our G O D, and Pſa.109.10 whereby wee may bee transformed to the likeneſſe of his glorie: yea in verie deede, ſo wee reſorte vnto it with ſuch vnfayned zeale and affection, as I haue tolde you of. But there are but fewe that vnderſtande the thing which is heere declared: and in deede, the greater part of the worlde is not worthie thereof: for wee ſee manie that doe continuallie holde on, and bee deafe eared, in ſomuch that although G O D ſpeaketh loude and ſhirle; yet they doe wilfully deſpiſe him. Nowe then, let him that is ignoraunt bee ignoraunt ſtill; See how Saint Paul skorneth all ſuch as will needes 1.Cor.14. bee wildeheaded, and not ſubmit themſelues quietlie to the obedience of Gods worde. Goe too, ſayth hee, will you bee ignoraunt? Then bee ignoraunt. And wee ſee howe in an other place, hee ſayth, that they which woulde not beleeue the trueth nor regarde the light 2.Theſſ.2. of lyfe and ſaluation, muſt needes be caſt into horrible darkeneſſe: as we ſee many bee, which make a ieſte of G O D. When they come to heare his woorde, what reuerence yeelde they vnto it? It is rather a vayne curioſitie: G O D muſt bee fayne to puniſhe ſuch folke, and to depriue them of the fruite which all the faithfull receyue, that is to ſay, that they ſubmitte themſelues vnto him, ſeeking nothing but the profite by hearing Gods worde and beholding the force which it hath in woorking.

Now therfore when we ſee ẏ the word of God is after a ſorte vnprofitable vnto many people, 2.Cor.2.16. and alſo a ſauor of death vnto the misbeleeuing which diſdaine to be partakers of the grace that was offered them; let vs not ſtarte aſide for all that, but let vs heare our God, and in like wiſe be afrayde to bee puniſhed, for our deſpiſing of ſuch a treaſure. Let vs benefite our ſelues by the doctrine of ſaluation. As how? Euen by yeelding our ſelues quietlie vnto GOD (as I ſaid afore) to be inſtructed by him who ſheweth him ſelfe to bee a teacher of the little ones and lowlie ones: and ſeeking nothing but to bee edified through faith in the feare of his name, and in all godlineſſe that wee may bee mooued to call vppon him and labour to ſerue him. When wee be ſo minded; let vs not doubt, but that hee will vtter vnto vs that power of his which is ſhewed vnto vs in this text.

And nowe Moſes addeth a comfort to them that are afflicted, when they haue offended God and that hee vſeth rigour towarde them, and that is verie neceſſarie. For the lande of Chanaan was as a ſpeciall earneſt pennie and pawne to the Iewes, that GOD had choſen and adopted them for his people, they were ſeparated there from the reſt of the worlde, it was a lande that GOD had dedicated and reſerued to himſelfe, as if hee had ſaide, Here ſhal my name bee called vppon. The lande of Chanaan was, as it were, a mirrour of the kingdome of heauen, and of the euerlaſting inheritaunce. When the Iewes were baniſhed from that land, it was, as if GOD ſhoulde haue rooted them out of his houſe, and ſaide, I doe refuſe you, and I renounce you: and that was enough to bring them in diſpaire. On the otherſide, God promiſed to keepe them euermore with a fatherlie care, and to cauſe them to proſper continually. Therefore when they ſawe themſelues ouerwhelmed with many miſeries, yea almoſt infinite, it was a kinde of driuing of them into diſpaire, yea euen into vnmeaſurable diſpaire, as if God had forgotten them. Finally GOD ſaide that hee woulde bee their heade and their king; and that they ſhoulde be as a bodie gathered together vnto him. Nowe when they bee diſperſed vnder the Painyms and the infidels, vnder the wicked and the deſpiſers of the lawe, among people vnholie and vncleane: the raygning of ſuch kinde of people ouer the Iewes, made it ſeeme vnto them that God had forſaken them, and that his whole adopting of them was loſt; ſo as they ſhould all haue periſhed in their afflictions, vnleſſe they were comforted. And that was the thing which Moſes amed at. Hee ſheweth them, that although God be harde and rough to them for a time, yet doeth hee not faile to remember that hee had choſen them for his people, of porpoſe to vſe mercie towarde them, yea, when the time ſerueth for it: howbeit not ouerhaſtily; but after that hee had well tamed them, ſo as in ſteede of rebelling agaynſt him, they haue chaunged their minde to obey him. Nowe wee perceiue what is the meaning of Moſes; And this is the more expreſſely and largelie ſhewed vnto vs, according as the Promiſe concerning ẏ redeemer came more to light. For when God ſaide to Dauid, that the redeemer of the worlde which was promiſed vnto Abraham ſhoulde come of his ſeede, he confirmed and ratified that which we heare in this 2.Sam.7.14 Text, ſaying, If thy ſeede do fal away and forget my lawe, and goe aſtray: I will (ſaith he) viſite their iniquities, but it ſhall bee with the rodde of a man: I will puniſhe them, but it ſhall bee with meaſure, & I will neuer take away my mercie from them. This is a more large declaration of that which is ſayd here, to wit, that God muſt needes ſo puniſhe the Iewes, after hee had long ſuffered their misbehauiour. And when they had ſhewed themſelues vnreformable, hee muſt puniſhe them, howbeit in ſuch wiſe, as there ſhould yet bee reſerued ſome mercie. And wherefore? Becauſe he hath not reſpect vnto them ſimplie, but vnto him ſelfe and to his owne trueth. Nowe wee muſt note that when God made his couenaunt with Abraham, as we haue alreadie ſaide, the ſame was not for the woorthineſſe that was in that people, neither was it for their deſertes; but God grounded himſelfe vppon his owne free goodneſſe onely. Albeit that the people ſhewe themſelues vnworthie, yet notwithſtanding muſt GOD remayne alwayes firme in his purpoſe: according as Saint Paul alſo ſpeaketh, ſaying, that the calling of Rom.11.29. GOD whereby hee did chooſe the linage of Abraham and ſanctified it, is without repentaunce, and inchaungeable. It is true, that the hypocrites, (as it hath alſo beene treated of,) haue beene puniſhed according as they were woorthie, and yet Gods continuall keeping of his promiſe profited them nothing at all. And why? See here howe it came to paſſe. God had choſen the linage of Abraham; that people fell away from him, and hee puniſhed them: according as their malice did increaſe and augment, euen ſo were their puniſhments alwayes the ſorer, vntill they came euen to the extremitie, inſomuch as God ſeemed euen to haue forſaken them, and to haue cutte them off from his houſe. And when he hath doone ſo, then wrought hee after ſuch a ſorte, as there remaineth yet ſome ſeede hidden vnder the grounnde, and in time will hee make it manifeſt that hee forgetteth not what he had ſaide, namelie that in the ſeede of Abraham all nations of the earth ſhoulde bee bleſſed. Cen.22.18. Loe heere a handfull of people whom God keepeth, euen after an incomprehenſible maner. Anon after, out of this, he raiſed a great multitude of people vntill that Ieſus Chriſt himſelfe was come. Bee the wicked and the contemners of God and his lawe eſcaped thereby? No, God hath puniſhed them. But nowe muſt we benefite our ſelues by this doctrine. For albeit that our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt hath appeared for the ſaluation of the world: yet muſt the Church remayne vntill the ende: wee haue the promiſe that cannot fayle. But in the meane while wee ſee the thankeleſneſſe which is too common in the worlde, yea and it ſo ouerfloweth

the worlde, that GOD muſt needes withdrawe his goodneſſe, and exclude vs from being partakers thereof, becauſe wee haue thruſt him farre from vs. And that is the cauſe of the deſolation which is to bee ſeene ſtill in the Popedome at this day. The Papiſtes woulde ſhielde themſelues againſt GOD and his worde, by alleadging that it is vnpoſſible that God ſhould forſake his Church: yea, but in the meane while they doe not vnderſtande howe they misbehaue themſelues againſt him, and are gone away from him, and cannot ſuffer him any way to come neere them. And why? Becauſe they driue away the Goſpel from them with ſwoorde and fire, ſo as Ieſus Chriſt hath no place with them, nor acceſſe vnto them. We ſee therefore, howe GOD at the firſt bluſhe ſeemeth to roote out thoſe whome hee had called, and nothing is to bee ſeene but confuſion, as if the Church were loſt, and vtterly wyped out of the worlde. Yet notwithſtanding God keepeth his owne, hee knoweth howe to accompliſhe his promiſe; which is, that the ſtate of the Church bee euer continuing: and we ſee the markes of it. For when it was to haue bin thought that there was no more trueth in the worlde, and that the ſeruice of GOD had beene altogether brought to nought, hee did ſet vp ſome doctrine againe. In deede the number of them that beleeue the Goſpell is little: yet neuertheleſſe it is a matter that exceedeth all expectation, and it woulde neuer haue beene thought, that hee would haue wrought after that faſhion, againſt all hope: in-
Pſal.126.1. ſomuch that (as it is ſaid in the Pſalme) it might bee ſaide that it is as a dreame, if a man conſider howe the Goſpell hath beene ſet vp againe. Yet notwithſtanding it falleth out that the wicked, & they that are wilfully bent to euill, gaine nothing by that which God doeth, for it is to their more confuſion: but the faithfull haue wherewith to comfort themſelues, when they ſee that God doeth chaſtice them; for they perceiue that hee doeth it not of purpoſe to forget his mercie, or for that hee meaneth not to vſe it towarde them. Loe here a ſtaffe to ſtay vs by, when God chaſtiſeth vs for our ſinnes. For one fillippe of his finger were enough to bring vs to ruine, and to throwe vs into the deepeſt doungeon of death. As ſoone as GOD doeth but blowe vppon vs, (ſaith the holy ſcripture,)
Pſal.104.29 bee a man neuer ſo freſhe and flooriſhing, by and by hee withereth and droopeth. And what then ſhall become of vs if wee bee ſmitten with his mighty hande? Muſt wee not needes bee worſe than miſerable? Here therefore wee bee admoniſhed to ſtay our ſelues vppon ſome comforte, or elſe wee ſhall bee vtterly vndoone as ſoone as God giueth vs any token of his anger. Hereby wee ſee howe profitable this doctrine is for vs, where hee ſaith, that when God ſcourgeth thee, yet hee will not forget the promiſe which he ſwore to thy fathers: and albeit that thou bee thruſt out into the vttermoſt partes of the worlde, yet neuertheleſſe the Lorde will gather thee againe into this lande which he hath promiſed thee for thine inheritance. As often therefore, as God puniſheth vs for our ſinnes, be it that ech of vs haue his priuate diſeaſe or wretchedneſſe or any other token of the wrath of God: or elſe that wee be generaly ſcourged with the plague, with warre, with hunger, or with anie other affliction; firſt let vs acknowledge our ſins, and be ſorie that we haue offended our God, and prouoked his wrath againſt vs; and heerevpon let vs alſo bee alwayes reſolued in this point, that he will not ſo puniſh vs, but hee will yet giue place to his goodneſſe and pitie, and that we ſhall finde mercie at his hande, when we condemne our ſelues, and confeſſe our offences, and beſeech him to receyue vs into fauour, not for our deſertes but in reſpect of the couenaunt which hee hath made with vs; becauſe hee hath choſen vs to bee graffed into the bodie of our Lord Ieſus Chriſt. And like as in olde time hee declared by circumciſion, that the Iewes were a people ſanctified vnto him, euen ſo hath hee nowe giuen vs baptiſme, whereby he marketh vs, as it were to be of his flocke, and wherein wee haue a warrant that the bloude of our Lorde Ieſus is our clenſing, ſo as wee bee thereby waſhed from all our vncleanneſſe. Hauing this, let vs come boldlie to our God, for we haue here witnes that he wil receiue vs.

But to the ende that this doctrine may bee the better vnderſtoode, let vs followe the order which is kept by Moſes. *When all theſe thinges* (ſaith hee) *bee come vppon thee, whether it bee the bleſſing or the curſe.* Hee ſetteth the bleſſing foremoſt, to ſhewe that the ende whereat GOD doeth alwayes ame, is to drawe vs vnto him by gentleneſſe, and after a gratious and a louing manner. In deede if hee ſhould deale with vs according to our kinde, hee ſhoulde bee rough vnto vs at the firſt: but hee prooueth whether hee may winne vs by faire meanes, and therefore hee doeth alwayes vtter his goodneſſe towardes vs, and maketh vs to feele it. That is the cauſe why Moſes ſaith, Thou ſhalt firſt ſee the bleſſings, and haue experience of them. And in that reſpect al- Pſal.30.
ſo is GOD called gratious, liberall, long ſuffering, and ſlowe to anger. This word therefore muſt bee well weyed: for Moſes ſheweth what the nature of GOD is towarde vs, to wit, that hee deſireth nothing but to handle vs gentlie as a father doeth his children, and that hee taketh not anie pleaſure in dealing with vs roughlie. Thus much for one point

And on the other ſide, hee meant to doe the Iewes to vnderſtand, that ſeeing they had had experience as well of the one as of the other, that is to ſay, as well of Gods fauour and of the benefites which hee had promiſed them, as alſo of his puniſhmentes and corrections: the ſame ought to giue them the more light, and confirme them the better in the thinges which they hadde hearde, and that they had not beleeued. As for example.

The Iewes were taught, that if they ſerued God and obeyed him, hee woulde keepe them as his flocke and haue a ſpeciall care of them, and as it were dandle them in his lappe, and beſtowe all his richeſſe vppon them, and finallie deale with them as they coulde wiſhe: And likewiſe they were threatened on the contrarie ſide, that if they tranſgreſſed the lawe of God, and were wilfull and frowarde againſt him, they ſhoulde be driuen to feele his hande againſt them; and like as they had fought againſt him, ſo hee alſo woulde fight againſt them, Thus yee ſee howe the threatenings are declared vnto them as well as the bleſſinges; and they cared neither for the one nor for the other, but played the brute beaſtes, and tooke leaue to deale wickedlie: inſomuch that when GOD chaſtiſed them, they regarded it not. Neuertheleſſe, in the end it muſt bring them to conſideration of themſelues, when they make compariſon after this manner; As howe? God hath verified it vnto vs, and ſhewed it as it were with his finger that he hath not ſaid in vayne vnto vs, I wil bleſſe you Deut.28.1. if you walke in mine obedience. We haue perceiued it by experience. Again, as touching the threatenings, hee hath put them in execution, and wee haue beene blockiſh for a time, but yet it behooueth vs nowe to conſider the matter. Thus ye ſee howe the bleſſinges beeing ioyned with the puniſhments ſerued the better to bring backe the Iewes vnto God: and therefore they ought to haue touched them the neerer to the quicke. And that is the thing which Moſes ment in ſaying, Gods chaſtiſing of you when you haue doone amiſſe, is not the onely way whereby hee will inſtruct you. In deede hee will puniſhe you, but that is not the onelie meane whereby hee intendeth to teach you. For he wil firſt make you to feele his goodneſſe and patience, and when you haue conſidered both twain of them, then is it time or elſe neuer to call your ſelues to rememberance, and not to continue ſtill brutiſh and ſenſeleſſe as you haue bin afore. That is the thing which we haue to mark in the firſt place.

Nowe laſtlie hee ſaith, *When God hath caſt thee out among the ſtrange nations, if thou return there vnto thy hearte,* (That is the worde which Moſes vſeth, but hee taketh it for remembrance) *ſo as thou turne againe with al thine affection vnto the Lorde thy God to obey him, hee will then haue pitie on thee.* Whereas he ſaith that the people ſhall bee driuen out of the lande, it is the vttermoſt of all the puniſhementes whereof hee had made mention afore, according to that which we haue alreadie touched, namelie that the lande of Chanaan was as it were a warrant, that GOD tooke the Iewes for the houſeholde people of his realme, of purpoſe to leade them from thence to the inheritaunce of the kingdome of heauen. Nowe on the other ſide, when the Iewes were driuen out of the ſaide Lande, they were as people aliened from God. Alas [might they ſay] what a caſe is this? For our God which ſtretched out his hande to bring vs out of the lande of Egypt, did promiſe vs therewithall that we ſhoulde poſſeſſe all the lande that hee gaue to our father Abraham, and that it was vnto vs a token and a mark of his Adoption: but now be we depriued thereof, and that is a token that hee hath vtterlie forſaken vs. Vppon this forewarning we haue to gather, that ſeeing God, (after meane puniſhmentes) did not onely promiſe and offer his mercie vnto the Iewes, but alſo euen when the rigour ſeemed extreeme, and the woundes incurable, yet hee lefte them ſome hope, howbeit not vnto all, but vnto ſuch as were reſerued for ſeede (like as wee haue ſeene here before, and is alſo treated of aſwel in the firſt chapter of Eſay as alſo in the tenth). Deut,28.6 Iſa.1.9.& 10.20. The ſame may ſerue vs to great purpoſe. For when our Lorde puniſheth vs but meanely, wee take courage to returne vnto him: but if hee continue to puniſhe vs a long while, and it ſeemeth that hee hath quite caſt vs off, and wee perceiue nothing but rigour: then wee be ſo beaten downe, that wee bee not able to open our mouth to call vppon him, and wee bee ſo caught with feare and ſorowe, that wee hadde leauer to pine away in our miſeries, than to returne vnto him. To the ende therefore that wee may fare the better by it, becauſe men bee ſo vntowarde to be brought vnto God, when hee afflicteth them roughlie: let vs marke wel what is ſaide in this place. Although that GOD doe ſmite ſtroke vppon ſtroke, although it ſeemeth that hee is determined to ouerthrowe altogether: yet notwithſtanding hee doeth ſtill call vs backe vnto him, and woulde not haue vs to bee faintehearted. And therefore let euerie man ſtirre vppe himſelfe, and although hee bee at his wittes ende as they ſay, ſo as hee woteth not where to become: yet let him not ceaſe to take hearte in conſideration of this promiſe and to ſay, No, although I were brought to the botome of the graue, yet doth my God call me backe to him, and telleth mee that ſeeing I am touched with repentaunce, he will haue mercie on mee to forgiue mee all my ſinnes. This therefore is it that wee haue to marke further in this place.

Nowe Moſes ſheweth what is true repentaunce, ſaying: *If thou doe turne vnto the Lorde thy GOD with all thy minde.* For euen the wickeddeſt, after God hath ouermaiſtered them, will not ſticke to ſay, wee haue doone amiſſe, and they will ſeeme to bee chaunged. But as ſoone as God giueth them anie releaſement, by and by they are worſe than euer they were before. Or if they doe not ſhewe at the firſt daſhe, that they bee rebellious againſt GOD, yet doeth their hypocriſie diſcloſe it ſelfe at the laſt, and it will appeare that there was a hidden ſore within, and that there was nothing but filthie matter. To bee ſhort, there are verie fewe, that turne themſelues to GOD, though they bee admoniſhed by neuer ſo many afflictions. Therefore hath Moſes in this place defined true repentaunce: and the ſame ought to ſerue vs for manie purpoſes. Let vs firſt of all marke, that when God doth puniſh vs we think it enough to be ſmitten with one ſtripe or twain. O, ſay wee, In deede I haue offended: but ſeeing I doe acknowledge my ſinne, ſhoulde God perſecute mee yet ſtill? Hee ſeeth yͤ I am a frayle & a wretched creature, what wold he haue more than the confeſſion of my faulte? But we looke not on the other ſide, that our heartes bee ſtill hardened in wicked affections, and that it is become of vs, (according as the Prophet complaineth) Psal.81.8. They turne vnto mee, howebeit no longer than whileſt I doe puniſhe them: for afterwarde they are worſe, or elſe they become as bad as they were afore. Seeing then that the caſe ſtandeth ſo, let vs learne, that when God, after hee hath puniſhed vs once, doeth hold on, and the plague increaſeth vppon vs; it is not without cauſe that hee doeth ſo. For hee perceiueth that there is yet a hidden naughtines in vs, like as a Phyſition perceiueth well that although a diſeaſe bee mended in outwarde apparaunce, yet the roote thereof is not quite taken away. The ſicke perſon coulde well find in his hearte to bee let a lone: but hee doeth ſtill carrie the diſeaſe about him although hee feele it not. Let vs therefore learne to yeelde our ſelues patiently to the corrections which God ſendeth vs. If they continue longer than wee woulde, and our affections cannot abide it: wee ought ſo much the more to turne vnto him, ſpecially with all our hearte as Moſes ſaith. Therefore hee ſaith by his Prophete Ieremie, Ier.4.1. If you turne, turne vnto me, ye children of Iſraell. For hee ſeeth that this worde repentaunce is abuſed by men: for it rowleth in their mouth, and euerie man maketh a kinde of cloake thereof; as wee ſee the Papiſtes doe, which call it a dooing of penaunce, when folke make croſſes, or take a croſſe vpon their backe, or beſprincle themſelues with holy water, or ſay *a mea culpa*, or faſt a certayne day, or trotte on pilgrimage, and doe all other ſuch abhominations. Our Lord perceiuing that theſe are al but mockeries, ſaith, It is to mee, it is to me that you muſt turne. As if hee ſhoulde ſay, Am I a little babe, that you ſhoulde bring mee bables to pleaſe me, and to make me paſtime withall? No: but knowe yee that I am the liuing GOD which ſearcheth the heartes and knoweth all the thoughtes of men; and though there be neuer ſo much doubleneſſe in you, you ſhall not be able to deceiue me. Aſſure your ſelues therefore that I am hee to whome you muſt conuert. And in that reſpect doeth Moſes ſpeake here of the whole heart. Let vs conſider then that to pacifie the wrath of God when wee haue prouoked it, euerie of vs muſt enter into himſelfe and ſo examine all our thoughtes, as wee may be no more giuen to our owne ſenſualitie; and that if we goe about to be wiſe in our conceytes, it ſhall come to nought, and God muſt haue the gouerning of vs by his worde, and ouerrule our affections, that they may bee bridled, and for aſmuch as they boile againſt God, and reſiſt him, let vs thruſt them vnder foote: for we ſhall neuer bee able to dedicate our ſelues vnto God, vntil we haue forſaken al our owne luſtes, which be contrarie vnto him. Thus you ſee how men muſt examine their heartes, to come to GOD indeede, and to haue a right and a true repentaunce, ſuch as is heere mentioned by Moſes.

And nowe he addeth afterwarde, *If thou doe then call to remembrance.* Wherein yet better than before, he ſheweth the fruit of the chaſtiſements which GOD doeth ſende vs. And that is alwaies to the ende to induce vs to ſuffer afflictions patiently; for we be like litle children, as yͤ Apoſtle Heb.12.11. ſaith in the Epiſtle to the Hebrewes. As long as a father holdeth the rodde in his hand, & ſcourgeth his childe, there is nothing but weeping & ſobbing: and euen ſo it is with vs. But if we could conſider of the ende of our afflictions, to witte, that they be a furtherance to our ſaluation, and doe ſtand vs in ſteede of medicines, (as we haue alreadie ſaid) then were we too much vnthankfull if we coulde not finde in our heartes to bowe downe our neckes to him and ſay: Lorde conuert thou vs at thy pleaſure ſeeing thou knoweſt that we haue neede thereof, and makeſt it profitable to our ſaluation, and doeſt not ſhew thy ſelfe altogether a rigorous Iudge. Moſes therfore prouoketh vs thereunto by telling vs, that although the people of Iſrael hauing beene afflicted, perceiued not at the firſt that their ſins were the cauſe why they were caſt into farre countries, and as it were rooted out of the Church, and by all likelihoode vtterly reiected of God: yet ſhoulde they at length beginne to perceiue it. And therefore let vs learne to looke alwayes vnto our GOD when he ſcourgeth vs: and if we haue forſlowed to do it, yet when he holdeth on ſtill, let vs then at leaſtwiſe remember him, ſeeing that he doth ſtill viſit vs; and let vs not be wilful ſtubborne.

But indeede this is not common to all: for there be many which continue frowarde, and are vtterly cut off from the Church, and from al hope of ſaluation. And therefore ſeeing that the world is vnreformable, Let vs looke wel about vs that we bee not compriſed in the number of thē: and when God maketh vs to feele his wrath, let vs ſo feele it: as it cauſe vs not to defie him, & to vomet our bleaſphemies as many do; but to bring vs in minde of our ſinnes, and to make vs aſhamed of them; and moreouer, that therwithall wee may bee aſſured to finde mercy in our GOD: for without that, it is impoſſible that wee ſhoulde haue anie deſire to turne vnto him. As for thoſe which thinke that God will not be mercifull vnto them, albeit that they doe acknowledge their ſinnes, yet will they ſquatte them downe in their filthineſſe, and they can neuer be deliuered or diſpatched from thē. And why ſo? Becauſe they runne away from God, neither is it poſſible to make them to come neere him; for that they haue none vnderſtanding of his fatherly goodneſſe, nor bee aſcerteyned that he is readie to receyue them vnto him. Hereby wee ſee, howe the diuell hath reigned and yet doeth reigne in the Popedome. For they talk much of repentance, but the wretched ſinners are ſtill left in doubt. In deede they giue them many plaiſters; howbeit not to purge away the inward vncleannes;but rather to qualifie,and to ſweeten the ſore on the outſide, which inwardly continueth ſtill: whereuppon they become drunken with this fooliſh opinion, of ſatiſfying God, & that thereby they deſerue and make full amendes. Thus the wretched Papiſtes doe their endeuour to reconcile themſelues to God,but with what certaintie? None at all: all is haphazard. Againe they alleage the keyes of the Church; but thoſe keyes, bee Pardons, Satiſfactions, and Indulgences, and Merites before God, but no promiſe at all. Nowe contrariwiſe wee muſt vnderſtande,that, for to haue true repentance, it is behouefull that God doe declare vnto vs his fatherly loue, and that in making our repaire to him we bee fully certified that we ſhall not be diſappointed, nor haue the gate ſhut againſt vs. How ſo? Moſes hath ſpoken obſcurely of the Redeemer, for the time was not yet come that the plaine declaration ſhould bee made thereof. At this day Ieſus Chriſt doeth call vs, and wee vnderſtand what Heb.9.15. the Apoſtle ſaieth; namely, that Gods Throne is not dreadfull and terrible vnto vs to make vs afraide: but that it is a Throne of Grace vnto vs,to the which wee may boldly approch.Nowe then let vs acknowledge the ineſtimable good which God hath doone vs, in drawing vs out of this maze of the Popedome, and in telling vs, that hee is readie to receiue vs to mercie, and to deale with vs like a father, notwithſtanding that we haue bin rebellious children towardes him. Thus did Moſes meane in this place.

Yea and for a more confirmation thereof he addeth, *Although thou wert diſperſed into the vttermoſt coaſtes vnder heauen, yet the Lorde thy God will fetch thee from thence, and bring thee againe into this lande which he hath promiſed thy fathers, and there hee will increaſe thee more than euer thou waſt.* Moſes doeth here ſhewe that wee muſt not miſtruſt God, albeit that there bee nothing but troubles,myſeries and calamities, ſo as wee bee vtterly forlorne.Let vs haue an eye to this comfort. For ye ſee here howe yͤ people of Iſrael was like a bodie torne in pieces, and driuen away as duſt before the winde: and yet notwithſtanding God doeth promiſe to gather them together againe. Nowe ſeeing hee hath wrought ſo with them; wee muſt vnderſtand that he will doe the like toward vs at this day, and that although we were diſperſed,he will not fayle to holde vs vnder his protection,ſo as we ſhall be gathered together againe, if Ieſus Chriſt doe the office of a Shepeheard towarde vs, and wee bee of his flocke. And hath he not in deede accompliſhed towarde vs that which is ſpoken heere? Wee muſt conſider, not onely howe God hath gathered vs in, when wee were vnder the tyrannie of the Pope; but moreouer howe he hath aſſembled vs heere in a flocke: wee muſt vnderſtand that wee bee heere vnited all together, as if wee were of one houſholde. Whereas we were diſperſed and aliened from our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt, he hath now renuited vs to himſelfe. For as Paule ſaieth to the Coloſſians, his office is to gather all thinges together as well in heauen Col.1,20. as in earth. So long as we bee cut off from the vnitie of faith, and aliened from Ieſus Chriſt, wee bee like duſt driuen with the winde, and in ſuch confuſed ſtate haue wee beene, but God hath deliuered vs from it. As often therefore as wee come into extremitie, let vs vnderſtande that God woulde haue vs yet to turne vnto him, and will giue vs furtheraunce thereunto: wherefore let vs plucke vp our heartes, following the exhortation that is giuen vs heere.

And by the way Moſes ſheweth that GOD doeth it not for any recompence which he looketh for at the peoples hand, but for loue of his owne free choiſe, and for his promiſe ſake, by the which he bounde himſelfe when he ſwore vnto Abraham to giue vnto him and his that land for their inheritance. Therefore when wee turne vnto our God to aske him forgiueneſſe of our ſinnes, if wee woulde haue him mooued to ſhewe vs mercie: wee muſt not come vnto him vpon preſumption of our merites; we muſt not thinke to obtaine grace by our owne ſatiſfactions,or by our good workes,or by any other meanes: but wee muſt be wholly grounded vpon this,that it hath once pleaſed him to receiue vs vnto him, and alſo declared by his dooinges, that he will holde vs for his children, ſeeing hee hath giuen vs Ieſus Chriſt; by whom wee obtayne forgiueneſſe.When wee bee once grounded vppon this free mercie, let vs not doubt, but that our Lorde is alwayes preſt and readie to receiue vs to mercie. But if wee doe ſwarue neuer ſo litle from that way, wee ſhall ſo ſtray, that in ſtead of approching vnto God, wee ſhall goe further from him. That is the thing which Moſes meant to ſignifie, in making mention of the othe,whereby God had ſworne to their fathers that he woulde giue them the lande. Likewyſe if at this day wee perceiue the Church to decreaſe,yea euen ſo farre as it may ſeeme to be nothing; let vs vnderſtande that GOD wyll multiplie it, ſeeing hee hath made that promiſe, at leaſtwiſe if wee returne vnto him according as it is heere ſpoken. And ſeeing he hath iuſtified the knowledge of his mercie in the land of Chanaan,let vs not doubt at this day,but that to bring vs into the heritage of the kingdome of heauen,he will ſhewe himſelfe much more ſtedfaſt, yea and vtter ſuch power in our behalfe, that albeit wee ſee neuer ſo many lettes, as it were to ſhutte the way of ſaluation againſt vs, from the which euen our owne ſinnes doe turne vs away; yet ſhall the goodneſſe of GOD get the vpper hand, ſo wee bereaue not our ſelues of it altogether through our owne vnthankefulneſſe.Seeing then that we doe heare ſuch exhortations, let vs enter into examination of our ſinnes,and let euerie of vs confeſſe howe many wayes hee hath offended his God, and let all of vs in generall doe the lyke with one common accord. And when wee haue mourned and ſighed for them, let vs then pray vnto our good GOD, to touche vs ſo to the quicke, that wee may not onely come and confeſſe our ſinnes with our mouthes, and with certayne ceremonyes, but alſo returne to our GOD with heart and minde, ſo as he may aſſwage our plagues, griefes and afflictions, through his infinite goodneſſe, which hee hath manifeſted vnto vs by his Goſpell, and wee turne vnto him with ſure and infallible confidence, to obtaine fauour at his hand.

Nowe let vs fall downe before the Maieſtie of our good GOD, with acknowledgement of our faultes: beſeeching him to cauſe his admonitions to profite in vs more and more; and that ſeeing he hath once called vs vnto him, he ſuffer not his labour to bee loſt in afflicting vs ſo many wayes, but that wee may finally returne vnto him: and that in ſo returning wee may yeelde foorth true righteouſneſſe and ſoundneſſe, ſo as wee double not ne play the hypocrites. And that to accompliſh this thing hee make vs to feele and to acknowledge his fatherly goodneſſe, that wee may bee altogether giuen ouer thereunto, and haue our eyes and all our ſenſes ſo fixed on our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt, as wee may vnderſtand that it is by his meanes that wee muſt obtaine mercie of GOD, of the which wee bee vnworthie as touching our ſelues. That it will pleaſe him to beſtowe this grace not onely vpon vs, but alſo vpon all people and nations of the earth, &c.

On Munday the xx. of Aprill, 1556.

The CLXX. Sermon which is the ſecond vpon the thirtith Chapter.

6 And the Lorde thy God will circumciſe thy heart and the heart of thy ſeede, that thou mayeſt loue the Lorde thy GOD with all thine heart and with all thy ſoule, to the ende that thou maiſt liue.

7 And the Lord thy God will lay all theſe curſes vpon thine enemies, and vpon them that hate thee, and which haue perſecuted thee.

8 Thou then ſhalt returne, and obey the voyce of the Lorde, and doe all theſe Commaundements, which I commaund thee this day.

9 The Lorde thy GOD will make thee plentifull in all the woorkes of thy hande, in the fruite of thy wombe, in the fruite of thy Cattell, and in the fruite of thy Lande to thy welfare. For the Lorde will reioyce agayne ouer thee to doe thee good, lyke as hee did reioyce ouer thy fathers.

10 If thou obey the voice of the Lord thy God, in keeping his Commandementes and his ordinaunces written in the booke of this Lawe, and returne vnto the Lorde thy GOD with all thyne hearte and with all thy Soule.

Hitherto Moſes in promyſing ẏ God would vouchſafe ſuch fauour on his people, as to bleſſe them, hath ſpoken but of the thinges which concerne this preſent lyfe, as of bodily health, of foode, of peace, and of preſeruation from their enemyes. But nowe hee ſpeaketh of a higher and a more excellent matter, to wit, that GOD will chaunge the heartes of them which before were euil and froward. And that is a farre greater thing than to giue vs onely meate and drinke, and whatſoeuer elſe is to bee deſired for the fleſh in this tranſitorie lyfe. Wee haue moreouer to gather out of this text, that whereas the holy Scripture requireth vs to doe that which God demaundeth; it is not bycauſe wee haue the power to doe it: for GOD doeth not meaſure his commaundements after our power: albeit that wee be weake, yet neuertheleſſe wee bee bound vnto him: but when he hath ſhewed vs our duetie, it belongeth to him to giue vs the grace to accompliſh it. And this text doth ſhew it vs very well: for we haue ſeene it heretofore, (and Moſes doeth yet againe confirme the ſame,) ẏ men ought to turne to God; Deut. 30. that they ought to feare him with all their heart and with al their ſoule; & that they ought to obſerue his law. Now when we heare this, we may iudge that if men will imploy themſelues, & take a good way, it is in their libertie, and they haue free choiſe to gouerne themſelues well if they liſt: and the Papiſtes in deede doe abuſe themſelues with ſuch Textes. For as ſoone as they heare that God commandeth; they do forthwith conclude that wee are able to put all in execution. But we ſee howe Moſes ſpeaketh thereof. He ſaith, Thou ſhalt keepe the commandements of the Lord thy GOD, to loue him with all thine heart and with all thy ſoule; and then he addeth, It is the Lord that will giue thee ſuch a minde, & ſuch an affection. Alſo he ſaith in another place, Deut.10.16. Circumciſe your hearts this day vnto the Lord: and now he ſaith, *It is the Lord that will circumciſe thine heart.* It is his very office. We ſee then, that when God giueth vs his lawe, it is not bycauſe we are able to attaine to the accompliſhment of that which is contayned in it: but it is ynough for vs to vnderſtand wherein we bee bound vnto him: and that knowing once our infirmitie, we reſort to the remedie; euen to pray him that he will ſupply our default. But they may heere reply, that Moſes meaneth not, that onely GOD ſhold altogether change men, and reforme their hearts: for this place ſeemeth to ſhew, that God will ayde men, when they haue ſome good motion, and be diſpoſed to ſerue him: and that it is ſo, he ſaith, Thou ſhalt loue the Lord thy God with all thy heart. But yet hee addeth, And the Lord wil make thee to loue him. It ſeemeth therfore that Moſes placeth ſome good diſpoſition in men, and that they doe begin on their part, and that thereuppon God helpeth them and addeth that which they want. Thus do the Papiſtes turmoyle themſelues, when men alleage vnto them whatſoeuer is ſpoken in holy Scripture concerning the grace of God; as ẏ it is he which inlighteneth our conſcience, it is hee that giueth vs the knowledge to diſcerne good from euill, it is he that giueth vs wiſedome to walke as becommeth vs, it is he that giueth vs power to reſiſt temptations, it is he that wealdeth & guideth our hearts in his obedience; it is he that giueth vs the power and vertue to continue: when men tell them any of theſe thinges, O [ſay they] it is true that men doe not all; for, ſeeing that they be weake, God muſt ayde them: but yet doeth it lye in them to guide themſelues, and to haue ſome good preparation; and moreouer it lyeth in them alſo to followe the grace of God and to receiue it; and hauing accepted it to make it to preuaile. To bee ſhort, the Papiſtes make a parting of ſtakes as if it lay in vs to ſeeke God, & then that it were in vs to put his grace in effect, in ſuch wiſe as it ſhould not be vnprofitable, and that there is alſo a certaine agreement betweene God and man, ſo as God for his part doth one peece and we doe the other, yea and the principall part. But the meaning of Moſes is nothing ſo. For he ſheweth not what belongeth to man, as in compariſon and in reſpect of God. But it is the common faſhion of the holy ſcripture, firſt to ſhew vs what is our dutie, and then to adde that although we be not able to reſort vnto God when he calleth vs, yet we muſt not be faintharted at ẏ feeling of our weakneſſe: but rather reſort vnto him that is able to helpe it, according as he hath promiſed to do it. Let vs marke wel then, that when holy Scripture ſpeaketh of that which men doe owe vnto God, wee muſt not in that caſe ſtand ſcanning of our owne power and ability: for we ſhall not faile to be euermore detters, as we haue ſaid: and yet we muſt note alſo, that the vnabilitie which is in vs, proceedeth of our fault. Yet notwithſtanding the Papiſts alleage, that it were a crueltie in God to require of vs to do more than we can. It ſeemeth indeed, that God ought to be contented; if a man doe what he can. Now then if we cannot haue a good deſire, and if we haue yet leſſe power, that 2.Cor.3.5. we cãnot ſo much as think a good thought; wherfore doth God conſtraine vs to loue him perfectly? There ſeemeth to be no vpright dealing in ẏ. But we muſt repaire to our originall ſinne, which hindereth vs ſo as we ſerue not God no not haue not the will to ſerue him. Indeede God hath imprinted a will in vs by nature, and for as much as Rom.1.20. we are mẽ, we haue a diſcretion to diſcerne good and euill, whereby we be inexcuſable: and when we ſin, it commeth not of compulſiõ, neither are we forced by other meanes; but it proceedeth of our own will and inclination. But now let vs ſee whether our wil can bend it ſelfe both the waies, and is able to chuſe either good or euill? No. For we be captiues vnder ſinne: and whence cõmeth Rom.6.17. & 7.14. this captiuitie and bondage? From the offence of Adam. Seeing therefore that the euill is in our ſelues; wee muſt not ſeeke for fonde and vnprofitable excuſes, for we ſhall win nothing thereby; but let vs ſtoope and condemn our ſelues. If God therfore require aught of vs, he doth vs no wrõg; and yet notwithſtanding, men may not reply that they be feeble and weake, for the euill ſhall euermore be imputed vnto them, & they ſhal be found guiltie thereof. But now let vs come back to the matter which we haue touched. The holy ſcripture ſetteth before vs the lawe of God as ẏ thing which we ought to follow; and that is our rule. We for our part doe draw cleane contrary. Whereto then ſerueth the law of God ſo long as it is but a dead letter, that is to ſay, ſo long as we haue but our eares beaten therewith, or ſo long as it is written but in paper & parchment, or in ſtones as this was, as it is in deede ſo long as it is but preached vnto vs? It ſerueth but to our condemnation, ſo as we be there conuicted and can no more pleade ignorance: but rather ſhew our ſelues open rebels, in that we bow not downe our neckes, to receiue the yoke which God hath ordained for vs. That is the cauſe why the lawe of God vnder Moſes did bring nothing but wrath. Therefore he ſaith ẏ it doth augment ſinne; and Rom.4.15. Rom.5.2. 2.Cor.3.7. conſequently that it is vnto vs the meſſenger of death. So then, let vs marke well, that whereas God teacheth vs what wee ought to doe; albeit ẏ the ſame doctrine ought of it ſelfe to ſerue vs to ſaluation: yet neuertheleſſe it bringeth vs nothing but condemnation, euen bicauſe of our ſin. Such is the falling out of it; but howſoeuer ẏ caſe ſtand, yet muſt the law of God alwaies condẽne vs. Now after that God hath conuicted men, & beaten downe their pride, to the intent they ſhould not preſume of themſelues; he addeth the promiſe, and ſaith: Go to, It is true ẏ your hearts be incircumciſed, it is certaine ẏ you haue blind motions, and that you be corrupted in all your nature: but I will change your heartes, I will renue your mindes, I will reforme you to my ſelfe: whereas heretofore you haue been rebellious againſt me, & there hath bin nothing in you but malice: henceforth there ſhalbe a readines to obey my lawe. God giueth that very promiſe. Whereby hee ſheweth that whatſoeuer hee commaunded vs afore, our doing thereof ſhalbe by his only power, & not in any part by our own.

In this caſe it is not for vs to father the cheefe part vppon our owne free will, no nor the one halfe neither, for God muſt haue all the prayſe without exception, and that whatſoeuer we doe, doe proceede of his woorking of it in vs, and of his reforming of our wittes, and of his changing of vs. And for that cauſe the holy Scripture 2.Cor.5.17. ſayth, that we be made newe creatures. When it ſayth ſo, doth it meane that men were earſt good? No, but that GOD doeth reforme them. And in deede if it were in vs to amende our ſoules, and to renewe them; wee ſhoulde doe more than GOD doeth. GOD hath created our bodyes and alſo our ſoules; but yet notwithſtanding, what bring wee from our mothers wombe, but all maner of curſedneſſe? For (as I haue ſayde) wee bee infected with originall ſinne. Thus doeth GOD make vs mortall men; yea, but in the meane whyle, there is this miſcheefe, namely, that wee bee aliened from him and from all goodneſſe. Nowe if men were able to deliuer themſelues out of the curſe wherein they bee, and could giue themſelues a newe power: ſhoulde not they then doe more than GOD hath doone? Nowe then whereas Moſes ſayeth in this place, *The Lorde will circumciſe thy heart to loue thy GOD with all thy hearte and with all thy ſoule:* hee ſheweth thereby that if wee doe amiſſe, (as we doe indeede,) wee cannot haue ſo much as any one good motion to come vnto GOD, vntill wee be altogether renewed by Gods working in vs: and therefore that we muſt not be fainthearted. Wherfore? For when he hath taught vs what we ought to doe, he giueth vs alſo the power to performe it. After hee hath taught vs by the voyce of men, hee teacheth vs alſo by his holy Spirite in our heartes; and that teaching is of efficacie; ſo as wee doe not onely knowe the good, but alſo wee haue a deſire to followe it and to giue our ſelues ouer vnto it. And Iohn.6.44. that is the cauſe why hee ſayeth that we bee drawen vnto him. And indeede Moſes ſayth not, The Lorde will circumciſe thyne heart, to the ende that thou mayſt bee able to loue him, but hee ſayth, to the ende that thou loue him. Hee ſheweth that GOD doeth not onely giue vs the power to will well, but alſo doeth throughly faſhion vs to the ſame. And that is a further point wherein the Papiſtes doe abuſe themſelues too groſſely: for when they ſpeake of the grace of the holy Spirite, they vnderſtande that GOD in deede giueth vs the power, if it ſeeme good to vs: but yet that all the ſame lyeth in our diſcretion, and that GODS woorking in vs is not in ſuch ſorte, as that both our liſting and our performing proceede both thereof. But it is too nygardely a ſpeaking of the grace of GOD, that he ſhould ſay vnto man, Well, I wil giue thee power that thou mayſt doe well, if thou wylt: but I will lay the brydle on thy necke, and when thou haſt a good will, and that of thy ſelfe, if thou haſt conſtancie and power to put it in execution: thou mayeſt well doe it, and I will helpe thee therein. If GOD ſhoulde doe ſo, what ſhoulde become of our ſaluation? For can men in ſuch frayltie as wee doe feele, and amiddeſt ſo many combattes as Sathan doeth deliuer vs, haue one onely firme and conſtant will? It is impoſſible. Moſes therefore ſayeth not, that GOD will circumciſe our heartes, to the intent wee may haue power to feare him: but hee putteth the thing in effect, to the intent that wee ſhall feare him; after which manner alſo hee ſpeaketh by his Prophetes, as well Ieremie as Ezechiel. Ier.31.33. Hee ſayeth, that hee will put his feare in our Ezec.36.26 heartes. Hee ſayeth not that hee will giue them power. And then will I make them (ſayeth hee) to walke in my commaundementes. This is it that GOD doeth attribute vnto himſelfe, to wit, that hee will ſo imprint his Lawe in our heartes, as wee ſhall haue a will agreeable vnto his: and then hee will guide and gouerne vs in ſuch ſorte as wee ſhall ouercome all temptations, and accompliſh that which hee commaundeth vs. It belongeth not to vs then, to challendge ſuch prayſe to our ſelues. Thereby wee ſee that the Papiſtes deale treacherouſly in all the doctrine of freewill: for all their whole ſeeking is to robbe GOD of all that euer the holy Scripture declareth to bee his, and which hee reſerueth to himſelfe, and to ſpoyle him of his honour, vſurping it euerie man to himſelfe. Let vs therefore beware of this diueliſh arrogancie, and let vs vnderſtande that Saint Paule hath not ſayde without cauſe, That it Phil.2.13. is GOD that woorketh in vs both the wyll and the deede. Saint Paule ſayeth not after the manner of the Papiſtes, that when God giueth vs the meane, wee may bee able to will that which is good, but hee ſayeth, that hee will put the will in vs. And then hee addeth, that GOD in likewiſe doeth woorke the matter, that is to ſay, hee accompliſheth the good woorkes in vs: and the whole is perfourmed (ſayeth hee) after his owne will. Therefore, whereas the Papiſtes ſaye that GOD hath reſpect whether wee bee able to vſe his grace well or no: and that according as euerie man behaueth and gouerneth himſelfe, GOD dealeth with him thereafter: Saint Paule ſayeth that it proceedeth altogether of GODS good pleaſure. And yet it is not therefore to bee ſayde that wee bee blockes of wood. But let vs marke well what Saint Paul concludeth, that is, that wee muſt walke in feare and warineſſe, woorking our Phil.2.12. ſaluation. What? Is it in vs to doe it? No: but hee ſheweth that wee bee inſtrumentes of GOD, and that when hee giueth vs the wyll and power to perfourme, it is bycauſe that euerie one of vs ſhoulde offer himſelfe to doe his indeuour, howbeit vnder the leading of the holy Spirit, acknowledging that all of it proceedeth from aboue: and Saint Paule ſayeth that wee muſt doe it with feare and carefulneſſe, to the intent wee bee not vnprofitable; and yet that in the meane while, there bee not any drop of preſumption in vs, to ſuppoſe that wee haue any abilitie or power of our ſelues, but that GOD bee honoured as hee deſerueth. Nowe wee ſee, what is the naturall ſenſe of this Text, where Moſes promiſeth vnto the Iewes that GOD will circumciſe their hearts. Thereby hee ſheweth that it is not ynough for men to haue the Lawe preached, and to haue their eares beaten therewith, and to vnderſtande what their duetie is: for all that will be but as a dead thing, vntill the time that God doe chaunge their heartes, and reforme them, and woorke within them; and that the affections of men and their thoughtes bee guided by the holy Ghoſt.

And by the way hee ſheweth heere the vſe of Circumciſion, which is another poynt worthie to bee marked. For the fantaſticall fellowes of our dayes, which woulde take away the Baptiſme of little children, neuer vnderſtoode the vſe of Circumciſion. It ſeemed vnto them that it was but a temporall matter, yea and a tryfling thing, and that it was not ſpirituall for the auncient fathers: in ſo much that the curſed heretike which was puniſhed in this Towne, mocked all the Sacramentes of the Lawe of Moſes. Abraham [ſayd hee] had but a ſhadowe of the heauenly lyfe; and albeit that hee was named the father of the faithfull, and it appeareth, that hee did altogether ſtay himſelfe vppon the celeſtiall heritage: yet was hee not touched therewith, neither dyd the fathers knowe GOD, but worſhipped an Angell which was there in a viſible ſhape in ſteade of GOD. Theſe bee the horrible Blaſphemies, which inſue when men doe ſo ſeparate the Lawe from the Goſpell. In deede wee haue at this day a grace which ſurpaſſeth that grace which GOD ſhewed to our fathers: but yet muſt wee not ſo bereaue, Abraham of the ſpirituall kingdome of our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt, as to make Circumciſion to bee but an earthly Sacrament. Therefore let vs beare well in minde, that when GOD ordayned Circumciſion, beſides that it was a ſeale of the righteouſneſſe of fayth, (as Saint Rom.4.11. Paule ſayeth in the fourth Chapter to the Romanes:) it did alſo ſhewe vnto men that they ought to bee mortifyed, and renewed by regeneration to the obedience of GOD. Whereby wee may gather, that Circumciſion ſignifyed the ſame thing vnto the Iewes, which Baptiſme importeth vnto vs at this day. What haue wee in Baptiſme? That wee bee bleſſed in our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt; and that whereas wee haue nothing but accurſedneſſe by the heritage of Adam, wee be ſanctifyed to bee adopted into the celeſtiall heritage, ſo as God by iuſtifying vs, doeth accept them which were not earſt woorthie to bee numbred amongeſt his creatures. Againe, wee haue alſo a ſimilitude and a portraiture of death, that wee myght bee chaunged to ſerue our GOD. The ſame was likewiſe in Circumciſion: and Moſes doeth ſhewe in this place, that it was not a vayne figure. It was not a marke that GOD had ſet vppon his people, but onely to ſay, You are a choſen people, and in the meane whyle they ſhoulde haue thereby no promiſe, nor warrant of their ſaluation, nor of any thing that was ſpirituall. But contrariwyſe in ſaying that GOD will Circumciſe their heartes; hee ſheweth that this Sacrament, this viſible ſigne of Circumciſion, declared vnto them that they ought to bee chaunged, and that they ought to be a holy people vnto their GOD. And therefore let vs learne that Baptiſme at this day ſucceedeth circumciſion, like as Saint Paule ſayeth in the Epiſtle to the Coloſſians. Col.2.12. After hee hath ſhewed that Circumciſion remayneth not at this day as touching the outwarde vſe: hee ſayeth that wee bee Circumciſed, not by the hand of man, but in that wee bee buried in the Baptiſme of our Lorde Ieſus, whereby the olde man is mortifyed, that from hencefoorth the ſpirit of God may gouerne vs. Thus yee ſee what we haue to obſerue in this place, as touching the firſt poynt. Therefore let vs marke, that although the fathers which lyued vnder the Lawe were Gal.3.23. & 4.2. as little children vnder their Tutors and Ouerſeers: yet were they the children of GOD as wee are; and had the verie ſame promiſe of ſaluation, and the Sacramentes which GOD deliuered them, tended to the ſelfe ſame ende, and ſo conſequently were ſpirituall. Thus much concerning one point.

Nowe furthermore it is heere ſhewed vnto vs, that Circumciſion did not onely ſignifie vnto the Iewes, that they ſhoulde bee a holy people vnto GOD, and that they ſhoulde change the malice of their hearts: but it ſhewed alſo that God would do them the fauour to regenerate them by his holy Spirit. As at this day in Baptiſme, when the water is powred vppon the head of a little childe, it is not onely to ſignifie, that beyng come to mans age hee muſt ſerue GOD, and yet notwithſtanding is not able to doe it vnleſſe it bee giuen him from aboue: but the infant is baptiſed by the hande of another, and the hand of the Miniſter is, as it were the hand of Ieſus Chriſt, to whom onely it doeth appertaine to Baptiſe, as Saint Iohn ſayth: Wee in deede doe Baptiſe with water, but his office is to Baptiſe with the Spirit and with fyre. Therefore let vs marke it well that when the Miniſter layeth the water on the childes head, therein hee repreſenteth the perſon of our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt, witneſſing thereby, that our Lorde Ieſus will bee ſo gracious to as many as beleeue and are choſen of GOD his father; as to drawe them to him and to gouerne them, ſo as they ſhall become newe Creatures. And euen ſo is it with Circumciſion. Abraham in deede was circumciſed; but that was after an extraordinarie manner. But yet ordinarily it behooued men to bee circumciſed by the handes of them that were appointed thereunto: and thoſe did repreſent the perſon of God. It was therefore a teſtimonie that men of themſelues could not be circumciſed, but that it was neceſſarie that God ſhoulde put his hande thereto, and that he ſhould change them.

Seeing it is ſo, let vs marke, that in all the Sacramentes wee bring nothing of our owne, but that wee doe rather come to receiue that which is offered vnto vs in the name of GOD. The Sacraments then be not meritorious matters, that men might alledge any ſeruice that they had doone; but rather come to ſeeke that which they want. Whereby wee ſee the fooliſhneſſe that is in the Iewes: for they boaſt themſelues of Circumciſion, as if it had beene a great vertue, and woulde needes bring it in reckoning, as if God had beene beholden vnto them, bycauſe they were circumciſed. To bee ſhort, whenſoeuer deſeruing and grace came in queſtion, the Iewes pretended that they were not ſaued by the free goodneſſe and mercie of God. And wherefore? To what end ſerued yͤ circumciſion? It ſerued for a teſtimonie, for an earneſt, for a viſible ſigne, to declare yͭ it is God that doth all in vs. But theſe miſerable beaſtes vnderſtand not that. See here I pray you the vnthankfulnes of men; which hath taken place not with that nation onely, but among the chriſtians alſo, where yͤ goodnes of God hath bin vttered much more at large. Behold, our Lord Ieſus Chriſt cal-
Col.2,10. leth vs vnto him, he telleth vs that we muſt ſeeke all our welfare in him: & yet the Papiſtes haue not ceaſſed to diſtinguiſhe, and to ſeeke out a woorke, which is wrought on mans part as they terme it. They haue yeelded that the principall part of the Sacramentes is a diuine worke; but yet neuertheleſſe they ſticke not to ſay, that men doe bring thereunto ſomewhat of their owne. And no maruaile. For we ſee to what point they are come; namely that they haue chaunged the Supper of our Lord Ieſus Chriſt, into a charme, and a diueliſh ſorcerie. Thus ſaide Ieſus Chriſt;
Matt.26.26 Take, Eate: he commandeth vs to receiue it: & the Papiſtes make God to beleeue, yͭ they do offer it vnto him. And further they ſtabliſh thereupon a worke of merite, euen the moſt excellent yͭ euer they could dreame of. But yet for al that we ſee how yͤ diuell hath bewitched them, ſo as they haue changed yͤ whole order of nature. For in ſted of receiuing yͤ thing with humilitie which God offered them; they haue preſumed to offer vnto him the things which they haue forged in their owne braine: & doe make themſelues beleeue, that all thoſe things are acceptable vnto him, yea and that he is very much beholding to them for ſo dooing. So much the more therefore doth it ſtand vs in hand to mark that which is ſpoken here, namely, The Lorde thy God will circumciſe thy heart. So then, ſeeing God hath ſhewed vs what Baptiſme doeth ſignifie, let vs vnderſtande howe it is our duetie to reforme vs, and to renounce our owne nature to ſerue GOD. But doe wee once knowe that? Then let vs proceede to the promiſe that is giuen vs, which is, that bycauſe wee can doe nothing, GOD ſayth that he will put to his hand, that wee may bee chaunged, and become new creatures, through his holy ſpirite. This is in effect that which wee haue to obſerue in this place.

Nowe Moſes addeth, *That thou mayſt lyue,* not that God dealeth with vs according to our deſeruings: but bicauſe wee be ſlouthfull, therefore he addeth this promiſe, namely, that wee ſhall be bleſſed of God: and whatſoeuer he hath ſayd to make vs to walk in his obedience, it is to ſhewe vs, that wee muſt walke in ſuch ſort, as wee prouoke not the vengeaunce of GOD againſt vs, if wee will bee bleſſed of him. It is true that hee may alwayes puniſh vs by good right: and that although hee guide vs, and that wee haue a good will to ſerue him, yet is there ſuch imperfection in vs, as wee bee euermore faultie before him: but yet hee forbeareth vs. And therefore when theſe thinges be put together, namely, that GOD maketh vs to walke according to his Lawe, and that hee doeth it to the ende that wee may lyue; it is all one as if it were ſayde, that men bereaue and ſpoyle themſelues of the grace of GOD, bycauſe they are wicked, and liue not as becommeth them. And therefore God is fayne to redreſſe it, and to drawe them vnto him, and to reforme them, and by that meane to make them to inioy all his bleſſings.

Nowe hee addeth thereunto, *That hee will reioyce ouer them for good, as hee reioyced ouer their fathers.* This is a manner of ſpeeche that importeth much. In deede GOD is not ſubiect to our paſſions, to reioyce after the manner of men, there is no ſuch matter in him: but hee ſpeaketh thus, for that hee coulde not ſufficiently expreſſe the loue which hee beareth to vs, but by ſuch ſimilitudes. The thing then which the holy Ghoſt meant, is that GOD holdeth vs ſo deare, and beareth vs ſuch feruent loue, that a father reioyceth not more when hee is able to aduaunce his childe, or when he can doe him good, than GOD reioyceth in vs, when hee hath occaſion to doe vs good, as who woulde ſay, that his afflicting and ſcourging of vs doeth grieue and vexe him, and that hee doeth it contrarie to his inclination. For hee requireth nothing but to finde vs alwayes diſpoſed to receyue the riches which hee hath in his hande, which alſo hee is readie to beſtowe vppon vs. And therefore doeth GOD borrowe the ſame ſimilitude of men. For (as wee haue ſayde) hee is not like vnto vs, neyther muſt wee haue ſo fond imaginations, as to thinke that hee is mooued with paſſions eyther one way or other; but to the intent to manifeſt vnto vs, howe much hee loueth vs, hee crieth alas, when he is to afflict thoſe to whome he meaneth to doe good. Alas [ſayeth hee] muſt I auenge my ſelfe Iſa.42.13.
as of myne enemyes, and reioyce mee in vexing them? Hee calleth them his enemyes, and yet hee ſpeaketh ſtill of the Iewes, whom hee had choſen: but hee preſuppoſeth that they made warre againſt him, and that therefore hee was driuen to be reuenged of them: howbeit hee declareth that it was to his griefe. Let vs therefore learne to taſte of this loue whereof the holy ſcripture ſpeaketh vnto vs; that we may be ſo rauiſhed therewith, as to deſire nothing more thã to ſubmit our ſelues to our God, which is in deede the thing that he ſhooteth at.

Wherefore is it that God forceth himſelfe to ſhewe vnto vs ſo vehement an affection? It is to mollifie the hardnes of our hearts, that we may be enflamed with an other maner of zeale than wee haue. Will we then enioy our God? Let vs giue him occaſion to doe vs good, let vs (I ſay) ſuffer him to be mercifull and liberal towards vs; when wee hinder not God to doe vs good, hee proteſteth that he is glad of it. And cōtrarywiſe, when we lay a barre in his way; ſo as he cannot vſe his gratious goodneſſe towards vs, in powring out his benefites vppon vs as hee for his Iſa.63.10. parte is ready to doe: hee ſayth, that we grieue his holie ſpirit. For after that manner ſpeaketh the Prophet Iſay. They haue grieued the ſpirite of God (ſayth hee.) Not that God is ſubiect to vexation of minde, as I haue ſayd already; but it is to ſhewe that men are ſo much the more faultie, and to cauſe them to abhorre their naughtineſſe the more, when they bee thus rebellious againſt him, and cannot ſuffer him to doe them good. Moſes dooth adde moreouer, *Becauſe thou ſhalt haue hearkened to the voyce of the Lord thy God.* Here hee commeth againe to the order of ſpeaking: for it is enough that hee hath tolde vs in one worde, that becauſe wee bee not able, God promiſeth to doe it. Yet neuertheleſſe hee continueth his office: and as hee was the lawegiuer ordeyned of God, ſo doeth hee require the people to walke vprightly. That is the cauſe why hee vſeth ſtill this ſpeech, ſaying: Becauſe thou ſhalt hearken to the voyce of the Lorde thy God, yea and that thy hearing ſhall bee to keepe that which is contained in the Lawe. Heereby he meaneth to ſhewe vs, howe wee ſhoulde obey God, that is to ſay, by what meane. And as touching the ende, wee haue ſeene heeretofore what it is: namely that hee requireth obedience at our handes, tō the ende hee may haue occaſion to deale with vs gently, and after a fatherly manner, and that hee deſireth nothing but to powre out his great treaſures vppon vs. It is then to our profite and ſaluation that wee ſhoulde obey him. That is the ende, and the meane is, by hearing his voyce. We muſt therefore beware that wee rebell not againſt him, nor bee deafe eared when hee ſpeaketh vnto vs, except wee meane to grieue him, as hee ſayeth in the Pſalme. Bee not rebellious as your fathers Pſal.95.9. were, which prouoked Gods ſpirite euery day. There God complaineth that hee was prouoked to wrath, when that the people grieued him, and that hee was fayne to enter into a diſliking of them. So then, let vs holde this rule that is deliuered vnto vs, whereby to enioy our GOD, that hee may cauſe vs to proſper. The meane whereof is, that whileſt hee ſpeaketh vnto vs, wee haue our eares attentiue to receiue his voyce. And Moſes doeth therewithal expreſſe what is the manner of hearing God well. For there are a great many which bring Aſſes eares with them: they can wel ynough ſay that the thinges which are ſpoken are true, like the Aſſe which can well ynough nodde with his eares. So it coſteth them nothing to ſay, It is all good, I like well of it: but yet they bee not a whit touched at their heartes, nay rather, wee ſee they deſpiſe all that is tolde them; and they ſuppoſe that God is beholding vnto them, when they haue not openly ſpoken againſt him, nor blaſphemed his doctrine. But Moſes requireth an other manner of hearing farre differing from this: namely *The performing of the thinges which are conteined in the lawe.* It is ſayd in an other place, that Ieſus Chriſt auoweth them to bee Luke.11.28. bleſſed which heare the worde of GOD and keepe it. And there our Lord Ieſus Chriſt ſpeaketh the more groſly, to the intent we might be the better enformed: for we forget things, and we think that if we confeſſe the Law to be good, righteous, and holy, wee bee then diſcharged: But our Lorde ſaith, that wee muſt firſt heare and then keepe. And Moſes ioyneth both together, as in deede, to heare and to keepe, are thinges which ought neuer to goe a ſunder. Yea, but yet therewithall hee giueth men a perfect rule, ſo they yeelde to bee taught of him; and they ſhall not neede, (as wee haue ſeene here before) to turne either to the right Deut.5.32. hand or to the left. Therefore let vs marke that the doctrine of the lawe dooth teach vs what is good, and that thereby GOD meaneth to informe vs playnely of his will, that wee may bee pliable to bee taught, and ſubmit our ſelues obediently vnto him. They then which inuent one thing or other of their owne braine, and would doe as they liſt: doe ſhewe that they rather ſerue their owne affections, than GOD. Therefore to order our lyfe well, wee haue none other rule but that which is giuen vs from aboue, nor any other than the very ſame which is contayned in the Lawe of God. In deede men doe euermore confeſſe that nothing ought to be done which is not agreeable vnto Gods will: but yet for al that, they forge and deuiſe ſtill ſome new inuention or other. And that is becauſe they thinke that God hath not in his Lawe declared vnto vs, all that hee requireth of vs, and that hee woulde haue vs to ſtay altogether vppon that. And therefore Moſes ſendeth vs backe to that which is ſet downe heere: as if hee ſhoulde ſay, Men muſt not take vppon them to adde any thing in this behalfe vnder colour that the ſame is well pleaſing to GOD: for I tell you that whatſoeuer God requireth and alloweth, hee dooth declare it in his Lawe: content your ſelues therefore with this doctrine, and bee not wiſer than needeth, ſeeing that your GOD hath taught you perfectly. For the better confirmation hereof hee ſayth, *Becauſe thou ſhalt be conuerted to the Lorde thy God, with all thy heart, and with al thy ſoule.* He ſheweth here, that before wee can heare GOD, or keepe his lawe, and bee obedient vnto him: wee muſt bee conuerted vnto him. In deede hee ſpeaketh to ſuch as were already ſwarued: But yet the nature of men is ſo in generall, that euen from our mothers wombe wee bee all of vs backſlyders, and enemies to GOD, and there is nothing in vs but vtter frowardneſſe and rebellion. God therefore muſt bee faine to chaunge vs from the roote. For he ſhall neuer get good fruite out of vs, vnleſſe the roote be firſt chaunged. Now this worde Conuerſion, or *Turning* importeth, that, whereas man hath his backe turned vpon God, he muſt turne againe toward him with his face: and that is all one as if the ſcripture ſhould ſpeake of a change; Rom.12.2. as it is in lykewiſe ſayde that wee muſt bee renewed. Wee muſt therefore conſider, that if wee haue the witte to ſuffer our GOD to teach vs, it is a token that wee are going toward him, and that wee bee willing to ſhewe the feare, obedience, and ſubiection which wee owe vnto his Lawe: But yet wee muſt come to this poynt, of conuerting or turning back. And wherefore? For vntill men doe knowe themſelues, how can they ſo order their lyfe, as it may bee acceptable to God? Wee muſt vnderſtand that wee bee altogether vntoward, and wee muſt beginne at this poynt, that whereas we haue bin lyke ſtrayed beaſtes, we muſt come and ſubmit our ſelues to our God. And for that cauſe the Prophet Ieremie ſaith, that the thornes which bee in vs Ier.4.4. muſt bee plucked vp, and then the good ſeede ſhal haue place: as if a place were full of thornes and bryers, and euill weedes, the ſame coulde not bee ſowen, neither coulde any plough goe there to put in the good ſeede: and therefore it muſt firſt bee ſtubbed and rid cleane. And that is the cauſe alſo why the Apoſte ſetteth downe the ſame ſimilitude, according to that which Moſes meant to ſhewe in this place, inſomuch that hauing treated of the feare of God, and of obeedience to his lawe, hee dooth purpoſely ſpeake of Conuerſion, ſaying it is needefull that men ſhoulde bee chaunged. And hee ſayth, *with all the heart and with all the ſoule*, ſhewing that the repentance which God requireth of vs, is that wee ſhoulde ſerue him vnfainedly, according as all the Scripture declareth. For men bee giuen to hypocriſie: It is enough with them to haue a certaine faire ſhewe and outward appearance, and it ſeemeth to them that God is payed. But he regardeth not that which is faire to the eye: hee would poſſeſſe our hartes and affections, that is the principall poynt. Meane we then to direct our lyfe in ſuch ſorte as it may bee allowed of GOD? It is not ſufficient to occupie our handes, our feete, and our eyes, and to order our outwarde lyfe vnblamably, ſo as men may finde no fault therewith: but alſo our thoughtes and our affections muſt bee altogether changed, as Saint Paule Rom.12.2. alſo declareth, that the ſame is our reaſonable ſeruice. Renue your ſelues (ſaith he.) He ſpeaketh neither of hands, nor of feet, but of al your vnderſtanding & of al your ſoule: you muſt of neceſſitie be changed, if you deſire that God ſhold accept the offering which you make vnto him of your lyfe. Herein we ſee how much the Papiſtes be deceiued, when they ſpeake of repentance. For among them repentance [or as they terme it, Penaunce) is but the dooing of trifling toyes, as to goe woolwarde, to trotte on pilgrimage, to doe other gewgawes, to cauſe ſome Maſſe to bee ſayde, or to beſtowe ſome Almes. That is the thing which the Papiſtes doe comprehend vnder this woorde Penance. But the holy ſcripture ſaith that men muſt conuert, that is to ſay, bee chaunged. There is no worde of gadding hither and thither, neither is there any talking of the making of any outward countenance; but that there muſt bee this renewing. And it declareth yet farther, yͤ the ſame renewing muſt be of our hart, and not onely of our hart, but alſo of all our whole heart; as if it were ſayd, that God accepteth no fayning, but rather vtterly abhorreth it. True it is that we cannot haue à heart ſo perfect as is requiſite, it ſhall want much thereof: neuertheleſſe, wee muſt miſlyke of all fayning, and not be double minded: And wee muſt enforce our ſelues to fight againſt all our wicked affections, and not ceaſe vntill our God doe raigne ouer vs as wee ſerue him, not vppon compulſion and in outwarde ſhewe, but of a free good will, and as ſetting all our delight in his Lawe, according to that way Pſal.119.1 which Dauid ſheweth vs by his owne example.

Nowe foraſmuch as wee bee ſo farre off from this perfection, and ſo guiltie before our God, as hee may iuſtly caſt vs off altogether: let vs come and with all humilitie fall downe before him, beſeeching him that it may pleaſe him to haue pitie vpon vs, and to receiue vs to mercie in the name of our Lord Ieſus Chriſt, blotting out our faultes and offences, and not to reſpect what wee haue deſerued: But rather to vſe his infinite mercie, that wee by that meane may bee reconciled vnto him, and nothing may hinder him to make vs to feele his grace and to guide vs by his holy ſpirite in ſuch ſorte as wee may bee all wholy his, and hee poſſeſſe vs, and euermore vpholde vs, as we haue neede, vntill he hath throughly reformed vs, and vtterly ridde vs not onely from the imperfection of our fleſhe, but alſo from this mortall body it ſelfe, to bring vs into the glory of his kingdome. That it may pleaſe him to beſtowe this fauour not onely vppon vs, but in lykewiſe vppon all the people and nations of the earth, &c.

On Tewſday the xxj. of April, 1556.

The CLXXI. Sermon which is the third vpon the thirtith Chapter.

11 For the commaundement which I commaund thee this day, is not hidden from thee, nor farre off from thee.

12 It is not in heauen, that thou mighteſt ſay, which of vs ſhal go vp into heauen and fetch it vs, to make vs heare it that we may doe it?

13 Neither is it beyond the Sea, that thou mighteſt ſay, which of vs ſhall goe ouer the ſea, and bring it vs, that we may heare it and doe it?

14 For this worde is very nigh thee, euen in thy mouth and in thine heart, to doe it.

Deut.29.29 Heretofore in the laſt Chapter, Moſes had put a difference betwixt Gods ſecrets and the law, ſaying that if wee bee learned in Gods worde, we ſhal alwayes find ſuch doctrine as is behouefull for our ſelues and for our children. And in the ſame place hee proteſted, that God ſpeaketh not in ſuch darke manner, as men cannot vnderſtand what hee meaneth: but that he expreſſeth his wil faithfully, to the end they ſhould haue good and conuenient inſtruction to their ſaluation. Nowe continuing his purpoſe, he ſaith farther, that the Lawe which he had declared, is not a ſecret doctrine, nor farre diſtant from the people, ſo as they might reply, ſaying: Who is hee that ſhall paſſe ouer the ſea? or who is hee that ſhall mount vp aboue the clowdes? No, ſaith hee, the worde is ſet downe before thine eyes, thou haſt it in thy mouth and in thy heart: and ſo is there no place at all of excuſe through ignorance: wherefore turne that grace to your profite; otherwiſe there is nought elſe to be looked for, but dreadfull condemnation before God vpon all them that continue in their blindneſſe; for here is that true light which ſhoulde guide vs in all the courſe of our lyfe. Wee ſee what Moſes meant in this Text; euen to exhort them to whom hee had deliuered the Lawe, to be attentiue to the ſame. Now for that purpoſe, he promiſeth them that in ſo doing, they ſhoulde not ſpend their time in vaine, but that if they would apply their ſtudie to bee edified in the worde of God, they ſhoulde finde ſufficient for that purpoſe. On the contrarie ſide, he pronounceth a terrible threatning againſt all them that goe about to ſhielde thẽſelues with ignorance. For there remaineth no more excuſe after that GOD hath ſpoken. If this were ſaid in the time of the Lawe: howe much more conueniently may it bee ſayd to vs of theſe dayes? For wee are not ignorant that God hath ſhewed himſelfe vnto vs more familiarly, than to them to whom Moſes ſpake: they had onely that which remaineth vnto vs to this day. But ſince that time, God ſent his Prophets, which haue more largely expounded ẏ thinges, that were briefely and darkly mentioned in the lawe. After all this, the Lorde Chriſt our ſauiour is come into the worlde, and hath accompliſhed that which was ſpoken by the Apoſtle in the Epiſtle to the Hebrues: that God had ſpoken after diuers manners vnto our fathers, Hebr.1.1. but nowe laſtly, he hath ſhewed himſelfe by the mouth of his onely Sonne, giuing vs a final concluſion of all Propheſies, and euery maner of doctrine. We heare alſo how our Lorde Ieſus ſayth: that many kinges and Prophets had longed to ſee and to heare that which his diſciples Luk.10.24. ſawe and heard, and that they found not that fauour. This alſo is ſpoken vnto vs. So then let vs marke well that the reproofe which Moſes layd to the Iewes whom hee taught, ſhall turne to our dreadfull condemnation, if we profit not in the ſchoole of God, whiles he taketh the care and trauaile to teach vs. Nowe for one point wee haue to note what is ſayd here: namely, *That the word is not hidden nor farre from vs, ſo as wee might ſay: who is hee that ſhall paſſe ouer the Sea? who is hee that ſhall mount vp aboue the Clowdes?* By theſe wordes God ſheweth, that when his word is publiſhed, it is not in vaine, as it is alſo ſayd by his Prophet Eſay. Eſa.45.19. Wee conclude then, that the doctrine of God is not of it ſelfe ſo incomprehenſible, that wee haue not abilitie to conceiue it: but that it is a perfect light whereby wee may beholde the way of ſaluation, as hereafter ſhall be ſhewed. It is ſuch an orderly kinde of teaching, as no body but our ſelues is to bee blamed, if we be not edifyed as we ought to bee, and ſo farre forth as is neceſſarie for vs. See here then I pray you the Teſtimonie which God giueth vnto his worde: namely, how it is not a iarring that cannot bee vnderſtoode, but a playne ſpeech, to the end that men might be brought vnto him, by knowing what is meete and expedient for them, by diſcerning betwixt the good and the euill. Nowe ſeeing that God ſpeaketh thus of his worde, wee muſt not doubt to finde that which hee ſaith. For otherwiſe we ſhoulde make him a lyer: but hee ſhall be found faithfull, and our ſelues condemned of Blaſphemie. Let vs marke farther, that the promiſe which God maketh vs, is infallible, to the end that wee ſhould ſtand faſt, and not wauer with any doubt or ſcruple, if wee ſuffer our ſelues to be taught by him. Then let vs but yeelde our ſelues teachable, and ſure it is, that God for his parte, will not ſuffer vs to dwell in ſuſpence, nor our mindes to wander, and to goe on groping like blinde folke. There is full certainetie of knowledge, if wee become good ſcholers to God, and reſiſt him not as robbers. And here a man may ſee the froward vnthankfulneſſe of the Papiſtes, which would make men beleeue, that they ſhould not venture to reade the holy ſcripture, nor once be ſo hardy as to looke into it, becauſe it is ſo high and ſo deep a thing, ẏ men ſhal be forthwith caryed away into many errors and many fancies. It is very true that men doe abuſe the trueth of God: and we our ſelues doe ſee, howe they turne the trueth into lyes: But yet to impute the ſame vnto Gods word; it were a diueliſh blaſphemie. And therefore let vs learn that we muſt ſettle our ſelues wholy vppon that which is ſhewed vnto vs here. For God himſelfe dooth aſſure vs that in his worde we ſhall finde the right vnderſtanding of all thinges that are expedient for our ſaluation. Thinke we that our good God will deceiue vs? Let vs therefoee abhorre the excuſe which the Papiſtes doe holde, of purpoſe to dwel, to neſtle, yea and altogether to rotte in their ignorance, But contrariwiſe, let vs truſt and wholy reſt vpon this promiſe, knowing that God doth vs an ineſtimable good turn, whenſoeuer it pleaſeth him to ſet his worde before our eyes; and to deliuer it to bee preached in our eares. Now then, whenſoeuer God giueth vs his knowledge, let vs vnderſtand that he will not haue ſuch a treaſure to be loſt or to periſh: but that we ſhould receiue it, and turne it to our cõmoditie. But herewithal we haue to mark alſo, that vntill God haue ſpoken and taught vs in his ſchoole, we haue neither learning not wit, but are as ſtray cattell, and at a worde vtterly forlorne. It is not therefore without cauſe that Moſes ſaith: The commaundement which I giue thee, is not hidden from thee, nor farre off, ſo as thou mighteſt ſay: Who ſhall goe vp to heauen? Who ſhall paſſe ouer the Sea? or who ſhall goe downe into the deepe? Hereby he giueth vs to vnderſtand that if God doe pluck back his word, ſo as we know not what hee requireth of vs, nor haue any teſtimony of his will: then may wee well ſeeke about lyke people in perplexitie, crying alas, what ſhall we doe? Who is hee that ſhal goe vp aboue the clowdes; who is hee that ſhall goe downe into the deepe? Who is hee that ſhall paſſe the Sea? To what end? There is no other inſtruction at all, whereby God giueth vs any certaine, and infallibe direction. When we bee thus deſtitute, wee bee as loſt people, hauing neither way nor path to leade vs, we can diſcerne nothing. Howe much ſoeuer men doe attribute to their owne wiſedome, ſuppoſing themſelues diſcreete enough to rule themſelues all their lyfe long: yet are they but wretched beaſtes, vntill God haue ſhewed them his will. Thus much for one poynt.

Nowe it is farther to bee vnderſtood, that if GOD come not firſt to vs, wee haue no meane to come at him. Who is he that can giue vs winges to mount vp to heauen? Or howe ſhall wee be able to paſſe ouer the deepe? Although we had the knowledge of all ſecrets of nature: well might we trauell all the worlde from place to place, and well might we mount aloft vnto the very ſkyes: and yet in the meane while wee ſhoulde want the cheefeſt thing of all, which is to vnderſtand the trueth of God; for that ſurmounteth al the wit of man. Let vs learne therefore, that God in his infinite goodneſſe, perceauing that we haue no meane to approch vnto him: giueth vs an eaſie acceſſe thither. Yea and hee commeth downe vnto vs, to faſhion himſelfe to our rudeneſſe and infirmitie. We ſee how he dooth (as ye would ſay) ſtammer with vs: for hee ſpeaketh not in ſuch loftineſſe, as might well ſeeme agreeable to his infinite glory & maieſtie; but the phraſe of holy ſcripture is groſſe and rude; by the which God ſpeaketh to vs in ſuch plaine manner, as there remaineth no excuſe for vs, if we vnderſtand him not plainely. Seeing it is ſo, let vs vſe this maruailous goodneſſe which God hath beſtowed on vs, and let vs holde vs to the ſame: and therewithall let vs alſo acknowledge our owne ignorance, that wee may humble our ſelues: for the very cauſe why ſo fewe folke doe profite in the holy ſcripture; is their owne oueerweening, in that they be forepoſſeſſed with an imagination of their owne wiſedome and ſharpneſſe of wit: and ſo being drunken with their owne conceite, they alwayes deſpiſe the worde of GOD. Let vs therefore humble ourſelues, for wee knowe that God nameth himſelfe the teacher of the lowly and of litle ones, to the ende wee ſhoulde not come to the hearing of his worde, as people puffed vp with our owne greatneſſe, fondly ſurmiſing our ſelues to bee men of great abilitie to diſcerne: but that our whole wiſedome ſhould conſiſt in obeying him, in conſidering that ſeing hee hath ſtooped ſo lowe vnto vs, it is not for any of vs to aduaunce himſelfe. And ſeeing wee haue no winges to mount vp aloft, let vs take heede that wee attempt it not: for ſo may wee fall and breake our neckes, mount wee neuer ſo litle.

Pſal 19 [illegible]
Pſal.11 [illegible]

But let vs marke moreouer, that his promiſe dooth importe alſo a condemnation to them that haue their eares continually beaten with the worde of GOD, and yet remaine hardhearted ſtill, and receiue no profite thereof at all. In deede the Goſpell (wherein the Law of righteouſneſſe is conteyned) is preached continually: and if wee be of that ſorte which S. 2.Tim.3.7. Paul ſpeaketh of, which are alwayes learning and neuer come to the knowledge of the trueth; thinke we that wee bee excuſable before God? Surely no. It will come to paſſe that whatſoeuer we haue at any time heard of the worde of God, the ſame muſt come to reckoning and we ſhall be reproued of vnthankfulneſſe, becauſe great treaſure ſhall haue periſhed without any benefite vnto vs. Wee ſhall not haue heard that Sermon in all our lyfe, which God will not lay to our charge at the latter day: as how? How haue you profited by it? Wee haue not heard one lecture, that ſhall not bee recited vnto vs. Let vs therefore bee well aduiſed, and whileſt the Lorde is willing to teach vs, giuing vs faithfull expounders of his worde, and dealing ſo familiarly with vs: let vs for our parte bee diligent to receiue it, and embracing the doctrine that is deliuered vnto vs, let vs ſhewe our ſelues more and more conformable to the ſame: not alledging the obſcuritie and depth of it therefore, as the Papiſtes doe, which goe about to ſhield them with their ignorance, ſaying that the holy Scripture is too high and ouer deepe to bee conceiued. It is true that the holy ſcripture is too high and too deepe: but that is in reſpect that wee be wrapped in miſtie darkeneſſe. But it is the office of GOD to inlighten vs; as wee ſhall ſee hereafter. Howſoeuer the matter ſtandeth; let vs aſſure our ſelues of this, that if wee yeelde our ſelues pliable to Gods direction, he will inſtruct vs faithfully in his worde, ſo as wee ſhall feele it to bee neere vnto vs. But yet is this neuer accompliſhed in vs, vntill our Lorde inſtruct vs by his holy ſpirit, together with the preaching of his worde by the mouthes of men. And that is the cauſe why Saint Paul in the x. Chapter to the Romans ſayth, that this ſentence is to bee Rom.10.6. applyed to the Goſpel. At the firſt ſight, it woulde ſeeme that S.Paul tooke it contrary to the meaning of Moſes. And for proofe thereof, doth not Moſes in this place ſpeake of the Law? Hee ſaith: The commaundement which I ordayne for thee this day. In ſaying, this day, hee ſpeaketh of his office. Nowe his office was to bring the Lawe and to publiſh it. It is ſayd in the firſt of Iohn, that the Lawe was giuen Iohn.1.17. by Moſes, but grace and trueth were giuen by Ieſus Chriſt: It ſeemeth not then that this can in any way agree with the Goſpell. But if we marke it well; wee ſhall finde it good reaſon, that Saint Paul ſaith, that this poynt is not verifyed, vntill wee come throughly to Chriſt. And why? Let vs take Moſes to witneſſe without going any further. Wee haue ſeene here afore, that in fourtie yeeres ſpace after the ſetting forth of the Lawe, the people had profited nothing in it. The reaſon thereof is this: Deut.29. 4. For thy God hath not giuen thee an vnderſtanding heart, euen to this day. Wee haue the Lawe beaten into our eares, and yet in the meane while wee are ſtill dulheadded, and conceiue not the meaning of Gods ſpeach. This (as I haue ſayd afore) proceedeth not of any faulte ỹ is in the Law; but of our owne wretched blindneſſe: As the Sunne is as bright to the blinde, as to all other men: but yet they bee not able to receiue lyke benefit by the light thereof: Euen ſo ſtandeth the caſe with vs. (Thus much for one poynt.) Inſomuch that as long as God ſpeaketh to vs but onely by the mouthes of men: It is but loſſe of time. And wherefore? Becauſe wee are deafe, wee are blinde: wee are dulheaded; neither is it ſufficient for vs that the commaundement bee layd directly before our eyes: that wee neede not to mount aboue the clowdes; and that wee neede not to diſcend into the deepe to ſeeke for it: for it muſt bee in our mouth and in our heart. But how ſhall we haue it in our mouth and in our heart? Soothly euen by Gods putting of it there by the grace of his holy ſpirit. Saint Paul therefore preſuppoſeth this grace to proceede from God peculiarly toward his elect; that he not onely offereth himſelfe freely vnto them, (which manner of ſpeach Moſes alſo did vſe when he ſayd, God ſheweth vs his goodnes after a ſpecial maner:) Deut.4.7. but alſo imprinteth it in our hartes, making vs to vnderſtand what he ſayth, by giuing vs the ſpirit of knowledge and diſcretion: for vntill God hath ſo wrought with vs, his word lyeth ſtill hidden from vs. And we heare what he ſaith by the Prophet Eſay: I wil (ſaith God) ſpeake vnto this Eſa.28 11.& 29.11.12. people in a ſtraunge and vnknowen language: And when I ſend forth my Prophets, euery man ſhall bee aſtoniſhed ſaying; What is this? What is it that God ſayth? For I will ſpeake to them in high Dutch, of purpoſe that they ſhall not vnderſtand one iotte, and ſo ſhall all the propheſies be vnto them, as a ſealed booke: which if you offer to a learned man, hee will anſwere: I would read in it, but the booke is cloſe and ſealed vp: therefore let it be opened and I will ſee what matter is in it: Againe it ſhall bee a booke layd open, yea but as a booke offered to the vnlearned, and to little children; and they ſhall ſay, I ſee heere is a booke, a man may well perceaue the letters, but I haue not bin at ſchoole, I am not learned: I ſee well the letters, but I knowe not what they meane. Wee ſee that our Lorde ſpeaketh, and yet notwithſtanding, he is not vnderſtoode. Therefore let vs marke that Moſes preſuppoſed God to haue giuen vnderſtanding to the people. Now his giuing of it was by the meane of Ieſus Chriſt our Lord, and that not through the Lawe, but through the Goſpel. The Lawe of it ſelfe bringeth nothing but condemnation, conuerting men be- Rom.4.15. & 7.7. fore God, making forth their proces, and finding them guiltie: as wee haue heretofore alledged. The caſe beeing ſo: there is but onely one meane, whereby to bee inlightened from God, ſo as wee may attaine to the knowledge of his holy will for our ſaluation: And that is to acknowledge the grace which is offered vnto vs in his Goſpell through our Sauiour Chriſt.

It is not therefore without cauſe that Saint Paul addeth this title vnto the worde: It is (ſaith Rom.10. he) the word of faith that wee preach vnto you.

He calleth it the worde of faith, when wee not onely knowe whereto we be bound, and vnderſtand what God exacteth and requireth of vs, and what hee commandeth vs: but alſo, when wee come to him as deſtitute of all goodneſſe, beſeeching him to vouchſafe to take pitie of our want and needineſſe, and to enrich vs with his graces. When wee ſeeke God in this maner, and aske of him that which wee want: then haue wee the worde of faith, and not the word of the Lawe. For the worde of the Law ſayth, Doe this and doe that, and beware of ſuch a thing, which if thou tranſgreſſe, beholde the curſe is prepared for thee. By the worde of the Lawe wee ſee whereunto wee are bound, but wee bee not able to diſcharge it; but wee ſtand all confounded and damned. It behooueth vs therefore to haue the worde of faith, that is to ſay, to taſte of Gods promiſes, whereby hee ſheweth himſelfe ſo bountifull towarde vs through our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt. When we receiue this as it is offred vnto vs in the Goſpel; then is that fulfilled which is ſpoken here; to wit, that the worde is not aboue the clowdes, that it is not in the bottome of the deepe, nor on the other ſide of the Sea: but in our mouth and in our heart. Wee haue therefore to conſider firſt of all, that God holdeth men ſufficiently guiltie, after hee hath once taught them. For as ſoone as the worde is preached, there is preſent condemnation to all them that cannot profite thereby, and there is no way for them to ſcape. And why? For God hath called vs, and wee haue not aunſwered him: he hath ſhewed vs the way, and we haue not vouchſafed to enter therein: to bee ſhorte, wee ſee that when Gods worde hath bin preached vnto vs, there is matter ſufficient to reprooue vs, and wee cannot reply vnto it. But herewithall let vs marke alſo, that as touching our parte, the worde of GOD is at it were aloft aboue the skyes, or as if it were in the bottome of the deepe, notwithſtanding that wee haue our eares continually beaten therewith. Herein wee ſee the wretchedneſſe of our nature, that though God ſpeake vnto vs with open mouth, and teach vs neuer ſo faithfully, yet doe wee continue ſtill as we were, ſo as no amendment at all is perceiued in vs, for all the long ſchooling that God hath beſtowed on vs. What is to be done then? That GOD hauing ſpoken by the mouth of men, and by the holy ſcripture, doe alſo gather vs vnto him, and make vs to feele his goodneſſe towarde vs. For it is not ſufficient for vs to vnderſtand the thinges that are ſhewed vs in the holy ſcripture: but wee muſt alſo bee touched to the quicke with them in our heartes, that wee may bee well aſſured of Gods fatherly loue towardes vs. Whē wee are once at that poynt, there is no more hyding, then is there no more darkeneſſe in the holy ſcripture: but it is a ſufficient inſtruction, inſomuch as it is good and expedient for vs. For this cauſe dooth Saint Paul ſende vs to our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt, ſaying, That if we beleeue with our heart to Iuſtification, and Rom.10.6. confeſſe with our mouth to ſaluation that Chriſt dyed, and that GOD rayſed him againe, then are wee in that perfection which Moſes ſpeaketh of here. Nowe it is true that Saint Paul dooth vſe in this place, the worde Hell, for the worde Deepe: which hee dooth for the fitter applying of that ſentence to his owne purpoſe, which Moſes did vſe after a general manner. Moſes ſpeaketh after the common cuſtome of men. O what is hee that can dig down into the bottome of the deepe? Who is he that can mount vp aloft aboue the skyes? Saint Paul minding to apply this to our Sauiour Chriſt, ſayth, that we need not to alledge either heauen or hell, or aught elſe that can bee imagined in this worlde; God dooth ſufficiently ſhewe himſelfe vnto vs, in that wee haue witneſſe that Ieſus Chriſt dyed and is riſen againe. For wee knowe that by the vertue of that worde, Hell is bereft of all power ouer vs; and heauen is ſet open for vs. True it is that wee muſt beginne with this ſimplicitie that Moſes ſpeaketh of. When hee ſaith that the worde is in our mouth, and in our heart; his meaning is that the being thereof in our mouth, is to the end wee ſhoulde talke of it, and ſo become learned: and that the being thereof in our heart, is to the ende wee ſhoulde vnderſtand it. But Saint Paul goeth yet farther: not that hee wreſteth and wringeth the Teſtimonie of Moſes: but hee ſheweth that the ſame is in very deed fulfilled: to wit, that wee haue power to ſpeake the worde of GOD as wee ought, and that we haue it alſo imprinted in our hearts. He ſayth then, firſt that wee muſt come vnto our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt, according to this ſaying, which is ſet downe in another place, namely, that Ieſus Chriſt is the ende of the Lawe, and alſo that Rom.10.4. hee is the lyfe of it. Then we ſee that if wee meane to profite by the holy Scripture, wee muſt hye vs to our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt; for hee is the liuely Image of God; it is he in whome Col.1.15.& 2.3. are comprehended al the treaſures of wiſedome and vnderſtanding. Thus much concerning that poynt.

Are wee nowe come vnto Ieſus Chriſt? It behooueth vs to knowe the principall thing that is giuen vs in him, to wit, that wee bee redeemed by his death and paſſion; for he hath ſuffered the paynes that were due vnto vs, and hath borne that dreadfull vengeance of God, which belonged vnto vs, and hath thereby made vs free. That then is the benefite which wee reape by the death and paſſion of our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt: and by his reſurrection hee hath purchaſed righteouſneſſe and lyfe for vs: and hath alſo opened vnto vs the kingdome of heauen, from the which wee were earſt baniſhed. Nowe firſt of all, when wee call to minde the death, and paſſion of our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt, wee muſt needes bee deliuered from all anguiſhe and diſtreſſe of minde. For hee telleth vs (as it is ſayd here) that it is not for vs to alledge any more; Who ſhall goe downe into hell? (as we haue beene woont to doe.) Howe nowe? If all ſinners muſt be condemned before God: ſeeing that wee bee ſinners; ſurely wee bee all vndone. And who is he that can aſſure mee that hell ſhall haue no power ouer me? I feele the ſinne which doth accuſe mee, and that is all one as if I ſhoulde beholde the gulfe open readie to ſwallowe mee vp; Sathan hath gotten the maiſterie ouer me. See how men are diſmayed and plunged in continuall griefe and trouble of minde, vntill they haue receiued knowledge of the benefite that commeth by the death and paſſion of our Lord Ieſus Chriſt. But we knowe that our Lorde Ieſus ſuffered the ſorrowes of hell, and yet was not Act.2.24. holden priſoner of the ſame (as Sainct Peter ſheweth in the Actes:) whereby wee be well aſſured, that the bandes of death are broken, and that hell hath no more power to ſwallow vs. And why? Becauſe the Lorde Ieſus hath purchaſed vs freedome. But howe know we that? By the Goſpell. But if I ſtill ſtande in doubt whether I bee deliuered from the curſe of God; it is as much as if I ſhoulde drawe Chriſt againe from death: for hee is not deade in vaine. To what ende is it? Let vs conſider a little wherefore the onely ſonne of God yeelded himſelfe to ſuch ſhame; as to be hanged on tree, and to be as it were accurſed before God his father, (according as wee haue ſeene euen in the one and twentith Chapter of this booke,) and to bee Deut.21.23 Eſa.53.2. beaten by the hande of God, vntill hee ſeemed as vile as a Leper, as the Prophet Eſay ſaith in the 53. Chapter, that hee bare the burden of all our offences: as if he had beene a miſerable ſinner; and was enuironed with ſuch extreme ſorowe, that hee wiſt not what to ſay, but to crie Matt.27.46. out: My God my God, why haſt thou forſaken me? And thinke wee that the ſonne of God dalyed when he was ſo humbled, yea and not onely was made vtterly of no reputation, as Sainct Phil.2.7. Act.2.24. Paul ſaieth: but alſo fought with the pangues and ſorrowes of death: He offered himſelfe in the perſon of vs, as a wretched ſinner to beare that vengeance of God which was due vnto vs, ſo as (to bee ſhort) he knewe that God was bent againſt him, to thunder downe vppon him for our ſakes. Foraſmuch then as we know that Ieſus Chriſt abode ſuch incounters for our redemption: ſtande wee yet ſtill ſcanning and replying, as who woulde ſay, O I cannot tell, and howe can I bee ſure of it? Surely that were euen as much as to deny the death and paſſion of our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt. For it is a plaine ſcorning of all that hee hath endured and ſuffered for our ſaluation, when wee acknowledge not the fruite that doeth growe vnto vs thereby. So then the firſt point is, that hauing the Goſpel, wee haue whereuppon to reſt, ſo as wee neede not to alledge: What is he that ſhall goe downe into hel? For Ieſus Chriſt hath beene there, to the end that wee ſhoulde not come there at all: and at this day hee giueth vs witneſſe of the ſame by the Goſpel, to the intent wee ſhoulde knowe that his death hath alwayes preſent power and operation for all ſuch as flee vnto it for refuge.

Alſo there is on the other ſide, that wee haue no more cauſe to replie, Who is hee that ſhall mount vp to the heauens? Why? That is aſmuch (ſaieth Sainct Paul) as to plucke downe Chriſt from the heauenly glorie, whereunto hee is exalted. Wee ſay in an article of our faith, that Chriſt deſcended into hell. In ſo ſaying wee ought to aſſure our ſelues, that we bee nowe out of daunger, for hee entred thither to the ende that wee ſhould be free from it. We adde thereunto, that hee is alſo aſcended into heauen. And why? To the ende that wee might knowe that the gate thereof ſtandeth open for vs. We heare alſo how hee tolde his diſciples: In my fathers houſe are many manſiIohn.14.2. ons: ſignifying therby that heauen was not onely for himſelfe, but that it is a common heritage for all the faithfull, and that hee hath taken poſſeſſion thereof, as it were in our behalfe. Nowe then, we proteſt in the article of our beliefe, that the heauens at this time ſtand open for vs: and that wee ought to aſſure our ſelues to come thither, becauſe our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt, our heade, is gone vp thither and will not bee ſeparated from the members of his bodie. Notwithſtanding that wee haue confeſſed this: yet wee ſtand ſcanning ſtill, and are full of wauering fancies: Ah, ſay wee, I know not for all that, what ſhall become of mee, I cannot tell whether God doth recken me to be one of his children: who is he that hath bin in heauen, who is he that hath come thence againe to bring vs newes? See theſe diueliſh blaſphemies. This is not onely to ſtande in doubt of the trueth of the Goſpel, but alſo to teare Chriſt Ieſus in peeces, aſmuch as we can. O horrible outrage againſt the ſonne of God: for hee that doubteth of his ſaluation, ſheweth himſelfe to beleeue no whit of that which wee confeſſe, namely that Ieſus Chriſt hath ſoueraigne dominion both in heauen & in earth: that God gouerneth the world by him, ÿ he maketh al creatures to kneel down to do him Phil.2.10. homage: to be ſhort, wee acknowledge not that the Lorde Ieſus Chriſt is riſen againe from the deade: but to the vttermoſt of our power, we goe about to deface and to aboliſh the power of the holy Ghoſt, which ſhewed it ſelfe in his reſurrection. See nowe in what caſe wee be, if we receiue not the Teſtimonie of the Goſpell, to aſſure vs, that wee bee as it were, rapted vp into heauen, euen to enter directly into the poſſeſſion of all thoſe goods which ly hidden from vs, and are not viſible; as the Prophet Eſay Eſa.64.4. 1.Cor.2.9. ſaieth: ſuch as the heart of man is not able to conceiue. If wee ſee not an open gappe euen vnto hell; to ſpyte Sathan, to defie death, and to triumph ouer all thinges that may impeach our ſaluation: well, let vs on the one ſide conſider howe ſainct Paul ſaieth, that when wee haue receiued the Goſpell through faith, wee bee Eph.2.6. foorthwith ſet downe in the heauenly places: we bee (as yee would ſay) enthroniſhed with the Angels of Paradiſe, as alreadie raiſed vp thither by God. It is true that heere beneath, wee be as wretched wormes creeping vppon the grounde; but when wee haue once 1.Pet.1.3.4.5. the doctrine of faith, we haue the earneſt penny of our ſaluation; according as ſaint Peter ſaieth; that through faith wee may put our ſelues into the handes of God in ſuch manner, that lifting vp our eyes & minds into heauẽ, we be brought in thither, becauſe that Ieſus Chriſt our heade is there before in our behalfe, and hath there prepared the heritage which he will hold in cōmon with vs. Thus ye ſee how we muſt practiſe this point, following the exhortation of S.Paul. Moreouer wee muſt likewiſe marke howe hee ſaith; that wee muſt beleeue with the heart to iuſtification, and confeſſe with the mouth to ſaluation. I haue heretofore ſhewed you briefly the ſubſtance of our faith; howe it muſt reſt wholly vppon the death and reſurrection of our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt: I ſay vppon his death, becauſe that hee by his obedience, hath put away all our iniquities and tranſgreſſions: hee hath ſuffered the puniſhment that was due vnto vs, to diſcharge vs of the ſame, he hath alſo diſpatched away the curſe which lay vppon vs. So much concerning the firſt point.

Nowe concerning the ſeconde; wee muſt vnderſtande, that by his riſing againe he hath purchaſed righteouſneſſe vnto vs, and therby ſhewed himſelfe a conquerour ouer ſinne and death: and his reſurrection doeth alſo import that hee is aſcended into heauen, of purpoſe to take the poſſeſſion of that inheritance, which hee will make common vnto vs, and of the which hee will make vs partakers with himſelfe. This is the ſubſtance of our faith. Nowe it behooueth to haue this faith both in our heart and in our mouth. Truely it were to ſmall purpoſe if wee did but talke of the graces and bleſſings which our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt hath brought vnto vs; as wee ſee a great number of bablers doe; they talke much thereof, but what are they the better for it, ſauing that it increaſeth their condemnation? It is no great matter then to haue the confeſſion of faith on the tippe of the tongue before men: for it muſt be rooted in the heart, we muſt (ſay I) haue yͤ vertue of the death and reſurrection of our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt imprinted within vs, and ſainct Paul ſaieth, that that ſerueth vs for righteouſneſſe. And why? Becauſe wee knowe that wee bee reconciled to GOD, inſomuch that Chriſt hath taken our burden vppon him, ſo as wee being thereof diſcharged are become acceptable vnto God, ſo yͭ he will no more impute our ſinnes vnto vs. And why? For Chriſt ſhould haue ſuffered in vain for vs, if we ſhould nowe be called to reckening for our ſins. Thus then wee ſtand acquited through the ſatiſfaction made for vs by Chriſt Ieſus: and that is the righteouſneſſe whereof Sainct Paul ſpeaketh. For when wee receiue Ieſus Chriſt, it is certaine, that hee reneweth vs by his holy Spirit. And wee bee not onely adopted to bee the children of God by his meanes: but alſo wee receiue therewith the warrant of our Election, which is that wee bee reſerued for the inheritage of God. So then let vs vnderſtande, that there is none other meane whereby wee may attaine to righteouſneſſe, but by beleeuing with the heart.

Nowe this worde Beleeuing importeth that wee ſhoulde ſeeke in Ieſus Chriſt, for that which wee want in our ſelues. For if wee reſt vppon the Lawe, for as much as it commaundeth vs to doe that which wee ought to doe, it is nothing woorth. But if wee repaire vnto God, knowing that hee is readie to releeue our wants: that is the thing which is meant by the worde *Beleeue*, according to the meaning of Sainct Paul. And of a trueth, when wee doe ſo beleeue, and are ſo iuſtified: the ſame ſufficeth for our ſaluation: For iuſtification doeth of it ſelfe import life euerlaſting. Neuertheleſſe Sainct Paul doeth put ouer ſaluation to the confeſſion, doing vs to vnderſtande, that the children of GOD ought not to bee tongue tyed, but to magnifie the goodneſſe whereof they haue had triall, and euerie man to edifie his neighbour as much as in him lyeth.

Nowe then like as wee haue our heartes ſet vppon God to receiue his worde which is offered vnto vs: ſo muſt wee haue our mouth open to glorifie him, by acknowledging howe much wee are beholding vnto him. They therefore which haue through faith embraced the benefites of the death and reſurrection of our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt, ought to indeuour to ſet the ſame foorth, ſaying, Our GOD hath ſo powred out the ineſtimable treaſures of his goodneſſe towardes vs, as it is good reaſon that all our whole life ſhoulde bee ſpent in glorifying him, and yeelding him praiſe and thankſgiuing: according alſo as Sainct Peter in his firſt Epiſtle ſaieth: that the ſame is the 1.Pet.1.15. verie ende why we were brought out of the horrible darkeneſſe of death, to bee conueied into the kingdome of Gods light, and into the kingdome of life. S.Paul then doeth expreſly match the confeſſion of the mouth with ſaluation, not that faith being right and true is not ſufficient of it ſelfe: nor that wee doe purchaſe Saluation by ſpeaking: but to ſhewe that faith cannot bee without confeſſion. Whereby wee ſee that they which nowadayes doe renounce God by holding their peace, or keepe the knowledge of the Goſpell, as it were, buried within them; doe defraude GOD of the honour that is due vnto him, and neuer knewe what faith meant. O ſay they, I keepe my faith to my ſelfe. Yea? Then doeſt thou make the holy Ghoſt a lyer. As for thoſe that bee of the Popedome, communicating with ydolaters in al their abhominations, and being readie to turne with euerie winde: if a man tell them that it is a kinde of renouncing God, and a forſaking of him that redeemed them from death. O (ſay they) I holde my faith in my heart. It is vnpoſſible that there ſhoulde bee faith in the heart, but that confeſſion with the mouth ſhoulde preſently followe: or elſe were the holie Ghoſt a lyer, as witneſſeth Sainct Paul. And that is the thing which hee meant in ſaying; that when we haue beleeued with the heart to iuſtification, wee muſt then alſo confeſſe with our mouth, that wee haue a redeemer which hath deliuered vs from death, and opened vnto vs the kingdome of heauen, to the intent it ſhoulde nowe bee our inheritance. To bee ſhort, we ſee howe ſainct Paul agreeth very well with Moſes. For albeit that Moſes intended heere to reprooue ſuch as had hearde the lawe, and to conuict them of vnthankfulneſſe: yet hath hee ſhewed afore, that it is not ynough for vs to haue our eares beaten with the literall worde, vnleſſe that God doe alſo giue vs vnderſtanding thereof: and that doeth hee giue vs by our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt. It followeth then, that vnleſſe the lawe bee matched with the Goſpel; it is not neere vnto vs: For although that wee for our part bee dayly taught it, and that the worde doe dwell amongſt vs; yet ſhall we wander farre from it, and receiue no taſte of that which is vttered vnto vs. That then is the meaning of Moſes. And Sainct Paul doeth verie well agree therewith, in that he telleth vs that we muſt reſort to Ieſus Chriſt, and acknowledge what profite wee receiue by him, and to what ende hee was ſent vnto vs from God his father. And moreouer let vs acknowledge it in ſuch ſort, as wee may reſt wholly vppon his Goſpell, and ſtande contented when God hath ſpoken vnto vs; and not go about to fetch downe Ieſus Chriſt from aboue, as folke that woulde crucifie him newe againe. Let it ſuffice vs, that hee hath fully redeemed vs by that one ſacrifice wherewith hee hath made perfect ſatisfaction for all. Let it ſuffice vs that hee is aſcended into heauen, to the ende to drawe vs vnto him. And ſith we haue receiued yͤ knowledge heereof by the Goſpell; let vs make our profite of it, and beſeech God that this doctrine may firſt of all be printed in our hearts, to the ende that being iuſtified by his free goodneſſe, wee may ſtande fully aſſured vppon the redemption and ſatisfaction which our Lord Ieſus Chriſt hath purchaſed for vs, becauſe wee haue no righteouſneſſe in vs. And thereupon let euery of vs endeuour to glorifie God, knowing that hee hath adopted vs to the ende that he might be magnified in all our whole life, according as it is ſaide in the Prophet Eſay, The people which I haue created ſhall ſhewe forth my praiſes. Eſa.43.7.& 21.

Nowe let vs fall downe before the maieſtie of our good God with acknowledgement of our ſins, beſeeching him to make vs to feele them better than heretofore wee haue done, and that wee may attaine to the remedie; that is to ſay, the forgiueneſſe of them in our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt. And that foraſmuch as our God ceaſeth not daily to inſtruct and to edifie vs in his word, it may pleaſe him not to ſuffer vs to bee deafe hearers of him, but rather to pearce our eares, to the ende wee may become throughly obedient vnto him, and holde vs therein; and to ſhew forth the vertue of his holy ſpirite, to the ende, that the thing which is ſaide heere may bee accompliſhed in vs: And that when we haue belieued with our heart, we may alſo confeſſe his holy name with our mouth, and our whole life may bee agreeable to the ſame confeſſion. That it may pleaſe him to deale ſo graciouſly not with vs onely, but alſo with all Nations and people vpon earth, &c.

On Wedneſday the xxij. of Aprill, 1556.

The CLXXII. Sermon, which is the fourth vpon the thirtith Chapter.

15 See; I haue this day ſet before thee, lyfe and good, death and euill.

16 For I commaund thee this day to loue the Lorde thy GOD, and to walke in his wayes, and to keepe his commaundementes, and his ordinaunces and his iudgementes: that thou maieſt liue and increaſe, and that the Lorde thy GOD may bleſſe thee in the Lande which thou goeſt to poſſeſſe.

17 If thy heart turne away, and thou obey not, but beeſt led aſide, and boweſt thy ſelfe to other gods, and serueſt them:

18 I doe tell you this day, that you ſhall ſurely periſhe, and not prolong your dayes in the lande, into the which nowe paſſing ouer Iordan thou goeſt to poſſeſſe it.

19 I take heauen and earth this day to witneſſe againſt you, that I haue ſet before you life and death, bleſsing and curſe. Therefore chooſe life that thou maiſt liue, thou and thy ſeede,

20 By louing the Lorde thy GOD, by obeying his voyce, and by cleauing vnto him : for hee is thy life and the prolonger of thy dayes : that thou maiſt continue in the Land which the Lord hath ſworne to thy fathers, Abraham, Iſaac, and Iacob, to giue vnto them.

WE ſawe yeſterday howe Moſes did magnifie the authoritie of the worde of God which was committed vnto him, ſaying: Seeing that God is come nere vnto vs, and hath opened his holy mouth to declare vnto vs his will, we muſt holde vs wholly thereunto, and without ſeeking any further, wee muſt not aske any more, who ſhall goe vp into heauen, or who ſhall go downe into the deepe? For wee haue ſure witneſſe and ſuch a one as cannot faile vs. Seeing that God hath ſpoken let vs followe it. He addeth here moreouer; *See, I haue this day ſet before you, life and bleſſing, death and euill.* Whereby hee ſheweth vs, that the worde of God, when it is taught vs, doeth carry with it ſuch vertue, and ſuch power, that we ought to holde the things which are there tolde vs, to bee as certaine, as if they were alreadie done in deede. The worde which Moſes doeth vſe in ſaying, *See*, as if he ſhoulde point with his finger, to make the matter viſible vnto vs, doeth import that wee muſt yeelde ſuch reuerence to the worde of God, that wee muſt eſteeme the thinges therein conteined, to be as preſent vnto vs. And the ſame is to bee applied as well to the threatenings as to the promiſes. If God doe promiſe vs any thing, it is not for vs to caſt doubts thereof, [and to ſay,] Yea, but how may it come to paſſe, ſeeing there is no likelyhood thereof? Let vs ſticke to that which hee telleth vs. Likewiſe if God doe threaten vs, wee muſt tremble and not doe as they doe which tarie for the ſtrokes, for they be ſo ouertaken vnawares, as they haue not the power to crie alas, they be ouer raught with feare, and God giueth them not the grace to returne vnto him, becauſe they coulde not finde in their hearts to doe him the honour, to ſubmit themſelues vnto him at ſuch time as he warned them a farre off that hee is their Iudge. Thus are we to practiſe this ſentence which Moſes vſeth in ſaying, That when wee heare the worde of God, hee will haue vs to reſt altogether thereon and to ſettle our wittes wholly vnto it. And this ought to ſerue vs to double purpoſe: that when as it ſhall ſeeme vnto vs, that it is but loſt time in this worlde to ſerue God, yet notwithſtanding we may not ſurceaſe to obey him, waiting for the bleſſing which hee hath promiſed vs, and aſſuring our ſelues, that wee ſhall not be deceiued becauſe he is faithfull. And likewiſe on the contrarie part, when wee be tempted to doe euill, in hope that we ſhall remaine vnpuniſhed: let vs bee holden backe with this bridle, namely, that wee cannot eſcape the wrath of God, becauſe hee hath declared that hee is the Iudge to doe vengeance for ſuch thinges. The faithfull therefore in ordering their life, muſt alwayes bee fully reſolued of this, that in ſeruing of God, they bee ſure that hee will guide them, and that their ende ſhalbe good and happie. But in the meane while the worlde ſhall ſcorne them, and they ſhall haue many temptations to turne them away; they ſhall ſee the wicked proſper, they ſhall ſee them make their triumphes; and on the otherſide they ſhall all that while ſee themſelues goe to wracke. Nowe when wee bee thus toſſed, wee muſt take our ſtay in the worde of GOD. Seeing that God hath promiſed to bleſſe vs, when wee walke according to his will: we are ſure that he will not abuſe vs; for his worde is the infallible trueth; and therefore let vs ſticke vnto it. Againe, it ſeemeth vnto vs, that we ſhoulde make mountains and work wonders, when we let looſe the bridle to our owne luſtes: Let vs feare God: for he telleth vs, that when men haue once misbehaued Gen.4.7. themſelues, their ſinne abideth ſtil at their doore and keepeth continuall watch, ſo as when they haue wandered hither and thither, and paſſed their boundes neuer ſo farre, yet they muſt come to reckening. Seeing it is ſo, let vs learne to bridle our ſelues, and not to tarrie till God execute his iudgementes vppon vs: but let vs rather preuent them through feare. Nowe wee ſee to what end Moſes hath declared, that he ſet before the eies of the people, both life and good, death and euill: verily euen to aſſure the Iewes thereof, that they might no longer ſtande in doubt. And wherefore? For there needeth nothing to carrie vs away, as wee ſee too much by experience. For it is a verie rare thing for men to reſt them vppon the promiſes of God ſteadfaſtly without wauering, they bee blinded with the thinges of the worlde: and vnleſſe God doe out of hande accompliſh the thing which hee hath ſpoken; they thinke they ſhalbe deceiued. And although they dare not accuſe God of vnfaithfulnes: yet can they not find in their hearts to doe him the honour to thinke him to be true. Againe, although God threaten vs, yet are we ſo dulheaded, ẏ euery of vs perſwadeth himſelfe ẏ he ſhal go vnpuniſhed, and ſcape ſcotfree. Seeing then ẏ there is ſuch lightnes in vs, & that we bee ſo wauering, we ought ſo much the more to put the leſſon in practiſe which is ſet downe heere.

Now as touching life and good; it is aſmuch as if he ſhould ſay, all manner of happineſſe: and likewiſe by death and euill, is ment all maner of wretchednes. Indeede this preſent life is not the full meaſure or perfection of the bleſſings which God hath promiſed vs. It is no more but a certaine taſt of them. Death alſo is but a little token of Gods wrath. The ſtate of the life to come is the perfection both of weale and woe. But Moſes ſpeaking vnto the people, that were yet holden vnder the figures and ſhadowes of the lawe, did name life, and thereunto added this worde bleſſing, to ſignifie, that the people by ſeruing of God ſhoulde bee bleſſed, euen in all manner of felicitie; and contrarywiſe that they muſt of neceſſitie looke for all manner of wretchedneſſe, if they did fall away frõ the ſeruice of God. For the better confirmation hereof, hee ſaieth, *This day I commaunde thee to loue the Lorde thy God, and to keepe his commaundements, and to cleaue vnto him, that thou maieſt come to poſſeſſe the Lande which hee hath promiſed to thy fathers.* Heere is a confirmation to holde the people conuicted, that they might haue no occaſion to reply any more, but be compelled to confeſſe that the Lawe of God ſerued to call them to ſaluation, if ſo bee they had obeyed him: And contrariwiſe that it ſhoulde bee vnto them a good Teſtimonie of their condemnation, ſo as they coulde not pretende any excuſe, ſeeing they were ſo well inſtructed, and yet continued hardhearted and ſtubborne ſtill. Moſes ſheweth this by the ſubſtance that is contained in this doctrine. What is it (ſaieth hee) that I haue inioyned thee? It is, that thou ſhouldeſt loue the Lorde thy God. Hath not nature left this marke imprinted in our heartes, namely, that wee bee created euen to this ende: to loue our God? Wherfore are we in this world? Wherfore doth God keepe vs heere? Is it not reaſon that he ſhould haue ſome homage of vs, and that forſomuch as wee be his creatures, wee ſhoulde haue an eye vnto him, & he bee the ſcope of our life? If it be not ſo, what order will there be? Wee ſee in this worlde very many Teſtimonies of Gods wonderful wiſedome, iuſtice, righteouſnes, and power, and he hath placed vs here beneath, to beholde al theſe thinges; and alſo he hath faſhioned vs after his owne image and likeneſſe. Gen.1.26. Now if our eyes bee blindfolded, if wee bee dulheads, if we wil not vnderſtand the things which haue bin ſhewed vnto vs, is it not a kinde of turning of all thinges vpſidowne which God hath eſtabliſhed both beneath and aboue? Yes ſurely. Ye ſee then howe it is an vtter confounding and ouerthrowing of all order, whẽ men worſhip not their God, ne ſubmit themſelues vnto him. It is not therefore without cauſe that Moſes alledgeth this reaſon, when he ment to ſhew vnto the Iewes, that it was not for thẽ to argue any more as touching that doctrine, ſeeing that the ende whereto it tended was that God ſhould be honored and haue his right. But this word *loue* importeth yet more. For it ought to touch men more liuely, than if he had ſpoken ſimply of feare & ſubiection. Indeede Moſes addeth by and by yͤ wee muſt obey our God, and that we muſt keepe his ſtatutes & his decrees. God then doth iuſtly require of vs a ſeruice, & we ought not to denie it him: but yet hee beginneth at loue, to the intent to draw vs vnto him after a louing manner, and not by force as if we woulde ſay, well it is ynough for vs to ſerue our God: but yet let vs goe to it with grinding our teeth, becauſe no man can exempt himſelfe from that neceſſitie. But Moſes ſheweth that the doctrine of yͤ lawe ought not only to holde vs in awe, and to bring all our ſenſes and affections in captiuitie vnder the obedience of God: but alſo that it ought to win & poſſeſſe our harts, ſo as we ſhold come of good will to offer our ſelues vnto God, to bee altogether his. Let vs therfore conſider that God doth vs a ſingular good turne, when hee beginneth at this point, namely, yͤ he will haue vs to loue him. But we be alſo exhorted to ſerue him, not by cõpulſion, as yͤ moſt part of the world doth, in whõ (as wee ſee) there is nothing but ſlauiſh feare. Therefore let vs learne ſo to gouerne all our affections as it may be our chiefe pleaſure to ſerue God. Now on the contrary part, whereas Moſes ioyneth the obedience of the law with loue, therby hee ſheweth that there may bee hypocrites which ſhall make a countenance to loue God, & will boaſt themſelues therof with full mouth: but yet the very true proofe thereof is that wee honour his maieſtie and ſubmit our ſelues to the ſame. For God hath not bounde vs to him by halues: what manner of ſuperiority hath he ouer vs? Now then like as a child loueth his father, & as a good ſubiect loueth his prince; euen ſo muſt we loue our God, that is to ſay, wee muſt beare ſuch reuerẽce towards him, as to couet nothing but to frame our ſelues to his good pleaſure in al things, ſo as he may weald vs at his wil, and bee glorified in all our life: And foraſmuch as he wil haue a triall of vs; when hee hath giuen vs his lawe and ſet vs downe the rule whereby our life ſhould be guided: if we behaue our ſelues thereafter, then doe we ſhew indeed that we loue our God aright. And therfore let vs conclude cõcerning all ſuch as pretend deuotion & holines, (of which ſort we ſee many nowadays in yͤ popedom yea & euen where the goſpel is preached, there be many that make pretence to be rauiſhed and caried away with a zeale) that all that euer they do is but ſmoke, vnleſſe our life bee anſwerable thereto, ſo as we follow the wil of our God, & indeuour to obey him by keeping his commandemẽts & ordinances. That (I ſay) is yͤ true mirror where we may behold whether we loue our God or not, and whether there be any faith & purenes in vs. And herewithall Moſes telleth the people againe, that they ſhall not loue God but to their owne profite & welfare: as if hee ſhoulde ſay, although God doe by iuſt title, require that wee ſhoulde loue him, yet doth he not that in reſpect of his owne profite or aduantage, for he can receiue nothing of vs. Howe then? He ſeeketh and procureth our welfare. For hee ſeeth verie well that we be miſerable when wee are fallen away from him: and therfore he is deſirous to win vs, not for any gaine that can therby redound to himſelfe, but to the intent that all the benefite thereof ſhoulde redound vnto vs. Nowe then what a churliſhnes is it, that men cannot finde in their heartes to ſubmit themſelues vnto God, ſpecially ſeeing that he neuertheles hath ſuch a care of their welfare, that he ſeeketh them, and taketh paines to reduce them to him, howbeit (as I ſaid afore) not for that he can be any thing bettered therby for his part, but becauſe he wold not haue them to periſh. Seeing then yͤ we know this, muſt we not needs be too too dulheded, yea ſtarke mad, if our harts be not meekened; yea & not onely meekened to ſtoope vnder the obedience of God; but alſo therewithal ſet on fire with a zeale to come vnto him, & to bende all our indeuour that way? Nowe wee perceiue in effect whereat Moſes amed in all this ſentence. And moreouer on the contrarie ſide hee doeth alſo ſet downe the threatenings; for (as I haue ſaid) hee expoundeth more at length this doctrine, which he had erſt touched in fewe wordes. See, I ſet before thee this day good and euill, life and death. Hauing ſaide ſo, hee taketh the firſt part thereof. For (ſaieth hee) I craue nothing of thee, but that thou ſhouldeſt loue the Lorde thy God, that by obeying him thou mighteſt liue and poſſeſſe the land which hee hath promiſed vnto thy fathers, which is as it were, a pawne of his loue, and the true felicitie vnto the which thou art called, for to attaine to it, that is to ſay the kingdome of heauen. Thus much concerning the firſt part.

Nowe he commeth to the ſeconde and ſaith, *If thou turne away, and rebell, and beeſt caried to ſerue ſtraunge Gods: I tell thee, that thou ſhalt periſh*, (ſaith hee) and thou ſhalt not eſcape the hande of the Lorde thy God. Looke not to prolong thy dayes when you ſhall haue ſo deſpiſed him which hath all goodneſſe in his owne power, and will in the end reuenge himſelfe of the diſpiſers of his worde. Nowe wee ſee the meaning of Moſes in generall. It remaineth for vs to marke the manner of ſpeech which hee vſeth. He ſaith, *If thy heart looke backe not to obey, and that thou beeſt moued to obey ſtraunge Gods and to ſerue them.* When hee ſaith, If thy heart turne backe, his intent is to expreſſe heere the malice of men, which couet nothing but to flee from God. For if we were not caried away by our wicked affections, it is certaine that euerie of vs woulde followe this Principle, and the ſeede which is in vs; namely, That foraſmuch as there is but one God, therefore we ought to worſhippe and ſerue him. Let men bee as wicked as they liſt, and let them ſtriue as much as they can to extinguiſh al manner of light, that they may haue no more reaſon in them: (as we ſee many doe, whoſe whole delight and indeuour is to make themſelues verie beaſtes); yet doeth this remaine ſtill engrauen in them, That there is a God which ought to be ſerued. What ſhall become of vs then, if we ſeeke him not as we ought to doe? Againe, ſee we not the worlde howe it is ſo farre out of courſe, that there is nothing but confuſion throughout all, and that thereuppon euery man goeth aſtray? Whereof commeth it (ſay I) that we bee ſo witleſſe, as to follow the wicked trade of other men, and yet bee compelled to condemne the ſame? Euen of this, that wee turne away our heartes backe; that is to ſay, that euerie of vs wrappeth himſelfe in wilfull blindneſſe, and euery of vs ſetteth himſelfe backe, notwithſtanding that we haue beene taught the contrarie. For albeit that it is true without exception, that all they which turne away from the truth, doe it of a certaine wickedneſſe: yet notwithſtanding, we bee double folde the leſſe excuſable, when wee haue bin taught by the word, ſo as God hath ſhewed himſelfe vnto vs familiarly. Therefore when we heare this ſaying of Moſes, wee muſt apply it to our vſe. For we ſee how our Lorde hath ſhewed vs the way of ſaluation by his Goſpel, wee ſee how he continueth it ſtill from day to day: what will become of vs then, if wee ſtray away? Wee ſhall not bee as the Turkes, or as the verie Papiſtes: but it ſhalbe vpbraided vs that wee haue turned our heartes backe, and that where as God had ſet vs in the good way, and reached vs his hande to guide vs: wee haue beene frowarde, and woulde not hearken to the thinges which hee tolde vs: and that all this wee haue done of wilfull malice. Yea and Moſes addeth yet an other worde, ſaying, *If thou bee driuen to ſerue ſtraunge Gods*. He ſheweth that men be driuen with a certaine furie or frentikeneſſe when they cannot finde in their heartes to ſubmit themſelues to God, to bee wunne vnto him by his worde. Needes then muſt there bee a dreadfull rage in this caſe, and that Sathan worketh after a horrible manner, when men bee ſo farre out of brder. Wee haue ſeene in the fourth Chapter, howe hee ſaide, Looke well to thy ſelfe, that in beholding the ſunne and the ſtars, thou be not compelled to worſhippe them and to make them ydols. Deut.4.19. There Moſes ſheweth that men woulde neuer runne out to ydolatrie, vnleſſe they had ſome outrageous prouocation within them to driue them thereunto, as if they were out of their wittes. For were men well aduiſed & ſetled in their wits, as they ought to bee: they woulde certainly come to their God. And therefore wee bee double guiltie, when hauing turned away from our GOD, and drawen backe our heartes through wilfull malice and ſtubborneneſſe, ouer and beſides that, wee haue beene caried with ſuch a raging moode, as wee cannot bee tamed, neither can any repentance take place in vs, neither will wee bee ruled by reaſon; but we behaue ourſelues like folk that are ſtraught or rather ſtarke madde. And hereby wee ought to take warning to miſtruſt all our affections, and to bridle and impriſon all our wittes, ſeeing wee bee ſo lightly withdrawen from God, and turned away to become backeſlyders. If men giue themſelues libertie, what followeth but that their heart will quickely bee turned backewarde? When wee ſhoulde walke vprightly, wee make it difficult to goe one ſtep, but if it come to backeſlyding, wee flitte away like water, there is nothing in vs but ſlipperneſſe. Therefore muſt wee holde our ſelues as captiues, knowing well that if wee haue neuer ſo little libertie, wee bee ſtraightway gone quite from our God.

Moreouer when men doe ſo beleeue their paſſions, they muſt needes become like madde beaſtes, neither reaſon nor equitie may beare ſway, there is no more vnderſtanding in them, and to bee ſhort they are become brutiſh of their owne accorde. Seeing wee bee warned of theſe thinges, let vs learne ſo to fight againſt all manner of exceſſiue luſtes, and againſt all the appetites that boyle within vs, as GOD

may gouerne vs quietly, and wee bee readie to follow which way ſoeuer he calleth vs. Now after that Moſes hath ſpoken ſo, he addeth, that albeit that the people haue paſſed Iordan, and be come to the poſſeſſion of the land, yet they ſhal not enioy it for euer. Here our Lorde declareth vnto vs, yͭ if he beare with vs for a time, wee may not thereupon fall aſleepe, nor perſwade our ſelues that wee bee at peace with him, as the hypocrites do, who vnleſſe they be pinched with miſerie, and that God doe purſue them roughly, doe alwayes make their market after their owne deuiſe. Well [ſay they] God muſt needes loue mee, for I am at myne eaſe: and thereupon they flatter themſelues. And whereas they do but mocke God, they thinke that hee ſeeth it not a whit. To bee ſhort, the bleſſinges that God beſtoweth on them, they turne as it were to a ſhrowding ſheete, of purpoſe to keepe God from eſpying any whit of their life. And thus they bleare their owne eyes, & make them ſelues paſtime & good cheare, as though they ſhold neuer come to reckoning. And that is too common a fault. Now Moſes ſayth vnto them here, Albeit your God doe at this preſent time bring you into the lande which hee promiſed you, and that you paſſe ouer Iordan, where God will ſhewe his power, euen in drying vp yͤ Iordan as hee did in drying vp the read ſea, where your enimies were vanquiſhed & put to yͤ foyle; inſomuch that when you were like to haue bin ſtopped from entring into your inheritance, yet notwithſtanding al thoſe lettes were ouercome. For as much therfore as you ſee ſuch fauour of God; beware that you ſleepe not in the meane whyle, but walke in his feare; for he can as well driue you out of that land, as he doeth at this preſent bring you into it. To be ſhort, whenſoeuer we haue receiued any fauour at Gods hand, we be exhorted to vſe it in ſuch wiſe, as yͤ ſame may be an occaſion vnto vs to ſerue him, ſo as wee conceiue courage to yeeld ouer our ſelues to his obedience, for leaſt we be bereft therof againe either early or late, for playing the wylde beaſtes & for dealing ſtubbornly after that God
Deut.32,15 hath made vs fatte, according as wee ſhall ſee in the ſong of Moſes. Moſes hauing ſpoken ſo, vſeth a greater vehemencie, ſaying: *This day I call heauen and earth to witneſſe, that I haue ſet before thee life and death, bleſſing and curſing.* The ſame in effect was ſpoken afore, but (as I told you at a glance) Moſes meant to expreſſe yet more, to the intent that the people ſhoulde vnderſtande that he ſpake in good earneſt, and that although their hearts were of ſtone, yet ought this to ſoften them. And let vs marke firſt of al, that if the Iewes were thus harde & ſlowe, yea and ranke rebelles too; we be no better than they. For it is not in reſpect of them onely that God ſayth hee wil chaunge mens ſtonie heartes; it is a gene-
Ezec.11,19. ral promiſe. Hee ſheweth that of nature men be ſuch, namely, altogether rebellious, & that they will by no meanes be ruled. And therefore Moſes is fayne to inlarge his ſpeech, and to haue recourſe to heauen and earth. Hereby we haue matter firſt of all to pricke vs forwarde. In deede men ſuppoſe that they be able fellowes to come vnto God: but were there ſuch forwardnes in vs as wee ſurmiſe: it were ynough for God to becken to vs with the finger, and to ſay, Come. But nowe when hee is fayne to crye out, and to vſe roughneſſe, and to handle vs ſharply, yea, and (as yee woulde ſay) to coniure vs; it is a token that hee perceiueth well, that without this manner of dealing, hee coulde not drawe vs to him; but that wee woulde ſtill drawe backewarde from him. Therefore let vs learne to condemne our ſelues: and moreouer when we heare that GOD doeth prouoke vs more roughly than wee woulde, wee may not for all that bee nyce, nor grieued thereat. In deede it is meete for vs to bee tender hearted one way, that is to ſay, that wee bee not like Stithyes or Anuyles, which beate backe the ſtrokes of the hammer: but yet let vs take heede, that wee repyne not at the vehemencie which GOD vſeth towardes vs; knowing that the ſame is neceſſarie for vs. If GOD then after hee hath taught vs gently, doe exhort vs with a more quickeneſſe, yea, and threaten vs, and moreouer ſummon vs, and afterwarde frame our inditement againſt vs, let vs vnderſtande that it is neceſſarie that it ſhoulde bee ſo, and that wee ought not to bee offended thereat: for wee ſhall winne nothing by it. Yee ſhall ſee many which can fynde in their hartes that the Goſpell ſhould be preached: but after what manner? Forſooth after a deade manner, ſo as the letter ſhoulde be layed foorth, and then euery man holde what hee liſted, without any exhortation to bee made, and without vnfolding of the inwarde force thereof. Such ſcoffers as theſe are to bee ſeene, which doe flatly mocke GOD, and yet in the meane whyle will needes bee borne withall. What, ſay they? Is it a preaching of the Goſpel, when men threaten, and deale thus roughly? But in the meane whyle let vs conſider what wee be, whether it be meete that God ſhould deale with vs after our one liking. In deed, if we were pliable, ſo as our heartes did yeeld at euerie word: then weare this vehemencie ſuperfluous & vnprofitable: but ſeeing we be as ſlow as Aſſes, and alſo frantique, ſo as he cannot tame vs, nor reclaime vs vnto him; it is good reaſon that he ſhould ſpeake in an other phraſe. That is the thing which wee haue to obſerue, where Moſes doeth in this place call to heauen and earth. Yea and let vs marke, that he expreſſeth more in ſaying, heauen and earth, than if he had called all the Angels of heauen, (as hee might haue done,) and in likewiſe all the dyuels of hell, as executioners of the iuſtice of God. But it ought to make vs more aſhamed when he ſetteth before vs yͤ ſenſleſſe creatures. Now therfore when wee haue not obeyed our God, who ſhalbe our witneſſes to condemne vs? The creatures yͭ haue neyther reaſon, nor vnderſtanding, nor ſenſes. The earth knoweth not wherefore it was created, no more do the heauens; and yet doe euen they preach with a loud voyce, that their creator is to be obeyed.

To take theſe wordes of *Heauen* and *Earth*, for men & Angels: were too colde a doctrine. Moſes vndoutedly had a farther reſpect; which is, that men ſhalbe woorſe than aſhamed, if they giue not eare to God when he teacheth them. And wherefore? For it might be replyed that it was an vnreaſonable kinde of ſpeach, to cal heauen and earth to witneſſe. For they bee not of capacitie to alleage any thing. No: but let vs conſider howe the earth, hauing no vnderſtanding, doeth through a ſecret inclination obey God; ſhee openeth her bowels to nouriſh men; ſhee bringeth foorth fruite, ſhee doth her dutie in all reſpectes; yea, and ſhee doeth it in ſuch wiſe, as ſhee maketh it manifeſt vnto vs by effect, that ſhee tendeth to none other ende, but to obey her creator. And what doeth the heauen? Wee ſee howe it goeth about, and is in continuall labour: what voyages doeth the Sunne make euery day? hee fetcheth an infinite circuit. Wee ſee likewiſe howe the moone doeth the like, and ſo the reſt of the Planets. Alſo wee ſee other motions which goe a contrary courſe to theſe. To bee ſhort, the heauen doeth as it were burne in deſire to ſerue God; and yet theſe bee creatures without reaſon, without vnderſtanding. Seeing then that theſe ſhewe openly vnto vs, that the ſecrete inclination of nature doeth lead them thereto, & they neuer leaue off, but there is ſuch a conſtancie in them, that ſince the worlde was firſt created, this order hath alwayes continued ſtill: what is to bee done of vs in whome God hath imprinted his owne image, to the intent wee ſhoulde haue witte and diſcretion; telling vs in our conſciences, that wee ought to diſcerne good and euill aſunder, and prouoking vs thereto by his worde, wherby he diſcouereth himſelf vnto vs familiarly? If we for al this do draw back ſtil, & wil not receiue his yoke, nor yeeld him any obedience, muſt we not needs be worſe than monſters; and conſequently bee counted deteſtable? And on the other ſide, if after wee haue ſhewed ſome ſemblance of obedience to God, wee then become wauering, and by and by become wearie of ſeruing him, and turne away from him: ſhall wee not bee reprooued & conuicted by the continuall order of nature? Let vs marke wel then, that it is not without cauſe, that Moſes, (to make men more aſhamed) telleth thē that heauen and earth ſhalbee witneſſes againſt them, whereby they ſhalbee conuicted. Thus yee ſee in effect what wee haue to obſerue. Now let vs come to that which hee addeth, *I haue ſet before thee good and euil, bleſsing and curſing: to the intent thou ſhouldeſt liue: verily, euen by louing the Lord thy God for that he is the life and the long continuance of thy dayes.* Here Moſes addeth not any new thing; but confirmeth his former matter. Whereby wee doe ſtill ſee, that we be ſo dulheaded when obedience to Godwarde commeth in talke, that it is not ynough for vs to haue the matter ſpoken briefly, & as it were by a glance: but it muſt be beaten into our heads. And therfore God neuer vſeth any ſuperfluous ſpeache: but thereafter as he ſeeth it expedient for vs, ſo doth he repete things: and becauſe he ſeeth that we haue but a ſhort memorie, hee is faine to put vs in mind of the things which we knew & haue now forgotten. Alſo for as much as he ſeeth vs to be hard of digeſtion; he is fayne to chaw the doctrine to vs aforehand, that we may bee able to digeſt it. That is the thing which Moſes doth preſently, when he ſayeth: This day I call heauen & earth to witneſſe, that I haue ſet before thee good and euill, bleſſing and the curſe. Nowe let vs returne to that that wee haue ſpoken; which is, that as often as the worde of God is declared vnto vs, wee muſt looke into the power therof, euen to ſtay our ſelues thereuppon: that after wee haue once receiued the grace which hee offereth vnto vs, wee may not dout that wee ſhalbe deceiued, being ſo ſtayed vppon the teſtimonie which hee hath deliuered to vs of his goodneſſe and loue. And likewiſe that beeing touched with dread and feare; to the intent we may preuent the threatenings, wee muſt not linger till hee put the thinges in execution, which hee hath denounced againſt vs, but we muſt goe and yeelde our ſelues vnto him, to pray him to receiue vs to his mercie and pitie. And albeit that this ſolemne proteſtation bee not made euery day, as it was here done by Moſes; yet wee muſt vnderſtande that it belongeth vnto vs at this day, to the ende that none of vs ſhoulde beguyle himſelfe.

Moreouer it is ſayde that both bleſſing and curſing are ſet before our eyes when wee haue the worde. Why ſo? For when our Lord trayneth vs vnto him, what remayneth then? Is not hee our life and the length of our dayes? Shall wee liue when wee bee parted away from God which is the fountaine of life and of all manner of happineſſe? If wee take this worde *God* [in our mouth] and do not vnderſtande whoſe we bee, nor what wee owe him; wee make him but an idoll, hee is but a fantaſie: as there be many which talke ynough of God, but yet they doe not thinke that they leaue him emptie of all his glorie. But it is not for vs to ſpeake after that manner of our God: wee muſt yeelde vnto him that which belongeth to his maieſtie. Beholde, our God is the fountayne of life, hee is the welſpring of vertue, of ioy, of felicitie, & of glorie. To bee briefe, the fulneſſe of all goodneſſe lyeth in him; and therefore as ſoone as wee turne away from him, wee cannot haue any droppe of thoſe things: but all manner of miſchiefe ſhall purſue vs. That is the thing which Moſes hath declared vnto vs in this place. So then by this worde *God*, and by his proper office, he ſheweth vs, that when we haue his word, we muſt not then any longer ſtagger, neither is there any excuſe for the misbeleeuers which do not this honor to God, to conclude & to anſwere Amen, as ſoone as he ſaith the word. And why? For it is alone as if they renounced him. And yͤ Apoſtle vſeth as it were a like reaſon, in the Epiſtle to the Hebrewes, where hee ſayeth: Hebr.4.12. For as much as it is the office of GOD to ſearch mennes heartes, hee hath alſo giuen the ſame power to his word, ſo as it muſt pearce our bones, and ſoake euen into the marrow and into ẏ very thoughts. He putteth downe there a likeneſſe and conformitie betwixt God and his worde. So alſo in this place Moſes telleth vs, that it is not for vs to cauill or wrangle any more, when wee haue once beene inſtructed by the worde of God. For therein hee ſheweth himſelfe what he is, there muſt wee behold his power. Nowe then, if wee intytle God to this prayſe that hee is our life, and the length of our dayes, it is certaine that wee muſt fynd the ſame in Gods worde, and thereof wee ought to bee throughly well aſſured. To be ſhort, wee ſee howe Moſes ſtandeth vppon this point, that the worde of God ought to haue ſuch honour & reuerence at our hands, as to accept it as if God himſelfe appeared vnto vs viſibly in his maieſtie, and to ſubmit our ſelues obediently thereunto, as in very deede that is the true proofe and tryall of the obedience which wee yeelde vnto him. But herewithall, wee bee alſo admoniſhed, that men deceiue themſelues, when they ſeeke either life or proſperitie any where elſe than in God. For wee foorthwith goe to Pſal.104.29 wracke as ſoone as he draweth his ſpirite from vs. Do wee then deſire to liue? Let vs abide vnder the wings of our God, and cleaue vnto him, according as it is ſayde here. True it is that in this place Moſes ſetteth forth an earthly life vnto the Iewes, and alſo the land of Chanaan, which was aſſigned vnto them for their inheritance: but yet he ſheweth that God meant by exerciſing of them in thoſe thinges to trayne them on farther. Let vs marke (I ſay) that Moſes did not meane to holde the people to this earthly life, but to make them to vnderſtande the goodnes of GOD, and to giue them ſome certaine taſte therof, by the teſtimonies which they had here beneath. Moreouer, ſeeing that it is ſo that God proteſted vnto the Iewes by the mouth of Moſes, that hee layde before their eyes both life and death, when hee willed that the lawe ſhoulde bee publiſhed: let vs vnderſtande that the ſayde life is yet better vttered vnto vs at this day. For the lawe is called the meſſenger of death, becauſe life is not there ſo largely knowen, as our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt doth ſhewe it vs at this day, in that hee commeth to offer himſelfe vnto vs as the liuely image of his father, to the intent that wee ſhoulde be tranſ- Col.1.15. figured into his glorie. Let vs then marke well, that as oft as the doctrine of the Goſpell nowadayes is preached vnto vs, God ſheweth forth life vnto vs, and calleth vs in ſuch wiſe vnto him, as wee may become one with him, according to this ſaying which wee reade in the ſeuenteenth Chapter of Saint Iohn; Holy Father, I beſeech thee, that they may bee one with vs, Iohn.17.21 as thou and I are but one. Seeing then that our Lorde Ieſus hath pronounced this with his own mouth; let vs not feare but that whenſoeuer we bee called vnto him, hee doeth ioyne vs perfectly to himſelfe in glory. But yet therewithall, let vs alſo bee afrayed, leaſt for our refuſing to receiue life to inioy it; death bee giuen vnto vs. Not that that is of the nature of the Goſpell; (for wee our ſelues be the cauſe thereof) but becauſe the reprobates bee euermore conſumed by the onely ſauour of the Goſpel, through their owne malice and vnthankfulnes. Let vs bee ad- 2.Cor.2.16. uiſed to chooſe the life that is offered vnto vs, ſeeing wee neede not to ſeeke it farre off, but the matter reſteth onely in receiuing it, when it is ſet before our eyes. But as touching the cauſe, and how God gouerneth vs by his holy Spirite: that was treated of yeſterday, ſhewing that the ſame is done by his word, notwithſtanding that it is vttered vnto vs by the mouthes of men.

Nowe let vs fall downe before the maieſtie of our good God, with acknowledgement of our ſinnes: beſeeching him to make vs feele them more and more, yea, and to miſlike them, and that wee may bee ſo reformed to his obedience, as we may couet nothing but to dedicate our ſelues wholy to his ſeruice, vntill that being quite diſpatched from our olde Adam, wee bee fully reformed by his righteouſneſſe. And ſo let vs all ſay, Almightie GOD heauenly father, &c.

On Thurſday the xxiij. of Aprill, 1556

The CLXXIII. Sermon which is the firſt vpon the one & thirtith Chapter.

THen Moſes went and ſpake theſe wordes vnto all Iſrael,

2 Saying vnto them, This day am I ſixe ſcore yeres olde, and I can no longer goe in and out: And the Lorde alſo hath ſayde vnto mee, Thou ſhalt not paſſe ouer this Iordan.

3 The Lorde thy God will paſſe ouer before thee: It is hee that ſhall deſtroy this people before thy face, and thou ſhalt poſſeſſe them. Ioſuah is hee that ſhall goe ouer before thy face, euen as the Lorde hath ſpoken.

4 And the Lorde will doe vnto them as hee did to Sehon and to Og the kinges of the Amorrhytes, and to their countries, the which hee hath deſtroyed.

5 And the Lorde will deliuer them before thee, to the intent you may doe vnto them according to all the commaundement which I haue commaunded you.

6 Be of good comfort, and take courage, feare not neither be diſmayed before their face: for the Lorde thy God goeth with thee, hee will not leaue thee nor forſake thee.

7 And Moſes called Ioſuah, and ſayde vnto him in the preſence of all Iſrael: bee of good comfort, and take a good heart to thee: for thou ſhalt goe in with the people into the Lande, which the Lorde hath ſworne to their fathers to giue them: and thou ſhalt diuide it vnto them for their inheritaunce.

8 And it is the Lorde that goeth before thee: it is hee that is with thee: hee will not forſake thee nor leaue thee, therefore haue no feare nor dread.

HERE it is ſhewed vs, howe Moſes was not cōtented to ſerue God & the people vnto ý which hee was apointed all the days of his life: but alſo did his endeuour, that the remembrance of the name of God might continue among the people, and alſo that all things might be gouerned accordingly, euen after his death. Alſo hee gaue them to vnderſtande, that Gods calling of him was not to the ende that the people ſhould bee ſo entreated for a certaine time: but that as the lawe was giuen for a witneſſe that God had choſen the children of Abraham; ſo hee would guyde them euen to the comming of the Redeemer, according whereunto hee went through with his calling. That is the very thing, which we haue here chiefely to obſerue, when Moſes by the commaundement of God ordayned Ioſuah to bee his ſucceſſour to gouerne the people. And therewithall hee ſheweth that hee had faithfully trauayled all his life, and that it was not for any want of good will, that hee gaue ouer the charge that was committed vnto him: but becauſe *hee was altogether forworne with weakeneſſe*. For if Moſes ſhoulde haue withdrawen him to bee at reſt, the people might haue beene in dout, and alſo much diſcouraged thereby: but whereas hee declareth that hee neuer ceaſſed vntill hee had finiſhed his courſe: therein hee ſheweth the way and example vnto all men, that none ought to turne heade; but that ſo long as God doeth prolong their liues, they ought to goe on foorth whither ſoeuer hee calleth them, and to bee firme and conſtant without ſwaruing aſide or changing. Moreouer hee ſheweth vs, that wee muſt not ſhrinke away for any mans death, becauſe God continueth euermore in his ſtate. And although ý they by whom he meant to be ſerued doe periſh, yet muſt not his right be thereby diminiſhed: and that is a poynt worthie to be remembred. For wee ſee what happened in that people; notwithſtanding that they had beene forewarned thereof, yet fell they away after the death of Ioſuah, and God was driuen to afflict them by the handes of their enemies to bring them backe againe. But felt they once agayne the fauour of God? By and by they fell to their olde byaſſe againe, and remembred not a whit that they were deliuered, but returned to their idolatrie againe. The booke of the Iudges is full of theſe thinges. When God had raiſed vp Samuel who was the excellenteſt of all others: yet could not they abyde him, but deſired a king, and the State was fayne to bee changed after their appetite. Wee ſee therefore that this people were ſo wretched, that they continued not any longer in the ſeruice of God, nor in the obedience of his lawe, than a man of courage and ſtoutneſſe had the gouerning of them.

1.Samuel.8.

Therefore it is ſayde here, that although Moſes was olde and ſhort lyued, yet was it not for them to looke eyther this way or that way, but to conſider that the liuing God had choſen and elected them for his people, and promiſed them to haue care of their welfare: and that ſeeing hee had taken them into his ſauegarde, hee woulde neuer forſake them, ſo they did ſticke vnto him, and were faithfull vnto him, and turned not away. And thus wee may gather a good admonition out of this place: that is to ſaye, that hauing both our eyes and our wittes faſtened vppon the worde of God, wee muſt haue a right continuance in yͤ faith,albeit that things do change as touching the worlde. In deede, if wee haue good folke to leade vs, wee bee ſo much the leſſe excuſable, if wee profite not thereby. For if God ſtretch out his hande vnto vs, and giue vs gouernours which bee as his meſſengers; edifying and gouerning vs faithfully; it is good reaſon that wee ſhoulde ſtrayne our ſelues ſomuch the more: for wee haue one generall rule, to cauſe the meanes that God giueth vs to bee auaylable, euen by turning them to our profite. It is a ſingular thing, when hee giueth vs ſuch men as haue the vertue of his holy ſpirite, which alſo bee ſo endued with whatſoeuer is for our benefite, as wee may vnderſtande that hee offereth him ſelfe vnto vs in their perſons: It behooueth vs I ſay, to bee ſo much the more moued at ſuch times to ſerue God. But howſoeuer it bee, let vs content our ſelues with the doctrine; and albeit that men do dye and fayle vs, let vs neuertheleſſe vnderſtande, that God is alwayes the ſame, and that his trueth cannot change. For it is ſayde of men, that they bee but a ſhadowe; but the worde of GOD continueth for euer. And that not onely in it ſelfe, but it muſt alſo haue a rooting in vs, euen an incorruptible roote, as ſaith Saint Peter. Let vs learne therfore, that if the people of Iſrael were exhorted to continue in the faith and ſeruice of God after the death of Moſes, wee alſo muſt doe the like at this daye.

Pſa.102.12.
Eſa.41.8.
1.Pet.1.23.

And Moſes in ſo dooing doeth make it manifeſt, that hee beareth no enuie towarde Ioſuah, as many do, who ſeeke their own renown, and would not that others ſhould do any thing, for feare leaſt their owne prayſe ſhoulde bee ſtayned, and that men ſhould not talke ynough of them. Moſes had not this curſed ambition, that hee ſhoulde hinder the procurement of the peoples welfare by the aduauncing of Ioſua, but as much as in him lay hee did put him in authoritie, yea euen to perfourme a farre greater matter than was graunted to him ſelfe to doe. For God tolde him before, that hee ſhould not enter into the lande that was promiſed to the people. In deede hee ſawe it: but hee was ſhut out, becauſe hee honoured not God, when the people murmured for want of drinke. Becauſe hee did not then ſufficiently glorifie God: but was troubled and vexed in his minde, hee was depriued of that honour, and God did diſgrade him in that behalfe. And yet for all that, Moſes omitted not to take Ioſuah, and appoynted him to bee his ſucceſſour, willing him to doe his duetie in ſetting the people in poſſeſſion of their inheritance. Seeing then that wee perceiue that Moſes did willingly ſubmit himſelfe, let euery of vs learne to haue no reſpect to himſelfe, nor to vaunt himſelfe, nor to ſeeke our owne credite in this worlde, of purpoſe to bee renoumed both during our life and after our death: but let vs content our ſelues, that God doeth acknowledge, that wee were willing to ſerue him, ſo as the Church might feele the profite of our labour, and bee edified thereby.

Num.20.12
Deut.32.51.
& 52.

When wee bee at this poynt, let vs referre our ſelues to our God, and beare no enuie to thoſe whome hee rayſeth vp in our ſteed. For wee knowe, that if GOD doe not worke continually amongeſt men, the grace that hee hath put into them will quickly vaniſh; (ſuch is our frailtie:) and then all that wee haue profited ſhall bee nought woorth. Is it our deſire that GOD ſhoulde continue that which hee hath wrought by vs? It is neceſſarie then that hee haue alwayes people to ſerue him. Let euery one therfore endeuour to diſcharge his duty without enuie, and without ſpyting: let the maſter haue his honour and preheminence, and let vs bee cohelpers one to another, and doe our endeuour to ayde ſuch as wee ſee to bee acceptable to God. Thus much is here ſhewed vs by the example of Moſes.

Nowe hee ſayeth vnto the people, *I am an hundred and twentie yeares olde, I can no longer goe and come: and the Lorde hath ſayde that I may not enter into this lande.* Firſt of all, hee alleageth his weakeneſſe, for that hee was ſo olde, ſo bruſed and broken: that hee was no longer able to ſatiſfie ſo difficult a charge. I can not goe and come (ſayeth hee). Nowe hereof I gather that which I haue touched, namely, that whileſt Moſes was luſtie, or had in him any ſtrength at all, hee ſpared not himſelfe, knowing well that the ſame was not giuen him for himſelfe, but for the common benefite, and welfare of all the people: hee then practiſed that which Saint Paul ſpeaketh of, namely, not to liue to himſelfe. Nowe in deede wee bee not all ſo excellent as hee was: yet neuertheleſſe this rule is common to all the children of GOD, that is, that no body is created for his owne particular behoofe; but that we muſt looke to our vocation, that wee may followe it, and offer vp our ſelues in ſacrifice to God, & euery man liue and continue according to his abilitie and meaſure without ydleneſſe. And let vs not flatter our ſelues, as to ſaye, I am excuſed: for it is not for vs to take our leaue, and to giue ouer, and to diſcontinue when wee our ſelues liſt. Euery man (I ſay) muſt goe on euen to the ende, without beeing wearie: and when it ſhall pleaſe GOD to deliuer vs out of this world, then are we diſcharged, and not afore.

Rom.14.7.
2.Cor.5.13.

Rom.12.1.

Nowe when hee ſayeth that God depriueth him of going into the lande; hee alleageth a matter not honourable to him ſelfe: but doeth call to remembrance the fault that he had committed. Hee doeth not here accuſe God, neither fretteth hee at the puniſhment whereof he ſpeaketh; but he acknowlegeth his offence with meeknes. Seeing that Moſes, a man ſo excellent which was as it were an Angel amongſt mortall creatures, was contented to teſtifie his fault, and often times to rehearſe that he was not worthie to enioy the heritage which God had promiſed to Abraham, in ſo much that although hee had deliuered the people, and had doone ſo many noble actes, & had publiſhed the Lawe, and was reputed gouernor of yͤ Church of God euen vntill yͤ comming of our Lord Ieſus Chriſt: yet notwithſtanding euen after all this,hee was not aſhamed to lay foorth his owne fault, and to declare that God would not admit him to the promiſed heritage:what ought wee to do? So then whenſoeuer God puniſheth vs, let vs not ſeeke vayne ſhiftes to couer our vncleanneſſe: but let vs rather bee well contented, that the puniſhmentes which God hath ſent vs, may profite & ſerue for inſtruction to all our neighbours. Hee ſayeth moreouer, *The Lorde thy God will goe before thee,and deſtroy all theſe people before thy face, and thou ſhalt doe vnto them,as thou didſt vnto Sehon & Og kings of Bazan & of the Amorites*. Here Moſes confirmeth the matter which we haue touched, to wit, that although hee be not preſent in perſon,when the people ſhould enter into the lande of Chanaan, yet was God of right to be eſteemed more than mortall men, ſo as the people ought not to bee afrayde though they ſawe not Moſes any more, nor aske, where is hee that hath led vs? Be contented(ſaith he)to haue the Lorde to goe with you. Hereby wee bee yet better warned to yeeld God his due honour,which is,to reſt in him alone,although wee bee bereft of all meanes heere beneath. In deede it is a thing to bee deſired, that wee might euer bee gouerned by ſuch rulers as are led by the Spirite of God: for it is a priuiledge and fauour, that cannot bee ſufficiently eſteemed, and it is alſo a ſigne and token that hee is amongeſt vs: Therefore it were greatly to be wiſhed. Neuertheleſſe,although wee bee depriued therof, and that God taketh them away by death, whereby his bleſſing,to the outward ſhew,is ſo much the leſſer: yet, let vs looke vp higher and by fayth behold howe he is preſent to them which ſeeke him, and that he hath his hand euermore ſtretched out to helpe them,ſo as his power ſhalbee ſtrong ynough, albeit that hee ſhewe them nothing viſibly. That is the thing which we haue to remember where Moſes ſayeth, *The Lorde thy God will goe before thee.* It is certaine that as touching my ſelfe I ſhal not be there any more,but ſhoulde you therefore bee diſmayed and fayntharted? What is God? Wote ye not that he hath all in his owne power? What am I? I am but a ſhadowe. Now God hath put a certaine droppe of his power in me,and you haue perceiued the experience thereof: and although the ſame haue profited you, what is it in compariſon of his helping of you with the whole fulnes of his power? Nowe then, looke that you meaſure not Gods power by a mortall man: neither bee yee ſo groſſe headed and witleſſe, as to ſay that you be diſcouraged becauſe I am no more with you, and that yee bee alreadie vanquiſhed: for that were a curſed blaſphemie. But vnderſtand,that God is not diminiſhed: when the creatures be periſhed, hee is able to rayſe others: and without rayſing vp of any at all, he is ſufficient himſelfe: for hee hath no neede to borowe from any where elſe. Now then the verie office and propertie of faith, is to reſt vs in God and to ſtaye vppon him, ſo as although all the worlde fayle vs, yet wee aſſure our ſelues that God wil worke mightily ynough, without being ayded by any other partie. Moreouer, for the better confirming of the people in hope, Moſes telleth them that they had ſeene alreadie after what maner God had wrought in his peoples behalf. You haue had(ſayeth hee) victorie againſt Og the king of Bazan, and againſt Sehon the king of the Amorrhites,and you know that God did then fight for you. (For in deede the people had beene at that time, as it were vtterly forlorne, and were driuen of force to confeſſe that the victorie came not of themſelues, but that God through his grace did vanquiſh theſe two mightie kings.) Seeing therefore that GOD hath alreadie ſhewed himſelfe a father towards you, feare not but that he will continue ſo hereafter. Thus ſhould wee bee confirmed in hope, by our former experience & feeling of the fauour and helpe of our GOD. When he hath once made vs to taſt his goodneſſe;let vs thereby bee ſo much the more aſſured. That is the thing which Moſes meant to teach vs in ſpeaking here of Sehon and Og. Now hee addeth farther, that the Iſraelites ſhoulde doe vnto all the nations whom God would deliuer into their handes, according as it is commaunded them here. It ſhoulde ſeeme at the firſt ſight, that the people ought much rather to haue vſed mercie, than ſo to haue rooted them out vtterly. But(as Deut.7.16. wee haue ſeene heretofore) God had ſayde vnto them: You ſhall ſpare none, neither litle nor great; all the race of them muſt bee rooted out: for I will not haue any of them remaine vnto you. Nowe it ſeemeth to bee a kinde of crueltie,that notwithſtanding that they yelded themſelues,and craued mercie, yet they ſhoulde neuertheleſſe be al kild. Yea,but yet for al that,ſeeing God had ſpoken it,the people were of dutie to execute it, & not to be wiſe to the contrarie, nor to gloſe vpon the worde of God, or to reply vnto it at all. Wee ſee then that when men will needes ſwim betwixt two ſtreames, and make a medly betweene the worde of God & their own fancies; they marre all. There is nothing better than to followe that which God ſheweth & cōmandeth vs. For if we take vpon vs to be too forecaſting, hee will laugh our preſumption to ſcorne,& in the ende we ſhalbe accurſed. Let vs marke then,that ſeeing it was Gods will that all thoſe people(to wit, the Chananites, Pherezites,& their like) ſhoulde bee rooted out:it was the duetie of the Iſraelites to doe that which was giuen them in charge: for there was none but GOD him ſelfe that coulde bee Iudge thereof. Yet notwithſtanding, it is certaine yͤ God dealt not exceſſiuely in puniſhing thoſe people:for hee had long time patiently wayted for their amendment;euer ſince the time of Abraham had they bin vnrefourmable; they had bin ſpared foure hundred yeres. But were they therby any whit amended? Nay, they were become worſe than euer they were:was it not reaſon then,yͤ after god had ſo lōg borne wͭ them,he Gen.15.16. ſhold lay his hand vpon them at yͤ laſt? [Yes verily;]& therfore let no bodie murmur in this behalf againſt god,as thogh his vēgeāce were too rough.And in very deed it is a wonderous thing yͤmen cannot content thẽſelues with the iuſtice of God how moderately ſoeuer he vſe it When we perceiue any ouer great iniquitie (ſpecially if it touch our ſelues, & that we receiue damage & hurt thereby) we cry vnto God: & be greeued if he beſtirre him not at the firſt daſh, & we think that he is as it were aſleepe. What ſay we? Is it poſſible that God ſhould ſuffer ſo long? If hee looke downe, how can he be ſo patient? We will needes haue God to take weapon in hande at our pleaſure: and when hee doth any execution if it like vs not, we ſay: Howe nowe? What rigorous dealing is this? God ſayth, that he is long ſuffering, full of goodneſſe, ſlowe to wrath, and inclined to mercie: howe is it then that he dealeth thus roughly with men? Nay, wee thinke that he is cruell, and we will alſo condemne him in that point. Seeing then that wee be ſo vntowarde, and that in ſteede of iudging rightly of the workes of God, we wrappe vp all in confuſion: let vs learne to like well of all his dooinges, without any gaineſaying: and when we perceiue not the cauſe; let vs make this concluſion, that howſoeuer the caſe ſtande, all that euer proceedeth of him, is rightfull, & that there is nothing in him but infinite wiſedome and vprightneſſe. And moreouer let vs alſo ſhut our eyes cloſe againſt all conceites, which may hinder vs and make vs vnable to ſerue GOD, yet let vs not range hither and thither: but let it ſuffice vs to haue the worde from his mouth, and to holde vs to that which he hath commaunded. That is the thing which we haue to gather out of this text, where Moſes telleth vs that the people of Iſraell muſt do vnto all their enemies, according as God hath commanded them.

Exod.34, 6.

Nowe thereupon he ſayth, *That they ſhoulde not be diſmayed nor afraide, but that they ſhoulde bee courageous and behaue themſelues manfully.* Whereupon is all this exhortation grounded? Vpon the promiſe which he made, namely, The Lord thy God will goe before thee. We muſt therefore marke that men ſhall neuer take good courage, what ſoeuer is ſayde vnto them, vnleſſe they bee aſſured of the helpe of God, and that he will be on their ſide, and giue good ſucceſſe to all their enterpriſes. It is certaine that men be too bolde to do thinges, and to attempt more than is lawfull for them: but they do euer go about it careleſly, and without diſcretion. And as a madde bedlem, notwithſtanding yͭ he bee brought lowe with his long ſicknes & feele not his own weakeneſſe: yet is he much ſtronger and rageth in ſuch wiſe, as he cannot be ruled, and worketh more trouble than if he were in perfect health: euen ſo is it with men when they haue no promiſe of God, but be chafed in their owne raſhneſſe and preſumption. They dare doe wonders: but in reſpect to doe well, we neuer take courage therin, vnleſſe we be aſſured of the will of God: and to be ſhort, we can neuer build but vpon his promiſes. We muſt therefore remember that Moſes, before he exhorteth the people to bee valiant & to behaue themſelues ſtoutly, ſayde vnto them, Thy God wil be with thee, feare them not. And why ſo? For thou art ſure that thou canſt not quaile, becauſe thy God gouerneth thee. Howbeit, foraſmuch as wee doe not at the firſt take ſure holde of the promiſes of God, neither are they ſo certainely ſettled in our heartes, as is to be wiſhed; Moſes doth alſo adde a confirmation, and ſayth: Nay, the Lord thy God will not leaue thee, neither ſhalt thou euer be forſaken of him. It was ynough that he hadde ſayde afore, Thy God will goe before thee, hee will giue thee victorie againſt all thine enemies; thou haſt alreadie had experience of his helpe: It ſhalbe alwayes the ſame: this may ſeeme to haue beene ynough. But yet that which Moſes addeth vnto it is not ſuperfluous, becauſe of the vnbeleefe of men: who notwithſtanding that God doe aſſure them, doe yet ſtill doubt and be wauering, vnleſſe they haue a newe confirmation. Whereby we perceiue that it is no light matter to giue credit to the promiſes of God, and to holde vs to them, as many do ſuppoſe, but that is becauſe they neuer tryed it. They that thinke themſelues to bee moſt faithfull, haue neuer taſted what faith is: according as we ſee a great manie fooles, which ſpeake of warre, and thinke to deuour all at one bitte, whereas in deede they neither knowe nor haue ſeene any thing. Euen ſo is it with thẽ that haue a ſpeculatiue faith: they make themſelues yͤ ableſt folk in the world, they boaſt themſelues to be as faithfull as any can be founde: but they that knowe what faith is, doe vnderſtande that there is nothing more harde, than for vs to ſtay ourſelues vppon God; and in that behalfe wee muſt bee faine to impriſon our ſenſes, and to take the bit in our mouth (as they ſay) and to enforce our ſelues; yea and that God alſo on his ſide doe worke in that behalfe, as we doe ſee that he doeth. For it is no ſuperfluous talke, when hee ſetteth his promiſes before vs, and putteth vs ſo often in minde of them. For it is a token that they beare no great ſway with vs, or rather that they enter not into our hearts to ſettle there, as were meete they ſhoulde. Thus yee ſee what Moſes meant, in ſaying, That the Lorde will neuer forſake his people.

Moreouer, vnder this worde, he ſheweth vnto vs, that Gods offering of his grace vnto vs is not for a day, but that hee will continue it vnto the end, conditionally that we alſo do receiue it with the like condition. In deede it is true that in this place he treateth but of the Land of Canaan: but we knowe that it was a pleadge of the eternall life, and of the inheritaunce that is prepared for vs in heauen. Now he ſayth expreſly, Thy God wil neuer leaue thee, neither will he euer forſake thee. Wee ſee therefore that our Lorde meaneth not to encourage vs for a day, but he meaneth that we ſhould depende vppon him to liue and to die, and that we ſhould be fully reſolued, that when he hath begonne, he will performe his worke towarde vs, and that he wil not leaue vs at the halfe way, (as they ſay). And this is to bee well noted, becauſe that although men imbrace Gods promiſes, yet are they ſometimes or other in dout, and wot not where to become: and ſpecially when any temptation commeth vpon them, then be they ſo ſcarred, that to their ſeeming, God is loth to doe them good, or elſe that he will not continue to doe them good. Seeing then that we be thus toſſed with doubtes and troubles, we haue ſo much the more neede to remember the leſſon that is here deliuered vnto vs: namely, yͤ God doth offer vs his grace, with ſuch condition as it ſhall neuer faile vs. But we ſee how this doctrine hath bin peruerted ſpecially in the popedome. They be not aſhamed to ſay, that we muſt ſtande alwayes in doubt of continuaunce to the end, and that we wote not what God intendeth to doe heereafter; inſomuch that it is a principall article of their faith which they holde in the Popedome. Neither meane I that it is the ignoraunt ſort of the ſimple people only which do ſay ſo, but that it is the reſolution of all the Monks and Freers; who affirm it to be the principal article of their faith, that men muſt ſtande alwaies in doubt whether God wil ſaue them or not. Seing then yͤ the deuil hath borne ſuch a ſway, ſomuch the more ought we to be confirmed in this doctrine, where it is ſayde, The Lord thy God will not leaue thee, neither ſhalt thou euer be forſaken of him.

Now when Moſes had thus ſpoken to the people: then hee called alſo Ioſuah and confirmed him. And moreouer in the perſon of Ioſuah, we may perceiue the thing yet better which I haue ſayd afore; namely, yͤ it ſufficeth vs not to be once certified of the grace of God; but that becauſe of our weakenes, we haue neede to be vpholden & maintained, leaſt wee fall away or ſwarue aſide. For behold, here is Ioſuah whom God had choſen to be gouernour of his people to ſet them in yͤ poſſeſſion of their promiſed inheritaunce. And yet notwithſtanding for all that he had hearde his duetie and office at the mouth of Moſes, yet was God fain to giue him new reuelations after the death of Moſes; & to vſe the like words vnto him againe. And how ſo? Was he ſo ſhort witted, that ere three dayes to an end, he had quite forgottē what had bin ſaid vnto him before God and the ſanctuarie? He was there preſent, and a ſolemne ceremonie was vſed thereabout, & was it becauſe that Ioſuah had forgotten his duetie? No: But he was a fraile man: and God knowing him to be ſo, did confirme him, and encourage him. And if this needed to bee done to Ioſuah; what needeth to be done to vs? Therefore let vs beware of the preſumption that blindeth vs, in that we thinke we neede not to ſette our mindes continually vppon the worde of God as there be many doe, which hauing hearde ſome one ſermon, do ſuppoſe that they bee clarkes good ynough, not conſidering that the thinges which they haue heard will ſoone vaniſh away, and be quite and cleane gone ere three daies to an end, vnleſſe they doe ſtill beate vpon it. So then, let vs be well aduiſed that wee exerciſe ourſelues in the promiſes of God, and when they be often laide afore vs, let vs not thinke the time to be loſt in hearing them: but let vs vnderſtand that our Lordes intent is to emprint them in vs, to the ende we ſhould ſticke vnto them, and be ſo throughly grounded in them, as Satan may neuer haue power to turne vs away, by any meanes whatſoeuer. That is a thing which we haue yet farther to remember.

Nowe let vs come to that which Moſes ſpake vnto him. *Moreouer thou ſhalt go before the people* (ſayeth hee) *and therefore bee of good courage and behaue thyſelfe manfully*. When hee ſayeth vnto him, that he ſhall goe before the people, he ſtabliſheth his authoritie in the name of GOD. Wherby he maketh it manifeſt, that it is not for men to thruſt in themſelues; accordingly alſo as the Apoſtle ſaith, yͤ no man ought to vſurpe honour vnto himſelfe, but hee yͤ is called to it muſt Hebr.5.4. vndertake and diſcharge the ſame: let vs then learne to hold vs in ſuch modeſtie & ſimplicitie, as yͤ none of vs auaunce himſelfe aboue meaſure, ne paſſe his boundes, as who would ſay, I will do this or that, not knowing whether he be appointed of God or not, but let euerie man be contented to doe that which is his charge, let a man gouerne his owne houſhoulde; and ſith he is but a priuate perſon, let him not vſurpe vppon that which is not permitted vnto him. Let the miniſter of the worde preach, and exhort, and accōpliſh his dutie, let the magiſtrate in like wiſe looke whereunto hee is called, let euerie of vs, keep his degree & his order: and let there be no confuſed mingling among vs. That is the thing which we muſt remember. Very large doctrine might be gathered out of this article, but I will not ſtande much thereuppon; for it hath beene often ſpoken of, & it is ſufficient for me to touch theſe matters in fewe wordes, for when they be once hearde, euerie man may thinke vpon them afterwarde. And greatly ſhall they haue profited in Gods ſchoole, which can holde thēſelues in quiet, and not attempt more than God hath cōmanded them, but ſimply followe their owne vocation. That is the thing which we haue to marke in this place, where Moſes ordaineth Ioſuah in his ſteede, howebeit ſpeaking, as in the perſon of God, and by his authoritie.

Moreouer he ſheweth that when God calleth vs to any charge, he doth alſo giue vs the ability to accompliſh that which he cōmandeth vs. And this is a neceſſary doctrine. What is the cauſe yͤ men be ſo feareful, that if they ſee but a ſhadow, by and by they be amazed and at their wits end how to do the thinges which they knowe to belong to their office? They ſee wel ynough wherunto God hath called them; and yet for all that they ſhrinke away their ſhoulders: and what cauſeth that? Euen that curſed diſtruſt of ours, in that we conſider not that God doth guide vs, and that he hath his hande euermore ſtretched out to helpe vs, ſo we walke ſimply, and doe our endeuour to obey him, and followe him quietly, hauing regarde to our office and calling. And ſo it is a leſſon whereof we can not be too mindful, which is ment in theſe wordes: *Thy God will not forſake thee*. And well ought we to put the ſame in vre. For it is a Teſtimonie, that God will neuer giue them ouer, whom hee ſetteth a worke, but that he wil giue them power, & bleſſe them, & make the ſucceſſe of their trauaile to be good and happy, if they ſtay vpon him and leane vnto him.

Hebr.3.5. 13-5. him . Yea and wee ſee that in the epiſtle to the Hebrues, the Apoſtle extendeth the ſame yet further, where he ſaith, Let your heartes be farre from couetouſneſſe, and know ye that it is written, The Lorde wil not forſake you . Whereby he ſheweth vs, that whereas we vſe ſo many wicked trades; and whereas treaſon, crueltie & malice doe leade vs into ſuch extremities, that we fling ouerthwart the feeldes, and walking in bypathes doe followe our owne diſordered luſtes: the welſpring of all theſe vices is that we put not our truſt in God; neither is it throughly wel ſealed in our heartes with any certaine aſſurednes that the Lorde is neere vnto vs, and that he will neuer forſake vs. And therefore ſeeing we haue no ſtay, but be ſo wauering & carryed away with vnquietnes, yea & ſet on fire, and our luſtes be as a thouſand fornaces continually burning within vs, becauſe we haue not our truſt in God; let vs learne to cõmit ourſelues to his prouidence, & to holde ourſelues aſſured ẏ hee will not faile vs: & then ſhall we finde the thing ẏ is tolde vs heere: namely, ẏ euerie man in his vocation may be aſſured ẏ God will be alwaies preſent with him. Is a man charged with a houſhold? Then will he be full of care, & if he haue a nũber of children, hee grudgeth, ſaying, Alas what ſhall I ſay? If I had but one or two children, I could deale as wel as they ẏ haue no charge at all: but now ẏ I haue ſo many hanging on my ſhoulders; alas what ſhall I do? True it is, ẏ a father ought in deede to take care for his children: but what manner of care ſhould ẏ be? It muſt moue him to call vpon God to haue recourſe to his helpe, to hold his family in order, that thinges go not to hauocke; it muſt cauſe him to inſtruct his children to liue in ſobrietie, and to bee contented with a litle, & not to lauiſh out ẏ which they haue: but labour that God may bleſſe thẽ. Such is the care that a father ought to haue. And this kinde of care hindereth him not to reſt vpõ God, ẏ hauing taſted this promiſe; namely, Thy God will not forſake thee, he do alwayes his dutie, and gouerne well his houſhold. And euen ſo it is of all others. Although they ſee neuer ſo great difficulties (as there be many which in their vocation, notwithſtanding ẏ they be priuate perſons, do finde thẽſelues greatly pulled backe) yet muſt they euer haue recourſe to this ankerhold; Thy God is aboue, he will guide thee, care not: ſo thou folow him, his helpe ſhall neuer faile thee. Much more reaſon is it therfore, ẏ ſuch as be in higher office and haue a heauier burthen to beare, ſhold haue recourſe to this promiſe when they ſee troubles, and many grudginges againſt thẽ, and perceiue the world inflamed with malice, & to ſay, What will our Lord ſleepe in heauen? The thing ẏ was ſpoken to Ioſuah, was it ſpokẽ only for one yere? No: but in ẏ perſon of him God meant to aſſure vs, ẏ when we walke in our dutie, and go directly to work as he hath cõmanded vs, hauing regard to obey him rather than to pleaſe the world, he is with vs and will aſſiſt vs. Seeing it is ſo, let vs march on, and not care for any thing that can happen vnto vs. This (I ſay) is the true vſe of this doctrine.

Moreouer, although we haue this aſſurance, that God will accompliſh & performe the worke that he hath begun, yet doth it not follow therfore, ẏ we alſo ſhould not inforce ourſelues. For theſe two thinges are ioyned together, namely, thy God will neuer giue thee ouer; and therfore be thou of good courage, & behaue thyſelfe valiantly. It is not ment then, ẏ God leadeth vs as it were ſleeping, and as though it were no harde matter for vs to do him ſeruice, when it pleaſeth him to imploy vs to any charge & office: No no: for we muſt labour therein, till wee pant againe, & ſometime it ſhall ſeeme vnto vs ẏ God is farre frõ vs & thinges ſhall be doutfull & diſordered, ẏ we wot not what ſhall become of vs: but then let vs cheere vp our ſelues. After ẏ maner muſt wee truſt in the prouidence of our God. And when we be ſo ſtayed thereupon, it is not meant ẏ we ſhould therfore let things fall out as they may, as wee ſee many doe, which take occaſion to waxe cold. God (ſay they) will prouide, & in the mean while they neglect their owne duetie. It is not ment that we ſhould ſhut our eyes, ſaying, God will prouide for it. Truely although all things in the world were as far out of order as could be; yet ought we to be well aſſured, howſoeuer we fare: but yet on the other ſide we muſt ſerue God after ſuch maner as he hath appointed vs to be his inſtrumentes, yea and ẏ in ſuch wiſe as if it be his will, that we muſt ſuffer much, ẏ then wee muſt haue patience & not be ouerthrowẽ nor broken therby. The thing thẽ in effect which we haue to beare in mind cõcerning this place, is ẏ we muſt labour all our life long in ſuch wiſe, as euery one may keepe himſelfe within his owne boundes & limites, and ẏ we attempt not raſhly more than God giueth vs leaue to do. And moreouer ẏ we muſt not be afraid to do, & to employ vs to thoſe things which our duty requireth, aſſuring ourſelues ẏ God is neere vnto vs, and that we ſhall feele his power at our neede, and ẏ hee will not forſake vs. When men thinke ẏ all is loſt, & doe mocke vs, & count vs as people paſt hope of recouery, let vs not dout but ẏ our Lord will accõpliſh that which is heere promiſed: and therfore let vs euermore holde on with patience, waiting for the performaunce of that which wee heare ſpoken of heere.

Now let vs fall downe before the maieſtie of our good God, with acknowledgement of our faults, beſeeching him to make vs to feele them more & more, and ẏ in likewiſe by acknowledging the frailety ẏ is in vs, we may ſeeke to arme vs ſo with his promiſes, as we may be fenſed vntil the end, not only to ſuſtain one cõbat or two, but alſo to fight all the daies of our life, & to remaine inuincible againſt al maner of tẽptations: And ẏ foraſmuch as it behoueth vs to depend altogether vpon him; we may be ſo ſtayed thereupon, ẏ when things do happen vnto vs contrary to our mindes as in reſpect of the world, we may not therby be abaſhed or diſmaied, but truſt that he only is as good as all other helpes, & therupõ cõmit ourſelues vnto him, endeuoring to glorifie him: and ẏ ſeeing it is his will to gouerne vs by the hand of our Lord Ieſus Chriſt, we may be pliable and obedient vnto him; that being aſſured that he is our good and faithful guide,& that he will not faile vs, we may euermore take the more courage to giue ouer ourſelues, and wholly to offer our ſelues vnto him. That it may pleaſe him to graunt this grace not onely vnto vs, but alſo to all people and Nations of the earth, &c.

On Friday the xxiiij. of Aprill, 1556.

The CLXXIIII. Sermon which is the ſecond vpon the one & thirtith Chapter.

9 And Moſes wrate this lawe and deliuered it to the Prieſtes the ſonnes of Leuie, which bare the Arke of the couenaunt of the Lord, and to all the Elders of Iſraell.

10 And Moſes commaunded them, ſaying, At the ende of euery ſeuenth yeere, in the time of the yeere of freedome, in the feaſt of Tabernacles,

11 When all Iſraell commeth to appeare before the Lord thy God, in the place which hee ſhall chooſe: then ſhalt thou reade this Lawe before all Iſraell, in the hearing of them.

12 Thou ſhalt gather the people together, men, women, and children, and thy ſtraunger which is within thy gates, that they may heare and learne and feare the Lorde your God, and keepe all the wordes of this lawe, to doe them.

13 And that their children alſo which haue not knowen it, may heare it and learne it, ſo as they may feare the Lorde your God all the dayes that thou haſt to liue in the Lande whither thou goeſt ouer Iordan to poſſeſſe it.

14 Then the Lorde ſayde vnto Moſes, beholde, the dayes of thy death are at hande: call Ioſuah and ſtande ye at the Tabernacle of the Congregation that I may giue him his charge. And ſo Moſes and Ioſuah went, and ſtoode at the Tabernacle of the Congregation.

WE do wel confeſſe that God dealeth gratiouſly with men, when he vouchſafeth to teach them, and to ſhewe them the way of ſaluation. For we ſee well it is a moſt miſerable ſtate when men haue no teaching all their life long, but do guide themſelues at all aduentures. Nowe the caſe ſo ſtandeth that we can not holde any way that is certaine for vs, but only ẏ which God ſheweth vs: for as for the thinges which men deuiſe, in deede they thinke them good ynough, but in the meane while, albeit that they bee blinded with their owne fantaſies, yet muſt they needes euermore ſtande in dout, and God maketh it manifeſt at the laſt, that it was but vanitie and folly. If men therefore were well aduiſed, nothing ſhould be more deere vnto them, than to haue Gods trueth to guide them, which woulde be a lampe to ſhewe them the way of ſaluation. Beholde, God calleth vs, hee tarrieth not till wee come to ſeeke that which is good for vs, neither would he haue vs to fetch long windlaſſes: but he offereth himſelfe of his owne good will, aſſuring vs that we can not faile, if we will hearken to his voyce; he will giue vs ſufficient inſtruction, and he proteſteth that it ſhall not be in vaine for vs to followe that which we ſhall haue heard at his mouth. Isa.45.19. Yet notwithſtanding, wee for all this doe make ſmal account to be taught of him; euery of vs wandereth after his owne imagination: and (which worſe is) hauing hadde ſome taſt and knowledge, and hauing founde by experience that all our whole happineſſe lyeth there, and that our whole contentment and reſt ought to be ſettled in the obeying of Goddes worde; yet is there none of vs but hee turneth aſide from it, and the ſame hath beene common in all ages. Nowe therefore, to remedie this miſcheife, GOD hath vouchſafed that his woord ſhoulde bee kept by ſome meane, and that ſome certaine folke ſhoulde haue the charge to preſerue it ſafe and ſounde; that it might not periſhe. Wherein we behold the ineſtimable care that he hath of our ſaluation. Be not wee worthy to be depriued of ſuch a treaſure, ſeeing we do eſteeme it ſo litle? Yes: for our vnthankefulneſſe deſerueth the wrath of God, and that he ſhould withdrawe the thing which hee hadde beſtowed vppon vs. Yet notwithſtanding, hee ceaſeth not to drawe vs ſtill backe vnto him: and heereof wee ſee heere a goodly example in that it is ſayde that Moſes *hauing written the lawe, committed it to the prieſtes* *the children of Leuie, which carried the Arke, and to all the Elders of Iſraell*, which hadde the charge and authoritie to gouerne the people. True it is, that when GOD hath once publiſhed his worde, euerie man ought to bethinke him to receiue it, for euerie man ought to take heede to it, for himſelfe; men ought not to depende one vpon an other: neuertheleſſe there is not any man that is greatly carefull thereof. It is behoouefull therefore that GOD ſhould appoint people to watch ouer vs, whileſt we ſleepe, and to call vppon vs: and if they ſee vs readie to ſwarue aſide, they muſt reſtraine vs. This is the cauſe, why it was ſpecially requiſite that the lawe ſhould be deliuered into the handes of the Prieſtes. Firſt of all it was written; and it was ſufficient, that the people had hearde the will of God. If men had good remembraunce, and woulde not forget that which they haue learned; it were ynough I ſay, that Moſes had once declared vnto them that which was requiſite for their welfare. For hee hadde commaunded them to occupie their mindes about the ſtudie thereof both night and day, and to write the Deut.6.8. lawe vpon the poſtes of their houſes, vpon their tables, and euerie where elſe; to the intent, that whyther ſoeuer they turned their eyes, they might euer be ſtirred to thinke vppon God. Againe, they ought to haue had a care to inſtruct their children: and beſides this, the Lawe was copyed out, yea and to be kept as it were vppon Recorde of authoritie, as which proceeded altogether from the hande of God. And the reaſon was that the people did ſoone growe out of kinde. Although they hadde their eares beaten with the thinges that were contayned in the lawe; yet turned they away to ſuperſtition, and afterward euery man became dulheaded & had nothing in him but ignorance, ſo as wͭ in a while there was no knowledge of God among them. But is the lawe written? Yet is it neceſſarie that it be cõmitted as a treaſure into the hands of the Mal.2.7. Prieſtes, which be yͤ meſſengers of God, as ſaith the Prophet Malachy; Knowledge ought to dwel in their mouth; and when we haue asked counſell of thẽ, we ought to hearken vnto them to be enformed of the truth. Nowe then they are appointed to be keepers. But what came to paſſe after that God had prouided ſo well for the matter? The lawe periſhed and was loſt. And ſurely ſeeing there was ſo good order takẽ for the preſeruation thereof, that men might heare it ſpoken of, yea and yͭ at the end of euery ſeuen yeere in the feaſt of Tabernacles, in yͤ ſolemn day, the couenant of God was to be renued, & the whole law was to be repeated before all the people: it is an incredible matter yͭ the ſame was ſo ſtraitely kept, yet notwithſtanding yͭ in the meane while there was ſuch rechleſnes, yͭ the people made no reckoning to be depriued of their chief welfare. For mẽ (as we haue already ſayd) be more wretched than brute beaſts, vnleſſe they be taught by God. To what end ſerueth all the reaſon & vnderſtanding yͭ they ſuppoſe thẽſelues to haue by nature, but to their greeuouſer condemnation, vntil God hath put forth his hand to them, and haue ſhewed thẽ wherunto they muſt ſticke? But yet howſoeuer the worlde went, the children of Iſrael, yͤ bleſſed ſeede of Abrahã, the choſen people, elect & adopted of God, his inheritance and his Church, they (I ſay) vnto whõ God had done ſo great honor, whõ he had exalted vnto ſo high a dignitie, hauing heard the law publiſhed, ought euery of them to haue borne it in minde, and to haue kept it as carefully as men keepe the charters of a kingdome, or the Crowne, or other ſuch thinges. And truly in all cõpariſon, the lawe of God deſerueth well to haue the preeminence aboue al yͭ euer is in the world. But yet for all that it vaniſheth away, & in the mean ſpace the people had no great care thereof. And ſurely it is a very ſtrange caſe how it ſhold come to paſſe, cõſidering yͭ the remẽbrance therof was ſo ſolemnly kept, by reaſon wherof al the people ought to haue thought thus: How now? We loſe this good cuſtom, wherby yͤ law of god ſhold now ſound in our eares, wherby we ſhould haue yͤ remẽbrance therof renewed; whereby we ſhold be confirmed in his couenant, & whereby the ſame ſhould be ratified vnto vs by yͤ reading of the law. The people (I ſay) had no regard to any of theſe thinges. In deede they aſſembled at yͤ feaſt day, & made great cheere, but yet euery body returned home to his owne houſe, wͭout hauing regarde to theſe things, inſomuch yͭ the lawe lay as it were buried vntil the time of Ioſias, in the which it was found 2.Chr.34.14 againe. True it is yͭ at that time they were greatly abaſhed at it: but yet we ſee the rechleſnes of men in yͭ they ſpake not a word when they were depriued of ſo great a benefit. And yͭ is a token of too ſhamefull thankeleſnes. Heere haue we a lookingglaſſe, wherein we may very well behold the affectiõ of men: for we at this day be no better than the Iewes were. And in deede wee perceiue howe the world ſeeketh nought elſe but to be exempted, yͭ they might not haue their eares troubled with the law of God, nor with his word. True it is that they are aſhamed, & do abhor to ſay yͭ Gods word ſhould be deſpiſed; but yet they would make it a relique, to be worſhipped a farre off, & as a ſealed letter, ſo as men ſhould content thẽſelues with the doing of ſome honor & ceremony to it, as if they ſhould ſay, Lo, the word of God ſhalbe reuerenced, but yet it belongeth not to vs to trouble ourſelues ouermuch therewith, by applying our ſtudy thereunto. We ſee then how the world doth euermore ſhift it ſelfe from taking any ſuch knowlege of Gods word as they ought to haue. For whereof cõmeth the horrible ignorãce, which reigneth yet ſtil in may cõtries, & generally in all the popedome, but only of this, yͭ men referre thẽſelues to the Monkes & Freers, and ſuch other people, or at leaſtwiſe to the Popes Clergie for the knowledge of the holy ſcripture? For it is not for ſecular or temporall perſons (as they terme them) to deale therwith. And the ſecular prieſtes alſo (as they call them) diſcharge thẽſelues thereof & put it ouer to the Monkes: they ſay it belongeth to none but doctors of diuinity to deale with it. See how brutiſh the world was become. And yet a man would thinke it ſtrange yͭ men ſhould be ſo groſly ouerſeene, as to haue no diſcretion in ẏ behalfe, but that they ſhold be led by the muſſels like beaſts, and go aſtray after ẏ maner. How is it poſſible ẏ God ſhould ſo forſake his church,& that thinges ſhould be ſo groſſely abuſed? Let vs looke to the cauſe & fountaine of the miſchiefe. When God kindleth the light of life amongſt vs, if we ſhutte our eyes thereat,& turne our backes,or take couertes to ſleepe in, & play the ſluggardes, which ſhut their windowes, ẏ the ſun ſhould not ſhine into their eyes: if we ſeeke to ſettle after ẏ ſorte in our lees; is it not meete ẏ God ſhold withdraw all his teaching from vs? Surely it is the paymēt which the world hath receiued,becauſe ẏ where it ſhoulde haue ſought learning fit for it; it choſe rather to be ignorant, ẏ it might haue excuſe before God.And moreouer,when our Lord vouchſafed ẏ his Goſpell ſhould be preached, that the world might be inlightned by ẏ brightnes therof; men did openly rebell againſt it, & choſe to obey lyes rather than the trueth. Therefore it could not be but ẏ ſuch horrible vengeance muſt needes come vpon them.Againe we ſee the care that God hath had to preſerue his goſpel in perfect ſtate. For like as he had prouided for ẏ law, euen ſo hath he alſo done by the goſpell, which is the perfection of all learning, according as S. 2.Tim.2.2. Paul ſayth in the ſecond to Timothee. We ſee there what order he eſtabliſhed in the Church, Looke what thou haſt hearde of me (ſaith he)by many witneſſes, commit thou it ouer as a gage vnto faithfull folke, which be meete and able to teach others. There S. Paul appointed keepers of the goſpell,as God had earſt appointed ẏ Leuiticall prieſts for keepers of the lawe. Alſo hee would ẏ they ſhold be faithfull folke which ſhold be occupied & employed therein: and he would ẏ they likewiſe ſhould doe their dutie in deliuering ẏ things ouer frō hand to hand,as they had receiued thē, to ẏ intent they might not lie hidden in darkenes. Yet neuertheleſſe we ſee howe it is come to paſſe. Therefore, wee muſt marke well in this place, ẏ God hath euermore procured the ſaluation of his people,& of thoſe whom he hath choſen, & not forgotten any thing that might be a meane to keepe them vnder his obedience. Thus much for one point.

Moreouer,wheras the world hath bin alwaies wauering, & caried hither & thither, and could not ſtay nor hold it ſelfe to ẏ ſeruing of God,nor ſuffer it ſelfe to be guyded by the doctrine which is for the ſaluation thereof; & to be ſhort, wheras men play the wilde beaſts; it is not at the firſt daſh ẏ they haue ſo reſiſted God, or made countenance to diſobey him: but they haue turned away frō him by litle & litle, in ſuch ſort ẏ within ſhort time they haue falne quite & cleane away. And ſo ye ſee how men haue continued in their naughtines,& not kept the lawe ẏ was deliuered vnto thē for a rule to liue by, & for ẏ way to lead them to ſaluatiō. Seeing it is ſo,we ought to take ſo much the more heede to the things which are ſhewed vnto vs heere.What muſt then be done? It is not ynough ẏ the truth be[but only] writtē: for to what end ſhall ẏ ſerue me but to my greater condemnation? But foraſmuch as men are ſo wedded to the thinges that concerne this tranſitorie life, & think not on the heauenly treaſure; it is requiſite ẏ there ſhould be good keepers:and aboue all thinges wee muſt note ẏ there will alwaies be a ſpeciall order to retaine vs euermore in the obedience of God, ſo long as his worde is dayly ſhewed vnto vs, & that euery man hath it in his handes. And if this be not permitted,wee ſhall quickely be carried hither & thither, and there will be no ſtay in vs, vnleſſe we haue ſuch a bridle to hold vs backe. That is a thing which we haue to marke.

Nowe in ẏ meane while we ſee what charge is here cōmitted aſwel to the Leuites, as to the rulers.True it is, ẏ at this day there is no certaine kinred allotted thereto by God in his Church: for his wil is,ẏ Shepherds ſhold be choſen:which office is no heritage: but he would ẏ they ſhould be taken according as they bee knowen meete. Neuertheleſſe al Paſtors,& Elders,that is to ſay, all Officers, & ſuch as haue publike charge,muſt vnderſtande that they muſt employ thēſelues to maintaine the pure religion,& that they muſt be as keepers of the word of God, to the end that it ſhould not periſh. And albeit ẏ there is no excuſe for the reſt of the people: yet ſhall theſe feele double vengeance, if they do not, what lyeth in them,to cauſe men to continue conſtant in the pure worde of God, & to ſee that euerie body be taught, & that both great & ſmall do yeelde thēſelues thereunto. If they ſtraine not themſelues to the vttermoſt of their powers ẏ Gods trueth may continue ſounde,it is certaine that they are to account therefore.

Now as touching that which Moſes ſaith further,*That he cōmandeth the children of Iſrael,that on the ſolemne day at the feaſt of the Tabernacles at the end of euery ſeuen yeere,the law ſhould be recited to all the people*: it is not meant ẏ God would not haue the Iewes taught it dayly: but it was yet a ſtraiter band, & the keeping ẏ ſolemnity,(as we haue ſeene heretofore where we treated of the couenant made by Moſes)was not to the intent ẏ the Deut.27.4. people ſhould[at other times] be vnmindfull of the lawe,but to ẏ intent they ſhould be ẏ deepelyer touched therewith, & haue it the better ratified after a ſolemne maner. That is the very meaning of this place. Euery yere, yea at euery feaſt or ſolemnitie,ẏ people cōming to the tēple were to be taught in deede. The ſacrifices were not to be done as a vaine pompe;but in ſuch ſort as men might know the end & vſe of thē, ſo as euery body might vnderſtād what God he ſerued, & be put in mind of the couenant which he had made with their fathers. But yet herewithall,beſides all this,God did moreouer ad a larger confirmation thereof, by renewing the remēbrance thereof at ẏ end of ſeuen yeres, as it were by the ſolemne taking of a new oth,to the end ẏ it ſhold not vaniſh away.Let vs vnderſtand then,ẏ when men had exerciſed thēſelues frō day to day, and frō moneth to moneth, & had all their life long ſtudied in the lawe of God, & bin taught his wil; yet this ceremony was neuertheleſſe obſerued, that they did reade all thē contentes of the lawe that the people might conſider thus ẇ thēſelues;

This

Deut.29,11.

This is not a treaſure yͭ may at any time periſhe from among vs,God hath not giuē it for a time: but it is for vs & for our childrē for euermore,as we haue ſeene in yͤ 29.chap.Seeing it is ſo,let vs take heed yͭ we continue the poſſeſſion therof amōg vs, & yͭ through our own rechleſnes we be not defeated of ſo ineſtimable a benefite, which ought to be preferred aboue all yͤ riches & delectable things of this world.Now wheras he ſpeaketh of yͤ feaſt,it is ſaid, *At ſuch time as al Iſrael ſhal be aſſēbled togither in the preſēce of his god.* We haue heretofore often times treated of this maner of ſpeaking, & it is nowe needeleſſe to ſtande long vpon it.It is ynough for vs alwayes to remēber, yͭ God in commanding men to come & worſhip him in his holy ſanctuarie,meant that the faithful ſhould haue a certein teſtimonie,& pawne of his preſence , to the intent they ſhould the willinglyer reſort thither, & vnderſtand that ſo to do was not an vnprofitable & loſt labour . Yet notwithſtanding God ment not to hold yͤ Iewes in any groſſe imagination, as if he had been encloſed in the Arke of the couenant, or as if his eſſence had bin betwixt yͤ Cherubins : but his comming down was of purpoſe to make yͤ faithful to mount vp to heauen through faith: & that is the common maner which hee hath alwayes holden in his church.For in as much as wee are not able to approch vnto him, nor to haue any acceſſe thither becauſe of our infirmities; hee vouchſafeth to ſtoope to our litleneſſe: howbeit not to make vs to neſtle ourſelues here beneath, or to conceiue groſſe opinions, as though hee were tyed to the elements of this world: but rather yͭ by ſuch meanes, hee might raiſe our faith vp on hye.Thus were they taught in the time of the law.And euen now alſo doth he vſe the ſame maner of dealing with vs at this day. We haue at this day the Sacraments. In deede wee haue not ſo great a multitude,as the fathers had, for it were more than needed for vs , becauſe wee haue the ſubſtance of all the olde ſhadowes our Lord Ieſus Chriſt. But yet for all that,God doth ſtil at this day apply himſelfe to our rudenes by his ſacraments.

Ephe.5.26. Tit.3.5.

In yͤ water of baptiſme we haue a teſtimony yͭ we be waſhed & made cleane, and that we be renued by his holy ſpirite.Now then we muſt not muſe vpon the water; but when we ſee the viſible ſigne,we muſt riſe aloft, & vnderſtand,yͭ God accompliſheth the thing in trueth, which is ſignified vnto vs by the viſible Sacrament. Euen ſo alſo it is of the Supper. Wee ſee there bread & wine, but we muſt through faith mount vp to our Lord Ieſus Chriſt,who is yͤ true foode of our ſoules,that wee may be fed & ſatiſfied in him. And the ſame is called the preſence of God. And why? For it is no deceitfull matter, neither doth God intend to beguyle vs,when he declareth & witneſſeth vnto vs,yͭ we be waſhed, & fed by the vertue of his onely ſonne; but hee would that we ſhould be aſſured of it, by feeling the verie effect therof. Now when God vttereth ſuch vertue,do not we feele him preſent?Let vs note then,that God is preſent with vs when we come vnto him,being called thither, & hauing the meanes which he hath ordeined:and in like

Matt.18,20.

wiſe when wee be aſſembled togither,there is a preſence of our God. For our Lord Ieſus Chriſt ſitteth in the middeſt of vs,becauſe wee bee his. We muſt not think that he is farre off, but that he receiueth al our requeſts,& that we be hard, & do obtaine of God his father all that is conuenient for vs. Thus ought wee to take courage. When we vſe the Sacraments, when wee come to heare yͤ word of God, when we make commō prayers, & when wee obſerue the whole order which God hath eſtabliſhed in his church:let vs be aſſured that he is with vs, & that hee aſſureth vs not in vaine,& that we make no windlaſſes as other men do,greatly tormenting themſelues in following their owne fanſies. No no; but in ſō doing our God preuenteth vs, & ſeeketh altogether to haue vs ioyned vnto him,& that hee will ſhew the ſame openly & make vs to vnderſtand it by effect. That is the thing in effect, which we haue to remember concerning the manner of ſpeach which Moſes vſeth here.

And by the way , the people are warned by this meane,to heare the law with yͤ more heede & reuerence. What is the cauſe, that when the worde of God is preached vnto vs, many in the meane while doe wander in the ayre, or bee at home with their houſhold,or elſe fall on aſleepe; and (to be ſhort) that although they doe both heare & vnderſtand, yet they bee not moued awhit; the law & the Goſpel bee vnto them as a matter of nothing: whence commeth ſuch contempt? For it is againſt nature; that our GOD ſhould ſpeake, & that the creatures which liue by his grace, & which ought to dedicate themſelues wholy vnto him, ſhould yeeld him ſo litle honor & authoritie. We do eaſily vouchſafe to heare a man, if we haue him in any eſtimation; no worde that proceedeth from his mouth ſhal fall to the ground; but we wil as it were ſuck vp whatſoeuer is ſpoken by ſo great a perſonage;in ſo much that before his words be fully pronounced,we conceiue what he meant to ſpeake. Behold, God ſpeaketh,& albeit yͭ it be by yͤ mouth of men, yet is it his will that his word ſhould be of like maieſtie with vs, as if hee himſelfe were here in perſon. But it preuaileth not : & that is becauſe we thinke not on this preſence wherof Moſes ſpeaketh in this place. Let vs marke wel then, that where it is ſayde that when the people aſſemble together, *in the preſence of their god*, then the law ſhalbe repeated ; it is as a preparatiue. For to the end that wee ſhould be drawne away,& carried vp from the cares of the world, & from the vaine & fond gaſings, with yͤ which we be intangled by nature: our Lorde doth here waken vs,and tel vs, that it is he that ſpeaketh,& that hee wil throughly inſtruct ſuch as wil heare him with all humilitie, and that his worde ſhall in like wiſe haue the power and force to ſearche mens heartes and to trye all their thoughtes & affections. Seeing it is ſo that we cannot eſchue the preſence of our God, and that hee ſummoneth vs before his maieſtie, and declareth that when wee heare his worde , it is to note and marke out them that obey him ; that ſo at the leaſt wiſe wee ſhoulde not bee ſo doltiſh , as not to apply our endeuour to bee taught as wee ought, nor to conceiue a feruent zeale, with ſuch meekeneſſe and aptneſſe to learne, as S. Iames requireth in vs, but that wee may haue Iames.1.21. the ſeed of life take roote in our hearts to bring foorth ſuch fruites as may bee acceptable to our God. This then is one circumſtance more which wee haue to obſerue in this place, where Moſes declareth yͭ when the people were come together after the order which GOD had ſet downe in his lawe, hee woulde bee preſent with them, and it was as an opening of the gate of heauen.

Nowe let vs come to that which hee addeth. He ſayeth, *That all Iſrael ſhalbe gathered together, and that they ſhall read the law before men, women & litle children.* When he ſaith, Thou ſhalt aſſemble the people, he doth againe make it manifeſt that men will neuer come at God vnleſſe they bee thruſt forward & pricked as oxen or aſſes: & that ſerueth to make vs yet more aſhamed of ſuch rechleſnes. For litle children need not to be exhorted to breake their faſt, they can very well aske their foode; the great ones alſo are deſirous ynough to be fed, euery man hath care ynough for his belly: we neede no ſolicitors to come vnto vs to ſay, And wil ye not dyne? But in yͤ meane while, behold, our ſoules ſtarue, if they want the foode which God hath ordeined for them: and yet who is he that careth for it? Who is he that commeth to ſeeke that foode? None. Therefore it is ſaid, *Thou ſhalt aſſemble the people.* We ſee thẽ what beaſtlineſſe there is in vs: albeit that wee think our ſelues to be very able, & that euery of vs boaſteth himſelf to be a reaſonable creature, & that we haue wit & diſcretion to gouerne our ſelues: magnifie we our ſelues neuer ſo much after yͤ maner, yet ſeeke wee nothing but to periſh in our ignorance: and we be ſo farre off from ſeeking God, that he is fain to giue vs many ſtrokes with the ſpurre to draw vs vnto him, becauſe we be ſo ill diſpoſed: yea & we ſee yͤ example hereof in our ſelues, in ſo much yͭ if there were not an houre appointed for it, how many ſhould a man finde that would haue the regard to ſay, Let vs heare the word of God, yͭ we may haue ſome teaching? Nay, euen when the houre is come, & the bell hath bin tolled, euen then ſtil the moſt part make none account therof. I ſpeake not of them which haue ſmal leiſure therunto, & which haue ſome excuſe: but of ſuch as haue eaſe & al things at wil, inſomuch as they knowe not howe to beſtow the time, they are euen wearie of it & wote not what to do, nor (as they ſay) how to driue away the time; and yet rather than they will go to the church, they will ſit downe ydly in their houſes, or elſe in the ſtreetes rather than come to heare a ſermon. It is certaine yͭ there be ſome venimous toads, which gnaſh their teeth againſt the word of God, & doe flee from it as much as they may; but there be others which come thither, they wote not wherefore, ſauing that they looke for no teaching. Others come thither for a faſhion, & becauſe there is in it a certain ceremony: but yet for all that, they be neuer yͤ better mynded nor the better diſpoſed towardes it. Now then we perceiue yͭ looke how much God calleth vpon vs to heare his word; ſo much the more ſlow we be thereunto. And alſo contrarywiſe, we ſee how our Lord reproueth our vnthãkfulnes, & yͭ we miſapply & miſuſe the good which he doth to vs, & as much as in vs lyeth, ſuffer it to periſh, vnleſſe he vſe al maner of helpes, to ſet vs forward more & more.

As touching that he ſaith, that the law *ſhalbe preached & recited to men, women, & litle children:* wee ſee in this place, yͭ God hath not giuen his word to a ſmal portion of people only, but would yͭ al in general ſhould be partakers of it, euen frõ the moſt vnto the leaſt; & that is a very notable leſſon. For we ſee the craftines of Sathan, how he hath laboured to depriue the greater part of the world of that benefite, vnder colour that the word of God is no cõmon matter; yͭ it is too high & too deepe; and that it is too obſcure. And moreouer they haue had this opinion, that it is not for men to enter into it, for that it is a Labyrinth to maze men withal, & men cannot faſten vpon it. Wee ſee howe theſe hypocrytes in the popedome do terrifie the people from reading the word of God. Take heede (ſay they) for it is dangerous for you to aduenture ſo farre. In very deede yͤ word of God is ſacred and holy: but what then? If the vnlearned ſorte ſhould taſte of it, they ſhould foorthwith be infected with hereſies, & their errors would be infinite, ſo as they ſhould fall into great confuſion. By this meanes men dare not once ſeeke after the will of God: but they be borne in hande, yͭ as ſoone as they enter into it, they by and by plunge themſelues into a bottomleſſe gulfe. Contrary to that, here God ſayth, yͭ when he gaue his law, it was not alonly for the Trybe of Leui, but for al yͤ people: and not for men only, but for women alſo, yea, & euen for the litle children. Let vs holde it (ſay I) for a concluſion, that whereas God hath giuen vs his lawe, and all the doctrine that is contayned therin; it is the teſtament which he hath left for vs: and thereby hath he adopted vs for his children. Nowe if wee bee not the children of God, then are wee not worthie to haue any thing in common with him: but hee calleth vs vnto him. And how ſhall we be ſure of it, if he himſelfe bee not a faithfull witneſſe vnto vs of his will? Seeing then that our Lorde certifyeth vs of our ſaluation, when he giueth vs his word: wee muſt vnderſtande that he will not ſuffer vs to ſtray, as though wee knewe not whether wee ſhoulde turne on the right hand or on the left: but that hee doth giue vs an infallible direction. Seeing then that hee vouchſafeth to doe the office of a ſchoolemaſter towardes vs; let vs indeuour to profite thereby, and let vs behaue our ſelues like good ſcholers towardes him, and let none of vs in this caſe alleage, I am no clarke. For God hath not ſpoken to the greate doctours onely, but his will was to deale foorth his worde in common both to great and ſmall, and to the moſt ignorant: and hee hath ſo tempered it to their capacities, as that all they which come to yeeld themſelues teachable, ſhall very well perceiue that our Lorde knew well what is meete for them,and they ſhalbe taught after ſuch ſort as he knoweth to be moſt conuenient for them. Now if this be verified of the lawe, much more reaſon is it that it ſhoulde at this day take effect in the time of the Goſpel.For we heare how it is ſaide by the Prophet Eſay; that in the kingdom of our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt all ſhalbee taught of God. Marke the prophet Eſay, who knewe very well that God had giuen his law to al the Iewes, and that it was a good and profitable inſtruction, as well for the litle children as for the Elders. But yet for as much as hee knewe wel that God would vtter foorth his grace more largely, and ſende a newe manner of light of vnderſtanding, when as Ieſus Chriſt ſhoulde bee manifeſted vnto the world ; hee ſayth that then all the children of the church ſhould be taught of God. And we ſee that in the Popedome, where they turne away the people from reading the holy Scripture. It is a wicked blaſphemie, when men ſuffer themſelues to bee ſo blynded, and vouchſafe not to ſuffer thēſelues to be lead nor taught at Gods hands;yea & they haue proceeded to ſo diueliſh blaſphemie,as to accuſe the holy Scripture of too much darknes,as a thing of too great depth wherein men ought not to be inſtructed, for feare leſt they ſhould forthwith be poſſeſſed with many errors. When they talk on that wiſe, the iniurie tendeth to yͤ liuing God; for they accuſe him of vntrueth, notwithſtanding the proteſtation that he maketh by his Prophet Eſaye; Yea & wee ſee, howe all the whole Scripture is full of the like teſtimonies, whereby it is auowed that the holy Scripture is profitable. There needed no more but this one place of S.Paul, where hee ſayeth , That all ſcripture is profitable to inſtruct , to exhort, to diſprooue and to rebuke. Hee ſayeth not that it is profitable for three or foure rables of ſcuruie Monkes or ſhauelinges; hee ſayeth not ſo : but he ſayeth that it is profitable to make the man of God perfect. And therefore let vs not dout , but that when our Lorde deliuered his lawe hee knewe our capacitie, and applyed himſelfe in ſuch wiſe therunto, as hee teacheth vs according to our meaſure. In ſo much that if wee bee teachable , wee ſhall fynde that his doctrine was not deliuered vs in vayne, but that hee meaneth to guyde vs thereby vnto ſaluation , as it is in deede the true meane to attayne thereunto : onely let vs ſuffer our ſelues to bee gouerned of our G O D, and not behaue our ſelues ſtubbornely towardes him , ſeeing hee offereth himſelfe ſo freely vnto vs. And ſurely it ought to mooue vs very much, when hee ſayeth, that God will haue all, yea euen the litle children and all to bee hearers of his lawe. For he telleth vs (as Salomon alſo ſayeth in his booke of the Preacher) that men muſt not delaye to thinke vppon G O D, till they beginne to droope and bee broken with age. Yet notwithſtanding, wee ſee howe youth runneth aſtray, and that there is nothing harder than to make young folke beleeue that they muſt be bridled in, that they muſt imploy them ſelues,whileſt they be ſtrong and luſtie,and that they muſt ſo much the more apply their wittes to be inſtructed in the word of God. A man can not bring this to paſſe, but the ſtronger & luſtier they be, the more careleſſe be they. Now Moſes ſheweth in this place, that as ſoone as the litle ones begin to diſcerne betweene good and euill,they muſt learne to knowe what God created them;and then what God hath ſhewed him ſelfe to be their father; & what God they ought to ſerue,& wherein they muſt put their truſt.

Eſai.54.13.
Ioh.6.46.
2.Tim.3,16
17.
Eccle.12.1.

And in very deede,at the verie ſame time, God did alreadie at yͤ eighth day, giue a marke of his free adoption;for before they knew either good or euil,God enterteined them to be of his flock, and the circumciſion ſerued to ſeale the promiſe of ſaluation which he had made in ſaying; I wil bee the G O D of thy ſeede. Seeing that children be thus entertained , and God hath made it manifeſt that they bee of his church, & houſholde people of the kingdome of heauen: is it meete that when they be come to the age of vnderſtanding, they ſhoulde holde ſcorne of him which hath preuented them with ſo great goodnes? Ought they not to know, who is their creator, and in likewiſe , who hee is that hath vouchſafed to ſhewe himſelfe to bee their father , when as hee hath receyued them for his children?

Gen.17.12.

And wee at this day haue ſo good reaſon as the Iewes had. For as ſoone as our children be born,they be caried to baptiſme.And there God doth ſhewe that hee hath already choſen them, and that his will is that they ſhould bee as of his houſholde . Therefore when an infant is thus declared to bee a member of our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt,before he doth vnderſtand what yͤ grace of God or religion or any thing elſe is:ſhould he not when he commeth to age of vnderſtanding, indeuour to learne yͭ he was created of God:who hauing created him after his owne image , hath vouchſafed alſo to chooſe him to be of the number and company of his people : and hath placed him in the body of our Lord Ieſus Chriſt , to the end he ſhould be partaker of the inheritance of ſaluation ? Conſidering ſo many and ſo ineſtimable benefites receiued at Gods hand,ought he not (ſay I)to giue himſelfe wholie to him and to his ſeruice ? And if they doe it not , doe they not ſhewe themſelues too much vnthankfull in diſappoynting the grace which was then giuen vnto them? Alſo,our Lord ſheweth the zeale that ought to bee in them which bee taught by his word : namely , that ſo much as in them lyeth, they muſt not ſuffer any deſpiſers of religion to dwell amongeſt them : but rather take paines to winne the poore ignoraunt ſort , and euery man reache his hand to him that goeth aſtray , ſo as it may not bee long of vs , that all men bee not brought into the way of ſaluation , and that all of vs liue not with one accorde as wee ought to doe.

It is ſaide : *The ſtraunger alſo that dwelleth with thee, ſhall in likewiſe be taught*. In deede they had not the promiſe, as the childrē of Abraham had : they were not of the body of that people . But neuertheleſſe God would not haue any brutiſh people to abide there , which ſhoulde deſpiſe all religion; for it is ſuch an infection and corruption as is not to bee borne withall in the church,when ſuch folke are to bee ſeene there as knowe not whether there bee a God in heauen, or not, or which knowe not what religion they ſhoulde holde. Such are to bee ridde away, or elſe there wilbee nothing but corruption, which in the ende will marre all.

Againe,it is ſayde, *The children of them which haue not heard thereof afore.* It is ſhewed in this place, that when the lawe of God hath ſerued to eſtabliſh vs in his feare, and in the hope of his goodnes,and that wee our ſelues haue beene edified thereby from day to day: wee muſt not forget them that haue not yet taſted of ẏ trueth, but doe as yet goe aſtray in their errors: we muſt pitie them,and doe our indeuour, ſo much as in vs lyeth,to winne them, that God may be honoured of vs all together. That is all in effect which wee haue to beare away concerning this place. Nowe (as I haue alreadie ſayde) if the people of Iſrael were exhorted to haue ſuch a care, in the time when they had the doctrine yet more darkely than it is nowe deliuered vnto vs in the Goſpel, (for albeit that it was ſufficient for that time; yet in compariſon of the Goſpel, it was not ſo large as wee haue it now) ſith it is ſo, let vs looke well to our ſelues,and marke well,that if euer wee be bereft of this ſo precious treaſure which God hath giuen vs,ſo as it be taken from vs; it is for our owne malice, rechleſneſſe,and vnthankfulnes, becauſe wee haue deſpiſed God, and thruſt the things vnder foote which wee ſhoulde haue kept moſt carefully. And therefore let it be a warning to vs to make vs giue good heede to the heauenly doctrine when it is once taught vs,and ſet afore vs. And moreouer let vs followe the order which our Lorde hath eſtabliſhed in his Church, and not onely let euery of vs for his owne particular part and perſon followe it and indeuour to profit his owne houſholde: but alſo let vs benefite al other folk in common by exerciſing our ſelues in that which God commandeth vs. And againe,when euery of vs hath ſo conſidered of himſelfe;let vs in likewiſe bee careful of our neighbours, & doe our indeuours to winne the ignorant,& to confirme them which be alreadie brought into the good way, vntill wee bee all come to the marke that God hath ſet before vs.

Now let vs fall downe before the maieſtie of our good God, with acknowledgement of our faults;beſeeching him to make vs to feele them more and more,euen with ſuch repentance, as being beaten downe in our ſelues,we may ſeeke nothing but to obtein mercie of him, according as he hath promiſed vs in our Lord Ieſus Chriſt: ſo as he will cauſe the deſert of his death & paſſion to be auailable, that we being waſhed from all our filthines,may be ſo gouerned by his holy Spirite,as we may deſire nothing but to giue ouer our ſelues vnto him,fighting againſt all maner of wicked luſtes & affections, & labouring more and more to bee ridde and deliuered from all things that may hinder vs from yeelding our obedience to his righteouſnes. That it may pleaſe him to grant this grace,not only vnto vs, but alſo to al people & nations of the earth,&c.

On Munday the iiij.of May,1556.

The CLXXV. Sermon which is the third vpon the one & thirtith Chapter.

14 Then the Lorde ſaid vnto Moſes: Behold the dayes of thy death be at hand. Call Ioſuah,and ſtand both of you at the Tabernacle of the Congregation that I may giue him his charge. So Moſes and Ioſuah went and ſtoode at the Tabernacle of the congregation.

15 Then appeared the Lord at the Tabernacle in a clowdie pillar:and the clowdy pillar reſted vpon the doore of the Tabernacle.

16 And the Lord ſaid vnto Moſes: Beholde thou goeſt to ſleepe with thy fathers, and this people will ſtande vp and commit fornication with the ſtrange gods of the lande whereinto they goe: and will forſake mee, and breake my couenant which I haue made with them.

17 By reaſon whereof my wrath ſhall in that day be kindled againſt them,and I will forſake them and hyde my face from them,that they may be a pray. Many miſchiefes and troubles ſhall they fynde: By reaſon whereof they ſhall ſay at that day: Do not theſe miſchiefes finde mee out, becauſe my God is not with mee?

GOD hath ſuch a care of mans welfare, that hee delayeth not the remedying of a miſchiefe til the miſchiefe be come: but preuenteth it aforehand, as we haue here a faire exãple thereof. He tarried not til the people were turned away after idols; but foraſmuch as he knewe well yͭ it would ſo come to paſſe, hee vouchesafed to warn them of it, & made an aſſay to ſee whether any preſeruatiue medicine might holde it from breaking out. God therefore ordeined this ſong to the intent yͭ the people ſhoulde daily haue in their mouth a teſtimonie againſt themſelues, & yͭ they ſhould by that meanes be either reſtrayned, if it were poſſible; or elſe bee left vtterly without excuſe. And here we ſee firſt of al yͭ God did not chooſe this people for that they were more worthie or more righteous than other nations of yͤ earth. For proofe wherof, he knew very wel that they would be always inclined to euil, and not ceaſſe to ſhrinke away, but become hardharted in rebelling againſt him: & yet for all yͭ, he forbare not to deliuer them out of the land of Egypt, & to powre out all yͤ treaſures of his infinite goodnes & mercie vpon them in doing thẽ good. We haue then heere a certaine proofe, yͭ when God did chooſe the people of Iſrael, hee had no reſpect to any worthines or merites that were in them: but rather meant to glorifie his own free mercie, in ſhewing, yͭ although men be neuer ſo vnworthie to be receiued to mercie, yet doth he not therefore ceaſe to ſhew himſelfe a father towards them. But herewithal we ſee alſo (as I haue already ſayd) that god ordeineth ſuch remedies as hee knoweth to bee conuenient to bring them back into the right way, & delayeth not the releeuing of them till they haue done & are falne downe: but prouideth all the helpes aforehand which he knoweth to be meete for the leading & guiding of them, to the intent they ſhould not ſwarue nor ſtart out of the way.

Now in deede here might be a queſtion put, whether God could not haue reſtrained yͤ people of Iſrael better, if he had would; for we knowe yͭ if he liſt to reſtraine mens harts by his holy ſpirite, he is able to do it. And why then wrought he not ſo with this people? We cannot binde God to giue vs ſuch conſtancie, as yͭ we might continue in his ſeruice. And therfore we muſt not argue againſt him in this caſe, nor ſay that this ſõg was not ſufficient, & that it had bin better that God had wrought effectually by his holy ſpirite. For it was not his will; he left the people in their own frailtie. Howbeit wee muſt not ſay as ſome blaſphemers do, that God mocked them, in that hee vſed ſuch a remedie, as hee knewe to be vnſufficient: for God may wel ſtill vphold, that he hath diſcharged his office towardes men, when he hath once giuen them his worde, inſomuch yͭ although it cannot touch them to the quick, but remaineth as a dead letter vnto them: yet neuertheleſſe, they continue iuſtly condemned. But this woulde bee darke if it were not better declared. Let vs marke therefore firſt of all, that by this ſong, (according to the ſtorie therof reported by Moſes,) Gods will was that the people, (before they were fallen away and eſtranged from the way of ſaluation,) ſhoulde haue a teſtimonie againſt themſelues, as wee ſhall ſee more at length hereafter. But it ſufficeth for this preſent to touche the contentes and ſumme of this ſong: which is, that God being the creator of all the worlde, choſe the lyne of Abraham, whome hee adopted, and beſtowed vppon them all the bleſſings that were poſſible to bee wiſhed, and laſtly brought them out of the lande of Egypt, and put them in poſſeſſion of the lande which hee had promiſed them for their inheritance, and there fedde them fatly: notwithſtanding all which things, that people rebelled againſt him, (as horſes that bee too much pampered in the ſtable, and bee too fat, and therefore doe kicke againſt their maſters) and turned away after ſtrange Gods. And therefore that God being prouoked to anger, ſtirred vp ſtrange nations to chaſtice them and to puniſh them for their rebelling after that maner: howbeit that it grieued him to deale ſo roughly with them, like a father that is very ſory to vſe rigor towards his children, after which maner we ſhal ſee yͭ God ſetteth forth himſelfe like a man ſore grieued: [as if he ſhould ſay] were not this people very far ouerſeene, or had they any drop of reaſon & good vnderſtanding, to conſider their owne ende: they would not haue bin ſo turned away from me. After that manner then is the ſong, as we ſhal ſee. Now it was a cõmon ſong. God willed that it ſhould bee in euery bodies mouth both great & ſmal, to the end that euery man ſhould be daily called vpon, to walke in the feare of God. And ſo we be warned of that which may happen vnto vs. God doeth firſt declare vnto vs his curſe: and to what end, but that euery one of vs ſhould keepe himſelfe from it? Againe, he ſheweth vs the inconuenience wherinto we ſhal fall; he telleth vs that he wil reuenge our rechleſnes, & therefore let vs beware of it. For to what end doth he it, but that he woulde not haue vs to tempt him, but rather yͭ it ſhould reteine vs in his ſeruice? Ye ſee then howe the people ought to haue taken warning hereby.

But now we aske whether that ought to haue ſufficed, and whether the people had power to reſtrayne themſelues, as it is imagined that men haue free wil to chooſe good or euil. The anſwer is, that it was not ynough for GOD to put his word in their mouth, but it behoued him alſo to imprint it in their harts by his holy ſpirit. We ſee how it is ſaid farther in this place: *Thou goeſt to dye, and the people after thy death will fall away, and runne a whoring after ſtrange gods.* It is God yͭ ſpeaketh on this wiſe to Moſes. Now it muſt needes be yͭ he foreſaw what would come to paſſe, yea, but they wil allege yͭ Gods foreſight kepeth not men back frõ turning vnto God whẽ they liſt. In deed it is certaine yͭ the foreſight of God is not yͤ cauſe that men do either good or euil, but yet god did know very wel yͭ this people, whatſoeuer doctrine or religion they ſhould haue, would not ceaſe to be wicked & froward: he knew very wel yͭ his warning of thẽ aforehande would not ſufſice to conuert them. God knewe it welynough. Wherefore then did he not prouide for it? See here how men do take vpon them to pleade againſt God: but they muſt bee ſtopt with their preſumption. If they alleage, Wherefore is it that God, when hee ſeeth men go out of courſe, doeth not remedie it? The aunſwere therunto is this, that God is neither tyed nor bound therto; it is ynough then that they bee made thereby inexcuſable. And therefore, although God doeth knowe aforehande, that wee, becauſe of our infirmitie, ſhall not bee able to continue in his obedience; and that there wilbee ſuch malice in vs, that wee ſhall not ceaſſe to prouoke his wrath: yet is it ynough ÿ he doth inſtruct vs by his word, & that we bee accuſed & condemned by him. Yea: but in deede it lyeth not in vs to do well. Al theſe replyes be friuolous before God. For men cannot allege that the euil commeth from any where elſe [than themſelues.] Although we be enclyned to ſinne, & although we be altogether thereto giuen by nature; ſhall we ſay that it is by any conſtraint? Shall we ſay that the fault therof is not in vs? It is impoſſible. Seeing then that our mouth is ſtopt in this caſe, we muſt condemne our ſelues & humble vs before God. And albeit that his word ſerue but to make vs guiltie, & not to change our hearts from euil to good: yet neuertheleſſe, it is not ſuperfluous, neither ought we to ſay that God doeth daly, or that hee doeth mocke vs: for hee doeth the office of a teacher towarde vs, & telleth vs what his will is. Wherefore let vs deſire him, not onely to teache vs by the mouth of men, but alſo to print his worde in our heartes, and to make it preuayle, to the ende it bee not in vaine. Such requeſt muſt wee make, ſith wee ſee what is contained in the ſong of Moſes. Moreouer we muſt honor the wonderfull prouidence of God, in that it is ſayde vnto vs, that he foreſeeth what ſhall befall vnto men, & yet notwithſtanding taketh no order for the redreſſe therof, as wee woulde if hee ſhould followe our appetite. It ſeemeth a ſtraunger matter at the firſt ſight, that God ſhoulde ſay, This people wil runne a whoring, and goe and defile themſelues with ſtrange Gods. He ſayth it, and yet he giueth none other remedie but a ſong, of purpoſe that this people ſhould bee condemned by their owne mouth. And wherefore doth he not rather preuent the miſchiefe? For he might do it. But (as I haue ſaid alreadie) it is not for vs to enter into diſputation in this caſe: for ſurely all they that vſe ſuch arrogancie & boldnes, ſhall finde themſelues confounded. What muſt wee do then? We muſt ſtoope & honor the glorie of God which is incomprehenſible to vs, & ſuffer our ſelues to be gouerned by him. And whereas he knowing mens lewdnes aforehande, doth neuertheleſſe ſuffer them to rotte therein vntil he prouide for it: we muſt vnderſtand that he doth it iuſtly, though the reaſon therof be vnknowen and hidden vnto vs. Wee in deede will euer be grunting at it, vntil we be ſubdued vnto ſuch humilitie & reuerence, as to conclude that God is iuſt, & that we know not what is good for vs, except that God reueile it vnto vs. Nowe then if wee haue not this modeſtie and ſobrietie in vs, there wil alwayes ſeeme to bee ſome cauſe for vs to grunt at: But yet muſt wee euer be confounded, according as it is ſaide in the 51. Pſalme, that when men haue condemned God, yet his righteouſnes ſhall not bee a whit diminiſhed thereby, but hee will well defende it. Seeing it is ſo, let vs beware that wee enter not into ſuch boldneſſe as to reply againſt God, and to moue the queſtions which many people in the worlde at this day do mooue, like theſe maſtife dogges which ceaſe not to bark againſt God when they cannot byte him: but let vs ſtand ſilent, when it is ſayde that God doeth well knowe what ſhall come to paſſe vpon men, & neuertheleſſe beſtoweth not his grace, but vppon thoſe whome he liſteth. For it is certaine that hee toucheth with repentance whome hee will, but not al. For a great number of the people are farre out of ſquare. If wee aske howe it commeth to paſſe, that ſome haue continued in the pure religion, & haue alwayes ſerued God: vndoutedly it came of a ſpeciall grace; no man prepared himſelf to it. As touching the others which haue miſſed, & repented: if it be asked who recouered them; it is not of men that they bee conuerted, it is the ſpeciall gift of God. We ſee then how God hath wrought in ſome, to guyde them alwayes in the pureneſſe of his ſeruice; and that others haue bin receiued to mercie, albeit that they had offended; & that the ſame hath not fallen out to al indifferently. We ſee then that God beſtoweth his grace where it ſeemeth good to himſelf, and we muſt not pleade againſt it, to ſay: And why doth hee not deale egally with all, as hee doeth with ſome? Why vſeth he not like meaſure? We ſhall winne nothing by pleading ſo againſt God. Thus much wee haue to conſider concerning this place.

Pſal.51.6.

Herewithal let vs mark alſo what hath beene touched afore: to wit, that although the word of God, of it ſelfe, hath not power to reforme our harts, to lead vs vnto God, to heale our faults, & to bring vs to good: yet is it certaine ÿ we ceaſe not therfore to be condemned therby. For although the word of God be dayly preached vnto vs: yet are we neuer the better for hauing our eares beaten therewith as wee ſee a great many people are, who hauing bin inſtructed in ÿ Goſpel, become worſe therby than they were afore. And the reaſon is, becauſe ÿ the worde of God entreth not into their harts, but through ÿ grace of ÿ holy Ghoſt. And this grace is not beſtowed on all. They therfore which come to heare the worde, become ſo much the more blameworthy when they once know God, if they profite not thereby, & God muſt needes caſt them off in a leawd mind. Let vs mark then ÿ the word of God being ſpoken by a mortal man, without any further help than ÿ outward teaching therof, is not ynough: for ſo it ſhal but beat our eares: as for our harts, they ſhal not be touched therẇ. What muſt then be done? We muſt pray God to ſpeake vnto vs inwardly after a ſecrete manner, and to cauſe the voyce which ſoundeth in our eares, to enter likewiſe into our thoughtes and affections, that wee may bee touched therewith to the quicke. That is the point which we muſt come vnto. Yet neuertheleſſe we muſt not think that the word of God ſerueth to no purpoſe, whẽ we reade it in holy ſcripture, or haue it expounded vnto vs. Let vs aſſure ourſelues that it ſhall not fall to the grounde, either it muſt ſerue vs to ſaluation, or elſe we muſt receiue thereby ŷ grieuouſer condemnation. Now if we couet to haue this doctrine profitable to ſaluation, let vs pray God to write it in our heartes; and furthermore we muſt beware ŷ we be not therby ŷ more guiltie. For when wee haue heard the will of God, and be not therein throughly certified: if afterward we continue hardened in our ſtubbornes, what excuſe is there for vs then? We haue bin wont to make a buckler of ignorance, but ŷ will ſerue the turne no more. Therefore wee muſt marke, ŷ although the only word of it ſelfe can not conuert men: yet doth it ſuffice to caſt them into vtter condemnation, as thoſe which would needes defie God wilfully. It is alſo ſayd in this place, ŷ God *appeared to Moſes at the Tabernacle, euen in a cloudie piller.* This was not done for Moſes only; but rather for all the people. In deede it was very behoouefull ŷ Moſes ſhold be aſſured of Gods guiding. For the enterpriſe which he vndertooke to bring the people out of the lande of Egypt, was not for a mortall creature to haue done [of himſelfe.] It was needefull then ŷ they ſhould know ŷ God did auow him. And therfore it was Gods will to ratifie the cōmiſſion which he had giuen him, ŷ it might haue full authoritie among the people. After the ſame maner was it Gods wil to deale in giuing new cōmiſſion to Ioſuah, who was to ſucceede Moſes. Alſo it was his wil to cauſe this laſt ſong to be receiued without gaine ſpeaking; & to do them to vnderſtand ŷ it was not forged nor hāmered in ŷ head of a man, but ŷ it came frō heauen, and ŷ it was God that ſpake it. To the end therfore ŷ the people might be throughly aſſured of theſe thinges, he ſayth, Come thou & Ioſuah to the Tabernacle. And what is the cauſe ŷ God would not aſwell ſpeake to Moſes in his owne Tent? It was becauſe hee would haue the people to be ŷ more moued. For men are ſo ſlender witted & earthly, ŷ they haue neede to bee led vnto God by viſible ſignes. To what end ſerued ŷ Tabernacle? It was a witneſſe ŷ God dwelled amongſt his people, as wee haue ſeene heeretofore. It is certaine ŷ God filleth all places with his power & eſſence: But yet becauſe men are rude & groſſe, it behoueth thẽ to haue ſome helpes to bring them vnto him. So then, the Tabernacle ſerued to waken mens wits that they might vnderſtand, ŷ in cōming thither they came neere vnto God, as if they had beene preſent before his maieſtie. For ŷ cauſe therfore it was ſaid vnto Moſes & Ioſuah, that they ſhold come to the Tabernacle of the congregation. But that is not all. For there appeared a cloudie piller, and (as we knowe) ŷ was a double ſigne or miracle, to ſhew vnto the Iewes ŷ God was nigh Exod.13.21 Num.14.14. vnto thẽ. For in the day time there was a long thicke cloude, which was like a great piller; and in the night the cloude turned to a fire. And to what end was the piller darke, & like a cloud by day? Becauſe the fire ſhould not be ſo apparant to the people. Moreouer it was Gods will to refreſh them, as if it were ſayde, I haue my wings ſtretched out, to giue you ſhadowe, & to maintaine you vnder my protection; that if the ſonne be ouer whot by day, you ſhalbe hidden as vnder me & vnder my leading. And by night, when al is darke, I will ſerue you for a light, & you ſhalbe guided thereby: there ſhalbe continually a burning fire, to ſhewe vnto you ŷ I am waking, and that I am neuer aſleepe, & that I haue not mine eyes ſhut, but that I do foreſee for all your neceſſities. That is the cauſe why God appeared in ſuch maner to the Iewes, to wit, ŷ by day he gaue them a cloud to couer them, which was long and in forme of a great Pyller (as I haue ſaid), and by night there was a burning fire, all on a length, like vnto a train of fire ouer al ŷ people. And this fire ſerued to giue light to the people; as if God had ſhewed his hand, as who wold ſay, feare not: for I haue not forgotten you; I wot what is neceſſary for you. But yet it is ſayd ŷ when Moſes was called to the Tabernacle to receiue any great charge, then the cloud deſcended by day, like as the fire alſo did his office by night. Thus did God cauſe the cloud to deſcende of purpoſe ŷ the doore of the Tabernacle ſhould be ſhut; and that Exod.19.9. Numb.12.5. was aſmuch as if ŷ people had bin taught thus: Behold, now is Moſes to be withdrawen from all ŷ world, God ſpeaketh to him as it were mouth to mouth, it is not for vs to looke to haue him conuerſant any longer heere beneath after the maner of mortall men, there is an other reſpect to be had of him: God hath ſequeſtred him, becauſe it is his will to haue ſuch familiaritie & cōmunicatiō with him, as we may receiue ŷ which he bringeth vnto vs, as if it came from heauen. That then is the cauſe why the cloud deſcended vpon the Tabernacle. And this is not ſpoken here only, but as often as it was Gods will to authorize Moſes, and to ratifie the office which he had giuen him, to ŷ end that the people ſhold ẇ the greater reuerence receiue ŷ doctrine which proceeded from him. The ſame in likewiſe was alſo done when Moſes appointed Ioſuah in his owne place to ſucceede him. Inſomuch ŷ when God was about to ſhewe him what he had to do, the cloud appeared againe. Now theſe thinges ought to ſtande vs in ſteede at this day. For God did not meane to giue authoritie to his law, only for that time; but to the end of the world. Therfore when we reade ŷ which is ſet downe heere concerning the cloud; it is all one as if God had ſet his ſeale to the doctrine of Moſes, to the intent that we ſhould receiue it without replying or doubting, and thinke that it was not Moſes that was the chiefe author thereof: but that he was the inſtrument of the holy Ghoſt. Thus you ſee howe the ſame miracle doeth yet at this day apply it ſelfe vnto vs, and howe we ought to be edified thereby. But by the way, we ſee the malice of men, in that they which hadde ſeene ſuch a ſigne with their eyes, did yet for all that not ceaſe to play the rebels againſt Moſes. It is a

great matter, that God ſhold put forth his hand as if his maieſtie deſcended from heauen, & teſtifie vnto men ẏ it was he that ſpake, & that yet notwithſtanding the people ſhould ſtil continue like wilde beaſtes, and not vouchſafe to hearken vnto him. Is there any reaſon in that? Neuertheleſſe we ſee it in the people of Iſrael. Albeit ẏ in the time of Ioſuah, there was ſome good gouernment; yet ceaſed they not to abuſe ẏ benefits which they had receiued afore time. Indeed there was no general falling away: but yet to ſay that the people did behaue thẽſelues vprightly in ẏ obedience of God, it wanted a great deale thereof. Therfore we ſee that whatſoeuer God doth, men notwithſtanding be ſo blinde & blockiſh, that they cannot find in their hearts to ſubmit thẽſelues vnto him: and if they doe, it is not with any conſtancy or ſtedfaſtnes. Sith we know this, let vs caſt downe our eyes, and pray to our God, that when he giueth vs any ſignes to confirme vs in the obedience of his word, & to edifie vs in the faith, we may haue ẏ skill to profit our ſelues thereby, ſo as he looſe not his labour, nor we ſtriue againſt his power: but that as ſoone as it ſheweth it ſelfe, wee may be moued to honour him, & to yeede vnto him his due glorie. Thus much haue we to gather vpon this place, where it is ſayd ẏ God hauing cauſed Moſes and Ioſuah to come vnto the Tabernacle, did therewithall appeare in ẏ cloud. It is out of doubt, ẏ God ſhifteth not his place: for (as we haue already ſayd) he filleth all places with his eſſence: howbeit in reſpect of men, it is ſayd that he deſcended from heauen. To what end? Becauſe that when wee perceiue his preſence, it is ſayd ẏ he is nigh vnto vs. Is it becauſe that there is any change in him?
James.1.17. No, there is not ſo much as a litle ſhadowe, as ſaieth S. Iames. But let vs conſider how fooliſh we are, and then ſhall we not find it ſtrange that the Scripture ſpeaketh in this maner, to faſhion it ſelfe to the weaknes of our vnderſtanding. We ſuppoſe that God is farre from vs, and ẏ there is a great diſtance betweene him & vs. And wherfore? Becauſe he hath told vs ẏ he is in heauen. Howbeit, it is not ment that he is there ſhut vp, we muſt not imagine ſo: but if it were ſayde that God is heere with vs, we would tye him to the earth, yea and we would tie him vp in euery corner. We ſee how men deale in that behalfe, when it is tolde them ẏ God ſheweth himſelfe in Baptiſme and in the ſupper alſo: they make Idols of thoſe viſible ſignes, & thinke that God is incloſed in them. Therefore it is ſayde that he is in heauen. But yet we muſt not imagine it to be in power onely; but wee comprehende him not in our vnderſtanding. And that is the cauſe why the holy ſcripture ſtammereth and ſtutteth after our rude maner, & ſaith that God commeth downe, as I haue ſayde: not for ẏ he ſhifteth places touching himſelfe; but it is ſayd in reſpect of vs. Wherfore let vs learne to conuert to our profit all the ſignes ẏ God hath giuen vs of his preſence, in ſuch ſort, as we may therby honor him as in his glory celeſtiall, by lifting vp our mindes aboue all the world. That is the thing which we haue to gather.

Now let vs come to ẏ which is here recited. *Behold, thy dayes are come that thou ſhalt dy* (ſayth God to Moſes) *thou ſhalt goe ſleepe with thy fathers, & this people ſhal ariſe* (ſaith he) *& go a whoring after ſtrãge Gods* (or elſe the Gods of the ſtrangers). When God told Moſes in this wiſe that he muſt die: we perceiue thereby that he ſtrengthened him, and that this tidinges of death was not to make him afrayd. And in deede, if we be not alwaies ready to depart the world, when it ſhall pleaſe God to fetch vs, what profit receiue we of all ẏ doctrine that is preached vnto vs? What doth God purpoſe when we be taught in his word, but to giue vs to vnderſtand ẏ he placeth vs in this world as in a paſſage, ẏ we muſt be ſtrangers heere, that our inheritance is aboue, and ẏ we muſt be newſhapen from day to day, by putting away frõ vs all our affections, & whatſoeuer elſe is of the old man, to the end we may come vnto him, vntill ẏ he hath clothed vs ẇ his heauenly glorie? Thus ye ſee how it is the purpoſe of God, to draw people from the world, & to bring thẽ vnto himſelf. But now if we be ſo giuen to this preſent life, that God muſt plucke vs away from hence as it were by force: and ẏ when his will is that we ſhall die; we be full of ſpite & rage and torment our ſelues thereat; we ſhewe well that we vnderſtande not what the word of God meaneth, and that we neuer had ſuch taſt thereof as was requiſite. Let vs therefore by the example of Moſes, be ſo diſpoſed to dye, that whenſoeuer it ſhall pleaſe our Lorde to take vs away from hence, we may be readie to goe, and to depart out of this priſon of our bodie. If it be alleadged that wee haue not ſo much profited as Moſes, and that wee bee not ſo farre forewarde as hee: it is out of doubt that God beſtowed on him a ſpecial grace, which was not cõmon to all, & is very rare to be found. For it is no ſmal matter, when it is ſayde, ẏ there neuer roſe vp a Prophet in Iſraell, ſo great nor Deut.34.10. ſo excellent as he. But yet notwithſtanding we haue the Goſpell which Moſes hadde not. Albeit that God gaue him largely of his ſpirite, more than wee haue; yet had not he the doctrine [of the Goſpell] but in ſhadowe and figure: becauſe Ieſus Chriſt was not yet manifeſted: hee had the ſacrifices of the lawe, as well as the reſt of the people. And whereas our Lorde Ieſus is come to bee our life, we know that he is now aſcended vp to heauẽ, we know that firſt he was beneath in the deepe, that is to ſay, that he ſatiſfied the wrath of God to thẽ ende to redeeme vs from eternall death. Seeing wee haue ſuch an aduauntage, what excuſe is there, if we bee afrayde when death is talked of vnto vs, and thinke that all is loſt for our part? So then, let vs marke that to bee well learned in the goſpell, it behoueth vs to knowe, aſwell what it is to die, as what it is to liue. And howe? We muſt not be tyed vnto this preſent worlde, nor make account to dwell heere for euer: but wee muſt haue the one foote vp (as they ſay) [as folke ready to goe]. Alſo wee muſt conſider howe fraile our life is, and euen in our full health wee muſt alwaies haue death before our eyes. For the performaunce whereof, let vs looke vp to the heauenly life yͭ is promiſed vnto vs, whereof alſo we haue ſo good a pawn in our Lord Ieſus Chriſt. That is the way for vs not to be afraid, whenſoeuer God ſhal make vs to vnderſtand yͭ our end is nigh, and ſhew vs that he wil take vs vnto him. I ſay it ſhall neither abaſh vs nor make vs afrayde, but we ſhalbe determined to go vnto him with a good will: as no doubt but Moſes receiued that tydinges with great ioy, [as if hee ſhould haue ſayde] Wel Lorde, I haue finiſhed my courſe, I haue trauailed in yͤ world ſo long as I had power and ſtrength, and now beholde I am old & drooping, but yet ſhall I be reſtored in thy ſaluation. Seeing then yͭ it is thy will to ſequeſter me from all the troubles of this world, behold I am nowe readie: like as I haue continued in the world, ſo long as it was thy wil, euen ſo doe I nowe deſire nothing but to yeeld my ſelfe vnto thee. And for the ſame cauſe S. Paul ſayeth, that the Chriſtians Phil.1.21. turne all thinges to their owne benefite, aſwell death as life. For if we liue in this worlde, though it be in miſerie & wretchednes, ſo as we be afflicted and deſpiſed, and tormented, and ſeeme to be as people caſt away: yet doth yͤ ſame turne to our profite and aduantage. And why? For all our afflictions be bleſſed in our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt, becauſe God maketh them auailable to our ſaluation: according as it is ſayde in the Rom.8.28. eight to the Romanes: that the thinges which ſeeme to hinder our felicitie, are in deede giuen vs of GOD as helpes and furtheraunces thereof. When it commeth to death, we know that Chriſt Ieſus had victorie thereof, and yͭ ſeeing he is ryſen, we be aſſured yͭ foraſmuch as we be his members, and haue one common life together with him, therefore wee ſhall not periſhe. Thus doth death turne to our gaine and profite, and we haue cauſe to reioyce in all reſpectes.

Moreouer where it is ſayd, *That after the death of Moſes the people will riſe*, there is no doubt but yͭ this greeued Moſes. For he bare ſuch a feruent Exod.32.32. zeale to the welfare of the people, that he forgot himſelfe and ſaid, Race me out of the booke of life, and let the people bee ſaued. See heere howe Moſes was content to bee cutte off, yea, and euen to be damned ſo that God would ſaue the people; not becauſe that that was poſſible; but he was ſo rauiſhed, that hee had no care of himſelfe. Nowe therefore when he heard that the people would fall away from God, there is no doubt but his heart was mortally wounded. But what? Yet muſt hee needes heare theſe tydinges full of ſorrowe and anguiſh. Heerein we ſee how God did exerciſe him euen vnto yͤ end. We muſt not therefore ſuppoſe, that Moſes diſcharged his duetie, as it were with dallyaunce; but that he had terrible hartbyting, ſo as he was toſſed too and fro, and God gaue him alwayes dreadfull grypes of minde. But yet neuertheleſſe he did ſtill continue. And therefore when we ſee that matters fal not out as we wold, albeit that we haue faithfully laboured, and it ſeeme that our trauaile is vnprofitable, and that Sathan will throwe downe that which we haue indeuoured to ſet vp; and thinges fall out to trouble and diſorder: let it not turne vs aſide from the good way: let it not repent vs that we haue ſerued our GOD, let it content vs that our labour is acceptable vnto him: for although it be not ſo profitable vnto men as were to be wiſhed, yet haue we done ſuch a ſacrifice vnto God as he doth receiue and accept. Yea but yet if men fare litle the better thereby, wee may be ſorrie and ſigh therefore. Neuertheleſſe we haue not loſt our time, becauſe God liketh well of our dooinges. That (ſay I) is the thing whereby the miniſters of Gods worde ſhould cōfort themſelues at this day, when they ſee the worlde ſo drunken, as we ſee it is, and that in ſteede of going forwarde, the greater part goeth backewarde; and that whereas Gods worde is ſo preached vnto them, that the very walles doe ring of it: yet doe they but make a ſcoffe of it. When we ſee ſuch thinges, let vs reſort to God and ſay: Alas Lorde, thou knoweſt wherfore thou haſt employed vs hereunto, and albeit that thy doctrine be ſo ſlenderly receiued of the worlde, yet is it alwaies a ſacrifice of good ſauour vnto thee; according as Saint Paul ſayth: Beholde (ſayth he) it behooueth our preaching to be as the ſauour of death 2.Cor.2.15. to many people. They be the miſſebelieuing which be hardened againſt God: but howſoeuer they fare; that ſauour is a ſweete ſent to our God, foraſmuch as it is his will, that his Goſpell ſhould be preached vnto all creatures. And all the faithfull in generall ought to apply the ſame to their owne vſe, ſpecially when wee deale vprightly with men, and they render vs euill for good. For then it ſeemeth that the thinges which we haue indeuoured to doe for their welfare, are taken in diſdayne; and by meanes therof we cōmonly repent vs, by reaſon of our frailtie. What then? We muſt arme ourſelues with ſtedfaſtneſſe in this caſe. And although there be neuer ſo great vnthankfulneſſe in the world, yet muſt we neuer be ſorry that we haue obeyed our God. No; but the iſſue is not anſwerable to our deſire. There is no remedie. Let vs be contented that our God alloweth our obedience. So much concerning that point.

Moreouer whereas it is ſayd that *the people will riſe vp*: God telleth of a change, that whereas they ſhoulde holde them quiet vnder the bridle which God had giuen them, they would riſe vp proudly and ſtubbornely, & through inordinate deſire ſeeke to ſhake off the yooke which was layde vpon their necke. By the ſight heereof we may learne what our owne nature is. For it is certaine that heere God ment to ſhewe vs as in a glaſſe, what wee be, vntill ſuch time as hee hath wrought in vs. Nowe then, when we be taught in the doctrine of the Goſpel, what is our dutie, but to hold ourſelues quiet, without wrenching either hither or thither, as we be too much giuen by nature? The word of God then muſt hold vs in and ſettle vs, that we couet not newe changes euery day & euery minute of an houre: but that God may haue the obedience that is due vnto him, and wee followe that which he commandeth vs. Thus ought the word of God to preuaile in vs, to keepe vs quiet. But yet we ſee howe the children of Iſraell dealt in that behalfe, and howe they roſe vppe, that is to ſay, that they changed, and could not keepe themſelues in the obedience of God. At the ſame point are we. Therefore let vs miſtruſt all our owne conceites. When ſo euer any thought comes in our minde, or whenſoeuer we take any thing in hande; let vs euermore ſuſpect it, for feare leaſt wee ſhake off the yoke which GOD hath layde vppon our neckes, and let vs vnderſtande that God muſt guide vs to the ende. Seeing then that we be ſo wauering by nature: let vs learn to ſubmit ourſelues the better to the word of God, & not to enterpriſe thinges of our owne heades, as who would ſay, I will doe this, I will doe that: for as ſoone as we followe our owne wit, and aduiſe, we become ſtray beaſtes. There is no more then for vs to doe, but onely to liue in continuall obedience. And for ſomuch as our Lorde hath ſhewed vs howe he would haue vs to walke; let vs hold vs thereto, & not follow our tickling luſtes, to be carried too and fro by them. After that manner are we to practiſe this place, where it is ſayde, *That the people would ryſe vp after the death of Moſes*. True it is that wee ought to haue our hearts alwayes lifted vppe to Godwarde: but yet muſt they alſo bee brought lowe through humilitie, and we muſt not lift vp ourſelues with pride and preſumption, to caſt away that which hath beene taught vs.

Nowe let vs kneele downe before the maieſtie of our good God with acknowledgement of our ſinnes: beſeeching him to vouchſafe to receiue vs to his mercie. And foraſmuch as wee know we bee no better than theſe whom we ſee here condemned euen before they were borne, according as it is heere ſpoken of them which ſhould ſucceede after the death of Moſes: let vs pray to that good God, that ſeeing he knoweth the vices that be in vs, & that we bee not able to helpe it, vnleſſe he worke by his holy ſpirite, he will therefore clenſe vs from all wicked affections, and ſo ſubdue vs vnto him, that though we be ſtraied away by nature, yet notwithſtanding he ſuffer vs not to continue ſtill in our iniquities: but that being drawen vnto him, as he hath once called vs thereunto, we may continue conſtantly therein, and ſo perſeuere vnto the ende: and that in the meane while, hee will vpholde vs becauſe he knoweth vs to be weake, vntill hee hath fully reſtored vs by his power. That it may pleaſe him to graunt this grace, not onely vnto vs, but alſo vnto all people and Nations of the earth, &c.

On Wedneſday the v. of May, 1556.

The CLXXVI. Sermon which is the fourth vpon the one & thirtith Chapter.

17 Is it not becauſe my God is not with me, that theſe euils haue found me out?

18 But I will hyde my face in that day becauſe of the wickedneſſe which hee ſhall haue committed, euen for that he ſhall haue turned away to other gods.

19 Now therefore wryte this ſong for you, and teach it the children of Iſrael, putting it in their mouthes, that this ſong may be a witneſſe to mee againſt the children of Iſraell.

20 When I haue brought them into the lande which I ſware to their fathers, flowing with milke and hony: and they ſhall haue eaten and beene filled and become fatte, and haue turned away to other gods, and ſerued them, and blaſphemed mee, and broken my couenaunt.

21 And when many euils and tribulations be come vppon them: then ſhal this ſong anſwere to their face for a witneſſe: for it ſhall not be forgotten in the mouth of their ſeede: for I knowe their thoughtes, and what they doe already at this day before I haue brought them into the land for the which I haue ſworne.

THe chiefe thing that God telleth vs, to aſſure vs in this preſent life, is this, that hee hath his eye vpon vs, and that he is ſo mindefull of our welfare, that nothing ſhall want vs, becauſe he is able to prouide all thinges that bee neceſſarie for vs; and therewithall is able alſo to defende vs from all anoyaunce, inſomuch that his eye is vnto vs a buckler, a fortreſſe, and a ſhadowe to ſhroude vs vnder it. Likewiſe it is ſayde of his good will in the fifth Pſalme, that it ſhall be our ſhielde. Pſal.5.3. The thing then wherein the faithful ought to reſt and reioyce: is yͭ God looketh vpon them with compaſſion yͭ he neuer forgetteth them, that he guideth all their ſteps, and that he hath a fatherly care ouer them to remedie all their euilles. And on the contrarie ſide, the greeuouſeſt threat that God can vtter is to turne his face away from vs, and no more to vouchſafe to haue care either of vs, or of our life, but to forſake vs. For then wee are ſet open to Sathan and all maner of misfortune. And where is then our defence? For wee haue no meane to reſiſt, we ſee we be fraile and wretched creatures, there is nothing in vs. And therefore wo be to them of whom God wil haue no longer care; but forſaketh them as thoſe that belong not vnto him at all, ne be of his houſholde. And that is the thing which he ſayeth in this place, that *when the people of Iſraell haue left him, hee will hide his face from them*, and will be no more their father, as he had beene afore time. Nowe this is ſo ſpoken vnto the Iewes, as it ought to ſerue vs alſo for a warning at this day. Will we then haue this ſoueraigne and ineſtimable benefite, namely, that God ſhould guide vs; that our life ſhould be in his hande, and that he ſhould take vs into his keeping to vpholde vs? Then muſt we looke that we call vpon him, and as we profeſſe his name, ſo muſt we alſo ſerue him in truth 2.Tim.2,19. according to this ſaying of Saint Paul, that who ſoeuer calleth vpon the name of the Lorde, that is to ſay, whoſoeuer proteſteth to be of his people, 2.Cor.5,7. muſt depart from all iniquitie. Therefore let vs learne to ſerue our God with a pure conſcience, to reſort to him for refuge, and to put our whole truſt in him. And then are we aſſured that one hayre of our heade ſhall not fall away without his will. For if he haue care of the ſparrowes, Matt,10.29 (as our Lorde Ieſus ſayth) what will he doe by them whom he hath choſen for his children? We be not onely men created after his owne Image, but he hath alſo ſet his marke vpon vs, to the end to ſaue vs as members of our Lord Ieſus Chriſt. Let vs not doubt therefore, but that he wil euermore performe the duetie of a father in looking to vs. But if in the meane while we become wandering beaſtes, and euery man fall away from him; then muſt that which is pronoũced heere be accompliſhed vppon vs, namely, that God will hide his face: not becauſe that he forgetteth any thing: but he ſpeaketh in this manner after the faſhion of men, to make vs to vnderſtande that in deede he will not looke vpon vs with compaſſion, nor prouide for our life, nor ſuccor any of our neceſſities; but that he will doe ẏ cleane contrary, that is to ſay, that he will leaue vs for ſuch as we be, and ſhew vnto vs, that we be not worthy for him to encumber himſelfe any more with vs, or to buſie himſelfe about vs. Surely it is a dreadfull vengeance, when GOD hath ſo forſaken vs. Therefore let vs beware that we ſticke ſo vnto him, as there may bee an inſeparable band betwixt vs, that is to ſay, as we for our part may honour him as our father, repoſing and ſetting all our truſt in him: and he go forewarde continually in doing vs good, and as his regarde may be the couert to hide vs from al ẏ aſſaults of Sathan, from all the troubles that he deuiſeth againſt vs, and from the hurtes and anoiances of this worlde.

Now he ſayeth expreſſely, that he will bring the Iewes to that paſſe, that they ſhall confeſſe thoſe miſchiefes to bee falne vppon them, *becauſe God is not amongſt them*. Heere he treateth of a forced confeſſion: for hee ſpeaketh not a whit of true repentance, but onely of a remorſe which all the deſpiſers of God doe feele, for that they haue of long time beene ſtubborne, yea and ſkorned all correction. When they be pinched to the vttermoſt ẏ they can no longer hold out; then muſt they needs confeſſe ſpite of their teethes, that there is a God which is their Iudge. He ſayth that the Iewes ſhall make ſuch a confeſſion, when he hath brought them vnder foote with maine ſtrokes. Heereby we ſee ẏ he threateneth them that his puniſhing of them ſhall not be mieldly and after the cõmon maner; but that alſo he will vſe ſuch rigour, that what hardneſſe and ſtubborneſſe ſoeuer be in them, yet ſhal they be broken if they will not bowe, accordingly as I haue handled the ſame point heeretofore. Neuertheleſſe it is good for vs to bee often put in mind of it, & to bethinke vs thereof oftentimes. For men do alwayes deceiue themſelues herein, that they thinke that they ſhall by and by ſcape the hande of God, and when they haue receiued a ſtripe or twaine, they doe but ſhake their eares & thinke all is done. Therefore if wee be ſtubborne in naughtineſſe, let vs looke ſurely to bee beaten downe, vntill we be driuẽ to confeſſe that he puniſheth vs iuſtly. Nay, let vs not tarry till then. But when we heare how God proceedeth againſt ſuch as are vtterly hardhearted and will not yeeld vnto him, let vs be afraid. And as ſoone as we heare him threaten vs, or perceiue any token of his anger, let vs turne againe vnto him, and meeken our heartes, and let vs vnderſtande ẏ vntill he be appeaſed, our ſorowes muſt needes increaſe, euen to the vtter ouerwhelming of vs. That is the thing which Moſes ment in ſaying, that they which deſpiſe God and his word, ſhall feele that there is neither ende nor meaſure of their calamities, and that they ſhalbe cõſtrained to ſay, Theſe plagues are come vpon vs, becauſe God is not among vs.

And heerewithall we muſt alſo marke the experience which the people had. For (as the cõmon prouerbe ſayth) experience is the miſtres of fooles. The people had then already of long time knowen what it was to haue God dwelling amongſt them, and ẏ it brought all maner of ioy, all maner of reſt, and all maner of happines. And when ẏ God was turned from thẽ, they were driuen to conſider to their coſt, what an vnhappineſſe it was to haue him a ſtranger to thẽ. To be ſhort, heere Moſes ſheweth the diuerſitie ẏ is to be ſeene, when God doth for a time bleſſe a people, & make them to proſper: and contrariwiſe when for the miſuſing of his grace he turneth away, and ſheweth himſelfe an enemie and aduerſarie againſt them. Nowe therefore while we inioy the tokens and Teſtimonies of Gods loue, let vs learne to ſerue and feare him, that ẏ poſſeſſion thereof may continue with vs for euer. If we be ſo wicked and froward, as to skorn God when he vſeth ſuch goodneſſe towarde vs, and forbeareth vs with patience: let vs aſſure our-ſelues that he will giue ſuch glorie to his benefits as that the extreme miſeries which he will make vs to feele, ſhall force vs to ſay, Where is the Lorde that dwelled with vs afore time? Howſoeuer the caſe ſtand, Gods will was that the ſong which was deliuered to Moſes, ſhould be a witneſſe to aunſwere againſt the people. He ſayth yet againe that hee will hide his face, and that by reaſon thereof the people ſhall be a pray, and vtterly deuoured, and that there ſhalbe nothing but tokens of horrible cõfuſion in all their ſtate. The people then is ſufficiently warned and certified of Gods wrath: but yet God addeth this ſong more, to the ende that on the one ſide the people perceiuing their ſtate ſo wretched, ſhold ſay, God puniſheth me and that iuſtly. And on the other ſide, that in this ſimilitude they might behold themſelues as in a glaſſe, and that by the hauing of this ſong, they might bee put in minde of their miſdeedes and tranſgreſſions; and made to conſider that God doth the office of a Iudge, and thereby be the more moued to thinke vpon their faultes, and to humble themſelues. Now we ſee heere firſt of all, what dulneſſe there is in men: for God giueth vs no ſuperfluous thing, nay there neuer departeth word frõ his mouth which is not profitable for vs, and which ought not to ſerue vs for inſtruction. Wherefore is it then that God giueth this ſong to the people of Iſraell? It is becauſe it ſhould ſerue them for a Teſtimonie. At what time? Euen at ſuch time as they ſhould be afflicted to the vttermoſt, that they might be holden as it were on the torture, and be conſtrained to confeſſe the faultes and iniquities which they had committed. And how then? Could not the plagues which they endured, ſuffice to bring them to reaſon, and to cauſe them to turne againe vnto God, whom they had forſaken? Yes in deede, were it not that men be ſo hard hearted, that in ſeeing they perceiue not a whit, and that their wittes be as it were dulled and dead. We ſee by this then, that although our Lorde chaſtiſe men, euen with ſuch extremitie, as they muſt needes confeſſe that it is he to whom they be to aunſwere and to yeelde account, and that it is his hande that purſueth them, and that he is their enemie: yet they be ſo fooliſh that they ſettle thẽſelues in their owne imaginations, and although they knowe it, yet they bee not throughly perſwaded of it in their heartes: but let it eſcape them and by and by forget it, vnleſſe God doe put to his worde, and tell them, It is to me that you muſt haue an eye: for I do ſummõ you before my iudgement ſeate. When I do thus ſcourge you, I ſet your faults before you, I do heere make out your proceſſe for you. If God ſpake not when he ſtriketh with his hande, the ſtripes would bee vnprofitable to vs. Now we perceiue the hardheartednes that is in vs. For although it be heere ſpoken of the children of Iſrael, yet doth the holy Ghoſt vnder the example of them, tell vs what we be. Therefore let vs learne to know our ſelues better, and conſider that although it bee needefull for vs to receiue inſtructiõ concerning Gods puniſhments, leaſt we ſhould become vnreformable: yet notwithſtanding it would profit vs nothing, vnleſſe we had the word of God, whereby he draweth vs to repentance, and by the which he doeth vs to vnderſtande, that the thinges which we ſuffer muſt not be imputed to hap hazard, but we muſt vnderſtand ẏ they come frõ him. And thus muſt we reſort to the holy ſcripture, ſo often as wee be afflicted. For on ẏ one ſide, when men are ſcourged they chafe vppon the bridle, and become as doted, as if they were aſtoniſhed with the ſtroke of a hammer; they thinke not of God. True it is that when they feele thẽſelues pinched with aduerſities, they crye alas, but they doe neuer the more lift vp their eyes to ẏ hand of God, to vnderſtande him to be their Iudge. Therefore we muſt proceed thus far; that is: we muſt haue recourſe vnto Gods word; and when God ſmiteth vs on this maner, let vs take warning to ſubmit ourſelues vnto him, & not keepe vs aloofe as we are wont. Now ẏ ſame word not only will ſhewe vs ẏ it is Gods hande that ſmiteth vs; but it will alſo bring vs to examine our life. It is not ſaid in the ſcripture ẏ God puniſheth men not knowing wherefore, or ẏ he taketh pleaſure in tormenting them: but it is ſayd, that he puniſheth them for their faultes ſo as we muſt alwaies needes acknowledge his iuſtice; inſomuch ẏ if men coulde skill to profit themſelues by the afflictions ẏ are ſent them, they be all of them as medicines, and Gods intent is to ſhew himſelfe a father by warning them after ẏ maner. Moreouer they ſerue to make men inexcuſable: inſomuch ẏ all the afflictions which they ſuffer in this world, ſhalbe an augmentation of the laſt vengeance, becauſe they would not ſtoope vnder the hande of God, while he nurtured thẽ for their welfare. Thus ye ſee ẏ when we be ſcourged, we muſt reſort to the holy ſcripture, firſt of all to vnderſtand ẏ it commeth not by aduenture, but that our Lord doth thereby ſhew vnto vs ẏ we haue offended him, & that he meaneth thereby to make vs to feele our ſinnes, to the end we ſhould not be ſo ſenſeleſſe as we were before, to flatter & to hardẽ ourſelues but that we ſhould come directly vnto him, and yeelde ourſelues guilty, yea euen with ſuch miſliking of our ſins, as we ſhold hate the euil ẏ is in vs, and ſeek nothing but to be receiued vnto his gouernment, to be changed & renewed by him, ſo as wee may take no pleaſure but onely in framing ourſelues to his good pleaſure. That is the thing which Moſes meant in ſaying, ẏ although the people ſhould be conſtrained to ſay, ẏ they ſuffered thoſe ſo many plagues & miſeries, becauſe God was no more among them: yet ſhould they alſo haue a teſtimony to follow thẽ, and to holde them as at a bay, as who would ſay, Thou ſhalt not eſcape, but ſhalt know ẏ thy ſins be the cauſe of al theſe euils; although thou ſeeke ſtartingholes, yet muſt thou bee as it were pent vp, and feele ẏ God is againſt thee, & that thou ſhalt be more & more tormented, vntill thou turne againe vnto him. True it is that this is ſpoken of a witneſſe ẏ was againſt ẏ people, and ẏ it ſerueth to expreſſe ẏ ſtubbornes which was in ẏ children of Iſraell, as hereafter we ſhall ſee more at large.

And ſurely although God vouchſafe to ſhewe vs mercie, and would haue vs to heare his woord, to the intent to bring vs to repentaunce, yet muſt that woorde firſt bee a witneſſe againſt vs. As for example, wee ſhall neuer obtaine fauour of God vntill hee haue condemned vs. And wherefore? Bicauſe we be wrapped in our ſinnes, and doe ſooth and flatter our ſelues in them. Nowe ſo long as men doe thus glory in themſelues, or become careleſſe, there is no place for mercie: for they make but a ſcoffe of the goodneſſe of GOD. Yee ſee then that wee bee ſhutte out from all hope of ſaluation, vntill wee bee condemned of God. To bring this to paſſe, his word muſt diſcouer our iniquities, and all our filthineſſe, and make vs abaſhed and aſhamed, and alſo driue vs to feele the ſorrowes of death, and to ſee hell which is prepared for vs. The point then whereat God beginneth when hee meaneth to bring men to ſaluation, is that he ſtirreth vp his worde for a witneſſe to them, to make them to know that they be vtterly forlorne and damned. Is that done? Then doth God admoniſh vs, and giue vs Teſtimonie of his good will; and not onely lay vs foorth his doctrine, but alſo recite the proceſſe of all our faultes. Nowe then, let vs receiue the woord when it teſtifieth vnto vs our condemnation; that beeing drawen thereby to repentance, and altogether aſhamed of our ſelues, wee may obtaine fauour before GOD. Yet let vs vnderſtande moreouer, that when GOD doeth ſo frame our inditement, it is for our benefite: for hee maketh vs our owne Iudges, to the intent that hee himſelfe would not iudge vs, but ſurceaſſe from it. Nowe if wee will needes play the wilde beaſtes, when as GOD teſtifieth our ſinnes vnto vs; or elſe if wee goe to Gen.3,7. ſeeke for leaues to couer vs, that is to ſay, if wee will needes ſcape his iudgement by our lying and hypocriſie, and play the skoffers which make a mocke of all warninges that are giuen vnto them; or if we play the mad bedlems in deſpiſing GOD as we ſee many doe, who cannot abyde any rebukes, but doe grinde their teeth as often as they bee made to vnderſtande their ſinnes; if (I ſay) wee doe proceede ſo farre, then muſt the woorde of God ſtand ſtill in his firſt force, to wit, it muſt bee a Teſtimonie to vs of our damnation. And therefore ſeeing it is ſayde heere that the Song is a witneſſe to auow that GOD hath iuſt cauſe to puniſhe his people, and that the people ſtande conuicted thereby: let vs feare, let vs feare (I ſay) leaſt our Lorde doe with lyke extremitie purſue the proceſſe which hee hath made againſt vs, and that there bee no place of refuge to his grace after wee haue once reiected it: nay rather, as ſoone as hee ſummoneth vs, let vs learne to ſtoope, and to ſhut our mouth; and not to make any excuſe, but to ſay; Lorde, we ſee verie well, that if thou wouldeſt vſe rigour towardes vs, we were vndoone, there is no ſhift for vs but that thou muſt receiue vs lyke damned and forlorne caſtawayes as wee bee, and beſtowe thy mercie vppon vs: for all our welfare lyeth in this, that thou looke no more vpon our ſinnes to puniſh them, but that through thy free goodneſſe, thou doe take them away and blot them out. Thus ye ſee how we ought to put this place in vre, where Moſes ſayeth, that this *Song ſhall be for a witneſſe to the people of Iſrael.*

Hee ſheweth yet better what teſtimonie hee giueth by this Song. *It is* (ſayeth he) *that I will bring you into the lande which I haue promiſed to your fathers, a land flowing with milke and honnie.* Heereby he giueth vs to vnderſtande, that it is a fatte lande, and fruitfull of all good things in ſuch abundance, as if milke did runne therein, in ſtead of Riuers: and as if they had withall the like abundance of hony. This maner of ſpeech is very commonly vſed whenſoeuer God ſpeaketh of the land of Chanaan: and not without cauſe. For God had bleſſed it aboue all the reſt of the world; yea and no doubt, but the people found that with their comming thither, the fruitefulneſſe of that land was augmented. And ſurely it is a maruailous matter, how ſuch a huge multitude was nouriſhed in ſo ſmall a countrie. But at this day we ſee it is a land halfe barren. True it is that euen as yet there are ſome places thereof as little ſpeckes, which are very fat & abundant; but yet farre vnable to verifie that which wee reade of it here, namely that the land did flowe with milke and honie. But herein we do ſo much the better ſee that which is ſpoken in the 107. Pſalme, namely, that when God hath giuen neuer Pſal.107.34 ſo great fruitfulneſſe to a land, he can make it barrain againe, as if it were ſowed with ſalt, ſo as there ſhall be nothing but leanneſſe, nor any ſuſtenance to bee found therein. Wee perceiue then by the land of Chanaan, how it is the hand of God that giueth aboundance to a land: and likewiſe that his withdrawing of his bleſſing, cauſeth a land to become fruitleſſe and altogether barraine. And therefore doeth Moſes nowe proteſt that when the people come into ẏ land, and there be nouriſhed, filled and fatted, & then ſerue ſtraunge gods: they ſhalbee condemned ſo much the more: and then they muſt not looke for any ſtartingholes, but bee diſcouered to the whole world to their condemnation, and this preſent ſong ſhalbe as a proceſſe wherin the forme of law is obſerued; ſo as ẏ ſummons ſhalbe made firſt, & then the examinations and informations ſhalbe exhibited; and afterward ẏ malefactors being arrained and condemned by their owne mouth, ſhall receiue the ſentence of iudgement againſt them. Now wee ſee what the meaning of Moſes was.

Heereupon let vs marke that by making compariſon of the woord of GOD with the thinges which are befalen vnto vs, and which wee haue felt by experience; wee ought to be wakened, or elſe we be too brutiſh. As for example, whereas the Scripture telleth vs that God beſtoweth his richeſſe vppon men, of purpoſe to bring them backe vnto him by his gentleneſſe, and fatherly goodneſſe; and alſo that hee continueth to doe them good, of purpoſe to drawe them to repentaunce, when he ſeeth them goe aſtray: although wee had no experience thereof, yet is it certaine that the holy Scripture ought to ſuffice vs. But if wee looke into our owne ſtate, and vppon the thinges whereof God hath giuen vs experience; and conſider howe many wayes he hath ſhewed himſelfe liberall towarde vs, ſo as his goodneſſe is throughly knowen vnto vs, and we bee reſolued that it is his hand that hath fed vs: ſurely ẏ beholding of ſo many benefits which God hath beſtowed vpon vs, ought to make vs to proceed yet farther, & to conſider that although we haue offended him, and bin wicked and vnthankfull; yet is he not weary to do vs good: but doth rather ſtriue againſt our leaudnes, & ouercome it with his goodnes. When we think vpon theſe thinges, then hath ẏ ſcripture a good teſtimony of our experience, and then muſt we needs be ſo much ẏ more guiltie. That is ẏ thing which Moſes meant in this text. For hauing tolde the Iewes that this Song ſhould ſerue for a teſtimony to ſtop their mouthes ſo as they ſhould not haue any thing to reply againſt GOD, hee ſaith: for proofe heereof, *I wil bring them into the land which I promiſed vnto their fathers*, and there they ſhall be fedde and fatted. For ſeeing that euen after they haue taſted my goodnes ſo great towards them, they will needes turne away from mee, and follow after ſtrange gods: is it not ynough to bewray their filthynes vnto all the worlde? Muſt not all creatures be witneſſes thereto? Shal not my word thē haue good authoritie to ſay, that they be too leawd a people, & a people that are not worthy, that I ſhould euer haue giuen them one morſell of bread to eate, & much leſſe that I ſhould haue adopted and choſen them from among all the Exod.19.6. nations of the world, to be a holy people, and a 1.Pet.2.9. Royall preeſthoode? Now we perceiue the meaning of Moſes. It remaineth ẏ wee apply it to our vſe. It was meete that the Iewes after this warning peale, ſhould haue acknowledged that they came not into ẏ land of Canaan, otherwiſe than by the leading of God, and that the ſame lande was giuen them in poſſeſſion bicauſe of the Promiſe made to their father Abraham. Moreouer they ſaw, how God held them there. It is good reaſon then that they ſhould haue concluded, that (ſeeing they were depriued of ſo great a benefite, and yet God is vnchaungeable & altereth not his purpoſe) the euill came of themſelues, in that they ſuffered not God to continue his mercy toward them, but did refuſe it, & ſhut the gate againſt him. Indeede we haue not at this day a land of Canaan; we haue not ẏ which the Iewes had, to be gathered into one certaine Country. But what? We be too blind, if we vnderſtand not that what Country ſoeuer God hath giuen vs to liue in, yet it is he that doth harbour vs. And although we had neither Teſtimony nor Token of his goodneſſe as concerning this preſent life; yet there is a matter which paſſeth all this; which is, That he hath drawen vs out of the darkeneſſe of damnation wherin we were plunged: and hath brought vs to ẏ heritage of ſaluatiō. For through Eph.2.6. hope, we be already ſet aboue with Ieſus Chriſt; as S. Paul ſpeaketh in the Epiſtle to the Epheſ. Yet neuertheleſſe beſides this, God of his exceeding great goodnes, faileth not to giue vs many mo teſtimonies of his fatherly loue: for who elſe nouriſheth and feedeth vs in this world? Howe many waies doe we dayly perceiue that he hath his hand ſtretched out, yea or rather his winges, (as he ſaith in the Song) as it were to broode vs Deut.32.11. heere like little chickins? We ſee it with our eyes. Seeing then that wee haue ſo much experience of the goodneſſe of God; and againe ẏ on the other ſide, he by his ſcourging of vs doeth traine vs to the vnderſtanding of our ſinnes, and thervpon doeth offer vs his woorde wherein to beholde the articles that are layd againſt vs: muſt we not needes be too hard hearted and brutiſh, if wee bee not mooued to come vnto him with true repentance? So then, let vs learne to exerciſe our ſelues better in the rememberaunce of Gods benefites, & to acknowledge them accordingly, as he hath bound vs vnto him: and on ẏ other ſide to conſider, that if he at any time faile vs, the ſame muſt needes come of our vnthankefulnes. For as for him, he will continually proceede more and more to doe vs good, vnleſſe we hinder him, and turne away the courſe of his goodneſſe, as if a man ſhould ſtay the running of a Riuer. For the goodneſſe of God is a fountaine that neuer dryeth; it is certaine that he neuer ceaſſeth to doe vs good. Doeth he then ſcourge vs? Our ſinnes muſt needes be the cauſe thereof, bycauſe we haue prouoked his wrath. After that manner muſt wee conſider as well of Gods benefites, as of the afflictions that he ſendeth vs, ſpecially when wee bee warned by his word, as the way is here ſhewed vs.

And whereas he ſayeth, *That the people after that they be filled and fedde*: It ſerueth to aggrauate their vnthankefulneſſe the more. For if the people of Iſrael had bin afflicted, and that thereupon they had fallen away, [there had bin ſome colour] as oftentimes men being tempted doe fall away from GOD bycauſe they be at their wits end. And albeit that the ſame be no ſufficient excuſe, yet may it ſeeme that the fault is ſo much the leſſe. As for example, whē a man hath meanely ſerued God, and it hath not appeared that he hath dealt amiſſe, but rather that hee had a good zeale and affection: if God thereupon doe puniſh him, and he bee ſo vexed that he woteth not where to become; in ſo much that hee doe murmure, chafe, and blaſpheme God, or is induced to doe euill, men will ſay, Wel, this man, as long as GOD dealt gently with him, did ſhewe himſelfe to bee in good order: but nowe ſee what temptations doe. But when a man is bleſſed of GOD, and doeth proſper by all meanes, and it is Gods pleaſure to wynne him by gentleneſſe and goodneſſe: if thereupon hee become a rebell, and deſpiſe God, and giue ouer himſelfe to all manner of looſeneſſe, (as ſome are ſeene to do, or rather as the common manner is, that as ſoone as GOD giueth men that which they doe long for and deſire, they become drunken, and doe loſe both wit and reaſon;) if a man [ſay I] doe then ouerſhoote himſelfe after that faſhion when GOD dealeth with him ſo graciouſly: is not his ſinne ſo much the more haynous? Yes certainely.

That is the thing which Moſes meant to declare in this place;[where he ſayeth,]They ſhal come into the Lande which I haue promiſed them, there will I ſuſtaine them, there ſhall they bee filled and made fatte; and then *will they turne away after ſtraunge goddes*. By theſe woordes we are made to vnderſtande, that the more our Lorde maketh vs to feele his fauour and fatherly goodneſſe, the more ought we to be allured to reſt wholly vppon him that hee may poſſeſſe vs, and the more ought all our wittes and affections to bee ſtayed vppon his loue, ſo as the diuell may not finde any breach nor gap open to deceyue vs, for ſo much as G O D hath ſo wonne vs vnto himſelfe. That is the inſtruction which we muſt learne by this text, otherwiſe the complaynt that G O D maketh againſt the Iewes by his Prophet Ieremie, ſhall lyght vppon vs. My people [ſayeth he] what haue I doone to thee? Heere G O D entereth into diſputation with the people bycauſe they were ſo defiled with Idolatry and had peruerted all together. Goe to (ſaith hee) let vs nowe pleade together; my people, what haue I doone to thee that thou ſhouldeſt complaine? I haue brought thee out of the lande of Egypt, I haue ſtretched out my mightie hand to deliuer thee from thence, I haue ledde thee, and directed thee, I fedde thee in the wilderneſſe, I cauſed Manna to come from heauen, I gaue thee the foode of Angels: and when thou waſt come into the lande which I had promiſed thee, I fought againſt thine Enemies, and I gaue thee victorie againſt them all. But theſe bee not the cheefe matters: I haue moreouer giuen thee my Lawe, which is the couenant of lyfe and ſaluation, I haue giuen thee my Sacrifices, to the intent thou ſhouldeſt haue a Teſtimonie that it is not without cauſe, that I would haue you to my ſelfe. Alſo I haue made thee to finde ſo great riches of my bountie, that it is impoſſible to value the benefites which I haue beſtowed on thee: and doeſt thou nowe fall to deſpiſing me, and to breaking thy fayth, and to turning away after ſtraunge Gods? Is this the recompence that I looke for? If a man doe plant him a vine and tend it; he meaneth to eate and drinke the fruit thereof. And if the vine do yeeld a ſtrange and a bitter fruite, to choke the maiſter withall, what wil come of it? Deſerueth not ſuch a vine to be quite plucked vp? Let vs therefore bethink our ſelues, and not tarie till our Lorde accuſe vs to haue greeued his holy Spirite: but let vs turne this text to our profite. And for as much as we knowe by experience, that he is a liberall father vnto vs; let it mooue vs to ſoften our hearts, how heard ſoeuer they bee, that wee may learne to giue ouer our ſelues wholly to him. Thus ye ſee whereto this Text ought to ſerue vs where it is ſayde, *I will ſet them in the Lande which I haue promyſed to their fathers, they ſhall bee nouriſhed there and made fatte, and they ſhall turne away vnto ſtraunge gods*. And therefore ſeeing that G O D maintaineth vs, let vs ſuffer him alſo to guide and gouerne vs, vntil he hath brought vs to ẏ eternal inheritaunce, which he hath promiſed vs, and which we looke for.

Ier.2.5.

Iſa.63.10.

Yet moreouer hee ſaith, that this ſong ſhall aunſwere them as a witneſſe, becauſe it ſhall neuer depart from their mouth. Hereby we do ſee how it is our Lordes will ẏ his word ſhould ſerue not to ſome one vſe onely; but alſo for a continuall inſtruction euen vnto the end; & that the fathers ſhould conuey it ouer to their childrē. And the chiefe ſucceſſion which we ought to leaue to them that come after vs, is that when God hath once vttered his will vnto vs, wee muſt beware that it be not buried, ſo as none of vs bee ſo fond as to hold himſelfe contented with his owne onely knowing thereof, as though the light of ſaluation ought to die with vs: but rather that they which come after vs may inioy it alſo. And therfore when we our ſelues haue knowen God, and haue had his trueth preached among vs; wee muſt to the vttermoſt of our power indeuor, that it may continue after our death, and that our children may come to receiue ẏ doctrine which we haue followed. And if the word of God ſlip away, and men think not thereon (as it is come to paſſe in the Popedome, & as it was afore time:) it commeth of their owne leawdneſſe, and they muſt needes yeelde a reckoning for their diſanulling of ſo great a benefite. Wee ſee that the law was loſt for a time amongſt the people of Iſrael, and this ſong was out of the mouthes of both great and ſmall: but yet God at the laſt did not ſuffer the people to continue in ſuch ignoraunce; but it was his will that the Lawe was founde, and that the people came with great ſolemnitie to receiue it, and hee tolde them that they were woorthy of blame for defacing the doctryne of Saluation, and therefore hee willed them to repent. Nowe, ſeeing it is ſo; as I haue already touched, when G O D hath once taught vs his will, let vs learne (as I ſayde afore) not onely to profite therein for the preſent tyme or for the tyme of our owne life, but alſo to procure as much as in vs lyeth that our Children after our death, may ſtill enioy the ſame Religion, and that the name of G O D may euer bee had in remembraunce.

And although there be many that cannot profit themſelues thereby; yet ſhall it turne to their condemnation, and God ſhall not fayle to bee glorified. For ſurely Moſes ſpeaketh in this place, not onely of Gods elect, and of ſuch as were the true ſeede of Abraham: but alſo of ſuch as were willing to take profite by the lawe, and were not altogether reprobates. For ſeeing it was Gods will that this ſong ſhould bee in their mouthes; thereby wee ought to be ſo much the better aduertiſed, that our Lord doeth oftentimes leaue his worde to the worlde, to bee a meſſage and a teſtimonie of his loue and goodnes; howbeit not for the ſaluation of all men, but for the condemnation of the greater part. Wee ſee that euen among the Heathen there remained alwayes a remnant of the trueth: wee ſee ſuch ſentences vttered by the heathen, as it is impoſſible for a naturall man to thinke the leaſt of them which they haue alleaged. By what meanes then did they it? It was Gods dooing, who brought them ſo farre foorth to their greater condemnation; and at the laſt day they ſhall full well be brought in minde of it againe. Nowe if we haue the word of GOD, which ought to bee a much more familiar inſtruction to vs; and that God conſtraineth vs to haue our eares beaten therewith, and to bee able to talke thereof; if wee make none account thereof, but walke altogether contrarie to it, ſo as it may ſeeme that wee haue conſpired to prouoke the wrath of GOD againſt vs; Alas how dreadfull condemnation is readie for vs? Therefore let vs looke well to our ſelues, and let vs conſider that our Lorde doeth often times leaue his worde in the mouth of men, not to the intent they ſhould be inſtructed thereby to their profite;(for they be neither worthie nor capable thereof, bycauſe of their malice and rebellion,)but to the intent they ſhould haue the leſſe excuſe, at ſuch time as they muſt condemne themſelues, and when this ſentence is to bee executed vppon them, namely, Thou wicked Luke.19.22. ſeruaunt I condemne thee, yea euen by thine owne mouth. Let vs therefore take heede of that, and let vs make ſuch confeſſion of Gods trueth; as the ſame may proceede from the roote of our heart, and be a good Sacrifice, and ſo conſequently turne to our ſaluation, as Saint Rom.10.10. Paule ſayeth in the tenth Chapter to the Romanes, which was alleaged by mee, not long ſithens. Thus muſt the woorde of GOD bee alwaies in our mouth, not to condemne vs, in ſuch wiſe, as wee may ſit rucking ſtill continually in our filthineſſe: but to condemne vs in ſuch wiſe as wee may bee touched with repentaunce, and vtterly miſlike of our ſinnes, and flee vnto God to obtaine fauour at his hand: yea euen in ſuch wiſe, as he may rule and gouerne vs by his holy ſpirit, and from henceforth bee glorified in all our life.

Nowe let vs fall downe before the Maieſtie of our good God, with acknowledgement of our faultes: beſeeching him to vouchſafe more and more to giue vs a true vnderſtanding and feeling of that which wee haue deſerued, ſo as wee may bee altogether caſt downe in our ſelues, and lay away all glorying of our ſelues, and that our whole reſorting for refuge may bee alonely to his goodneſſe: and that in the meane whyle we may ſigh vnder the burthen of our fleſh, for ſo much as wee bee ſo ouerloaden, that wee are not able to come to him with ſo pure affection, as we ought: and that he will augment the graces of his holy ſpirit, vntill he haue rid vs quite and cleane of all maner of vices and imperfections, and renewed vs after his owne image, ſo as we may forſake all thinges, to giue our ſelues vnto him: and that renouncing this preſent world, we may labour to attayne to the inheritaunce of the heauenly life. That it may pleaſe him to graunt this grace, not onely vnto vs, but alſo to all people and nations of the earth, &c.

On Wedneſday the vj. of May, 1556.

The CLXXVII. Sermon which is the fifth vpon the one and thirtith Chapter.

22 And ſo Moſes wrate this Song the ſame day, and taught it the children of Iſraell.

23 Then hee commaunded Ioſuah the ſonne of Nun, and ſayde, bee ſtrong and of good courage: for thou ſhalt bring the Children of Iſraell, into the lande concerning the which I haue ſworne to them, and I will bee with thee.

24 And it came to paſſe that Moſes finiſhed his wryting of the woordes of this Lawe in the booke: ſo that hee made an ende.

25 Then Moſes commaunded the Leuites that bare the Arke of the Couenaunt of the Lord, ſaying:

26 Take the booke of this Lawe, and lay it in the ſide of the Arke of the Couenaunt of the Lorde your God, that it may bee a witneſſe agaynſt thee.

27 For I knowe thy ſtubbornneſſe and thy ſtiffe necke, beholde, whyle I am yet aliue with you this day, you bee Rebelles agaynſt the Lorde: how much more then will you be ſo after my death?

28 Cauſe all the Elders of your Trybes and your Rulers to come before me, that I may vtter theſe words in their hearing, and that I may call both heauen and earth to witneſſe againſt them.

29 For I knowe that after my death, you will bee corrupted and fall away from the way that I haue commaunded you. And finally euill will come vppon you, bycauſe you ſhall haue doone euill in the ſight of the Lorde, by prouoking him to anger through the workes of your handes.

30 So Moſes ſpake the words of this ſong in the eares of all the congregation of Iſraell: vntill he ended them.

Wee haue heere before already ſeene, howe Moſes exhorted Ioſuah, whome GOD gaue him to bee his ſucceſſor. And therein wee haue ſeene alſo, that he was contented to haue ſerued God during his owne lyfe time, and that hee was not grieued ỹ another was reſerued for the charge which was more excellent than that which had beene committed vnto him. For the chiefe matter was to put the children of Iſrael in poſſeſſion of the heritage that God had promiſed them. Moſes is remoued from that honor, and GOD tolde him that it was to ſhame him withall, bicauſe he had not glorifyed him, when the people ſtroue, at ſuch time as they asked water to drinke. God ſayd that Moſes behaued not himſelfe conſtant ynough at that time, and therefore hee puniſhed him, and would not that hee ſhoulde put the people in poſſeſſion of the land of Chanaan. Nowe ſee with what patience Moſes did beare this chaſtiſement which God layd vppon him: In ſo much that although Ioſuah was appointed in his place, yet hee was not a whit mooued thereat with enuie or euill will: but did rather exhort him, deſiring nothing, but that ſuch a man might be ſet vp, as ſhould maintayne and preſerue the ſtate of the Church. Hereby wee are taught, that although God doe pardon our faultes, yet neuertheleſſe if it pleaſe him to ſend vs corporall puniſhments to the intent wee ſhoulde the rather humble our ſelues, and not ſpurne againſt his power, but ſtoope to it, and yeelde our ſelues altogether obedient; ſurely it is conuenient for vs as he knoweth verie well. And therefore let vs ſuffer our ſelues to bee gouerned by his hand, as it is the generall rule that we muſt obſerue in al the puniſhments that God doeth ſend vs.

Num.20.10

And by the way, wee are alſo to marke, that the zeale of the honour of God and of ỹ welfare of his Church, ought to beare rule in vs: ſo as none of vs doe couet to bee in high degree, and to mount aboue his neighbours: but bee contented that God doe conduct vs by the meanes of men, and that hee chooſe ſuch inſtrumentes as it pleaſeth himſelfe. For ſo hee may alwayes haue the ſoueraintie, and the Church proſper, let vs reioyce therein, and let no man haue regarde of himſelfe. Moreouer wee are to call to rememberaunce, that when Moſes meant to encourage Ioſuah, hee aſſured him vppon the promyſe of GOD. And that is the thing which muſt bee the ſtay of all our ſtrength. For if wee will bee ſtout vppon our owne heade; GOD will ouerthrowe ſuch a raſhneſſe, lyke a fond thing as it is. What muſt then bee done? Wee muſt embrace the promiſes of GOD; and when hee hath once tolde vs that he is our defender: wee muſt not feare that wee ſhall bee forſaken of him, but bee reſolute in all thinges. And although the worlde doe offer vs many ouerthwartes to make vs to diſtruſt: yet let vs ſtande ſtedfaſt in the thing which our GOD hath tolde vs. For it is good reaſon to doe him the honour, that his woorde may bee preferred before all thinges that may turne vs away from the affiaunce that hee hath giuen vs.

Thus ſee you heere a very profitable leſſon which is, ỹ bycauſe we feele ſo many infirmities in our ſelues ỹ there needeth nothing to beate vs downe, but as ſoone as ỹ wind bloweth, we be ſhaken, or elſe doe fall altogether: we perceiuing ſuch feebleneſſe in vs, muſt receiue the remedie that is offered vs here; which is to hearken to the promiſes of our God. And for as much as hee aſſureth vs that he will neuer faile vs; let vs truſt to that ſtay: For when the winds, the Stormes, and the Tempeſtes of this preſent world come; wee ſhall neuer bee ſhaken. Ye ſee then that the ſtrength and ſtay, of the faithfull, is to reſt altogether vpon that which God hath promiſed them. And for that cauſe doeth Moſes ſay to Ioſuah, *Thou ſhalt put the children of Iſraell in poſſeſſion of the land.* And Moſes ſpeaketh it not at aladuenture; but to ratifie that which we haue ſeene more at large here before; namely that God had choſen Ioſuah to that office, and that hauing committed the charge vnto him, he promiſed him in likewiſe to vphold him with his mightie hande, Whereupon it is ſaide vnto him, *be ſtrong, and behaue thy ſelfe manfully.* So then let vs learn to fight againſt al temptations when wee haue once taſted the force of Gods promiſes. For it is a token that wee giue no credite to that which God ſpeaketh, when wee continue lyke Reedes ſhaking with euery winde, and tremble at euery trouble that commeth: ſtanding in a mamering, or ſtarting from the right way, and waxing rechleſſe in diſcharging our duetie. As often as ſuch thinges happen, wee ſhewe our weakeneſſe: and wee giue good proofe that wee beleeue not that which GOD hath ſpoken. Wee may well alleage and ſay, As for my ſelfe, I hold the promiſes of God for certaine, I doubt not but that whatſoeuer proceedeth from his mouth is an infallible trueth. Wee may well ſo ſay; but the deede it ſelfe proueth that there is nothing in vs but hypocriſie, and that wee bee not firme to go through with that which is commaunded vs, and to diſcharge

Deut.30.

our duetie in following our vocation, ne walke ſteadily when all thinges ſeeme forlorne. To be ſhort, let vs learne that faith is ioyned with ſuch power, as ought alwayes to make vs to go foreward ſtill, whitherſoeuer God calleth vs: And ſo ſhall it doe, conditionally that we bee grounded vppon his woorde. And on the contrary ſide, we muſt needes be toſſed with vnquietneſſe, and be wandering hither and thither, and trotte vp and downe without any ſtay, if we haue not the word of God to guide vs, and to be our lanterne. And it is the right payment of all them, that leane to their owne fanſies, and make fooliſhe enterpriſes, and paſſe their boundes and lymites: It is requiſite (ſay I) that our Lord ſhould beate them downe at the laſt, though they were aduaunced for a tyme. And what is the cauſe? Bycauſe (as I ſaide afore) there is no power but that which is grounded vppon the woorde of God.

But there is yet one point more, which is that euerie one of vs muſt haue reſpect whereunto hee is called, and what it is that God hath committed to his hands: for (as we ſee heere) if Ioſua had thruſt in himſelfe, without God had appointed him, what power could hee then haue had? Peraduenture for a braide or twain he might haue done wonders, as we ſee yͤ Children of this worlde doe, who in their brauerie doe as it were ſpitte fire for a whyle as they ſay, but in the end are quite confounded. And euen ſo ſhoulde it haue happened to Ioſua. But foraſmuch as hee taryed till God had ſhewed him his wil, therfore he was not diſappointed of his hope. So then, let none of vs take more vppon him than is lawfull for him: but let vs conſider what our office and calling require, and ſo let euery of vs keepe him within his degree, with all ſoberneſſe and modeſtie; and then will GOD bee our guide, according to this ſaying of his, that his Angels ſhall alwayes beare vs company, euen in Pſal.91.11. our iourneyes, ſo wee goe not aſtray. Nowe heerewithall it is declared heere, that Moſes did write this Song and all the booke of the Lawe; and that hauing written it, hee red it openly before all the people, and gaue the booke of the Lawe to the Leuites, willing them to lay it in the ſide of the Arke or Coffer of the Couenant, and telling them that it ſhould be a Teſtymonie againſt the people. Yea and once againe he accuſeth thē of rebelliō. *Thou ſhalt know* (ſaith he) *what a one thou art.* God muſt alwayes haue an action framed againſt thee and bee thy Iudge; for thou art full of Rebellion, thou wilt not bee gouerned but by ſtrong hand; If thou wouldeſt willingly ſerue thy God, hee would vſe thee after a more myeld and gentle faſhion. But what? Bycauſe thou art ſo hardened in euill, that thou wilt not by any meanes bee bowed, GOD is fayne to vſe rigour. And nowe yet once againe (ſayeth hee) I will call heauen and earth to witneſſe againſt you. That is the effect of that which is declared in this place.

Now as concerning the firſt poynt, we muſt marke that this woorde *Writing* doeth import, that Moſes was not the author of the Lawe nor of the ſong: but was onely the writer or recorder thereof, at the mouth of God. Nowe then, like as a clearke of an office writeth what is appoynted him; Euen ſo it is ſayd expreſſely here, that Moſes wrate the things which he receiued of God, and not any thing that was forged in his owne brayne. And this ſerueth to giue ſuch authoritie to the Lawe and to the ſong which wee ſhall ſee heereafter; as may make vs to giue eare with all reuerence, not to a mortall creature, but to the liuing GOD, whoſe will it is to haue his Maieſtie knowen there. Thus much for one poynt.

And herewithall it is ſhewed vs that our faith oweth no obedience but to him onely, neyther ought to depend vppon men, howe wiſe ſoeuer they be; but that God ought to haue the gouerning and whole Lordſhip thereof. According whereunto Saint Paule proteſteth, that he raigned not like a Lord vnder any colour ouer their 2.Cor.1.24. faith, but that he reſerued that right vnto God, to whom alone it belonged. And in verie deede if wee ſhould compare all the men liuing in the worlde with Moſes, it is certaine that we ſhould alwayes finde, that hee is the excellenteſt Prophet that GOD hath choſen of all the reſt, according as wee ſhall ſee in the ende of this Deut.34.10. ſong: and yet for all that, his ſpeaking of the law which was publiſhed by him, is not to bring vs in admiration of his perſon, that wee ſhould ſay, Truely that was an excellent man: but it is ſayde that God was ſerued by him. After what manner? Soothly euen thus, that hee did not take any thing in hand, nor put foorth any dreame or dotage of his owne, but onely wrate that which hee had receiued at the mouth of God. Seeing that this teſtimonie is deliuered concerning Moſes: what diueliſh boldneſſe and arrogancie is in them that bee farre inferiour to him: which will needes bee heard, when they bring foorth nothing but their owne fantaſies, and ſubmit not themſelues to the worde of God? And yet wee haue to marke that the charge of Moſes differed greatly from theirs which be at this day ordained Miniſters in the Church. For God gaue him his lawe; and therefore hee was fortie dayes and fortie nightes in the mountaine without meate or drinke, to the ende that his doctrine ſhoulde bee authoriſed. Nowe, this was peculiar to him, and as a ſpeciall priuiledge. Seeing it is ſo, then are we ſo much the better confirmed in that which I haue ſpoken; to wit, that it becommeth not men to enterpriſe any thing of their owne braine (as they ſay,) but that they muſt onely deliuer forth that which God cōmandeth them, and be (as it were) his inſtruments.

And heerewithall let vs marke alſo, how it is not without cauſe, that Moſes commandeth the Leuites to lay *the booke of the Lawe in the ſide of the* Chiſt or *Arke of the couenaunt*: for thereby it had the more Maieſtie, not bycauſe the Sanctuarie of it ſelfe was of more worthineſſe than other places; but bicauſe God had ordained it to yͤ vſe, and that it was his pleaſure that it ſhoulde be as a pledge, & a viſible ſigne of his preſence.

This matter hath bin alreadie treated of heretofore:& therfore we need not to ſtand vpō it any long whyle: neuertheleſſe it is requiſite to haue ẏ remembrance thereof briefely renewed vnto vs. Men of their owne nature bée ſo dull, that they can neither attaine nor indeuour to attayne vnto G O D vnleſſe they haue ſome helpes. As for vs, wee haue not nowe the figures and ſhadowes which the fathers had vnder the law. For G O D hath nowe reueyled himſelfe vnto vs more familiarly in the perſon of our Lord Ieſus Chriſt, who is his liuely Image: but vnder the lawe, it was neceſſarie that the fathers ſhoulde haue the figures to aide them, to the intent they might bee confirmed in the fayth. And when they came to the Sanctuarie or the Tabernacle, it was a kind of offering themſelues before the face of God. There were no Images nor Puppets: for it was not their faſhion to haue anie ſuch remembrance of God, as the Papiſtes doe imagine; but there were the ten commaundementes, which were laide vp there, and God woulde that his maieſtie ſhoulde bee looked vppon in his worde. And Moſes giueth expreſſe commaundement, that the booke of the lawe which he had written, ſhoulde bee laide there in the ſide of the Cheſt of the couenaunt. And to what ende? As if God ſhoulde ſay, Here is my Teſtimonie, you muſt not receyue this doctrine as if it were framed after the deuice of man: ye muſt hold it as a thing that comes from mee: for you haue a viſible token thereof. Nowe then we ſee whereunto this ceremonie of ẏ putting vp of the booke of the lawe into the Cheſt of the couenaunt did ſerue: It was all one as if God had proteſted that hee auowed it to be his owne, and that Moſes had no further to do with it than onely that hee ſerued him as his miniſter.

Col.1,15.

Here we ſee yet againe that which we haue declared alreadie: namely, that God calleth vs altogether to himſelfe, and that hee would not haue drawen vs away one way or other to haue regarde vnto men: for ſo ſhoulde our faith bee alwayes wauering, and there woulde be no ſtay. It is his will that wee ſhoulde haue our eye vppon him alone, to yeelde our ſelues to his obedience. And therefore let vs learne to betake vs wholie to our God, if wee meane to haue a true and holie vnion in the Church. The Papiſts do prate much of the Catholike church, and of the agreement that ought to bee therein: Yea, but in the meane while there is horrible diuiſion and helliſh confuſion among them, becauſe God beareth not rule there by his word, neither is there any allowable doctrine, but they be toſſed too and fro: I meane not the common ſort onely, but euen them alſo which make the articles of fayth and frame commandements & traditions at their owne pleaſure, whereof they haue hoorded and heaped ſo manie one vpō an other, that they can ſcarſly wel tel who is the reporter of this or that, or who is the inuenter thereof, or who was the firſt maker of ſuch an order or of ſuch a tradition. Thus yee ſee how all thinges goe to confuſion and diſorder, when men direct not themſelues by the pure doctrine of G O D. And therefore let vs marke, that when our Lorde willed that the booke of the law ſhoulde be put vp in the Sanctuarie: it was as it were his Royal ſeate where he ſate himſelfe, & where hee woulde bee honoured. And thereby hee ſhewed in effect, that hee woulde not haue his Church to be gouerned after the pleaſure or liking of men: but meant to holde it in awe, and that his onely worde ſhoulde bee receiued, ſo as men ſhould looke onely vnto him, and be gathered together there. But now that wee haue our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt for our heade, and that he is appointed our Shepeheard, and telleth vs that if wee bee his ſheepe, wee muſt not onely heare his voyce, but alſo diſcerne it from the voyce of ſtraungers: I pray you ſhall there be anie excuſe, if we be ſo wauering in the aire, as we ſee the Papiſtes are, following euery man his owne deuice, or elſe buſying themſelues about the Traditions of men? Therefore let vs learne to ſubmitte our ſelues vnto God and vnto him whome he hath ſet vp in his behalfe to be our onelie gouernour: Alſo let vs learne to heare the lawe and the Goſpell in ſuch wiſe, as wee may quake at the Maieſtie of our God: and let vs come with ſuch reuerence and humilitie to the hearing of the doctrine that is deliuered out of it, as wee may not in anie wiſe replie againſt it, nor bring thither anie one droppe of our owne wiſedome, to ſay, I think it not meete; to what purpoſe is this ſpoken? But let vs without gaynesaying, receiue all that euer our Lord declareth vnto vs. Thus much for one point.

Iohn.10,4a & 5.27.

And moreouer let vs ſo ſticke to him, as our faith be not toſſed to and fro. When wee ſee diuerſitie of opinions, and that to aduaunce themſelues men doe through ambition vndertake great matters; let not that carie vs away; but let vs continue ſtill reſolued that there is none but G O D alone that will teach vs [aright,] & that hee hath doone it by his lawe, and laſtlie by the Goſpell, inſomuch that our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt is appointed by him to be our Teacher, and we haue expreſſe commaundement to heare him, This is my welbeloued ſonne, heare him. By the which point he doeth men to vnderſtande, that he will haue them to ſticke vnto his doctrine and to be obedient to the ſame.

Matt.3,17.

Moreouer it is ſaide, *That the law ſhall bee laide vp there for a Teſtimonie againſt the people of Iſraell*, It ſhoulde ſeeme at the firſt ſhewe, that the law ſerueth but to condemne men: but I haue alreadie declared yeſterday, that it is ſaide ſo as in reſpect of folkes frowardneſſe which will not be taught but by compulſion. True it is that this hardeneſſe is to bee founde in all men: for by nature wee are hardlie brought in order, we bee comberſome, the wilde beaſtes doe not eaſilie become gentle, nor ſuffer themſelues to bee tamed at our hands; but yet there is not ſo wild a beaſt to bee founde in the worlde as euerie man is, vntill our Lorde haue ſubdued the ſtubborneſſe that is in vs, and giuen vs the Spirite of meekeneſſe; and therefore our Lorde is faine to ſpeake vnto vs, and as it were to enter an action to reproooue vs. In reſpect whereof it is ſaide, that the ſpirite ſhall iudge the worlde. Iohn.16.8. There our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt treateth of the Goſpell, and ſheweth to what ende it ſhall be preached. I will (ſaith hee) ſende foorth my doctrine, and to what ende? To iudge the world. Yea but the Goſpell is a meſſage of grace and fatherly louing kindneſſe. God doth heere offer vnto vs his heart, and telleth vs that hee requireth nothing, but to bring vs to ſaluation: and wherefore then ſpeaketh hee of condemnation? It is impoſſible for him to bring vs to ſaluation, vnleſſe we bee firſt condemned. Therefore it behoooueth vs at the firſt entrie to be inforced to ſubmit our ſelues vnto God: for vntill he hath made that chaunge in vs, wee will neuer yeelde to bee gouerned by him. Yet notwithſtanding our Lorde ſo worketh in his elect, ẏ after he hath humbled them, they ſuffer themſelues to be led without any more reſiſtance; inſomuch ẏ their whole pleaſure and ioy is to bee ſubiect to God, and to frame themſelues altogether after his will. The others be ſo rebellious, that our Lord is faine to vſe continuall roughneſſe and ſharpnes againſt them. True it is that euen the faithful haue alwayes in them ſome kind of ſtriuing, ſo as they bee neuer ſo throughly reformed but that there is euer ſome replying. Yet notwithſtanding, as manie as are gouerned by the Spirite of God (as all his children bee) ſhall cheefely haue their whole deſire and affection to bee altogether ſubiect vnto God, and to doe nothing vppon their owne heade or after their owne liking. As for the others which be not reformed, it is requiſite that God ſhoulde alwaies ſtande in lawe againſt them, and vſe rigour to their condemnation. For this cauſe it is ſaide here, that the booke of the lawe ſhoulde bee a witneſſe againſt the people. Moſes meaneth not but there ſhoulde bee ſome, that ſhould profite by the law, ſo as the doctrine thereof ſhould not be a warrant vnto them of Gods goodneſſe to guide thẽ to the hope of euerlaſting life: but he treateth here of the greateſt ſort which was wicked and froward. And ẏ ſcripture vſeth ſuch a maner of ſpeech, when a people is for the moſt part wicked, ſaying, All of you. Although our Lorde knowe his owne people, and ſeparateth them from the reſt: yet forbeareth he not, to ſay, You: as though hee ſpake generally without exception. Let vs marke then, that the lawe was laid vp for a Teſtimonie againſt the people: not becauſe it doeth not conteine a witneſſe of the loue of God for mens welfare: but becauſe of ẏ peoples malice, who could not finde in their heartes to fare the better thereby, but turned the light into darkeneſſe, and conuerted their breade and meate into poiſon, and altered life into death. Alſo we ought to thinke vppon this which Paul ſpeaketh, namely that the lawe is a 2.Cor. 3. 7. miniſter of death: but he ſpeaketh there but of ẏ commandements: whereas here Moſes comprehendeth all the couenaunt that God had made, euen the couenant of the Goſpel, concerning the which we haue ſeene herebefore how Saint Paul ſaide, that the ſame perteineth not to the Deut.30.14 lawe: namelie: The word is in thy mouth and in Rom.10.6. thy heart. Alſo I haue tolde you, and wee haue had ſufficient proofe therof, that Moſes was not onely a miniſter of the law, but alſo did ſet forth the free promiſes of ſaluatiō which were grounded in our Lord Ieſus Chriſt. And now he doth briefely comprehende all that in a ſumme.

Neuertheles he forbeareth not to ſay, that the lawe ſhall be a witneſſe againſt the people. And why? As I ſaide afore, it commeth not of the nature of the lawe, that is to ſay of the doctrine; but of ẏ malice of that people, which could not abide, that God ſhould be their father and Sauiour. Now then, the thing which is here proteſted of the lawe, perteyneth to the Goſpel: to witte, that when the Goſpell is preached, if wee accept the meſſage which is offered vnto vs, wee haue GOD for our father, we bee aſſured of his free adoption, and we may freely cal vpon him in the name of our Lord Ieſus Chriſt. Thus ye ſee howe wee ought to be rauiſhed with ioy, when God ſheweth himſelfe ſo good and gratious towardes vs. Neuerthelater, if we deſpiſe ſo great a benefite, or abuſe it as the hypocrites do; or if we be ſkorners of God, or looſe liuers; or if we be ſo wedded to this preſent worlde, that the heauenly inheritance ſeemeth nothing vnto vs: God will holde ſkorne of vs alſo, and moreouer there ſhal not one onely word be ſpoken, which ſhal not ask vengeance againſt vs at the laſt daye: God wil haue infinite witneſſes. Looke how manie ſermons haue beene made, looke howe manie lectures haue beene reade, and looke howe manie bookes haue beene printed: and they ſhal al be witneſſes to condemme vs as guiltie, and to make vs inexcuſable before God. Although then ẏ this ceremonie of hauing a booke laid vp as it were in the preſence of God, be not now obſerued: yet notwithſtanding ſeeing we haue God with vs in the perſon of our Lord Ieſus Chriſt, and that Ieſus Chriſt hath receiued and auowed vs for his Church, and alſo authoriſed his Goſpel according as we perceiue by this ſaying of his, He ẏ heareth you, heareth me, and he ẏ refuſeth you Luk.10.16. refuſeth me; Seeing (ſay I) ẏ we be at this point; there nedeth none other proces to bee framed againſt vs. Let vs looke therfore that we withall reuerence and feare receiue the doctrine which is deliuered vnto vs in the name of our God, to the end wee bee not iudged and condemned thereby at the laſt day. According whereunto our Lord Ieſus Chriſt threatneth the Iewes in an other place, ſaying: It is not I that will condemne you, but the word which you haue heard Iohn.12.48. at my mouth ſhall be your iudge. So then, let vs take heed while our Lord allureth vs vnto him gently, and let vs goe to him: and let our whole ſeeking be to put ourſelues as ſheepe vnder the guiding of our ſheepherd: and then ſhal not the worde be a witneſſe againſt vs, nor ſerue to condemne vs: but much rather we ſhal haue in ẏ law a certaine Pawne of our ſaluation: and we ſhall ſee in the ende, that it is not a vayne doctrine. Wee ſee yet better by that which followeth, that the malice and rebellion of the people was

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Numb.12.3.

the cauſe why Moſes vſed ſuch ſeueritie. For it is ſaide that he was verie mield and gentle: and yet howe ſpeaketh he? What maner of ſpeech doeth he vſe? I haue knowen you of long time to be very hardhearted and ſtubborne, and at this day, I perceiue not that you bee any whit amended; nay ye bee rather waxen worſe and worſe: ye bee become wilde beaſtes, euermore rebelling againſt GOD, and howe much more then will ye do ſo after my death? As if he ſhould ſay, I knowe you to be ſuch as wil neuer be good. And nowe muſt I haue recourſe to heauen and earth: for I find no ſufficient witnes among you: I muſt call the ſenſeleſſe creatures, to ſhewe that the heauens and the earth, albeit they haue neither reaſon nor vnderſtanding, ſhal appeare before GOD to crie for vengeance againſt you. In ſpeaking after this maner, Moſes might ſeem to bee the ſharpeſt, the rougheſt, and the cholorickeſt man ẏ euer was: and that was againſt his nature. But what? Hereby wee doe ſo much the better perceiue, that the people were in maner vnreformable and paſt hope of recouerie, and that there was none other way to deale with thẽ but after ſuch a faſhion. And indeede, if wee compare Moſes with God, what is al the mieldneſſe that may bee in a mortall man in reſpect of the fountaine of all goodnes? For albeit that Moſes was of a meeke ſpirit, ſo as there was nothing in him but meekenes, and that he was as mielde as the ſcripture ſpeaketh: yet notwithſtanding, all the goodneſſe which he could haue was but a little droppe of that which GOD had ſhed out vppon him by his holy ſpirite. In GOD we finde all perfection of goodnes: yet doe we ſee howe ſharpe and rough he is againſt men. And whence commeth that, but of our greeuing of him? Inſomuch that hee is faine (as ye woulde ſay,) to transforme himſelfe, becauſe we cannot finde in our heartes to ſuffer him to behaue himſelfe towardes vs, as hee woulde in following his goodnes, which is infinite and vnmeaſurable in him. So then, we ſee that the frowardnes of the people of Iſrael was horrible, ſeeing that GOD and his ſeruant Moſes, (who bare the marke of the goodnes and meekeneſſe of his holy ſpirite) were driuen to behaue themſelues ſo roughlie. And hereof wee may gather, that when GOD choſe that people, it was not (as we haue alreadie ſaide herebefore) either for deſert or worthineſſe that hee founde in them. And indeed Moſes caſteth it in their teeth [ſaying;] Shoulde you thinke that GOD is bound to you? If he haue aduanced you aboue al other nations, & giuen you anie dignitie or excellencie: ſhould you therefore boaſt your ſelfe thereof? Nay you be a *ſtiffe necked people, which cannot bowe; you be* (ſaith he) *rebellious and froward*, and therefore it is to bee concluded, that God was not mooued to chooſe you, but of his owne goodneſſe.

Nowe that we haue found ſuch frowardnes in the people of Iſrael; let vs repaire to ourſelues: for the meaning of God is to teach vs at other folkes coſt. They which be deade ſo long while ſince, be at this day ſet as it were on a ſtage, God putteth them to reproch, that they might ſerue for an inſtruction to vs. We heare that the people of Iſrael were froward & ſtubborne, and we ſee how God condemneth them, & diſcouereth their ſhame. To what ende? For our good & for our learning. Now then, ſeeing that the childrẽ of Iſrael be put to ſhame here after ſuch a ſorte, let vs learne to examine well whether there bee the like faultes in vs: and ſurelie when we haue ſerched all thinges throughly, we ſhall find that we be no leſſe faultie than they. For where is the readineſſe to ſerue our God when hee calleth vs? Wee be ſo ſlowe and ſo rechleſſe, as is pitie to ſee. Neither is there onely ſlownes and ſlackeneſſe in vs: but alſo wee ceaſe not to kicke againſt him. Howe manie wicked fanſies haue wee, which turne vs away from the ſimplicitie of faith? Howe much are wee tempted of our wicked luſtes, which ſerue to make vs to kicke againſt our God? How bee wee held down in this preſent worlde, whereas wee ſhoulde mount vp vnto heauen? Howe doe wee breake all manner of order which our Lorde hath ſet amongeſt vs for our welfare? And albeit that for a time, wee pretende ſome good deſire and inclination: yet it laſteth not, wee bee changed from it with the turning of a hande, ſo as we be caried nowe this way, nowe that way, & euerie little ouerthwart is enough to make vs miſlike of Gods worde. And haue we once conceiued ſuch miſliking, in the ende wee become like venemous Todes againſt God: and wee ſee ſo manie examples thereof as is horrible. Nowe therefore, when wee haue well looked into our ſtate, wee ſhall bee conſtrained to confeſſe that we be no better than this people. Wherefore let vs beware that the worde of God which is preached, be not a Teſtimonie againſt vs at this day. Yea and let vs not thinke it ſtraunge, though God reprooue vs ſharpelie, and ſend vs ſuch rebukes as he did to the Iewes: neither let vs ſay, with ſuch, as ſettle themſelues in their filthineſſe, Howe nowe? God pincheth vs too harde. Alas wee had neede to bee called vppon a hundred foolde more than we bee. What muſt we then doe? We muſt be more quiet towardes our God than we haue beene; ſpecially when he vſeth roughneſſe in his worde, and that our ſins bee laide open, ſo as our ſhame bee diſcouered: and that on the otherſide he threateneth vs, & ſummon vs before him, and lay there before vs the condemnation that is prepared for vs, vnles wee returne vnto him by repentaunce. Therefore whenſoeuer hee vſeth ſuch vehemencie, we muſt not kicke againſt him, but wee muſt acknowledge the ſame to be more than needefull for vs, becauſe that if hee helde vs not ſhort after that maner, he could neuer weeld vs. Thus yee ſee what we haue to remember, in that we ſee Moſes to haue been ſo vehement, as to haue vſed the tearmes of rebellion and malice, and to haue tolde the people that if they had beene ſtubborne in his life time, they woulde much more bee ſo after his deceaſe. When we ſee all this, let vs vnderſtande that our Lorde teacheth vs, that we haue neede to be ſubdued after

ter that manner; for what were to bee wonne at our handes, by vſing gentleneſſe towardes vs? The matter is apparaunt. True it is that God allureth vs ſo gently, that hee may ſeeme to flatter vs as a father doeth his children: but if hee continue in ſo doing, wee fall to making heade againſt him, and to ſetting vp of our briſtles, and finally to daſhing at him with our hornes, and to ſpurning and kicking at him, ſo as it woulde pitie ones hearte to ſee it. Foraſmuch therefore as our Lorde knoweth that he coulde not holde vs in obedience, but by ſuch threateninges, rebukinges, and rigour: he faſhioneth himſelf to our nature, to the intent to ſubdue the ſtubborneſſe that is in vs. Thus ye ſee ſtill what wee haue to remember vppon that place.

Nowe it is ſaide herewithall, *That Moſes willed the People to bee aſſembled together, euen of purpoſe to call Heauen and earth to witneſſe againſt them.* Howbeit, foraſmuch as this hath beene expounded once alreadie; I will not ſtande vpon it anie more. Onely this ſhall ſuffice, that to make the people the more aſhamed, Moſes calleth the heauens and the earth to witneſſe, which are vnreaſonable creatures. As if he ſhold ſay, needes muſt theſe bee deteſtable people: for it is an vtter peruerting of the order of nature, when men which are created after the image of God vſe neither wit not reaſon, but become blockiſhe; inſomuch that if God ſpeake to them it is but loſt labour, and hee is fayne to haue recourſe to the creatures which are voide of vnderſtanding, as to heauen and earth. Here therefore Moſes meant to touch the children of Iſraell to the quicke, in ſaying that hee called heauen and earth agayne to witneſſe which are creatures euen without ſenſe, to the ende they ſhoulde the better know what a brutiſheneſſe it was that they would not giue eare vnto G O D, who notwithſtanding had not onely printed his image in them inaſmuch as they were men; but alſo had choſen them for his people, and giuen them his lawe to leade them a right. Nowe, although this thing bee to bee counted as a monſtrous and ouglie thing: yet is it to bee ſeene in manner euerie where. For God ſpeaketh as well in theſe dayes, as hee did by Moſes. Yea and hee hath ſhewed himſelfe more familiarly to vs, in the perſon of our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt: and yet for all that, what manner of eares bring wee to the hearing of his worde? Wee be not onely deafe but alſo partlie madde, and partlie ſo blockiſhe that if wee were timberlogges, wee coulde not in a manner bee ſo ignoraunt as wee bee. Not without cauſe therefore is it rehearſed here againe, that Moſes had recourſe to heauen and earth, to the intent to make vs aſhamed, becauſe wee bee ſo poſſeſſed aforehande with our wicked luſtes, or with the vanities of this world, or with our owne blindneſſe; that for all that euer G O D can ſay or ſpeake vnto vs, hee cannot preuayle at all with vs. Yet notwithſtanding, it might ſeeme that this people had more modeſtie in them, than Moſes ſpeaketh of: For in the ende it is added that Moſes ſung this ſong, and put the people in minde of the thinges which they had ſeene alreadie, and moreouer threatened them that GOD woulde puniſhe them, telling them that although God did at that time ſet them in poſſeſſion of the lande which hee had promiſed them; yet ſhould they not abide anie long time in it, ere hee ſhoulde bee faine to driue them out againe, and all for their wickedneſſe. Doeth Moſes ſay ſo? They heare him well enough. And it is a woonder to ſee howe this people are painted out in that ſong: for there all their leawd dealinges are diſcouered; and yet they replie not to it any more. For if a man ſhoulde ſpeake to the people of Geneua noweadayes, as Moſes ſpake to the people of Iſraell; and reproue folkes ſinnes as they deſerue, ſhoulde hee bee receyued? If a man ſhoulde lay foorth the leawde dealinges that reigne among vs, and tel vs of our contempt of G O D and his woorde, of our ſtubbornneſſe and wicked practiſes, of our whoredome and looſeneſſe, and of ſuch other like thinges: and not onely ſpeake of the deedes that are doone nowe adayes, but alſo ſhewe other thinges that haue beene committed; and not onely ſpeake of actuall ſinnes, but alſo ſay after this manner, Ye bee of ſuch a nature as this, namely yee bee thankeleſſe towardes G O D, ſtubborne againſt him, full of crueltie, pride, malice, and al manner of iniquitie. If a man ſhoulde ſpeake al theſe thinges, I pray you howe ſhoulde hee bee hearde? O, what murmuring woulde there bee? Nay it woulde paſſe murmuring: for men would gnaſh their teeth at it, and there woulde be no ſuch patience in vs, as was in this people: for they coulde well enough endure Moſes to tell them the thinges aforeſayde. It is ſaide expreſſely, that hee rehearſed all the ſaide ſong in the hearing of all the people. And there is is yet this ſaying added more, *Throughout to the ende.* And why was that? Hee coulde haue ſaide well enough, that Moſes had rehearſed the ſong with a loud and cleare voyce, in the hearing of the people: but hee ſayth, that euerie whit of it was rehearſed in the eares of the people, euen from the beginning to the ending. So then, his meaning is, that the people ſtoode as dumbe, and yeelded themſelues guiltie. And therefore ſith wee ſee that notwithſtanding ſuch ſilence, and ſuch apparancie of the feare of G O D and of godlineſſe, yet G O D vttered ſo rough a ſentence: wee muſt vnderſtande, that it is not enough for vs to proteſt ceremoniouſly, that wee bee ſubiect to G O D: Inſomuch that although wee reſorte to ſermons, and haue our eares beaten continuallie with them, and call vppon G O D, and make profeſſion of our faith; yet notwithſtanding all this is nothing. In deede all theſe thinges are good and holy: but if we vſe them in way of hypocriſie, curſed bee we, and we muſt not thinke to pay G O D with ſuch kinde of Coyne. What is to bee doone then? When wee haue hearde Gods worde, let euery of vs examine himſelfe, let vs ſearch out our ſinnes, let vs be ſorie to ſee that we be not ſo forwarde as were requiſite: and beeing prouoked hereby, let vs pray God to change and reforme vs, and to bring vs home wholy to himſelfe. After that manner muſt wee deale. And moreouer, although wee haue had ſome order, and kinde of gouernment among vs for a time; yet let vs be afraid alwayes, leaſt there haue beene ſome faynedneſſe lurking vnderneath it. For we ſee what befell to the people of Iſrael: and in verie deede the thing ſhewes it ſelfe. For wee ſee that by ſtartes they ſubmitted themſelues, and there ſeemed to bee ſome feare of God in them. And yet as ſoone as any occaſion was offered, as ſoone as anie wicked deceiuer ſtepped vp; by and by they were turned away againe. Examples hereof are to bee ſeene: and God graunt we ſee them no more. Yet ought they to warne vs, that if there bee anie forme of good gouernment or behauiour among vs, ſo as the Church ſeemeth to be in good ſtate, and religion to floriſhe, and God to bee honoured: the ſight of all this muſt not make vs to thinke that that is all which we haue to do, as though a great number of vices lay not lurking vnderneath it: but wee muſt pray God to vouchſafe to make this gouernment to bee of ſuch force, as it may drawe our heartes vnto him, and euerie of vs may haue an eye to himſelfe; that when wee once knowe throughly the euill that is in vs, we may ſeeke to God to rid vs thereof: that whereas wee haue beene ſtubborne, and hardhearted aforetimes, we may no more followe that trade, but come and ſubmitte our ſelues with all meekeneſſe and mieldnes to our God, ſo as he may rule vs without any gainſtriuing.

Nowe let vs fall downe before the Maieſtie of our good God with acknowledgement of our ſinnes, praying him to vouchſafe to burie them quite and cleane, and therewithall to receiue vs ſo into his protection, as we may fight againſt al the luſtes of our fleſhe, and the temptations of the worlde, vntill wee haue finiſhed our courſe: And that becauſe wee be ſo frayle of our ſelues, wee may alwayes reſort vnto him, euen vpon truſt of the promiſes which hee hath made vs, ſpecially in that hee hath promiſed to heare vs in all our petitions which wee make to him in the name of our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt. And ſo let vs all ſay, Almightie God heauenlie father, &c.

On Thurſday the vij. of May, 1556.

The CLXXVIII. Sermon, which is the firſt vpon the two and thirtith Chapter.

HEarken O yee heauens, and I will ſpeake: and heare thou earth the word of my mouth.

2 My doctrine ſhall flowe as doth the rayne, and my wordes ſhal drop as the deawe, euen as the raine vpon the hearbes, and as the great raine vpon the greene graſſe.

3 For I will call vppon the name of the Lorde God: yeeld yee honour to our God.

4 The workes of the mightie God are perfect, for all his wayes are iudgement: God is true, and without wickedneſſe: he is righteous and iuſt.

IT ſhoulde ſeeme that for as much as Moſes was ordeyned to bee the teacher of the Iewes, hee ſhold chieflie haue exhorted thẽ to heare the thinges that were ſpoken to them for their inſtruction and welfare. But hee ſeemeth not to vouchſafe to direct his ſpeach to them, but rather to heauen and earth, as though hee condemned them aforehande for ſtubborne people, and not of capacitie to receiue anie good learning. Neuertheleſſe his ſo doing is not for that hee woulde not haue the ſame to ſerue their turne, that they might benefite themſelues thereby: but for that hee was faine to quicken them vp in ſuch wiſe, as it might grieue them at the heart, to ſee that God taketh them for condemned perſons aforehand; to the end that the ſame might touch and moue them the better. And ſo let vs marke; that becauſe Moſes ſawe that the people were all prepared, and he ment to teach them to bee reformed by that means; it behooued him to vſe ſuch manner of proceeding. And it is verie needfull towards thoſe that are ſtubborne, and vnwilling to learne at Gods hande; for ſuch are to bee rebuked and threatened; their leawdneſſe is to be diſcouered; and they muſt bee put to ſhame; ŷ being diſmayed, they may aduiſe themſelues to returne vnto God. And this ſheweth vs, that ſuch as haue the charge of teaching in ŷ church, ought to bee indued with wiſedome and diſcretion. For if their hearers behaue themſelues meekly, and be willing to be guided by the hande of God: it were no reaſon to thunder at them or to vſe roughneſſe againſt them. But on the cõtrarie part if there appeare anie hardnes of heart and ſtubborneſſe in them, or if it be founde by experience that it is but loſt labour to ſpeake gently to them, as when men make thẽ ſelues deafe: then behoueth it the Preacher to ſtep to them with greater vehemencie. And Moſes beganne not his gouerning of the people at the making of this ſong, but he had felt the experience of it long time afore, whereby he perceiued that it was a verie harde thing to bring to paſſe. And moreouer he regarded not onely the folke then preſent, but alſo the ages then to come. True it is that thoſe which liued in the time of Moſes, coulde not but haue their eares beaten with the thinges conteyned here: but yet was the ſame to ſerue for their children alſo. Moſes therfore foreſeeing that the Iewes might become worſe and worſe, as it is the common cuſtome of the worlde, yea and being aduertiſed thereof by Gods ſpirite; vſeth ſuch a kinde of roughneſſe as wee ſee here. And herewithal we haue to remember the thing which I haue expounded alreadie: namely that Moſes calleth Deut. 30.19 heauen and earth to witneſſe, to the intent the people ſhoulde bee the more aſhamed, ſeeing that the ſenſeleſſe creatures doe frame their inditement, and that there needeth none other condemnation before GOD. For had Moſes called the heathen and vnbeleeuers to witneſſe, it had bin ſufficient to put thoſe to ſhame whome God had choſen and adopted to bee his children, but yet woulde not that haue mooued them: for all men are of one common nature, al haue reaſon and vnderſtanding: and although they bee not al trained familiarly in Gods word, yet haue they al ſome ſeede of religion in them. Therefore the alleadging of the heathen and Cap. 32.8. vnbeleeuers (as he will alledge them afterward) had not beene of ſuch force as the vſing of this preface that heauen and earth ſhall bee his witneſſes in all ages. As if hee ſhoulde ſay; as long as there is either Sunne or Moone in the skie, as long as the earth doeth her duetie in yeelding ſuſtenaunce and foode for man: ſo long ſhall I haue good and faithfull witneſſes, that I haue ſpoken in the name of God: and yet for all that, this people continueth hardhearted ſtil. Ye ſee then that the worde ſhall continue ſtill, and although men ſtreine themſelues neuer ſo much to aboliſh this doctrine: yet notwithſtanding all creatures ſhall beare me recorde before God, that I haue ſpoken, and that he authoriſed me to ſpeake, and that he ſent me to do it. Thus we ſee now the meaning of Moſes.

And ſo wee haue to note, that they which referre this ſaying to men and Angels, reſtraine the wordes of Moſes ouer coldlie. True it is that both men and Angels might well beare witnes of the vnthankefulneſſe of the Iewes: howbeit (as I haue ſhewed alreadie) the holie Ghoſt proceedeth yet further, namely that although no man ſpeake in the mayntenance and defence of Gods cauſe againſt the Iewes: yet notwithſtanding the order of the worlde, and the onely beholding of the ſunne and Moone, & of ŷ thinges which wee ſee here beneath, will ſuffice to ſhewe that God diſcharged himſelfe of the promiſe which he had made to that people, in powring out his great treaſures vppon them: and yet that they continued ſtill in their malice & wilful ſtubborneſſe: inſomuch that whereas hee foreſawe, that they were fully bent to all euil, and woulde fall away to all manner of wickedneſſe: he warned them of it aforehande, & yet that woulde not ſerue, but euen of a malicious and ſpitefull wilfulneſſe they turned away from their God, and would not hearken to anie warning, notwithſtanding the good order which God had taken for the procuring of their ſaluation. Now let vs applie the ſame to our ſelues alſo, and let vs vnderſtand that whenſoeuer Gods worde is preached vnto vs, if we receiue it not, our refuſal muſt be grauen in heauen and earth, and all the worlde ſhall ring of it, and the ſame ſhall ſerue to confirme our inditement before God. Indeede it will ſeeme, that when wee haue deſpiſed the doctrine that is preached vnto vs, it was but loſt labour, and as a ſounde that vaniſheth in the aire: but there ſhal not one of the words that God hath ſpoken fall to the grounde, whereof we ſhall not feele the power. For needs muſt they either turne to mens ſaluation, or vtterly bereaue them of all excuſe and make them double damnable. Therefore let vs thinke wel vpon it. For as oft as God graunteth vs the fauour to be taught in his name, & by his wil: there followeth this ſeale, that heauen and earth ſhall be witneſſes againſt vs to our condẽnation, if we wil not yeeld reuerẽce to him which hath al authoritie ouer vs, in ſhewing our ſelues obedient towardes him by our willing imbracing of his word with a quiet minde.

Now Moſes hauing vſed ſuch a preface, wiſheth, *that his doctrine may be like a flowing rain, ſo as it may moiſten like the drops that fall vpon the graſſe, and ſhed abroad like the dew which watereth the medowes.* And why? *For* (ſaith he) *I will call vppon the name of the Lord*, I wil exhort mẽ to *giue glorie vnto God.* Here Moſes ſheweth, that when wee bee about to ſet foorth the praiſe of God, and to treate of his goodnes, wiſdome, and power, to the intent hee may be honoured of men as hee deſerueth, it is not for vs to vſe a common and ordinary kind of ſpeech, ſpeeche,but wee muſt ſtreine our wit and skill to the vttermoſt of our powers, that our woordes may be aunſwearable to the infinite maieſtie of God:or if they cannot attayne thereunto, (as in deede we muſt needes come farre ſhort of that,) they may at leaſtwiſe come as neere as is poſſible, and tend to that ende. When we ſpeake of worldely matters, wee may well vſe a common ſtyle,& yet if we treate of any matter of importance, we ſharpen our wittes to ſpeake after the beſt maner that we can,for(to our ſeeming) the thing is worth it. But when we come to GOD: then muſt we vſe a new and more exquiſite maner of ſpeaking:ſpecially when we will maintain his maieſtie againſt men, and ſhewe that hee is woorthy to be honoured of al men, becauſe hee hath created the worlde, and mainteineth it ſtil at this day by his power, and alſo becauſe hee feedeth and ſuſteineth men: but moſt of all for his chooſing and adopting of his people and Church,by the knowledge whereof,men ſee wel howe bountifull God is towardes them. Now then,are wee ſufficient of ourſelues to treate of ſuch thinges? Who is hee that can bee founde 2.Cor.2,15. fit for that purpoſe? If all the Angels of heauen woulde magnifie God with one melodie & one accord,could they counteruail that infinite glorie? No ſurely,they ſhould come farre ſhort of it. And what ſhall become of vs then, who be frayle creatures,and can but ſtammer, when we be to ſpeake of God but ſomuch as in a ſhadow? But there was yet one other reaſon why Moſes deſired *that his doctrine might flowe like raine that moyſteneth the graſſe,and watereth the medowes*. For hee conſidereth that if our Lorde giue vs not a grace which farre paſſeth the meaſure that wee haue receiued,all is to no purpoſe:For although God raiſe vp Prophets and good teachers, and gouerne their tongues by his holy ſpirite, and giue them wherwith to teach his Church faithfully:yet ſhal they not greatly edifie it.And why? Not for any default in them: but for that they ſpeak ſomtimes to ſtones, men be ſo dulheaded, and malice doeth ſo reigne in vs, that God can haue no acceſſe nor entrie in vnto vs. By means whereof Gods worde becommeth drie and barren, notwithſtanding that of it owne nature it be moiſt and haue power to wet throughly. For it falleth but vppon ſtones and Rockes,where it parcheth and is loſt out of hand.

Nowe firſt of all we be taught heere, that the chiefe thing which wee haue to doe in all our life, is to magnifie Gods name and to ſet foorth his praiſe, not onely with our mouthes, that all other men may be prouoked to praiſe him with one accord as wel as we; but alſo with our hearts that euerie man may giue himſelfe to it, and exerciſe himſelfe therein.That is the thing (ſay I) wherein men ought to occupie themſelues, if they were not miſaduiſed to turne themſelues away from ſuch indeuour.And aboue all others, they that haue the charge of preaching Gods worde, haue heere a good leſſon: to wit,that of themſelues they bee farre vnable to performe their duetie, they haue a charge that is ouer high and excellent for them, yea euen though there were farre greater ability in them without all compariſon than there is. Choſe me out the ableſt in the world; and yet muſt they be faine to acknowledge ſuch weakeneſſe in themſelues, as that they cannot ſpeake of God with ſuch maieſtie and reuerence as they ought to do, no nor once come neere it, vnleſſe God gouerne them and giue them a new ſpeech, altering and reforming their tõgues,ſo as they may not ſpeake after the manner of men, but may ſhew howe it is the holy Ghoſt that raigneth in them. Nowe if Moſes wiſhed this in reſpect that he might faile bicauſe hee was a man; if ſo great a Prophet did both know and acknowledge that hee could not magnifie God as became him: alas, much leſſe can we diſcharge our ſelues thereof. Therfore let vs acknowledge our infirmitie and reſort vnto God,praying vnto him that as he hath vouchſafed to admit vs into his ſeruice, ſo he will alſo giue vs power and abilitie to handle thoſe high myſteries to the edifying of his Church, and to ſet forth his praiſes in ſuch wiſe as he may be honored as he deſerueth.And ẏ two reaſons which I haue ſpoken of, ought to moue vs thereunto. The one is by conſidering what oddes there is betweene the infinite glorie of God, and the ſlendernes that is in vs. For what is it that cauſeth men to preſume to worke wonders, and to ſtand ſo much in their own conceits, as to think themſelues able to go through with all thinges, but that they thinke not of God as they ought. Now therfore,when we know that God doth vs the grace to vouchſafe vs to be his lieuetenants, to beare abrode his name among men, and to bring folke to the knowing of him:truly it ought to induce vs to humilitie. And when wee once know our vnſufficiency,we muſt alſo bee prouoked thereby to pray God to ſupply our want.Beſides this let vs alſo conſider what ẏ world is.For although God had giuen vs more grace than we haue:yet is the worlde ſo frowarde, that the doctrine of God can haue no entrance at all.For it belongeth alonely to God to alter mens hearts, that is to ſay,to ſoften them, that his doctrine may drop into them and become like a moiſtening ſhower watring the medowes, whereas it dryeth away vpon ſtones and Rocks.Seeing it is ſo,let vs learne to call vpon God better than we haue done,foraſmuch as our labor were vnauailable without him.

And herewithall we be all warned in general, after what ſort we ſhould receiue Gods doctrine, that is to wit,as a raine. Were a peece of lande neuer ſo well husbanded and neuer ſo well ſeeded,yet if it wanted moiſtening from heauen,to what purpoſe were it? Shoulde not all the paine that is taken about it be vnauailable? Euen ſo is it with vs:god muſt water vs dayly with his word, or elſe hee ſhall draw no nouriſhment out of vs, we wil bring forth no fruite. Sith wee know this, wee ought to bee more diligent in hearing Gods word than we be.The earth openeth her mouth in the drought of ſummer, ſo as it chinketh if it want raine: and (as we haue ſeene heretofore) ẏ heauen muſt be faine to hearken to the earth, as though the earth made requeſt and ſupplication Oſee.2,21.

when it wanteth moiſture. And ſeeing it is ſo; why perceiue we not our owne neede,& why go we not like hungrie folkes to pray God to water vs with his worde? Nay, the ſloth that is in men doeth well ſhewe, that they neuer knewe either the power or the office of Gods worde; namely that it is a dewe and a raine. Finally foraſmuch as the ſcripture telleth vs, and we our ſelues doe feele indeed that our hearts are hard, inſomuch that although God do water vs and raine downe vppon vs neuer ſo much, yet doth not any drop enter into vs, vntill hee haue touched vs to the quicke, and taken away the ſinne that is in vs: he muſt be faine to clenſe all our wicked affections, to the end that his worde may enter, ſo as there may be neither marowe, nor bone, nor thought, nor affection, nor aught elſe in vs, wherunto this word of his may not extend, that wee may feele the force thereof. Thus ye ſee in effect what wee haue to remember vpon this place.

Nowe whereas Moſes ſaith *that he will call vpon the name of the Lorde*; hee meaneth not ſimplie that he will but onely pray, as indeede that manner of ſpeech is ſo taken in many places: [as for example] I will call vppon the name of Pſal.18,4. God, that is to ſay, I will flee to him for refuge: but the ſcripture oftentimes taketh the calling vpon Gods name, for the ſpreading thereof abroade, that it may bee knowen in all places. According hereunto, Moſes ſaith that he wil cal vpon the name of the Lord; that is to ſay, that in this place he will not treate of common things, ſuch as belong to this tranſitorie life, nor ſuch as concerne the corruptible matters of this world: but that he will mount aboue al the creatures, becauſe hee will haue God to bee knowen, worſhipped, and honored of all men, and ſpecially of the people whome hee choſe to bee his flocke, whom he marked out to bee of his owne houſhold and Church, whom he woulde haue to honor him as he is worthie. And that doeth hee ſhewe immediatly in ſaying, *Giue glorie to our God.* Heere Moſes ſheweth to what end and intent he would call vppon God; his meaning was not that he himſelfe alone would call vpon God, but to exhort all thoſe whom hee had charge of, to ſubmit themſelues to God, and vppon the knowing of him, to yeelde him his due right. Wee ſee howe God is defrauded by men: they robbe him and bereaue him of his honour. And although we haue an infinite number of other vices in vs, and bee blameworthie innumerable wayes: yet the greateſt euill that is in vs, is this trecherie of ours, that to the vttermeſt of our power, wee darken yea and vtterly deface the glory of our God. And yet the verie cauſe why wee were created, is that we ſhoulde giue him his owne, and yeelde him the honour that belongeth vnto him. In this reſpect therefore doeth Moſes tell vs that Gods name muſt bee publiſhed, that al men may indeuour to glorifie him as hee deſerueth. And heere wee ſee alſo to what ende Gods worde is dayly preached vnto vs, and beaten into our eares. It is not to the ende wee ſhoulde but confeſſe the thinges to bee true which are vttered, and in the meane while goe away ſo colde as though wee were no whit moued at the doctrine which wee haue hearde: but that wee ſhoulde bee all of vs inflamed to glorifie our God, and not take his worde to an vncertaine vſe, (for that were a defiling thereof:) but heere the holy Ghoſt ſheweth vs to what ende God will haue his name knowen in this worlde; namely that his praiſe may bee giuen vnto him, according as it is ſaide in the Pſalme, Lorde, after as thy name is in Pſal.48.10. the worlde, ſo alſo be thy praiſes. Yee ſee then howe that when folke reſort to Sermons, they ought to diſpoſe themſelues to the receiuing of the thinges which are tolde them concerning God; that knowing him to be ſuch a one as hee is, they may giue themſelues wholly to the glorifying of him, and that when we haue heard the doctrine whereby God ſheweth himſelfe decked with his moſt excellent vertues, we may bee prouoked thereby to conſider thus with our ſelues: I ſee it is my duetie to inforce my ſelfe to the glorifying of my God. That then is the thing in effect, which we haue to remember vpon this place, where Moſes ſaith that he will call vppon the name of the Lord.

Afterwarde hee exhorteth thoſe whoſe Prophet hee was, to yeelde glorie vnto God. And he ſheweth therewithall, that God will not bee praiſed and commended at our handes without cauſe why: but that wee haue matter to inforce vs thereunto, though no man exhorted vs to it. His ſaying is, *The working of the mightie is perfect* or *whole.* By this title which he giueth vnto God, hee meaneth to ſhewe, that God requireth not that we ſhould knowe but onely his being, ſo as wee ſhould ſtand gaſing at him without the liuely knowledge of his power. True it is that the woorde which Moſes vſeth doeth ſignifie properly *a Rocke*. But the very meaning thereof is, that when wee ſpeake of God, or heare him ſpoken of; it muſt not be alonly to feede ſome fond and idle imaginations, but to make vs vnderſtand that his power is preſent with vs, and that it is ſpread abroad euery where, ſo as wee may reſt vpon him, and well perceiue that we be gouerned by his hand, and ſo knitte vnto him, that we liue in him, and that without him we ſhould periſh, and the worlde bee brought to nought in the twinckling of an eye. Therefore as for them that treat of ſuttle deuices concerning Gods being, and in the meane while doe not edifie men in the faith and feare of him, ne cauſe them to vnderſtande his power: they bee but lightheaded and rouing teachers: they vſe not the ſpeech of the holy Ghoſt. Wherfore let vs mark wel, how Moſes hath ſhewed vs here, not onely ẏ there is a God, but alſo ẏ wee ought to take hold of his power, as which is ſpread abroade euerywhere, filling the whole worlde, inſomuch that euen wee our ſelues are partakers thereof.

Nowe it is ſaide, that Gods woorking is perfect or whole. And afterward he addeth, *that God is faithfull*, there is no fault to bee founde in him, *there is no vnrighteouſneſſe in him, his wayes are ſtraight, hee is iuſt and ſoothfaſt.* And whereto ſerue all theſe thinges? For it might ſeeme that all theſe words were needeleſſe, becauſe the wickedeſt folkes that are, wil confeſſe God to be righteous, and that it were too horrible a blaſphemie to accuſe God of vnrighteouſneſſe. It ſhould ſeeme, that in this place Moſes treateth not of any great matter, when hee ſaieth that Gods workes are perfect, that hee is righteous, that he is faithfull, and that there is no fault to be founde in him. But if wee looke vppon the vnthankfulneſſe of men, wee ſhall eaſily perceiue that Moſes doth not without cauſe in this place maintaine Gods trueth, righteouſneſſe and wiſedome, and all that hee deſerueth to be glorified for. True it is that men will not bee ſo bolde as to belke out their blaſphemies with full mouth, to accuſe God: but yet they wil goe about indirectly to deface the commendation of his goodneſſe, power, and wiſedome, and of all that euer is in him. Firſt of all wee ſee howe men content themſelues with Gods doings. They can wellynough ſay that his workes are perfect and faultleſſe: but in the mean while, which are thoſe works? We muſt come to the ordering of the whole world. The holy ſcripture

Pſal.115.3.

telleth vs that there is not that thing done here below, which is not diſpoſed by the ordinance & hand of God. Nowe wee ſee a great number of ſtraunge things, inſomuch as wee be abaſhed to ſee howe things fall out cleane contrarie to our expectation and deſire, as we thinke. When wee thinke to take our eaſe; beholde, a ſtorme commeth. When wee thinke to feede our ſelues fatte; beholde, God cutteth our pittance ſhort. When we thinke to liue in peace and reſte; beholde, by and by there commeth ſome warre or ſtrife. To be ſhort, both priuately and generally we be toſſed vp and downe among a number of whirlewinds. Yet for al this, we muſt glorifie god, aſſuring our ſelues that his afflicting, his exerciſing, his humbling, his remouing, and his toſſing of vs to & fro after that faſhion, is not without cauſe. Men therefore muſt ſuffer themſelues to be gouerned after that manner by the hande of God, and they muſt glorifie his prouidence, although they haue not their owne deſires and likings. But what ſhall wee doe? Doe wee neuer finde fault with any of Gods doings? Whence come ſo many murmurings? Whence come ſo manie cries and Lamentations, but of this, that men cannot finde in their hearts to frame themſelues to Gods will? What meaneth this? Howe goes the worlde with vs? Men torment themſelues. True it is that if we aske them, How now? Will ye goe to law with God? Thinke yee to get the vpper hande of him? They will ſay it is no part of their thought. But yet muſt wee needes grant, that Gods will is to trie vs after that faſhion, by the diſorder of things in this world, or elſe we muſt needes denie both his iuſtice, and his vprightneſſe, and vtterly bereaue him of all power, and make him an ydol, as all theſe raſcals do which denie Gods prouidence: For they will needes ſhut him vp in heauen, as though he had no regarde of the worlde, ne ordered not all the things that are here beneath. Nowe when men do ſo make an ydoll of God, it is a double blaſpheming of him. And although we attribute vnto him the gouernment and dominion of the world: yet muſt wee not looke to ſee a reaſon of all his doings, or to finde the cauſe why they ſhould be rightfull; and yet muſt we with all lowlines confeſſe them to be faultleſſe. And ſo when we haue once learned this leſſon yͤ Gods workes are perfect; we ſhal haue profited greatly, not only for one day, but alſo for all our life long.

But ſome fantaſticall perſons miſunderſtanding this text, haue troubled themſelues greatly, without reaſon. For they fall to ſcanning; with howe can Moſes ſay that Gods workes are perfect, conſidering the great number of defaultes which are to bee ſeene in this worlde? For one is blinke eyed, another is lame, the thirde is croopleſhouldred, another hath but one hand and another wants a legge. Alſo we ſee trees wherein there is much amiſſe: and to be ſhort, we ſee diuerſe creatures which want their perfection in many things. And how is it then ſaid, that Gods works are perfect? Such reaſoning is too beaſtly. For the meaning of Moſes is no more but this, that we muſt glorifie God in all his doings, confeſſing that all thinges are ordered by good reaſon, and by wonderfull righteouſneſſe and wiſedome; and that when we haue ſearched them throughly, wee ſhall finde that men ſhalbe confounded euen in the thinges which they woulde needs incounter & ſet themſelues againſt. To be ſhort we muſt apply hereunto the doctrine of S. Paul (which he alleadgeth to another purpoſe, but yet it wil ſerue wel to this text) namely that

1.Cor.1.25.

Gods fooliſhneſſe is wiſer than all the wiſedome of the world. S. Paul ſpeaketh there indeede of the Goſpel: but yet is that ſaying verie true in generall. For when thinges go out of order and cleane arſiuerſie, and we perceiue not wherefore God dealeth after that faſhion, but (to our ſeeming) hee dealeth vnaduiſedly: we muſt vnderſtand that in the things which to vs ſeeme folly, that is to ſay, wherin Gods wiſedome appeareth not, there is wiſedome ynough to confounde vs, and therefore wee muſt not turne againe with preſumption and ouerweening, to replie; This ſeemes not good to me: but we muſt ſtoope, and imbrace Gods doings quietly. And herein we ſee yͤ rage of theſe raſcals, which babble nowadayes againſt all thinges that exceede their capacitie. If a man ſpeake of Gods eternall election, & ſay he hath choſen whom he thought good through his owne freebeſtowed goodnes, and alſo that he reiecteth whom hee liſteth: and moreouer, that he diſpoſeth al things that are done in yͤ worlde, and holdeth the reines of the bridle ſecretely, (ſo as although men ouerſhoote themſelues in their naughtineſſe, and that the diuell alſo doe ſtrein himſelf to make a hotchpotch of al things as it were in ſpite of God: yet notwithſtanding God ouerruleth al, cauſing euen the diuel himſelfe in deſpite of his teeth, to execute the things that he hath decreed; and that men (bee they neuer ſo ſtubborn againſt him,) cannot but do that which he hath determined:) Theſe raſcals glorying in themſelues do ſay; O, I conceiue not that. And thou beaſt, what art thou? If all the greateſt doctors of yͤ world ſhold lay their heads together, they coulde not attaine to the vnderſtanding thereof. And I make no reckening of ſome hypocrits which diſguiſe themſelues, and counterfait themſelues to be doctors in deſpite of nature: but if yͤ Angels of heauen ſhold come, yet ſhould they be faine to reuerence the wonderfull ſecrets of God. Wee ſee howe the Cherubins are deſcribed vnto vs in Eſay, namely how they ſtretch out their winges to hide their faces, becauſe they be not able to comprehende the infinite maieſtie of God. And yet for al that, vnder pretence that our braine conceiueth not the full meaſure of the things which the ſcripture telleth vs concerning God; wee reiect it. Thus we ſee yet better, how it is not for nought that Moſes ſaide that the workes of the mightie are perfect, but [that it ſerueth] to make vs to tremble before the maieſtie of God, and by acknowledging that he is almightie, to refraine frõ incountring him by ſaying, Why doth he ſo? Or why willeth he this or that? Nay let vs ſimply confeſſe that his works are perfect, namely in wiſedome, in righteouſnes, and in goodnes, ſo as there is no fault to be founde in any of al his workes. Eſa.6.2.

Now hee addeth, *that all his wayes are righteouſneſſe, that God is true, without wickedneſſe, iuſt, and vpright.* Whereas he ſaieth that all his wayes are righteouſnes, it is a more larger expounding of that which he had ſaid afore. For by a ſimilitude this worde *Way*, is taken for all manner of doings. And heerein Moſes ſheweth vs, that it is not ynough to haue glorified God in ſome part or portion, but that wee muſt confeſſe without exception, that hee is the welſpring of all wiſedome, of all power, of all goodneſſe, and of all iuſtice. We ſhall ſee ſome which will be contented to glorifie God, ſo long as things fall out to their lyking: but if God deale with them to their miſliking, they alter their ſpeech, and ſpit out their venim againſt him. See howe men woulde part ſtakes with God, reſeruing to themſelues the libertie (or rather the diueliſh malapeartneſſe) to freate and fume at God when hee doeth not as they woulde wiſh, and as ſeemeth good to their opinion. For this cauſe Moſes ſaieth, that all Gods wayes are righteouſnes, that is to ſay, that although God as now remoue things eft at one ſide and eft a tother, and wee ſee great backturnings and chaunges, and he ſeemeth to be minded to turn yͤ worlde vpſidedowne: yet notwithſtanding he for his part knoweth why he doeth ſo. True it is that we ſhalbe abaſhed at it, and the rudeneſſe and frailty of our vnderſtanding ſuffereth vs not to conceiue Gods wonderfull counſailes: they bee too deepe a gulfe for vs: but yet doth God alwayes keepe a meaſurable and euen hande in all his doings. Then is it not any one or two deedes wherein GOD ſheweth his righteouſneſſe, but in the whole gouernement of the worlde. Lo to what point we muſt come.

Moreouer Moſes doth expreſly call him *true*. And that is to bee referred to the doctrine, to the ende that men ſhould learne to receiue that which is ſaide and ſet downe vnto them in the name of God. And indeede, vntill ſuch time as we knowe God to bee true, we can neuer taſt of his righteouſneſſe nor of his goodneſſe: or if we haue any taſt thereof, yet can we not be ſure and fully reſolued of it. For proofe hereof, we neuer vnderſtande Gods iuſtice, wiſedome, goodneſſe, or any other of his vertues, but by his worde. True it is that wee haue experience of them: and God ſheweth himſelfe ſufficiently both aboue and beneath, that hee might bee glorified at our handes, at leaſtwiſe if wee had eyes and eares to ſee and heare. But what? Such is our ſlothfulneſſe, that we wote not howe to benefite our ſelues by the great number of the recordes wherein God maketh his glorie to ſhine forth. His worde therefore muſt goe ioyntly with it: for if wee bee not taught at his mouth, wee ſhall neuer attaine vnto him, no nor come any thing neere him. But if wee doubt of Gods worde, and haue but an opinion of it, as who woulde ſay the thinges that are conteined in it haue ſome reaſon, but yet wee doe but coniecture ſo: what a thing were it? What certaintie ſhoulde wee haue of God or of any of all his vertues, for the which hee is to bee glorified? Wee ſhall bee always in a mammering. And ſo wee ſee of what importance this ſaying is, where Moſes termeth God *True*. For hee woulde haue vs to learne to yeelde ſuch authoritie to his worde, as it may benefite vs, and that as ſoone as wee heare God ſpeake, wee ſhoulde bee fully reſolued and perſwaded, that wee ſhall not bee diſappointed in following all that hee ſaieth to vs, and in beleeuing the ſame. By this meane then wee may conſider all Gods workes, ſo as wee ſhall haue a lampe to guide vs and to giue vs light, that wee may not runne reeling in continuall doubtfulneſſe. But foraſmuch as Gods worde is the infallible trueth to vs, wee ſhall haue a ſtayed iudgement concerning the thinges that are ſaide vnto vs, and wee ſhall truſt in God, not as the heatheniſh ſort doe, who bee ſhaken from it out of hande, becauſe there is no ſteadineſſe of faith in them: but wee ſhall haue a good ſtaffe to ſtande by, ſo as Gods trueth ſhall fence vs againſt all diſtruſt, againſt all grudging and againſt all thinges that may turne vs from the glorifying of him. And therewithall wee ſhall alſo haue a good foundation of our ſaluation, when wee once knowe that God is *True*. For if wee imbrace not the thinges that God doeth, what will become of vs? There is nothing but damnation in men, and the more they truſt in themſelues, the more muſt they needes bee confounded. Then can wee not conceiue any hope of ſaluation, vnleſſe wee bee well aſſured that God foadeth vs not with wordes without effect: but that wee knowe him to bee faithfull and truſtie, ſo as if wee haue but a worde of his mouth, it is as good as if our ſaluation were already ſhewed.

And thereuppon hee ſaieth further, *that there is no wickedneſſe in him*, [but] *that hee is iuſt and faithfull*. It ſhold ſeeme yͭ Moſes ſpeaketh too coldly of God in this place, in ſaying, There is no wickedneſſe in him. For who doubts of that? Nay, it is to cut off all the wicked imaginations that men deuiſe, when they be not helde in awe ſo as they may yeeld to conclude that God is faithfull, good, and iuſt, yea and voide of vnfaithfulneſſe. And who accuſeth him thereof? But yet wee ſee howe that euen the holy Prophets were driuen to reſiſt thoſe temptations. Ier. 12.1. Lorde I knowe that thou art iuſt, ſaieth Ieremie. Abac. 1.13. As much doeth Abacucke, and they crie out ſo of purpoſe to ſhewe that they bee troubled with many incumberanees, when they ſee things ſo out of order in the worlde. There then wee ſee howe they had eaſily beene caried away to blaſpheme God, and to deeme ſome vnrighteouſneſſe to bee in him, if they had not beene reſtrained. And ſo wee ſee; that it is not without cauſe, that Moſes ſaieth heere: that *God is true & without wickedneſſe*. There is nothing in him (ſaieth hee) but the ſame is praiſe worthie; inſomuch that when wee ſpeake of his trueth and righteouſneſſe, we muſt exclude all wiſedome & power of man. And to be ſhort, he muſt be praiſed without exception and not after the common manner of men. And that is the cauſe that when Gods word is ſpoken of in the Pſalme, it is Pſal. 12.7. ſaide to be like ſiluer tried ſeuentimes in the fire after it hath beene molten and all the droſſe of it taken quite and cleane from it. At the firſt ſight this ſimilitude may ſeeme to vs to bee but colde. But let vs looke a little vppon our ſelues, and we ſhall finde that our wits doe tickle vs inceſſantly; inſomuch that when wee haue confeſſed God (yea euen without diſſimulation) to be true: yet when wee come to his promiſes, euermore we will haue ſome reply, and we will neuer be contented in our minds, nor well at reſt. For we haue a leawdnes which holdeth vs back, and hindereth vs that wee cannot glorifie God as becommeth vs. So then let vs marke, that Moſes doth not heere without cauſe exclude all iniquitie: to the ende that when we ſpeake of God and of any of all his vertues, wee ſhoulde doe it with ſuch reuerence and admiration, as wee may not onely not accuſe him of any vnfaithfulneſſe, and confeſſe that wee perceiue not any vice in him: but alſo be throughly perſwaded and reſolued, that there is ſuch perfection in him, as that there remaineth no more for vs to doe, but onely to worſhip him, yea euen though we conceiue not the highneſſe that is hidden from vs.

Nowe let vs caſt our ſelues downe before the maieſtie of our good God with acknowledgement of our faults, praying him to take from vs al hardneſſe and ſtubbornnes, and to frame vs to the obeying of him, that the preaching of his worde vnto vs may not bee in vaine, but that it may profite vs, ſo as wee may become good ground, and ſerue in ſuch wiſe to the glorie of our God, as that the labour and paine which he ſhall haue beſtowed vpon vs, may not be in vaine, but that all may redounde to the full eſtabliſhing of his kingdom. And moreouer that ſeeing it pleaſeth him that our ſaluation ſhould be matched with his glorie, he will alſo ſo further the ſame, as wee may bee incouraged by that meanes to giue our ſelues more and more vnto him. That it may pleaſe him to grant this grace, not onely to vs, but alſo to all people and nations of the earth &c.

On Friday the viij. of May, 1556.

The CLXXIX. Sermon which is the ſecond vpon the two & thirtith Chapter.

5 They haue corrupted themſelues before him by their ſinne: euen they that are not his children, but a froward and wicked generation.

6 Doeſt thou reward the Lorde ſo, O thou fooliſh and vnwiſe generation? Is not he thy father, and thine owner, is it not hee that hath made thee and faſhioned thee?

7 Remember the time paſt, conſider the yeares of ſo many generations. Aske thy father, and hee will ſhewe thee: inquire of thine elders, and they will tell thee.

Yeſterday wee ſawe why Moſes ſpeaketh here expreſly of Gods truth. For men had neede to be aſſured of Gods promiſes, that they may holde themſelues to them and reſt vpon them: and alſo to know that his worde is the rule of all perfection, that they may receiue it with all reuerence. And it is ſaide expreſly, that there is no vnrighteouſneſſe in him, to the ende that men ſhould learne, not to meaſure him by their owne ſcantling as they be wont to doe. For in aſmuch as we comprehend not Gods iuſtice, wee drawe it downe to ours, by meanes whereof wee abace his maieſty too much. Therfore if we will yeelde God his due honor, we muſt ſeparate him frō all his creatures: wee muſt not imagine aught of him after our owne fancie, nor compare him to mortall men: for in ſo doing wee ſhall diminiſh his glory too much. But now Moſes addeth, *that the children of Iſrael had corrupted themſelues towards him.* Nowe if we ioyne theſe two ſayings together, to wit, That God is true, iuſt, and vpright, ſo as his workes are perfect, and alſo that the people of Iſrael were marde out of hande: thereby wee ſhall the better ſee howe deteſtable that people was for their vnthankfulneſſe. For Gods trueth and righteouſneſſe ſhine forth the brighter, in that they could not holde themſelues to him. Beholde, God choſe the children of Abraham. But let vs ſee what he was. To bee ſhort, had the children of Iſrael ſticked to him, and continued in the vnion which hee hadde appointed and called them vnto, it had beene to their higheſt welfare, yea and their whole happineſſe and glorie. But they turned from God and fell away from him; and therfore muſt it not needs be that they were mad, and caryed away with a diueliſh rage, accordingly as he ſaith Ier.2.13. in Ieremy, They haue forſaké me, euen me who am the fountaine of liuing water? Nowe then wee ſee better the meaning of Moſes, for hee ſhewed heretofore the goodneſſe, iuſtice, and righteouſneſſe of God, to the ende that the people ſhoulde haue the leſſe excuſe, and their ſin be knowen to be the more heynous, in that they coulde not abide that God ſhoulde holde them ſtill for his inheritance. But (as I haue ſaid alreadie) if we be ſeparated from God, we bee as it were in the bottome of the dungeon of all miſchiefe; whereas if we be knit vnto him, wee can want nothing. Seeing then that the caſe ſtandeth ſo with men when they cut themſelues off, yea & baniſh themſelues out of Gods kingdome after he hath gathered them to him, and ſhewed himſelf willing to take them to be of his houſholde: worthily bee they to be condemned for folk voide of wit and reaſon, and their vnthankfulnes is too too deteſtable.

And that is the cauſe why Moſes ſpeaketh ſo roughly, ſaying: *They haue marred themſelues towards him:* yea but they were ſuch as be no more his children. It is certaine that God had choſen Abrahams linage, with condition to bee father to them all. And therefore hee ſaieth by Ezec,16.20. his Prophet Ezechiel, that the children which came of them, were begotten vnto him. True it is that all men in generall are called Gods children: but yet that title belongeth alonely by priuiledge to thoſe that be of his church. Let vs marke well then, that in reſpect of adoption, the children of Iſrael ought to haue beene held and auowed for the children of God. But it is ſaide here, that they were not ſo: for they were growen out of kinde, accordingly alſo as God complaineth by his Prophet that their fathers dealt vnfaithfully with him, for they had begotten ſtrange children, yͤ is to ſay, they had ſo corrupted themſelues, yͤ there was no more ſoundneſſe in them, neither belonged they at all to the houſe of Abraham, but had ſo wrapped themſelues in the wickedneſſe of their forefathers, that God ſawe not any thing in them belonging vnto him. Nowe then we ſee, to what purpoſe Moſes ſaide that they had marred themſelues, meaning thoſe that are not Gods children, whom he blameth for their depriuing and diſappointing of themſelues through their own malice, of the ineſtimable benefite and honour which God had beſtowed vppon them. For what a thing is it that wee may bee ſo bolde as to call vppon God, as our Father, and reſort vnto him familiarly, and to be receiued as his children? And euen ſo was it with the lynage of Abraham: but they continued not in the poſſeſſion thereof. Who was to bee blamed for that? It was becauſe they yeelded not to God the honor due to their father, as he himſelfe complaineth by his Prophet Malachie, ſaying: If I be your father, Mal.1.6. where is the honour which yee owe vnto me? But all their ſeeking was to hold themſelues aloofe from God. Ye ſee then how they renounced that manner of kinred, which God had ſet among them; and therefore it is not without cauſe that Moſes vpbraideth them, that they were become ſtraungers. True it is that they vaunt themſelues to be Gods children: but by Eſa.53.7. what right? Only by ſtabliſhing yͤ fleſhly kinred. And we ſee alſo how the Prophet Ezechiel ſaith vnto them, What? Are you of the linage of Iſrael? Ezech.36.3. Hence yee harlots birds. Was not your father a Chananite, and your mother a Iebuſite? Nowe it is certaine that as touching the fleſhe, they came not of yͤ people of Chanaan, nor yet of the Iebuſites: but the Prophet doeth them to vnderſtande, that they had no more to doe with the holy linage, but had cut themſelues off from it as rotten members.

Nowe let vs nowadayes bee well aduiſed, and ſeeing that God hauing called vs to him, hath giuen vs the marke of his free beſtowed adoption, that is to ſay baptiſme, wherby he doth vs to wit that wee bee reckened for members of Ieſus Chriſt, and be as it were graffed into his bodie: let vs bee well aduiſed I ſay, that wee boaſt not thereof in vaine. For if wee deſpiſe God in liuing vndiſcreetely, and falſifie the faith that we haue plighted vnto him: let vs not thinke that he is ſo bounde vnto vs, but that hee may forſake vs, and that for al our boaſting of our ſelues to be his children, he will tell vs plainely (as wee heare in this place,) that wee belong not vnto him at all, but that wee bee vtter ſtraungers vnto him. For (as ſaieth Sainct Paul) all that come of Abrahams linage are not accounted his Rom.9.7.8. ſeede, that is to ſay, they bee not ſpirituall children. To be ſhort, will we haue God to auowe vs for his children? Let vs beware that wee walke in his feare and loue. At a worde, let vs take him for our father, and ſhewe it by our deedes: and then ſhall wee be acknowledged to bee his children. But if hee ſee vs growe out of kinde, hee muſt needes tell vs that ſeeing wee haue not kept our faith and troath towardes him, hee will haue no company with vs. For what a bondage were it, if God ſhoulde take vs for his children, and in the meane while be ſcorned & miſuſed among vs, ſo as his grace ſhoulde bee troden vnder foote, and his holy name defiled? Should God then mingle himſelfe with our filth and vncleaneſſe, when wee be ſo full of vnbeliefe? No: For then ſhould hee renounce his owne nature, which is vnpoſſible.

Now it is ſayd here, *They marred themſelues towardes him*. The worde that Moſes vſeth, betokeneth to deſtroy, corrupt, or marre. And ſome expounde it, that the children of Iſrael did not any harme vnto God in their turning away vnto wickedneſſe: as in very deede hee ſhoulde receiue no harme at all, though wee were all become ſtraungers vnto him. Can wee aduantage him any whit? What benefit ſhall hee receiue at our handes? When men turne away from God, hee is neither hindered nor furthered thereby; for hee continueth euermore at one ſtay, without increaſing or diminiſhing. This then was a reproofe which Moſes gaue to the whole people, as if he ſhould ſay, Go to, you haue followed your owne luſtes, you haue made no reckoning of your God, and what will be the ende of it? In deede hee will forſake you, but his ſo doing is not for any harme that hee ſhall haue receiued by it: What paſſeth hee for that? Shall not all turne to your owne confuſion? This leſſon deſerueth to bee wel marked: For it is good to humble men, by making them to vnderſtand that God may euer forbeare them well enough, and that his ſeeking of them is for their benefite and welfare, without regarde of himſelfe. But wee may take this ſaying of Moſes more playnely, that they had marred themſelues towardes him, becauſe their true ſoundnes had bin to haue liued in obedience towardes the Lawe. That is the meane wherby men may abide in their ſtate, I meane them whom God hath called to him. And I ſpeake not of the corrupted ſtate as it is in Adam, and as wee bring it from our mothers wombe: but of our ſtate when God hath repayred vs after his owne image. That is the meane for vs to perſiſt, namely by holding our ſelues to the pureneſſe of his worde, without ſwaruing to the right hand or to the left. But if we leaue the doctrine of God, by and by we be corrupted and mard. Therefore when men turne away from the pure and playne worde of God; it is an infecting and corrupting of themſelues, ſuch as alwayes leadeth them to death.

And hee expreſly addeth: *in their ſpottes*. This ſaying importeth a reproch lykewiſe; inſomuch as it might bee ſayd, that they had caſt themſelues wilfully into leawdneſſe, of purpoſe to ſhame themſelues. Now wee knowe how it is ſayd in Exodus, that God was (as yee would ſay) the honor of his people. For when wee be vnder the protection of our God, there is as a royall Crowne vppon our head: and it is a greater honor, than if wee had all the dignities in the worlde. And for the ſame cauſe alſo dooth Moſes ſay, that this people became ſhameleſſe in giuing themſelues to idolatrie and ſuperſtition, and diſcouered their owne filthyneſſe as a man that ſheweth his owne ſhame. So then, it may well bee taken that the people ouerthrew themſelues in their vncleanneſſe, becauſe they did caſt themſelues into reproche and infamie, by forſaking their God, yea euen that God of theirs whome onely they were bound to glorify. But by the way by this worde *Spottes* or *vncleanes*, Moſes meant all the wicked luſtes which cauſed the people to ouerſhoote themſelues. As if he ſhoulde ſay, Beholde, your God had ſhewed you the faſhiō and mean to make your ſelues cleane, that you might haue bin a holy people. For the Lawe ſerued to haue withdrawen you from all the defilementes of the world; ſo as by keeping of that rule, ye ſhould haue continued vnder his obedience. And what haue yee done now? Yee haue vnhallowed the Law of God, yea euen lyke as a Swine ſhould wallowe himſelfe in the myre and dyrt. The thing then which you haue gayned by forſaking your God, is that your luſtes haue ſo caryed you away, ẏ you haue gone and plunged your ſelues in doung, yea euen with the vtter renouncing of the honor which God had beſtowed vppon you.

Exod.32.28
Pſal.47 5.

Hee addeth *That they were a frowarde and curſed generation*. And it ſerueth to expreſſe yet better, that although God had preuented them with his grace, & giuen them occaſion to continew ſtill with him: yet they coulde not haue that ſtedfaſtneſſe. And what ſhould a man ſay, ſeeing them ſo vnconſtant, but that they were a frowarde generation? For if other men to whome God ſhewed not the lyke grace, were to be condemned iuſtly, if they ſhoulde haue dealt ſo wickedly: are not thoſe dubble guiltie which being adopted by God, and being ayded and ſuccoured ſo many wayes by him, had neuertheleſſe ſo farre ouerſhot themſelues, as to forſake him and diſclaime him vtterly? And therefore let vs marke that Moſes beholding the ouergreat vnthankfulneſſe of that people, did ſo aggrauate their offence in reſpect thereof, that hee vtterly diſgradeth them in this place. Nowe muſt we apply this to ourſelues. For according as God hath vttered the treaſures of his goodneſſe towardes vs, ſo much the more be wee bound and beholden vnto him. And if we falſify our faith, curſed are we: for our enormitie is the more accurſed, and our iniquitie is the greeuouſer both before the Angels, and before all mortal creatures. And therefore let vs ſo walke in the feare of our Lorde, ſith it hath pleaſed him to take vs for his inheritance, that wee take not vppon vs that title in vaine, leaſt wee become lyke vnto them which are falne away from him.

Heereuppon Moſes maketh an other complaint more ſharpe and bitter. *Thou fooliſh people*, (ſayth he) *wilt thou needes requite the Lorde ſo?* Here Moſes toucheth the vnthankfulnes of the people as it were with his finger, vnder the word *Requite*. For he falleth to vpbraiding them with the benefites which God had beſtowed vppon the children of Abraham. But as God is no nigard, ſo dooth hee neuer caſt vs in the teeth with the benefites which we haue receiued at his hand, vnleſſe hee be inforced thereto by our abuſing of them, for that hee ſeeth them vnhallowed and defiled by our leawdneſſe, accordingly alſo as Saint Iames ſpeaketh thereof, ſaying that God giueth all thinges bountifully, and that he is of ſuch liberalitie, that he neuer ceaſeth to

Iames.1.5.

giue, yea euen without vpbraiding. Hee is not lyke mortall men which haue a certaine repining in their giuing, or which grudge when a man commeth to them the ſecond time, ſaying, What? Ought not that which I haue done for you already to ſuffice you? God (ſaith hee) is none ſuch. For the more that wee be bound vnto him, the more is he willing to increace his gratious giftes dayly. Yea, but when hee ſeeth them misbeſtowed, & that we turne them cleane contrarie to his intent & purpoſe: then holdeth he his hand, thẽ reſtraineth he the good that he had done vnto vs, then blameth he vs, and putteth vs in minde of them to make vs aſhamed. And therefore let vs looke well vppon this text [where it is ſaid,] *Thou fooliſh & witleſſe people, doeſt thou requite thy God thus?* Accordingly alſo as hee ſayth by his Prophet Ieremie, er.2.5. My people what haue I done to you, ſaith hee? If thou haſt any thing to ſay againſt me, alledge it, and thou ſhalt finde that I haue not failed at any time, to giue thee cauſe to followe me and to cleaue vnto me. For I haue powred all good thinges vppon thee, and yet notwithſtanding thou haſt bin ſo beaſtly as to forſake me. Let vs mark I ſay that here Moſes ſpeaketh not of Gods common giftes, which hee beſtoweth vppon all men indifferently: but of the ſpeciall giftes, which the people of Iſraell had receiued aboue all other nations. If GOD liſt to vpbraid all mankinde in generall, he may wel doe it if he ſay no more but, Who is he that created and ſhaped you? Who is he that hath giuen you wit and reaſon? Who is hee that maketh the Sunne to ſhine vppon you, and the earth to yeelde you fruite? God therefore hath largely wherewith to vpbraide all men for the good which he hath done them, to ſhewe that they be too too blame worthie, if they doe not honor and ſerue him. For euen the very knowledge and light which God giueth vnto vs, dooth vs to vnderſtand, that we liue at his coſt, that wee be guided by his power, and that it is hee which dooth both clothe and feede vs: to the intent that his ſo dooing ſhould make vs to put our truſt in him, and to commit the whole ſtate of our lyfe vnto him, thereby to ſhewe that hee is our ſoueraine, and that we be vnder his gouernment; and therefore that wee be to be condemned whẽ we rebel againſt him. So then, God might well vpbraid all men in cõmon: but here hee ſpeaketh to thoſe whome he had adopted. And ẏ is the cauſe why he treateth peculiarly of the benefites which he had done to them as to his Church and peculiar children.

But before wee come to that point, let vs marke how Moſes in this place dooth iuſtly call them *fooliſh and witleſſe people.* True it is that all men may well bee condemned of folly lykewiſe, when they ſerue not God. For if wee haue any vnderſtanding, ought wee not of right to imploy it to the knowing of him who hath created and formed vs? Can men boaſt themſelues to bee wiſe, if they knowe not who hath ſet them in the worlde, or who mainteineth and preſerueth them? If on the other ſide they haue any reaſon, is it not a raging madneſſ, when they knowe not the principall point of their whole lyfe? Now foraſmuch as God came neere to the people of Iſraell, it muſt needes bee that they were bewitched, ſeeing they were not touched with ſo many and ſo euident recordes of Gods goodneſſe: I ſay it was more than beaſtly blockiſhneſſe. For as for the heathen and infidels, in deede they be vnexcuſable in that they knew not God, who ſheweth himſelfe to them in the whole creation of the world. But as for the Iewes, who had the Lawe, and had ſeene ſo many miracles, and finally had bin conuerſant with the Lorde, who came downe to them, (I ſpeake after the manner of the holy ſcripture, for wee know that God ſhifteth not from place to place, but is infinite and filleth all places,) and applyed himſelfe to their rudeneſſe, inſomuch as he verifyed the thing which he ſo often proteſteth, namely, I will dwell among you and abide with Exod.25.8. you: [they were much more vnexcuſable.] And therefore, when notwithſtanding all this, they turned away from him and forgat him, yea and ſpited him as though they had conſpired together to prouoke his vengeance by doing againſt him all the outrages that they coulde: muſt it not needes bee an horrible ignorance, yea and a very brutiſhneſſe, vtterly voyd of all witte and reaſon? Wherefore let vs marke, that our true wiſedome is to honor God. And in that re- Prou.28.26 ſpect is it ſayd, The fooliſh man dwelleth in his owne heart, and hath no lyfe in him. True it is that the heathen folke thought themſelues fine witted and of abilitie, when they deſpiſed God and thought to beguile him by their ſuttleties, as wee ſee theſe courtiers & all the braue laddes of the worlde doe nowadayes, and as wee ſee theſe fineheaded fellowes doe, which ſkoffe at all religion. To their owne ſeeming they bee men of great wiſedome, at leaſtwiſe when they haue digged ſo deepe, that (in their owne opinion) God cannot ſpy them out. Yet notwithſtanding, we may wel call them fooles, and not without cauſe dooth the holy Ghoſt terme them ſo. For why? Our very wiſedome Prou.1.7. and the chiefe point thereof, is to feare GOD, ſaith the holy ſcripture. And in deede, euen nature ought to teach vs that. For what is a man, when hee knowes not whether hee was ſhaped by haphazard, whether there bee a God that created him, or if he be as a blinde wretch, not knowing who is his God, that hee may worſhip him and make an oblation and ſacrifice of his lyfe vnto him? Muſt it not needes bee that a man is worſe than all the brute beaſtes in the worlde, when hee is become ſo brutiſhe, or rather falne into ſuch blockiſhneſſe? Yes verily. Then let vs beare in minde the wordes that Moſes vſeth here, and let vs wey them as they be worthie, that wee may apply our indeuour to the ſeruing of our God, knowing that the hauing of that poynt is our true wiſedome, and that all other thinges are but appendantes, and that by and by wee runne aſtray as ſoone as wee haue left the pure doctrine: Inſomuch that although the whole worlde commend vs, and clap their handes at vs, and wee ſeeme to bee excellent in all reſpectes: yet in very deede wee be witleſſe, and it were better for vs a thowſand times to be frantike, yea and ſtarke mad, than to haue wit and reaſon (to all lykelihood) after that ſort, and to be without any knowledge of our God.

But now let vs come to the contentes of the accuſation and proces that Moſes maketh here: *Is not he thy father* (ſaith he) *which poſſeſſeth thee? Hath not hee made thee? Is it not he that hath ſhaped thee?* Whereas he calleth God the father of the children of Abraham; I haue tolde you already that his calling of thẽ ſo, is but in reſpect of adoption, becauſe they had bin choſen to be Gods flocke & his Church. True it is that foraſmuch as we beare the image of God, wee bee his children euen by nature. But foraſmuch as wee be confounded in Adam, and Gods image was defaced in vs: we deſerue not that title, wee be vtterly bereft thereof. Therefore we muſt be faine to begin againe at this point, namely at his calling of vs back againe vnto him, ſo that although we were cut off from his houſhold, yet hee reacheth vs his hand, and of his own mercie taketh vs to be of his houſhold againe. This did hee to the linage of Abraham. For of his own freegoodnes Gen.17.7. he made him this promiſe, I wil be thy God and the God of thy ſeede after thee. Thus ye ſee by what title the Iewes might clayme God for their father. It was not for that they were better worthy of it than other men, it was not for that they had atteined ſuch nobilitie by their deſerts, or for that they had purchaſed it by their owne policie, or for that they had gotten it by any other way or mean [of their own:] but for yͤ God had called them to it, as we haue ſeene heretofore. And ſo much the leſſe excuſe had they, whẽ they turned away from him, and lifted vp their hornes againſt him. For it is an ineſtimable benefite for vs to haue God to our father. Becauſe that therein we be made fellowes with the Angels, who are lykewiſe called the childrẽ of God, in reſpect that they be members of our Lord Ieſus Chriſt. Seeing that God hath called vs to the fellowſhip of the Angels, to be their brethren & companions; what a leawdneſſe were it to make our ſelues vnderlinges to the diuels, & to ſubmit our ſelues vnto their bondes and tyranny? What a dealing were it that I being made a companiõ to the Angels of heauen, ſhould take the diuel for my Lord & king? What a choyce were that? Were I not worſe than mad? So then, let vs mark well, that when as Moſes dooth here call God the father of the Iſraelites, it is to inhaunce their vnthankfulneſſe the more, and to ſhewe their leawdneſſe the playnlyer. [As if he ſhould ſay,] Conſider your former ſtate. For God had aduaũced you wonderfully high, and you haue wilfully caſt your ſelues downe to the bottom of hell. After which maner he vpbraideth the king of Babi-
Eſa,14.12. lon, that he had bin as the morning ſtarre: and now behold (ſaith he) thou art in the bottom of
Pſal.82,6. hell. True it is alſo that God calleth kinges his children, & lykewiſe all Princes and Magiſtrats. But if we compare them with the childrẽ of the Church, and with the flocke of our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt: ſurely Gods calling of vs to the knowing of him, and his marking of vs out to aly himſelfe vnto vs, dooth farre ſurmount all the kingdomes and Empyres of the world. And therefore it is certaine that when men turne away from their aliance with God; it is all one as if they forſooke heauen to goe to the bottome of hell. For (as I haue ſayd afore) they cannot away with the company of the Angels, but will needes goe to ſubmit themſelues in bondage to the diuels.

And according hereunto Moſes addeth, *that God had poſſeſſed that people*, as he termeth them his heritage. Whereby he doth vs to vnderſtand (as he will declare afterward) that God meant to haue held that people as his owne houſhold, ſuffering the reſt of the world to wander away & to become ſtraungers vnto him, whereas his wil was to haue the people of Iſraell as people familiar and well acquainted with himſelfe. According whereunto he addeth, *It is he that hath created thee, it is he that hath ſhaped thee.* And this creation is not the ſame that belongeth to all men and to all the childrẽ of Adam: but it is the ſame that is ſpoken of in the hundreth Pſalme. It is he that made vs, and not we our ſelues). And it is a Pſal.100.3. very common ſpeech in the holy ſcripture, to ſay that God hath created and faſhioned his Church. This is a people whom I my ſelfe haue created, and they ſhall ſet forth my prayſe ſaith Eſa,43.7. he, in the three and fourtith of Eſay. But it were needeleſſe to alledge many places, for all the ſcripture is full of them. And it is a notable point of doctrine, that God declareth vs to bee newe creatures, at ſuch time as he chooſeth vs to him- Eph.2.10. ſelfe. True it is that wee be greatly bound vnto him, for vouchſafing to ſet vs in this world. For although he had made vs but brute beaſtes, yet were it a great thing that we might bee counted the worke of his handes. But it was not his will that wee ſhoulde bee Aſſes or Horſes: it was his will that wee ſhoulde bee reaſonable creatures. This is ſo high a preheminence, that wee cannot commende it ſufficiently. Yet is that nothing, in compariſon of his calling of vs to the faith. Inſomuch that when hee telleth vs that hee will take vs to bee of his Church, hee dooth after a ſorte forget his former creating and ſayth: that he giueth vs a farre other thing than to haue bin mortal men, which is nothing in compariſon to bee of his Church. And this ſerueth to humble vs, to the intent we ſhould not thinke our ſelues to bee come to the faith by our owne power, but acknowledge the ſame to be the gift of God, leaſt we ſhold vſurpe the title of the creator, by imagining our ſelues to haue gotten faith by our owne abilitie, as the Papiſtes doe, who ſay that although they cannot doe any thing but through the grace of God, yet doe they prepare and diſpoſe themſelues thereto aforehand. Againe, they haue a kinde of concurrence, or running together, wherethrough they be as companions with GOD, ſo as they worke together with his grace, or elſe doe ſo aunſwere thereunto, that Gods grace dooth nothing but by halues. Loe at what poynt the Papiſtes are: and by that reaſon they ſhould be halfe their owne creators. For I haue declared already, (and the very truth is ſo), that it is a farre greater thing for vs to be counted of the Church, than of the common kinde of men: for it is a farre nobler creation to bee the children of God, than to be the children of Adam. Yet notwithſtanding, the Papiſtes doe chalenge the one halfe thereof to themſelues, ſaying that they diſpoſe themſelues to it by their owne freewill, and that they deſerue grace at Gods hand, and alſo that they worke together therewithall. By which reaſon, the one halfe of this creation, which is the excellenteſt, ſhall belong to men. And what a treacherie were that? Therefore when wee heare that it is God that made vs, Pſal.100.3. and not wee our ſelues; let vs not make account of our ſelues nor be puffed vp with the winde of preſumption, which ſerueth to no purpoſe but to make vs to ſwell. Let vs vnderſtand then that we haue nothing of our owne, but that all is Gods, in that it hath pleaſed him to call vs to his word, it is not we. A man might thinke it ſtraunge why it ſhould be ſayd, it is not wee that haue created our ſelues: for there is none of vs al but knoweth it and confeſſeth it. But if we haue an eye to the fond and diueliſh ouerweening wherewith men are beſotted: we ſhall ſee that this kinde of ſpeach is not ſuperfluous, but that the holy ghoſt meant to exclude all ſuch fooliſh imaginations, to the intent that men ſhould not reſerue aught to themſelues, but yeeld fully vnto God, that which is belonging vnto him. And that is the cauſe alſo why S. Paul ſaith in the ſecond Chap- Eph.2.10. ter to the Epheſians; We be his workemanſhip, for he hath created vs to good workes, namely which he hath prepared for vs before wee were borne. If men think themſelues to be ÿ founders of their owne good woorkes, yea or euen of their good thoughtes; they deceiue themſelues ſore. God had prepared all thoſe thinges aforehand in his treaſures ſaith S. Paul, and now hee hath put them into vs. And why? For we be his workmanſhip, it hath pleaſed him to faſhion vs to another vſe. Thus yee ſee how men are beaten downe, and how God ſheweth that hee himſelfe alone is to haue the honor of the diſpoſing and preparing of them. And ſo in this text whereas it is ſayd, It is hee that hath created thee and faſhioned thee: it is becauſe it is a more excellent gift, that is to wit, that God printeth his marke vppon vs, as who ſhoulde ſay that wee ſhoulde bee reckoned for his children, ſo as hee gathereth vs vnto him, and maketh vs in effect new creatures; by reaſon whereof our ſinne becommeth the more heynous, if wee deface the ſame againe, and fall to wallowing of our ſelues againe in the filth and vncleanneſſe of this worlde, as who woulde ſay it greeued vs that God had not made vs brute beaſtes at ſuch time as he tooke vs to be his children. And therefore we haue to marke, what the words import which Moſes vſeth here: For his meaning is to ſhewe, that this people was the leawdeſt and moſt deteſtable that coulde be imagined, becauſe they had forgotten ſuch gratious benefites as coulde not be ſufficiently commended. And looke what is ſayd of the Iewes, agreeth fitly to vs lykewiſe, namely that we muſt not forget Gods graces. We in theſe dayes haue receiued no leſſe than the fathers that were vnder the Lawe. For wee haue the very pledge it ſelfe, which the Iewes had not: that is to wit, our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt. He is the onely ſonne of God, and is come down to vs from the boſome of the father. Hee hath yeelded vs recorde of our adoption: the gate of paradiſe is now opened vnto vs: wee may now not onely call vppon God as our father, but alſo call vnto him with full mouth, ſo as wee may cry *Abba father*, for that is the worde which Saint Rom.8.15. Paul vſeth expreſly. Seeing then that God hath diſcouered himſelfe more fully to vs than to the fathers that liued vnder the Lawe: Surely our fault will be the more grieuous and leſſe excuſable, if we yeelde ſo poore a recompence as is ſpoken of here. Againe, hath he not purchaſed vs to himſelf? If he poſſeſſed the people of olde time becauſe he brought them out of the land of Egypt: let vs ſee how much more he hath done now for vs than for them. True it is that Gods redeeming of the Iewes was by the power of the death and paſſion of our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt: but that thing was not yet declared vnto them, they had but the figures and ſhadowes thereof. But as now we ſee that the bloud of our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt hath bin ſhed for our redemption, and for the purchaſe of our ſaluation. And ſhall we now go trample vnder our feet the holy bloud, wherby the couenant of the ſpirituall kinred which God hath entered into with vs, is ratifyed and confirmed? And as touching the Law, how doth the Apoſtle ſpeake of it in the Epiſtle to the Hebrewes? As many (ſaith he) as violated the taber- Hebr.2.2. nacle that was made by Moſes, were not ſpared, their fault was vnpardonable: and what ſhal become of vs nowadayes? Is not our leawdneſſe much more ſhamefull? Therefore let vs beare now in minde that we be Gods precious poſſeſſion, to the intent we giue not our ſelues ouer to Satan. Moreouer let vs vnderſtand, after what manner he hath created and faſhioned vs, and let vs not refuſe that grace: but ſith he hath voutſafed to reforme vs, let vs not ſteine our ſelues with reproche, by going about to deface the image & workmanſhip which he hath put into vs.

Howbeit foraſmuch as men doe by al meanes poſſible pleade ignorance, to the intent they might not come to account before God, nor be conuicted or touched for their euill doings: Moſes addeth; *Aske of thy fathers, and they will teach thee what thou haſt bin: Inquire of all thine Elders, and call to minde the time that is paſt.* Here Moſes meant to ſpurre forward the ſlothfulneſſe of the Iewes, becauſe they did wilfully bury the grace of God, and tooke pleaſure in the not minding of them. Now although he ſpake this to the Iewes: yet notwithſtanding, foraſmuch as the ſame vice is common & ordinarie through the whole world, and that we be too much atteinted therewith: it ſtādeth vs in hand to thinke, that the holy ghoſt directeth the lyke accuſation to vs nowadayes. For after what ſorte doe we call Gods benefites to our mind? Do we bethink vs of them euening & morning? Nay there is none of vs all which ſhutteth not his eyes againſt them, as much as he can. To be ſhort, nothing grieueth vs worſe, nothing troubleth vs more, thã to be bound vnto God. And yet is that the thing wherein all our happineſſe conſiſteth. For it is not with him as with mortall men. If we be ouermuch bound to a creature, we wil be as it were aſhamed of it. I am ſo much in ſuch a mans debt ſay wee, yͭ I wot not how to requite it. But if we conſider how liberal God hath bin to vs, it is a meane to confirme vs ſtill the more in faith, & to make vs the bolder to repayre ſtil vnto him: for he is the fountain that neuer dryeth. Thinke we that God can euer bee diminiſhed in his grace, or in any goodnes? Nay. And yet notwithſtanding, our naughtineſſe is ſuch, yͭ when God hath beſtowed neuer ſo great graces and benefites vpon vs, inſomuch that we be as good as ouerwhelmed with thẽ; al our ſeeking is to put them out of remembrance: let vs marke wel therefore, that Moſes hath not without cauſe blamed the Iewes, and that we nowadayes haue need to bee blamed after the ſame manner, and to be pricked foreward lyke Oxen and Aſſes.

As concerning the Iewes, he ſayd, *Bethinke thee of the olde time, call to minde the dayes that are paſt.* As if he ſhould ſay, How now ye wretches? Muſt God giue you wit and memorie, and yet you not conſider what he hath done heretofore? The wit of an Oxe or of an Aſſe extendeth no further than to the thinges yͭ are preſent: but men haue reaſon to conſider of thinges paſt and of thinges to come. For wee haue a certaine foreſight of thinges to come: we make compariſon of things paſt, experiẽce ſheweth vs how to diſpoſe things in our ſelues. Now if we apply not all this to conſider how God hath euer gouerned vs, and how he hath ſhewed himſelfe a father towardes vs, ſhall we not be guiltie of peruerting the whole order of nature? So then, not without cauſe doth Moſes ſay: *Bethinke thee of the old time.* And afterward he ſayth: Thou haſt witneſſes enowe: *Inquire of thy Fathers, inquire of al thoſe that* haue liued afore thee, & they wil tel thee newes; they wil ſhew thee, that at ſuch time as thy God diuided the nations of the world, and made yͤ partitions betweene people & people, hee had a ſpecial regard of thee, & ſhewed playnly yͭ his adopting & chooſing of thee was not in vaine. For the mark yͭ he amed at, was to dedicate thee to his ſeruice, & to reſerue thee for his owne inheritance. Now thẽ, is it not a peruerting & confounding of yͤ order which he had ſet down to be inuiolable, when thou turneſt ſo away from him? Yes: for hee had ſhouled thee out from al yͤ heathẽ, & choſen thee as it were for his own portion. That is the thing in effect which Moſes meant to ſay vnto yͤ Iewes.

And this text ought to teach vs, firſt to bee mindefull of the benefites which he hath done to our fathers, although we haue not ſeene them in our owne time. For that is a thing whereon we muſt ſet our mindes. Hath God giuen vs wit and reaſon but onely to conceiue thinges preſent & which we ſee with our eyes? Nay, our vnderſtãding muſt proceede further, yea and all muſt be referred to the honor & glory of him which hath giuen vs that vnderſtanding. And it ſtandeth vs ſo much yͤ more in hand to marke well this doctrine, becauſe we ſee men fickleheaded & giuen to all vanitie & fond ſpeculations. True it is that we would be loth to be as bruite beaſtes, and we would faine be as men of vnderſtanding: there is none of vs all, but he laboureth for it. And yet for all yͭ, what is our vnderſtanding, but an inquiring of the thinges that paſſe our capacitie? Men neuer ceaſe to be inquiſitiue of the thinges that are farre aboue their vnderſtanding, yea euen of thinges needeleſſe & vnprofitable: inſomuch as they will needes knowe what God did afore hee made the world, & ſuch other thinges. Againe, as touching ſtories, if a man occupy himſelf in thẽ, it is but to range abroad here and there, without conſideration of Gods doinges: inſomuch that God is quite forgotten, & thinges are not referred to their right and due vſe. Wee ſee then how men runne rouing, ſo as they can babble well enough of thinges paſt, that ye would take them to haue good knowledge of them. But it is but in thinges vnprofitable, & in the meane while God is let alone, & they haue no regard at all of thẽſelues. But contrariwiſe it is ſhewed here, that when we talke of matters of olde time, and enquire of thinges that haue bin done long agoe, we muſt keepe this order of proceeding, that we haue an eye vnto God, how he hath gouerned yͤ world, and alwayes ſhewed himſelfe righteous, faithfull, vpright, good, and pitifull. Firſt therefore let vs conſider that. And afterwarde let vs come vnto our ſelues: and ſith we ſee that hee hath ſeparated vs from the reſt of the worlde, & taken vs for his children without any worthines of ours, preferring vs before thoſe which were nothing inferiour to vs: (for in deede we be no better than the reſt of Adams children:) ſeeing (ſay I) ſuch goodneſſe of God towardes vs, we ought to apply our indeuour to know the ſame wel: and by inquiring of former yeres: we ought to behold Gods working, to the end he may be glorifyed at our handes, for that we haue found by experience, that we be ſo many wayes bound vnto him; and that the infinite goodneſſe which he hath ſhewed towardes vs, may prouoke and inflame vs to yeelde ous ſelues wholy to the ſeruing of him. If wee ſo doe, wee ſhall not bee blamed for the vnthankfulneſſe, for which the people of Iſraell are blamed here by Moſes. For conſequently all thoſe whome God hath called vnto him, ſhall be compriſed vnder the ſame condemnation, vnleſſe they can ſkil to benefite themſelues the better by his gratious dealinges.

But nowe let vs caſt our ſelues downe before the maieſtie of our good GOD with acknowledgement of our faultes, praying him to make vs to feele them more and more, ſo as wee may not onely condemne our ſelues with our mouthes, but alſo vtterly miſlyke of them, and turne againe vnto him with a true meaning minde, to obey him and to ſubmit our ſelues to his good wil: & that therwithal he may ſo worke in vs by his holy ſpirit, that ſith he hath vouchſafed to begin to make vs newe creatures, hee do alſo reforme vs to the full, vntill wee be throughly clothed with his righteouſneſſe, and that all our imperfections and vanities be mortified: That it may pleaſe him to grant this grace, not onely to vs but alſo to all people, &c.

On Munday the j. of Iune, 1556.

The CLXXX. Sermon which is the third vppon the two and thirtith Chapter.

8 When the higheſt diuided to the Nations their inheritaunces: and when hee ſeparated the Sonnes of men: then did he ſet the boundes of Nations according to the number of the children of Iſrael.

9 For the Lordes portion is his owne people, and Iacob is the meteline of his inheritaunce.

10 He founde him in a deſert Lande, and in a horrible wilderneſſe where nothing was to bee heard but roaring. He led him vp and downe, and gaue him vnderſtanding, and kept him as the apple of his eye.

11 As the Eagle ſtirreth vp her neaſt, houering ouer her young ones, and ſpreading out her wings, taketh them vp, and caryeth them vpon her wings:

WE haue ſeene already heeretofore, howe the intent of Moſes in this text is, to ſhewe the children of Iſraell how greatly they bee bound vnto God, in that he loued them, and choſe them out from among all the nations of the earth, and adopted them to bee his children without any deſert of theirs, or without hauing any reſpect of their worthineſſe, only of his own meere mercie. Now hereuppon hee ſayth, *That when God diſtributed the world into partes, aſſigning all Nations their Countries: hee helde ſtill this Lande for the heritage of his people.* True it is that notwithſtanding this, he did as it were lend the land of Chanaan for a time to the olde inhabiters thereof, that is, to the Hethites, the Heuites, the Phereſites, the Chananites, and ſuch like. His aſſigning of that Countrie to them was not for euer, for hee reſerued it till the time that hee ſhould fetch his owne people out of Egypt. And wee muſt marke, that at that time Abraham was not yet borne, neither was there then any people of Iſrael. Howe can it then bee, that God ſhould bee prouoked by any deſert, ſeeing hee tooke the thing which as then had not any being? Yea and let vs marke alwaies, that the people which was to iſſue out of the ſtocke of Abraham, had beene no better than other nations, if God had not wrought in them. Therefore it is to bee concluded that God vttered an infinite goodneſſe towardes that people, and that his will was that they ſhould bee a looking-glaſſe of his grace, to the whole worlde. And where as Moſes ſaith, *that God diuided landes to Nations, according to the number of the children of Iſrael*: he maketh here a compariſon betweene the ofſpring of Abraham, and the ſeuen nations that dwelled in the Countrie, which they entred into and poſſeſſed afterwarde. Surely they were a great multitude of people, and ſeuen ſundry nations were of them: and yet our Lord preferred one lynage before them al. True it is that hee encreaſed the ſame lynage beyond the opinion of men, according to this promiſe which hee had made to his ſeruaunt Abraham, Number the ſtarres of the Skie and ſand of the Gen.15.5. Sea if thou canſt: for ſo ſhall thy ſeede be in multitude. But who wold haue thought that for one houſholds ſake, there needed ſo great a lande as that ſeuen nations ſhould haue bin driuen out of their Country, to giue place to them that were deſcended of one barren man, as the prophet Eſay telleth them, ſaying: Go ſeeke your originall, Eſa. 51.1,2. get ye to the ſtone that ye were heawen out of; for Abraham was alone, and Sara was a barren woman to her vttermoſt olde age: and yet hath God made you to iſſue out of theſe two ſtones as it were by myracle, and not by the common order of nature: knowe yee therefore that he hath wrought ſo mightily toward you, that of duetie you ought to be the more prouoked to ſerue and honour him, that his glorie may ſhine foorth in you. Yee ſee then that the meaning of Moſes in ſaying, *according to the number of the children of Iſrael*, is that foraſmuch as God had foreſeene that hee would adopt the ofſpring of Abraham; hee gaue the Lande of Chanaan, not to one people alone, but to ſeuen Nations in number.

And here we haue to note in the firſt place, that inaſmuch as the office of diſtributing the worlde into portions is attributed vnto God: wee ſoiourne as it were by his appointment, ſo long as wee dwell here belowe. True it is that the children of Iſrael had a peculiar ſtate: but here Moſes ſpeaketh of the whole worlde, accordingly alſo as the ſame is treated of in the Pſal.107.35 hundreth pſalme and in other places. And that ought to make vs to liue in the feare of God, whereſoeuer wee bee. For why? We be found at his coſt, & our dwelling vpon earth is not by haphazard, but where it pleaſeth him to maintaine vs. Yee ſee then how it is a profitable leſſon to teach men to liue as in the preſence of God, becauſe it is hee that hath appointed them to dwell there. But by the way we be warned alſo, not to trouble the boundes of places or the common order, but to holde our ſelues euery man to his owne, without incroching vppon other men. For why? God hath ordayned bounds in the world from the beginning. This being ſo; let euery man now abide in his owne poſſeſſion; and let not men trouble nor moleſt one another. Yet notwithſtanding we ſee how malicious men are. For ambition and couetouſneſſe haue cauſed all the boundes to bee broken which GOD had ſet in the worlde. Nembrod began firſt with Gen.10.10. ſetting vp the kingdome of Babylon: and afterward other men became deſirous to win one frõ another. Yee ſee then how men haue peruerted the order that God had ſet in the world lyke vnſatiable gulfes. But howſoeuer men haue delt, yet hath God alwayes ſo bridled them, that for all their greedineſſe they could neuer ſet ſuch confuſion, but that ſome certaine order hath remained ſtill. Howſoeuer the caſe ſtand, let vs marke wel, that Gods creating of men was not to caſt them here at aladuenture: but that his ordeyning and ſetling of the earth was to the ende we ſhoulde dwell therein. And truely wee knowe that the earth was couered with water, & naturally the ſea ought to be aboue the earth, ſo as al of it ſhould be ouerflowen. It is of ſpeciall vertue that wee haue any dry place whereon to ſet our foote. And who is the dooer of that? As ſoone as God commaunded the waters to Gen.1.20. withdrawe, by and by there was place for men to dwellon. Seeing then that we liue here, and that the earth dooth feed & ſuſteine vs, let vs aſſure Pſal.33.7. our ſelues that therein God ſheweth his pitie towardes vs. And therefore let vs ſerue him with the earneſter minde, & euery of vs be contented with that which he hath, without intermedling within other mens boundes. Let vs not through couetouſneſſe rake to vs the things yͭ belong not to vs: but let euery man hold himſelfe as it were locked vp, becauſe we offend God and not men when we ſeeke to incroch vppon that which hee hath not giuen vs.

Now then, ſeeing that Moſes telleth the people of Iſrael that they be bound vnto God for his allotting of their inheritance vnto them in the land of Chanaan, yea euen before Abraham was borne: there is much more reaſon that we ſhould magnify the ineſtimable goodneſſe of our God, in conſideration of the heauenly heritage which he hath promiſed and prepared for vs. For his preparing of a place for vs in heauen, was not at that time when he parted the worlde into portions: but euen before the world was created, as Epheſ.1.4. ſayth S. Paul. For before there was either heauẽ or earth, God hauing adopted vs to be his children, prepared a dwelling place for vs aboue. Sith it is ſo, we conclude that he had no reſpect of any worthines in our perſons, ne looked that wee ſhould merit or deſerue aught at his hand: but onely vſed his owne free goodneſſe. Yee ſee then how we muſt be caryed vp aboue the world as oft as we thinke vppon our ſaluation.

And the reaſon hereof is added forthwith by Moſes, namely, *Becauſe they were the people of God, and his portion, and Iacob is the meteline of his inheritaunce.* Thẽ if it be demaunded, why God in making partition of the world, preferred the children of Iſrael before all the reſidue, & why that one houſe was ſo deere vnto him, that he vouchſafed to appoint them a countrie certaine: If it be demaunded what moued God thereto: Moſes anſwereth, it was becauſe Iacob was his portion and the meteline of his heritage. As if he ſhould ſay, Ye poore ſoules, your God hath vſed ſuch gratious goodneſſe towardes you, as yee cannot ſay there was any thing on your owne behalf, or that ye had any vertue in you, or (at a word) that ye can dim Gods glory any whit by your owne deſerts. There was no ſuch thing; for all proceeded of his owne free adoption. What was the cauſe that the linage of Abraham became Gods inheritance, & as it were his portion? For by the worde *Meteline* here is betokened a part or portion. For in thoſe dayes men meaſured Landes by Metelines, & that is the cauſe why the word *Cord*, or *Meteline* is ſo often ſpoken of in the holy ſcripture, when mention is made of diſtributing or diuiding into portions. Now then if it be demaunded why yͤ people of Iſraell belonged more to God than all yͤ reſt of the worlde; or what affinitie or acquaintance there was more betweene him and them: It cannot be ſayd that they had purchaſed or procured more to themſelues, or that they were nobler than all other men, as we haue ſeene heretofore. What canſt thou ſay (ſayth Moſes in the ſeuenth chapter?) Hath God Deut.7.7. choſen thee, becauſe thou waſt a nobler, a worthier, or a more renowmed Nation than any other? No: but for the loue which he bare to thee. Therefore lyke as in that place Moſes vſed the word Loue, to ſhewe that Gods owne free goodneſſe moued him to take Abrahã & his ofſpring: ſo in this place he ſaith, Know ye that your God hath choſen you, & that it is his will to take you for his heritage. And ſo ye ſee in effect, yͭ to take away all pride and preſumption from the children of Iſraell, & to ſhew them that they could chalenge nothing to thẽſelues, Moſes bringeth them backe to the welſpring which the whole ſcripture ſheweth vs, to wit, that all the benefits and gratious giftes which God beſtoweth vpon vs, and which wee receiue at his hand, proceede of his owne meere goodneſſe, without being bounde thereto, or without inclyning thereto in reſpect of any deſerte of ours, but onely becauſe hee loueth vs, yea euen without any cauſe why that wee can alledge: for we bring nothing at all vnto him. That is the thing which we haue to beare in minde.

And if this doctrine was true as in reſpect of yͤ Land of Chanaan: what ſhal it be in reſpect of our comming to the immortalitie of the heauẽly glory? The people of Iſraell could not obteine the land of Chanaan by their owne deſeruing, but GOD was faine to loue them euen of his owne meere mercie, wherethrough hee did thẽ all the good that they receiued at his hand. Yet notwithſtanding, that land was nothing in compariſon of the immortall life. Whereas it is ſayd that wee bee reformed after the image of God, to bee partakers of his glory, and that wee bee his heires, and companions to the Angels,yea and to our Lord Ieſus Chriſt: it is a far other thing than ỹ land of Canaan and the ſuſtenance that is giuẽ vs for this tranſitorie life. And therefore let vs vnderſtand that men are worſe than blinde, yea and more than mad,whẽ they thinke to attaine to ſo great a good thing by their owne deſertes. Yet notwithſtanding, we ſee how this diueliſh opinion hath reigned and had full ſcope in the world,and how the Papiſtes are ſtill at the ſame poynt at this day, that when ỹ inheriting of paradice is talked of,[they ſay]that men muſt purchace it by their own merites. And in the meane while they conſider not how the immortal lyfe is named an inheritance, becauſe it dependeth vpon Gods free adoption. Eph.1.14. And whereon is Gods free adoption grounded, but vppon his chooſing of vs before ỹ world was made; I ſay vpon his chooſing of vs, euen of vs which were forlorn as well as ỹ reſt of the whole world?For we know we be all curſed in Adam.Again,what is ỹ cauſe ỹ he chooſeth vs, who were lyke to thoſe whō hee reiecteth?What is ỹ cauſe ỹ he proceedeth yet ſtil in drawing vs vnto him? Shall wee finde the cauſe thereof in our ſelues? Alas no: but wee muſt diſcharge our ſelues of all ouerweening, and repaire to the foreſayd fountaine of his freegoodneſſe. And therefore let vs beare well in minde, that here wee bee warned, that we muſt not ſeeke the cauſe of our ſaluation in our ſelues nor of any of all the benefits which God beſtoweth vppon vs, no not euen in reſpect of this preſent lyfe: and therefore that wee can much leſſe ſeeke the cauſe or ground of the promiſed immortalitie, in our ſelues or in our owne deſerts, but ỹ we muſt magnify his meere goodneſſe in that behalfe. And ſeeing that God hath choſen vs to be his heritage, we muſt ſuffer him to poſſeſſe vs. But there is a greater reaſon in reſpect of vs than of the Iſraelites;becauſe he hath not onely reſerued vs in creating the world, but alſo purchaſed vs by our Lord Ieſus Chriſt.Doth not this price which God hath beſtowed for our ſaluation to ỹ intent we ſhould bee his heritage, deſerue to haue vs wholy at his deuotion, and ỹ euery man ſhould ſo indeuour to dedicate himſelfe to his ſeruice,as that he might haue the dominion ouer vs?So then,let vs not play the traitors in bereauing God of the thing which he reteined to himſelf when he voutſafed to haue vs to be of his Church.Alſo let this moue vs that he will not poſſeſſe vs,but vppon condition that as we inioy him,ſo hee may inioy vs: and what an exchange is that? Conſider what we be. We be dung,filth,and vtter curſedneſſe, and yet ye ſee how God accepteth vs for his heritage, and for his part would that we ſhould poſſeſſe him. Sith it is ſo,what an vnthankfulneſſe is it, if we continue not in obeying him, that he may poſſeſſe vs?

And let vs mark further, that there is not any thing which ought to moue vs more to the ſeruing of God, than to come to the knowledge of our free election, ſo as we know that his beginning to doe vs good is not now preſently,but before we were borne, before the creating of the world,inſomuch that he tooke vs to him and adopted vs aforehand euen before that time. So much the more ought we to abhorre theſe raſcals which would haue the doctrine of Election aboliſhed: for by that meane they ouerthrowe ỹ whole groundwork of our ſaluation,as though they ſhould ſtop the ſpring from whẽce the water floweth,ſo as we may no more drink thereof. For how ſhall we know that God hath called vs to ſaluation, but for that he hath loued vs without any deſert of ours, and taken vs aforehand to himſelf,euen before ỹ world was created? Alſo how ſhall we know our ſelues to be beholden to him for all thinges, and that he is not bound vnto vs; vnleſſe we come to this poynt, that we were lyke to thoſe which peariſh,ſo as there was no difference at all betweene them and vs, ſauing ỹ hee hath marked vs out to be his, without finding any cauſe in vs why,that we were dearer to him than other men, and that he made more account of our welfare, all which thinges are grounded vppon his euerlaſting vnchaungeable purpoſe and will, the reaſon whereof is vncomprehenſible to the worlde? They therefore which go about to aboliſh this doctrine,are deadly enemies to God his glory,and to our ſaluatiō, and would (as much as in them lyeth) deface al religion.That(ſay I)is the thing which we haue to remember vpon this Text.

Hereupō Moſes ſheweth yet better, how God hath vttered his goodneſſe towards the people of Iſrael. *He found him*(ſaith he)*in a deſert land,in a deſolate place,in a dredful wildernes,where was nothing but roring of wild beaſts.There he led him vp & down, there he nurtured him,there he kept him as the apple of his eye.* If the people of Iſrael had not ſerued as ſlaues in Egypt, and trauelled through the wilderneſſe: Gods goodneſſe had not bin ſo well knowen and ſo glorious as it is at this day. For why?Whereas God tooke Abraham out of his countrie,and brought him into a ſtrange Land, and afterward gaue him a ſonne when hee was vppon the point of a hundred yeres old, & that of that one child there iſſued ſuch an infinit multitude:it might well haue bin ſayd that God had ſhewed fauor to that linage: but yet ſo blind are men in conſidering Gods goodneſſe towardes thẽ,that it would neuer haue bin perceiued how God vttered his bountifulneſſe towards ỹ ſtock, vnleſſe Iacob had gone downe into Egypt, and that the people of Iſraell had bin kept in cruell bondage, as Moſes reporteth in Exodus. Exod.1. But when they had bin held in ſuch ſlauery that the king of Egypt had commaunded all their menchildren to be ſlayne:then were they come to ỹ vttermoſt pinch. And then did God fetch them away,and make thẽ to paſſe the red ſea, hauing wrought a great number of miracles before. By meanes whereof they were after a ſort wakened, that they might the better bethinke them howe dearely God loued them & how much he ſet by them, ſeeing he vouchſafed to yeeld ſo great & ſo ſtately recordes of the goodneſſe and fauour which he bare towardes them. Moſes therefore following the ſame reaſon,ſaith here,Looke backe to your firſt originall from whence you be iſſued. Did God find you in a fat and fertile coūtrie,as though he ſhould ſay,I wil maintaine you in the ſtate wherein yee be: for it is not enough for men to haue a conuenient and eaſie dwelling place, vnleſſe I preſerue them and hold thē vnder my protectiō. You therefore ſhal be mine, and I will bee your ſafegarde. Did God finde his people in ſuch ſtate? No. And therefore Moſes ſayeth to the children of Iſrael, Conſider from whence ye came,& from whence your God hath fetched you. Were ye not in a wilderneſſe ſayeth hee? Yes; that then is the place from whence hee hath fetched you: and ſo much the more ought you to conſider the fauour which he hath ſhewed you, that yee may perceiue howe much you be bounde vnto him. Now then, ye were in a wilderneſſe: and after what ſorte? There was not one graine of Corne to feede you withall, there was not one drop of water for you to drinke, he was faine to make water to iſſue out of a dry rocke miraculouſly for you, hee made Manna to fall from heauen. Ye were in a place where yee coulde not build you one houſe, ye were there among the wild beaſts, ſo as ye muſt needes haue periſhed, and therfore a man needes not to vſe long diſcourſes to ſhew how God was bountiful vnto you. For ye were as good as in a graue by the ſpace of forty yeeres, and yet God kept you aliue after a ſtraunge faſhion & vnknowen to men. Ye were deſtitute of foode and drinke, & God furniſhed your turne. Your ſhooes, your hoſe, & your garments did not rotte all that while. Now then, ſeeing that God maintained you after that manner againſt the commō order of nature; did he not ſhew thereby what care he had of you, and what loue he bare vnto you? So then, looke that ye neuer forget ſo great benefites, ſpecially being ſo many and ſo huge in number as he hath done for you.

Nowe we ſee the meaning of Moſes in that hee ſayeth that God founde his people in a wilderneſſe, a dry and barraine ground, a deſolate place. And the ſelfeſame thing meaneth Ezechiell in his ſixteenth chapter, where he vpbraideth Ezech.16.3 the people of Iſraell with the vnthankfullneſſe which they had ſhewed. What are yee, ſayeth hee? For I tooke you comming out of the land of Egypt, as a Child borne out of time. The Child ỹ ſo commeth out of his mothers wombe, is al to berayed, and he ſhould periſh in his own filth, if he were not rid of his ſpottes and blemiſhes, and waſhed from the vncleannes which he bringeth with him. To be ſhort, he rehearſeth all the thinges that are wont to bee doone to a child that is newely borne. Againe he vſeth another ſimilitude which is, as if a man ſhould finde a wretched harlot that were ſtarke rotten and readie to fall in peeces by reaſon of her infections: Ezech.16.8. And I haue waſhed you & made you cleane, yea and I haue taken you in mariage: and doe ye not knowe that to bee a benefite? Thus we ſee that Ezechiell hath followed the ſame order which Moſes did in abaſing the Children of Iſraell, by bringing them backe to their firſt ſtate, to the intent they ſhoulde learne that Gods aduancing of them after that faſhion beyond al expectation of man, was to the end his grace might be the better knowen in them.

And now to apply this doctrine to our owne inſtruction, let vs conſider what wee be before God chooſeth vs. It is ſayd that hee found his people in a wilderneſſe. True it is that he had adopted them before that time, inſomuch that the promiſes were made vnto them before they went downe into Egypt. But it is enough that the people were there in ſo miſerable ſtate, to the end they ſhoulde perceiue that God had at that time giuen them as it were a ſecond byrth, and ſo dooth the ſcripture cuſtomably terme it. But now let vs come to our ſelues. In what caſe dooth God finde vs? In what ſtate dooth hee take vs? We bee the children of Adam, that is to ſay, curſed, and heires of euerlaſting death. There is nothing in vs but ſin, there is nothing in vs but corruption, God muſt needes reiect vs and hate vs, he muſt needes become our deadly enemy, and vtter his vengeance vppon vs. To bee ſhort, wee be in the dungeons of hell, vntill God haue reached vs his hand, and had pitie vppon vs. It is not for any man to exempt him ſelfe from this confuſion: for from the greateſt to the leaſt of vs, we be all plunged in it. Now let vs boaſt of the thinges which we haue of nature. For God findeth vs voyd of all goodneſſe, we haue not one droppe of vertue, wiſedome, or righteouſneſſe: but contrariwiſe wee be full of corruption, wee bee ready to burſt for filth and vncleaneſſe, wee bee bondſlaues to Satan, vnder the tyranny and bondage of death, and at a worde we bee plunged in hell. At that poynt are wee when God chooſeth vs, that is the poynt whereat hee beginneth our ſaluation. Now ſith it is ſo, let vs learne firſt of all to rid our ſelues of all pride. And although Satan beguile moſt men, making them to beleeue that they can deſerue at Gods hand: yet let vs aſſure our ſelues that we bee beholden to Gods free goodneſſe for all thinges. Marke that for one point. To the intent that all mouthes may bee ſtopped before GOD (as ſaieth Rom.3.19. Saint Paul) let vs ſo humble our ſelues, as that wee make not any mo allegations, as who would ſay, we haue done this or that: but let vs preach the mercie of our God, and let vs declare that he is the beginning, the ende and the increaſe of our welfare, ſo as wee drawe out of that fountaine wherewith to ſatisfy vs, without ſeeking of any peece of our ſaluation either in our ſelues or in any creature. Otherwiſe wee make our ſelues to beleeue wonders, and they ſhall ſerue to feed vs withall: but in deed it will be but deadly poyſon to make vs to burſt.

And now let vs marke well, that Moſes hauing ſayd that God found his people in a wilderneſſe, addeth *that he led them vp and downe there, that hee nurtured them there, and that he kept them there as the apple of his eye.* By this terme of *leading vp & down,* Moſes dooth the people to vnderſtand, that it was not for a day or twaine, nor for ſome ſhort time that God made them to taſte his goodnes, but that he had continued it by the ſpace of forty yeeres together. Lykewiſe, his heaping vp of theſe words together, *A deſert land, a deſolate countrie, a place full of roringes, a barraine ground,* is not

for nought,but ſerüeth to touch the people the better to the quick, that they might call to mind what plight they had bin in before their cõming into the land of promiſe, where Gods bleſſing was powred out vpon them moſt aboundantly. And therfore the word *Lead* betokened as much at ẏ time as if Moſes ſhoulde haue ſaid, Ye wretched people,had God vttered his loue & goodneſſe towardes you but for one moneth, ẏ ſame ought to haue bin remembred of you for euer,ſo as you ſhould neuer haue forgotten it.But now, it is not one moneth no nor one yere,but whole fortie yeres together, that God hath held on & continued his goodneſſe towardes you: of all which time your fathers hauing not a crum of bread to eate,were miraculouſly fed with Manna from heauen; nor hauing any wine or other liquor to drink, had water giuen them out of the rocke. And as they ſhifted from place to place,
Num.20.11. GOD gaue a continuall courſe to the water,
Pſal.105.41 wherewith to refreſh themſelues and their cattell.Seeing then that God hath ſo imprinted his grace ẏ it may be wel knowen of you in the great number of good turnes which he hath done for you: you be the leſſe to be helde excuſed, if yee make not account of the glorifying of your God, who hath ſhewed himſelf ſo liberal towards you.

But we muſt alwayes marke,that the ſpeaking of theſe thinges by Moſes to ẏ Iewes is after ſuch a ſort,that his doctrine is behoueful to vs at this day. And therefore we muſt vnderſtand, ẏ God leadeth vs vp and downe in this world, to ẏ end we may haue the more leiſure to feele his fauor, if we perceiue it not ſufficiently in one day.True it is ẏ if we ſhould haue experiẽce of Gods goodnes but once in all our life, ẏ ſame ought to ſuffice vs,at leaſtwiſe if we had not our eyes blindfolded,or that we were not ſhortwitted to forget Gods doinges out of hand.If he had once giuen vs any recorde of his fatherly loue, we ought to acknowledge the ſame and to minde well ẏ leſſon,and to exerciſe our ſelues therein daylу both euen and morne. But what? Becauſe al is marred by our vanitie,and all the good ẏ God dooth for vs is by and by forgotten:therfore doth he traine vs in this flightful lyfe,and leade vs vp & downe after ſuch a faſhion, that wee be put in minde of our wretchednes many wayes. The happening of ſo many neceſſities & Gods deliuering of vs from them,is to the intent ẏ we ſhoulde beare it the better in minde;how he not onely ſuccoreth vs once or twice at our need,but alſo holdeth on with his fauor throughout,yeelding vs record by infinite wayes ẏ he is our father & taketh vs for his children. After this manner ought we to wey this word *Lead*,when God toſſeth & turmoyleth vs to & fro in this world,making vs to feel many things, ſo as we haue not one continual ſtate of quietnes,but are fain to walk one while one way, and another while another, & anon to go clean backe again,enduring now cold and now heate, & another time hunger, & being vexed ſometimes with noyſe of warres,ſometime with ſickneſſes,& ſomtime with other things.Now when we be ſo led vp & downe, let vs aſſure our ſelues that our Lordes meaning is to make vs to come to the knowledge of his goodneſſe.

And hereunto Moſes addeth farther, *that the people were nurtured.* Truely ẏ chiefe learning and inſtruction which they receiued was by the law. Yet notwithſtanding, all the warnings that God gaue them in the wilderneſſe, ſerued to nurture them. Moſes therefore ſpeaketh not here alonely of the Lawe which was vttered to the people to giue them knowledge of Gods wil:but alſo generally of all the inſtructions & warnings which God gaue them by the ſpace of forty yeeres, as
when he puniſhed the idolaters, when he puni- Num.32.28.
ſhed ẏ whoremongers,and ſuch as were giuen to Numb.25.9.
their luſtes,and when hee puniſhed the rebels. Num.11.33.
For at thoſe times it behooued them to receiue Num.14.23.
newe inſtruction. Yea and all of vs muſt vnderſtand,that generally al ẏ benefites,al ẏ threates, & all the puniſhmentes which God at any time vſed towardes the childrẽ of Iſraell,were as many inſtructions to them. But we muſt marke here that it is Gods will that we ſhould learn by them ſo long as we liue in this world. For like as he executeth ẏ office of a ſchoolemaiſter towards vs, ſo wil he haue vs to play the good ſcholers vnder him,& to profit in the doctrine which he deliuereth vs. And it is a very notable point, that God will not haue vs to liue here lyke brute beaſtes without reaſon & vnderſtanding. Whereto then ought our lyfe to ſerue here,& whereto ought it to be applyed? Wherein ought men to buſie thẽſelues during ẏ time that they be here beneath? To profit in Gods ſchoole.That is ẏ end whereunto we be ſuſteyned and mainteined here. But we abuſe the life wickedly which hee giueth vs, applying it cleane contrary to his will, if we become not euery day better than other. Therefore let vs not loſe our time, but let vs imploy it according to ẏ meaning of our God. And when we riſe a mornings let vs thinke with our ſelues, God hath preſerued me hitherto to the intent I ſhould profit in his ſchoole,and therefore I muſt not forget the benefites which God beſtoweth vpon me this day,but make them meanes wherby to confeſſe my faith,that ẏ praiſe of all goodnes may be yeelded to him,& I imploy my ſelfe with ſo much ẏ better courage to the ſeruing and honouring of him, knowing ẏ he furthereth my ſaluation continually more and more, ſeeing he draweth me to him by ſo many meanes: & therwithall I muſt alſo learne to ſtand in awe of him, ẏ I may yeeld him his due reuerence. Lykewiſe when euening commeth, let vs conſider thus with our ſelues,ſeeing that God hath voutſafed to imploy me hitherto in his ſeruice, it is good reaſon that I ſhould holde on ſtill,and ẏ I ſhould not turne away from him. Therefore when wee haue reckoned all thinges well, we ſhall finde ẏ there hath not paſſed one day no nor one howre or minute wherein our God hath not giuen vs ſome inſtruction. And if we fare neuer the better by it,who is too blame for it? Then haue we here a very profitable leſſon, namely that as long as we liue in this world, we be in Gods ſchoole, & that he for his part ceaſeth not to giue vs good inſtructions and furtherances to our ſaluation. Whether he beſtow his benefites vppon vs, or

chaſtice vs for our ſinnes, or ſhewe vs examples of his goodnes, or of his wrath and of his rigour in puniſhing ſuch as haue done amiſſe: all of thē are euer inſtructions for vs to fare the better by.

Now in the end Moſes addeth, *that God kept that people as the apple of his eye.* Here is a ſimilitude which ought well to rauiſh vs to wonder at it. For Moſes could not haue vſed a fitter ſpeech to ſhewe vs what care God hath of vs & of our ſaluation. He ſaith here that if God were a mortall man, he could not more charily keepe the apple of his eye, than he kept his people. Wee knowe it is the tendreſt part of all a mans body. If a man be ſtriken on the head, or on the hands, or on the armes, it may be borne with: but if he be but touched on the apple of his eye, al his bodie ſtarkles at it: we be as greatly grieued at it as if a man had ſtabbed vs in with a dagger. It wold not greeue vs ſo much to haue one of our armes cut off, as to haue but a phillup with ones finger vppon the eye. And it is expreſly ſayd, that God keepeth vs not onely as his arme or as his legge. True it is ẏ God hath neither armes nor legges, we muſt not imagin any ſuch thing in him: but he borroweth a figure from men, to make vs vnderſtand the thing ẏ elſe were too high for vs to reach vnto. For if hee ſhould ſpeake according to his own maieſtie, we could not conceiue him: but he ſtoopeth to vs & vſeth a maner of ſpeech that is agreeable to our rudeneſſe & infirmitie. His ſaying then is, that he will defend and preſerue vs, not as a mortall man dooth his armes or his feete, but as he would doe the apple of his eye. Wherby we learne that God vttered ſuch a charineſſe in preſeruing the people of Iſrael, that if all the gentleneſſe and louingkindenes in the world were put together, it were nothing in cōpariſon of the infinite gratious goodneſſe which hee ſhewed in that behalfe.

And this is ſayd for vs alſo. God muſt be faine Zach.2.8. to keepe vs as the apple of his eye, as he himſelf ſpeaketh thereof by the Prophet Zacharie. For Moſes maketh here a recitall: but there is a promiſe which ſerueth for all ages. And lykewiſe Pſal.17.7. alſo it is ſayde in the Pſalme according to that which Moſes had ſet downe afore, Lorde keepe vs as ẏ apple of ones eye. This prayer was penned by the holy Ghoſt for all the faithfull: and it is needefull for them, as I haue ſayd. For let vs ſee what our ſtate were without it. We be in daūger Iohn 16.11. of a thowſand deathes, not without cauſe is Satan named the prince of this world, and what power haue we to withſtand him? He hath fiery dartes againſt vs, there is not that ſtroke which he ſtriketh but it were deadly, if we were not defended and preſerued by the wonderful gratious goodnes of our God. Seeing it is ſo, it ſtandeth vs in hand to be maintayned by him, yea & to be ſo maintayned, as he ouercome al ẏ dangers ẏ may befal vs in this worlde, & alſo al ẏ aſſaults which wee may haue within our ſelues. God I ſay muſt be faine to ouercome thē all, or elſe we ſhall liue in continual doubt & anguiſh, & not know where to become euery minute of an houre. We ſhould be ſhaken with diſpayre of our ſaluation, were it not that we were thus ſhielded by God, yea euen in ſuch ſort, that if wee were to indure all that euer coulde light vppon vs in this preſent world, yet we might conclude with our ſelues, that God wil get the vpper hand howſoeuer the world go.

And here is added another ſimilitude, that is to wit, that God played the parte of an Eagle or of a Hen in ſpeaking after that manner. Now we knowe that in the holy ſcripture there is often mentiō made of Eagles. And why? Becauſe they be much commoner in that countrie than they be hereawayes: and the Prophets after Moſes time did apply themſelues to ẏ common maner of ſpeech of that country. Therefore let vs mark wel that whereas here is ſpeaking of an Eagle, it is as much as if God ſhould ſay, Go to, I haue bin as a Hen is towardes her Chickens. Here we ſee how God ſtoopeth to vs. When the caſe concerneth Gods maieſtie, we ſee how ẏ very Angels doe couer their eyes, & are not able to looke vppon it, accordingly as the Cherubins are deſcribed vnto vs by the Prophet, Eſa.6.2. namely ẏ they haue winges to couer their faces withall, becauſe they could not abide to beholde ẏ glory of God, without dazeling of their eyes. Now if the Angels of heauen cannot ſtand before the glory & maieſtie of God, but that they muſt be faine to caſt down their eylids: what ſhal wee be able to doe? And yet notwithſtanding God lykeneth himſelfe here to a Hen. And why? to the end to vpbraid vs with our vnthankfulneſſe. For he ſhould neuer need to vſe ſuch ſimilitudes, if we were not too too blockiſhe, not conſidering his gratious goodnes when he vttereth it vnto vs, inſomuch that although we haue the fruition of it, yet notwithſtanding we perceiue it not. Therefore to rid vs of this brutiſh blockiſhnes, God is faine to ſay, Ye wretched people, knowe ye not that I am towardes you as a Hen that broodeth her Chickens vnder her winges? So then, let vs marke firſt of all that here we be reproued of the ouergreat blockiſhnes which is in vs, in that we conſider not Gods benefites. That is the cauſe why God vſeth ſuch compariſons: And yet is not that any derogation at all to his glory or highnes. For his goodnes & his power are thinges ẏ agree wel together; they be no ſuch thinges as cannot abide to match one with another. God is mightie, God is dreadfull in his maieſtie, all ẏ is true: but yet is his goodnes as infinite as his power. And what importeth his goodnes? That hee ſhould be as a Hen. And therefore let vs marke, that this dealing of God muſt not diminiſhe his glory, ſo as we ſhould not worſhip him with all humilitie & reuerence: but rather touch vs to the quick, that when God (hauing beſtowed ſo many benefites vpon vs, & we thinke not vpon them but doe bury his goodnes in forgetfulnes) vpbraideth vs ẏ he hath played ẏ Clockhen towardes vs and we could not abide it: we may learn to apply all our wittes to conſider how good & gratious God is towardes vs, & that knowing him to be ſo, wee may alſo aſſure ourſelues that hee ought to bee worſhipped in his glory & maieſtie, to the ende we may be ſubiect to him and come ſhrowd our ſelues vnder his winges, to be defended by him. But this ſhalbe layd forth more at large to morrowe if God will.

Now let vs fall downe before the maieſtie of our good God with acknowledgement of our faultes,praying him to make vs feele them better,yea in ſuch ſort, as wee may returne to him with true repentance, acknowledging the tranſgreſſions and iniquities which we haue committed,not only to obteine forgiueneſſe of them,but alſo to be maintained by him all the time of our lyfe: and that in the meane while it would pleaſe him to keepe vs to himſelf and correct all things that are contrary to his righteouſnes, and doe hinder vs from giuing our ſelues wholy to him as we ought to doe. That it may pleaſe him to graunt this grace, not onely to vs but alſo to all people and nations of the earth, &c.

On Tewſday the ij. of Iune, 1556.

The CLXXXI. Sermon, which is the fourth vpon the two and thirtith Chapter.

11 As the Eagle ſtirreth vp, &c.

12 So the Lord alone did leade him,and there was no ſtraunge god with him.

13 He caryed him vp to the high places of the earth, and made him to eate of the fruits of the fieldes: and he made him to ſucke Honnie out of the Rocke, and Oyle out of the hard ſtone.

14 He fed him with butter of kyne and milke of ſheepe, with fatte of Lambes and of ſheepe fed in Baſhan, and Heegoates, and with the fatte of wheate: and made thee to drinke the iuice of the moſt excellent grape.

15 But he which ought to haue beene vpright,became fatte and fell to kicking. Thou art become fatte,luſtie, and thicke. And ſo hee forſooke God his maker, and regarded not the ſtrong God of his welfare.

YEſterday we ſawe the ſimilitude which Moſes brought in to expreſſe what goodnes and gentlenes God vſed towardes the children of Iſraell: for he dealt with them as when a hen gathereth her chickens vnder her winges. We ſee thẽ howe God dooth in ſuch wiſe vtter and make knowen his infinite power to his children in the preſeruing of them, that hee ſtoopeth to them, beareth with them in reſpect of their frailetie, and (at a word)maketh himſelfe lyke a Clockhen. Now it remaineth on our ſide, yͤ we knowing our owne feebleneſſe,ſhould flee vnto God, and hide our ſelues vnder his winges, that wee may there be defended and kept ſafe. And wee muſt not bee afraid to preace vnto him, for his maieſtie ought not to be terrible to vs any more ſith we ſee he hath made himſelfe familiar with vs,& draweth vs to him by gentlenes. And ſurely it muſt needes bee that we be deſtitute of wit and reaſon,if we goe not to ſeeke him: for howe ſhall the little chicken doe, if he be not vnder his dammes wing? Much leſſe can wee continue without the protection of our God, than little chickens can doe, if they run not vnder yͤ wings of their dam which leadeth them. But in the meane while we fare little the better by this leſſon.For although we bee warned ſufficiently of our infirmities, yet doe we not ceaſe for all that to be blinded with preſumption,inſomuch as euery of vs thinketh to maintaine himſelf well enough. And by yͤ meanes we hold skorn of yͤ help of our God. Or elſe we be ſo full of diſtruſt, yͤ although he call vs to him with all the gentlenes that can be deuiſed: yet we cannot finde in our heartes to come to him, but doe alwayes ſtand in doubt of him. And that is the cauſe why our
Matt.23.37 Lord Ieſus Chriſt findeth fault with the citie of Ieruſalem, that when as hee would haue gathered her chickens together, ſhe would not. Hee maketh euen a complaint of it in way of lamentation,ſaying: O Ieruſalem Ieruſalem, how often would I haue gathered thy childrẽ together, as yͤ Hen ſtretcheth out her wings to gather her yong chickens to her, & thou haſt deſpiſed that great benefite,thou haſt not voutſafed to ſhroud thy ſelfe vnder me. I haue bin deſirous to make thee to feele my power to yͤ maintaining of thee in thine eſtate.But what? Thou haſt bin faine to feele heeretofore many chaſtiſementes becauſe of thine vnthankfulnes: but the time will come yͤ thou ſhalt bee vtterly deſtroyed. Let vs beware that God haue not lyke cauſe to finde fault with vs nowadayes, and to powre out his vengeance vpon vs after he ſhal haue borne with vs a long time. For the foreſaid threatning which our Lord Ieſus Chriſt made,befel not out of hãd. God had many ways aſſayed to gather the citie of Ieruſalem vnto his obedience: and when he ſaw them ſo ſtubborne yͤ they were paſt amendment,he puniſhed them according to their deſert. Therfore let vs not tempt yͤ patience of our God, but when we ſee him ſpread out his wings to gather vs to him, let vs runne to him, & let neceſſitie driue vs thereto: For what ſhall wee doe if our Lord keepe vs not? Againe, Let not fearefulnes or douting keepe vs back from him. For what can he do more, than abace himſelfe after the maner of a clockhen, to the intent that his maieſtie ſhoulde not bee terrible to vs and ſcarre vs away?

Let vs marke further,yͤ God playeth the part of a Clockhen in all pointes,to gather vs vnder his winges.For on the one ſide he calleth vs vnto his tuition by yͤ preaching of the Goſpel, promiſing vs yͤ the power of his holy ſpirit ſhall not faile vs,but yͤ it ſhall defend vs againſt all the aſſaultes of Satan, according as it is ſayd that all
the fortreſſes of hell ſhall bee able to doe no- Matt.16.18
thing to vs, if wee bee grounded vppon the faith of the Goſpell. Beſides this, wee knowe

that God watcheth ouer his ſeruaunts, and that he guideth them. Therfore let vs ſticke to thoſe promiſes, and ſuffer our Lorde to vſe his kindneſſe, as he ſetteth it forth by this ſimilitude; and ſith we ſee he is willing that we ſhould come familiarly vnto him; let vs not play ẏ wild beaſts.

Nowe, it is ſaide immediatly after· *that God alone ledde his people, and that there was no ſtraunge god with him.* This ſerueth to condemne the wickedneſſe of the children of Iſrael, which coulde not reſt wholly vpon God; whereas hee was ſo ſufficient for them: for they had founde by experience, that they needed not to ſeeke any other. And not without cauſe is this ſet downe. For although men doe not vtterly refuſe Gods help, yet can they not content themſelues with it, but they fall to raunging and rouing and make byleapes, bearing themſelues in hand, that it wilbe good for them to match ſome other helpe with God. Lo at what point we be. For we woulde bee aſhamed to ſay that God can doe vs no good, & that we can well forbeare him. Therefore wee can finde in our hearts that he ſhal haue the firſt place and chiefe preheminence: but we cannot finde in our hearts to reſt wholly vpon him, but we fall to conceiuing of fonde imaginations, O, God is farre from vs, wee deſerue not that hee ſhould haue care of our ſaluation, and therefore it were good for vs to get vs this or that. To bee ſhort, in all ages men haue ſought occaſion to turne away from God, not by falling quite and cleane away from him, (as I ſaid) but by making a minglemangle, and by ſeeking ſtill the things which haue ſeemed beſt to their owne lyking, as though God were not ynough of himſelf alone.

In reſpect of ſuch naughtineſſe it is ſaid here, *that there was no ſtraunge god with him when hee led the people through the wilderneſſe,* and conueied thẽ into the Lande of promiſe. The God which had adopted Abraham, the ſame which made both heauen and earth, the ſame which afterwarde did ſet forth his lawe, euen the ſame was hee alone, and hee called not any others to his helpe. True it is that God continually vſed the ſeruice of his Angels for the welfare of his people, and for the maintenance of his Church: but yet doth it not followe that hee borrowed aught of them. Whereas it is ſaid that the Angels are Pſal.91.11. Heb.1.14. appointed to haue care of vs, it is not to ſtoppe vs from repairing right foorth vnto God, nor to darken his brightneſſe therby, that men ſhould honour him the leſſe: for the Angels are nothing as in reſpect of themſelues: And therefore the holy ſcripture termeth them the Rom.8.38. vertues or powers of God, for he vſeth them as his owne hands. Not without cauſe therefore doth Moſes ſay, that God was alone in the leading of his people, and had not any ſtraunge god with him. For we ſee how thoſe wretched folk forbare not to forge ydols to themſelues. Inſomuch ẏ although God 400. yeres before had promiſed to redeeme them, although he had performed that promiſe in very deede, although he had ſhewed himſelf to them ſo many ſundry wayes, ſo ẏ they had euery day ſome newe viſible token, and ẏ the cloude by day and the fire by night were a warrant of Gods preſence: yet notwithſtanding they forbare not to inuẽt new ſuperſtitions. And why? Becauſe that (as I ſaide afore) ſuch is our curſed inclination, that we cannot repoſe our ſelues vpon God alone, but we fal to rãging here & there, and our wits are rouing abrode to inuent ydols to our ſelues. For this cauſe doth Moſes here reproue the leawdneſſe of the children of Iſrael, which could not hold themſelues contented with God, though he gaue them ſufficient cauſe.

But now let vs applie this leſſon to our ſelues alſo. For we ſee what ẏ Prophet Eſay ſaith where he ſpeaketh of the redemption that was to bee wrought in the perſon of our Lord Ieſus Chriſt. It is ſaid in the 59. Chapter; that God ſought and looked about him if he coulde finde any helpe to Eſa.59.16. redeeme the worlde. Not that God was cumbered with the matter, or that he wiſt not what hee had to do: but by that figure the Prophet expreſſeth the better, that it was onely God that redeemed vs, and that he was not helped by any other. Therefore when he had ſought, he found that he ſhoulde bee faine to vſe his owne onely power. Then armed hee himſelfe with his iuſtice, hee fenced himſelfe with his owne power, and ſo finiſhed and performed the thing which hee had determined, that is to wit, the redemption of his people. Seeing then that God hath ſo purchaſed vs to himſelfe in the perſon of his ſonne, as that he had not any companion in the doing thereof, but hath vttered forth the infinite treaſures of his goodneſſe, iuſtice, and power: let vs learne to hold our ſelues wholly to him, and not to be ſo fickleheaded as to ſet vp ydols, and to runne gadding here and there, and to let our ſelues looſe to no benefite. Let vs rather conſider howe God himſelfe alone hath redeemed vs once for all, and that hencefoorth hee will haue the guiding of all his himſelfe alone, and that hee wil haue vs to ſticke to him alone. True it is that our Lord Ieſus Chriſt alſo was a leader of the people of Iſraell in the wildernes, 1.Cor.10.9 as ſheweth S. Paule in the tenth chapter of the firſt epiſtle to the Corinthians, where he ſaith that they tempted Ieſus Chriſt. And how was that? Euen becauſe he was alwaies the mediator: howbeit, that was after a darke maner. But nowadaies hee ſheweth himſelfe to vs face to face: inſomuch that if we looke there, we haue there ẏ whole fulnes of Gods maieſtie. Seeing it is ſo, that God in theſe daies diſcouereth himſelf more fully vnto vs, than he did to the Iewes in the time of the law: there wilbe ſo much the leſſe excuſe for vs, if wee abyde not faſt ſetled in him, ſo as hee alone do ſuffice vs, and we doe take our whole contentation in him. Yet notwithſtanding, wee ſee howe froward the worlde hath beene. For what a number of ydolles haue men forged euen ſince Chriſtes comming into the world? And howe haue we behaued our ſelues ſince the time of our ignoraunce? For looke howe manie Patrons and Aduocates the Papiſtes haue imagined, ſo many fellowes haue they added to our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt, and ſo doing they ſet their minds vpon the creatures, and let the liuing God goe. Indeede they will proteſt that their intent is nothing ſo:but a man may ſee by their doings that God is not knowen there from his ſainctes,as they themſelues haue ſaide in their common prouerbe . After that manner haue we erred: and we haue alienated our ſelues(to our power)ſo farre from our God, that we haue wel deſerued to be ſhaken off at his hand.But foraſmuch as he hath ſhewed vs that it is onely hee to whom wee muſt ſticke,and foraſmuch as he offereth himſelfe ſo familiarly vnto vs, to the intent we ſhoulde ſubmit our ſelues to him:we ought now to be ſo much the more ſtedfaſt: and ſeeing wee haue ſuch aſſurance, let vs not be drawen too and fro by our vnconſtancie and lightnes,but let vs conclude that God cannot away to haue any ſtraunge gods with him, and that it behoueth vs to doe him the honour of reſting in ſuch wiſe vpon his power and goodneſſe,as it may ſuffice vs to call vpon him,and to flee to him for all our refuge.

And Moſes addeth immediatly, *that God caried vp his people*,(or made them to ride vp)*vppon the high places of the earth, and gaue them the fruites thereof to feede them*,namely *the butter of Kyne, the milke of ſheepe, the fat of Muttons,of Lambes,and of Goates, the fat of Corne and the bloud of Grapes*,(for ſo he termeth them:)*and that he made them to eate Oyle out of the harde ſtones and honny out of the Rocks.* Hereby Moſes ment to vtter howe liberall (yea euen beyonde all opinion of man) God ſhewed himſelfe towards his people. His ſpeaking of the high places of the earth,is in reſpect of the ſituation of the lande of Chanaan: for it is high in compariſon of Egypt and of the countries thereabouts.To ſay(as ſome haue imagined)that it is the middeſt and (as ye would ſay) the Nauill of the earth,is to no purpoſe . Becauſe mention is Pſal.74.12. made of the mids of the earth among the Prophetes, ſome haue ſurmiſed that God meant to bound it out,as if he had beene ſome Geometrician that ſhould haue butteled and bounded the whole world.But whereas it is ſaide,in the mids of the earth,it is meant, in the mids of the lande that is to ſay, of Iewry. Yet notwithſtanding, as I ſaide afore, the Lande of Chanaan is high,if a man haue an eye to any of all the Countries round about it.Againe,it hath many mountains and high Rockes in it, inſomuch that at the firſt ſight a man woulde take it to be barren . And therefore Moſes declareth that the people ſhold eate honnie out of the Rockes, and Oyle out of the harde ſtones: that is to ſay,that where men would think there were nothing but wildernes, there would God make Olifetrees to growe:and where men would thinke to be nothing but barrenneſſe, there they ſhoulde gather honnie,and (to be ſhort) that eueriwhere there ſhoulde bee nothing but ſweeteneſſe and abundance.

Afterwarde hee ſpeaketh of *fat Sheepe,Goates and Lambes*. Trueth it is that in this place is vſed the worde *Baſan*, which had that name, of fatneſſe: for the hill of Baſan was a goodly countrie of paſture . And this is the cauſe,why hee expreſly ſpeaketh thereof . And let vs marke that Moſes neuer came within the land of Chanaan,hee had neuer ſo vewed it that hee coulde deſcribe it,as he doth heere . Needs therefore muſt hee ſpeake,not as a man,but as one whoſe tongue is gouerned by the ſpirite of God. And heere he treateth of the thinges which the people were to finde after the deceaſe; and yet hee ſpeaketh of them as if he had ſeene them,and as though the thinges had beene done alreadie. So then we haue a plain proofe that Moſes wrate not any thing on his owne heade,but was an inſtrument of the holy Ghoſt.For he left this ſong to the children of Iſrael, and made it common among them before his death,as wee haue ſeene afore. Whereby it was apparant,that hee was taught at Gods hand all the thinges which were vnknowen vnto him as in reſpect of the fleſh: & ſurely not euen the children of Iſrael themſelues coulde vnderſtande the contentes of that ſong, vntill they had had the experience of it.But the effect ſhewed that his ſo ſpeaking was not in vaine. The thing then which Moſes(or rather the holy Ghoſt by his mouth) intended; is to put the Iewes in minde, howe liberall God had ſhewed himſelfe to them , namely by bringing them into the Lande of promiſe, and by giuing them fruitfulneſſe, that it might ſuffice to maintaine them. And no doubt but he meant here to magnifie Gods goodnes , by declaring that he paſſed the common order of nature when he had ſuch a care to ſuſtaine his people ſo welthily in that lande which a man woulde neuer haue thought able to do it. So much the more therefore ought we to abhorre theſe diueliſh heades, which haue gone about to deface Gods grace in this behalfe, ſeeing that the holy ſcripture ſtandeth thereuppon, namely that men muſt not deeme according to the common order of nature, concerning Gods mainteining of his people after that manner. As for example, that curſed heretike which was executed heere among vs; He meaneth Seruetus. was not aſhamed to write in one of his books that the land of Chanaan is indeede ſpoken of, howebeit ouer fauourablie, and that they which haue ſo ſpoken thereof,haue made vs to beleeue many things vnaduiſedly.And what cauſed him ſo to do,but that he was a worldly man and a deſpiſer of God , ſeeking by all meanes to skorne God , and to aboliſh his grace , and that men might no more knowe how to worſhip him? So then yee ſee howe Gods grace was had in contempt.But contrariwiſe,we muſt alwayes be reſolued,that God hauing once made his promiſe to his ſeruant Abraham, did therupon intend to vtter his wonderfull power , as one that had a care of his people.Yea and we muſt call to mind what was ſaide yeſterday , namely that GOD had made his partition to the former inhabiters of that countrie,(to wit of the lande of promiſe) according to the number of the children of Iſrael,for he knewe wellynough what a multitude of people he was to maintaine there. That is a cauſe why Moſes declareth here again,that the Rocks yeelded hony,and yͤ ſtones brought forth Olifes: that there was paſtureground to yeelde fat muttons,lambs & goats, & to yeeld butter,& all manner of white meate, ſo as nothing might be wanting:alſo yͭ the land yeelded yͤ fat of corne (for he vſeth that terme,)as who ſhold ſay there were lumps in the meale, and nothing but pure and fine flower of wheate, ſo as our Lorde gaue his people abundance of all things ẏ he knewe to be meete for them: and that hee gaue them the bloud of ẏ grape, that is to ſay, the grapes were ſo full, that a man might haue preſſed as it were bloude out of them. To be ſhort, he declareth that God failed not his people in any thing, but prouided them ſtore of all things neceſſarie, yea and ſhewed himſelfe ſo liberall, that hee gaue them euē more than needed. Now after as God dealeth largely vnto vs, ſo muſt wee inlarge our harts to ſerue him, that we may be fully fraught with loue towardes him. For all the benefites which we receiue of him, muſt kindle our hearts to goe vnto him. We haue in them a taſt of his goodneſſe to draw vs vnto him. Now then if wee make not Gods gracious gifts auailable to vs, ſo as we loue him for them, and bee rauiſhed with deſire to come vnto him: it is certaine that wee muſt yeelde a ſorrowfull account for it. For wee vnhallow them, and abuſe them too ſhamefully, and thereby God looſeth the things which hee had beſtowed vpon vs as his children, becauſe it is not his meaning that they ſhould haue beene caſt away as vpon dogges.

For this cauſe Moſes aggrauateth heere the malice of the people, in that he ſaieth, that after God had ſhewed himſelfe ſo liberall, *foorthwith they became fatte, and being become thicke, fat, and as it were ſo brawned that they were readie to burſt with greace: they fell immediatly to defie the God which had made them, and to mocke at the ſtrength of their welfare*. Here wee be taught to call our ſelues daily to account for the benefites which God hath beſtowed vppon vs. Wherefore let vs beware that we deuour not the benefites which wee haue of God, forgetting them and the giuer of them; Nay, let vs make them all as notes of remembrance to put vs in mind how much we be bound and indebted vnto him. True it is that wee can neuer bring that to paſſe, according where- Pſal.40.6. to it is ſaide in the Pſalme, that if men imploy themſelues neuer ſo much to the conſidering of Gods gracious gifts, they ſhall finde themſelues graueled, for they be mo than the hayres of our heads. Yet notwithſtanding, it behoueth vs to doe our indeuour to magnifie our God, conſidering how greatly wee be bounde vnto him, and howe many wayes hee maketh vs to feele his goodnes. That is our true ſtudie; that is ẏ thing wherein we muſt exerciſe our ſelues all the time of our life. And the chiefe ſacrifice that God requireth of vs, is thankſgiuing, which is when we honour him with the things that we haue receiued of him, according to this ſaying of the hun- Pſal.116.12. dred and ſixteenth Pſalme, What ſhall I yeeld vnto the Lorde for all the good which hee hath done vnto mee? I will take the cup of ſaluation, and call vpon his name. So then let this text bea warning and incouragement to vs, to conſider better of our Gods benefites that wee may fare the better by them. That is one point.

And moreouer, when wee once knowe that God hath bounde vs vnto him, and dayly bindeth vs in hauing a care to ſuſtaine theſe our mortall bodies which are but carions & dung, the which neuertheleſſe he feedeth with bread: let the conſideration thereof make vs to mount vp higher, and to bethinke vs howe we be day- Ioh.4.14. & 6.35. lie fedde with the grace of his ſpirite, and refreſhed with the liuing waters which wee haue of him; yea and that we be fedde with our Lord Ieſus Chriſt himſelfe who is the heauenly breade that feedeth our ſoules. Let vs conſider theſe things, and learne therby to giue ourſelues wholly to our God who ſheweth himſelf ſo bountifull and liberall a father towards vs. If we do not ſo, we haue here a horrible condemnation. For (as I haue ſaid) to the intent to ſet out the miſchiefe ſo much the more to the full in that men diſcharge not their duetie to Godwarde, being ſo preuented by his drawing of them vnto him: Moſes putteth heere as it were into a paire of ſcales, on the one ſide Gods benefits, and on the otherſide the peoples forgetfulnes, negligence & vnthankfulnes. And this is the thing that in effect wee haue to remember out of this place.

Now it behoueth vs to marke well the thing that is rehearſed heere by Moſes, namely *that the Rightfull was growen fatte*. His attributing of that title to the people of Iſrael, is to ſignifie whereto they were called of God: for this comprehendeth the principall end of our calling. Gods adopting of vs to bee his children, is to the ende wee ſhoulde liue righteouſly. The Iewes are called a froward and crooked generation. Such Matt.16.4. then are the vnbeleeuers vntill our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt haue brought them home to himſelfe. On the contrarie part, when God calleth vs to be of his flocke or houſholde: then he reformeth vs, and he will haue vs to holde the way of ſaluation as he ſheweth it vnto vs. And ſuch ought the children of Iſrael to haue beene, ſeeing that God had choſen them. But what? It is ſaid that after the rightfull or righteous was waxen fatte, he fell to kicking againſt his maſter. Now if this bee ſaide nowadayes, it will bee double to our ſhame: for if our Lordes ſpeaking of righteouſneſſe or vprightneſſe be to ſhewe ẏ thoſe whom he had ſanctified, defiled themſelues, and that thoſe whom he had brought into the right way, were gone aſtray: it is to condemne them the more grieuouſly. Therefore it ought to make vs the more aſhamed, whē God ſhal ſay, What are yee? For I haue adopted you to be my children, and what a lookingglaſſe and patterne haue you in me? Ye ought to reſēble your father: ye knowe my goodnes and my iuſtice, and yet are you as crooked as ſerpents. Muſt we not needs be confounded with double ſhame, when God vpbraideth vs after that ſort? So then, let vs learne to what purpoſe God hath ordained vs in vouchſafing vs the grace to gather vs vnto him. Let vs follow the vprightnes which he cōmandeth vs, & let vs not ſwarue aſide from hi[illegible] Moreouer let hym vs beware ẏ fatneſſe blind vs not, and ſo mar vs leaſt when we haue beene full fedde for a time, we growe frowarde through Gods vſing of his liberalitie towards vs. And ẏ is a very needefull point,

point. For when God ſheweth himſelfe ſo liberal,and feedeth vs with abundance of all things: his ſo doing is to make vs to perceiue his goodneſſe the better. Therefore it ought to inflame vs the more, ſeeing that our Lorde handleth vs gently as though wee were his tender babes, as he himſelfe termeth vs. But wee ſee on the contrarie part,that if God deale bountifully with vs, wee play the ſtubborne and vnruly horſes. As a horſe that is ouerpampered in the ſtable wil not be ruled, but fals to kicking, and becomes ſo luſtie as if he were wilde: euen ſo is it with vs alſo: ſuch is our nature. And are wee to bee excuſed, when we ſhall haue abuſed Gods gifts after that faſhion? If it be demaunded what maketh men proude,what maketh men become wilde beaſts, ſo as they cannot away with any yoke, but are feerce and hardharted,and cannot afterward away with good inſtruction and warning, but are madde againſt God, puffed vp with pride and preſumption, ſtarke blinde, deſtitute of reaſon, and vtterly voide of modeſtie and humanitie: what is the cauſe of all this, but the good things which God hath beſtowed vppon them? And how may that bee? For it is a monſtrous thing, and a thing vtterly againſt nature. God commeth to vs,he vttereth his treaſures,hee woulde haue vs to knowe him to be as gentle and gratious a father as can be, hee maketh vs as it were cockeneyes; he could do no more to ſhewe what affection he beareth vs, except he ſhould powre out his bowels vppon vs; he interteineth vs as if it were in a Paradiſe, accordingly as it is ſaide of
Pſal.36.1. all thoſe whom God hath taught, namely that he keepeth them as much at their eaſe,as if they had all the commodities that coulde be wiſhed. Seeing then ẏ God hath ſhewed himſelfe ſuch a one; what a thing is it that men ſhoulde take occaſion thereby,to kicke againſt him, and to bee proude and full of preſumption & ouerweening, ſo as they ſhoulde deſpiſe all admonitions, yea and be as it were ſtark mad againſt all doctrine? And what a horrible ſin is this? Yet do wee make a trade and cuſtome of it. Whereby we ſee howe froward our nature is, and what a bottomleſſe pit of al vices and infections is in it.

And therefore let vs beare this doctrine ſo much the better in minde,where it is ſaid *that the righteous fell to kicking when he once became fat:* How that although wee had earſt ſome good plaine meaning in vs,& there appeared in vs ſome willingneſſe to ſerue God:yet aſſoone as we be waxen fatte,by and by we become wilde beaſtes, as appeareth euen by experience. Howe many be there, which are treatable & liue after ſome vpright manner, ſo long as God holdeth them in meane ſtate? True it is that we ſhall ſee a number of hypocrites alſo,who as long as they haue not wherwith to ſet out themſelues,will pretend to be as lowly as is poſſible,and yet all is but hypocriſie. Again there are others which wil beare the countenance of good behauiour,and be well ruled,and liue in the feare of God: but as ſoone as they be growen fatte,by and by they play the wilde beaſts,they be ſtarke mad,they ſhew their teeth,they put out their hornes,they fall to kicking,& they fling out againſt God. This is ſeene too much. And therefore it was not for the children of Iſrael onely that Moſes ſpake ſo: but the holy Ghoſt hath ſhewed vs heere as it were the liuely picture or image of the naughtines which is in vs,and wherunto we be inclined and giuen: that is to wit,that when God hath once made vs fatte, by and by in ſteede of liuing righteouſly which is the very condition whereupon he hath choſen vs to be his children,we fall to kicking againſt him.

And to amplifie the leawdneſſe yet more, of ſuch as doe ſo abuſe Gods gratious giftes; Moſes ſaith further, *Thou art become thicke and fatte, thou art as it were cumbered with thine owne fatte, thou art euen ouergrowen with fatte. And ſo he forgate*(or forſooke)*the God that made him,and ſkorned the ſtrong God of his welfare.* Whereas Moſes ſaith here that the people became luſty,fatte & thick,as though they had bin choked with their own greace: it is in two reſpects:the one to blame them ẏ ſorer,for that in ſteed of noting & marking well Gods benefites,ẏ thereby they might haue bin the more prouoked to ſerue and honour him: they deuoured them vp without meaſure or temperance: and alſo that the quantitie of Gods benefites was ſo great, that it behighted them the greater condemnation. Let vs marke well then,that if wee forget Gods benefites, they be regiſtred vp before him to put vs to reproch. Therfore we ſhall gaine nothing by the ſhortnes of our remembraunce,nor by our forgetting of the great number of Gods benefits,no nor yet by our defacing of them as much as in vs lieth:for God forgetteth not any thing, all thinges muſt needes come to account before him. Wherefore let vs prouide for it aforehand. And as (I haue ſaid) let euery of vs looke neerely to himſelfe, & the mo commodities we haue,let vs conſider ẏ our Lord bindeth vs the more to magnifie him,& wil haue vs to receiue the cup of ſaluation at his hand, & to call vpon his name,that our mouthes may be open to ſing ſongs of praiſe vnto him. Mark that for one point. And therefore let vs aſſure ourſelues ẏ this vnthankfulnes wil make vs the more vnexcuſable,ſeeing ẏ God ſetteth here before vs ẏ benefites which he had beſtowed vpō his people,& vſeth ſuch a number of words to ſhew that nothing was forgotten which he had done for ẏ people when they had once eſtranged thēſelues from him,and ẏ his intent in ſhewing himſelf ſo liberal,was not ẏ the people ſhoulde make none account of it,but ẏ they ſhold haue born al things wel in minde. Let ẏ therfore ſerue for one point.

Againe, when our God giueth vs ſuch abundance;let vs beware that we vſe his benefits wel. For ſurely to learne to be rich,and to haue abundance,and alſo to be contented with pouertie & Phil.4.12.
want (as ſaith S.Paul) is a poynt very hard to bee attained vnto: and yet it ought to be common to al the children of God. S. Paul,in ſaying that he could skil to be poore,meaneth that hee was patient, ſo as he neither troubled nor tormēted himſelfe when God ſent him ſcarſitie and want of eaſe:for he knew that God would not fail him in the end. Ye ſee then ẏ the knowledge of Gods

children,is on the one ſide to be poore. Againe on the otherſide he ſaith, that he can skill to abounde: meaning, that when God gaue him abundance and more than he needed: hee ouerſhot not himſelfe by abuſing it in ſuperfluous expenſes or in playing the looſe colt as men term it, but that he vſed it moderatly and meaſurably. Then if God giue vs more than wee neede, let vs aſſure our ſelues that in ſo doing he approcheth the neerer to vs,at leaſtwiſe if we can skill to vſe well the benefites which he hath beſtowed vpō vs,that is to ſay without vainglory,without pride,without diſorder, ſo as wee be not too much giuen to our delights, but vſe Gods benefites with meaſure and ſtayednes, and therwithall be readie to indure hunger and thirſt when it pleaſeth God, that if he giue vs abundance wee be not ſo drunken with it but that we ſtil acknowledge him to be our foſterfather. But we ſee on the contrary part howe the worlde behaueth it ſelfe in this behalfe. For what a ſort of drunkardes, what a ſort of gluttons ſhall a man ſee, which are like ſwine in a ſtie without any vnderſtanding or reaſon? They can fill their paunches wellynough,but they can no skill to lift vp their heades to heauen to honor him that findeth and maintaineth them ſo wealthily: their groynes & muſſels are euer grubbing downewarde to their feeding. Therefore let vs not reſemble them. If God giue vs wealth,let vs not pamper or pranck vp our ſelues, but rather let it bee as a ſpurre to quicken vs vp to come vnto him;the nearer that hee approcheth vnto vs,and the more that hee maketh vs to feele his goodnes;the more wholly let vs yeeld our ſelues thereto.That is the thing which we be taught in this text.

Now whereas Moſes ſaith,*Hee forſooke the God which made him,and skorned the ſtrong God of his welfare*: thereby hee ſheweth vs after what manner we abuſe Gods benefites,namely by ſhrinking away from him,whereas he would haue vs to bee brought neerer to him. For(as I ſaide afore)all the commodities which God giueth vs in this world ought to be as ladders whereby to climbe vp to him. And if we be wedded to the earth, it is the way to make vs turne the benefits of our God to the cleane contrarie. Therefore let vs take good heede that we prouoke him not to diſpleaſure. And whereas Moſes ſaieth, that it was God that created his people: hee meaneth it not alonely as in reſpect that he is the maker of the world,but as in reſpect that hee had choſen that people, and had made as it were a newe worlde of them. For Gods fetching of the children of Iſrael out of the lande of Egypt, his feeding of them in the wildernes, and his putting of them in poſſeſſion of the land which he had promiſed vnto them,were as a newe creating of them: He had not onely made them men, but alſo newe men. So then the making that Moſes ſpeakes of here,is not of the firſt making whereby the children of Iſrael were brought into the worlde: but of Gods reforming of them to bee his children. And it is the very ſame thing that is ment in the fourescore and fifteenth Pſalm. Now then(ſaith Moſes) will ye ſpite him which hath twice made you after that faſhion? What an vnthankfulnes were that? The like condemnation lyeth vpon vs nowadayes, if we walke not in the obedience of our God, ſeeing he hath not onelie placed vs in the worlde,but alſo called vs to the hope of the endleſſe life,reforming vs by his holy ſpirit, and calling vs to the knowledge of the Goſpell of our Lord Ieſus Chriſt. Sith it is ſo,let vs beware we forget it not,or that we ſhrink not away from him in any wiſe. Yea and let vs marke well the word that Moſes vſeth in ſaying that *they mocked or skorned the ſtrong God of their welfare*. The terme that hee vſeth commeth of a *foole* or *thing of nothing*,[as if a man would ſay,they befooled him, or they louted him.] Whereby he aggrauateth the ouergreat skornefulneſſe of that people in not honoring God as they ought to haue done. Then if wee yeelde not God his due glorie and praiſe,it is all one as if wee made no account of him,or as if wee bleared out our tongues at him in way of mockage: And that were too exceſſiue vnthankfulneſſe or rather vntolerable trecherie. Therfore let vs beware that we be not guiltie of ſuch a crime as is the deſpiſing of him which is the ſtrong holde of our welfare, that is to ſay, him vpon whom we ſtay, without whom we can by no meanes continue,which keepeth vs vnder his protection,and to be ſhort, of whom we hold our life and all that belongeth thereunto. Muſt we not needes be worſe than brute beaſtes,when we forget him? Let vs vnderſtand then that beſides the other benefites which God beſtoweth vpon vs, we be alſo ſetled vpon his power, ſo as he hath ỹ gouerning of vs,and we be after ſuch a ſort in his tuition,that we finde him alwayes the fortreſſe of our welfare, to the intent that wee holding our ſelues to him, may knowe alſo that hee is euer readie and forwarde to increaſe his gratious giftes and to multiplie them, vntill hee haue brought vs to the full perfection of our ſaluation.

Pſal 95.7.

Nowe let vs fall downe before the maieſtie of our good GOD with acknowledgment of our faults,praying him to make vs feele them more and more,and therewithall that hauing ſhewed himſelfe ſo gratious towards vs,hee ſuffer vs not to forget his benefits,nor to abuſe the ſuſtenāce which hee giueth vs in this worlde;but that wee may be drawen further by it,namely to ſeeke the heauenly foode of our ſoules leaſt they ſhoulde ſtarue,and that our whole ſtay and contentation may be in the doctrine which is dayly deliuered vs by the Goſpel, and in the grace of our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt; ſo as all his ſpirituall gifts may bee applied by vs to the glorifying of our good god: that when his glorie ſhineth forth in this world, we may perfectly be partakers thereof,after wee bee rid of this mortall fleſh,and diſpatched from the tranſitorie ſtate of this earthly life. That it may pleaſe him to graunt this grace not onely to vs but alſo to al people and Nations of the earth &c.

On Wedneſday the iij. of Iune, 1556.

The CLXXXII.Sermon which is the fifth vppon the two and thirtith Chapter.

16 They haue prouoked him with their ſtrange gods,& ſtirred him to diſpleaſure with their abhominations.

17 They haue offered ſacrifice to Deuils, and not vnto God: to gods whom they haue not knowen, to newe gods lately come vp, whom your fathers feared not.

18 Thou haſt forgotten the ſtrong God that begate thee: and beene vnmindefull of the God that ſhaped thee.

19 The Lorde ſawe it and was ſore grieued at it by reaſon of the prouocation of his ſonnes and daughters.

HEere Moſes declareth the vnthankfulneſſe of the people, in that they peruerted the ſeruice of God, hauing the lawe whereby they were taught after what manner God woulde bee honored, and being inſtructed at his hande that they ought to giue themſelues wholly to him, and not go ſeeke vnto ydols, nor borrowe any thing of the heathen and Infidels. But notwithſtanding all this, the people ceaſed not to take the bridle in their teeth, and to mingle a ſort of ſuperſtitions with the ſeruice of God. Inſomuch as it ſufficed them not to haue God to their father, but they woulde needes haue a number of other patrons, as men terme them. And this befell not onely when Moſes wrate this ſong: but alſo the holy ghoſt informed him of the things that were then to come vpon that people, and this record was of neceſſitie to bee giuen thereof. And ſo this ſong ſerued to ſhewe the tranſgreſſours of Gods lawe, that they coulde not ſcape the hande of the heauenly Iudge, ſeeing their ſinnes were knowen ſo long aforehande. For howe is it poſſible that God ſhould forget the faultes that wee haue committed, or howe is it poſſible for vs to blindfolde his eyes that he ſhould not ſee them, ſeeing he foreſawe our euill doings euen long afore we were borne, and is the iudge of them?

But heere Moſes vpbraideth the people, *That they had prouoked God by ſtraunge Gods, that they had ſtirred him vp to ielouſie, and that they ſet his wrath on fire with their abhominations.* Firſt wee muſt call to rememberance what hath beene ſaide as well in the fifth Chapter as in other places: namely Deut.5.9. that this worde *ielouſie* is attributed to God, becauſe hee will haue vs to worſhippe none but himſelfe alone: and alſo becauſe hee admitteth vs with this condition, that wee ſhoulde walke before him in all manner of pureneſſe. When a man misbehaueth himſelfe, it is all one as if a woman forſaking her husbande, ſhoulde play the harlot and giue ouer her ſelf to al leawdnes. That then is the cauſe why God termeth himſelfe iealous. Not that he is ſubiect to any paſſions; but to ſhewe that his honour is deare to him, and that he cannot away with any companion, but that if we will acquite our ſelues of the faith that we haue plighted vnto him, wee muſt yeeld ourſelues wholy vnto him, we muſt behaue ourſelues ſoundly & vncorruptly without doublenes, we muſt not ſtand debating what God we ſhould ſticke vnto, but we muſt let him haue the poſſeſſion of vs, & not make any minglemangle or corruption. And that is the cauſe why Moſes expreſly addeth the worde *ſtraunge*, as though a woman forgetting her ſelfe to bee vnder couert baron, or that ſhe is bounde vnto her husbande by reaſon of the faith which ſhe hath plighted vnto him: ſhoulde goe make herſelfe common to ſuch as had no intereſt in her. In the ſame taking are wee, when wee inuent newe gods to worſhip them at our owne pleaſure.

Moſes addeth *their abhominations*: meaning that as ſoone as wee ſteppe aſide from the liuing God, and from the doctrine whereby he woulde haue vs to bee ruled; all our life is deteſtable before him, what colour of good intent ſo euer wee ſet vppon it, as the vnbeleeuers beare themſelues euer in hande that they doe well when they corrupt the true religion with their owne fancies. They beare themſelues in hand that all ſhoulde be well: but God cleane contrarie wiſe auoweth that in thoſe doings of theirs there is nothing but curſedneſſe. And ſo let vs marke well, that God alloweth not any Religion which is not ruled by his worde, and that it ſhall be in vaine for vs to alledge that wee thought we did for the beſt, when we ſought patrons and aduocates and inuented newe gods of our owne heade. All theſe thinges may perchaunce goe for good on mens behalfe, who deceiue themſelues with their owne dotages and dreames: but yet hath GOD giuen his definitiue ſentence vpon them, which hee will not repeale.

And to aggrauate the euill, Moſes addeth *that they were newe gods, gods that were ſtart vp but a while agoe, gods whom their fathers knewe not:* and ſo in effect, that they had done ſacrifice; not vnto God, but vnto the diuel. When hee ſpeaketh here of newe gods, whome the fathers feared not, and which came vp but tother day: thereby God doth the children of Iſrael to vnderſtande, that they ought to haue ſticked vnto him, becauſe hee is the maker of the world, and there was none but hee onely from all euerlaſtingneſſe, and that without him there is nothing firme and ſtable. Here therefore hee reprooueth the peoples fooliſhneſſe in forging newe gods to themſelues, euen ſuch gods as had neuer beene knowen of afore. And heere wee muſt note, that Moſes termeth al things by the name of *Nouelties*, which are inuented by men, though the error haue continued neuer ſo long time. For it is a fondneſſe to alledge that men haue done ſo heretofore a hundred yeares ago, and that things haue beene helde and obſerued ſo beyonde all remembrance of man. For God paſſeth not for that. And why? Wee muſt goe to the euerlaſtingneſſe which hath beene before the creation of the worlde. Men then can not preiudice Gods trueth by their long poſſeſſing of their abuſes. For God will ſtill vſe ſuch ſtyle as wee ſee heere, namely, that it is all but newe ſtuffe. For in deede the ydols of whome mention is made heere, had beene worſhipped long time afore. As for example, the Egyptians boaſted themſelues to haue beene often thouſande yeares continuance before the creating of the worlde: they bare them ſelues in hande that they had their kingdome long afore the Moone was created in the skye. But what coulde all this boote them as in reſpect of their ſuperſtitions? Let vs marke well then, that the children of Iſraell, intermedling themſelues with the abuſes and corruptions of ſuch as boaſted themſelues to haue liued after that faſhion by the ſpace of fiue hundred, a thouſande, three thouſande, yea and (as I ſayde) ten thouſande yeares before the creation of the worlde, are (notwithſtanding all this) condemned of deuyſing of newe gods. Coulde not they haue replyed thus? This is not newe: for let it bee inquired, and it will bee founde that the Egyptians haue euer liued ſo: and Gods lawe may bee called newe in compariſon, at leaſtwiſe to outwarde ſeeming. But (as I ſayde afore) Moſes had an eye to Gods euerlaſtingneſſe. For if yee ſeeke there for the things that men haue deuiſed; yee ſhall finde them to bee nothing. And why ſo? For (as it is ſayde in the Pſalme) a thouſande yeares are but as one day in Gods ſight. In deede wee make great account of a thouſande yeares: but that is becauſe wee paſſe away in poſt through the worlde. For after a two or three turnes, wee bee fayne to returne from whence wee came. By reaſon of the ſhortneſſe and brittleneſſe of our life, wee make a greate matter of it if a thing haue continued fourtie or threeſcore yeares, and much more if it continue a hundred yeares. And if it holde out to a thouſande: then wee thinke wee ſhoulde neuer make any more ſticking at it, nor any more gayneſay it: but in deede all this is but mockerie, as I haue declared before.

Pſal.90.4.& 2.Pet.3.8.

And truely GOD created the worlde to the ende that his maieſtie ſhoulde bee ſeene both aboue and beneath, as in a looking glaſſe, and hee hath taught men that it is hee, to whome they ought to come. Adam knewe that. Neuertheleſſe, moſt men haue falne away to ſuperſtition, inſomuch that wee ſee that the ſeruice of GOD was imbaced euen in the life of Adam, and that it was fayne to bee reformed againe as it were by miracle. When the floude came, God cleanſed the earth newe againe. And whereas hee reſerued but one only houſholde wherein there were but eight perſons: it was a meane to bring home the worlde againe vnto him: that whereas they had all beene backeſlyders afore, and had turned away from him, they ought as then to haue come to reaſon, and to haue reformed themſelues by the thinges which they had ſeene with their eyes. But beholde, there followed a newe falling away euen in the life of Noy. His owne children forſooke the ſeruice of GOD, and forged ydols to them ſelues. Nowe this ought of reaſon to bee taken for newe. But the miſchiefe continueth ſtill, and wee ſee that ydolatrie reigned euen in the time of Abraham. Foure hundred yeares mo had paſſed at ſuch time as the lawe was giuen, yea, there were paſſed about a fiue hundred yeares ſince the time that Abraham had beene an ydolater at home with his father. Superſtition therefore had beene auncient, and was become as it were rotten. Men had weltered in it ſo long time, that they might well ſay, We in theſe dayes are not the firſt beginners thereof. No: but though an errour bee once waxen olde, yet muſt not men make a cuſtome of it, neither muſt they of a wicked cuſtome make a continuall lawe or rule. Loe howe men beguyle themſelues by ſticking too ſtiffely to things that are growen into euill cuſtome. For why? They beare them ſelues in hande, that if a thing haue beene vſed of long time, then it is lawfull for men to doe it. But an euill cuſtome is nothing elſe than an errour forgrowen. And it is ſo much the woorſe and the more to bee miſliked, becauſe God hath beene the grieuouſlyer offended by it. Wherefore let vs beware that wee drawe not thinges to a conſequence, becauſe they haue beene abuſed of long time: but let vs ſtill returne backe to the originall.

Gen.7.17.

Ioſua.24.2.

And this is a verie neceſſarie poynt for vs in theſe dayes. For the Papiſtes affirme that the thinges which wee doe, are newe, and that they were inuented but a whyle agoe. Yea, but if wee aske them a proofe of their antiquitie, what ſay they? That ſuch thinges haue beene done nowe theſe fiue hundred yeares. Truely they lye moſt commonly with full mouth. For the thing which they holde as chiefe and moſt reſolute, is not of ſo long continuance. If yee ſeek for their confeſſion, or ſhrift, about a foure hundred yeares agoe, there was no lawe at all thereof. If yee looke for their tranſubſtantiation, it is in like caſe. They make men beleeue that the breade is no more a materiall

thing, but that it is God whome wee ought to worſhip. And that is ſpycke and ſpawne newe, I meane euen in accounting after the manner of men. In like caſe is it with all the reſidue. If wee looke vppon all the faſhions which they holde at this day, ſurely they bee but a renuing of the thinges that were in olde tyme, and yet there is little or no reſemblaunce in them. But let vs put the caſe it were to bee graunted them, that the forme of religion which they holde hath beene obſerued by the ſpace of a thouſande yeares or mo. What will a thouſand yeares helpe when wee come before GOD?
Pſal.90.4.& 2.Pet.3.8. They will not bee reckened for a day, no nor for a minute, as I ſayde afore. And where is then our true antiquitie? In Ieſus Chriſt who is the beginning of all thinges, and to whome all things are to bee brought backe againe: In the liuing God, by whom our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt is ſent vnto vs, to make his will knowen vnto vs. There muſt wee bee grounded, if wee will haue the auncient faith. For in holding our ſelues to men, wee ſhall haue nothing but noueltie. Score wee vp neuer ſo many yeares, they will ſtande vs in no ſteede, for all paſſeth and glydeth away. But wee muſt haue him, which hath neither beginning nor ending, and his vnchangeable trueth muſt bee our rule. When wee reſt vppon that, then haue wee the auncient faith. And therefore wee at this day may well proteſt againſt the Papiſtes, Turkes, and Iewes themſelues, that they bee backeſlyders, and haue withdrawen themſelues from the true and pure religion, and that wee continue in the doctrine which hath beene followed in all ages, worſhipping the God which created vs, which gaue foorth his lawe by the hand of Moſes, and which hath vttered himſelf moſt perfectly by the Goſpel. Bring wee here any newe thing? Say wee that men muſt haue newe rules and newe faſhions inuented by men as the Papiſtes doe? For all their Religion is grounded vppon theſe poyntes, namely, that they muſt keepe the traditions of their elders, that they muſt obſerue the lawes of their mother holy Church, that the ſame muſt bee taken in equall authoritie with the holy Scripture, and that the holy Ghoſt was not giuen fully ynough to the Apoſtles, but that the perfection of thinges was reuealed afterwardes to a ſort of hypocrites and I wote not to whome elſe. Thoſe are thinges whereon the Papiſtes reſt. The Turkes are altogether Renegates. The Iewes haue peruerted the lawe, and haue no more of it but the dead letter, becauſe they
2 Cor,3,6,7 8. haue refuſed Ieſus Chriſt who is the ſoule thereof as Saint Paul termeth him. So then, wee may well proteſt, that our faith is auncient, for as much as it is grounded vppon Gods trueth, who neuer chaungeth ne varyeth, and that men haue not taught vs any thing on their owne head, but that wee haue the ſame God which hath vttered him ſelfe in all ages, and that wee followe the doctrine whereunto hee woulde haue men to holde themſelues, which likewiſe is euerlaſting. Thus much concerning the firſt poynt.

And as touching the mention that is made of the fathers, let vs marke that in this behalfe wee muſt in any wiſe vſe diſcretion, that wee take not thoſe indifferently for our fathers, which could not beget vs by the worde of God. For the Egyptians and all the Infidels of the worlde coulde welynough ſay, Our fathers liued ſo, ſo haue they taught vs, wee holde our religion of them: and ſuch ſayinges might wel bee ſet as a ſheelde to defende them. But becauſe God diſclaymed their fathers, therefore coulde that excuſe ſtande them in no ſteede. For God preſuppoſeth heere that hee had called to him both Abraham and the Patriarkes, and alſo that they had helde the true religion, which thing did put a difference betwene them and the reſt of the whole worlde.

Againe, whereas hee ſayeth, *that they had worſhipped gods whome their fathers feared not:* it is all one as if hee ſhoulde vpbrayd them, ſaying; What? I adopted and chooſe your fathers to bee my children, and they worſhipped mee as their God, and will you nowe forſake mee? To bee ſhort, wee muſt holde this for a generall rule, our fathers are thoſe whome God hath reputed, and aduowed to bee his children. Therefore whoſoeuer ſeeketh any other fathers than the children of God, ſhall finde nothing but baſtardie. And at that poynt are the Papiſtes. For in ſpeaking of the fathers, they conſider not that the Apoſtles and ſuch other as haue beene begotten by the pure doctrine of the Goſpel, are our true fathers: but they call hypocrites, and dreamers, yea and ſcorners of GOD which haue turned all thinges vpſide downe, their fathers. They alledge the greate Aſſes which neuer taſted any whit of the holy Scripture; ſo that if a man marke what maner of fathers they auouche, ſurely it is ſo fonde a thing, that they bee woorthie to bee laughed to ſcorne for it euen of little babes. True it is that for honours ſake they will ſay that Saint Auſtine, S. Ambroſe, and Saint Bernarde are their fathers: but if any good thing be alledged that is founde in them, they abhorre that: in ſo much that if they had them aliue at this day, they woulde burne them as well as they doe the Martyrs, whom wee ſee them handle moſt cruelly. Therefore (as I ſayde afore) it behoueth vs to walke diſcreetely in that behalfe, and to conſider who bee our true fathers that wee may followe them: namely thoſe whome God auoweth for his children, and haue begotten vs by his worde, which haue helde vs to it, and which haue taught vs it. But as ſoone as this incorruptible ſeede of ſaluation is marred; by 1.Pet.1.23,
and by there is no more fatherhood. And herein wee muſt practiſe Saint Paules ſaying, which is, that all kinred proceedeth of God. Let vs Eph.3,15.
then referre all kinred vnto God, and ſo ſhall wee not bee aſhamed. But if euery man will needes followe his owne fathers without difference; hee ſhall finde that when the blynde followeth the blynde, both of them fall into the pit and breake their neckes together. At that

poynt are all they which ſtande ſtiffely in their owne opinion againſt God, & leane to yͤ things which haue beene deuiſed by men. Therefore let vs bee well aduiſed, and ſeeing GOD hath graunted vs the grace to haue his goſpel planted once among vs, let vs continue in all pureneſſe, holding our ſelues wholly vnto him, that there may bee a conformitie and agreement betweene vs and thoſe that haue ſhewed vs the right way. Thus yee ſee in effect what wee haue to remember vppon this text, where Moſes blameth the Iewes for ſtarting backe, & for deuiſing of new gods which had not beene feared among their fathers.

Yea and wee muſt bethinke vs of that which Ier.2.10. is ſayd in the ſeconde Chapter of Ieremy. Go your wayes (ſayth hee) into all the countryes afarre off, get ye ouer the ſea, ſeeke throughout al the yles, and ſee if there be any people that forſaketh their gods: yet are they no gods, they bee but ydoles and dead thinges: but you haue forſaken mee, euen mee who am the fountaine of liuing water. God ſheweth there that ydolaters are wilful in their leaſings: inſomuch that although the diuell haue ſo bewitched them that they bee voyde of diſcretion and reaſon, & cannot iudge of any thing: yet notwithſtanding they be wedded ſtill to their follies. And becauſe they thinke they do well, they holde them to it, and they can by no meanes bee turned from it. Yee ſhall ſee them as greatly bent to their willes, as may bee, and yet they haue no foundation nor proofe thereof. Now then, that we which haue knowen Gods trueth; which are ſure that it is hee which created and ſhaped vs, and which hath vttered himſelfe to vs by his lawe, by his Prophets, and by his Goſpel; that wee which haue ſuch warrant and certeintie, that wee which haue the fathers & the greate clowde of witneſſes to guyde vs (as the Apoſtle Hebr.12.1. termeth them in the Epiſtle to the Hebrewes:) that wee which after the Apoſtles haue alſo had the Martyrs & thoſe which haue receiued the Goſpel with pure obediẽce, & followed the ſimplicitie thereof: that we (I ſay) ſhould yet notwithſtanding loue better the corruption, dung, & filthines brought in by men, & that we ſhould find in our hearts to haue Gods word falſifyed among vs: what a thing were that? Muſt it not needes be that wee be as it were mad, when we be o vnſtedfaſt & light mynded, as to ſtart away from that which is certaine and infallible? After that maner then muſt wee put this text in vre, to yͤ intent we be not accuſed before God, as ſekers of new gods which were not knowẽ to our fathers, & which came vp but a while agoe.

The word that Moſes vſeth here betokeneth properly to ſtand in awe, to feare, or to tremble before God. Wherby he ſheweth that Gods maieſtie ought to bee ſo dreaded of vs, yͭ we ſhould ſtoope vnto it, & be caſt down & humbled at it. Not that God would haue vs to be afrayd of it, for we can neuer ſerue him with our good will, & with a pure & free heart, if wee conceiue ſuch a feare of him as ſhal make vs to flee from him. But there are two things in the ſeruice of God, as is ſhewed vs in the Pſalme which ſhalbe ſong Pſal.5.8. anon, namely that in comming vnto God, wee muſt bee touched with a certeine feare, to yeeld him his due reuerence. That is one point. And therewithall wee muſt alſo conſider his goodnes, that wee may take courage to come vnto him, & be bold to cal vpon him, not douting but that he heareth vs, & that we ſhalbe wel accepted at his hand. Marke wel therefore what this word *Feare*, importeth, that wee may learne to hold our ſelues vnder the obedience of our God with ſuch awe as none of vs may take leaue to runne aſtray, as wee ſee men do, whoſe boldnes is ſuch that they fling abrode euery where, becauſe they make but a ſporte & a dalyance of God. Therefore let vs beware that wee be not ſo rude as to daly with ſo great a Lorde; but rather let vs be ſeaſoned with ſuch a feare aforehand, as may alwayes hold vs in awe: and yet notwithſtanding not cauſe vs to ceaſſe frõ worſhipping of our God, in ſuch ſort as hee may be amyable to vs, and we may preaſe boldly to him knowing well that he will receiue vs with pitie, Pſal.103.13 as a father doth his children, ſeeing hee calleth vs to him before we come.

Nowe in the ende Moſes ſayeth, *that they offered ſacrifice to diuels & not vnto God.* This ſaying may ſeeme rough and hard at the firſt ſight. For if a man had asked the heathen concerning their intent, they would haue ſayd by & by, We knowe there is one chiefe God: but wee haue many gods becauſe the maieſtie of God is ſpred out euery where. And therefore foraſmuch as we cannot attaine to ſo high a thing, it behooueth vs to haue meanes. That is the cauſe why they forged ſuch a multitude of gods. As for the diuels, they abhorred them. The Heathen could as will ſkill as the Papiſtes to ſay, Wee intende not to haue aught to doe with the diuels, ſauing the ſorcerers, (for there haue euer beene ſome ſuch) but I ſpeake as touching their cõmon religion: and it is certaine that all of them woulde haue proteſted, Our will is to ſerue God. But what is anſwered them heere by the mouth of Moſes, who is appoynted Iudge with full authoritie, and is as the inſtrument of the holy Ghoſt? Ye ſerue the diuel. Wee ſee then that all their excuſes ſhall ſtande them in no ſteede, and that this muſt holde to the condemnation of the whole worlde, namely, that as ſoone as men ſwarue neuer ſo litle from yͤ pure trueth, it is a ſeruing of the diuell, and the diuel hath a parte in all their doings: for God refuſeth euery whit of it. And it is a text well worthie to bee noted, to the intent that the ignorant wretches may bee wakened, and vnderſtande that in grounding themſelues vpon their owne good intentes, they doe nothing elſe but increaſe Gods vengeance vppon their heads, without amending their caſe thereby. Wherefore let vs on our ſyde vtterly abhorre all that euer is contrarie to the ſeruice of God, & make much of the fauour that hath beene ſhewed vs in his deliuering of vs from ſuch a bottomleſſe pit. We haue thought our ſelues to haue done maruellouſly well in ſeruing of ydols; we haue eſteemed it an Angels life to trot vp and down from altar to altar, and from chappel to chappel, to babble before puppets, to heare Maſſes, and to ſet our mindes vppon ſuch other gewgawes. But in the meane while, beholde, God telleth vs that wee ſerued the diuel. It is a horrible thing for vs to heare him ſay ſo. Therefore let vs looke that wee condemne our ydolatries, and bee ſory that wee haue ſo prouoked Gods wrath againſt vs. And therewithall let vs conſider the ineſtimable good which he hath done vs, in reaching vs his hande to lift vs out of the gulfe wherein wee were plunged. That is the thing which wee haue to remember vpon this Text. And therfore let vs be throughly ſettled in the pure doctrine, and in the ſimplicitie of the holy Scripture. For why? As long as wee holde that rule, wee bee ſure that GOD will allowe of the ſeruice which wee doe vnto him. But if wee mingle any thing with it of our owne fancies, or if we borrowe any thing of men; all is marde and corrupted, and the diuel is foorthwith put in poſſeſſion of all that euer wee doe, and God renounceth vs, according to this ſaying of his by the Prophet Ezechiel. Ezec.20.39 Hence (ſayeth he) I giue ouer my part, I will haue neither little nor much to doe in this caſe, I require no more of you: yee thinke to ſerue mee and your ydoles together, but I renounce you and giue you ouer quite and cleane to the diuell: for I intende not that you ſhall ſo mingle mee with your dung and filthineſſe. Thus you ſee in effect what Moſes meant to declare heere.

Nowe hee addeth, *that the people forgate the God which had begotten them, and the mightie one which had created and ſhaped them.* Hee vſeth ſtill the ſame worde which I haue tranſlated before, and which ſignifieth properly a *Rocke*. And God is ſo termed, becauſe we be preſerued, and mayntained by his power, as if a houſe were grounded and buylded vpon a rocke. Whereas hee ſayeth that the people had forgotten the God which had begotten them, it is to bereaue them of all excuſe of ignorance. For the Heathen might well haue ſayde that they had neuer taſted a whit of the true religion, and that their weltring after that manner in their owne dotages, was for want of teaching, and that it is no woonder though a blynd man ſtumble or goe aſtray in the darke. The Heathen might haue alleaged after that ſort for themſelues. But as for thoſe to whome the lawe had bin giuen, there was no ſuch ſtarting hole for them. Ioſu.24.2. Exod.3.15. & 34.1. For God had drawen their father Abraham from the ydolatrie wherein he liued, as is declared in the laſt Chapter of Ioſua. Hereupon, about a foure hundred yeres after, he put them the better in mynde againe that he was the liuing God. And afterward he did ſet down his wil euen in writing. It was his minde that it ſhould bee a preſident of authoritie whereby to knit a mutuall agreement betweene him and them, as if hee ſhoulde ſay, I wilbee your father, and bee you my children. Seeing then that the people of Iſrael were taught after that faſhion, and God vttered himſelfe ſo familiarly vnto them; what can they ſay, or what excuſe can they alledge, for their turning away to the ſuperſtitions of the Heathen, and for their peruerting of the trueth, which was ſo throughly knowen vnto them, and yet they turned it into lyes, inſomuch as they fell to the quenching of the light of ſaluation, and woulde needes goe wilfully and wittingly aſtray, ſeeking their owne deſtruction euen after that God had reached them his hande, and ſhewed them the way of ſaluation? According whereunto wee haue ſeene the proteſtation that Moſes made in the thirtith Chapter, ſaying: This is the way, walke therein. Deut.30.15 Is it not too ſhamefull a rebelliouſneſſe, when folke will ſo deſpiſe God and not ſticke vnto him? So then, it is not cauſeleſſe that they bee accuſed in this text to haue forgotten the GOD which ſhaped them. And therefore let vs marke well, that when wee haue once knowen God, the ſame ought to ſuffice to holde vs in continuall obedience towardes him, if wee were not too too vnthankfull. Nothing ought to holde vs ſo ſure as the knowing of GOD. For then may wee ſay, This is our GOD, wee haue no dout nor miſweening of him, as they haue which deceiue themſelues by following their owne imaginations, but wee haue the certaine trueth which cannot beguyle vs. Had we therefore well profited in the knowledge of GOD, ſurely it woulde ſuffice to holde vs in awe. And although wee were neuer ſo ſore turmoyled on all ſydes, ſo as the diuell did caſt neuer ſo many ſtumbling blockes in our wayes, and wee had neuer ſo many occaſions giuen to turne vs aſyde, and wee ſee neuer ſo greate diuerſitie of opinions and whatſoeuer elſe is poſſible: ſurely if wee haue profited in Gods ſchoole, and knowe him as wee ought to doe, wee ſhall neuer bee turned away from him. And that is Saint Paules meaning where hee ſayeth, Eph.4.14. that ſuch as are well grounded in the Goſpel, ſhall no more bee like little babes that wilbee allured at the ſhewing of an apple, and turne their heads this way and that way after it, and that if a man put a toye in their head, by and by they bee carryed away with it, and forget the thing which they were in loue withall a litle afore. S. Paul ſayth that if wee be well ſettled in the Goſpell, wee ſhall not bee any more ſo led by the billes, neither ſhall the diuell bee able to woorke vs ſuch illuſions, but that wee ſhall abyde vnuanquiſhable, and hee ſhall gayne nothing at our hands. For our faith ſhall be ſtedfaſt.

Alſo on the contrarie parte, if wee doe eſtrange ourſelues from GOD, after wee haue once knowen him, it betokeneth a deſperate malice in vs, it is not for vs to cloke the matter as then, for all that wee can alleage wilbee to no purpoſe. Then is it a thruſting of GOD vnder our foote, if after his ſhewing of him ſelfe vnto vs, wee corrupt the pureneſſe of his woorde in chaunging the Religion which hee hath giuen vnto vs, and in leauing the rule which it behooued vs to followe. Nowe wee ſee the meaning of Moſes. And therefore ſeeing that God hath beene ſo gracious to vs as to reueale his will vnto vs, and ſheweth vs that hee is the liuing God: let vs take heed that wee wauer not any more, ne bee Eph.4.14. any more as reedes that yeeld to euery wynde, but that wee continue ſtedfaſt in the fayth wee haue receiued by his worde, leaſt it bee caſt in our teeth that wee haue forgotten him with all the benefites which wee haue receiued at his hande.

And heere Moſes ſetteth not downe ſingly the worde *God*, but ſayeth, *The God which begate thee, the mightie one which ſhaped thee.* Here Moſes telleth the people of Iſraell, that they had good cauſe to holde him for their God, if they had not quyte and cleane forgotten the gracious goodneſſe which they had earſt founde in him by experience. And that is a thing well woorthie to bee weyed. For it is Gods will not onely to bee knowen in his beeing or in his name, but alſo to ſhewe himſelfe to vs by his deedes, ſo as wee haue true recordes of his power, goodneſſe, mercie, and iuſtice. Seeing then that God hath ſo ſhewed himſelfe to vs, what is our vnthankfulneſſe if wee knowe him not? Is it not too ſhamefull? Therefore wee muſt alwayes conſider, that God hath cauſed it to be declared vnto vs, not onely that it is hee whome wee ought to feare, and to whome wee ought to be ſubiect without any further proofe, but alſo that therewithall it is hee that hath begotten vs. And this is to bee marked yet better of vs, than it was of the men of olde time vnder the lawe. For wee haue our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt the onely ſonne, into whoſe bodie wee be graffed that we may become the ſonnes of God. Therefore the body of the tree and roote of our adoption, is that wee bee made the brethren of our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt. For beeing begotten of God, wee bee nouriſhed and ſuſtayned by the doctrine of his Goſpel. Nowe if wee conſider what wee were before, namely, the children of Adam and heires of euerlaſting curſedneſſe: and alſo if wee haue an eye to thoſe whome God ſuffereth to runne into deſtruction, it will yeelde the greater glory to the fauour which hee ſheweth vs. Seeing then that God doeth nowe drawe vs to him to bee his owne, and to bee of his houſholde, ſhall wee fling away from him? Shall wee rather followe ydoles which wee are not acquainted with? Wee ſee then as nowe, that wheras Moſes doeth ſo grieuouſly blame the children of Iſraell, hee doeth it not without cauſe, conſidering the experience which they had had of Gods goodnes, power and iuſtice, and yet that they had made no reckoning of it.

In reſpect whereof hee ſayeth that *God ſawe it and was angrie at it, euen becauſe of the misbehauiour of his ſonnes and daughters.* This ſentence is a confirmation of my former ſaying. For whereas the Iewes are termed the children of God, it is not in way of honour, but rather to ſhewe that they were guiltie of ſuch vnfaithfulneſſe as to forſake their God, and to rebell againſt him, and to woorke him ſuch ſpyte, as that they had leuer chuoſe the deuil than him. Thus yee ſee howe wee ought to ioyne theſe two thinges together, namely, that God is the mightie one which begate vs, and of whom wee holde all thinges: and therewithall that hee hath receiued vs and adopted vs to be his children. But wee ſhall pay full deare for it, if wee continue not in his obedience. The thing then whereunto wee muſt come backe, is that if God cannot beare with the wickednes of the world, ne doeth forgiue the vnbeleeuers which haue ſinned without the knowledge of his wil: needes muſt wee bee dubble puniſhed, and needes muſt more horrible vengeance light vppon our heads, who haue beene faithfully inſtructed to drawe nigh vnto him, and taught that hee hath nouriſhed vs in his lappe as his owne children, and yet notwithſtanding wee haue forſaken him. And that is Saint Paules meaning where hee ſayeth, that they which haue ſinned without the lawe, ſhall periſh neuertheleſſe for all that: and that they which haue offended after warning giuen by knowledge of the lawe, ſhall haue the ſorer damnation, Rom,2.12. accordingly alſo as our Lorde Ieſus ſayeth, that the ſeruant which hath done amiſſe though it were through vnskilfulneſſe, ſhall not fayle to bee puniſhed for it: Luk.12.48. becauſe hee ought to haue inquyred his maſters will. If a ſeruaunt ſay; I wiſt it not: And knoweſt thou not that I am thy maſter? Oughteſt thou not to inquire my will? But much more ought God to haue ſuch preheminence ouer his creatures. And if they that haue offended ſo through ignorance are not excuſed, what ſhall become of vs which knowe the will of our GOD? If wee fall to ſtryuing againſt him, to ſpyte him as it were of ſet purpoſe and of prepenſed malice and frowardneſſe; if wee fall to daſhing at him with our hornes, ſo as wee ſet our ſelues againſt his righteouſneſſe and tranſgreſſe his whole doctrine: muſt not ſo greate and ſo diueliſh headdineſſe bee puniſhed much more grieuouſly? In that reſpect is it ſayde heere that God was prouoked to anger with the tranſgreſſion of his ſonnes and daughters: as who ſhoulde ſay; True it is that God is greatly offended throughout the whole worlde: but hee had reſerued a people to himſelfe, whome hee had gathered together for his owne inheritance, and euen they are growen out of kynde: and is not that a thing to moue Gods vengeance the more?

Nowe let vs apply this doctrine to our owne vſe. And ſith wee ſee howe the wretched worlde is blynded nowe adayes, let vs conſider thus with our ſelues: Well, the Papiſtes ſhall not fayle to bee condemned: And if wee condemne them, can they ſcape the hande of GOD? That is vnpoſſible. But let vs firſt of all play the Iudges towardes our ſelues; and conſider that GOD hauing called vs to bee his children, will bee knowen to be our father, and wilbe ſerued & worſhipped at our hands. And therfore whenſoeuer we happen to ouerſhoote our ſelues, and to giue ouer ẏͤ doctrine wherein we haue bin once trayned. Gods wrath muſt needs be kindled againſt vs,& without cõpariſõ much more grieuouſly than againſt the ſilly ignorant and vnbeleeuing ſort. Seeing then that we be Gods children,& he hath ſet his markes vpon vs,& neuer ceaſſeth to allure vs by gentlenes: let vs not turne away from him, but let his ſo doing prouoke vs to honor him,and to ſerue him in ſuch wiſe, as he may take pleaſure in vs, and delight to doe vs good, and continue the increaſe of his grace and benefites more & more towardes vs.

But nowe let vs fall downe before the maieſtie of our good God with acknowledgement of our ſinnes , praying him not to lay them to our charge , but to drawe vs to him continually as long as wee bee in this worlde , correcting our vyces and infirmities , and ridding vs from all the corruptnes of our fleſh,and ſtil bearing with vs till hee haue fully reformed vs according to his righteouſnes , and taken vs quyte & cleane out of this corruptible life. And ſo let vs all ſay, Almightie God heauenly father,&c.

On Thurſday the iiij. of Iune,1556.

The CLXXXIII. Sermon which is the ſixt vpon the two & thirtith Chaper.

20 So he ſayd, I will hyde my face from them, and ſee what ſhall befall them. For they bee a fickle generation,children in whome there is no ſtedfaſtnes.

21 They haue mooued mee to ielouzie by the thing that is not god , and they haue prouoked mee to diſpleaſure with their vanities.And I[likewiſe] will moue them to ielouzie by them which are no people,and by a fooliſh nation will I prouoke them to indignation.

22 For the fire is kindled in my wrath, and ſhal burne to the verie bottome of the pitte, and deuowre the lande with the fruite thereof,and burne vp the foundations of the mountaines.

WE ſawe yeſterday how God is more grieuouſly diſpleaſed, when ſuch as ought to honour and ſerue him, do forſake him, than when it is done by ſilly ignorant vnbeleeuers. And not without cauſe . For God adopteth vs with this condition ; that his glorie ſhould ſhyne forth in vs: and therefore muſt it not needes be a dubbling of the offence, when wee be a reproche to him? If a father bee deſpyſed in his owne houſe, euen by thoſe whome he hath begotten, will it not grieue him much woorſe, than if ſome one of his neighbours ſhoulde miſuſe him ? Seeing then that God hath vouchſafed to chooſe vs to be his children ; and hath done vs the honour whereof wee were not worthie : let vs beware that our conuerſation bee ſuch , as our faultes and miſdeedes may not prouoke him , nor the thing befall vs which Moſes addeth here, namely, *that he will hyde away his face* . Nowe by this ſaying the Scripture meaneth that when GOD hath vſed patience in bearing long with men, winking at their vyces, and ceaſſing not to doe them good , and yet ſeeth that they bee altogether ſet vppon ſtubborneſſe and vnreformable: hee giueth them ouer for ſuch as they bee.

Nowe all our welfare and happineſſe lyeth in Gods defending of vs,and in his caring for vs. For if hee forget vs and vouchſafe not to ſuccour vs , and to bee our defence , in what taking are wee ? It were better for vs to bee deſtroyed out of hande, than to linger beeing out of the protection of our God. Therefore heere is a horrible threat, and ſuch a one as ought to make vs to quake, when as it is ſayde that when GOD hath tarryed a long tyme, hee will withdrawe himſelfe for our vtter alienating of him away from vs.

Wee haue ſeene heere afore, howe GOD vſed long ſufferance and gaue not ouer his people at the firſt daſh : but yet that at length hee was fayne to ſhewe that hee will not that his goodneſſe ſhoulde bee abuſed after that faſhion , nor that men ſhoulde harden their heartes by flattering themſelues , when hee puniſheth them not out of hande.

Therefore let vs looke to ourſelues. For if wee haue offended God, although hee lift not vppe his hande to puniſhe vs for it at the firſt inſtant, yet muſt not that make vs to fall aſleepe. Let vs (I ſay) preuent the vengeaunce of our God: for if hee be patient and beare with vs, it is to winne vs by his gratious goodneſſe and Rom.2.4. gentleneſſe, as S. Paul declareth in the ſecond to the Romanes. The more then that God ſpareth vs, the more let vs take warning to turne againe vnto him, and let it make vs aſhamed that we hauing ſo good a father, haue beene ſo ſtubborne againſt him. And if wee will needes ſtill welter in our owne filthineſſe, and heape naughtineſſe vpon naughtineſſe, ſo as there is no ende nor meaſure of our tranſgreſſions: then muſt GOD be faine to execute the thing which he ſpeaketh heere by Moſes, namely; *Hyde a way his face*; that is to ſay, that after hee hath hadde a care of our welfare, and continued in dooing vs good; he will at length giue vs ouer, and ſhew that he is no longer bounde vnto vs, and that although hee ſpared vs for a time, it is not his intent to bolſter vs continually in our euill dooinges. Wherefore let vs bee afrayde of this threate: and ſo long as GOD maketh vs to perceiue that he beholdeth vs with pitie, let vs walke as before his eyes, as though he were euer preſent with vs, and in all our thoughtes, wordes, and deedes, let vs haue our eyes ſtill vpon him.

But by the way we haue to marke, that God hydeth not his eyes in ſuch ſort, but that hee ſeeth and marketh all mens dooings, and dealinges. But it is ſo ſayde, becauſe God ſeemeth to ſhrinke away and to haue no more care of vs, when he ſuccoureth vs not at our neede. For if aduerſitie and afflictions oppreſſe vs, and wee flee vnto God; and yet finde no eaſe, but pine away ſtill continually: it can not be but that according to our vnderſtanding, we muſt needes imagine that GOD hath quite forgotten vs, and that he regardeth vs not any more. After this maner doeth Moſes tell vs heere, that God hydeth away his face. Furthermore we muſt vnderſtande, that when GOD hath once forſaken vs, there neuer happeneth any euill vnto vs, but it commeth from him: that is to ſay, all the afflictions which wee feele are puniſhmentes from his hande. We muſt not then thinke that GOD letteth men alone at all aduenture when he puniſheth them for their offences, but rather that hee is then neere them, to make them feele his power, ſhewing himſelfe a Iudge of their wicked deedes. But as for to holde them in his tuition, or to defende them; in that behalfe he threatneth himſelfe to be abſent, that is to ſay, that they ſhall not perceiue any more Deut.32.11 that he broodeth them vnder his winges, according to the ſimilitude which he had vſed afore.

And it is ſayde expreſſely, *That hee will ſee what their ende will be*. Heere GOD ſpeakes after the manner of men: for hee knewe all thinges aforehande euen before the creating of the worlde, and he needeth not to be taught by time as mortall wightes doe. But foraſmuch as we can not attayne to the heigth of Gods maieſtie, hee is faine to make himſelfe like vnto vs, and all for our inſtruction and edification. It is all one therefore as if he ſhould ſay to ſuch as deſpiſed him, Goe too, yee make no account for me, I behaued my ſelfe familiarly towardes you, and you haue abuſed that grace of mine; I haue required to be ſerued and honored of you, and you haue done mee all the ſhame ye coulde deuiſe: you haue borne yourſelues in hande that I was tyed vnto you, and that I was of neceſſitie to continue a father towardes you without ceaſſing, notwithſtanding that you played the rebellious children againſt mee. But nowe will I giue you ouer for ſuch as you be: doe the worſt yee can, and at length yee ſhall finde what it is to haue forſaken mee. *I will hide myſelfe from you*, that is to ſay, I will giue you ouer. In ſteede of maintaining and defending you as I haue done heeretofore, I vtterly renounce all acquaintaunce with you. See nowe what your ſtate ſhall be, and I alſo will ſee what your ende will bee, that is to ſay, it ſhall bee perceiued in what plyght men are, when I haue no longer care of them. GOD then ſpeaketh heere not ſo much of his owne knowledge, as of that which ſhall be ſeene and perceiued in the ende by experience. For (as I ſayde afore) GOD is not to bee taught by the chaunge of thinges, (for all thinges were preſent with him before the making of the worlde) but heere he declareth, that when folke are ſo forſaken, it will appeare by them that all the happineſſe of man conſiſteth in beeing preſerued by GOD: and that on the contrary part, they bee moſt wretched and vnhappie, when God hath giuen them ouer.

And hee addeth the reaſon. *It is a fickle and frowarde generation, Children in whome there is no trueth.* The firſt worde that Moſes vſeth heere, commeth of a verbe which ſignifieth to turne and returne. And ſo it is as much as if he ſhoulde ſay, It is a generation of wickedneſſes; for he vſeth the plurall number: and it importeth as much as if he ſhould ſay, It is a frowarde and curſed generation, or elſe a mutable and chaunging generation, and whereof there is no holde; nowe heere; nowe there: whereby is vttered not onely the vnconſtancie, but alſo the diſloyaltie of that people. He addeth that there was no ſtedfaſtneſſe in them. The worde betokeneth vprightneſſe, whereby is meant both loyaltie and faithfulneſſe. To be ſhort, GOD declareth heere, that he hadde tryed his people too much, and that in the ende it appeared that there was no vprightneſſe in them, but all manner of treaſon and trecherie. Foraſmuch therefore as hee founde ſuch leaudeneſſe in them, hee ſayeth hee will hyde himſelfe from them. But we muſt call to minde againe what I haue ſayde afore; to witte, that for a time GOD may fauour vs and beare with vs, and ſpare vs though we deſerue to haue rigour towardes vs: but when hee is ſo patient, it is to make vs diligent in examining our owne faultes, and to call our ſelues dayly to account, and to looke neerely to the thinges which are to bee found fault with, in vs. Alſo let vs marke well the ſaying that hath beene alleadged out of Saint Paul, howe that God allureth vs to amendment Rom.2.4. by gentleneſſe, when hee puniſheth vs not at the firſt, according to our deſeruinges. Sith the caſe ſtandeth ſo, whenſoeuer God ſheweth himſelfe fauourable and gratious towardes vs, let euery of vs conſider howe hee hath liued; and if we haue abuſed the benefites which he hath beſtowed vppon vs, let vs condemne ourſelues for it, and be ſorry for our ſinnes, and returne to him with ſuch ſorrowe as may appeare to bee vnfained. That is the thing which we haue to remẽber in the firſt place. But if we will needes diſcharge ourſelues by flatterie, to take leaue to doe euill: then muſt hee needes execute his vnreuocable ſentence of hyding away his face from vs after he hath borne long ynough with vs, and of ſeeing what will become of vs, and he muſt needes let vs rotte in our wretchedneſſe, foraſmuch as we could not abide that hee ſhould reach out his hande to helpe vs. And in any wiſe let vs marke that GOD can not away with hypocriſie in men: for among other thinges he requireth ſoundeneſſe and trueth in vs, that our conuerſation ſhoulde bee vtterly voide of all dubble meaning, and that we ſhould not be diſſemblers before him. True it is that our nature is full of fainedneſſe, as we ſee howe Ier.16.16. Ieremy reporteth of mans heart, that it is frowarde and beſnarled with all naughtineſſe, and that it is euen as a bottomleſſe pit. And therefore we muſt chaunge, if wee will haue God to admit and allowe vs for his children: and wheras we be inclined to euill, ſo as there is nothing but bitterneſſe and hardneſſe of heart in vs, we muſt pray vnto God to indewe vs with his holy ſpiritel, who is the ſpirite of conſtancie, and to ridde vs in ſuch ſort from all our naughtineſſe and vnfaithfulneſſe, as we may walke on before him in pure and vndefiled ſoundneſſe. Thus yee ſee what we haue to remember vppon this place.

Nowe it is ſaide further, *That foraſmuch as the Children of Iſraell had prouoked GOD to iealozie by the thing that was not god, and prouoked him by their leazinges through the ſuperſtitions which they hadde deuiſed: he alſo would prouoke them by a people which was no people, and moue them to iealozie by a Nation that was no Nation.* Heere GOD ſpeaketh againe after the manner of men, like as if a man ſeeing his wife ſo wicked and leaudely giuen that he could not reſtraine her, ſhould ſay, Well, I muſt needes diuorce her, and to doe her the more diſgrace I will take ſome chambermayde in her ſteede, to occupie her place. Now then if a wife haue liued in honorable ſtate with her husbande, and afterwarde behaue her ſelfe ſo naughlily and ſtubbornely, that hee caſteth her off, and thereuppon taketh ſome poore wench that was of no eſtimation, and vſeth her as his maried wife; his former wife will take the more ſpyte and griefe at it, as who woulde ſay, What? Shall ſuch a one nowe occupie my place? Muſt I be thruſt out for her? Muſt I be pointed at with euerie mannes finger and bee ſhamed and ill ſpoken of euerie where? After that manner is this text to bee vnderſtoode. For thus doeth GOD vtter his minde. What? They haue prouoked mee to Iealozie by the thing that is no god: I am the liuing GOD, and beſides that, they ought in reaſon to take mee for their father, becauſe I haue ſhewed my ſelfe ſo towardes them, declaring howe deerely I loued them, in that I haue preferred them before all other Nations of the worlde: and yet hereuppon haue they forged Idolles. But there is but one GOD: and therefore when men turne away from him, they muſt needes forge ydolles after their owne imaginations. Thus haue they prouoked me to ielozie by the thing which was not god.

And afterwarde he addeth, *their vanities*. As if he ſhoulde ſay, If a man marke what their ſuperſtitions are, and whereon they bee grounded: he ſhall finde them to be nothing elſe but lyes and deceites. Yet haue they prouoked mee with them ſayeth he: and nowe will I alſo haue my reuenge, for I will prouoke them by a people which is not a people, and by a nation which is not a nation, that is to ſay, which are not eſteemed to be of any reputation. I will then take to me ſuch folke as are nowe of no eſtimation, and ſet them in the ſame degree of honour wherein theſe thankeleſſe folke were before, which haue ſo abuſed the fatherly loue that I bare towardes them. This thing came not to paſſe out of hande, but was then accompliſhed when the Goſpell was ſpredde through out the whole worlde. True it is that in part God gaue ſome tokens of theſe thinges aforehande, in exalting the Aſſyrians and Chaldees Exod.19.6. aboue thoſe which boaſted themſelues to be the holy ofspring and yͤ kingly prieſthoode: but yet was not this definitiue ſentence performed to the full, vntill the comming of our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt. God (I ſay) ſhewed partly ſome ſigne heereof aforehande, at ſuch time as the people of Iſraell were ſcattered, brought to deſolation, carried away into ſtrange countryes, and there kept as baniſhed wretches without order vnder the ſlauerie of cruell tyrannie. For euen then did GOD beginne aforehande to make them perceiue, that his threatning of them to prouoke them by a people which was no people, was not in vaine. For firſt the Aſſyrians and afterwarde the Chaldees hadde the honour to reigne ouer the children of Abraham, which Ioh.8.33.34 vaunted themſelues to be at libertie, but they were bondeſlaues of ſinne. And foraſmuch as they had withdrawen themſelues from the obedience of GOD, it was good reaſon that they ſhoulde be vnder the bondage of Tyrans. GOD then gaue a certaine ſigne of fauour to thoſe that hadde beene vnbeleeuers, when hee magnified the heathen ſo much, euen as though hee had beene minded to diſanull the promiſe which he had made to thoſe which had earſt boaſted themſelues to bee his people, and had purpoſed to put them to vtter ſhame. Yet notwithſtanding the Chaldees and Aſſyrians did not ſo reigne ouer the children of GOD, that they could preiudice their ſaluation. Neither could the Syrians doe it, nor any of all the other nations that troubled them (as wee ſee in the time of the Iudges) & which inuaded the Lande of Chanaan and brought the children of Iſraell vnder tribute and ſubiection. For euen then although the children of Iſraell were oppreſſed, and caſt downe, as it were, and thruſt vnder foote, and their neighbours which were heathen and Infidelles had their full ſcope: yet notwithſtanding, Gods adoption abode ſtill in the linage of Abraham, and the caſe of thoſe that reigned ouer them was neuer a whit the better for it, becauſe they ceaſed not to ſerue their ydolles ſtill. But when the Goſpell was preached openly to the worlde, then did we ſucceede in the place of thoſe which hadde beene heires of the promiſe afore, accordingly as Saint Rom.10.19. Paule likeneth vs to wilde ſlips which are graffed into a good ſtocke, euen ſo is it with vs. For we be but thinges borne out of time, if wee bee compared with the Iewes who were after a ſorte the naturall children of God. Howbeit foraſmuch as GOD had promiſed Abraham that Gen.12.2. he would be the ſauiour of his ofſpring, the ſame belonged to all ſuch as were deſcended of Act.3.25. him, accordingly alſo as Saint Peter telleth them, You be the children of the prophetes, and heires of the promiſe: as who ſhoulde ſay that ſaluation belonged to them, euen by true and lawefull ſucceſſion: but when as they did cutte off themſelues from it by their owne vnthankefulneſſe, then did GOD call vs vnto him. True it is that if the Iewes had receiued our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt, yet had the doctrine of the Goſpel bin ſpredde abroade neuertheleſſe, throughout the worlde, and ſo ſhoulde wee haue beene ioyned and knit together in one. But foraſmuch as the Iewes conueyed themſelues out of the houſholde and Church of God, and imbraced not the grace which was offered vnto them: their roome became emptie, and ſo wee entred thereinto, inſomuch as GOD hath nowe baniſhed them, to the intent to make as it were a new houſe. And therefore S. Paul applyeth this Rom.10.19. text to his owne time. For hee ſayeth that as then the Iewes had too greatly prouoked Gods iealozie by their ydolatries, and that God was faine to raiſe vp a people which was no people, or a nation which was not reputed as a Nation, which thing was done to make them the more aſhamed of their deſpiſing of the benefit which had beene profered vnto them. Truely, the Iewes had not at that time any outwarde ydolatry. When Ieſus Chriſt came into the world, the Temple of Ieruſalem was not defiled with any ydolles, ſacrifices were made there according to the Lawe of Moſes: and yet for all that there was nothing but contempt of God & wickedneſſe, it was a piteous caſe to ſee the great number of groſſe ſuperſtitions, and all the pureneſſe of the Lawe was corrupted.

Let vs marke well therefore ẏ men are counted ydolaters, not only when they haue puppets of ſtone, of wood, or of peinters worke, but alſo when they ſticke not to the pure ſimplicitie of Gods word, but mingle their owne ſuperſtitions with the doctrine of ſaluation, ouerſhooting thẽſelues and turning away to al euil. After that manner was GOD prouoked to iealozie by the Iewes, but ſpecially by their refuſing of Ieſus Chriſt, who is the image of the father. For Col.1.15. whoſoeuer hath not the ſonne (ſayth Saint Iohn) 1.Iohn.2.23 hath not the father. And why? Becauſe the Col.1.19.& 29. whole fulneſſe of the Godheade dwelleth in our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt. Seeing then that the Iewes deſpiſed the onely ſonne, who was the image of the father, ſeeing they would not accept him which was ordained to be ſouereigne king, and of whom alſo it is ſayde in the Pſalme, Kiſſe the ſonne; whereby men are commaunded to doe Pſal.2.12. him homage and to kneele downe vnto him as it is ſayde in other textes: ſeeing that the Iewes haue ſo refuſed Ieſus Chriſt, ſeeing they haue ſo giuen ouer the true Religion; they haue made themſelues vtter ſtrangers to the liuing GOD which had choſen and adopted them. To bee ſhort, if we take not Ieſus Chriſt for our GOD, ſurely wee haue nothing elſe but an ydoll. As for example, the Turkes at this day doe make greate bragges that they worſhippe the GOD which created heauen and earth. What is their God? He is but an ydoll. The Iewes can well ynough ſay; our meaning is to ſerue the God which gaue vs his Lawe by the hande of Moſes, and ſpake by the prophetes. Their God is but an ydol. And why? For the Godheade which is in Ieſus Chriſt is vnknowen vnto them. But it is ſayde that the whole fulneſſe of the Col.2.9. Godheade dwelleth in him, yea euen perfectly and in verie ſubſtaunce, without any manner of ſhadowes or figures. Seeing then that GOD hath fully reueiled himſelfe to vs in our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt, and will haue his face to bee ſeene there: ſurely we can not boaſt that we haue the true God, vnleſſe our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt reigne among vs, and be ſo honoured of vs that wee ſticke throughly to him and reſt wholely vppon him. Nowe the Iewes denyed him and vtterly diſclaymed him: by meane whereof they prouoked GOD to iealozie, and there remayneth nothing with them but folly and falſe imagination whereby they haue deceiued and beguiled themſelues. And therefore not without cauſe doeth Saint Paule alleadge this Text, Rom.10.19 ſaying: Seeing that the Iewes haue prouoked Gods wrath by refuſing to imbrace his onely ſonne: therefore hath he rayſed vppe a people which was nothing afore.

And heere we ſee yet much better the thing which I tolde you afore, namely that GOD vſed long ſufferaunce towardes ſuch as were worthy to haue beene thundered vpon out of hande: for betweene the Lawe and our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt there were about two thouſande yeares. And if wee recken the yeeres, the Iewes began to meddle with the infections & filthineſſe of the heathen by ſetting vp of ydols by and by after ẏ death of Ioſua. Ye ſee then how God ſuffered aboue eighteene hundred yeeres to paſſe, wayting ſtill for ſome amendement.

Not that he diſſembled with them, for he chaſtiſed them to put them in minde of their faults. And they returned vnto him. But yet by and by after they fell away newe againe. Inſomuch that when they had acknowledged that thoſe harmes befell them for their ſinnes ſakes, and had giuen ſome token of repentaunce: by and by, or within a while after they fell to their olde byaſſe againe: and God likewiſe fell to puniſhing them newe againe. At the laſt came the captiuitie of Babylon which is deſcribed to haue beene ſo horrible and vnhappie, that it baniſhed them out of the Lande which hee had promiſed them for their inheritaunce, and they were driuen out of their owne houſes. Neuertheleſſe, in the ende GOD pitied them and brought them home againe. Notwithſtanding, they were no ſooner come home into their natiue countrey, and reſtored to libertie, but by and by they became againe worſe than before. Therefore was GOD alſo faine to puniſh them with puniſhment vppon puniſhment euen to the vttermoſt. Then came our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt to remedie all their diſeaſes, in reſpect whereof Iohn.11.25. he is iuſtly called euen the reſurrection of the dead. For although the Iewes had then beene all ſcattered abroade, yet would God haue gathered them home againe to him by the hande of his ſonne, if they hadde knowen the day of their viſitation. But they well bewray that they be wilfully bent againſt GOD, and that there is nothing but bitterneſſe and venime, yea and diueliſh rage in them. For it ſufficed them not to haue skorned the grace which was offered vnto them, and the redemption which they had pretended to haue longed for ſo greatly; but they did alſo crucifie the Redeemer which was ſent vnto them. Foraſmuch therefore as the Iewes did vtterly refuſe all the grace of God: the Goſpell was publiſhed through the whole worlde.

But (as I ſayde) we muſt marke well the long ſuffering which GOD vſed towardes them, that it may keepe vs from ſleeping in our ſinnes. For if wee abuſe the goodneſſe of our GOD when hee ſpareth vs, and vſeth not ſuch vengeaunce as we haue deſerued: we ſhall be driuen to pay the arrearages. Therefore let vs returne to him when hee threatneth vs. For it had beene much better for the Iewes to haue ſuffered temporall puniſhmentes, than to haue beene ſo borne with, and in the ende to haue had ſo horrible vengeaunce layde vppon them as we ſee befell to the Citie of Ieruſalem. For if we looke vpon the aduerſities that fell vppon it, wee ſhall not finde the like examples at any time ſince the beginning of the worlde, that the men of that countrey, and all other inhabiters were ſo afflicted. They played the madde men one againſt another for their vittelles, and the veryeſt cutthroates bare the chiefe ſway. They durſt not go out of their citie to eaſe themſelues becauſe they were incloſed on euerie ſide: and yet they were more cruelly handled within by theeues and rakehelles. The ruffians were readie to cutte the throats of them that came once out of their doores. Thinges were ſo farre out of order and ſo horribly put to hauocke, that women were faine to kill their owne children for hunger and to eate them, and it ſpited the father to ſee the mother ſteale her owne children to deuoure them into her owne bowelles. Therefore let vs bethinke ourſelues, and when thinges are ſo farre out of ſquare, and wee perceiue it to be our Lordes will to giue vs ſuch examples, to the intent we ſhould liue in awe and feare, and yet notwithſtanding that he giueth vs leaſure to returne vnto him; let vs goe vnto him, yea and that with ſpeede; & let vs not driue off frõ day to day, for feare leaſt the gate be ſhut againſt vs. That is the thing which wee haue to beare in minde.

Nowe let vs proceede to that which Moſes addeth, namely: *That GOD did then rayſe vppe a people which was no people, and a Nation which was no Nation.* By theſe words we be doone to vnderſtande, that vntill ſuch time as GOD hath choſen vs, and drawen vs to the knowledge of his trueth: it is all one as if we were not at all. True it is that Gods ſetting of vs in this worlde is not a benefite to be deſpiſed, neither doeth he ſet vs heere as Aſſes, Oxen, and Dogges: but as reaſonable creatures, and he putteth his image into vs. Ineſtimable is the benefit which he doeth vs therein: but yet for all that, foraſmuch as we be corrupted in Adam, and all of vs are accurſed; inſomuch that ſinne doeth ſo reigne in vs, that the Image of GOD is wiped out, and the vnderſtanding which we weene our ſelues to haue is but brutiſhneſſe, and our hearts are turned vpſide downe, ſo as there is nothing but rebellioufneſſe in vs: therefore it is ſayde that wee bee not worthy to bee counted a people, that is to ſay, it were better for vs that wee were not at all. Not that GOD is not glorified continually in his creatures: but this is ſpoken in reſpect of vs. For we will needes glorifie ourſelues and ſeeme great men, for wee ſee howe men beleeue wonders of themſelues, and they be ſo blinde that they ſurmiſe this and that of themſelues. But let the children of this worlde eſteeme of themſelues what they lyſt, and aduaunce their owne glorie as much as they liſt: yet doth GOD in one worde heere cut their combes, ſaying that their beeing is as though they were not at all. And it is not heere onely that the ſcripture vſeth ſuch ſpeech: for Saint Paul ſayeth generally, that GOD calleth the thinges which are not, as though they were. Rom.4.17. 1.Cor.1,28. Ye ſee then howe our firſt being is when GOD calleth vs to the knowledge of his trueth: according whereunto Saint Paul ſayth in an other place, ẏ our being is of God in Ieſus Chriſt, 1.Cor.1.30. inſomuch that we haue nothing at all before that time, becauſe there is nothing in vs but corruption. Seeing the caſe ſtandeth ſo, men can not looke for any thing but eternal death, vntil God haue reached them his hand, and gathered thẽ home to himſelfe. That is the thing which we haue to remember in this text where it is ſayde, that God would prouoke the Iewes to ielozie by a people which were no people.

Furthermore let vs marke, that whereas we haue beeing at this day, that is to ſay, whereas God hath aduaunced vs, (according alſo as hee ſayth by his prophet Eſay, Eſa.1.2. I haue brought vppe children and aduaunced them) foraſmuch as God dealeth ſo graciouſly with vs as to put vs in the place of them that were his naturall children, euen vs which were as children borne out of time: let vs aſſure our ſelues that if wee prouoke God to wrath, and make him as it were iealous, he will ſurely rayſe vp other Nations in our ſteede, according to this ſaying of our Lord Matt.8.12. Ieſus Chriſt to the Iewes; The kingdome of God ſhall be taken from you. This threat is ſpoken to vs nowadays. For (as ſayth ſaint Paul) Rom.11.21. if God haue not ſpared the naturall braunches of the oliue, but haue cut them quite and cleane off, and caſt them into the fire: how ſhall hee ſpare the wilde ones? What ſhoulde wee haue who were barreine by nature? Could wee ſay we were the children of Abraham, and that God had adopted vs at the firſt? No. For as long as the doctrine of ſaluation was among the Iewes, our forefathers were as rotten members, they had no hope of ſaluation, they were without GOD in this worlde, as ſayeth Saint Paul. Eph.2.12. But nowe wee bee come to the heauenly kingdome. Becauſe the Iewes are departed from it, through their owne vnthankefulneſſe, and fallen from the degree wherein they were, GOD hath aduaunced vs to it euen againſt nature. And thinke wee then that if wee become like thoſe which were our ſuperiours in dignitie, GOD will not in the ende powre out the like vengeaunce vpon vs as wee haue ſeene vppon them? Yes: and therefore let the Iewes bee a lookinglaſſe for vs to make vs behaue ourſelues humbly, that we abuſe not the grace of GOD. True it is that wee muſt be aſſured that GOD will holde out to the ende in the thinges which he hath begonne for our welfare, ſpecially if we on our ſide be not ſo malicious as to diſappoint his grace. But if we followe thoſe which haue gone before vs, let vs not thinke to ſpeede better than they haue done. Thus yee ſee what wee haue to beare away in this Text where it is ſayde that God will prouoke his people to iealozie by ſuch as were not a people aforetimes.

And Moſes ſayeth, *That they ſhall be a fooliſhe Nation*. And it behoueth vs yet againe to marke this well. For we imagine ourſelues to be verie wiſe; and that is the thing which plucketh vs backe from ſubmitting ourſelues obediently vnto GOD, and diſappointeth vs of the modeſtie to embrace by faith, whatſoeuer is propounded to vs in his name. But heere the holy Ghoſt bewrayeth vs what we be, to witte, that there is nothing in vs but ſtarke folly, vntill GOD haue inlightened vs. What muſt bee our wiſedome then? Euen that which we learne in Gods ſchoole. Heereby all ſelfe weening is beaten downe, that menne ſhould not imagine themſelues to be of ſufficient abilitie to gouerne themſelues, nor deſpiſe the doctrine of GOD, but yeelde themſelues teachable thereunto.

And herewithall let vs marke alſo, that generally God ment to bereaue men of all glorie in that he ſayth *that they be not at all, and that they be but fooles*, that is to ſay, that there is nothing in thē but reprochfulneſſe.

And hee addeth foorthwith, *that his wrath ſhall be kindled, and that it ſhall enter vnto the bottomleſſe pittes, and conſume the Lande with her fruites, yea euen to rootes of the Mountaines*. Heere Moſes ment breefly to touch thoſe yet better and neerer to the quicke, which were ſo bedoted, that they could not come to the knowledge of their ſinnes. And he not onely ſpake to ẏ people, whom he knewe to be ſtubborne and ſtiffenecked: Exod.34.9. but alſo through the power of Gods ſpirite he prophecied of thoſe that were to come. As for Moſes, he knewe them not to outwarde appearance: but GOD who knoweth what men are, gaue his ſentence vppon them aforehande. And foraſmuch as hee ſeeth them ſo blockiſh he handleth them in their kinde, ſaying, Goe too, I ſee you be not greatly moued at my threatning, and that ye proceede from euill to worſe: but I tell you that my wrath will bee no light fardle to beare, as though I gaue you but a yerke with my rodde by the way. What then? It is a fire that burneth vp all afore it, as we haue ſeene heeretofore in the fourth chapter, Deut.4.24. where it is ſayde, Knowe thou O Iſrael that thy God is a conſuming fire. This was expreſly ſpoken for the hardeneſſe of the peoples hearts. For it is certeine that God is deſirous to ſhewe himſelfe louing towardes vs, conditionally that we come vnto him with all meekeneſſe, and be readie to followe his voyce, taking him for our ſheepehearde, and behauing ourſelues towardes him as his ſheepe. If wee doe ſo, then will not God fray vs, nor ſhewe himſelfe terrible to vs. But if he ſee vs play the wilde beaſtes, ſo as wee can not by any meanes be tamed: then is hee faine to vſe rigour, according to this ſaying of his in the eighteenth Pſalme, that hee will bee Pſal.18.17. harde to ſuch as are harde, and that if men ſhew themſelues vnreformable, hee alſo will come roughly againſt them, and they ſhall finde nothing in him but vtter terrour and dreadfulneſſe. After the ſame manner is it in this text, where he ſayeth, My wrath ſhalbe as a burning fire. Yea, and thinke not (ſayth he) that I will burne but the chaffe and the ſtrawe; for I will burne vp the verie grounde, there is not ſo hard a mountaine but it ſhall melt before me, yea euen to the verie bottome: and there ſhall not be ſo deepe a pitte, but I will go to the verie bottome thereof. Now we ſee what the purpoſe or intent of Moſes was in this place.

And heereby let vs take warning, not to tempt God; accordingly as the Apoſtle in the Epiſtle to the Hebrewes applyeth the forealleaged text to the ſame purpoſe. My friends (ſayeth he) Hebr.12.18. knowe ye that God is a conſuming fire: and therefore let vs liue in his feare, & not tempt him: as ſoone as he ſpeaketh, let vs quake at it: let vs not tarry till hee ſmite vppon our heades with main blowes: but let vs go vnto him obediently: and let vs pray him to haue pitie vpon vs.

For if we goe about to winne him by ſtoutneſſe, ſurely we ſhall finde howe it is not ſayde without cauſe that Gods wrath is a burning fire to conſume all thinges : and wee ſhall feele that although we be neuer ſo ſtubborne, and that our heartes (to our owne ſeeming) bee as whot as fire through ouerweening, whereof wee haue made our ſelues as it were foretreſſes, towers, and bulwarkes for our great ſafetie : yet notwithſtanding, God will ſo vndermine vs, that we ſhall find howe there is nothing in vs wherewith to make reſiſtaunce, and that we haue no more power to ſtande before his wrath and vengeaunce, than ſtubble or hay which is conſumed out of hande by fire: nay we ſhall be no better than towe. Thus ye ſee howe wee may benefite ourſelues by this doctrine, if wee will not haue the ſentence that God pronounceth executed vppon vs. That is to wit, that foraſmuch as his wrath burneth ſo whot and is able to conſume all: wee muſt turne vnto him as ſoone as he threatneth vs, yea and ſo returne, as he finde vs not to be fooliſhe and wilde headed folke, as in whom there is nothing but lightnes and vnconſtancie.

Nowe let vs fall downe before the maieſtie of our good God with acknowledgement of our faultes, praying him to open our eyes more and more, that we may ſee our owne wretchedneſſe, and vpon the knowing thereof, bee alſo ſo touched by his holy ſpirite, that our heartes may ſtoope, and hauing felt what wee haue deſerued, we may ſteppe to him aforehande to obtaine fauour and mercie of him: and ſo continue therein, that all our life long, our whole ſeeking may be to increaſe and to be ſettled in his feare and loue: that taking him for our father, and repoſing ourſelues wholly vpon him and his goodneſſe, we may neuertheleſſe yeelde him ſuch reuerence, as to quake at his threatninges, and yet aſſure ourſelues that hee will be ſo good a protector and defender of vs, that we ſhalbe ſafe from all daungers, when he hath once taken vs into his protection and ſafekeeping. That it may pleaſe him to grant this grace not only to vs, but alſo to all people and Nations of the earth, &c.

On Fryday the v. of Iune, 1556.

The CLXXXIIII. Sermon which is the ſeuenth vpon the two & thirtith Chapter.

23 I will heape euilles vppon them, and I will beſtowe mine arrowes vppon them.

24 They ſhalbe burnt with hunger, and conſumed with heate and with bitter deſtruction. Alſo I will ſende them the teeth of beaſtes, with the venime of Serpentes that traile in the duſt.

25 The ſword ſhal rob them of their children without, and in their chambers ſhalbe fearefulneſſe vpon the young woman and the mayde, the ſucking child and the man with the hore head.

26 I haue ſaide I will ſcatter them abroade, and make the remembraunce of them to ceaſe from among men.

27 Were it not that I feared the diſdayne of the enemie, leaſt peraduenture their aduerſaries ſhould wax ſtraunge and ſay: Our hande is high, and it is not the Lorde that hath done all this thing.

WE ſawe yeſterday howe Moſes hauing ſpoken of Gods vengeaunce to the people of Iſrael ſhewed how dreadful the ſame is, becauſe men are not ſo moued at ẏ firſt as were requiſite, at leaſtwiſe to conſider their own naughtines, & to be diſpleaſed at it, ẏ they might humble themſelues & be aſhamed thereof before God. For inaſmuch as men are ſlowe vnto that, our Lorde ſheweth ẏ his threatning of them is not in ſport, and therefore that it is not for thẽ to fall aſleepe at it and to take their eaſe, but rather to trẽble and quake. Now purſuing the ſame matter, Moſes addeth *That he will ſende vpon that people all the euilles that can bee deuiſed, that hee will let fly his arrowes at them* to the vtter conſuming of them, that he wil arme the wilde beaſtes againſt them, that hee will ſende venemous ſerpentes among them, which though they glyde in the duſt, ſhall neuertheleſſe without fayle faſten vpon thẽ with their teeth, that they ſhalbe ſtarued for hunger, that he will ſende them burning diſeaſes, enemyes without doores, and feare within doores, and that he will not ſpare their babes nor their olde men, nor any thing elſe. It might ſeeme at the firſt ſight, that GOD were ouerrigorous. For ſeeing that God had choſen the ofſpring of Abraham from among the whole world, and his adopting of them was not grounded vppon any deſert or worthineſſe, but vppon the freegoodnes of Gods owne will: ſhoulde he haue vſed ſo great ſterneſſe againſt thoſe wretched creatures, though they had right greeuouſly offended him? Why did hee not rather ſpare them, and make the grace auailable which he had beſtowed vpon them afore? Nay, we haue ſeene already the long ſufferaunce which God had vſed towards them. And when men doe heape vp hoords of wrath a long time together after that faſhiō by their abuſing of Gods goodneſſe, as who ſhoulde ſay they were minded to ſpite God wilfullie, and to defie him, to ſee the worſt that hee can doe vnto them: it is good reaſon, that for their wilfull and ſtubborne hardening of their heartes, God ſhould make them to feele that hee will not haue his gentleneſſe ſo ſcorned, and finally turned cleane contrarie to his intent. Againe, after as God vttereth his fauour towardes vs, ſo muſt it bee the deerelyer ſolde vnto vs, if wee abuſe it. Nowe he calleth 1.Tim.3.15. the Church his houſe, and he taketh and admitteth vs for his children. Therefore if hee be diſhonoured among vs, ought it not to greeue him worſe (as I haue declared afore) than if thoſe which belong not vnto him (in compariſon) at all, had offended him a thouſand times?

Then let vs vnderſtande that God did iuſtlie ſhewe himſelfe ſo rigorous againſt the children of Iſraell, and let vs applie this doctrine to our ſelues becauſe wee be ſucceeded in their roome. We haue ſeene alreadie heretofore, howe God hath cut them off, and graffed vs in, in their ſteade, to the intent wee ſhoulde bee partakers of the adoption that belonged vnto them. Nowe if God haue not pardoned them, what Rom.11.21. will hee doe to vs? For we be not of more worthineſſe than they, neither is our ſtate more excellent than theirs. Therefore let vs ſee that we liue warely, and that we make the grace effectuall which we haue receiued at Gods hand, ſo as he may bee glorifyed thereby, and our ſaluation more and more furthered and confirmed by meane thereof. Thus ye ſee in effect what wee haue to gather vpon this text.

And whereas it is ſaide that God will heape euill vpon them, and ſhoote out all his arrowes againſt them: let vs marke yͤ here Moſes meant to doe vs to vnderſtand, that God hath mo ſorts & means of puniſhing men than one, inſomuch that when they think themſelues to be eſcaped, then are they newe to beginne againe. And this is verie worthie to bee noted. For wee ſee what the negligence of them is which haue doone amiſſe. True it is that if they perceiue any token of Gods anger, they will be abaſhed at it at the firſt, but if they feele no further thā threatnings they ſhake their eares and make a mocke at it. But if God ſcarre them a litle; as ſoone as it is ouer, they thinke themſelues quite rid of it. As for example, if there bee any noiſe of war, ſuch as haue misbehaued themſelues and led a wicked and looſe life, wil begin to ſhudder at it. But as ſoone as the ſame is ceaſed, they be the ſame men they were afore. Likewiſe is it with them concerning famine, and all other afflictions whatſoeuer. If a man be ſtricken with a diſeaſe and preſſed with the hande of God, hee wil play the holie man for the time: but as ſoone as hee is releeued, by and by he beginnes to ſet vp his briſtles luſtilier than afore. Yee ſee then at what point we bee. As ſoone as God withdrawes his hande, we beare our ſelues in hande that we bee quite and cleane diſcharged, and that there bee no mo meanes wherewith to puniſh vs. But contrariwiſe it is ſaide here, that if Gods ſhooting of one arrow haue not woūded vs to death, it makes no matter: for hee will ſhoote agayne, and in the ende ſo deale with vs, that wee ſhall find by proofe that it had beene for our behoofe to haue conſidered at the firſt, that he hath infinite meanes and incomprehenſible to vs, wherwith to take vengeance of our ſins. That is the cauſe then why he ſaith that he wil heape vp euill vppon them, as he will adde hereafter; ſaying: Are not theſe thinges laide vp in my treaſures? Deu.32.34. And there this matter ſhall bee treated of more at large. And by this worde *Arrowe*, he betokeneth al the weapons of his wrath, the which he ſetteth downe more particularly by and by after, ſaying that *He will ſende wilde beaſtes to deuoure all, hee will ſend Serpentes to conſume men with their ſtinginges; hee will ſende enemies with the ſword abroade; and hee will ſende terrour at home*. Heere GOD alledgeth ſome examples of the thing which hee had ſpoken, to wit, that when wee be eſcaped from warre, famine ſhall catch vs, and if God ſpare vs from famine, yet ſhall that nothing boote vs, for he will haue other weapons to purſue vs withall. And herewithall wee bee warned further that all creatures are in Gods hande, and that hee imployeth them to what vſe hee liketh beſt. As for example, if hee liſt to haue the wilde beaſtes to ſerue for our benefite, they muſt needes doe it. For hee leadeth them by his ſecrete moouing in ſuch wiſe, as they cannot but execute that which hee inioyneth. And on the contrarie part, whenſoeuer it pleaſeth him to arme the beaſtes: they muſt needes become our enemies, and wee cannot withſtande them. For vntill ſuch time as we bee at one with him, it is certaine that wee haue ſtill the worſe ende of the ſtaffe. Secondlie hee addeth *the trayling ſerpents*. Although wee deſpiſe theſe little beaſtes, ſuch as the Serpents are which trayle in the duſt as Moſes ſaith expreſlie here: yet wil God make the miſcheefe of them to attaine euen to our heades. For albeit that the biting of a Serpent bee but on ones heele or his foote: yet the venime of it ſtriketh vp through his whole bodie. The like is to bee ſaide of diſeaſes. For vnder one kinde hee comprehendeth here all, when hee ſayth, *That hee will ſende bitter heates, and that the ſame ſhall deſtroy men*. So then let vs marke (according to that which I haue treated of heretofore) that when wee bee vexed by men, the ſame happeneth not without the ordinaunce of God. Such thinges are Gods chaſtiſementes whereby hee calleth vs to the conſidering of our ſinnes, and whereby hee ſummoneth vs before him, not onely to indite vs of them, but alſo to the ende wee ſhould doe it our ſelues aforehand, and euerie of vs play the iudge in condemning our ſelues, that by that meane wee might obtayne fauour at his hande. But if we will needs bee ſelfewilled, then are they as euidences aforehande to condemne vs with, and wee muſt not imagine that wee can further our caſe by replyinges. And whenſoeuer wee bee ſo viſited, if wee yeelde not GOD the honour to confeſſe that he is righteous in ſo doing: ſurelie the miſcheefe ſhall bee doubled, and ſtill increaſed vntill it haue conſumed vs. Therefore although wee be troubled by men: yet let vs vnderſtande that GOD ſerueth his owne purpoſe by them as by inſtrumentes, and that wee muſt haue recourſe to him, and that if he were not prouoked againſt vs, wee ſhould bee vnder his protection, and hee woulde not giue our enemies the bridle after that faſhion. Let vs aſſure our ſelues that when ſickeneſſe commeth vpon vs, it is to bee accounted as the hande of GOD, and that his ſending of it, is to viſite vs, and to make vs to turne againe vnto him. As much is to bee thought of the reſt. For it is not to bee thought, that the creatures are led at all aduenture, that GOD ſhoulde not bee ſerued by them, and that they ſhoulde not bee at his diſpoſition. It is for heatheniſh and faithleſſe folkes ſo to thinke. But in acknowledging that GOD is the maker of heauen and earth, we profeſſe therewithal that al things are at his commaundement, that all thinges are diſpoſed by his appoyntment, and that nothing commeth to paſſe but by his iuſtice. That then is the thing which wee haue to beare in minde in this text when Moſes ſaith that God will arme the enemie without, and ſende feare within. Whereby hee meaneth that their needeth no more but a ſhadowe to fray vs, accordinglie Deut.28.66 as hath beene declared in the eight and tweentith Chapter. If GOD liſt to ſtirre vp great troubles and ſtormes againſt vs, he will doe it and it is meete that hee ſhoulde bee the ouerruler of all. But when hee intendeth to conſume vs: then muſt our life needes hang as vppon a twyned threed, ſo as at euening wee ſhall ſorowfully ſay, Who will cauſe me to ſee to morrowe morning? And (when night is gone) wee ſhall bee ſtill in the ſame greefe of minde, wee ſhall bee as men beſides themſelues and much woorſe. The thing then which this word *Feare* or terror importeth, is that God wil make men to be alwayes as it were beſides themſelues when they will not yeelde to his corrections to come to amendement, ſo as they ſhall bee wounded in their heartes, without his ſtirring vp of anie enemies, or his ſending of anie inconuenience vnto them; and they ſhall not knowe why nor wherefore, but that their owne ſhadowe troubleth them and maketh them at their wittes ende. Therefore if wee intende to inioy the greateſt and moſt deſirable benefite in the worlde, that is to ſay, to liue in peace and reſt: let vs learne that wee muſt not prouoke our God to make him our enemie. For as long as wee prouoke his wrath, all thinges muſt needes goe againſt vs. That is the thing which wee haue to gather vppon this place. And we muſt not thinke that wee haue profited anie whit, when wee haue put God out of our minde, or when wee haue turned our backes vppon him for a time, as theſe skorners doe which in ſuch times doe take their pleaſure in ſporting with GOD at the full. Therefore let not vs deale ſo hardheartedlie: for there is not a worſe thing than to haue rocked our conſciences aſleepe after ſuch a faſhion, that wee haue no more remorſe nor heartbiting in vs. But let vs ſet our mindes to haue peace with God, that is to ſay to reſort vnto him in ſuch wiſe, as we may feele him to bee our father and ſeeke to ſtay our ſelues vppon his goodnes, that our ſo doing may keepe vs in reſt. Thus yee ſee in effect howe wee haue to applie this worde *Feare or Terrour*, wherewith Moſes threateneth here the tranſgreſſors of Gods law, and ſuch as ſtand againſt him to the vttermoſt.

He ſaith further that *God will deſtroy euen the ſucking babes, and the olde men which are alreadie gray headed*, ſo as hee will not ſpare, neither ſex nor age nor anie thing elſe; for hee ſpeaketh of young folke and of maydes that are to bee maried. Nowe (as I ſayde afore) wee muſt not thinke it ſtraunge that God ſhoulde vſe ſuch ſeueritie: but wee muſt call to minde the vnreformable ſtubborneſſe which was in the people afore. For wee knowe that Moſes wrate this ſong to ſhewe the people their malicious and frowarde nature, yea and vtterlie vnamendable: in ſo much that when God had by all meanes vttered his goodneſſe and mercie towardes them, they drewe all to the worſt, and ſhewed themſelues too too vnthankefull, ſhrinking continually away from him, and marring themſelues with ſuperſtition and Idolatrie, ſo as the Prophetes ſtreyning themſelues to the vttermoſt, coulde not bring them backe againe into the right way. Is it then anie woonder that GOD after ſo long wayting ſhoulde vſe ſo great extremitie as wee ſee? No. For after that GOD had winked at them, their iniquitie came to the full growth, according to the fore alledged text of Geneſis which Gen.15.16. ſaith, that the wickedneſſe of the Amorrhites was not yet full growen: but within fourehundred yeares afterwarde, they ſhoulde bee vtterly rooted out. And why was that? For it was too much that thoſe people were hardened alreadie in the time of Abraham. But when as at the ende of fourehundred yeares more, they were become yet worſe, and ceaſed not to increaſe ſtill the great heape of Gods vengeaunce: was it not meete that hee ſhould then make them to pay the whole arrearages (as they ſay?) And ſeeing that the children of Iſrael comming into the ſame place and hauing ſo fayre a lookingglaſſe before their eyes, in thoſe Nations whome GOD had vtterlie deſtroyed; did neuertheleſſe giue ouer themſelues to the ſame ſuperſtitions, and thereby defiled the lande, which God had appointed to his owne ſeruice: was it not meete that they alſo ſhould be made an example to others? Nowe this ought to ſerue vs. For wee be in poſſeſſion of the inheritance which God promiſed to the children of Abraham: I meane not the land which they dwelt in, but the inheritãce which was betokened by that land as by a gage and figure. Gods will therefore is that we nowe ſhoulde bee his houſeholde, and that we ſhould bee gathered together into his Church and flocke, vntil he take vs into his kingdome. Nowe if in ſteede of honouring him, and of yeelding him his due ſeruice, we become vnrulie folke, giuen ouer to all leawdneſſe, and moreouer doe match the ſame with wilfull ſtubborneſſe, ſo as there is no meane to bring vs backe into the way of ſaluation: thinke wee that our Lorde will not bee reuenged of ſuch vnthankefulneſſe.

Furthermore let vs not thinke it ſtraunge, that the young babes are here ſpoken of. For as touching maides that are to bee maryed, young men, and olde folkes: if a nation bee corrupted, and the miſcheefe haue once ouerflowed his bankes (as they ſay:) they alſo muſt needes bee infected as well as the reſt, and the worlde ſees it is ſo. For when olde men are once ſaped in naughtineſſe, and inured by cuſtome to offend God: they wil rather haue their ſkinnes plucked off from their backs a thouſand times if they had ſo many ſkinnes, than once to be reclaimed. For they become ſo blockiſh, or els ſo inraged, that their is no way to deale with thẽ. As for young folke, we ſee they be as it were ſet on fire to make war againſt God. Againe, whereſoeuer wickedneſſe reigneth, and all thinges are peruerted: there the young women become as wilde as Roes; ſo as there remayneth not anie honeſtie, and much leſſe anie feare of God in them. This is apparant to all men. And therefore it is not to bee woondred at, though God doe threaten both young and old. But as touching little babes, that may ſeeme the more crueltie, becauſe they haue not offended like the others. For will God puniſh the guiltleſſe? Doth hee not ſay by his Prophet Ezechiel, that the Ezec.18.20. parties which haue ſinned ſhal beare their owne puniſhment, and that the Childe ſhall not bee puniſhed for his father? Yes, but we muſt marke that God hath a reaſon of his iudgementes, though it bee vnknowen to vs. Wee then may thinke ſome chaſtiſements of Gods to be ouerrigorous, but yet doeth he knowe why he doth ſo, and it becommeth vs to reuerence the things with all humilitie, which are incomprehenſible to vs. For what a thing were it if wee ſhould meaſure all Gods workes by our wit? Can wee attaine to them? Howe farre extendeth our vnderſtanding? Let vs conſider howe weake and ſmall it is, and what rudeneſſe is in vs. But on the other ſide, what are the iudgementes of God? Rom.11.33. Euen a deepe gulfe vnpoſſible to be gaged: they Eſa.40.13. be vncomprehenſible as ſaith the ſcripture. Rom.11.34 Agayne, whom did he euer cal to counſel? Therefore let vs content our ſelues with the thinges which God hath opened vnto vs, and be mindfull of the thing which wee haue ſeene not long ſince, namely that the ſecrete thinges belong to Deut.29 29 our God, and that the thinges which are in his Law belong to vs and to our children: that is to ſay, ẏ we muſt hold vs to the meaſure which God giueth vs, and not be inquiſitiue without ende & more than is lawfull for vs to know, but receiue the doctrine which hee giueth vs, aſſuring our ſelues that the ſame is ſufficient for our ſaluation. Alſo let vs bethinke vs howe it is ſaide in Iob, that we ſee the brimmes of Gods workes; Iob.9.10. but we can neuer attaine to the bottome of thẽ. Therefore whereas the ſcripture ſpeaketh nowe and then of ſome executions which God doeth: although the ſame may ſeeme to vs ouerrigorous, yet muſt wee bridle our ſelues and impriſon our wits to honour God with ſuch reuerence as he deſerueth. Let that ſerue for one poynt.

Furthermore as concerning that which is ſaid here of Babes, let vs marke that if God liſted to rende vp the whole worlde by the rootes, hee coulde doe it, yea and that right iuſtlie. For euen from our verie birth, we bring nothing but wrath and curſedneſſe. If God take young babes out of the worlde, yea and damne them: yet is there no rigour in ſo doing: for wee be all forlorne afore hande by nature. In this caſe therefore it behoooueth vs to caſt downe our heades and our eyes, and not preſume to ſtande in contention with God by reaſoning the matter with him, nor to control him as though he did wrong or iniurie to little infantes in taking them out of the worlde. For (as I ſaide) hee may not onely ſmite them with death, but alſo ſende them to euerlaſting damnation, becauſe wee bee all curſed in Adam. Now then, when he hath withdrawen his grace from a whole Nation, and all of them are become reprobates: then muſt his wrath needes extende as well to the young infantes as to their fathers, according to this ſaying, that God caſteth backe the wickedneſſe of Ier.32.18. the fathers, into the boſomes and lappes of their children. Not that the children be puniſhed being guiltleſſe: for God knoweth that they bee not ſo. Yea, but we perceiue not that they haue offended. As who woulde ſay, that wee were able to perceiue as much as God knoweth. Haue wee as ſharpe a ſight as hee? [No.] So then, although wee take little babes to bee faultleſſe: yet notwithſtanding there is a naughtineſſe incloſed in them, and the ſeede of ſinne is ſufficient to condemne them before God. Wherefore let vs marke, that although hee root out young babes; yet in ſo doing he cannot be blamed of crueltie: but he executeth a iudgement which ſurmounteth the capacitie and meaſure of mans wit, whereat wee may well wonder, but yet muſt wee confeſſe it to bee rightfull, as it is indeede. Wee ſee howe it fell out both in Sodome and in other places where it was Gen.19. 24. his will to haue all deſtroyed. When anie ſuch thing happeneth, let vs vnderſtande that GODS intent is to make vs to caſt downe our eyes. For if it befall ſo to

Luk.23.31. the greene tree, what ſhall be doone to the drie? Behold the litle Infants whom we imagine to bee innocent and faultleſſe: and yet wee ſee that Gods vengeaunce wrappeth them in with the elder ſorte, and with thoſe that haue greatlie offended. Righteous is G O D in ſo doing. What ſhall wee ſay to it, but onelie that wee ought to quake at it? For there is none of vs all which hath not deſerued a hundred times as much. If G O D ſpare vs, are we not the more bounde to his goodneſſe? And againe, if it pleaſed him to deale with vs according to our miſdeedes, ſhoulde wee not be afraide that we ſhal bee much more roughlie handled, than wee ſee little babes are? Yes ſurelie. So then, inſteede of contending as manie doe, and of entering into curious queſtions euen with diueliſhe malapeartneſſe to controll G O D, as I haue ſaide afore: let vs learne to be lowlie, in ſuch wiſe that hauing giuen glorie vnto G O D by confeſſing that he is euer righteous and ſoothfaſt, and let vs alſo haue an eye to that wee haue ſeene, that ſo we may impute it to his free mercifulneſſe that hee beareth with vs, and alſo bee the more incouraged to returne to him, ſo as wee may no more abuſe the long time of his patience. Thus yee ſee what wee haue to remember vppon this text, where G O D ſaith that hee will deſtroy euen the little ſucking babes.

Nowe hee addeth yet further, *I had ſaide or determined to roote out this people, but that I feared the prouoking of the enemie, leaſt the Aduerſarie might haue beene eſtraunged, and haue ſaid, Our hand is high, and it is not the Lorde that hath doone all this.* In this text our Lorde ſheweth that hee is ſo farre off from vſing any vnmeaſurable rigour againſt his people: that hee hath rather yet another reſpect not to roote them vtterly out, namelie leaſt the Infidels ſhould haue occaſion to blaſpheme him. That is the meaning of Moſes. They will complaine and ſay that G O D ought not to handle his people after that faſhion, but that hee ought to vſe greater kindneſſe and gentleneſſe towardes them. Yea, ſaith hee, pleade on your caſe: but yet ſhal yee winne nothing by it. For if God had reſpected no further matter than you, hee had rooted you long agoe out of the worlde, and the remembrance of you had beene quite and cleane aboliſhed long ere this. What letted him then? Not that you were not worthie to haue periſhed, for you haue not ceaſed to prouoke his wrath by dooing euill: but for that hee had a reſpect to your enemies, that is to ſay, to the Infidels. And why? For if God ſhoulde haue rooted out that people, whom he had chooſen: for aſmuch as the renowne thereof was ſpread ouer all the worlde, and the deliuering of them out of Egypt was as a woonderfull miracle, and the Iſraelites themſelues profeſſed themſelues continually to bee the worſhippers of the God which had taken them out of the deepe gulfe: ſhoulde not his deſtroying of them haue opened the mouthes of the wicked to skoffe at the Religion which was held in Iurie, and to haue ſaide, Where is nowe the God which maintained them ſo long time, as they themſelues haue reported? Either hee is falne aſleepe, or elſe he hath loſt his wittes, for he ſuccoureth them not any more. After that manner woulde the Infidels haue rayled at God if hee had not euer reſerued and kept ſtill ſome ſeede of that people, to ſhewe that his couenaunt was not quite and cleane diſanulled, but that it ſtoode ſtill in full force. That is the verie meaning of this ſaying where wee reade, I had determined to root them, yea and to ſcatter thē abroade eueriwhere. For the worde betokeneth ſuch a ſcattering or rending aſunder, as if one ſhoulde diſmember a mans bodie, and caſt the peeces thereof abroade here and there, ſo as nothing were left whole. Therefore, I had rooted them out [ſaith hee,] yea and that in ſuch wiſe as they ſhoulde neuer haue beene ſpoken of anie more among men, *but that I feared the prouocation of the enemie.* Nowe the thing that is rehearſed here, is read of in Exodus. And ſo it Exod.32.9.10.11,12,13 14. ſhoulde ſeeme that God was reſtrayned by Moſes from doing the thing which hee ſpeaketh of here. For hee giueth the ſentence, and addeth, Let me doe it; as though Moſes had ſet himſelfe againſt him. And yet for all that, it is verie certaine that God had determined aforehande to pardon his people: but yet it was his will that Moſes ſhoulde make interceſſion for them, yea euen Moſes, in aſmuch as he was there & made ſupplicatiō in the name of our Lord Ieſus Chriſt, and the people knew that they coulde not haue ſcaped except God had hearde the prayers of Moſes.

But howſoeuer the caſe ſtoode, this text ſheweth vs that God altered not his purpoſe: for hee is not variable, neither repealed hee his ſentence, though hee ſaide, I will yet againe pardon this people for thy ſake. For the thing which hee had determined in his owne minde, was performed, and yet notwithſtanding it was his will that Moſes ſhoulde ſteppe in as a mediator. And when God heareth vs, it is not for that we make him to chaunge his minde: but it pleaſeth him to declare the thing to vs which hee had determined to doe, to the end that our faith ſhoulde bee exerciſed, and wee knowe, that to pray, is no labour loſt or vnprofitable, for the fruite ſheweth the contrarie. That is the cauſe then why hee graunteth thoſe thinges at our requeſt, which hee had determined in his euerlaſting purpoſe afore. Yet notwithſtanding we ſee in effect, that if God had not beene minded to ſtoppe the mouthes of all the wicked, and vnbeleeuing ſort, he had deſtroyed that people. And that was done to correct ẏ ouerweening of ſuch as were euer ready to grudge againſt God. For ſuch is the maner of men, that they neuer want replies: but as ſoone as God ſcourgeth them, by and by they ſtand in contention with him. And if he preſſe them double; then they not onelie grunt at it, but alſo ſpewe out their blaſphemies againſt him. But here our Lorde ſheweth, that whē men haue caſt forth al their rage after that faſhion, yet it ſhall bee prooued to their faces, that hee notwithſtanding hath dealt ouergentlie with them, accordingly as it is certayne that euen at this day, if God had not a further conſideration than onely of vs, we deſerue well to be wiped out of the worlde. For notwithſtanding that wee haue receiued his worde, what doe we fare the better for it? We profeſſe the hauing of the Goſpell, and wee can well ſay that the Papiſtes are Idolaters, ſtraungers from God, and men giuen ouer to all euill. And why? For they be blinde and walke in the darke. But yet for all that, wee that haue the cleare light of life, howe doe we order our doinges? If we be compared with the Papiſtes, ſhall a man finde vs better than them? Nay, wee are ſo much more blame worthie than they, becauſe that for all our teaching yet wee deſpiſe God of a certayne malicious and determinate purpoſe. Sith it is ſo, if God had not a further reſpect than to vs, ſurelie wee ſhoulde bee conſumed out of hand. But for aſmuch as the Papiſtes woulde by and by ſet open their throates to ſcoffe at God and the pure Religion, therefore hee maintaineth vs ſtill. Wherefore let vs not boaſt that wee haue helde out vnto this time by our owne power: but let vs conſider that God woulde not haue his name blaſphemed, nor make the trueth of his Goſpell to bee a ieſtingſtocke for men to ſcoffe at: and let that bee a meane to humble vs yet better. Wee ſee then that this doctrine belongeth vnto vs, and that Moſes ſpake it not onely to the people of Iſraell, but alſo to all ſuch as ſhoulde profeſſe the ſeruice of God, and haue the pure doctrine of his worde: inſomuch that if they play the naughtipackes, and prouoke Gods vengeaunce againſt them, and God neuertheleſſe doe beare with them; it is not for their faire eyes (as they ſay,) nor for that they haue deſerued it: but becauſe our Lord will not giue ſuch looſe and vnbridled libertie to them that ſeeke occaſion thereof.

And it is ſaide expreſſely, *That God feared the prouocation of the enemie, leaſt hee ſhoulde eſtraunge himſelfe, and ſay, My hande is high, and it is not the Lorde that hath doone this thing*. By this worde *Prouocation*, hee meaneth the pride that is in men, accordinglie alſo as hee doeth in the eight Pſalme, where it is ſaide that God is glorifyed Pſal.8.3. by the mouthes of ſucklinges, in which place expreſſe mention is made of the enemie and of ẏ auenger, becauſe the vnbeleeuers are alwayes ſo proude and preſumptuous, that there is nothing with them but crueltie & thundering. So likewiſe in this text it is ſaide that God feared to prouoke the enemie, that is to wit, leaſt the Infidels ſhoulde proceede to ſuch wickedneſſe as to ſcoffe at the Law and at the true Religion. God then preuented them. And wee muſt not imagine that God was afraide of men: for hee coulde well haue prouided for it by ſome other meane. Is it not hee that hath made mens tongues? And how can they then ſtirre to ſpeak one worde, if he liſted to reſtrayne them? Could they moue to vtter one ſyllable? It ſhould ſeeme then that the thing which Moſes ſpeaketh here is needleſſe, namely that God ſhoulde bee afrayde to prouoke his enemies: for hee coulde wel haue remedied the matter if hee had would. I haue tolde you oftentimes alreadie, that God is ſpoken of after the manner of men. Therefore when God prouideth for a thing by anie worldlie meane, and ſuch as is common among vs: it is not for that hee is tyed vnto it, & cannot of his infinite power doe otherwiſe: but becauſe it pleaſeth him ſo to doe. Thus are wee doone to vnderſtande in fewe wordes, that when it pleaſeth God to ſerue his owne turne by the inferiour meanes which hee hath ordeyned in this worlde; it is not for that hee cannot doe what he liſteth of himſelfe and without any other helpe: but for that it is his will to keepe that order. As for example. Hee coulde well ſuſteine vs without breade, wine, or water: and yet notwithſtanding hee vſeth thoſe meanes. And why ſo? Euen becauſe it pleaſeth him. If we be ſicke, he can well heale vs without any medicine: and yet will hee haue vs to vſe medicines. In the time of warre he coulde wel repreſſe all our enemies without our ſtirring of anie finger towards it; but yet hath hee ordeyned other meanes. Ye ſee then after what manner this text is to bee vnderſtoode, where it is ſaide that God was afraide to prouoke the enemie: not that hee was vnable to let them or to withſtande them if hee had would; or that hee was vnable to haue ſtopped the mouthes of the Infidels; but becauſe hee ſawe men ſo malicious, that their whole deſire is to haue full libertie to ſpeake euill of his maieſtie. Which thing he perceyuing, intendeth to remedie it. And by what meanes? Euen by ſuch as hee himſelfe likes beſt of. Not that hee doeth it of neceſſitie (as I ſaide afore) or by anie conſtraynt: but that his good pleaſure is ſo. And therefore God coulde well roote vs out of the worlde at this day: and on the other ſide hee coulde well make the Papiſtes dumbe, and altogether ſenſeleſſe, or elſe hee coulde make them blockes or ſtones, or elſe he could vtterlie ouerwhelme them, ſo as his name ſhould not bee blaſphemed by them: and therewithall hee coulde raiſe vp a newe people which ſhould glorifie him in his iuſt deſtroying and conſuming of vs. God coulde well doe all theſe thinges: but yet for all that hee holdeth ſtill ſuch order in his workes, as hee hath determined vppon in himſelfe. That is the cauſe why on the one ſide hee ſpareth vs, and on the other ſide giueth not occaſion to the Papiſtes to blaſpheme his holy name if hee ſhoulde vſe extreeme rigour agaynſt vs.

And by the way, here wee bee put in minde of the nature of man. Indeede God ſpeaketh of the aduerſarie and enemie: but yet vnder them, he comprehendeth all ſuch as haue not beene taught by his worde to yeeld themſelues teachable vnto him. And what manner of diſpoſition attributeth hee vnto them? That they eſtrange themſelues: that is to ſay, that without inquiring or conſidering of Gods vengeaunce wherein he ought to be glorified, they turne it into a ſlaunder and ſay, It is not God that did it. Let vs marke well then, that if wee bee let alone to our owne nature, and that God guide vs not by his worde and ſpirite, to giue vs the true ſoundneſſe of vnderſtanding, diſcretion, and skill: although hee worke after ſuch a faſhion as his righteouſneſſe, power, and wiſedome may ſo appeare, that wee muſt needes be conuicted by it: yet we ſhal not ceaſe to caſt foorth blaſphemie againſt him. And why? For wee ſhall bee as witleſſe beaſtes. And this ſaying: *For feare leaſt the enemie ſhoulde eſtraunge himſelfe*, is to bee well weyed. For thereby God meaneth, that men inſteede of applying their wittes to the beholding of the thinges which hee ſheweth them, do wrappe themſelues in ignorance wilfully. Nowe it is certayne that although wee be blinde wretches, and that although by reaſon of Adams ſinne wee bee bereft of iudgement, reaſon, and vnderſtanding: yet there is malice ſtill in vs, ſo as our whole ſeeking is to bee ignoraunt of the thinges which our Lorde woulde haue vs to knowe. Therefore whenſoeuer men doe make a cloke of their ignorance, they ſhall euermore bee conuicted to haue refuſed the knowledge of thoſe thinges which might haue beene well knowen vnto them, if they had ſet their minds vppon them. And that is the verie cauſe why Saint Iude in his Epiſtle ſpeaking of theſe heatheniſh folke which deſpiſe G O D, and are groſſe and dulheaded as folke that haue no knowledge at all; ſaith that they knowe not the thinges which they ſhoulde know, becauſe they haue no liſt to knowe them. Then is it a curſed kinde of cloking, whenſoeuer men make not their benefite of Gods workes, but applie them cleane contrarie to his meaning.

Iude.10.

Now looke what is ſaid here concerning the Infidels, the ſame belongeth likewiſe vnto vs. And were it not that G O D bringeth the light vnto vs, or vs vnto the light, and opened our eyes to ſee the thinges which hee ſheweth vs: ſurely we ſhould not onely continue ſtil blind, but alſo it ſhoulde cauſe vs to become worſe and worſe, accordingly as it is ſaide here, that the Infidels ſhoulde haue blaſphemed G O D, ſaying, *Our hande is high, and it is not God that hath doone this*. On the one ſide then we let God alone as though he had done nothing: and on yͤ other ſide wee become ſo proude as to put ourſelues in his roome. For men content not themſelues with their robbing of God of his power, & with their defacing of his maieſtie: but they will alſo needs deck thēſelues with his feathers; & make themſelues verie Idols, and haue men to beleeue them to haue beene the doers of the thinges which are peculiar to G O D. So then, ſeeing there is ſuch mad pride in vs, and ſo groſſe ſelfe weening: wee ought to bee the more warned to yeelde our ſelues vnto G O D, and to pray him not onely to ſhew vs his workes wherein his glorie may ſhine foorth and appeare: but alſo to open our eyes that wee may ſee them, in giuing vs skill and diſcretion by his holy ſpirit, ſo as we may learne with humilitie to honour him: and that when we haue confeſſed his iuſtice, goodnes, and mercie, we may conſider howe much we be bounde vnto him, and that when hee puniſheth other men, we may be drawen to repentaunce by their meanes, and vnderſtande that he beareth with vs, becauſe he might well confounde vs out of hande, were it not that he intended to vſe fauour and goodnes towardes vs, to the ende wee ſhoulde bee the more inflamed to honor him, and to dedicate our ſelues to him in the name of our Lord Ieſus Chriſt.

Nowe let vs pray vnto him to vouchſafe to haue pitie vppon vs, and not to call vs to account for the great number of miſdeeds whereof wee be guiltie, becauſe wee knowe well that if hee liſted to deale rigorouſly with vs, we ſhould needes be confounded, yea and vtterly periſhe: and that although hee had not wayted for vs ſo long time, yet he had iuſt cauſe to haue deſtroyed vs as often as wee prouoked him to wrath: wherfore although we haue offended him without end or meaſure, yet notwithſtanding ſeeing hee hath ſhewed himſelfe ſo kindhearted a father towardes vs alreadie, it may pleaſe him to continue his mercie and fauour, and therewithall to reforme vs ſo by his holy ſpirit, that being guided and gouerned by him, our whole ſeeking may be to frame ourſelues to yͤ obeying of him, ſuffering our ſelues to be ruled by his word, and ſeeking nought elſe but to pleaſe him in all reſpects. That it may pleaſe him to graunt this grace, not onely to vs but alſo to all people and Nations of the earth, &c.

On Saturday the vj. of Iune, 1556.

The CLXXXV. Sermon which is the eight vpon the two & thirtith Chapter.

28 For it is a Nation voyde of diſcretion, and there is no vnderſtanding in them.

29 But if they were wiſe, they would vnderſtande this, and take heed to their ende.

30 Howe ſhoulde one of them chaſe a thouſande, and two of them put tenne thouſande to flight, were it not that God had ſolde them, and that the Lord had ſhut them vp?

31 For their gods are not as our God, and thereof euen our enemyes themſelues are Iudges.

VE ſaw yeſterday how God hauing a reſpect to the Infidels & their blaſphemies, had ſpared the people of Iſrael. And thereupon it was ſhewed, that God doth oftentimes pitie vs, & not puniſh vs ſo rigorouſly as we deſerue, to ẙ end that his name ſhould not be made a ſcoffing ſtocke, & a ieſting ſtock among the wicked, who ſeeke occaſion of skorning when they ſee God chaſtice his Church: & thereupon they fall to rayling at the doctrine and Religion it ſelfe. But now it is added here, *That this people were deſtitute of diſcretion, & voyde of vnderſtanding.* Truly men thinke themſelues wiſe ynough when they bee craftie and ſuttle in prouiding well for their buſineſſe, and in practiſing this and that, And then fall they flat to deſpiſe God, as wee ſee that all theſe worldlings doe, who are forepoſſeſſed of this fantaſie of ſelfwiſedome, by reaſon whereof the whole worde of God, and the ſuffering of themſelues to be gouerned by it, is to them but ſimplicitie and fooliſhnes. But yet for al that, the holy Ghoſt affirmeth, & that iuſtly, that all ſuch as liue not in the feare of GOD, are witleſſe. For our true wiſedome is to yeelde our ſelues to him which can leade vs to ſaluation: and without that, wee bee blinde wretches and incloſed with darkeneſſe. And therefore wee can not but goe aſtray all our life long, and after tripping to ſtumble right downe, yea euen into a deadly fall. Wee muſt vnderſtand then, that vntill we bee come to the ſubmitting of our ſelues wholly vnto GOD, and to knowe that all our happineſſe lyeth in him: wee bee voyde of diſcretion. But this cannot bee, but that therewithall men muſt alſo needes knowe themſelues. And in deede, if a man haue gone about heauen and earth, and gotten the vnderſtanding of al things in them, and in the meane time thinketh not vppon his GOD, nor yet vppon himſelfe: I pray you to what purpoſe is all his vnderſtanding? If hee were the skilfulleſt Aſtrologer in the world, and had all Philoſophie incloſed in his braine, and were perfect in all other ſciences, and yet in the meane while knewe not himſelfe, nor had any regarde of GOD; but were ſo brutiſh that he wiſt not what Religion meaneth: were ſuch a man to bee more eſteemed, than a ſimple idiot which liueth in the feare of GOD, and knoweth to what ende hee is created? Then is it not without cauſe, that Moſes condemneth all thoſe of brutiſhneſſe, which haue forgotten God, are gone backe from his worde, are intangled in ſuperſtitions, and to bee ſhort, haue left the way of ſaluation, and the light which God offered them to guide them all their life long. As for thoſe which haue ſo eſtraunged themſelues, Moſes not without cauſe doeth terme *witleſſe and forlorne in their Diſcretion.* And by that terme he meaneth, that the deſpiſers of God being giuen to their vanities and wicked luſtes, haue in deed ſome diſcretion, and doe delight and glorie in their own reaſon, yea and are ful of pride; in ſo much that if a man ſpeake to them to reclayme them into the right way, they deſpiſe all doctrine, bearing themſelues in hand that they bee able ynough to diſcerne betweene good and euill. That doeth Moſes meane. But what? It is a diſcretion of ouerthrowe and deſtruction. And therefore let vs ſuffer our ſelues to bee ruled by God, & let vs apply al our indeuour to the receiuing of ẙ thinges which he teacheth, if wee will haue an vnderſtanding that ſhall doe vs good.

And for the confirming of the ſame matter, hee addeth heere, *O that they woulde haue beene aduiſed, O that they had vnderſtood this, and that they had conſidered their laſt end.* We ſee why God hath pronounced that there is no reaſon in men, and that they be vtterly dull and deſtitute of vnderſtanding, when their lyfe is looſe and vnorderly. And why? Wee haue ſeene whereto GOD called the people of Iſrael. Nowe his adopting of vs, is to the ende that our lyfe ſhoulde bee bleſſed and happie, and that after he hath preſerued vs in this worlde, the inheritance of the heauenly kingdome ſhould bee beſtowed vppon vs. Yee ſee then that the true happineſſe of men is to haue the fauour and loue of God. And wee be ſure of his fatherly goodneſſe towardes vs, if when hee calleth vs by his woorde, wee come vnto him, and accept that grace by faith. The vnſeparable bond then betweene God and man, is that they receiue the record of his goodneſſe which hee giueth vnto them. And that ſerueth as well for this preſent lyfe, as for their euerlaſting life. On the contrarie part wee haue heard the threates which are giuen forth heere: that is to ſay, that GOD hauing long time borne with the Churliſhneſſe of that people, woulde bee reuenged of it. Now he addeth, Muſt it not needs be ẙ this people are deſtitute of wit and reaſon, when they conſider not this thing, ne haue an eye to their owne ende? Not without cauſe doth Moſes here point out what ẙ people ought to haue conſidered: for wee haue bin told afore, ẙ God hath ſo reſerued to himſelf the matters which concerne his own incomprehenſible determination, as yet notwithſtanding, he hath made the doctrine of the lawe familiar vnto vs: and he will haue it to be obſerued for ẙ exerciſing of vs therein all our whole life. Seeing then ẙ God hath ſpoken, and his will is ſet before our eyes: let vs mark that his ſo doing is not in vaine: accordingly alſo as hee auoweth by his Prophet Eſay ſaying, We cannot alleage ẙ it is a darke thing & ſuch as paſſeth our vnderſtāding. We muſt not ſay any more, Who wil go ouer the ſea? Who ſhall climbe vp aboue the cloudes? Or who ſhall go downe into the deepe? Seeing ẙ the word is in our mouthes & in our hearts, it ought verily to ſuffice vs. Neuertheleſſe it is true ẙ although God haue ſpoken, yet muſt he be faine to inlighten our wits with his holy ſpirit, or elſe we ſhall abide ſtill without vnderſtanding. But if wee conſider the doctrine in it ſelfe, it is moſt

Deut. 29.26

Eſa. 45. 19.

Deut. 12. 30

Rom. 10. 6

manifeſt vnto vs, and God reueileth himſelfe therein familiarly ynough. The thing then which we haue to remember vppon this text, is that Moſes vpbraideth the Iſraelites, that they had beene called to God after ſuch a faſhion, as they coulde not haue erred vnleſſe they had would: and moreouer that their end had beene ſhewed vnto them.

And by the word *End*, he meaneth al the happines that is promiſed to al gods children which addict themſelues to him and reſt vpon his promiſes, walking continually vnder his obedience: and contrariwiſe the confuſiō and ouerthrow of all skornefull, and diſobedient perſons, which deſpiſe ſuch grace, withdrawing themſelues from him and corrupting his woord. To that intent and purpoſe then doth Moſes expreſly ſpeake of the end of them. And now muſt we make our benefite of this leſſon. Firſt of al therefore let vs mark that (as I haue ſaid afore) we may be ẏ wittieſt folke in the world, and yet we ſhalbe counted as brute beaſtes and without reaſon at Gods hand, if we haue not a regard of him. The chiefe point then of our wiſedom, is to haue our eyes open to behold the light of life, to haue profited wel in the ſchoole of our God, ſo as we can worſhip him; and to be no longer as ſtray cattell, not knowing him that made vs and faſhioned vs, nor yet knowing our ſelues neither. And therefore let vs learne to receiue Gods word with all ſimplicitie, & not doubt but that there he commeth ſo familiarly vnto vs, as we cannot ſay ẏ we need make long iourneyes, or that the things are too profound and darke for vs. For our Lord doth (as ye would ſay) chawe our morſels aforehand to vs, becauſe of the rudeneſſe which he ſeeth in vs. And ſo he handleth vs lyke little babes, to the intent we may the eaſilier ſwallow down the foode which he giueth vs. Thus ye may ſee (I ſay) howe that when we haue Gods woord preached vnto vs, wee muſt not doe as the Papiſtes doe, which ſay, Oh ſir, this is to high for me, this geere is no't for plaine folkes, this is to be reſerued for the clergie. But let vs aſſure our ſelues that God ſpeaketh both to great and ſmall, and dalyeth not with vs when hee calleth vs to him by his word, but will haue vs to vnderſtand it. Then is it not long of any but ourſelues, if when his word is preached vnto vs, we be not dewly inſtructed in the things that are requiſite for our ſaluation. True it is that we muſt not ſteppe to it with preſumption, truſting in our own wiſedome: but we muſt deſire God to inlighten vs, and that as his voyce ſoundeth in our eares, ſo alſo he ſpeake to our heartes by his holy ſpirite. Let vs humble our ſelues, accordingly as we know how it is ſaid
Pſal.19.9. that God vttereth his wil to ſuch as are little and lowely. If we go to it after that maner, let vs not doubt but our Lord will make the things auaileable which are ſet downe to vs in his name, and giue vs acceſſe vnto him both familiar and eaſie ynough. Therefore let vs marke well this word *End*, whereof Moſes ſpeaketh heere, and let vs conſider whereunto God calleth vs. True it is that he maketh vs promiſes euen of this preſent life, ſo as wee ought to aſſure our ſelues that God will not fayle vs in this world, inſomuch that although he will haue vs exerciſed with many miſeries, and vexed with diuers temptations: yet notwithſtanding he ſayth he will hold vs vp with his mightie hand, ſo as we ſhall neuer bee deſtitute of his helpe at our neede. But yet the cheefe point is to conſider the heritage which is reſerued for vs in heauen, ſo as we tend thitherward, and ſet all our affections thereuppon, without intangling ourſelues ſo in theſe baſe things, that wee cannot haue our heartes alwayes vpwarde: and that for as much as our happineſſe and trea- Matt.6.20.
ſure is aboue; wee bee not held downe in this worlde; wherein all things are brittle and tranſitorie. After that maner ought wee to conſider the worde *End*, whereof Moſes ſpeaketh here. For whoſoeuer they bee that ſeeke their happyneſſe heere beneath; ſurely they differ nothing at all from Oxen and Aſſes, but rather their ſtate is yet much woorſe. For the beaſtes go on ſtill, and are not troubled with the great number of luſtes wherewith men are troubled. There is no ambition to be ſeene in them, there is no Couetouſneſſe, there is none of all the other luſtes. If they be a thirſt, they drink; if they be a hungred, they eate. But men deſire not onely to eate and drinke, but alſo to glut themſelues and to follow all maner of exceſſe. Ye ſee then howe a man is more wretched than a beaſt, in that he is ſo caried away by his vnruly affections. Sith the caſe ſtandeth ſo, let vs tend to the end which god ſetteth downe vnto vs; and let vs vnderſtand that God doth ſo make vs to taſte of his goodneſſe in this earthly pilgrimage, ẏ he wil haue vs to be filled therwith aboue, & but onely to paſſe through this world, or to dwell in it as ſoiourners, and in the meane while not ceaſſe to be ioyned and vnited to our Lord Ieſus Chriſt, knowing that he is our head, and the fountaine of all good things, and that all our ioy, contentation, reſt, and glory doe lye and conſiſt in him: and on the contrary part, that if God puniſh vs not at the firſt for our offences, we muſt not therfore fall aſleepe in thē, nor take occaſion thereby to flatter our ſelues. And why? If we liue ſo from day to day without looking any further: muſt it not needes be ẏ we be ſtarke blocks? True it is that the faithfull are not vexed with ouergreat carefulnes. For why? Pſal.37.5.& 145.18.
They caſt themſelues as it were into Gods lap, as they be incouraged to do in the pſalm. Then ſhal we not be vexed ẇ vnquietnes, as they be which haue no truſt in god. For when we cal vpon god, he is neere at hand, and we muſt not make long diſcourſes in that behalfe as the worldlings doe, who ſtand ſcanning of that which is to come a hundred yeres after their death. Yet notwithſtāding we muſt not be ſo wedded to ẏ things which we ſee before our eyes, that we ſhold not alwaies looke further off. But lyke as the promiſes of the heauenly lyfe ought to lift vs vp aboue the world: ſo ought Gods threatenings to quicken vs vp to walke in his feare, by rebuking vs for our ſinnes when wee haue done amiſſe, and by calling vs dayly to account: accordingly as it is ſayde, that by faith Noe beheld the floud when Heb.11.7.
other men made great cheere and feaſting.

So then, let vs learne to haue an eye to our end: that is to ſay, when we haue offended God, let vs not fall aſleepe vpon it, neither let vs foſter our vices from morrow to morrow till we be growne hardhearted through vnreformable ſtubbornneſſe: but although God beare with vs and vſe patience in winking at vs for a time: yet let not vs forbeare to bethinke vs of his threatenings, and to waken our ſelues that we may repent and aske forgiueneſſe and turne vnto him with true amendment. Ye ſee then that the true wiſedome is that men ſhould not be tyed to the preſent thinges, but to lift vp their heartes and mindes to the things that are inuiſible: accordingly as it is ſaid that faith is a mirrour of the things that are not ſeene, and the ground of the thinges which are abſent or farre from vs. Hebr. 11. 1. Although then that our happineſſe appeare not at the firſt, and it ſeeme that for all our ſeruing of God yet we be miſerable, by reaſon whereof the vnbeleeuers floute vs, and ſet their feete as it were vpon our throats, ſo as we be perſecuted by them: yet notwithſtanding let vs not ceaſſe to conclude, that hauing once put our truſt in God, we ſhalnot be diſappointed. For why? The end of it wilbe good: and therfore let vs tary patiently til God deliuer vs from the afflictions and miſeries wherin we be at this day. Let vs therfore ſet our mindes vpon the end which God hath promiſed vs. And therwithall let vs alſo haue an eye to his threatenings, and let them hold vs in awe. And although the wicked prouoke God, and are not rebuked for it at the firſt, bycauſe God ſeeth that they be not worthy to be chaſtiſed by his hand: yet notwithſtanding let not vs bee aſtoniſhed therat, but let vs vnderſtand that Gods threatening of the tranſgreſſors of his Law after that faſhion is not in vaine. And therefore let vs frame our owne inditement, that we may preuent the condemnation which otherwiſe taryeth for vs. That (I ſay) is the thing which wee haue to remember vpon the word *End*, wherof Moſes hath ſpoken heere.

And therwithall we ſee the goodneſſe of God heere expreſſed after a wonderful maner, in that he entereth into a complaning and ſorrowing, as if he were a man that could ſuffer: *O that this people* (ſaith he) *had bin weladuiſed.* True it is that our Lord is not ſubiect to our paſſions; but he vſeth ſuch form of ſpeech, to ſhew that the loue which he beareth vs, ſurmounteth the loue of all earthly fathers. And therefore it ſerueth in effect to doe vs to vnderſtand, that when we goe wilfully into deſtruction, and reiect the grace which was offered vs to our ſaluation: then doe we grieue the ſpirite of God, as is ſaid in the Prophet Eſay: Eſa.63.10. Zach.12.10. and it is al one as if we ſtrake God with a dagger, as he complayneth alſo by his Prophet Zachary. That is one thing in effect, which we haue to remember vpon this place. And were all this well grauen in our heartes; I pray you woulde it not make vs to abhorre all our ſinnes? When a man is tempted by Sathan to offend his God, if hee would bethinke himſelfe of this point, and ſay; How now? Thou grieueſt thy God, thou giueſt him cauſe to enter into complaint and ſorrowe, like a father that conceiueth griefe and anguiſh of mind when hee ſees his children vnruly and vnreformable: It is a wounding of him at the heart, and ſo likewiſe God telleth vs yͤ we grieue his ſpirite: If a man (I ſay) would bethinke himſelfe throughly of theſe things: although he had a heart of ſtone, yet would they breake it and ſoften it. And this is the cauſe why that throughout all the holy Scripture hee complaineth of this; that we greatly grieue him, whẽ we are ſo wicked & vnruly. Therefore let vs aduiſe ourſelues wel: & for as much as hee is deſirous to be our father, let vs bee to him as children. For it muſt needes be that Sathan hath more than bewitched vs, & that hee rageth moſt terribly in vs, if we be not moued at ſuch kind of dealing. And it behoueth vs ſo much the more to marke well this text, bycauſe our Lord condemneth men for that they are too ſenſeleſſe and brutiſh, and telleth them that they be too too blockiſh, in that they haue not eye to their ende: but ſpecially for that hee proceedeth ſo farre, as to cloth himſelfe with our humane paſſions, and lamenteth to ſee vs periſh wilfully, and that we cannot abyde that hee ſhould deale like a father with vs. That is one thing more which we haue to marke vpon this text.

Now if any man alleage, that God ſeeing men ſo deſtitute, could wel giue them vnderſtanding, as we haue ſeene heeretofore where it is ſayde, God hath not yet giuen thee a minde and heart Deut.29.4. to vnderſtand. We muſt mark that God hath his ſecret purpoſe, which he reſerueth to himſelfe, (For he ſheweth fauour to whom he liſteth: and Exo. 33. 19 & Ro.9.15 he hath pitie on whome he hath pitie) and it is not for vs to enter thereinto, but rather to doe him the honour to confeſſe that he is the fountaine of al goodnes, of al power, of al wiſedome, and of all Iuſtice and vprightneſſe. Yet notwithſtanding we muſt make haſt when hee calleth & incorageth vs by his word. For if we come not, ne hearken to the things that are ſet forth to vs in his name, to receiue them obediẽtly by faith: we ſhalbe condemned as perſons that haue grieued his holy ſpirite by rebelling againſt him, and ſhewed our ſelues to be vnreformable children, that haue diſdayned our father and made our ſelues ſtraungers to him and to his houſe. That is the thing which is ſet forth vnto vs in this text. Therefore whereas God vpbraideth vs with our grieuing of him, let vs beware that wee enter not into theſe needeles curioſities: but rather let it ſuffice vs to behold him in his word, where he ſheweth himſelf, and where he ſheweth himſelfe in ſuch wiſe, as we ſhall finde that all they which frame themſelues thereafter, ſhall haue a happy end: that is to wit, that for as much as they bee adopted of God afore, they cannot periſh: and on the coutrary parte, that they which turne their backe to God when he ſheweth them his face, and which kick and ſpurne againſt him, ſhall for their ſturdineſſe reape nothing but confuſion. That is the thing in effect, which we haue to gather vpon this place.

Now Moſes addeth conſequẽtly, *Were it poſſible for one man to chaſe a thouſand, or that two ſhould put* *ten thouſand to flight, vnleſſe the Lord had incloſed thē, and that their mightie one did hold thē captiue?* Here he ſheweth by effect, yͭ God had ſufficiently warned his people, if they had but one ſpark of reaſon in them. And thereupō it is to be concluded, yͭ there was no more excuſe of ignoraunce for yͤ people, but yͭ they were conuicted ouermuch, to haue hardened their hearts euen of wilfull malice, & ſo to haue withſtoode God, & to haue letted him yͭ he ſhould not bring thē backe into the right way. That was yͤ meaning of Moſes. Now let vs mark, yͭ when God vouchſafed to ſhew his fauour towardes the people of Iſrael: then was his promiſe performed, yͭ is to wit, yͭ as ſoone as the people did but (as ye would ſay) remoue thēſelues, by & by their enemyes were ouercome. We knowe what ouerthrowes they gaue, and by what meanes yͤ ſame came to paſſe. For we heare how it is ſaid by yͤ Prophet Eſay, yͭ whenſoeuer God liſteth to ſuccour his people, & to vtter his power in their defence: it ſhall fall out wͭ them as it did in the voyage againſt Madian: for at yͭ time Gedeon gate not the victorie by mans policie, neither by vailancie, or ſtrength of hand: but it was the ſword of God & of Gedeon that did the deede. And yet it was ſo done, as it might ſeeme to be a play of young children. But our Lord ſaith yͭ he will maintaine his people after yͭ faſhion. Againe in other texts he declareth that his ſauing of his people ſhall be neither by ſword nor by ſpeare, but by his owne only hand. Ye ſee then how God hath ſhewed himſelfe inuincible, as oft as he hath liſted to defend his people. Cōtrariwiſe a verie ſhadowe was ynough to diſmay thoſe wretched people and to put them out of heart, ſo as they were ouerthrowen & brought in bondage of cruel tyrans. After what manner? A man cannot tell how. If a man looke vpon the ouercomming of them, it is a wonderfull and vncredible thing to the ſight of the worlde, that there ſhould haue beene ſo great a change. Now for this cauſe doeth Moſes adde, *Were it poſſible that one man ſhould put a thouſand to flight, and that two ſhoulde chaſe ten thouſand, except your God had ſolde you, and that he helde yee ſhutte vp as priſoners?* For ſo long as he gaue you courage, and ſhewed you that he intended to maintayne you: your enemyes gayned nothing at your handes, but were vanquiſhed by the onely looke of you, bycauſe your God fought for you. But as now yee ſee how your God taketh part againſt you, and howe it is hee that fighteth againſt you. And therefore impute not your rough handling vnto men, but conſider howe it is the hand of God that purſueth you and is againſt you. Had the Iſraelites vnderſtoode this, they had beene touched out of hand with their faultes, they had humbled themſelues, & they had returned vnto God, acknowledging him for their Iudge. But they continued ſtill in their ſpytefulneſſe. Nowe then wee ſee the ſturdineſſe and alſo the more than beaſtly blindneſſe which was in them. And this vpbrayding of them is to bee marked well. For wee knowe it is the hygheſt poynt of condemnation, when GOD wynneth nothing at our handes by chaſtiſing vs, but his ſcourges become vnprofitable; as if a man ſhoulde ſmite with a hammer vpon a ſtithy or Anuile. Therefore when GOD looſeth his labour after that faſhion in correcting vs; it is a token that our diſeaſes are vtterly vncurable. And that is the cauſe why that in the firſt Chapter of Eſay, hee playeth the ſorowfull father, ſaying: Alas, what a thing is this? From the crowne of the head to the ſole of the foote, there is not any ſounde part in this people. I ſee they bee the ſame they were afore, they bee no whyt amended; and muſt I needes haue beſtowed my labour in vayne? Wee ſee whereunto this tendeth: to wit, GOD ſheweth that men are become ſtarke diuels when they conſider not that his correcting of them is to bring them to amendment. Nowe then if wee chafe vpon the bitte when God ſendeth vs ſuch warnings: ſurely wee bee vtterly vnreformable. Therefore let vs bethinke our ſelues better, and as ſoone as God lifteth vp his finger and maketh vs to perceyue his diſpleaſure; let our ſinnes come before our eyes, and let vs thinke vppon them with vtter miſlyking of them, and returne againe vnto him. The thing then whereof wee bee warned in this text, is that wee ſhoulde better regard GODS ſcourges, and not kicke againſt the pricke: for wee ſhall gaine nothing thereby. Wee haue heard what is ſayde in the Lawe, as I haue alleaged heeretofore, and as we haue read it in the eyght and twentith Chapter: that is to wit, that if wee march ſtoutly againſt GOD, hee alſo will ſtrike croſſely and ouerthwartly vpon vs. So then, let vs marke well the warnings which we heare. When there commeth a dearth of vittelles, let vs not thinke that God ſittes aſleepe in heauen. It is hee that tryeth vs, to the intent wee ſhould thinke vpon our ſinnes, and ſtand the more vpon our garde, knowing that they bee the Roddes wherewith he chaſtiſeth vs. And hee doeth it not without cauſe; but of purpoſe to humble vs, and to further our ſaluation continually, vntill hee haue brought vs to it throughly. Therefore let vs learne to bee brought backe continually to the knoweledge of our vices and ſinnes, when God calleth and exhorteth vs thereto. And for the bringing thereof to paſſe, let vs take good heede to yͤ afflictions which we ſuffer, aſſuring our ſelues that they ought to ſerue for our inſtruction.

Eſa.9.4.

Iudges.7.

Oſee.1.7.

Eſa.1.5.

Deut.28. & Pſal.18.28.

And after this, Moſes addeth further, *that their mightie one is not as ours:* that is to ſay, The Idols which the heathen worſhip, are not lyke to our God. And that it is ſo, *they themſelues are the Iudges.* This place hath commonly beene expounded, as though Moſes had complayned that the enemies of the Iſraelites had ſō ſurpryſed them, and ſo vexed them as no man might ſuccour them: but it is cleane contrarie. For Moſes declareth that if God were not againſt his people, they ſhould not bee ſo ſcourged by their enemies: as if he ſhould ſay, yee muſt not loke at your owne ſtrength nor yet at your enemies, but conſider that for as much as ye haue fought againſt your GOD, and prouoked his vengeance againſt you by your offences: all theſe troubles which you do now indure, are of his ſtirring vp againſt you, and your enemies haue not any whit of ſtrength, but of his gift. Thinke not therefore that they ſhould haue ſuch power, vnleſſe hee had ſolde you, and that hee himſelfe held yee in captiuitie, and had deliuered you into the hands of your enemies. And for proofe therof, is he like their ydols? Strength ſtandeth not in men, but it commeth from heauen. Now then do not the heathen deſerue to be depriued of all ayd, when they worſhip their ydols and dead things? But you now doe worſhip the liuing God, hee hath ſhewed that he will keepe you in his tuition, and that then you ſhall be ſafe againſt all the world. Seeing then that your God is not lyke the ydols of the heathen; howe could you bee ouercome by them, if God did not afflict you, giue you ouer, and forſake you? And that it is ſo (ſayeth he,) euen our enemies are Iudges. That is to ſay, the heathen perceiue and finde by experience the power of our God, ſo as they muſt needs ſpite of their teeth confeſſe, that our God hath all power in himſelfe, and that their owne ydols are nothing. True it is that they abyde ſtill in their ignorance and beaſtlineſſe, but yet howſoeuer they bee diſpoſed they haue the experience thereof: and yet you conſider not that. Heere Moſes rebuketh the ſtubbornneſſe of the people yet more, in that they tooke not warning by the great number of chaſtiſements and viſitations. Wee ſee then in effect, that when wee amend not at GODS chaſtiſements, we muſt in the ende pay the arrearages: for there is ſo much the leſſe excuſe in vs. If God did lay the brydle in our neckes and warned vs not of our miſdoings, but rather dazeled our eyes by blindfolding vs in ſuch ſort as wee might not ſee one whitte: yet ſhoulde not all that diſcharge vs, but yet ſhoulde not our ſinne bee ſo heynous, ſo as it myght ſeeme to men that there were ſome little excuſe for vs: but he goeth about to bring vs home to himſelfe, hee ſheweth vs that wee haue liued amiſſe, hee draweth vs to repentaunce, and wee proceede on ſtill, as though wee had determined to reſiſt his hande. Nowe it is ſayde, Humble your ſelues vnder his myghtie hande. 1.Pet.5.6. When GOD ſhaketh his hande ouer vs, it is good reaſon that wee ſhoulde ſtoope and relent vnto him, offering to him the ſacrifice which hee requireth, that is to ſay, the ſacrifice of a ſorowefull heart. Pſal.51.19. If wee doe not ſo, but ſtand out ſtill with harde and ſtiffe neckes; ſo as although GOD proceede in calling vs to him, yet wee continewe ſtill the ſame wee were afore; and notwithſtanding his rehearſing of one ſelfeſame leſſon to vs, yet wee ſtande ſtill at one ſtaye: at length wee muſt needes come to account for it. That is the thing which Moſes meant in this text.

What remayneth then to doe? Beholde, to all ſuch as walke in the feare of GOD, and reſt vppon the truſt of his goodneſſe, and flee to him for refuge; he promiſeth proſperitie in all things, ſo as they ſhall not want any thing ſo long as they be ſo vnder his protection. But on the other ſide, what can the ydolles of all the heathen in the worlde doe, or of all ſuch as haue peruerted the true Religion? Shall they bee fauoured of God? No not a whit as in reſpect of themſelues, ſauing that hee will puniſhe vs by their handes. Therefore when wee ſee men ſo aduaunced aboue vs, and to haue the better hande of vs, ſo as they may tread vs vnder foote and deuour vs: let vs aſſure our ſelues that God perſecuteth vs, and that it is he with whom we haue to deale. Becauſe wee haue warred againſt him with our vices: he alſo nowe after long tarying for our amẽdment, is faine to ſhew vs and to make vs feele to our coſt, that for as much as he is our Iudge, he cannot abyde that his grace ſhould be ſo deſpiſed and ſcorned. To bee ſhort, whenſoeuer wee bee afflicted, let vs enter into the thing which Moſes telleth vs heere, and conſider thus with our ſelues: Notwithſtanding that our God haue promiſed vs that wee ſhall finde good ſuccour continually at his hand, yet doe wee now ſee the cleane contrarie. And of whom is that long? Are not wee our ſelues to blame for it? Yes: For it is certaine that GOD foadeth not his ſeruauntes with vayne hope; nay hee alwayes goeth beyond their hope when they imbrace his promiſes as they ought. Wee muſt conclude then, that by our ſinnes wee haue forſaken and put from vs the ſuccours which hee had promiſed vs, and by meanes whereof (as Moſes ſayeth in another place) wee bee ſtripped quite and cleane Exod.32.25 out of that good couerture wherein our welfare conſiſted. For in Exodus Moſes ſpeaking of the ydolatry which the people had committed in making the Calfe of golde, ſayeth that they had ſtripped themſelues naked: as if he ſhould ſay, that the onely ſhadowe of God is ynough for our ſafetie, and that wee neede not to bee afraide ſo long as GOD broodeth vs vnder his wings. But as ſoone as we fall to ſin, we vncouer ourſelues, laying ourſelues open for a pray to Sathan, and to all miſcheefe. So then, we muſt conclude, that when our Lord doeth ſo ſet himſelfe againſt vs, it is bycauſe of our ſinnes. For why? His power is not abated, as ſaith the prophet Eſay. Eſa.59.1. Wherefore conſume we ſo away in our miſeries? Is it that God hath deafe eares & heareth not them yͭ call vppon him? Or yͭ his arme is broken ſo as he cannot help them as he did at yͤ firſt? No no: but bicauſe our ſinnes haue caſt a barre betweene him & vs, & we be not worthy to come at him to feele his helpe as afore.

Beſides this, Moſes by way of compariſon toucheth the children of Iſrael yet neerer the quicke in that hee ſayeth, *That their enemyes were Iudges thereof*. And thereby he meaneth that euen beaſtes myght perceyue it (as it is ſaid in the prouerb,) and that blindfolke myght iudge of it by groping. Nowe who were the enemyes of the children of Iſrael at that time, but the Infidels which had not any ſparke of lyght, euen ſuch as were ſotted in their ſuperſtitions? And howe coulde they then iudge of Gods power? Euen by the apparantnes therof, which was ſo great that it needed not any great reaſon to conceiue it. So then, in effect Moſes ſayeth heere that God had ſo manifeſted his power in ſauing his people, as that not onely they which were inlightened by the holy ghoſt, but alſo euen the brutiſheſt in the world might perceiue it. And in deed, what myracles wrought God in deliuering his people out of the lande of Egypt, and in leading them through the wilderneſſe? Neede we any great ſharpeneſſe of wit to conceiue ſo wonderfull power, which may rauiſh our wittes to be aſtoniſhed at it? No: but for as much as God hath ſhewed himſelfe ſo openly: both great and ſmall and euen the groſſeſt in the world muſt needes perceiue, that it is God. So then, whenſoeuer the word is matched with experience, & God giueth vs as it were ſpectacles to help vs, ſo as if our eyes be weake or dimmed, his word may bee a guide to ſhew vs how to diſcerne his power towards vs: ſurely there will be no excuſe for vs. For euen the Heathen muſt needes be Iudges or witneſſes thereof, ſo as wee cannot aleage, Yea it is true that God hath done it, and we ought in deede to diſcerne it, but alas, wee perceiued it not, for he dealt after ſuch a darke faſhion, as wee could not attaine thereto. Now, God telleth vs that if we were not ſo malicious as to ſhut our eyes, to ſtop our eares, & to dull all our ſenſes when he ſheweth vs ẏ tokens of his goodnes and mercy: we ſhould feele them with our handes, though wee had no eyes to ſee them withall. And on the contrarie part, when he teacheth vs, if we were not wilfully blind, that is to ſay, are contented to bee ignoraunt of the things which ought to bee beſt knowen vnto vs, it could not be but that vnleſſe we continued, & that through our owne vnthankfulneſſe, wrapped vp in ignoraunce, it could not bee I ſay, but that verie blind folkes themſelues ſhould be ſufficient witneſſes againſt vs, neither neede we to ſeeke any further ſtartingholes in this behalfe, for it ſhall be in vaine. After that our Lord hath drawen vs to him as well by his goodneſſe as by his chaſtiſements, and we come not to him, nor perſiſt to liue in his feare: then ſhall we come to the point to haue it caſt in our teeth, and euen the ignoranteſt in the world, the Infidels which neuer taſted of Gods truth, muſt riſe vp to beare witneſſe againſt vs, and to condemne vs, and to cut off occaſion of all excuſes. Lo at what point we ſhall be then. But this is ſaide vnto vs to the intent we ſhould not tarie to bee condemned after that faſhion. Then ſeeing that our Lord maketh his woord knowen in theſe dayes, euen to ſuch as are bewitched by Sathan: & ſeeing that vnto vs he giueth his word, not onely as a lamp, but alſo as a bright ſhining ſunne to giue vs light, and wee bee put in minde euery minute of an houre to thinke vpon him, to benefite our ſelues by his works, and to take ſuch warning by them as may confirme our truſt in his goodneſſe, and bring vs to his obedience: let vs on our ſide apply our mindes wholly that way, and euery of vs put his indeuour thereto, and giue another maner of iudgement vppon ſuch as haue deſpiſed God, and ſcorned his goodnes. Let vs (I ſay) become their Iudges, according to that which is ſaid, that being the members of Ieſus Chriſt, wee ſhall iudge the whole world. 1.Cor.6.2. The way then for vs to put this text in vre, is not to tarie till our Lord haue condemned vs by the teſtimonie of the vnbeleeuers, but to be ſo well diſpoſed to walke vnder his obedience, as our whole indeuour may be to frame our ſelues to that which he ſheweth vs, and euery of vs to make his profite in ſuch wiſe thereof, as our Lord Ieſus may acknowledge & auow vs to be members of his body, and we may boaſt our ſelues to bee his, when it commeth to the laſt day.

Now let vs fall downe before the Maieſtie of our good God with acknowledgement of our faultes, praying him to vouchſafe to haue pitie vppon vs his ſillie creatures, and that although we haue deſerued to bee caſt off by him, yet notwithſtanding he wil not deale with vs according to our deſertes, but rather ſhew footh the treaſures of his goodneſſe, and for our Lorde Ieſus Chriſtes ſake receiue vs into fauour, not only to pardon our faults paſt, but alſo to bring vs home againe to himſelfe, and to reforme vs in ſuch wiſe vnto his will, as all our whole lyfe may bee conformed to his righteouſneſſe. That it may pleaſe him to graunt this grace not onely to vs but alſo to all people and Nations of the earth, &c.

On Munday the xv. of Iune, 1556.

The CLXXXVI. Sermon which is the ninth vpon the two and thirtith Chapter.

32 For their vine is of the vineyard of Sodom, and of the fieldes of Gomorrha, and their grapes are grapes of gall, and their cluſters are bitter.

33 Their wine is the poyſon of dragons, and the cruell gall of the Aſpe.

34 Is not this layd vp in ſtore with me, and ſealed vp among my treaſures?

35 Vengeance and requitall belong to mee. When time is, their foote ſhall ſlip. For the day of their deſtruction is at hand, and the things that ſhould come vppon them doe make haſt.

Heere our Lorde ſheweth what manner of fruites the Iewes deſerued to gather. As if hee ſhould ſay, that the vengeance which hee intended to execute vppon them, coulde not bee founde to bee cruell, becauſe there was nothing elſe in them but gall, bitterneſſe, and all manner of poyſon. And bycauſe theſe figuratiue ſpeeches might ſeeme ſomewhat obſcure: hee addeth, *That they brought foorth none other than the fruites of Sodom and Gomor.* Whereby hee doeth them to vnderſtande, that their wicked deedes were as ſhamefull as the dooinges of thoſe two Cities, the which it was Gods will to deſtroy with lightening from heauen, to giue an euerlaſting example to the whole worlde. Nowe wee ſee in effect what the meaning of Moſes was. In deede ſome take this for puniſhment, ſaying that GOD woulde pay them with the like. As how? Namely that hee woulde giue them bitterneſſe, ſowerneſſe, anguiſh, and all manner of puniſhmentes to drinke of. And true it is that the Scripture ſpeaketh oftentimes ſo: for it like- Eſa.51.17.22 neth all the chaſtiſementes which GOD ſendeth vppon men, vnto drinkes. Thou ſhalt drink of my cuppe. As howe? I will ſende you of my ſpirit of giddineſſe, and of the ſpirit of rage and madneſſe. Likewiſe in another text he ſayeth, I will feede you with heauineſſe and ſorowe, and I will make you to drinke of my wrath till yee burſt. This kinde of teaching then is ryfe ynough in the holy ſcriptures. But in this text God hath a higher reſpect. Indeede it is true that hee threateneth the Iewes, but yet therewithall hee ſheweth that hee will puniſh them iuſtly according to their offences. They that referre this to the heathen and Infidels, deceiue themſelues. For they tooke it, that God after he had puniſhed his owne people, would turne his wrath againſt thoſe by whom hee had ſerued his turne, accordingly as wee knowe that when God liſted to execute his vengeance vppon the Iewes, hee vſed the ſeruice of the heathen, ſtirring vp ſometime the King of Egypt, ſometyme the King of Aſſyria, and another while the King of Chaldie. Ye ſee then that the Infidels were the inſtruments of Gods wrath. Not that they minded to ſerue God in making thoſe warres: but we know that God by his ſecret prouidence ouerruleth all thinges heere below; and applyeth them all to good vſe, making men how wicked ſoeuer they bee, euen in deſpite of their teeth to execute and performe all yͤ things that he hath ordained. Now when God hath ſo ſerued his turne by yͤ heathen; then cõmes their turne alſo. For it is ſaid that whẽ God hath done Eſa.10.12. and diſpatched all his woorke vpon mount Sion, then will he alſo ouermaiſter al thoſe which play their pranks, and weene to ſcape Gods hand and to abide vnpuniſhed: for he wil wel ynough find them out to pay them double. Howbeit, Moſes in this place treateth not of the heathen, but rather proceedeth in his matter wherewith he had begunne: which is, that God would puniſhe the Iewes, which ought to haue bin as his children: and yet notwſtanding had not ceaſſed to make warre againſt him, ſo as he held them and tooke them for his enemies. After which maner we ſee how he ſpeaketh by his prophet Eſay in the firſt Eſa.1.24. Chapter, ſaying: Alas, muſt I needes bee auenged of mine enemies?

But now that wee know of whom Moſes ſpeaketh: let vs looke more neerely wherefore it is ſayde that the vine of the Iewes is of the vineyard of Sodome and of the fieldes of Gomor. Wee knowe howe our Lorde lykeneth his Church to a vineyard. And not onely in this place; but alſo in the fifth chapter of Eſay it is moſt notably ſet downe, where he ſayeth, I will ſing a ſong vnto my beloued of his vyne- Eſa.5.1. yard. There the Prophet taketh vppon him GODS cauſe, lyke as a friend vndertaketh a quarell of him for whom he is minded to doe it. I will goe ſing a ſong, ſayeth he. After I had brought thee out of the Lande of Egypt, I planted thee in a fat ſoyle, I husbanded thee, I made a preſſing fatte for thee, and I omitted not any thing that belonged to thee: and nowe whereas I looked to receiue good fruite of thee: thou haſt brought mee foorth nothing but bitterneſſe. Yea and our Lorde Ieſus himſelfe had an eye to this ſong of Eſayes, when he accuſed the Iewes of ſuch vnkindeneſſe towardes God, Matt.21.33 that when hee hadde laboured by all meanes to ſaue them, yet they aduaunced themſelues ſo farre againſt him, as to murther his prophets whom he ſent vnto them to gather vp his Rents, yea and in the end to murther his onely ſonne and heire.

But nowe let vs come to that which Moſes ſayeth heere; namely, *that they bee of the planting of Sodome, and of the field of Gomor.* It behooueth vs to marke theſe two contrarie thinges. The one is, that God had choſen that people for his heritage, tendering it as a vine, and husbanding it all manner of wayes. It was meete therefore that they ſhould haue yeelded ſome good fruite vnto God, and that was the fruite of Sodom, that is to ſay, all manner of wickedneſſe wherewith Gods anger and vengeaunce were prouoked againſt them. And not without cauſe doeth Moſes ſpeake ſo: for hee foreſawe in his minde, that that people woulde giue themſelues ouer to all euill. And wee knowe alſo howe the prophets reprooue them for it. For they blame them not for ſome meane faultes; but they tell Ier.23.14. them that they haue outgone the wickedneſſe of Ez.16.46.13 the Sodomites and Gomorrites, & that whẽ the account commeth to be made, Sodom and Gomor ſhalbee their Iudges, yea and bee counted innocentes in compariſon of Iſraell and Iuda. For we muſt alwais remember that God had gathered that people to himſelf, and that the more fauour he had beſtowed vpon them, the greater was their vnkindnes, and cõſequently the greeuouſer was their fault, and the leſſe were they to be excuſed. Now the Prophets had an eye to the things which Moſes had propheſied afore. And ſo the whole matter commeth to this point, that the Iewes, who ought to haue glorified God, and which ought to haue had none other regard nor other ſtudy all their life long, than to liue in all pureneſſe of conuerſation; ceaſed not to doe euill, and to yeelde all maner of bitterneſſe vnto God. Sith it is ſo, we muſt not thinke that God did them wrong, neither ought they to complaine though hee puniſhe them extremely, and lay farre greater and horribler vengeaunce vppon them, than vppon all other Nations of the world. Such fruite then as they had ſowed, and ſuch fruit as they brought foorth, ſuch fruit did they gather: and it was good reaſon that God ſhould deale ſo rigorouſly with them. That is the thing in effect, which wee haue to beare in mind.

And now to apply this leſſon to our benefite, let vs marke firſt of al, that if we weene our ſelues to haue done but a ſmall fault, as men commonly doe either cloake their offences through hypocriſie, or elſe go about to make them leſſe than they be indeede: God will take vs to bee like the folke of Sodom and Gomor. And why ſo? Thoſe blind wretches gaue ouer themſelues vnto ouerheynous and curſed ſinnes, and became beaſtly. But what? As for vs we haue the lyght of life; we haue GOD calling vs into the way which is ready made, ſo as we neede but to goe on; wee bee warned to walke in obedience to GOD, and to dedicate our ſelues wholie to him euen as hee hath choſen vs to be his heritage: now if after all this, wee offende him yet ſtill, although our ſinnes bee counted but ſmall before men, are wee not as blamewoorthy as Sodom and Gomor, conſidering the rebellyouſneſſe which is in vs, and that we make warre againſt God euen of ſet purpoſe? Yes: and therefore let no man beguile himſelfe, nor no man flatter himſelfe, but let vs conſider how our Lorde will condemne vs ſtill as he did Sodom and Gomor. Eze.16.49. For God did giue them their fill, ſo as they had abundance of all good things, whereuppon they waxed proud, and did ſhut their handes and vouchſafed not to ſuccour the poore and needy. To bee ſhorte, in that place hee accuſeth Sodome and Gomor of three thinges: firſt that when GOD preſerued them, they became vnthankefull to him, and conſidered not from whence their welfare proceeded, ſecondly that they grewe proude, and gaue themſelues to pompes and delyghtes: and thirdely that they were cruell, and had no pitie nor compaſſion of their neyghbours to releeue them, hauing wherewith. And nowe let vs ſee if our Lorde giue not vs occaſion ynough, to loue and ſerue him, ſeeing he bleſſeth vs ſo many wayes. We muſt not haue an eye to the things that belong to this flightfull and tranſitorie lyfe, and to the ſuſtenance of our bodyes: but let vs conſider howe God powreth out his ſpirituall benefites vppon vs. Hauing ſo our fill, what acknowledgement doe we make to him thereof? Doeth not the world ſee that wee put all thinges out of minde? It ſhoulde ſeeme that our meaning is to deuour GODS benefites euen in mockage of him. As touching pride, doth not the world ſee howe great it is in moſt of vs? Doe wee ſuffer our ſelues to bee guided by the hand of God? Nay, as ſoone as any man ſhewes vs our faults, wee gnaſh our teeth at him, and there is none of vs that will bee meekened. True it is that wee will all generally confeſſe, that it is good reaſon that GOD ſhoulde gouerne vs, and that wee ſhould be guided and directed by his word: but when it comes to the proofe, none of vs will taſte of that ſauce: euerie of vs letteth the brydle looſe to his luſtes, and ſo wee drowne and become drunke in our delyghtes. Likewiſe wee bee full of crueltie. Where ſhall a man noweadayes finde men that deſire to communicate ſo with their neighbours, as they bee contented to releeue the neede of the poore? We ſee the contrarie. Thinke wee that GOD ſleepeth in the meane whyle? Thinke wee that hee hath a double meaſure to mete with? So then (as I haue declared afore) wee ſhall gayne nothing by flattering our ſelues: but GOD ſhall euer finde vs like to the folke of Sodom and Gomor, if we belie his word, and in ſtead of dedicating our ſelues vnto him, doe leade a heatheniſh and looſe life. That is one thing which wee haue to marke vpon the firſt place.

Againe, let vs marke well alſo, howe hee lykeneth the fruite of Sodom and Gomor *to the gall or venim of the Aſpe, to the cruell or deadly poyſon of the Dragon, and to all manner of bitterneſſe.* For thereby hee doeth vs to vnderſtande, that when wee liue wickedly, it is all one as if wee offered GOD poyſon to drinke, or woulde goe about to poyſon him. True it is that God is not ſubiect to ſuch things: but yet is it not long of vs. But if a childe ſhoulde offer his father the gall of an Aſpe, and all maner of bitterneſſe: I pray you woulde not euerie man abhorre ſuch a monſter? Woulde they not ſay he deſerued to haue all men riſe vp againſt him to roote him out? Beholde, heere our Lorde complayneth that when wee yeelde not the fruite which hee requireth of vs, it is all one as if wee did giue him bitter thinges to drinke, or as if wee woulde make him to burſt with gall, or with the poyſon of an Aſpe. Were this weyed as it deſerueth, ſurely wee woulde ſtand more in awe than wee doe. When the diuel tempteth vs and prouoketh vs to euill, if wee beare this leſſon well in minde, [wee woulde ſay to our ſelues,] Howe nowe? Wilt thou profer thy GOD the gall of Aſpes, and ranke poyſon to drinke? Truely wee are not ſo blockiſh but that our heartes woulde relent at it, and it woulde make vs to bethinke our ſelues. But alas, the diuell doeth ſo bewitch vs, that wee followe our wicked luſtes ſtill. Neuertheleſſe this is not ſpoken in vayne. So then let vs not imagine that Moſes hath heaped vp heere a deale of needeleſſe ſpeeche in that he ſayeth, Their vine is of the planting of Sodom and of the vineyarde of Gomor: and againe, their grapes are bitter, they bee the verie gall of the Aſpe, and their wyne is the poyſon of Dragons. His gathering of all theſe thinges together, is to ſhewe vs that wee cannot ſet ourſelues againſt GOD by leading a diſordered lyfe as we doe, but that (ſo farre as is poſſible for vs) wee offer to him bitterneſſe and ſowerneſſe to drinke, as if wee ſhould put venim and poyſon into his cuppe. And euen for that cauſe alſo doth he complayne that ſuch as haue ſo rebelled againſt him, haue greeued his ſpirit. Eſay.63.10. Not that God (as I ſayd afore) is ſubiect to any ſuch paſſions: but therein hee ſheweth mennes wicked dooinges according to this ſaying: They Zach.12.10. ſhall perceiue him whom they haue wounded. And how is that? Where are the daggers and ſwordes wherewith GOD can bee wounded? Nay hee ſheweth that our ſinnes are taken as ſore to heart, as though they were daggers to wound him withall. Now ſeeing it is ſo, and that our God hauing choſen vs for his vine and planted vs, dooth alſo take payne ſtill to husband vs; let vs learne not to yeelde him ſo harſh and bitter fruite, but rather to regarde what hee demaundeth of vs, and thereunto apply our ſelues, that in the end we bee not condemned to haue bin as Sodom and Gomorre, whereas hee would haue had vs to haue bin his holy citie, and he himſelfe woulde haue dwelled among vs, as in his ſanctuary and dwellinghouſe.

Now hee addeth thereunto, *Is not this layd vp with mee? Is not this ſealed vp among my treaſures?* This text comprehendeth two thinges. For firſt of all God ſheweth that ſinners beguile themſelues, imagining to ſcape his hand as though his eyes were blindfold, or as though he regarded not the things that men do here below. And ſecondly he ſheweth that he alſo wil therfore do his office, that is to wit, that foraſmuch as hee knoweth their ſinnes and wicked deedes, he will alſo puniſh them as they deſerue. Thoſe are the two poyntes which we haue to marke. Now as touching the firſt, wee knowe that men doe alwayes ſurmiſe that God perceiueth them not. True it is that wee will not ſay it with open mouth, nay wee will abhorre to ſay ſo: for if it bee demaunded of the verieſt naughtiepackes, whether God gouerne not the world, or whether he knowe not all mens faultes: they will ſay yes. But yet for all that, it is certaine that ſuch as prouoke him ſo boldly, are ſo dulheaded and brutiſh, that to their ſeeming God ſeeth them not: and the Scripture is full of that thing. Pſal.94.9. Shall not he which hath made the eare, heare? Shal he be blind which hath created the eye. Shall not he which faſhioneth mens harts vnderſtand all their thoughtes? And they againe haue ſayd on their parte, God ſhall not perceiue it. To bee ſhort, experience ſheweth that when men haue hardened themſelues in their ſinnes, they doe alſo beare themſelues in hand that God thinketh not any more vppon them, but that he turneth his backe and forgetteth them. Lo at what poynt we bee. But our Lorde telleth here on the contrary part, that all thoſe thinges are layde vppe in his treaſures, and faſt ſealed. As if he ſhould ſay, true it is that at the firſt daſh I ſhewe not that your ſinnes are come to my knowledge, I make as though I ſaw them not. Now becauſe I vſe ſuch patience, you imagine that I ſit idle in heauen, and let you alone, and minde not any more the gouernment of the world. Therefore ye abuſe my goodnes when my vengeance is not ſeene out of hand: but yet are all thoſe thinges layd vp in ſtore by me, and faſt ſealed vp in my treaſures.

Nowe to benefite our ſelues by this text, let vs haue an eye to that which is ſayd in Daniell, Dan.7.10. that the bookes ſhall bee layd open when the Iudge holdeth his Aſſiſes. Therefore if our ſinnes bee hidden as nowe from the worlde, ſo as wee be not accuſed of them nor no man rebuketh vs for them, inſomuch that we doe as it were fall aſleepe in them: let vs not therefore forbeare continually to mourne for them before God, and to enter into account, and to quicken vp our ſelues, knowing well that the Regiſters muſt bee layd open, when the ſentence ſhall bee giuen, and that as then our inditement muſt needes bee framed. Wee ſhall not bee made priuie to it aforehand, but as ſoone as the Trumpet ſhall haue ſounded, and our Lorde is ſet vppon the benche, there ſhall neede neither Regiſter nor ſecretarie to reade it, but euery mans conſcience muſt accuſe himſelfe, and euery man beare witneſſe againſt himſelfe, and euery man muſt lay open his owne ſhamefull dealinges: Sith it is ſo, let vs take heede to ourſelues, and not deceiue our ſelues by our vaine ſelfeſoothing. For although God puniſh vs not preſently, but beare with vs for a time: yet dooth it not therefore followe, that hee perceiueth not all our naughtie and wicked doinges. That is the thing then which we haue to remember in this text, wherein God ſaith, that all theſe thinges are layd vp by him, and faſt ſealed vp in his treaſures.

Yet notwithſtanding, no doubt but Moſes had an eye to the puniſhmentes, as if it had bin ſayd, that GOD can well reſerue chaſtiſementes to their due times, ſo that if he vtter them not at the firſt, hee knoweth wherefore hee delayeth them, and yet in the meane while they abide faſt locked vp. Therefore whenſoeuer GOD openeth his cheſtes, hee will finde terrible manners of vengeance, which are incomprehenſible to vs as nowe. Yea and let vs marke, that when GOD hath puniſhed vs two or three wayes, if hee withdrawe his hand afterward and yet wee ceaſe not to offend him ſtill, but hold on from euill to worſe, wee ſhall bee amazed to ſee what newe puniſhmentes hee will finde out, which wee neuer thought of. Therefore let vs not beguile our ſelues as though wee by our wit could meaſure both Gods puniſhmentes and all thinges belonging to his iudgement: but rather let vs vnderſtande that they bee hoorded vp as treaſures; and as often as wee bethinke vs of our faultes, let vs ſay with Dauid, Lorde who is hee that knoweth his owne ſinnes? Pſal.19.13. Truely Dauid played not the hypocrite in hiding himſelfe, neither ſought hee vaine and tryfling ſhiftes to diſguiſe his ſinnes: but after he had wel examined himſelfe, hee ſawe that God is a farre other manner of

Iudge than hee himſelfe was, and (as Saint
1.Iohn.3.20 Iohn ſaith) farre greater than our owne conſciences. If our owne conſciences accuſe vs, for euery fault which wee perceiue in our ſelues God knoweth a hundred. So then, there is no more for vs to doe but to cry out with Dauid,
Pſal.19.13. Who is he that knoweth his owne faults? Lorde cleanſe mee from my ſecret ſinnes. The way then which wee haue to deale, is firſt & formoſt to doe our indeuour to ſearch well the euill that is in vs, and (when wee haue done all that wee can,) to conclude in the end that wee perceiue not the hundredth part, and that God muſt bee faine to clenſe vs from our iniquities, euen though wee perceiue them not at all. Let that ſerue for the one poynt.

Againe as touching puniſhmentes, If GOD maintaine vs in reſt and at our eaſe, yea and thereunto doe alſo proſper vs: it muſt not make vs to fall aſleepe. For why? He hath his treaſures in the meane while, which are hoorded vp. Therefore let vs bee afraid, and although the ſignes of his anger appeare not, but hee ſeeme rather to ſmile vppon vs: yet if any man finde himſelfe faultie, let him flee to him and praie him to forbeare the putting forth of the treaſures of his vengeance, and rather to clenſe vs from all our faultes, and to ſet vs ſo cleare from them, as we may come before his face without ſpotte, and vnblameable, not in reſpect of our owne perfection, but becauſe hee hath forgiuen vs our offences, and ſo buryed them as hee will not call them to account. After that maner muſt wee put that texte in practiſe. And ſo in a worde let vs marke well, that it behoou eth vs to awake that wee may liue as in the preſence of God. Seeing then that nothing eſcapeth him, nor nothing fleeth out of his remembraunce, except it bee when he vouchſafeth to vſe mercie towardes vs: and lyke as hee marketh all our offences, ſo he hath wherewith to puniſh them; and hee can lay moſt horrible and dreadfull vengeance vppon vs: let vs not tary till hee execute ſuch ſentence vppon vs, but (as I tolde you afore) let vs rather pray him to clenſe vs from all our ſins, and to vtter forth the endleſſe treaſures of his goodnes towardes vs.

Nowe to confirme this leſſon, Moſes addeth, *Vengeance is mine, and I will pay home in time conuenient. Their foote ſhall ſlip, the day of their deſtruction is at hand, the time thereof haſteth on apace.* We ſee that when Moſes ſayd, *This is layd vp in my treaſures*, hee meant it not ſimply of mens ſins, but alſo of the corrections which God ſendeth vpon ſuch as haue offended him too much; & to ſhewe that hee hath meanes wherewith to puniſh them, which are vnknowen to men, and which ſhall amaſe them when they come to paſſe: In reſpect whereof hee ſayth, *Vengeance is mine*: As if hee ſhould ſay, what thinke yee mee to bee? For you call mee God, and yet in the meane while yee acknowledge mee not to bee the Iudge of the world: and that is a robbing me of my glory and maieſtie. And in deede, what is GODS beeing, but that when men haue liued in this worlde, they ſhoulde come to account before him, and he bee their Iudge? If wee ſcape Gods hand, ſo as our faultes abide vnpuniſhed, and euery man might runne at rouers as hee liſted, and in the meane while GOD ſhould ſhut his eyes at them; what a thing were that? Shoulde wee not make as it were a dead idoll of him? Yes certeinly. Here therefore GOD chalengeth to himſelfe the office of reuenging, as if hee ſhould ſay, Thinke not that my diuine being or this name of GOD conſiſteth in I wot not what an idle toye: but that it importeth that I gouerne the worlde with my power, that all thinges are guided by my wiſedome, that my righteouſneſſe reigneth, and that I haue the dominion of the worlde in ſuch wiſe, as all thinges muſt needes come to account before mee, that ſuch as haue ſerued and honored mee may not looſe their labour, nor the wicked ſcape vnpuniſhed which haue not ceaſed to breake all order and to worke mee deſpite. After this manner will I bee knowen to bee GOD, euen when you ſhall perceiue and feele my wiſedome, power, and righteouſnes. Now then, *vengeance is mine* (ſayth hee) that is to ſay; I am the Iudge, and therefore beguile not your ſelues. It ſeemeth at the firſt ſight that Moſes ſaith not any thing here, which is not knowen and confeſſed of all men. For who will deny that God is a Iudge? And yet for all that, (as I ſayd afore) after wee haue confeſſed it generally, euery of vs intangleth himſelfe in his owne imaginations, and wee thinke not vppon it when it commeth to the offending of GOD, wee make no account of it, all is one to vs, wee bee as bolde as mad men. And muſt it not needes be then, that the knowledge which wee had thereof is ouercaſt with a ſlumber? Now then foraſmuch as men doe wittingly deceiue themſelues, by turning away from this doctrine, that is to wit, that GOD is the Iudge of the worlde: therefore are men here put in minde that vengeance is his, and that hee will not forget to execute his office. And ſo wee ſee now to what purpoſe Moſes vſed that leſſon.

Notwithſtanding this, Saint Paul alledgeth the ſame euen properly alſo, thereby to reſtrein Rom.12.19.
vs from reuenge and from taking vppon vs the thing that GOD hath reſerued to himſelfe. Now then my friendes (ſaith hee) reuenge not your ſelues, but giue place to wrath: for it is written; Vengeance belongeth vnto mee. There wee ſee howe Saint Paul aſſwageth the choler and vnruly paſſions which cary men away, when they bee in a chafe. My friendes (ſayth hee) reuenge not your ſelues, for yee muſt giue place to wrath, or elſe it is all one as if yee ſtriued againſt GOD, and hindered him from dooing his office. But let him alone, for hee hath promiſed that foraſmuch as he is the Iudge of the worlde, whenſoeuer you bee troubled by your enemyes, hee will requite them with the

lyke: howbeit conditionally that yee beare all thinges patiently and meekely. For if yee will needes auenge your ſelues, it is all one as if yee did ſhutte the doore againſt GOD; as who woulde ſay, I will not tarie for him, but I wyll trie what I can doe of my ſelfe. Howe ſo? God is willing to bee your protector, hee is ſo gratious to you all as to take you into his tuition, and to auenge you of your wronges: and you bee ſo vnpatient and fumiſh, that ye cannot find in your heartes to tary his woorking. But whoſoeuer haſteth after that ſorte, doeth as it were thruſt himſelfe into Gods ſeate, and that is a blaſpheming of his name. Nowe therefore bee well aduiſed (ſaith hee,) and looke that yee giue place to GODS wrath, that is to ſay, that yee ſuffer our Lorde patiently and with a mield and quiet minde, to doe and performe the thing which hee hath promiſed, for as much as vengeaunce belongeth vnto him.

Thus wee ſee nowe whereto this ſaying tendeth, and that Saint Paule hath applyed this text wiſely, as whereof two thinges may bee gathered: whereof the one is, that for as much as wee ſee our ſelues continually giuen to ſhrowde our ſelues vnder hypocriſie, wee ſhoulde alwayes liue in feare and warineſſe: aſſuring our ſelues that when wee haue playde the beaſts neuer ſo much, and when we be neuer ſo beſotted in our ſins, we ſhall haue made neuer the better market, but in the ende GOD will needes perfourme that which he ſpeaketh heere. For why? Hee cannot bee God but that therewithall hee muſt needes bee Iudge of the world alſo. Therefore let vs liue in awe of him. Secondly wee haue wherewith to comfort vs, in that wee ſee he will auenge vs of our enemyes, if wee indeuour to giue our ſelues wholly vnto him, and to keepe our ſelues brooded vnder his winges; for if wee ſuffer him to guide and gouerne vs by his holy ſpirit, and indeuour to followe his woorde, the vengeaunce which is to bee feared of all the deſpiſers of his Maieſtie and of all that ſtriue againſt his woord, ſhall bee turned vppon our enemyes, and in ſo doing our Lorde will ſhew and confirme the fatherly loue which hee beareth vs. To bee ſhort, on the one ſide this doctrine prouoketh vs to bee afrayde to prouoke the wrath of our GOD wittingly, for feare leaſt wee feele his horrible vengeaunce. And on the other ſide it gladdeth and cheareth vs, bycauſe wee ſee that GOD vndertaketh warre againſt our enemyes, to reuenge our wronges as if they were done to himſelfe. Now therefore if wee will obey Saint Paules exhortation, wee muſt note that we muſt not onely referre all reuenge vnto God: but alſo holde our ſelues as brydled or impriſoned, and not deſire to haue GOD to execute all thinges which we haue imagined in our owne fanſies. For there are which wil not reuenge themſelues with their handes, but yet they woulde haue GOD to execute whatſoeuer they haue conceiued in their owne brayne, yea and they doe euen pray vnto GOD to thunder downe vppon their enemies. But contrariwiſe wee bee commaunded to pray for the welfare of them that doe vs harme. Matt. 5. 44. Then muſt we not onely abſtaine from reuenge, but alſo pray GOD to forgiue our enemyes, and to turne them, and to haue pitie vpon them. For if we auenge our ſelues, howe doe wee leaue it to Gods wrath to bee auenged? True it is that if our enemyes bee vtterly paſt hope of amendment, wee muſt put them into the hande of the Iudge. But vntill ſuch time as there bee no more hope of recouerie, let vs alwayes deſire their conuerſion vnto GOD, and let vs further them thereunto, by teaching them as much as wee can. Therefore, to giue place vnto wrath, is not onely to keepe our handes tyed vp, that wee doe not murther men: but alſo to brydle our affections, ſo as wee wiſh not any euill to our enemyes; but rather (whyle they be conuerſant with vs heere beneath,) to deſire God to haue pitie and mercie vppon them, ſo long as there is any hope of them.

Let vs nowe goe forewarde with the ſaying of Moſes. *To mee* (ſayeth hee) *belongeth Reuenge and Requitall*, or *I will requite it*. For the woorde which Moſes vſeth may well be tranſlated thus: *Vengeaunce is myne, and therefore I will requite it*. As if our Lorde ſhoulde ſay, I will doe my duetie: for I am not as mortall men, which doe often fayle, pretending great tytles and dooing nothing in effect. Seeing then that vengeaunce belongeth to mee, I will pay euery man according as he hath deſerued. And ſo thereupon he concludeth, *That their foote ſhall ſlip in conuenient time.* Here Moſes meant to ſhewe, that whereas God had ſpared the Iewes, it did not therefore follow that he had quite and cleane diſcharged them, but that his bearing with them was to ſee if they would at length returne to him againe, and that for as much as hee ſawe them ſtubborne, they ſhould catch a fall in the ende, yea euen in the turning of a hand. He addeth expreſſely: in *time conuenient*, to ſhewe that hee knoweth that it behoueth him to moderate his roddes, and that it is not to bee ſayde that hee foreſloweth too long, when hee is not haſtie. And why? Bycauſe hee doeth thinges in their due ſeaſons. Therefore wee muſt let him alone with the doing of his woorkes in ſuch meaſure as he liſteth: wee muſt not haſt Gods vengeaunce after our owne fanſie. And hee vſeth this compariſon, *That their foote ſhall ſlyde, or ſlip*. And why? For wee ſee howe the wicked misbehauing themſelues againſt GOD, doe vaunt themſelues aboue other men, and are not contented with their owne place and degree, but they ſuppoſe that without winges they can take the Moone with their teeth, as the common ſaying is. For as much therefore as they exalt themſelues aboue other men, and would as it were ſet their feete in all folkes neckes, yea and that they make countenaunce to bee no more ſubiect to GOD himſelfe: Moſes ſayeth expreſſely that their foote ſhall ſlip. As who would ſay, Thinke they that they ſhall keepe their footing? Thinke they themſelues ſo well rooted and grounded, that they ſhall neuer bee ſhaken? Nay, but as it is ſayde in the tenth Pſalme, They ſhall ſtum- Pſal. 10. 6.

Pſal.37.9. Pſal.73.18. ble, and I will make them to ſlyde. According whereunto it is ſayde in another place, Lorde thou haſt ſet their feete in ſlipperie places. To be ſhort, Moſes meant to ſhewe heere, that God will ouerthrowe all the deſpiſers of his woorde. When they haue long time looked aloft, and floriſhed and proſpered among men, yea and triumphed ouer others: hee will at length make them to ſtumble. Therefore let vs not truſt to our ſtate, neither let vs abuſe our ſelues when wee bee vpheldē and vnderpropped, ſo as the worlde fauoureth vs and wee haue ſtoore of worldly helpes to mayntaine vs. For why? Vnleſſe God holde vs faſt, and that wee reſt vppon him, ſurely wee bee in ſlipperie places; for although wee perceiue it not, yet is there nothing but yce in this world. One ſpeciall poynt then which wee ought to note well, is that wee muſt not thinke to haue any ſtay but in the grace of God. When he vouchſafeth to maintaine vs by his power, then may wee aſſure our ſelues that wee bee well grounded. But if he bee not fauourable to vs, if he vpholde vs not: let vs aſſure our ſelues that wee ſtand vppon yce, and wee ſhall not neede any thing to ouerthrowe vs. And although it befall vs not ſo at the firſt daſh, yet let vs aſſure our ſelues that the conuenient times are in the hand of God, who knoweth well the fit ſeaſons, and that if they bee not to day, they will bee to morrowe. And that is a thing which ought to waken vs well, and make vs to looke about vs for feare of this leſſon.

Alſo on the contrarie part it ought to bee a comfort to vs to ſee howe our Lorde ouerruleth all thinges in this worlde, and that although the wicked which ſeeke our ouerthrowe bee now exalted, and haue ſuch authoritie that they make all other men to tremble: yet our Lorde will giue them the ſlip, and trip vp their heeles. Yee ſhal ſee them vaunt themſelues, ye ſhal ſee them looke as bigge as though they would ſwallow vp Gods Church, yee ſhall ſee them make ſtoute bragges, the thruſting foorth of their hand is ynough to ſweepe downe all thinges a hundred leagues off; & yet ere they can turne their foote, they are caſt downe and all their attemptes goe quite and cleane backeward. Now when wee ſee theſe thinges, truely it is ynough to aſtoniſh vs and to abaſh vs: but yet on the other ſide
Pſal.73.18. ſeeing it is ſayde that they ſtande vppon yce, God will make them to ſtumble. The remembrance whereof being wel printed in our mindes, woulde put away all impedimentes that keepe vs from fleeing vnto God, & from praying him to vouchſafe to hold vs alwaies vnder his protection, vnder the which, (do the wicked what they can againſt vs) they ſhall neuer bring it to paſſe. Thus much concerning the conuenientneſſe of the time, and the ſlipping or ſlyding whereof Moſes ſpeaketh here.

Nowe to knit vp the matter withall, hee ſayeth, *That the day of their deſtruction draweth nigh, and that their times are comming in haſt.* This ſerueth ſtill to touche thoſe the better, which doe eaſily beare with their owne faultes, and caſt the time behinde their backes, as they ſay. But GOD telleth vs that ſuddainly ere they thinke of it, yea and euen when they warrant themſelues peace and reſt, their deſtruction ſhall come vppon them, accordingly as the Scripture doth oftentimes put vs in mind there- Eſa.57.21.
of, and not without cauſe. For wee ſee howe men do take their aduantage, bycauſe they imagine that whē God hath borne with them a day, a moneth, or a yeere, it ſhall bee ſo ſtill for euer after. By this meanes ye ſee how men doe recken without their hoſte, bearing themſelues in hande that tyme is woorth monnie, according to the common prouerbe which hath raigned at all tymes. For this cauſe it is ſayde, that the wicked muſt feele Gods hand in ſuch ſorte, as that they ſhal bee ouerwhelmed ere they thinke of it. And therfore the Scripture likeneth them Eſa.13.8.
to a woman with Childe: for ſhe is ouertaken in leſſe than the turning of a hand. Euen ſo is it with thoſe which are full of Gods wrath according to their feeding of it in themſelues. And yet for all that, they go on ſtill and keepe their olde trade, bearing themſelues in hand that God is a great way off, and that they ſhall haue forewarninges a long time before they feele the blowes. But they be amaſed to ſee how God hath vtterly deſtroyed them.

For this cauſe it is ſayde, *Your dayes make haſte, your time is at hand.* And that is the thing which Moſes looked at. Therefore let vs now looke to benefite our ſelues by this leſſon, and let vs make our cōmoditie of it in ſuch wiſe, as we may walk in ẏ feare of our God. Although things ſeeme to be in quiet, yet let vs not ceaſe to haue an eye to his wrath. For that is a thing wherein our fayth muſt be exerciſed. If our lord ſpare vs and deale not roughly with vs as we deſerue; let vs thinke, alas, yet haue we offended our God exceedingly, and thereby deſerue well that hee ſhould looke ſternely vpon vs: and yet notwithſtanding hee ſheweth himſelfe to haue pitie vpon vs, but yet muſt not that cauſe vs to fall aſleepe. The firſt thing then which wee haue to remember vppon this place, is that wee muſt haue an eye to Gods wrath a farre off as though it were at hand. The ſecond is that we muſt be of good comfort when God ſeemeth to be as it were aſleepe and letteth the wicked alone, and toucheth them not ſo much as with his litle finger, but ſeemeth euen to fauor them. Let vs aſſure ourſelues that their ſtate is neuer the better for all that. For it ſhall amaſe vs to ſee how God will worke more in one day, than wee looked for in ten yeeres. Yee ſee then after what manner the faythfull ought to hold themſelues in awe. Namely that when we haue bethought vs of Gods threateninges, and conſidered that his Iudgementes make haſte in comming: we may be ſure that we ſhall not linger ouerlong in this world, but that God wil performe this ſaying of his by the prophet Abacuck, Abac.2.3.
that although he ſhew not himſelfe to haue pity vpon his children at ẏ firſt: yet will he performe his promiſes: and although he doe it not out of hand, yet ſhall we perceiue in the end, that *they make haſt*, that is to ſay that they be comming in time conuenient,

Nowe let vs fall downe in the preſence of our good God with acknowledgement of our faults, praying him to make vs perceiue them better than we haue doone, and in the meane while not to ſuffer vs to ſettle ſtill in our leawde dealinges and offences, nor to yeelde him ſuch bitter fruites, that in ſteede of beeing his inheritance wee ſhoulde become as Sodome where all manner of outrage was committed; but that being gouerned by his holy ſpirite, wee may bee cleanſed from all our wicked affections, ẏ hauing brought him foorth ſuch fruite as hee requireth, we may be gathered vp into his glorie, to be taken and auowed for his children: And that whē he chaſtiſeth vs we may ſo benefite our ſelues by his corrections, as wee may not become vnreformable, but returne to him out of hande, to the ende we may not onely bee exempted from the curſes wherewith hee threateneth the skorners of his worde, but alſo be mayntained by his defence, and his wrath and vengeance bee turned vppon our enemies, to the better aſſuring of vs that he is our God and Sauiour. That it may pleaſe him to grant this grace, not only to vs but alſo to all people and Nations of the earth, &c.

On Tewſday the xvj. of Iune, 1556.

The CLXXXVII. Sermon, which is the tenth vpon the two and thirtith Chapter.

36 Surely the Lorde will take in hande the caſe of his people, and repent him ouer his ſeruantes, when he ſeeth their ſtrength is ſo gone from them, that they be in a manner ſhut vp, and none of them left remaining.

37 And when it ſhalbe ſayd, where are their gods, [euen] their God in whom they truſted:

38 The fat of whoſe ſacrifices they did eat, and the wine of whoſe drinkeoffrings they dranke? Let them ſtepe vp and helpe you, and let them bee your refuge.

39 See nowe how it is I, euen I that am God, and there is no God with me.

SVch as thinke that God hath hitherto alreadie threatened the heathen & vncircumciſed, which skorned the Iewes when they ſawe them in aduerſitie, expounde this text as though our Lorde ſhoulde ſay that hee will maintaine the caſe of his people, when hee ſees them become ſuch a skorningſtocke to the Infidels, and that hee will reioyce in ſo doing. For the ſeconde worde which Moſes vſeth, betokeneth ſometimes to comfort. But wee muſt remember what hath beene ſaide afore, namely that G O D continueth in threatening ſuch as cannot bee ſubdued but by maine force, according to the hardnes of heart which wee knowe to haue beene in that people. It was not enough then for God to haue threatened them in a worde or twayne: but it ſtoode him vpon to holde them as it were impriſoned. And that is the cauſe why hee addeth nowe, *That God will iudge his people.* As if hee ſhoulde ſay, Thoſe whome G O D hath choſen muſt not thinke to haue a priuiledge to be let alone vnpuniſhed in their offences and wicked doings: it is cleane contrarie: for therein will God ſhew his Iuſtice. And although God be Iudge of the whole worlde in generall: yet will he be knowen to bee ſo cheefely in his Church as the which is 1.Tim.3.15 his houſe, and it is good reaſon that he ſhoulde haue a care thereof and ſhew himſelfe to watch ouer it. And therefore when they that haue beene trained in Gods worde, and are his flocke doe runne aſtray: he muſt needs reforme them firſt of all. And that is the cauſe why the Prophete ſaith that Iudgement ſhall beginne at Gods houſe, which thing Saint Peter alleadgeth alſo. And it is a verie notable ſaying, and ſuch a one as may ſerue vs to great purpoſe. For we be abaſhed when wee ſee God lay his hand vppon them that call vppon his name, and are counted of the number of his ſeruauntes. When hee handleth them more roughly than he doth the Infidels, which belong no whit vnto him, it ſeemeth ſtraunge. But wee muſt note what I haue alleadged afore, namely that foraſmuch as G O D acknowledgeth vs for his houſeholde folke, hee muſt needes haue a ſpeciall care of vs. Therefore when hee ſees vs goe aſtray, hee reformeth vs, whereas in the meane while he makes as though he ſaw not the faults of thoſe that are ſtrangers to him, which neuer knewe him, and which neuer had any inſtruction by his worde: hee giueth them the bridle for a time: not that they ſhall not be driuen to yeeld an account thereof in the ende, but for that (as I haue ſaide afore) God executeth his chaſtiſementes rather vpon his owne Church, than vppon all the worlde beſides: Or at leaſtwiſe beginneth at that poynt. And that is the meaning of Moſes in this place where hee ſaith: *The Lord will iudge his people.* As if he ſhoulde ſay, Conſider vppon what condition God hath gathered you together, to wit, that you ſhoulde call vpon his name, and be his people and his heritage; his intent is to gouerne you himſelfe, and to haue the guiding of you himſelfe. Nowe then if ye be rebels againſt him, hee muſt needs haue his hand lifted vp, for to puniſh you. Know yee therefore that when ye tranſgreſſe his lawe, and that moreouer he ſees you hardened in euil and cãnot reclaime you by gentlenes, he muſt needs vſe an other remedie, and deale with you by all kinde of rigour: for it is his peculiar office to iudge his people.

And hereunto alſo is referred the text that Eſa.10.12. was alledged yeſterday out of Eſay, When God hath diſpatched all his worke vppon mount Sion, then will he turne his ſworde againſt the skorners of his maieſtie and againſt his vtter enemies. There the Prophet meant to hearten the faithful which might be troubled when they ſawe God puniſh them out of meaſure as men might deeme, and in the meane whyle beare with the heathen who had proſperitie and made good cheare as though God gaue them more libertie to doe euill. The godlie therefore might be ſhaken, and what meanes this? What auayleth it vs to haue the promiſes? Where is God become? It were better for vs ẏ he gaue vs ouer, and wee had no acquaintaunce with him. After that manner might a man bee tempted as in reſpect of the fleſhe. But the Prophet ſaith, No, no, ſpite not them which liue nowe in reſt, for they ſhall haue their turne. Howbeit, God muſt firſt finiſhe his worke vppon mount Sion, that is to ſay, he muſt firſt beginne with you, becauſe you be neereſt him, inſomuch that you ought to be linked to him by the bonde of his worde. But you haue fayled, you haue offended: and therefore hee is faine to chaſtiſe you, and that not ſleightlie as it were with his little finger, for he will doe all his worke throughlie. And it is not without cauſe that hee ſetteth downe the worde *All*; for it ſerueth to doe vs to vnderſtande, that wee muſt haue our backes readie to receiue his ſtrokes, vntill it pleaſe him to withdrawe his hande who knoweth when it is enough, and that hee haue chaſtiſed vs as much as needeth. That is the thing in effect, which we haue to remember vpon this text.

And the Apoſtle alſo helpeth vs to that conſtruction in the tenth to the Hebrewes. For after that he hath ſhewed that if they which break the Lawe of Moſes were condemned to death, wee in theſe dayes cannot eſcape Gods vengeaunce, if wee breake the couenaunt which hee hath made with vs by the bloude of our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt, which ought to bee much holier to vs than the couenaunt which hee made, but by the bloude of brute beaſtes: after his ſpeaking ſo, hee addeth, My friendes, yee knowe howe it is hee which hath ſaide, I will iudge my Hebr.10.30 people, it is I to whome vengeaunce belongeth. Alſo hee noteth the text that was expounded yeſterday, and likewiſe the ſame which we treat of as nowe. And wee ſee howe this applying of them is to make vs to vnderſtand, that if God ſpared not the deſpiſers of the couenant which hee had made and contracted with them in old time; needes muſt wee be handled more roughlie in theſe dayes. For we bee worthie of it, conſidering that God hath ſhewed himſelfe to vs after a farre more excellent faſhion, by ſending his owne ſonne, through whome he would haue vs to bee the more confirmed in the promiſe of ſaluation, by meanes of his bloude which is the verie ſeale thereof. Nowe then, if wee in theſe dayes deſpiſe ſo great a good turne, God muſt needes ſhewe double rigour to vs, and execute the thing which Moſes ſpeakes of here, which is, that vengeaunce belongeth vnto him, and that it is his office to iudge his people, and that he will do it.

Now afterward Moſes comforteth the faithfull, telling them that Gods rigour ſhal be none ſuch, but that in the ende he will haue pitie vppon ſuch as are not vtterlie paſt grace. *Hee will repent him ouer his ſeruantes*, ſaith hee. This is added as a qualification of that which he had ſaide afore, to the intent we ſhould not bee too much diſmayed when wee heare that in puniſhing ſin God will beginne at vs. For that might put vs into ſuch an vnquietneſſe, as that wee had leuer he ſhoulde let vs alone, and neuer take or auowe vs any more to bee his people. Not without cauſe therefore doth the Apoſtle adde this qualification: My friendes (ſaith hee) true it is that wee muſt liue in feare, and beware that wee tempt not God in abuſing his goodneſſe. If hee beare with vs for a time, wee muſt not in the meane while play the looſe coltes: for if wee bee his people, wee muſt receiue the firſt ſtripes. And why? Becauſe he hath a ſpeciall care of our welfare, and hee muſt needes call vs home againe to himſelfe when hee ſees vs runne at randon. But yet muſt not wee thinke our caſe the worſe, neither muſt it greeue vs to bee ſo chaſtiſed at Gods hande. For why? He will puniſh vs meaſurablie, and in the ende wee ſhall perceiue that hee hath not forgotten his mercie for all his ſhewing of ſuch rigour. He will then repent ouer vs, becauſe he ſeeth we be his people, and that hee hath entred into a couenaunt with vs and hath adopted vs for his children: and therefore hee will haue vs to bee his ſeruauntes, to the ende hee may rule ouer vs: and ſo at the length hee will declare; that whatſoeuer hee hath doone in correcting vs, hath not beene doone in vaine, or without purpoſe. But when the worde is taken for *Comforting*, it is as much as if GOD ſhoulde ſay, that hee will take pleaſure and delight in their vtter ouerthrowe and deſtruction: But here it is eaſie to be perceiued that Moſes meant to ſay the cleane contrarie: For he addeth, *That God will repent him when hee ſeeth the ſtrength of his people vaniſhed away, and that all of them are as folke diſcomfited*, ſo as there is none of them bee hee neuer ſo well garded and ſhut vp in hold, or bee hee abroade in the fields, which is not forlorne and vndone. Therefore when God ſeeth his people ſo miſerablie vnder foote, then will hee be ſorie (ſayeth he). For it might be ſayd vnto them, *Where bee your gods?* Heereby Moſes meaneth in effect, that GOD wilbee contented to haue ſo ouermaiſtred the Iewes that they put not their truſt any more in their Idols, ne bee any more blynded in their ſuperſtitions. For they ſhall well ſee that Sathan had beguyled and deceyued them. And on the other ſyde GOD may then ſaie vnto them, *Yee ſee now how it is I, euen I only that am GOD alone, and that there bee no other gods. Knowe ye alſo that when I haue ſtryken, I doe heale: and when I haue killed, I do quicken againe*. Therefore turne yee againe to mee, and by the way conſider *that there is none which can deliuer you out of my hand*. God then ſayeth that he will finde the meane to ſpeake after that manner, and that when the people are well beaten, then they will be diſpoſed to come to amendement. Now we ſee what is contained in this text of Moſeſes: it remaineth to apply the doctrine hereof to our vſe.

As touching this worde *repent*, we muſt take it as it is taken through out the whole ſcripture, not that God is changeable, or that he hath any alteration in himſelfe: but that it is ſo ſayd in reſpect of vs. Moſes reporteth that God repented that he had made man: Gen.6.6. which is not to bee ſo vnderſtoode as though God had not bin well aduiſed at the firſt what ſhoulde inſewe afterward. For whereof proceedeth repentance in vs, but that to our ſeeming we fore ſawe not the matter well at the firſt, and therefore it greeueth vs afterwarde that we were no better aduiſed aforehand? But this can in no wiſe befall vnto God: for all things are preſent vnto him, and he cannot be ouerſeene in any thing whatſoeuer. Why then ſayeth he that he repenteth? (for ſurely it is a very cõmon manner of ſpeech among the Prophets to ſay, Repent you of your ſinnes, Ier.18.2. and I will repent me of the euill which I had purpoſed againſt you, I will diſcharge you of it ſaith the Lorde) As haue ſayd afore, he applyeth himſelfe to our vnderſtanding. When we ſee any change or alteration in Gods works, to our ſeeming hee himſelfe alſo is chaungeable: Not that hee is ſo in deede, but wee be ſo dull of vnderſtanding that wee cannot reach to the maieſtie of God, and we imagine of God after the manner and reſemblance of our owne nature. Now God applyeth himſelfe to vs. Howbeit not to bring vs a ſleepe in our owne ignorance, or ſuperſtition; but to drawe vs to him leaſurely by degrees. That is the cauſe why hee ſayth hee will repent him. Neuertheleſſe the worde ſignifyeth properly, to ceaſe from punishing of vs, lyke as when a man hath chaſtiſed his childe, hee is touched with remorſe for it, and thereupon is loth to vſe ſo great rigour any more, inſomuch that hee ſaieth in the ende, I forgiue thee and I will forget the euill and the offence which thou haſt done: onely ſee that henceforth thou doe as I bid thee, and all ſhall bee forgotten: When a father ſpeaketh to his childe after that manner, it is as much as if he repented him, becauſe he is touched with a fatherly affection and loue that hee beareth to his owne bloud: But God who in goodneſſe excelleth all worldly creatures vſeth this ſimilitude of *Repenting*, to ſhewe that when hee hath chaſtiſed vs he will withdrawe his hand, and not preſſe vs to the vttermoſt. And that is a very neceſſary leſſon, and that is the cauſe why the Prophets, doe harpe ſo much vppon it. For if we looke well vppon the Prophets, there is nothing more ryfe among them, than after threatning, to adde ſome comfort wherwith to ſweeten Gods wrath, leaſt the faithfull ſhould be too much diſcomforted. For when wee ſee that God is againſt vs, is it not a gulfe to ſwallow vs in deſpaire? Who is hee that can ſtand out, when hee thinketh that God is his enemie, and can taſte nothing in him but vtter rigor? Muſt we not needes bee ſtricken then with ſuch terror, that heauen and earth doe threaten vs, that our lyfe becommeth lothſome to vs, and that wee could finde in our heartes that the mountaines ſhould ouerwhelme vs, as is ſayd in the Prophets? Oſe.10.8. What ſhould become of vs if there were nothing but ſuch rigor in God? Could wee euer preace vnto him, to hope that hee would be fauorable to vs? No, but wee would ſhunne him as much as wee coulde, and we could find in our hartes that his maieſtie were vtterly aboliſhed. Now then, if wee bee deſirous to fare the better by Gods threatninges, thereby to be drawen to repentance: wee muſt vnderſtand alſo that he is mercifull, and that we ſhall finde him ready to receiue vs into his fauour. When we once taſt of ſuch goodneſſe, then ſhall wee fare the better by his threatninges. The thing then which Moſes telleth vs here, is that when wee once knowe that GOD will not ſpare vs to feede vs in our vices and corruptions, but that foraſmuch as he hath adopted vs to be his children, he will hold vs in awe and correct vs when wee haue done amiſſe: wee muſt alſo conſider therewithall that hee forgetteth not to bee our father, but will repent him ouer his ſeruauntes, and ſo meaſure his chaſtiſements, that they ſhalbe as a medicine to vs, and we ſhall finde them to be to a good end. That is the thing which muſt comfort vs, that is the thing which muſt make vs to like well of all Gods chaſtiſementes, that we bee not too ſorrowfull in greeuing our ſelues; ne gnaſh our teeth at them as the faithleſſe do, which martyr themſelues with ſorrowing, and play the madde beaſtes.

But let vs marke well that for the ſame cauſe Moſes addeth *ouer his Seruauntes*.

It is true when he ſaith, *God will iudge his people*, that is to wit, the people that cal vpon his name, notwithſtanding that the moſt part of thē were hypocrites and wicked perſons. But whereas hee ſpeaketh of Gods Seruantes, he meaneth thoſe which followe the good trade whereto they were called, and which ſeeke to honor God to whom they belong, and who hath dedicated them to himſelfe. Then muſt we not onely haue the title of Gods people, but we muſt alſo indeuour earneſtly to ſerue him, and be Zelous in yeelding ourſelues ouer vnto him, ſeeing he hath reached vs his hand, and tolde vs that he will receiue vs to mercie.

And it behoueth vs to marke well the reaſon that Moſes addeth, to wit, *For hee ſhall ſee that their ſtrength is faded and weakened.* Here it is ſhewed vs that God withdraweth not his hand at the firſt when he hath once begunne to puniſh ſuch as haue ſhrunke away from his obedience, but at ſuch time as he perceiueth that their ſtrength fayleth. For why? We ſee that his corrections drawe vs not to amendment at the firſt. In deed we will proteſt as ſoone as God toucheth vs, that we be cleane altered from that we were before. If a man fall into any ſicknes, he will mourne & make a gay confeſſion of his former lyfe, he will ſeeme to be wholy reformed, & that frō thenceforth his whole indeuer ſhall be to giue himſelfe altogether vnto God. But be he once a foote againe, he fals to his old byas, and there appeareth no chaunge at all in him: but rather we accompliſh that which is ſayd by the Prophet, Pſal.78.34. namely that wee returne but onely while God ſmiteth vs, and as ſoone as he giueth vs a little reſt, wee forget it by and by, and make no more account of it. So much the more neede therefore haue wee to marke well theſe wordes of Moſes, where God taryeth till our ſtrength vaniſhe away. For as long as wee haue any courage in vs, we imploy it altogether to rebelling. Although GOD haue broken our armes, yet if we can ſtirre our legges, wee will bee ſtill kicking and ſpurning againſt him. If our tongue be able to wagge, wee will occupy it either in chaſing and fuming, or in grudging and blaſpheming: To bee ſhorte, as long as men are ſtrong and luſty, they ceaſe not to ſtriue againſt God, and to lift vp their hornes, and to puſhe at him lyke Bulles and wilde beaſtes. Lo at what poynt wee bee. Therefore it is no woonder though GOD continue his chaſtiſementes, and that wee ſeeme to bee at the laſt caſt, and that it might well ſuffice him to haue handled vs ſo roughly, yet hee layeth miſerie vppon miſerie ſtill; it is nothing to bee wondered at. For why? Vntill wee be waſhed away lyke water, and that there remaine not one whit of ſtrength in vs, it is certaine that wee will keepe ſome peece of ſtubborneſſe ſtill lurking within vs, which will ſhewe it ſelfe whenſoeuer occaſion is offered. GOD then knoweth good cauſe why hee withdraweth not the afflictions by and by which he ſendeth vpon vs. For vnleſſe it were expedient for our welfare, ſurely he taketh not delight to ſee vs ſo in anguiſh and ſorrowe. But hee knoweth our ſecrete diſeaſes which are vnperceiued euen to our ſelues, how that wee ſhould be beguiled by them. For a man wil diuers times imagine himſelfe to bee ſo well reclaymed, that hee needeth no more, and that is the thing that beguileth vs. But GOD ſeeth much clearer than wee doe, and hee is faine to play the Phiſition. If a Phiſition being a mortall man, bee able to coniecture that there lyeth ſome further inconuenience lurking in the diſeaſed perſon, and thereuppon doe giue him a ſtronger medicine: ſhall not our Lord from whom nothing is hidden, & to whome it belongeth to ſearch mens hearts, perceiue yͭ there are yet ſtil ſome naughty and wicked affections to bee remedied in vs? Yes: and therefore let vs marke well this ſentence of Moſeſes, where hee ſaith that God will repent him, at leaſtwiſe when he ſeeeth all the ſtrength of his people to bee foreſpent. And therefore let vs not thinke that our Lorde will vtterly ſinke vs, though he aſſwage not the afflictions out of hand which he ſendeth vppon vs. For hee knoweth that it is for our behoofe to languiſh, and he ſeeth that wee would kicke at him againe, if hee left vs in our full ſtrength. Therefore we haue neede to bee tamed, yea and to bee brooſed and broken, or elſe hee ſhall neuer haue ioy of vs. That is the thing in effect, which wee haue to practiſe vppon this place.

Nowe it is expreſly ſayd, that GOD will ſee them all diſcomfited, *as well the man that is ſhut vp, as the man that is left abroad*. This maner of ſpeaking is common enough in the holy ſcripture, as if yee would ſay the ſtrong and the weake, that is to ſay, all one with another. For by this worde *Shut vp*, the Hebrewes betoken him that is in a fortreſſe, caſtle, or holde, and in good ſafetie as in reſpect of men. And by the man *that is left abroad*, they meane the poore man which goeth abroad in the fieldes without defence or ſafegard. We ſee then howe his meaning in effect is that all of them as well great as ſmall, ſtrong as weake, riche as poore, ſhall bee all diſcomfited. True it is that ſuch as are already feeble to the worldward, ought to bee eaſily reclaymed vnto God and teachable enough. But herein it appeareth howe much naughtineſſe there is in our nature. For the miſerableſt of vs ceaſe not to ſtriue againſt God, and euen they which haue not whereof to bee prowd, but ought rather to hang downe their heads and to bee aſhamed of themſelues, euen they (I ſay) will not faile to ſwell with pride lyke Toades. When we ſee men fight after that faſhion againſt nature: needs muſt we ſay yͭ there is a terrible vntowardneſſe in mans nature. Now if theſe cannot bee made to ſtoope at the firſt, but God muſt be faine to winne them by maine blowes, inſomuch as hee may ſooner break them than make thē obedient & ſubiect to his gouernment & auctoritie, how much more needful is it for yͤ rich, & for ſuch as thinke thēſelues to be well fenced, & for ſuch as haue worldly meanes to ſtay vpon?

How

Howe much more neede haue they to bee tamed? For they doe euen burſt for pride, accordinglie as wee ſee howe the riche folke and the great perſonages of this worlde, and all ſuch as ſeeke to ſtande by themſelues, are ſo beſotted yea and bewitched with diueliſhe ſelfeweening, that they thinke they may defie God, and that his hande cannot touch them, & that they haue made a league with death, ſo that although al the earth were afflicted, yet they themſelues ſhould ſcape. Wee ſee that men are blinded after that faſhion vnder pretence that all thinges ſhall fal out as they woulde wiſhe. Now therefore let vs learne that all of vs as well ſmall as great, haue neede to bee ſubdued by Gods hand, yea and to be ſo ſubdued, as that wee may bee brought in maner to nothing. For vntill God haue brought vs to that point, wee will neuer ceaſe to put out our hornes at him like ſnayles. Albeit that we be nothing, yet wil we pretend ſome ſigne of pride. Seeing it is ſo, our Lorde muſt be faine to trample vs ſo vnder his feete, as wee may not be able to indure any more. Furthermore wee ſee how pride is a diſeaſe ſo rooted in men, that the remedying thereof muſt needes bee violent. Nay, which more is, God muſt bee fayne to vſe as it were a poyſon to cure that diſeaſe withall. Wee ſee what befell to Saint Paul. To the ende (ſaith he) that I ſhould not boaſt of my ſelfe, God buffeted mee. As howe? After what manner? Hee 1.Cor.12.7. ſaith that hee ſent him a meſſenger of Satan. See heere howe the diuell is become a Phyſition. And howe is that? Wee knowe that he bringeth nothing with him but deadly poyſon. That is true. But yet God ſerueth his owne turne by this poyſon as by a medicine. And if Saint Paul were fayne to haue this doone vnto him, what haue wee neede of in compariſon of him? So then, let vs not thinke it ſtraunge, ſeeing we bee ſo vnrulie and ſo vnweeldie, that when we haue once done amiſſe, a man cannot tel at what end to beginne to reclayme vs. For aſmuch then as we be ſo harde to bee tamed, we muſt not thinke it ſtraunge that our Lorde ſhoulde beate vppon vs with mayne ſtrokes, & continue ſtill in chaſtiſing of vs, vntill wee be vtterly diſmayed, and aſhamed of our ſelues, yea and be brought as it were to nothing in ourſelues. And nowe Moſes declareth, whereat God amed in all his ſcourginges of his people, to wit, to make them able to abide the hearing of the reproch that was to bee doone vnto them, and to touch them to the quicke, that they might accuſe and condemne themſelues, and make no mo replies and vaine excuſes, nor be any more poſſeſſed of their own fonde fancies, ſo as they coulde not feele their owne harme and offence.

For this cauſe hee addeth, that it ſhoulde be ſaide vnto them, *Where are your gods?* Or where is the mightie one in whome you truſted? Yee haue eaten the bloude of the ſacrifices, you haue drunke the wine of their drinkofferinges: nowe therefore let them ſteppe vp to helpe you and to ſuccour you, and let them be your refuge. Ye ſee ye haue beene deceiued by your fooliſh imaginations. *Know ye now therfore that I am the Lord, I am hee, euen I am hee without any other.* By theſe words which I haue declared, Moſes doeth vs to vnderſtande, firſt that God reſpecteth nothing elſe but the winning of vs to himſelfe, to the end wee ſhoulde be meeke, and of a mielde diſpoſition to receiue correction. That is the thing wherewith he is contented: inſomuch that if we returne to him by repentance, it is enough. Thē let vs conclude, that when he ſheweth himſelfe rough and ſharpe towardes vs, it is altogether for our welfare, and that although he put vs in feare by pretending the countenance of a iudge, yet he ceaſeth not to be a father and a Phyſition vnto vs. True it is that all men cannot taſte of this. For we may ſee a great ſort of theſe braue laddes of the worlde, which will needes abide in their wilfulneſſe, whatſoeuer come thereof. As for ſuch, all Gods chaſtiſementes muſt ſerue for ſummoninges, to warne them of their finall condemnation, howe it is as an entering into hell for them. But if wee bee not vtterly vnreformable, let vs marke as I haue ſaide alreadie, that Gods intent is not to ſink vs, when he ſeemeth to thunder againſt vs: but to put vs in feare ẏ we may bee led to repentance & become plyable, to ſuffer him to gouerne vs, that hauing acknowledged our ſinnes, wee may come to him with true humilitie, crauing pardon at his hand, that by that meane wee may be reconciled vnto him. That is a verie needeful thing for vs.

Nowe by the way wee ſee the fruite which the afflictions ſent of God doe yeelde vs. Not that they bee profitable to all men, as I ſhall ſhewe hereafter: but vnto the faithfull, whom God maketh his corrections to ſerue. For by thē he holdeth vs in awe, to the end we may not be moued with impatiencie when we happen to be chaſtiſed by his hande. For naturally wee bee inclined to impatiencie: inſomuch that if wee feele anie ſmarte, by and by wee leape out of our boundes. And we heare what complaintes and grudginges are made continually in the worlde: when men ſee warres, when folke are pinched with famine, or when they bee ſtricken with plagues: what a number of blaſphemies doe they ſpewe out againſt God? And although men dare not bee ſo bolde as to defie GOD in wordes: yet doe they gnaſhe their teeth at him, ſhewing thereby that they be no whyt mooued to receiue his chaſtiſements with ſuch mieldnes & meekenes as they ought to do. And whereof proceedeth that? Euen of that we taſt not the thing which Moſes telleth vs here, namely, that by Gods ouermaſtring of vs wee beginne to bee quiet towardes him, and to become teachable, and to receiue the warninges contayned in his worde, ſo as they profite vs to our ſaluation. Vntill GOD haue tamed vs, wee bee both deafe and blinde, yea and in a manner Lunatike. If a wretched man that is in a burning ague, haue anie ſtrength in him, hee will caſte him ſelfe into the fire or into the water: and if hee bee letted of his purpoſe, hee will fling himſelfe downe headlong to breake his necke. Nowe if the Phyſicion do hold him downe in his bed, & ſeeme to deale violently with him:it is meete he ſhould doe ſo, and hee doth no more than neede conſtreyneth him vnto. Let vs vnderſtande then, that wee be like Lunatike folke, and that there is neither wit nor reaſon in vs as long as God ſpareth vs. By reaſon whereof hee is forced to tame vs euen to ẏ vttermoſt til we can no more. For when wee be come to the poynt that there is ſcarce any more breath in vs, and that wee can ſcarce fetch our winde: then beginne wee to fall to the mieldeneſſe whereof Moſes ſpeaketh here, which is, that if a man vpbrayde vs with our offences and blame vs for them, wee keepe ſilence and holde our peace, and are not ſo haſtie as to ſay by and by: It is not ſo, ye doe mee wrong, as wee ſee a number doe, who as ſoone as a man openeth his mouth to tell them of their faultes, they fome out their furiouſnes, and cannot be reclaymed vntill God haue ouermaiſtred them. Therefore let vs conſider the fruit that commeth of Gods corrections: namely that where as earſt we did nothing but ſooth our ſelues in our ſinnes and vncleanneſſe, and weltred in them, and coulde not abide to bee drawen from them: then wee haue our eares opened to receiue good inſtruction, and we acknowledge our ſelues to haue done amiſſe. That is the thing whereunto the words of Moſes tend when hee ſaith, *Where are your gods?*

For the ſame cauſe alſo doeth our Lorde by his prophete Oſee liken Idolaters to Harlots. As long as a Harlot or Courtiſan hath great reſort vnto her, and hath great giftes, gaynes, and rewardes, and is coſtlie apparelled, and mayntayned in her delightes and pleaſures: ſhe maketh more account of herſelfe (notwithſtanding her leawdneſſe) than all the honeſt women of the worlde: and euen ſo is it with Idolaters. As long as they proſper in the worlde, they beare themſelues in hande that their Idolatrie is the cauſe thereof, and thereupon they growe hardhearted. Nowe if our Lorde let them alone in that plight, they ſettle themſelues continuallie more and more in their filthineſſe: and therefore hee muſt bee fayne to vſe violent remedies. In reſpect hereof hee ſaith that he will ſtrippe Hoſe.2.7.8.9. them out of their clothes, yea and diſcouer their ſhamefull partes, ſo as they ſhall become like a Harlot that is ſmitten with fiſtulaes, Pockes, and ſuch other filthie diſeaſes, and in ſteede of her former brauerie, is lothed and ſhunned of all men, that whereas ſhe went ruffling in her agglets before, nowe ſhee findeth not a man that will giue her a bit of breade, but is ſhaken off and ſcorned at al handes: whereby ſhe perceiueth her miſerie, and ſaith, Alas, I ſhoulde haue kept mee to mine owne husband, and [becauſe I did not,] now I haue the reward which I haue deſerued. Nowe then a leawd woman that is giuen to ſuch naughtineſſe, will neuer bee reclaymed but by ſuch neceſſitie. And euen ſo is it with Idolaters. That is the cauſe why Moſes ſaith nowe, that when God hath ſo diſcouraged his people, that both great and ſmall ſhall bee as it were vaniſhed away: then it ſhall bee ſaide vnto them, Where bee your gods? Goe make your mone to your Idols, goe call vppon them as yee were woont to doe. And ſo let vs conſider Gods goodneſſe in that hee hath reclaimed vs from the Idolatrie wherein we were, and that with more gentleneſſe than is ſpoken of here euen by his reaching of his hande vnto vs to drawe vs to him. And if hee vſe nowe and then ſome ſharpe chaſtiſementes, let vs aſſure our ſelues hee doeth it not without cauſe, but for that he knoweth our diſeaſes to be ſo deepe rooted, that wee haue neede to bee ſo purged and cured.

Nowe it followeth, *Let them ſteppe vp to ſuccour you, and let them reſkewe you.* Hereby Moſes meaneth, that when Idolaters are bereft of al worldlie thinges, and finde themſelues diſappointed of their vaine imaginations which they had conceiued afore: then they fall to recouer their ſight and their hearing. And in verie deed there is no acceſſe to Gods trueth, for thoſe that are wilfull, vntill they ſee themſelues at ſuch an afterdeele, that for all the ſhiftes and windlaſſes which they can make, they perceiue there was nothing but deceite in all their deuices. As for example in theſe dayes, ſo long as the Papiſtes thinke they can preuaile by the diueliſhe deuices of their Maſſes, Pilgrimages, and the reſt of Satans illuſions wherein they be plunged; who can perſwade them to giue ouer any of all thoſe thinges? What ſay they? Is it not good for a mā to ſerue ſuch a Saint, to call vppon ſuch a patron or aduocate, to builde a Chappel, to cauſe a maſſe to bee ſaid, or to mumble before ſuch an altar? To bee ſhorte, as long as the Papiſtes thinke they may preuaile by their ſuperſtitions, they be ſo wilful that it is vnpoſſible to haue any enterance vnto them, except our Lorde ſet to his hande, as hee hath doone towardes vs, and touch them with his holy ſpirite. But I ſpeake of the ordinarie meane, and I ſay that men are ſo forepoſſeſſed, that they ſhut the doore againſt God, and againſt all inſtruction, and againſt all warninges that can bee giuen. And therefore our Lorde had neede to ſmite vppon them with mayne blowes, yea and to bring them to ſuch extremitie, as they may knowe that they doe but miſſpend their time to no purpoſe, in gadding after their Idols, and ſo fall to miſliking of their offerings and other ſuperſtitions whereunto they were giuen afore.

But yet the knowing hereof is not all that is to be doone: the cheefe point is that which Moſes addeth here, namely to returne vnto God, and to acknowledge that it is hee onely on whome we ought to reſt. For euen the Idolaters themſelues wil oftentimes through deſperation defie their owne Idols. Wee ſee that when the Saint George of the Papiſtes or ſome other of their Idols haue beguiled them, ſo as there commeth ſome great froſt, they fall to dragging of him about in a Corde, like a galloweclapper, whom they had worſhipped a little afore. Wee ſhall ſee ſome, yea euen men of honour, which to ſpite their idols, doe breake downe their puppets, yea euen their bleſſed Ladie and all. And howe ſo? They play the madde bedlems, not onelie againſt their owne Idols, but alſo againſt whatſoeuer elſe they imagine to bee as a God. And the heathen haue ſhewed ful well, that their worſhipping of their Idols was not for anie reuerence that they bore vnto them, but for that it ſeemed to yeelde ſome benefite vnto thẽm: inſomuch that when they were once touched to the quicke, then they vttered their poiſon to aboliſh the name and maieſtie of God, ouerreaching themſelues ſo far, as to ſay that there is no God at all. After that manner doe all Idolaters and all vnbeleeuers deale, vnleſſe our Lorde take vppon him to worke and reſtraine them by his holy ſpirite. And that is the knowledge which Moſes ſpeakes of. Let vs marke wel therefore howe it is not ſaide here barely, that God would vpbraide the Iewes with their yeelding of themſelues to their Idols in vaine, and that their Gods in whom they truſted, had ſtood them in no ſteede: but that hee addeth, *Beholde howe it is I my ſelfe, and there is no other God with mee.* To bee ſhorte, it booteth vs not to knowe all the abuſes and fooliſhe fancies wherewith men beguile themſelues; but wee muſt alſo returne vnto God. And indeede what a ſorte of ſkoffers are there noweadaies in the worlde, which make a ſkorning of all the dotages of the Papiſtes, and yet in the meane while are worſe themſelues than dogges, ſo as it were much better for them that they were Papiſtes. A man ſhall ſee (I ſay) the deſpiſers of all Religion, which will ſay according as they thinke, that all the Religion which is in the Popedome, is flat mockerie, and a verie childiſhe toye. But what? They haue no feare of God, nor reuerence of his worde; it beareth no ſway at all with them. Nowe (as I haue ſaide afore) it were much better for ſuch that they were Papiſtes. And ſo let vs marke well howe it is to no purpoſe to knowe Idolatrie, and to perceiue and beleeue that all that euer is doone without the warrant of Gods worde or contriued by man is but abuſe, filth, and corruption: vnleſſe (which is the principall poynt) wee returne vnto God to doe homage to his maieſtie, and come aſhamed before him, acknowledging our faultes & crauing pardon at his hande, ſo as euerie of vs accuſe himſelfe and humble himſelfe in ſuch ſorte as there bee no more replying in vs, but that wee yeelde ourſelues to him with true repentance. That is the cauſe thẽ why Moſes hauing ſpoken of ſacrifycing to Idols, and vpbraded the Iewes with their defiling of themſelues with their abhominations, in eating the bloude and drinking the wine of their offeringes, and in intermedling themſelues with the filthineſſe of the heathen: after hee hath ſaid all theſe things and ſhewed that in all thoſe things there is nothing but illuſion and deceitefulneſſe: he addeth, Beholde, I am hee. Nowe God preſuppoſeth that they which are ſo ſubdued with maine blowes, haue their eyes well opened. Hee had caſt them in the teeth afore, that they were vtter blindfoolded as it had beene with a towell: Deut.29.4. but nowe that they ſhall ſee themſelues ſtarke naked, now they ſhall ſee themſelues vnarmed, their eyes ſhall be opened, there will be nothing to hinder their knowledge any more. What is to bee doone then? They muſt conſider that there is but one onely God, and that it is he to whom we muſt turne againe, euen to craue forgiuenes of our ſinnes at his hande, and conſequently to put our whole truſt in him, contenting ourſelues with his protection, without troubling of ourſelues to trot vp and downe as the wretched vnbeleeuers doe, who neuer haue any reſt but are toſſed and turmoyled with continuall vexations. Therefore let not vs bee caried away with ſuch vnquietneſſe, but let vs conceiue a right aſſurance, ſo as wee may reſt all wholie vpon our God. The reſt that followeth cannot be diſpatched as now, and therefore it ſhall bee reſerued til to morow.

Now let vs fall downe before the maieſtie of our good God with acknowledgement of our faultes, praying him to vouchſafe to make vs ſo to feele them, as hauing perceiued howe farre we haue ouerſhot ourſelues, wee may ſeeke earneſtly to be reformed by his hand, and that if it pleaſe him to chaſtice vs, wee may patiently abide all the corrections which hee ſhall ſend vs: or rather it may pleaſe him to make his worde to profite ſo much in vs, as wee may not tarrie till hee lift vp his hande to puniſh vs, but receiue the warninges that are giuen vs in his name, to reclayme vs wholy to his will, and that in the meane while he beare with vs in our infirmities, till hee haue rid vs quite and cleane of them, and in ſuch wiſe reformed vs to the obedience of his righteouſnes, as our whole ſeeking may bee to glorifie his name, euen till wee come to the immortal glorie which is prepared for vs in heauen & was purchaſed for vs by our Lord Ieſus Chriſt. That it may pleaſe him to grant this grace, not onely to vs, but alſo to all people and nations of the earth, &c.

On Wedneſday the xvij. of Iune, 1556.

The CLXXXVIII. Sermon, which is the eleuenth vpon the two and thirtith Chapter.

39 See nowe howe it is I, euen I that am God, and there is no God with mee. It is I that kill and make aliue againe, I wounde and heale, and there is none that can deliuer out of my hand.

40 For I lift vp my hande to heauen: and as for mee, I liue for euer.

41 If I whet the edge of my ſworde, and my hande lay holde of Iudgement: I will execute vengeaunce vpon mine aduerſaries, and pay them their hyre which hate mee.

42 I will make mine arrowes drunken with bloude, and my ſworde ſhall deuoure the bloudie fleſh of the ſlaine, and of the priſoners at the beginning of the vengeance of the enemies.

43 Yee nations prayſe you his people: for hee will auenge the bloude of his ſeruauntes, and yeeld vengeance to his aduerſaries: but he will be fauorable to his owne lande, and to his owne people.

WE ſawe yeſterday howe it is not enough to knowe, that there is nothing but vanitie and leaſing in Idols, and in al yͤ ſuperſtitions ẏ men haue deuiſed of their owne heades: but that the cheefe point is to knowe God to do him homage, to walke in his feare, and to conſider howe dreadfull his maieſtie is. Nowe heerewithall wee muſt marke alſo, that when we once knowe God to be too great a Lorde to bee dalied withall, if he chaſtice vs for offending him, we muſt taſte of his mercie to returne freely vnto him, beeing throughlie perſwaded and reſolued, that wee ſhall finde mercie at his hande, though wee be vnworthie of it. And that is the cauſe why he ſaith, *That it is hee which killeth and quickeneth, and that it is hee that woundeth and healeth againe.* Nowe wee haue alwayes theſe two thinges to marke: The one is that wee ſhall bee helde in awe by conſidering (as I ſaide afore) howe dreadfull Gods maieſtie is, according to the Apoſtles treating thereof in the fore alleadged tenth chapter to the Hebrewes. That is the thing which maketh vs to liue in awe. For we be not ſo bolde to offende God, neither take wee ſuch libertie as they doe which fling out at all aduenture: but yet, when wee haue done amiſſe and God warneth vs of our faults, then haue we neede to reſort to his infinite goodneſſe, and to aſſure ourſelues that howſoeuer the caſe ſtand, we ſhall obtayne pardon of our offences. Truely theſe two thinges, namely, *That God killeth and quickeneth againe; and that hee maketh a wounde and afterwarde healeth againe*: ſeeme at the firſt bluſh to bee contraries: For God ſeemeth not to play the Phyſicion towardes vs when wee bee as it were deade and layde in our graues. Neither ſeemeth this to bee agreeable to his nature: to put vs to death, and to afflict vs: but (as I ſaide afore) hee muſt be faine to doe both the one and the other: and wee on our ſide alſo muſt bee faine to feele it. For as long as men take leaue to doe euill, it is meete that God ſhoulde hold them in awe, and ſhewe them that hee is their Iudge. And on the other ſide that wretched ſinners ſhould humble themſelues, and with griefe of minde turne againe vnto him to obteyne forgiueneſſe at his hande; and then will he bee forwarde and readie to forget all their offences, and ſhewe them nothing but all maner of gentlenes & friendſhip. To be ſhort the two thinges which Moſes noteth here, are to be conſidered well: namely that God vſeth rigor towards ſuch as take too much libertie to do euil, and alſo that his goodnes is ready to vtter it ſelfe towardes thoſe which returne to him with repentaunce. And ſo ye ſee howe we haue to marke alſo howe good and pitifull God is: and againe on the contrarie part, wee haue to conſider his rigour and ſeueritie. To be ſhort, as oft as wee be prouoked to euill, and the wicked luſtes of our fleſh do tickle vs and intice vs to ſin; let Gods iudgement come before our eyes, that we may be mooued with feare, and thereby bee reſtrayned from the euill whereunto we bee tempted. On the other ſide, when we fall through infirmitie, let vs not be afraide to turne againe to our God, neither let vs thinke that hee hath quite caſt vs off. Although his hande be ſore vppon vs, and he ſmite vs as though he meant to vſe wrath and vengeance againſt vs: yet let that not make vs to ſhrinke from him, but rather let vs vnderſtande, ẏ as he hath made the wound, ſo he is at hand to heale it, ſo we ſeeke the remedy. Now the mean howe to ſeeke it, hath beene declared heretofore. And ſo ye ſee after what maner we ought to put this leſſon in vre, where Moſes ſaith that god hauing put to death, doth make aliue again. And herewithall let vs alſo beare in minde, that God playeth not with men as the heathen haue imagined, as who would ſay he toſſed and turned them like a bal: but yͤ reaſon is manifeſt why God doth firſt kill and lay in graue, before he reſtore to life againe: namelie becauſe we cannot find in our harts to ſubmit our ſelues willingly vnto him vntil he haue ſubdued vs by force: Nay the feruent heate of our boyling luſtes doth ſo carie vs away, and we be ſo blinded with them, that wee cannot conceiue howe terrible Gods iuſtice is, vntil he haue made vs to feele it by experience. Therfore it is needful for vs ẏ our Lord ſhold put vs as it were to death, to yͤ intẽt to make vs to taſt yͤ life which he giueth to thoſe yͤ return vnto him.

Hebr.10.31

And for the ſame cauſe he addeth, *That no mã can deliuer out of his hand.* For we know how men doe alwaies beare themſelues in hand: that they ſhall ſcape Gods hande: inſomuch that hee beginneth no ſooner to ſtrike them, but by and by they ſeeke ſtartingholes, and they will needes haue ſome pretie ſhift or other, and thereupon they fal aſleepe, and ẏ is a kinde of contempt to God ward. To the end then that wee may goe directlie vnto him, whether wee haue offended him, or whether we haue beene tempted to euil: we muſt alwayes vnderſtande that there is no deliueraunce, there is no ſhift but we muſt make our accout to him, vntill he of his owne infinite goodneſſe haue receiued vs, and bee come to attonement with vs. The thing therefore that will perſwade vs to come vnto God, is that we be fully determined and ſetled in our ſelues, that we ſhall gayne nothing by our running to and fro and by our ſeeking heere and there for ſtartingholes, but that all is meere deceyte to beguile our ſelues withall. When we once knowe this well: then ſhall wee bee prouoked to ſubmit our ſelues to God. Alſo it will hold vs in awe of him, and make vs to ſeeke forgiueneſſe of our ſinnes at his hand, when wee haue ſo giuen ouer ourſelues to him.

Againe we ought to wey well the wordes of Moſes, *It is I* (ſayth he) *it is I my ſelfe that am the euerlaſting, and there is not any other God.* For hereby wee ſee howe harde it is to holde men to the knowledge of the true God, becauſe they be euer ſwaruing aſide to their owne fooliſhe imaginations. For wee be naturally inclined to the forging of Idols, and to corrupt our ſelues with ſuperſtitions, ſo as faſhood doth alwayes beare ſway in vs rather than trueth. A man woulde woonder how ſo many errours ſhould be in the worlde. But let him conſider what a workehouſe our owne brayne is, and what thinges it forgeth and yeeldeth foorth; and ſurelie hee ſhall finde that we neuer ceaſe forging of lies and deceites to corrupt ourſelues withall, and to turne vs away from Gods pure trueth. And ſo, becauſe men are ſo wholy bent, yea and giuen ouer to leaſinges: therefore doeth God confirme this matter the more by ſaying, *It is I, and there is not anie other*: It is hee on whome wee muſt wholie reſt. Nowe ſeeing it is ſo, it behoooueth all of vs to knowe that euerie of vs had neede to holde himſelfe as it were by force in the pure ſingleneſſe of Gods worde, or elſe wee ſhall bee ouercome by Satans illuſions, and he will haue caried vs away here and there out of hande. And by the way, if wee ſee the worlde intangled in neuer ſo manie diſorders, and all men poſſeſſed with falſe and wicked opinions: let vs not be too much troubled at ſuch a ſtumblingblocke. For why? Wee ſee there is nothing harder than to holde men in the pure knowledge of God.

Nowe hee addeth conſequentlie, *Surelie I will lift vp my hande to heauen and ſay, I am the liuing; and that I hauing ſharpened the edge of my ſworde, & hauing taken Iuſtice in my hande, will execute ſuch vengeaunce that bloude ſhall run downe in ſtreames euerie where*, ſo as all mine enemies ſhall be made to come to their aunſwere, and I will ſpare nothing from one ſide to an other. Now here God confirmeth yet better that which hee had declared heretofore, and he confirmeth it with an othe: For this ſpeech, *to lift vp the hand to heauen* is as much to ſay, as to Sweare; not that God can lift vp his hande after the manner of men: for beſides that hee hath no hande, there is nothing higher than his maieſtie: but it is a figure taken of the cuſtome among men, and wee knowe it is verie common in the holie ſcripture. Becauſe we comprehende not God as he is in deede, but finde him to be a thing farre paſſing our reach: therefore is hee fayne to applie himſelf to our rudeneſſe. Euen ſo in this texte he ſaith that he will lift vp his hande, that is to ſay that hee will ſweare. Now, there is no need, that God ſhoulde ſweare: For the cauſe why we haue othes among vs, is our owne naughtines. There is ſo much craft and ſuttletie among men as is pitifull to beholde. They bee fleeting, they bee full of lightnes and vnconſtancie, and it is harde to bring them to vpright dealing. In theſe reſpectes, and for that wee be ſo giuen to deceitfulnes, othes are faine to bee miniſtred to vs: But Gods ſwearing is for our infirmities ſake. And truely wee bee greatly to blame in this behalfe, in that we compell God to ſweare. For nothing is more peculiar to him than trueth, and if hee had not that, hee were not God. Seeing then, that hee is the infallible trueth it ſelfe, if when hee hath once ſpoken, wee ſtand doubting ſtill, and examine whether it bee ſo or no: can there bee a more horrible blaſphemie, than to call Gods trueth in queſtion after that faſhion? Is it not all one as if wee woulde bereaue him of his verie beeing? And yet for all that, wee ſee howe men ſtande as in a mammering when God ſpeaketh to them. For if hee threaten vs, wee make no account of it: If we were throughlie perſwaded that all that euer proceedeth out Gods mouth is of ſuch certaintie as there ought to bee no replying againſt it, truely wee woulde tremble and quake out of hande for feare, as ſoone as hee threateneth vs: but wee know how hardhearted wee be in that behalfe. On the other ſide, if our Lorde promiſe to bee mercifull to vs when wee haue done amiſſe, and intreate vs as his children, and call vs to the hope of euerlaſting ſaluation: wee bee ſo tangled in this worlde, that euerie thing of nothing holdes vs backe and we deſpiſe the ineſtimable benefites which God offereth vs. Wee ſee then that men do not the honour to God to count him faithful. For then woulde they holde themſelues wholie to his worde, they woulde bee touched to the quicke, yea they woulde quake at his threates, and they woulde ſet all their ioy and delight in his promiſes. That is the cauſe why G O D warranteth, and confirmeth his worde with an othe. Nowe in this caſe (as I ſaide afore) wee our ſelues are much too blame; ſeeing that God is faine to yeelde to ſuch condition as to abace himſelfe as though hee were a mortall creature, to the entent hee may winne vs, and that wee may no more wander away, but bee fully perſwaded in our ſelues that this ſpeaking to vs is in good earneſt. Seeing then that our Lorde is faine to frame himſelfe vnto vs after that faſhion, thereby wee ſee our owne malice and frowardneſſe: and yet doth God beare with vs in ỹ caſe. But when he ſweareth, it is as much as if we ſawe heauen and earth ſhaken, nature changed, the Sunne darkened, and all the ſtarres bereft of their light. And therefore if wee bee not touched with ỹ othes which God maketh after ỹ maner: it is certaine ỹ the diuel hath as it were bewitched vs, and that wee bee become ſtarke blockes, or rather that wee be horrible and vglie monſters. Therefore let vs benefite ourſelues by the othes which wee reade in the holy ſcripture. And when God ſweareth that he will bee auenged at his enemies; let it abaſhe vs, as though we ſawe his vengeance and wrath take effect out of hande, and as though we ſawe him readie and in a forwardnes to execute the thing which hee hath vttered with his mouth. And when he ſweareth that hee will be friendly to vs and take vs for his children, confirming with an othe the heauenlie heritage which hee hath promiſed vs: ought not the doing of thoſe things to aſſure vs to withſtande all temptations? Although Satan and the fleſh tempt vs to diſtruſt, yet notwithſtanding let vs ſet this for a ſhielde againſt them, and ſay, No, ſeeing that God hath ſworne, ſhall we doe him ſuch wrong and diſhonour, as to cal the truth of his word in queſtion? Let that bee far from vs. That is the thing which wee haue to note in this text where God ſaith that he will lift vp his hande to heauen and ſay, I liue.

And he ſweareth by himſelfe, accordingly as the Apoſtle toucheth it in the ſixt to yͤ Hebrewes. Hebr. 6.13. When we ſweare, we call God to witnes as our Iudge if we lie. But it is not ſo with God; he cannot finde a greater than himſelfe to ſweare by. He ſaith therefore, I am aliue, as if he ſhould ſay, Nay, whoſoeuer he be that holdeth not himſelfe to the ſentence which I doe nowe pronounce, he derogateth my glorie as much as if he meant to aboliſh me quite and cleane, and to declare that I am no more God. But if I be God, it muſt needs be perceiued in the execution of the thinges which I doe nowe ſpeake. I am contented that men ſhall henceforth take mee but for an idol or a deade thing, if they finde not my ſayinges true in deede. When God ſpeakes after that faſhion, ought it not to make the haire to ſtande vp vppon our heades, if wee eſteeme not his worde to be verie certaine? Yes, And ſo we ſee my former ſaying yet better confirmed, namelie that it is not for vs to replie any more when God hath once ſpoken, but wee muſt take the matter to bee out of all crie, as though wee ſawe the thing alreadie done before our eyes. But let vs ſee nowe whereat God amed: for it is certaine that hee ſweareth not but for our welfare. It is not for his owne ſake, hee taketh neither good nor harme by it, but hee hath regarde of vs. And in token thereof hee ſaith, *That hee will whet the edge of his ſworde, that it ſhall bee as a flaming ſworde, and that hee will take Iudgement in his hand*, that is to ſay, that he will hold his aſſiſes to ſhewe himſelfe to bee the Iudge of the worlde, and that as then all his enemies muſt bee confounded, and all aduerſaries bee brought to nought. And whereas God ſpeaketh here of the edge of the ſworde, we muſt not imagine that hee vſeth any material ſword, for that cannot agree to him: but wee knowe hee hath all ſortes of puniſhmentes to chaſtice men withall as ſeemeth good to himſelfe. For in verie deede, all the ſwordes in the world do ſerue to execute Gods ordinaunce. When warre is to bee had, well may princes aſſemble great armies: but it is God that muſt beare the ſtroke. Then if there be fiftie thouſand men in armes on the one ſide, and forty thouſand on the other: wee muſt not thinke that God is that whyle aſleepe in heauen: for all they are of his waging. And although the two armies bee ſet one againſt an other: yet ſhall not one ſtroke be ſtricken but by the diſpoſition of Gods hand. The like is to bee ſayde of peſtilences, famines, & ſuch other like thinges. To be ſhort, all the ſcourges of this worlde are Gods ſwordes. And in that reſpect is it ſaide that God will ſharpen the edge of his ſworde, that is to ſay, hee will execute the chaſtiſementes which hee hath in his hande. But if hee winke at things for a time and liſt to vſe patience: hee ſeemeth to haue no regarde of the faultes that are committed here belowe. Yet doeth it not followe that all thoſe things are not inregiſtred before him; neither is it to bee ſaide that hee hath forgotten his charge, or that his power is idle: for hee hath all kindes of puniſhmentes, which he can well ſhewe foorth whenſoeuer it ſhall bee expedient to execute vengeaunce. And ſo yee ſee after what manner God is ſayde to drawe his ſworde.

Nowe the applying of this doctrine will giue vs yet a more eaſie vnderſtanding thereof. Let vs conſider to what ende it is ſaide: namely becauſe it ſeemeth to vs, that when God puniſheth not the wicked out of hande, hee letteth thinges goe at all aduenture, and that is yͤ thing which troubleth vs ſore. When we be wrongfully afflicted on the behalfe of men, and wee ſee the Church of God to ſuffer manie ſlaunders and moleſtations: what ſay wee? Whereon doeth God thinke nowe? Hath hee not pitie vpon his children? Wee bee tormented with extremitie, and yet hee maketh as though hee ſawe it not. Shall the crueltie of men haue ſuch ſcope for euer? Shoulde hee giue heade to the wicked after ſuch ſort that wee ſhoulde alwayes bee made a pray to them? Such complaintes do men make, when God doeth not out of hande puniſh the outrages that are doone to his ſeruauntes. And therefore it is ſaide, *That hee will ſharpen his ſworde, and take Iudgement in his hande*, as though that to holde vs in patience, he ſhould ſay, My friendes, trouble not your ſelues, let not your luſtes be ouer haſtie and inordinate. For I doe not this as vnmindfull of you. Although I ſuffer the wicked to doe manie thinges outragiouſly: it is not for that I haue no regarde of you, or for that I watch not for the welfare of my Church, or for that I pitie not thoſe which ſuffer aduerſitie, and are ſo moleſted: but becauſe I haue my conuenient times, which I diſpoſe at my pleaſure; and therefore tarie you my leaſure. For the wicked ſhall bee vtterlie amaſed at the whetting of my ſworde to make warre againſt them. Be not afraide: for although yee ſee it not at the firſt day; yet will I not faile to ſhewe my ſelfe your protector and the defendour of your life. Nowe then wee ſee in effect, that all this is applyed to our infirmitie, euen therafter as we be toſſed with temptations: ſo that when it ſeemeth to vs that God thinketh not any more vppon vs, but that hee hath turned his back and is aſleepe in heauen: we ſhould notwithſtanding that all this fall out, take it, as though hee had ſayd: Ceaſe not you to be patient and quiet, yea, hold your ſelues ſtil til I draw my ſworde, for I will ſurely doe it.

And for the ſame cauſe he addeth, *that he wil take iudgement in his hand*. Wee knowe that Gods maieſtie and his iuſtice are thinges vnſeparable. Sith it is ſo, let vs hardily conclude that hee is the Iudge of the world, yea & although the ſame bee hidden from vs, ſo as wee perceiue not any ſigne or lykelyhoode thereof, yet let vs not forbeare to ſay continually, What? Is it poſſible for God to renounce himſelfe, who is vnchangeable? Then muſt wee take him for our Iudge, aſſuring our ſelues that although hee hide himſelfe away, yet notwithſtanding hee will ſhewe that hee ſawe all, that all thinges lay open before him, and that he neuer chaunged his mind. Thus yee ſee howe wee ought to practiſe this leſſon, yea euen at ſuch time as our Lorde ſuffereth vs to bee as it were trodden vnder foote by the wicked, and all the whole Church is cruelly dealt with, and all thinges are out of order here beneath. For euē then we muſt not ceaſe to hope & to put ourſelues into ẏ protection of our God, becauſe he hath ſworne, and not only affirmed but alſo ratified with a ſolemne othe, that he will do iuſtice vpon his enemies, and that the execution thereof ſhal be ſo terrible, as ẏ there ſhalbe an vtter diſcomfiture of them, and all ſhall bee filled with bloud. And it is not to bee doubted but that in this place Moſes meant to confirme the faithfull ſtill in the hope which they ought to haue of Gods goodnes, although they ſeeme to bee as it were ſunken. And hee proceedeth in the matter which he had dealt with before: which is, that in the end God will bethinke him of his ſeruauntes. Howbeit that hee beginne at this poynt, namely that while the wicked doe make great cheere, and liue in pleaſure, & make their triumphes: God dooth ſay that hee will iudge his people, and that thoſe which are his children and houſhold ſeruantes, muſt be faine to indure hardnes, becauſe hee reformeth them when they haue done amiſſe. Nowe it would ſeeme that their ſtate is much woorſe than the ſtate of ſuch as are vtter ſtraungers to God and haue no acquaintance with him. And therefore dooth Moſes adde, No, in the ende God will mitigate his rigour towards you, and therefore let it not greeue you to ſee the worldliges ſpared, or to ſee them weltering in their pleaſures, as though all things were lawfull which they liſted. If your God afflict you in the meane ſeaſon, let it not ſeeme ſtraunge vnto you. For hee muſt needes haue a ſpeciall care of his owne children & chaſtice them ſeing he hath adopted thē. And as for your enemies, aſſure your ſelues that their turne will come about: and thereof your GOD aſſureth you here, in that hee dooth not ſimply affirme it, but alſo ſweare it. Therefore you may truſt vnto it. So then euen in the middeſt of our afflictions, let vs bee vpheld with this leſſon. For it will bee a good ſtud for vs to leane vnto, when wee make it auaileable as it deſerueth, and as God himſelfe intendeth it. Now wee ſee the ſtate of the faithfull to be too too miſerable both generally and particularly: for many of them indure ſuch miſeries and reproches in this world, that to all ſeeming they bee vtter caſtawayes, and that God diſdayneth them no leſſe than the world deſpiſeth them. Behold they which walk purely & ſimply before God, which loue righteouſneſſe and vpright dealing, which will neither deceiue nor hurt any man; euen they neuertheleſſe are faine to abide hunger and thirſt, and are greeued with many temptations and troubles, ſo as they wote not which way to turne thē. Now they might bee brought to deſpaire, if God withheld them not, by dooing them to vnderſtand that they haue neede to be chaſticed, and put in minde of their ſinnes. On the other ſide they ſee the wicked and the deſpiſers of God ſporting themſelues in all manner of diſorder, and in the meane while they bee neither chaſticed nor corrected, but ſeeme rather to be exempted and priuiledged from all harme, as it is ſayd in the threeſcore and thirteenth pſalme. Pſal.73.5. Loe here a very ſore temptation. We ſee generally that Gods Church is as a ſheep in the midſt of a great ſorte of Woolues. For the power of our enemies is ſuch, as they might ſwallowe vs vp out of hand, and we ſee there is no meane of reſiſtance in vs, we be all ſcattered abroad. Seeing then that wee ſee ſuch thinges, were it poſſible for vs to holde out one minute of an houre, if wee had not our refuge to this doctrine, that God ſcourgeth his owne, and that he beginneth at them, becauſe he muſt needes haue a care of his owne houſhold? But the wicked ſhall fare neuer the better for his bearing with them as now, neither is it to be ſayd that their ſtate is therefore better than ours. Therefore we muſt tary his leaſure with patience, vntil he take the ſword in hand, and keepe his Aſſiſes. Let vs referre all vnto him, and in the meane whyle keep ſilence, without grudging againſt him. Let not the corrections which wee ſuffer ſet vs in ſuch a chafe as to make vs play the deſperate perſons. Thus ye ſee how profitable this doctrine is to vs, if we can apply it to our inſtruction.

Now it is ſayd conſequently, *that God will requite his enemies with the lyke, and pay them their hyre which hate him, hee wil make his arrowes dronke with bloud*, and make ſuch a ſlaughter of them that they ſhall all bee diſcomfited. His ſpeaking after that maner is to make his Iuſtice the more terrible to vs, becauſe we be ſlow and dulheadded as I haue ſayd afore, inſomuch that wordes moue vs not a whit. Therefore doth our Lorde ſet downe a vehement kinde of ſpeech here, to the ende to waken vs, and to make vs yeeld due honor to his Iuſtice, and that (as I haue ſayd afore) it might be to vs as though wee ſawe both heauen and earth ſhaken. For after the ſame maner ſpeaketh hee by his Prophet Aggeus; & the Apoſtle ſhewing vs the maieſtie of the Goſpell, alledgeth the ſame text, that as oft as wee Agge.2.7.& Heb.12.26.

heare the voyce thereof ſound, it behoueth vs to call to minde, that God will bee heard and knowen both aboue and beneath. Now it is certaine ÿ the holy Ghoſt would not haue vſed ſuch ſpeach but for our blockiſhnes ſake. Seeing then that our Lord ſetteth downe here ſo many figures and ſo many compariſons, let vs accuſe our ſelues, and conſider that hee doth it for the brutiſhnes of our nature, by reaſon whereof hee is faine to chawe thinges to vs aforehand, to the end we may finde ſome taſt in them and be touched with them. But yet muſt we alwayes haue an eye to the end, and to the intent whereat this doctrine ameth. And our Lord ſayth *that it is for the ſlaines ſakes, and for the priſoners ſakes*. Whereby he dooth vs to vnderſtand that the vengeance which hee ſpeaketh of is for the welfare of his Church; howbeit not for all that haue borne ÿ name of faithfull, for wee know there are many which make falſe bragges of Gods name, & that is to their double condemnation. We know that the chaffe is mingled with the good corne, and the wicked are intermedled with the godly. But yet they which falſely abuſe Gods name after that faſhion, muſt not looke that their hypocriſie ſhall any whit boote them: nay rather they ſhall pay full deere for it. They then which pretend to bee faithfull and are not, ſhall not be allowed before GOD for euer: but hee will mark them out for falſifyers of his trueth. But our Lorde here comforteth ſuch as are not altogether paſt grace, but which notwithſtanding that they haue offended, doe neuertheleſſe turne againe vnto him, and beeing ſory for their ſinnes doe humble themſelues to him and ſeeke to bee reformed by his hand and by his holy ſpirit. Thoſe therefore which are ſo ouermaſtred, haue neede to be comforted at Gods hand, accordingly alſo as we ſee howe our Lord Ieſus Chriſt ſpeaketh to that ſorte of men, Matt.11.28. 29. ſaying; Come vnto me al ye that are wearie and ouerloden, and I will refreſh you, and yee ſhall finde reſt vnto your ſoules. So then, in this text our Lord hath an eye to ſuch as might be drowned in diſpaire, if he ſhould not giue them ſome taſte of his goodneſſe to ſtay them vp withall. And therefore he ſaith that although hee haue ſhewed himſelfe rigorous to his Church for a time: yet notwithſtanding he hath not diſanulled the couenant which hee had made with his ſeruaunt Abraham, but he wil ſhew that the people whom hee had choſen and adopted are his own, and that ſeeing he is their protector, he will Gen.12.3. Exo.23.22. performe this ſaying of his; I will be a friend to thy friendes, and an enemie to thine enemies. That is the thing in effect, which Moſes had reſpect vnto.

Sith it is ſo, let vs learne to arme our ſelues with this leſſon, and whenſoeuer our enemies behaue themſelues lyke wood beaſtes, yea and are as furious as flaming fire: let vs on our ſide vnderſtand that our God hath power enough to maintaine vs, and that if he do it not at the firſt, it is to try our patience, and to make vs to ouercome all temptations. Wherefore let vs learn to proceede on ſtill, yea euen though he ſhoulde leade vs vnto death, aſſuring our ſelues that hee dooth it to giue vs a better lyfe, and therefore let vs alwayes goe on ſtill, whither ſoeuer it ſhal pleaſe him to lead vs. But yet howſoeuer we fare, let vs not beare any ſpite to our aduerſaries. Although as now they execute their rage againſt vs: yet let vs be throughly perſwaded, that in the end they muſt come to account, and that as thē God will ſhewe how deere our welfare was vnto him, & that although he ſeemed to haue forgotten vs and to haue caſt vs quite and cleane vp: yet notwithſtanding hee did ſtill eſteeme vs as his flocke. God then will ſhew that he had vs alwayes in his protection. Therefore let vs in the meane time abide quiet, and let vs not be ſo caſt downe with temptations that wee ſhould be out of hope of our ſaluation, and giue ouer the promiſes thereof that haue bin made vnto vs. Thus doe we now ſee the meaning of Moſes, and alſo in how great ſtead his doctrine may ſtand vs, if we can haue the skill to apply it well to our vſe.

Now it is ſaid for a concluſion, *Ye people* (or nations) *prayſe ye the people of God*. Here Moſes directeth his ſpeech to all infidels and heathen folk, to the intent that the exhortatiō which he hath ſet downe heretofore, may haue the more force. Hitherto he had ſpoken to the belieuers, and to ſuch as haue eares to heare God withall, and to ſuch as he calleth to his ſchoole. Howbeit foraſmuch as there is ſo much troubleſomneſſe and ſcrupulouſneſſe in vs as is pitifull to ſee; Moſes meant to giue vs yet one meane more for our better confirmation: in reſpect wherof he ſayth, Conſider my friends & ſee how your God comforteth you in the middeſt of the chaſtiſements which he ſendeth you. Although ye haue offended him, & deſerue to haue extreme rigor vſed towardes you, without any abatement of his corrections: yet notwithſtanding, to ſhewe that hee would not haue you to periſh, nor ÿ you ſhoulde feele him but as a Iudge onely; he ſheweth again that he will haue pitie vpon you, and repent him of his ſmiting of you after that faſhion, and that he will withdrawe his hand. And if you beleeue not this; yet neuertheleſſe, ÿ infidels muſt needs beleeue it. Although they be deſtitute of reaſon, although there be not one ſparke of light in thē, although they be as brutiſh as beaſtes that neuer heard ſpeaking of the liuing God: yet ſhall they perceiue this, and their experience ſhal be ſuch, that they ſhall be driuen to ſay, Bleſſed is Pſal.33.12 the people whoſe father & ſauiour God ſheweth himſelfe to be: Euen they (I ſay) ſhal bleſſe you. Now, when the dumme are able to ſpeake, the blinde to ſee, & the deafe to heare; ſhoulde not they that haue bin inlightned by Gods word, & to whom he hath giuen tongues to magnifie his name; ſhould not they ſee nor perceiue a whit? What excuſe then ſhall there be for them? Now then, wee ſee why Moſes hauing exhorted the faithfull to repentance, & hauing ſhewed them that God will haue pitie & mercie vppon them after he hath corrected them for their faultes & offences: turneth his talke to ſuch as were blind, & had not any knowledge or taſt of the trueth, namely to the heathen, of purpoſe to make vs to perceiue the better, after what ſorte God cauſeth vs to feele his goodnes,euen by experience, ſealing it vp in our harts by his holy ſpirit,which 2.Cor.1.22. is named the earneſt penny and the ſeale of the hope of our ſaluation, & the cauſer of vs to take hold of all the good thinges which we receiue at Gods hand.Now then if we know nothing therof, & that the infidels by beholding Gods wonderfull working after a manner vnaccuſtomed among men, be inforced to ſay, O what a thing is it to be of the number of Gods people? ought not we to haue a more liuely knowledge thereof, & ſuch as may comfort vs in our afflictions,ſo as we may not ceaſe to call vpon our God to hold vs continually vnder his obedience,and to haue alwayes wherwith to aſſwage the bitternes of our ſorrowes? Truely the thing that Moſes rehearſeth here is ſhewed vs in the example of Balaam. For he was a falſe Prophet, hee was an enemie of God, hee was ſuch a one as had his tongue to ſale and his heart vppon his powch, ſeeking to turne the trueth into falſhood,and yet for all this,as though God had held him vppon the rack,he was inforced to vtter this ſpeech; Num.23.10 Let my ſoule dye the death of the righteous. He ſpeaketh there of the people of God, ſaying: Who art thou Iſraell? Who is hee that can doe any thing againſt thee, ſeeing thou ſtandeſt in the fauor of thy God? Was a deceiuer and an vnderling of Satan faine to ſay ſo? Yea verely. For it is Gods will that his will which hee hath witneſſed already to his people by his lawe and by his word,ſhould be knowen,and further confirmed euen by the mouth of his open enemie. Balaam was faine to ſay that the death of the Iewes was more to be deſired,than the life of all other men,becauſe God held them for his people. So then,let vs marke well,that whereas Moſes ſayth, Ye Nations or ye Gentiles prayſe yee the people of God:it is as much to ſay,as declare ye that God hath wrought after ſuch a faſhion, as it is not for men to doubt any more, but that for his adoption ſake, in that he hath voutſafed to chooſe the linage of Abraham, he will haue it knowen that therein he hath layd forth the infinite treaſures of his goodnes.

And forthwith he addeth, *that hee will reuenge the bloud of his ſeruauntes, and requite vengeance to his enemies, but bee mercifull to his land, and to his people.* Here are three thinges in effect, which I wil touch in few words, and it wil be enough to conclude this ſong withall. The firſt is that God ſayth, *He will reuenge the bloud of his ſeruantes.* Now vnder this ſaying hee ſheweth vs that wee may well be afflicted for a time,ſo far forth that euen our very bloud ſhall not be ſpared, whether it be that God puniſh vs for the faults which we haue committed againſt him, or that his will be to try our patience. The thing then whereof wee bee warned, is that if God thinke good to haue our bloud ſhed, we muſt not thinke it ſtraunge nor ſhrinke from the promiſes which he hath made vs,in auowing himſelfe to bee our God, and the defender of our lyfe.Neither muſt we think that thoſe promiſes are diſanulled, though our God ſuffer vs to be handled ſo cruelly. But let vs tary the time till he reuenge our bloud: for hee will then ſhewe how deare and precious our lyfe is vnto him.Thus much cōcerning the firſt point.

As touching the ſecond, he ſayth *that God will requite his enemies with the lyke*, to the ende wee ſhould knowe that all the felicitie of the wicked and of the deſpiſers of God ſhall be accurſed, & Pſal.37.1. therefore that we muſt not repine at them therfore.Now then, if wee ſee Gods enemies to bee rich,to haue their eaſe in this world, and to welter in all pleaſure: let vs let them alone,and not be drawen to ſpite them, or to intermeddle our ſelues with thē.For why?Gods vengeance which is yet vnſeene, muſt come before our eyes, & be conſidered by faith,& we muſt alſo remēber how it is ſaid,Curſed be you ẏ laugh,for ye ſhal weepe. Luke.6.25. Foraſmuch then as the laughter of ẏ deſpiſers of God muſt be turned into mourning, weeping, and gnaſhing of teeth: let vs chooſe to weepe & waile as now,that God may dry vp our teares, & wipe them away when the time ſhall bee come. That is the ſecond point.

The third is, that wee muſt learne and take hart to reſt vpon the promiſe that God will neuer forſake vs howſoeuer the world goe. Inſomuch that although we haue offended God neuer ſo many wayes;yet he will euer be mercifull to vs.And why is that? *Becauſe we be his people.* The very foundation whereupon we muſt build, is that being adopted of God into the number of his children,according to his purchaſing of vs by our Lord Ieſus Chriſt, into whoſe body hee hath graffed vs, and wee knowe that his pardoning of our ſinnes is for that he hath waſhed and ſkoured vs in the bloud of his onely ſonne: wee alwayes haue recourſe to this promiſe, that our God will be fauorable to vs. True it is that now and then we ſhall be ſo at our wittes end,that we ſhall not knowe what to ſay; but yet muſt wee hope beyond hope, that although God ſhew vs many tokens of his wrath,and we bee aſſaulted on all ſides,ſo as we ſee no way to get out,but we ſeeme rather to be ſhut vp in the very bottom of ẏ dungeons:yet notwithſtāding we haue this ſtay to leane vnto,that God will be fauorable to his people and to his land. And therefore let vs goe on ſtoutely ſtill, vntill God haue ſhewed vs by the deed it ſelfe, the thing that he had promiſed in word, as he declareth it here.

Now let vs caſt our ſelues downe before the maieſtie of our good God, with acknowledgement of our faultes, praying him to voutſafe to make vs feele them better,ſo as we may bethink vs of thēm and indeuour to forſake ourſelues, that he may ſo raigne ouer vs,as it may appeare that it is very he which gouerneth vs by his holy ſpirit, and we may ſuffer our ſelues to bee ſo ruled by his hand, as we neuer bee diſquieted and put out of patience for all the afflictions and miſeries of this world,but that we may be more deſirous to yeelde obedience vnto him, than to inioy all the proſperitie,eaſe and pleaſure that the vnbeleeuers can haue,which can ſerue them to no purpoſe but to their endleſſe ouerthrowe and confuſion. And ſo let vs all ſay, Almightie God heauenly father, &c.

On Thurſday the xviii of Iune, 1556.

The CLXXXIX. Sermon which is the twelfth vpon the two & thirtith Chapter.

44 Then went Moſes, and rehearſed all the words of this ſong in the eares of the people, he and Hoſea the ſonne of Nun.

45 And when Moſes had made an end of ſpeaking all theſe wordes:

46 He ſayd vnto them: ſet your mindes vpon all theſe wordes, which I proteſt againſt you this day: commaund you your children to keepe them, and to do all the wordes of this lawe.

47 For it is no vayne worde towards you: but it is your life. And by this word you ſhall prolong your dayes in the land whereinto yee goe ouer Iordan to poſſeſſe it.

I Haue told you heretofore how it was no very pleaſant thing to the children of Iſrael, to heare ẏ contentes of this ſong which I haue expounded. For therein God accuſeth them to haue bin vnthankfull to him from the beginning: inſomuch that whereas he had vttered all the treaſures of his goodnes towardes them; they had abuſed the ſame moſt wickedly, and bin vnfaithfull to him, and that, not for once and away, but by ſhewing themſelues alwayes vnreformable. Now, this might well haue greeued them: but yet was Moſes faine to ſhewe them the will of God. And ſo we ſee that they which are ſet in office to teach the people, muſt not ſooth them vp nor ſeeke to pleaſe them, according to the 2.Tim.4.3. ſaying of S. Paul that men ſhall haue itching eares, deſirous to bee fed with winde: but they whom God hath placed in the office of Shepheardes, muſt not bend themſelues that way. Although then we ſee men ſpiteful againſt Gods word, and to conceiue an vtter miſlyking of the thinges which we bee commaunded to declare vnto them: yet muſt we follow our commiſſion, and diſcharge our ſelues faithfully of our dueties. For although men lyke not to be reproued: yet is it for their benefite neuertheleſſe. As for example, a ſicke perſon will perchance refuſe a medicine: but yet muſt he receiue it, for it is for his health. Lykewiſe although the people of Iſraell were ſtubborne: yet notwithſtanding they did patiently abide this doctrine which was rough and hard, as we ſee. And hereby wee be done to vnderſtand, that if we cannot abide that God ſhould blame vs for our ſinnes, & reproue vs ſharply when we haue deſerued it; we be wors than thoſe to whom God hath ſpoken heretofore. Now God calleth them a curſed and froward generation: and what ſhall then become of vs? So then, if wee be not plyable to ſubmit our ſelues to God willingly, at leaſtwiſe when we haue done amiſſe; Or if he finde ſuch frowardnes in vs that wee haue neede to bee handled roughly: let vs beare it with all mieldeneſſe and meekeneſſe. Thus much concerning that poynt where it is reported *that Moſes ſpake or vttered all the wordes of the ſong in the hearing of the people.*

Now here is yet thus much more, that therein wee may ſee howe God ſpake by the mouth of Moſes. For it had not bin poſſible for that doctrine to haue bin retained, except the maieſtie of God had matched with it. Had a mortall man handled the people as Moſes did, vnauthoriſed from aboue: ſurely it had bin the next way to haue rayſed a great ſedition againſt him. Therefore it behooued God to ſhew that he had giuen power to Moſes, and that he held the people in awe. And that ſerued to ſhewe that the Lawe was not coyned here beneath: but that God was the very author thereof, and therefore is to bee receiued with ſuch reuerence as is due to thinges that proceede from him. That is an other thing which wee haue to remember vppon this text.

Hauing rehearſed the ſong, now he addeth an exhortation. *Set yee your mindes* (ſaith he) *vpon all the wordes of this Lawe.* Here he ſheweth to what purpoſe and intent Gods will was to haue the ſayd ſong publiſhed: namely; that the people might know their owne naughtineſſe, wherein they had continued a long time, and be reclaymed from it, and learne to miſlyke of their ſtubbornnes, and thereupon to meeken their hartes that they might liue in obedience to God. And this belongeth vnto vs, as whereof we may gather a generall rule: which is, that whenſoeuer our Lorde entereth ſo into proteſtation & pleading againſt vs, diſcouering our vices and bewraying the corruption that is in vs: it is to the end to drawe vs to repentance, that knowing in what plight we be, we ſhould humble our ſelues, and therewithall bee more ready to receiue the worde of God, that whereas we were hardhearted and full of venim before, ſo as there was no entring into vs to be found: our hearts might be diſpoſed both to heare & to beleeue his ſayinges, and to bee obedient to him in all caſes.

The end(ſay I)whereunto all the rebukes which God giueth vs,in exhorting and quickening of vs vp, ought to ſerue to make vs the better diſpoſed to heare his worde,becauſe he ſeeth that naturally wee would rather goe backeward than foreward. This thing is declared heere expreſly by Moſes, who hauing finiſhed his ſong, ſayeth, *Set your hearts vpon all the words of this lawe.* Nowe the maner of ſpeech which he vſeth, betokeneth that they ſhould be attentiue or giue good eare. And not without cauſe:according to his former diſcourſe,where he ſayth that he wakeneth men after that faſhion. For wee ſee what negligence is in vs. Although wee pretend ſome zeale of profiting in Gods ſchoole: yet notwithſtanding the doctrine is no ſooner preached, but that not onely the one halfe of it, but alſo the moſt part of it ſlippeth from vs: in ſo much that euen they that haue profited beſt, doe ſcarſely beare away the thirde part: and ſome others ſcarce one word. To be ſhort,wee bee ſo light headed,that our wittes are continually rouing here & there, and we be at no ſtay to apply our ſelues wholly to the doctrine which is preached vnto vs in the name of God. But although wee vnderſtand the thinges that are ſpoken, and can ſay them by heart: yet are not our heartes and affections euer the more giuen vnto them. Therefore wee muſt not thinke it ynough for vs to bee able to talke of it: but wee muſt haue an inward harkening vnto God, and euerie of vs muſt talke of it to himſelfe,cheawing as it were his cudde, that is to ſay, muſing vpon it in his minde by himſelf, as if he ſhoulde ſay; It ſtandeth mee in hand to marke this wel:but whereas we ſhould indeuour after that manner to print the things in our memorie which haue bin taught vs in the name of God: we let it all ſlip away. For as much then as wee ſee ſuch fault in our ſelues: wee ought to marke this text the better where it is ſayde; *Set your heartes thereon.* As if Moſes ſhould ſay that Gods word requireth a ſingular affection, ſo as if we will vnderſtand it well, wee muſt not heare it as ſome other thing of another mans telling: for it is a kinde of wiſedome that ſurmounteth all our wittes. Therefore it ſtandeth men in hand to ſtraine themſelues in this behalfe: but on the contrarie part we ſee the coldneſſe that is in vs, in ſo much that when we haue once taſted a little thereof, wee paſſe not any more for it. Come wee to the hearing of Gods woorde? Doe wee reade it alone by our ſelues? Then let this warning alwayes ſtand before our eyes, that Gods woord is worthie to be receiued with ſuch reuerence, as we ſhould lift vp our minds on high & labour and indeuour to rid our ſelues of al things that may hinder vs from giuing our ſelues wholy thereunto. Thus ye ſee what Moſes meant by this ſpeech of *ſetting their heartes.*

And he ſpeaketh not of ſome one part alone, but of *All the woordes of the Lawe.* Whereby hee doeth vs to vnderſtand, that we muſt not ſo part ſtakes with God, as to perfourme ſome one ſaying ſlightly, and to let the reſt alone: but that wee muſt doe our indeuour in all caſes, to bee throughly learned in all the thinges which our Lord knoweth to be auailable to our ſaluation. For it is certaine that there neuer ſcaped any ſuperfluous word out of the mouth of God. Wee muſt not thinke that Gods ſpeaking is after the maner of men, who to attaine to ſome one good ſentence, doe vſe many fetches about and many interminglings: ſo that if one good ſaying be rehearſed, a man muſt let paſſe three or foure other for it. But as I ſayd afore, Gods ſpeaking is in ſuch wiſe, that all is profitable euen to the laſt word. And therefore not without cauſe doth Moſes heere exhort the people of Iſrael to ſet their heartes vpon all the woordes of the Lawe. True it is that wee can neuer haue the full vnderſtanding of Gods worde, but wee ſhall haue doone much when wee haue knowen ſome part of it. And wee heare what Saint Paule ſayeth, 1.Cor.13.12 who comprehendeth himſelfe alſo in the number of thoſe which ſee and knowe but onely in part, vntill wee may behold Gods glory face to face. But yet muſt wee receiue all, euen to yeeld our ſelues obedient to God without exception, ſo as wee may bee quiet in all thinges which he ſpeaketh vnto vs. Then let vs not doe as many folke doe, which receiue Gods worde alonely ſo farre foorth as it is to their owne liking, and as for the reſt they let it alone. There are other ſome which beate their braynes about ſome one point, becauſe their minde inclineth that way; and as for all the reſidue, they thinke it belongeth nothing to them. But let vs pray God to graunt vs the grace, that when wee once knowe any one peece of his will, wee may continually growe more and more in vnderſtanding, and that wee perceiue(as ſayeth Saint Paul) that all ſcripture is profitable. For he ſayeth not that 2.Tim.3.16 there wee ſhall finde wherewith to edifie our ſelues: but he ſayeth that it is profitable to all thinges, ſo as there is there not only ſome thing that may doe vs good: but alſo that if we ſearch throughout the things which our Lorde declareth there, wee ſhall finde from the very beginning, that nothing is ſet downe there without cauſe, but that G O D had alwayes a regard to giue vs good inſtruction in all thinges which he hath ſpoken. And ſo ye ſee to what purpoſe Moſes exhorteth heere the people to ſet their mindes vpon all theſe wordes.

But nowe if wee conſider howe many thinges there are to drawe vs away from it, and to thruſt vs out of the way, yea and to pluck vs backe that we might not profite in Gods woorde: it may well teache vs further, howe greatly wee ought to ſtraine our ſelues to bee quiet and peaceable, that our Lorde may bee heard, and wee giue heede to the thinges which hee vouchſafeth to teache vs. Howebeit we bee farre off from ſuch perfection. For hardly can a man abyde ſteadfaſt one minute of an houre, without the comming of ſome toy in his head to turne him away. A hundred of them will come vnto vs in one houre: and how many moe then in a whole day? Yea and ſometimes the conceite of our fooliſhe imaginations doth ſo cary vs away; that we wote not where we be. But beholde, our Lorde God woulde fayne aſſure vs of his ſayinges: there is ſuch a couenant paſſed betweene him & vs, that it is not heard for vs to hearken vnto him; inſomuch that if we will giue eare vnto him, we ſhall finde that his doctrine is not vnprofitable to vs. And ought not this to prouoke vs to fight againſt all ſuch imaginations as trouble our mindes and make vs to wander away? Yes: and ſo wee ſee how greatly this exhortation ought to preuaile with vs, conſidering that we be ſo fickle minded and lightheaded, as experience proueth.

Nowe after this, Moſes ſayeth *that the people muſt commaund their children.* Heerein it is ſhewed vs, that it is not ynough for vs to profite euery man himſelfe in Gods ſchoole: but that when wee our ſelues haue learned, we muſt alſo indeuer to bring others into the right way of ſaluation; ſpecially wee to whom God hath committed the charge of ſuch as want learning and inſtruction. As for example; fathers and mothers ſhall yeeld an account for their Children, bicauſe God giueth them with this condition, that they ſhall be brought vp in his feare. Lykewiſe Mayſters and Miſtreſſes haue to aunſwere for their menſeruauntes and womenſeruauntes; and if they lay the brydle in their neckes, they muſt not thinke that our Lorde will let their negligence ſcape vnpuniſhed. Therefore let vs take warning by this text, that ſuch as haue children muſt haue a care to teache them, and to make it knowen that God is the father of all their whole ofſpring, if they themſelues wilbe taken to bee the children of God. Lykewiſe they that haue menſeruauntes and maideſeruauntes muſt vnderſtand that their houſe muſt bee ſo dedicated to the ſeruing of God, as he may haue all ſouerainty in the ſame. After that maner ought we to take paines in the behalfe of thoſe which are committed to our charge. For the more we ſee that the world fayleth in that behalfe, the more carefull ought wee to bee to doe our duetie therein. For it wil bee no excuſe for vs to alleage ý it was a common vice, but it will rather turne to our ſorer condemnation, bycauſe one corrupteth and marreth another. Nowe then, let vs learne to haue the zeale that is commaunded vs here; namely that where God hath graunted vs the grace to be drawen to ý knowledge of his truth; then to conſider, that we muſt alſo indeuour to make all other men partakers thereof, that after our death Gods word may haue his courſe ſtill, and not be buried with vs. For wee bee mortall creatures, and as touching this world we doe but paſſe away, and that very ſwiftly. But we knowe Eſa.40,8. that Gods truth indureth for euer; and therefore wee muſt ſo deale as that Gods woorde may continue and bee knowen, and bee receiued of men from hand to hand, euen after that wee be departed out of this worlde. And thoſe which haue any charge ought to bende themſelues cheefely heereunto, according to this ſaying of Saint Peter concerning the ſame matter. I will 2.Pet.1.15. cauſe you (ſayeth he) to haue a remembraunce of my doctrine after that God ſhall haue taken mee out of this worlde. Although I liue not to ſpeake to you any more with my mouth; yet to diſcharge my duetie, I muſt ſo deale ý when my mouth ſhalbe ſhut and I ſhalbe no more conuerſant with you heere belowe to teach you, yet the ſame doctrine which I haue brought vnto you may haue his courſe ſtill, ſo as you may keepe it to your benefite and edification. For although fathers and mothers bee bounde to teache their children, and maiſters and miſtreſſes to teache thoſe that are vnder them, and likewiſe the miniſters of Gods woorde according as the Lorde hath called them to ſpeake in his name, are bounde to ſhewe the right way and to giue good example to other men: yet notwithſtanding we ought all generally to indeuour that all folkes may hearken to God, and receiue his word, and that not for two or three dayes onely, but for euer. Thus yee ſee to what purpoſe Moſes hath ſaide heere, that Fathers muſt trayne vp their Children in all the woordes of the Lawe.

Nowe hee ſaieth conſequently, *To doe them and keepe them*. Heere Moſes repeateth that which hee had ſpoken afore: namely that our Lordes ſpeaking vnto vs, is not to the end wee ſhoulde alowe of his ſayinges, and confeſſe the ſame to bee true, rightfull, and iuſt: but to trye our obedience. Gods word then muſt reforme our lyfe: for to that end and purpoſe is it ſpoken vnto vs. Neuertheleſſe, wee ſee howe many a one doe thinke themſelues well diſcharged when they haue but ducked downe with their heades, in token that they gaineſaie it not. And they thinke GOD to bee beeholden to them if they blaſpheme not his doctrine, and ſhewe not themſelues to bee enemies to it, but confeſſe the ſame to bee good and holy, for they wilnot haue GOD to vrge them any further. But that were too eaſie a market. For if GODS woorde were preached but onely to the ende it ſhoulde bee receiued and confeſſed with the mouth: to what purpoſe ſhoulde it ſerue when in the meane while euerie man might take the brydle in his necke, and liue as though wee neuer had any rule of GOD? Were it not an vnhallowing and defiling of the holy thinges, and a diſſeating of the power of GODS woorde? Let vs beare well in minde therefore, that if wee come hither to Sermons, and yet continue ſtill lyke our ſelues, ſo as our lyfe bee not aunſwerable to that which hath beene taught vs heere: wee ſhalbe dubble to blame, bycauſe it is but a mocking and ſkorning of the doctrine of ſaluation, when wee let it ſlip away, and haue but our eares beaten with it, without any touching of our heartes or any reforming of our liues thereafter. What is to bee doone then? Wee muſt vnderſtande that GODS woorde is not named a Garde without cauſe, for as much as men are lyke wretched beaſtes without diſcretion, vntill God haue ſhewed them howe they ought to walke. Yee ſee then that it is our Gard or defence. And therefore if wee keepe Gods word, we alſo ſhalbe kept and garded thereby, and we ſhal haue our bonds certaine, ſo as we ſhal neuer erre while we liue: and moreouer we ſhall haue wiſedome to iudge betweene good aud euill.

And that is the cauſe why Moſes ſaith, *Let your children keepe the woorde*; and againe, *let them obſerue it*. True it is that wee can neither keepe Gods woord nor doe it; vntill hee haue written it in our heartes. But Moſes preſuppoſeth that God will ſhedde out his holy ſpirite vppon the people, ſo they ſhut not the doore againſt him, but bee readie to receiue the grace which our Lorde had promiſed them, as wee haue ſeene heretofore, where he ſayth; Deut 30.14 Behold, the worde is nygh thee, in thy mouth, and in thy heart. And not without cauſe doth Saint Paul ſay that Rom.10,16. this worde is the ſame which is preached in the Goſpell, bycauſe Gods ſpeaking there is not to make a noyſe in our eares onely, but alſo to ingraue the doctrine in our heartes by his holy ſpirit, which is brought vnto vs. So then let vs marke well, that whereas Moſes treateth heere of the keeping of Gods worde, God alſo doeth bynde himſelfe to his people, with condition that hee will gouerne them by his holy ſpirite, and write his worde in their heartes: and moreouer when hee hath ſo touched them, hee will alſo be fauourable to them in bearing with their infirmities and in forgiuing their ſinnes. And after that manner doe wee perfourme GODS woorde: not that wee can accompliſh it and do it throughly: for wee bee ſo farre vnable to perfourme the lawe, that wee cannot ſo much as 1.Cor.3.5. thinke one good thought. Nay rather wee drag backe from that which God commaundeth vs: wee bee enemyes to all righteouſneſſe and vpright dealing. God therefore muſt bee fayne to bow vs, and to giue vs ſuch teachableneſſe as we may bee readie to heare his worde. And moreouer when hee hath graunted vs the grace to haue ſuch zeale and affection, hee muſt alſo beare with vs in that we haue not done our indeuour to do the things which he hath appointed vs; & whereas we be diſobedient, and therefore hee might iuſtly puniſhe vs, yet notwithſtanding hee muſt bee faine to receiue vs to mercie, and to giue vs our pardon for our Lord Ieſus Chriſtes ſake. And although the fathers of olde tyme had not ſo great and ſo euident teaching as we haue nowadayes by the Goſpell: yet did they knowe that our Lorde had promiſed them both the grace of his holy ſpirite and alſo his mercie, to the forgiuing of their ſinnes. For the ſacrifices which were offered in thoſe dayes, were not ordayned without cauſe. It was not a trifling matter, that the people came to the temple to offer ſacrifices: but it was a ſure preſident that God receyued them to mercie; in ſo much that when the bloud of any beaſt was there ſhed, it was a figure which ought to leade them vp to a higher thing. For there Exod.25.40 & Hebr.8.5. was alwayes a heauenly patterne which Moſes had ſeene vppon the Mount. So then, let vs not thinke as the Papiſtes doe, that Moſes vpholdeth heere the Freewill of men, of purpoſe, therewithall to ſet foorth their deſeruinges, as though men coulde by their owne power and pollicie obtayne Paradiſe, and were able to ſerue GOD and to doe the commaundements of the Law: Moſes went not that way to worke; but hee knewe what promyſe had beene made to the people, and that all thinges tended to the Couenaunt which GOD had made with them, notwithſtanding that the time of the full opening thereof was not yet come as it was promyſed afterwarde by Ieremie, Eſay, and all Eſa.61.1.&3. Ier.31.33. Ezec.11.19. & 36.26. the reſt of the Prophetes, where it is ſayd that GOD woulde make a newe Couenaunt with his people, which was that hee woulde write his Lawe in their heartes, and chaunge their ſtony heartes into heartes of fleſh. True it is that this belongeth to the Goſpell: neuertheleſſe, it was figured alſo vnder the Lawe, and the fathers that liued in thoſe dayes, had ſome taſte thereof ſo farre as was expedient for them.

Nowe ſeeing that our Lorde hath nowadayes multiplyed his grace towardes vs, and made our ſtate more excellent than the ſtate of them that liued vnder the Lawe: ſurely wee be leſſe to bee excuſed than they, for it is certayne that it maketh our offences and diſobedience the more heynous. Therefore let vs bethinke our ſelues, and let vs marke well that ſeeing God doeth offer vs the liuing waters whereof Ezechiel ſpeaketh, that is to ſay, ſeeing he Ezec.36.25 sheadeth foorth the giftes of his holy ſpirit to make vs to walke according to his will: wee muſt aſſure our ſelues that if wee ſhut the gate againſt him, we ſhalbe much more worthy of blame than thoſe which yet neuertheleſſe were condemned vnder the lawe. And therefore let this waken vs, and make vs more willing to heare Gods word, to the end to keepe it, ſeeing he not onely ſpeaketh to vs by the mouthes of men, but alſo prepareth vs to draw vs to him by the inward power of his holy ſpyrite, and on the other ſide ſpareth vs, and falleth not to examining of our liues with rigour, but accepteth our dooinges as a father doeth his childrens, notwithſtanding that there bee much infirmitie and many vices in vs. And to the ende this word may haue the more force, Moſes ſayeth that he not onely ſpake or vttered it, but alſo *that he witneſſed or proteſted it to the people*, as wee haue ſeene afore. And not without cauſe doeth hee repeate it heere againe. For we be ſo laſie and ſhouthfull in receiuing Gods worde, as is pitie to ſee. Therefore it is requiſite that there ſhoulde alwayes bee ſome proteſtation, to make vs thinke the better thereon. Hee ſayde heeretofore, Deut.30.19. I call heauen and earth to witneſſe againſt you this day, that if the doctrine which I bring vnto you doe fall to the grounde, and that yee make no account thereof: the very Sunne and Moone and all other creatures ſhall cry out againſt you for vengeaunce of ſuch contempt and negligence.

So then he addeth now, God hath made mee a teacher, and I for my part will diſcharge my duetie, and that not with a colde and dead vtteraunce of the thinges which I haue receiued, but by proteſting to you on Gods behalfe as though I were a publike notarie & had a proxie from him, aſſuring you that ſith your God hath graunted you the grace to heare his word, if you bee negligent in receiuing it, yee muſt make a dreadfull account for it. Hereby we bee warned to receiue Gods worde with ſuch reuerence, as the Angels of heauen may bee witneſſes of our fayth, zeale, and conſtancie. Let vs goe with open heartes and mindes lifted vp to God, that wee may bee taught by him. And if wee doe ſo, wee ſhall bee turned away from all the impedimentes of the world, in ſo much that God ſhall no ſooner haue ſpoken the word, but wee ſhall bee agreed to yeeld to his teaching, and we ſhall not bee zealous for a ſmall time onely, but when we haue once begun, wee ſhall holde out to the ende. For woe to vs if wee turne head in the middes of our way, and ſtart aſide when we haue begun well, ſo as the diuell may finde yͤ meanes to leade vs aſtray. Alas, what ſhall it boote vs to haue beene come into a good trade? So then, let vs marke well this worde *Witneſſe*, which is ſet downe here by Moſes, to doe vs to vnderſtand that our Lorde ſpeaketh not to vs to leaue our vnthankfulneſſe vnpuniſhed when wee haue deſpiſed the thinges that are tolde vs in his name, but that there ſhall be alwayes this ſolemne witneſſing or proteſtation, vnleſſe we benefite our ſelues by his teaching of vs.

Now Moſes addeth conſequently, *That the worde is not vaine towardes them*. This peece of text is miſunderſtoode if it bee taken for an exhortation. And yet for all that, it ſhould ſeeme, that Moſes exhorteth the people, when he ſaith: Let not Gods woord bee vaine towardes you, beware that yee receiue it not as a thing of no price, nay rather conſider what a Maieſtie it hath, when God appeareth to men by his worde which is his liuely image. But in the Hebrewe tongue wherein the Prophet ſpake, it is thus: *The worde ſhall not bee vaine towardes you*. For ſo is it, worde for worde in the Text: when he ſayeth; *towardes you*, he meaneth, that in reſpect of the people, *the word ſhall not bee in vaine*. And this will well bee perceiued by the ſaying of Eſay in his
Iſa.55.10. fiue and fiftith Chapter, which text is miſexpounded likewiſe. But the right expounding of the one will bee a key to open the right vnderſtanding of the other. It is ſayd in Eſay, my word ſhall not returne emptie vnto mee, but it ſhall yeeld his fruit there as I ſend it vnto. Some haue thought that our Lord meant there, that whenſoeuer his worde is preached, it ſhall not bee in vaine, but that it ſhall yeelde profite by giuing fayth to the hearers. But the Prophet Eſay ment not ſo by thoſe wordes. What did he then? Hee confirmed or warranted Gods promiſes, to the intent that men ſhould not doubt of the performance of the thinges contained in them. As for example, God promiſeth vs to proſper vs by his bleſſing, to take vs into his keeping, and to defend vs againſt all the troubles and vexations of the world; ſo that if men perſecute vs, he will bee as our bucklar: if wee bee threatened and aſſaulted on all ſides, he will bee our fortreſſe; in time of dearth he will haue a care to feede vs; againſt all the aſſaultes of Satan, hee will gard vs by the power of his holy ſpirit: to be ſhort, Gods promiſes are infinite. And yet for all that, wee bee ſo weake hearted, that we conceiue not what he ſaieth, but rather wee thinke that wee ſhall be diſappointed if wee truſt to his promiſes. There needeth not any thing to toſſe vs too and fro, for to our ſeeming all Gods promiſes are but deceites. For this cauſe he ſayeth; No, like as the Raine falleth not in vaine, but moyſteneth the earth, and the earth being moyſtened yeeldeth forth hir fruite, ſo as the raine hath as it were a ſecret vertue to giue nouriſhment to men: therefore like as yee ſee that in the order of nature, the raine ingendreth ſuch a kinde of fruitefulneſſe in the earth; ſo aſſure you your ſelues that my word ſhall not bee in vaine, but I will make it to yeelde profite, that is to ſay I will perfourme all my promiſes. Therefore bee bold to truſt vnto mee, that I will performe and bring to paſſe al that euer I haue ſpoken by my Prophetes. So in this text Moſes ſayeth, *The word ſhall not be voide towards you*, that is to ſay, ſo you receiue it, thinke not that God will leaue you with your mouthes open like ſilly hungerſtaruen folke, ſo as yee ſhould hang lingering and not knowe what ſhall become of you: for your God will make you to feele by proofe that hee hath not promiſed you aught in vaine. Now, when our Lorde ſpeaketh after that manner, ſhall wee caſt doubtes yet ſtil, and ſtand ſcanning whether his ſayings ſhall be performed or no? *His worde ſhall not bee voyde towardes you*: that is to ſay, ye ſhall finde the effect thereof, and hold ye hardily vnto this, that God will worke with ſuch force, as yee ſhall perceyue that when his worde is preached vnto you, it is as much as if he himſelfe were preſent, to put the thing in proofe and execution, which hee hath declared. Thus wee ſee now the meaning of Moſes, to the intent that the people ſhoulde take ſome taſt of Gods word and receiue it with all reuerence. He telleth them that when God ſpeaketh, it is not a ſound that vaniſheth away in the aire: but that in that word lyeth and conſiſteth all our happineſſe and chiefe welfare, and that wee haue wherewith to content our ſelues, when our Lord vouchſafeth to direct his worde ſo vnto vs. For why? Wee ſhall not bee foaded with vaine hope; but we ſhall feele in deede how our Lorde meant to trie our faith in ſuch wiſe for a time, as that he wil yet neuertheleſſe performe all that euer he hath ſpoken.

Now Moſes confirmeth this exhortation yet better, by this which he addeth: *It is your life and your welfare. by it ſhall your dayes be prolonged in the land which you goe to poſſeſſe.* Hereby we may eaſily gather that Moſes made not an exhortation to the people, [to ſhewe] that the woorde is not vaine: but rather that he made them a promiſe, that the woorde ſhoulde haue force and vertue continually as it were without interruption. *It is your life* ſayeth he, and through the power thereof ſhall you prolong your dayes. Hee ſheweth then, that vntill ſuch time as our Lorde had giuen his Lawe to the people, they were as wretched folke that wiſt not where to haue any reſt, no more than all other men vppon the earth. True it is that Gods creating of vs and his ſetting of vs in this world, is to the ende wee looke at him,put our truſt in him,and hope for al good thinges at his hand. But what? We be ſo earthly, that we can by no meanes come nigh him. And indeede he is too farre off, and though wee thinke vpon him, yet vntill he giue vs his word and vtter his fatherly loue towardes vs, alas wee muſt needes euer tremble and bee abaſhed. Let vs marke well then,that we ſhal neuer haue any aſſuredneſſe, vntill our Lorde haue giuen it vs by his woorde. For our lyfe is but a lingering, wee bee turmoyled with continuall troubles and vnquietneſſe,and (which more is) wee muſt needes finde GOD our deadly enemie, vntill he haue taught vs by his word. And I pray you, can wee haue any ſparke of lyfe, when we perceiue that God is againſt vs? Now ſurely men deceiue themſelues if they weene to haue Gods fauour, vntill they be grounded and ſetled vppon his woorde. And therefore not without cauſe doeth Moſes ſay *that the word is our life*. For thereby wee bee doone to vnderſtande howe wretched our ſtate is, vntill our Lorde haue drawen vs to him, and communicated himſelfe to vs by meanes of his word.

Nowe when we once knowe that Gods word bringeth vs ſuch benefites, to wit, that we knowe that God wilbe fauourable to vs, that he quickeneth vs, and that it ſheweth vs wherein our ioy and felicitie conſiſteth: wee muſt knowe alſo that it ſerueth vs for a Seale, & that our Lord will haue vs to take it as a gage, as though the thing were done already. And therefore whenſoeuer God ſpeaketh, let vs hold vs to him. For hee is no vnſaier as mortall men bee: hee is not free of promiſe, and a performer of nothing: therefore let vs boldly ſticke to his word,and ſith it is our life,let vs aſſure ourſelues that it wil not deceiue vs, nor beguile vs if we truſt vnto it. For why? It ſhall not returne void from vs: that is to ſay,when we haue once admitted it in,it wil take ſuch roote,as Gods power ſhall euer be at hande to vs, and God ſhall ſooner renounce himſelfe than not performe his promiſes. True it is,that we ſhal not ſee it out of hand:but yet muſt we be fully reſolued thereof,and patiently tarry til yͤ fit time be come for our lord to ſhew that he ment not to ieſt or to dally, in telling vs that he would be liberall vnto vs. Now ſith it is ſo,let vs learne to be the more deſirous to receiue Gods worde, in reſpect of the profite that it bringeth vs. For God thinketh it not ynough to ſhew vs the maieſtie that is in his word, to the intent we ſhould be humbled to obey it: but his mind is alſo to allure vs,that we might be in loue with it. And to that ende doeth Moſes ſpeake it heere. He had magnified the word ſufficiently heretofore, ſhewing that it proceedeth from God,and that heauen and earth ſhall beare witnes againſt vs if we refuſe it; but now he addeth another reaſon to induce men the better to heare God,yea and to heare him deſirouſly, namely; *that God will prolong their dayes in the land which they go to poſſeſſe*, at leaſtwiſe if they ſuffer themſelues to be taught by him. And why? For we be all poore ſilly ſoules without hope of ſaluation,if we continue in the ſtate of al mākind. All the life which men weene thēſelues to haue in this world,is but as a way to hell vntill God haue turned vs to the better, and haue taught vs what is ſaide in his woorde. As touching that which he addeth, ſaying, *That they ſhall lengthen their daies when they bee paſſed ouer Iordan*: I will treate thereof to morow if it pleaſe God.

Now let vs fall downe before the Maieſtie of our good God with acknowledgement of our faultes,praying him to make vs ſo to feele them more and more, as wee may learne to turne againe vnto him, and make the great number of exhortations auailable which moue vs dayly ſo to doe: and that when he layeth before vs our ſinnes and threatneth vs with his wrath,we may be ſo conuicted, as we may not continue hardened in euill, but returne vnto him, and pray him to bee ſo gratious vnto vs, as not to ſuffer Satan to haue dominion ouer vs; but rather to make vs indeuour to reform ourſelues in ſuch ſort,as that our hearing of his word may cauſe vs to amend and bring vs backe to him, and frame our whole life according to his will. That it may pleaſe him to graunt this grace, not onely to vs but alſo to all people and Nations of the earth, &c.

On Fryday the xix. of Iune, 1556.

The CXC. Sermon, which is the thirteenth vpon the two and thirtith Chapter.

48 And the ſame day the Lord ſpake vnto Moſes, ſaying,

49 Get thee vp into this mountaine Abarim,the mountaine Nebo which is in the land of Moab ouer againſt Iericho:and there take a view of the land of Chanaan, which I giue in poſſeſſion to the children of Iſraell.

50 And thou ſhalt dye vpon the mountaine which thou goeſt vp into, and be gathered vnto thy people like as Aaron thy brother dyed vppon Mount Hor and was gathered with his people.

51 Bicauſe ye ſinned againſt me among the Children of Iſraell by the waters of ſtrife in Cades,in the wilderneſſe of Sin. For yee ſanctified me not in the preſence of the Children of Iſraell.

52 Therfore thou ſhalt ſee the land before thee, but thou ſhalt not enter into it, namely the land which I giue vnto the Children of Iſraell.

Deut.1.37. THis hiſtorie hath bin touched alreadie heretofore in the firſt Chapter, where Moſes declared that he was depriued of the benefite which he had looked for, that is to ſay, of inioying the Inheritance which God had promiſed to all the linage of Abraham. Now the ful time was come, and Moſes had bin appointed of God to deliuer the people: by reaſon whereof there was great likelihood that he aboue all others ſhould haue gone into that land. But when he was to haue ſet his foote into it, then behoued it him to die: and that was a verie hard caſe for him. Hee made mention thereof afore, to ſhewe to the children of Iſrael, howe great and exceſſiue their lewdneſſe was, ſeeing that he was puniſhed for their ſakes. For the miſchiefe came not of himſelfe, hee had not conſented, neither to their murmuringes nor to their blaſphemies, but rather had ſtrayned himſelfe to withſtand them. Yet notwithſtanding, his conſtancie was not ſo great as was requiſite. Onely bicauſe hee was as a man amazed, and glorifyed not God with ſuch ſtedfaſtneſſe as hee ought to haue doone; hee was baniſhed from the land. This doeth he charge them with to their reproch. And here he repeateth againe, how that after he had publiſhed the lawe, God told him againe that he ſhould beare that puniſhment of not entering into the lande of Canaan: and therewithall he telleth him immediately of his death. Nowe firſt of all, if wee reade what is written by Moſes himſelfe; it will ſeeme that he ouerſhot not himſelf in the place ẏ is called Meriba, which aforetime was named Exod 17.7. *Raphirim*. For there perceiuing the people to cry that they died for thirſt, hee called vppon God. Moſes doeth not take part with them that ſtormed after that manner, hee was no fellow with them, hee repyned not at God: but rather went to him with all humilitie, ſaying; Alas Lorde, I am a mortall man, and how may I ſatisfie this people, vnleſſe thou prouide for them? Moſes reſorted vnto GOD, his meaning was not to prouoke him to wrath, & therewithall it ſhould ſeeme that he looked that God ſhould woorke after his accuſtomed manner; that is to ſay, that hee ſhould ſhewe foorth his power. Now then, if a man looke vppon the outward apparance of the matter, it will ſeeme that Moſes behaued himſelf faithfully, and that he was not to be blamed. Yet notwithſtanding, hee is condemned, both he & his brother Aaron. And why? Hereby wee ſee that wee muſt not alwayes weigh our ſinnes in our owne ballance: for that will euer deceiue vs, according to this ſaying of Salomon, Prou.21.2. Man thinketh his owne wayes to bee right, but God weyeth mens hearts. Therefore when men haue acquit themſelues, they haue gained nothing thereby. For ſometimes the lewdnes lyeth hid within: God ſeeth it, and it is he ẏ chalengeth to himſelfe the office of ſearching of all thoughts. Then by the example of Moſes we be warned not to flatter our ſelues. For although our ſinnes be hidden from men, yea and that we our ſelues cannot comprehend them: wee muſt not vnder colour thereof deeme our ſelues to be righteous, but put our ſelues into Gods hande, praying him to make vs vnderſtand our ſecrete vices, and to vouchſafe that as they bee buryed from vs, ſo they may be pardoned by him: & let vs crie wͭ Dauid, Lord who knoweth his faultes? Pſal.19.13. But clenſe thou me from the things which I haue not perceyued. Thus yee ſee what wee haue to remember vppon this place.

And nowe hereuppon let vs learne to diſcharge our ſelues of all pride, for there are many men to bee ſeene, which coulde finde in their heartes to ſtand in contention with God; and would neuer agree to his iudgement, vntill hee haue ſhewed them wherfore he doth condemne this or that. But we muſt not lift vp briſtles after that maner. We knowe there is but one onely Iudge, and that wee muſt all come before his ſeate with reuerence, as ſayeth Saint Paule. Rom.14.10 2.Cor.5.10. Sith it is ſo, let vs keepe vs from attempting any thing beyond that which belongeth vnto vs, and let vs not take vppon vs the authoritie of God, to put difference betweene good and euill after our owne fanſie; but let vs enquire after the thing which our Lord alloweth, & hold it for good without gainſaying. And looke what he condemneth, let vs hold it for euill, without asking queſtion why, vnleſſe God ſhew vs ẏ reaſon, and then muſt we accept thereof. For if hee once ſay the worde, wee muſt holde vs to it and keepe ſilence. To be ſhort, let vs learne to glorifie God in all caſes: and when hee hath once ſpoken a thing, let it ſuffice vs, and let vs all agree vnto it without any further adoe. For it ſhal not boote vs to ſtriue, wee ſhall but double our condemnation continually. What ſhould it haue profited Moſes to haue made long proceſſe, and to haue entred into particularities with God for the iuſtifying of himſelf, [& to haue ſaid,] Why? What haue I ſaid? Did any one word ſcape mee out of ſquare? And on the other ſide, I meane not to conſent to the wickedneſſe of this people. Which thing I haue ſhewed as much as might be in all my dooinges. In ſo much ẏ euen when they asked water, I knewe not howe to doe better, than to conſider myne owne weakenes, and therefore I confeſſed it with mine owne mouth, and therewithal called vpon thee. Moſes had many allegations to make: but if he had entered into them, it had bin the next way to haue prouoked Gods vengeance ſo much the more againſt him. Seeing then that hee did willingly yeeld to his condemnation, to the intent to obtaine mercie for his fault: let vs followe his example, and ſuffer God to vſe his due authoritie ouer vs; and let all mouthes bee ſtopped before him as ſayeth the ſcripture. Thus much for that one poynt.

Nowe by the way we ſee what charge they take vppon them, which ought to gouerne a people. For it is not ynough for them to bee no partakers of the rebellions, mutinies, wicked compactes, & other offences that are committed againſt God. Although they proteſt that they bee not attaynted with them, nor had any minde or intent that way; yet ſhall they not goe quit nor be counted guiltleſſe for all that. For it behoueth them to withſtand it with all ſtouteneſſe of minde and force, and to bee vtterly vnuincible. If they ſhoulde ſee, not onely two or three naughtipackes ſet themſelues againſt God; but alſo euen a whole people ſet vpon miſchiefe: yet ought they to ſet themſelues againſt them as open aduerſaries, in the maintenance of Gods cauſe: and if they faile ſo to doe; their cowardlineſſe will not be excuſable. Oftentimes the Magiſtrats which haue Gods ſword in their hand, and the Miniſters of Gods woorde which are ordeyned to rebuke euill; thinke it ynough to bee but onely grieued when men offende God. But wee ſee contrariwiſe, that although Moſes and Aaron medled not with the wickedneſſe of the people, but did euen ſhunne it, and would with all their hearts that God had beene honoured, & it was not long of them that things went no better foreward: yet notwithſtanding, God imputeth it to them for a fault, bicauſe they were not ſtout and freeharted in ſtriuing againſt them, as they ought to haue bin. So then, they which are ſet in publique office, ought to deſire God to giue them ſuch conſtancie and ſtoutneſſe of mind, as they may not yeelde for any thing that can happen, but keepe on their courſe continually, without ſtriking their ſayle as they ſay. For ſurely as for vs, a ſmall thing will ſhake vs, or rather throw vs downe at the firſt blow. Therefore muſt God be faine to worke in vs. Yet notwithſtanding we ſhal not be diſcharged, except that euery of vs in his calling do put foorth himſelfe in the maintenaunce of Gods quarel, to reſtraine the euill as much as hee can, ſo as our mouthes be open to rebuke vice, inſomuch that if we ſee a whole people giuen to wickedneſſe, we cry out vnto them, & tel them of the vengeance that is prepared for them. Thus ye ſee what we haue to doe on our ſide.

Alſo let the magiſtrates ſtraine themſelues as much as is poſſible for them. For if we, conſidering what is happened to Moſes and Aaron, doe ſtep aſide; let vs not thinke our ſelues to haue more priuiledge than they. But yet we haue to note heerewithall, that Gods puniſhing of Aaron and Moſes was in ſuch ſorte, as he ceaſed not for all that to auow them for faithfull, and to allow their calling, and to yeelde them an excellent record euen after their deceaſſe, accordingly as Psal.96.6. we heare how it is ſayde in the pſalme, that Aaron and Moſes were his true ſeruauntes. Ye ſee heere how the holy ghoſt magnifieth Moſes and Aaron; and yet for all that they fayled not to be puniſhed too. Yea, but God vſeth but temporall puniſhment towardes them; and thereupon hee ceaſeth not to be their father ſtill. When God then puniſheth our faults, although the corrections bee irkeſome to beare; yet let vs bee contented therewith, ſo long as hee is mercifull to vs ſtill, and that hee auowe vs to bee of the number of his children. So long as that remayneth to vs, let vs go on ſtill, and let it not grieue vs though GOD ſcourge vs with his roddes, for wee haue neede of them. Wee ſee how the greateſt, euen thoſe which haue moſt excelled in all vertue and holyneſſe, haue ſhewed vs the way in this behalfe. Shoulde GOD ſpare vs more than hee ſpared Moſes and Aaron? Yee ſee then howe the faythfull ought to prepare themſelues to receiue chaſtiſement for the offences which they haue committed, and that they muſt not thinke that bicauſe they bee GODS children, therefore they ſhoulde bee exempted from all afflictions, and GOD ſhoulde doe away all their faultes without making any countenaunce of miſliking them. But rather they muſt bee fully reſolued, that God will viſite them and put them in mynde of their ſinnes; and thereuppon ſubmit themſelues to him, and offer him their backes. Like as a child looketh for correction when he ſeeth his father angrie: ſo muſt wee haue the meekeneſſe in vs to ſubmit our ſelues to God, and ſhame muſt not touch vs, neither we be ouermuch grieued when our Lord is minded to diſcouer our faultes, and to bring vs lowe before men. True it is that wee ought to be touched therewith, but yet with ſuch 2.Cor.7.10 ſorow as S.Paul ſpeaketh of, which wee muſt not ſhun, bycauſe it tendeth to our welfare. For if our ſorowing be after a worldly manner bycauſe wee bee not honoured nor had in ſuch reputation as we would be: it is a curſed and ſinfull ſorowing. But if wee bee ſorie that we haue offended God, and all our griefe is for the euill which we haue done: that ſorow is a ſacrifice which God alloweth and well lyketh of. Howſoeuer the world goe, if GOD liſt to lay any note of infamie vppon vs; let vs not thinke it ouer ſtraunge, ſith wee ſee that Moſes who had bin exalted as a figure of our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt, who had deliuered the people of Iſrael out of bondage, and vppon whom GOD had ſhedde out his power; was faine for all that to bee ſet as vppon a ſcaffolde, and to bee put to reproche, and to haue it made knowen that God did ſolemnely bereaue him of the land that was promiſed to the linage of Abraham, when a great ſort of Raſcals and a great many of people of none account entered into it, and in the meane whyle Moſes was fayne to bee ſhutte out. Sith wee ſee this, ſhoulde wee thinke our puniſhment ouer harde and grieuous, when God will haue our ſinnes laide open, ſpecially when it may ſerue for example & inſtruction? Nay, we ought not to haue ſo great regard of our owne honour, but that we ought to eſteeme the ſaluation of our neighbors much more. Moſes for his part knew ẏ this ſhold ſerue for a good preſident to the worldes ende, bicauſe that whenſoeuer we compare our ſelues with him, we muſt needs hang downe our heads (as I ſaide afore) and put our ſelues into the handes of GOD. At the ſight heereof Moſes was contented. For he ſought the welfare of the whole Church; and ſo that God were glorified, he made no further reckening; but vtterly forgetting himſelfe, he was not ſo chare of his owne renowne and good reputation in this behalf, but that hee did patiently beare the chaſtiſement which it pleaſed God to denounce againſt him. That is the thing which wee haue in effect to remember in this place, where it is ſhewed vs againe, that Moſes was ſhut out from the poſſeſſiō of the land which had beene promiſed for an inheritance, as well to him, as to all the reſt of Abrahams ofſpring.

And herewithall we ought alſo to marke well, that whereas God ſendeth him vp into Mount Nebo, and telleth him that hee ſhall dye there; he (as we ſhall ſee in the end) reſiſteth it not, but prepareth himſelfe to it. True it is that he pronounceth the bleſſings which ſhalbe ſeene hereafter in order, and which we wil go in hand withall to morowe if it pleaſe God. Alſo hee maketh as it were his laſt Will to all the people. And yet for all this he is not diſmayed; but putteth himſelfe into Gods hand, and prepareth himſelfe willingly to dye. Nowe heerein wee ſee, how the faithfull ought to be alwayes willing to goe whitherſoeuer God calleth them, and how they ought to ouerleape al the difficulties of this world; inſomuch that although they meete with neuer ſo many thornes, and neuer ſo many encounters: yet ought they to thruſt foreward ſtill, & not to be driuen aſide, nor to be put out of hart for all that. Alſo when God taketh them out of the world, it behoueth them to haue alwaies one foote onward on the way; as if they ſhould ſay, lo heere I am Lord, I am ready to come vnto thee. But this cannot be done, except a man haue profited well in Gods ſchoole, and ſpecially that we know there is a better life prepared for vs. For wͭ out that, we can neuer feele truly that we be but ſtraungers in this world. For they which beleeue there is none other life than this which we inioy heere, and think to make their reſt in this world; are ſo wedded to it, ẏ a man cannot plucke them from it but by force and ſpite of their teeth. But when we once know that our inheritaunce is in heauen: we conclude ẏ this world is but a pilgrimage, and that wee muſt paſſe apace through it. And he that paſſeth it ſo, ſhall finde it no hard matter to go through with his iourney, when he ſeeth that his ſaluation is on the other ſide, and that God calleth him thereunto. The thing then whereunto it behoueth vs to put our whole indeuour, is the minding of the heauenly lyfe, and to conſider that God allureth vs dayly to come to the immortall glory which he hath prepared for vs, to the intent that when we be to depart out of this world, we may not goe vnto him againſt our wils, nor make complaintes, nor ſay after the maner of vnbeleeuers, What ſhal I doe, or what ſhall become of me? For (as S. Paule ſheweth vs,) 2.Tim.1.12 he that hath our gage in his handes, is faithfull. Our ſaluation is named a gage, ſo as God byndeth himſelfe lyke a man that receyueth money or ſome other thing that hee is put in truſt with to keepe. Nowe if a man haue taken a thing to keepe, it behooueth him to ſhewe his honeſtie and trueth. And thinke we that God will deceyue vs, hauing promyſed vs to be the keeper of ſaluation? Seeyng then that hee hath vouchſafed to take it into his handes, and to vndertake the ſafe cuſtodie thereof; let vs bee bold to truſt vnto him, and let vs goe yeelde our ſelues into his handes whenſoeuer hee ſhall call vs. Thus yee ſee howe wee bee to put this text in vre.

Yet muſt wee note further, that there is leſſe excuſe for vs noweadayes, than there was for Moſes, or for all the fathers that lyued vnder the Lawe. For had they the promyſes that are made vnto vs at this day in the Goſpell? They dyd but ſee them a farre off, and vnder verie darke ſhadowes. Or did they ſee Ieſus Chriſt rayſed from the dead? In deede they knewe it, howbeit but by hope, as whereby they comprehended in a figure the thinges that were abſent. But nowadayes, foraſmuch as wee haue the Goſpell, which openeth to vs the gates of heauen: GOD allureth vs to him as familiarly as can bee, wee bee alreadie entered into it in the perſon of our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt: in ſo much that his going vp on high, is to drawe vs thither to him. For in as much as he is our head; he will drawe vs vp to him into the glory whereinto hee himſelfe is entred alreadie, ſo wee bee not ſeparated from him. Let vs beware then that wee diſappoynt not that grace of GOD. But let vs bee ſo ſtabliſhed in the fayth, that whenſoeuer GOD ſhal call vs out of the world; wee may not ſticke to goe willingly vnto him, and to doe that which wee ſee heere in Moſes. When GOD tolde him that hee ſhoulde dye, hee ſtrayned not courteſie to goe vp into the Mountaine, although that place were appoynted vnto him, as it were to offer vp himſelfe in ſacrifice to GOD. Moreouer, his ſinne was layde afore him againe: and yet did not that diſcomfort him neither. And that is a poynt more which wee ought to marke well, for it importeth a verie good leſſon. See heere, Moſes is at deathes doore: it may ſeeme that at that tyme hee ought to haue had ſome comfort wherewith to aſſwage his ſorowe. And yet for all that, God renueth the rememberaunce of the fault which hee had committed: and hee telleth him againe, that hee muſt take in good woorth the puniſhment which hee had hearde ſpoken of afore. Wee ſee then that Gods threateninges whereby hee layeth our ſinnes before vs, ought not to trouble vs ſo much, but that wee ought to take occaſion and matter to reioyce in them; bycauſe wee knowe (as I haue ſayde alreadie,) that GOD doeth ſo temper his rigour, as that euen in his puniſhing of vs, hee ceaſſeth not to doe the office of a father ſtill, ſo as the principall (that is to ſay the ſaluation of our ſoules) is reſerued vnto vs, yea and the temporall chaſtiſementes are beneficiall to vs, as by the meanes whereof GOD cleanſeth vs, and maketh vs to taſte the better how greatly it is for our behoofe to haue his fauour. That then is a thing which wee haue to marke in the perſon of Moſes.

So then, if any man be blamed for his faultes, though it were when he is ſicke, yea or at the laſt gaſp when Gods iudgementes are ſet afore him to make him ſory and to lament: yet muſt he not thinke it ſtraunge. For as we ſee, there are many which haue neede to bee ſo touched, and to be as it were touched with a launcer, that they may bee brought to God with ſuch reuerence as is requiſite. And although ſuch corrections bee bitter at the firſt ſight; yet muſt not men fall into deſpaire, but alwayes haue recourſe to Gods goodnes, aſſuring themſelues that his blaming of them after that manner, is not an vtter condemning of them, but is done to the end that they ſhould be their owne Iudges, and that hee therewithall is minded to receiue them to mercy. Therefore let vs ſuffer our Lord to deale after that manner with vs, and whenſoeuer we haue any heartbiting, ſo as God toucheth vs inwardly with the rememberaunce of our ſinnes, or we ſee them in reading his word, or we heare them ſpoken of in ſermons, or wee be warned of them priuately: let vs learne that the ſetting of them before vs is not to make vs conceiue any hartburning, or to caſt vs in deſpayre, ſo as wee ſhoulde bee kept backe from God: but that wee ſhoulde therewithall imbrace his promiſes, and not feare to bee diſappointed of the thinges which hee hath behighted vs: for his proceeding after that manner, is to the ende wee ſhould ſet the more ſtore by his grace, and accept it the better, and bee prouoked to ſeeke it, and alſo receiue it with the earneſter deſire. To that ende are his threatninges and iudgements ſet afore vs. And after that manner ought wee Deu.32.47. to practiſe the text that was treated of yeſterday, and alſo that which remaineth yet ſtil thereof. For it was ſayd that the Lawe was the lyfe of all the people, and that it ſhould maintaine thẽ in the land which God had promiſed them, and whereinto he led them to put them in poſſeſſion thereof. And yet neuertheleſſe wee ſee that in the lawe are many hard and ſharpe threates: there bee the curſes, which ought to make the haires to ſtand vp ſtiffe vpon mens heades: and there bee ſo many preſidents wherein God bewrayeth and vttereth the iniquities of the people: that at the firſt it may ſeeme that they ſhould bee vtterly confounded, and that the law ſerued but to ſmite them with maine blowes like a beetle, and to daunt them and ſcarre them in ſuch wiſe, as they might not approch vnto God; but yet haue wee neede to bee ſo mortifyed. For let vs conſider well the pride of our nature, and the falſe ouerweening and vaine ſelfetruſt wherwith wee be puffed vp, and how ſtubborne wee be againſt God: and wee ſhall finde that if hee will doe vs good, he muſt bee faine to beate vs downe after that manner, and his worde muſt be as a twoo edged ſword, ſo as there be neither thought nor affection in vs which is not ſear- Heb.4.12. ched by it, and it muſt enter into ẏ very marow of the bones, as the Apoſtle treateth thereof in the Epiſtle to the Hebrewes. Therefore let vs not thinke it ſtraunge that God dooth here tell Moſes againe of his fault, notwithſtanding that it was forgiuen him. For although hee ought to be glad of it, becauſe God did it in ſuch wiſe as he was nothing hindred thereby to call vppon him quietly, and to caſt himſelfe as it were into his fatherly lap: yet was it good for him to think vppon the fault which he had committed. And why? To humble him, to the intent hee ſhould yeelde the more honor to the infinite goodnes of God, and ſay, Alas, I might iuſtly haue bin ſunken to the bottom of hell for one only deede that befel me in leſſe than the turning of a hand: though I was grieued at the manifold grudgings of the people, yet intended I not to haue offended my God, but it happened vnto me through ouerſight for want of thinking thereon. And now if this onely one fault was enough to caſt me into endleſſe curſednes; Alas what is due to my whole lyfe? I ſhoulde haue committed a thowſand thowſand offences, yea and I ſhould neuer haue ceaſed to augment Gods vengeance vppon me ſtill, if I had not bin reſtreined and helde backe. And yet muſt I nowe beare the puniſhmẽt of my fault, which in the ſight of the worlde ſeemeth very light; but God knoweth what maner a one it is, ſeeing that for it I muſt bee foreſtalled of the land of Canaan, and haue deſerued to be baniſhed, not onely from thence, but alſo frõ the heauenly lyfe. Thus ye ſee how it was good for Moſes to bee taught humilitie after that faſhiõ: And what is thẽ to be thought of vs?

Nowe moreouer our Lorde ſayth vnto him, *that he ſhould beholde the land*: and that was to ſhew him (as I haue ſayd already) that he is not ſo forfended of going thither, but ẏ God taketh him ſtil as one of the number & cõpany of his children. And his taking of poſſeſſiõ of the land by eyeſight, was alſo an admonition vnto him, that ẏ land was not the cheefe heritage whereunto the children of Abraham were to attaine. Here therefore wee haue a ſure record, that although the fathers which liued vnder the Lawe had not the heauenly lyfe ſo lightſomly & largely reuealed vnto them: yet did they grounde themſelues thereupon, laboring to attaine therunto, and were not wedded to this world as if that had bin the marke they amed at and that they had bin tyed to it to ſay; Well, God hath choſen and adopted vs to poſſeſſe a good and fatte land, to the intent wee ſhould bee foſtered therein. For if the people had but thought vppon that; what had become of Moſes who was the excellenteſt prophet that euer God rayſed vp vntill the comming of our Lord Ieſus Chriſt, as wee ſhall ſee in the laſt Chapter? That is the cauſe why Moſes beheld ẏ land and vewed it a- Deut.34.10. far off. And although hee neuer ate one graine of the corne thereof, nor taſted one drop of the wine: yet did it ſuffice him to ſee that God had not diſappointed his people. It is to bee concluded then, that Moſes had a further forelook, and ſtood not muſing vppon the tranſitorie inheritance, but conſidered full well that when wee be made the children of God, it is to the ende wee ſhoulde liue euerlaſtingly with him. Seeing then that Moſes had that; let vs vnderſtand that the fathers were not without cauſe called the children of God ; which thing they were not, vnleſſe they were heires with vs. And forſomuch as they tended to the heauenly lyfe, (which notwithſtanding was ſhewed to them but afar off;) let vs take the more courage to vs, ſeeing that God is come neerer vnto vs after a more familiar maner, euen in the perſon of our Lord Ieſus Chriſt. Therefore let all theſe things moue vs, that our faith may waken vs and withdrawe vs frō all the impedimentes of this world, ſo as we may keepe on our way to the euerlaſting reſt which cannot faile vs.

Now whereas it is ſayd vnto Moſes, *that hee ſhall bee gathered vp with his people*: hereby our Lord meant, that hee was of neceſſitie to paſſe the common way (as they ſay,) of all mankinde, and that his caſe ſhould be no better than of all the reſt of Adams children. Truely this woulde trouble vs, if there were no more than ſo. But I haue ſpoken already of yͤ ſpecial promiſe whereuppon Moſes was grounded. Neuertheleſſe, our Lord ſhewed him that foraſmuch as he was deſcended of Adams race; it behooued him needes to dye. And this accordeth ſtill with the matter which I ſpeake of euen now, namely that we ſhal neuer take ſufficient taſte of Gods goodnes and promiſes, vntil we be brought low in ourſelues, yͭ we may know our own needines, and what yͤ lyfe is which is promiſed vs, and which we obtein by Ieſus Chriſt. We think not vpon any of all theſe thinges, except we firſt know the death yͭ is purchaſed vnto vs by Adam, & that the ſame dwelleth in vs, and holdeth vs priſoners in his bands. If we knowe not that wee bee curſed of God by nature, and that we haue no other hope but rottenneſſe as touching our bodies; and that as touching our ſoules we be reiected of God, & feele that he is againſt vs, and that he is our Iudge, yͭ he will vtter forth all his maieſtie to our confuſion: Vntil ſuch time as we feele all theſe things, it is certeine that we will neuer ſeeke the remedie that is offered vs in our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt, nor receiue him with ſuch reuerence as to become lyke poore hungry ſoules. So then we ſee how we haue neede of this warning, *that we muſt be gathered vp.* With whom? With thoſe which haue gone before vs. And without that, what comfort ſhall wee haue? Leſſe than the brute beaſtes haue. For if we thinke vpon nothing but death; we goe all into rottonnes; our bodies be in no better plight than the bodies of Aſſes and Dogges. And againe as touching our ſoules, we muſt needes bee ſeparated and cut off from God, and feele him to be againſt vs. That then is our ſtate.

And therfore whenſoeuer we heare any ſpeaking of death; let vs by and by bethinke vs of Adams ſin, of the corruption of our nature, and of all the vices that dwell in vs; which ſerue all to cut vs off as rotten members from Gods houſe and kingdome. When wee haue bethought vs thereof, and that we be ſo diſmayed as we know not where to become, for the terror that ſhall haue caught holde of vs: let vs repaire to Ieſus Chriſt, and ſith we knowe that hee is the reſurrection and the lyfe; let vs take courage to offer our ſelues vnto death, and let it not greeue vs to be done away, ſeeing wee haue promiſe that we ſhall be reſtored againe. And ſo, when wee haue bethought vs of all the nations of yͤ world, and of all Adams ofspring: let vs come to the people whom God hath ſanctifyed and choſen to be his heritage. Seeing then that we ſhall be gathered vppe with the righteous, ſurely it is a good gathering, and therein lyeth all our reſt & cōtentation, ſo as death ſhal be ſweete vnto vs. And although wee muſt of neceſſitie paſſe that way, with all other creatures: yet dooth God take vs and keepe vs as his choſen children, and to be ioyned to our Lord Ieſus Chriſt, who is named the firſt borne from among the dead. And to the intent we ſhould bee the firſt fruites of the reſurrection and of the quicke, hee hath gathered vs to himſelfe, and matched vs with yͤ holy Patriarkes, Prophets, and Apoſtles. That (ſay I) is the thing which ſweeteneth all the ſorrowes that we can conceiue.

Now in the end it is ſayd yet again vnto Moſes, *That he ſanctifyed not Gods name among the children of Iſrael, and therefore hee ſhould ſee the Land, euen the Land which God had giuen to his people.* Here we haue to marke, that it is not enough for vs to abſteine from doing euill: but that we muſt alſo ſanctifie Gods name, when we ſee men miſuſe it through their leawdneſſe. And in very deede, the chiefe thing that God requireth, is that his Matt.6.9. name ſhould be ſanctifyed: for it is the firſt petition which we make. And by that order, our Lord Ieſus Chriſt ſheweth vs full well, that wee muſt begin at that point; as for example when he ſaith, Firſt ſeeke yee the kingdome of God, what dooth that ſignify? Matt.6.33. That we ſhould ſeeke to exalt God, that all the world ſhoulde obey him, and that his maieſtie ſhould be knowen, to the end that all prayſe of wiſedome, righteouſneſſe, goodnes, and power might bee attributed vnto him. That is the thing whereunto euery of vs ought to put his indeuour. True it is yͭ we ought in deede to ſanctifie the name of God, that is to ſay, to dedicate our ſelues euery man for himſelf to his ſeruice, ſo as his glory may ſhine forth in vs: but yet is not that enough. For wee ſhall ſee men vnhallowe the name of God, ſome by blaſpheming him, and ſome by ruſhing out into all vices and enormities. Now therefore whē we ſee ſuch thinges, our zeale ought to be kindled to withſtand them to the vttermoſt of our power, & to ſhewe that we deſire nothing more, than that God ſhould bee honored, and abide vnappayred, ſo as men ſhould not abridge him of any thing. When wee haue this zeale, then ſhall we ſanctify Gods name, not onely in our owne ſoules and bodies, but alſo euen among thoſe which doe ſo vnhallowe and defile it. And for that cauſe are we commaunded to be as burning Creſſets in the mideſt of a froward & crooked generation. Phil.2.15. When wee dwell among the vnbeleeuers and enemies of Gods word, or among ſuch as deſpiſe it and make no account of it: then in ſtead of our accuſtomed ſeeking of vaine excuſes, with, I would faine ſerue God, but there are ſo many corruptions, that I muſt needes howle among woolues as they ſay: then (ſay I) is the time for vs to ſtreyne our ſelues ſo much the more, and to enforce our ſelues to ſanctifie ẏ name of God. And where? Euen in ẏ midſt of thoſe among whom we be conuerſant. That is ẏ thing which is ſhewed vs in this place.

True it is that Moſes was moſt bound thereto, becauſe God had choſen him aboue the reſt. Yet neuertheleſſe it behoued euery other man alſo to ſtreine himſelfe thereunto. And let vs vnderſtand, that ſeeing hee taketh vs for his children, wee ought at the leaſt to maintaine his honor as much as wee would doe the honor of our earthly fathers. And for that cauſe it is ſayd, *that he and Aaron had tranſgreſſed.* Wherby we ſee, that men may well acquit themſelues, and beſprinkle themſelues with holywater as they ſay, but yet muſt they paſſe by the ſentẽce which God hath pronounced; for only he is the competent Iudge. Although then ẏ Moſes was not ware that he had offended, and although alſo ẏ wee cannot diſcouer his offence: yet doeth our Lord ſay ẏ he had offended, ſo as it was not ynough for him not to haue done any euill deede, nor to haue abſteined from murmuring, nor alſo to haue withheld his conſent from the murmurings of the people: but he was a tranſgreſſor in that he was too cowardly & had not ẏ foreſayd inuincible courage that I ſpake of, to ſet himſelfe againſt the miſchiefe, and to ſtoppe it as he ought to haue done.

Nowe for a concluſion we haue yet to marke this ſaying which is added: *Thou ſhalt not goe in thither, but thou ſhalt ſee it, euen the land which I giue to the children of Iſraell to poſſeſſe.* For here Moſes had occaſion to bee further out of patience, whẽ our Lord exempted him alone, ſaying, All ẏ reſt of this people ſhall inioy ẏ land, but thou ſhalt be ſet beſide it. If we be driuen to indure any cõmon aduerſitie, we make ẏ lighter of it. But if a man be cut off alone, & ſee that God leueleth at none but him; ẏ is much harder and heauier. And at the ſame point was Moſes. But it was Gods will to trye his obedience and ſubiection. Alſo hee meant to ſet vs a faire lookingglaſſe before our eyes, to the intent we ſhould not be prouoked to rebel, though hee deale more roughly with vs than with our fellowes and neighbors. For we be wont alwayes to alledge; How now? Haue I offended more than others? I ſee God dealeth full roughly with me: and yet there are others which are no better than I: and what fault findeth he in me? Such complaintes ſhall a man oftentimes heare. But it is not for vs to looke how God handleth others. Let vs content our ſelues that he knoweth what is meete for vs; and let euery of vs beare his owne burden patiently, and not fall to vſing of ſuch replyes: for we ſhall win nothing thereby. Thus ye ſee what is ſet downe here in the perſon of Moſes, in that he was faine to bee baniſhed out of ẏ land, when all the children of Iſraell and all the reſt of the people went in; among whom neuertheleſſe there were many deſpiſers of God, and many hypocrites, to bee ſhort, they were as a clowte patched together of many peeces. Yet notwithſtanding, as in reſpect of poſſeſſing the land, they were to be preferred before Moſes. And therefore let vs vnderſtand, that when God hath once made vs to enter into the way of ſaluation, it is not enough for vs except wee attaine vnto it, and that for the bringing thereof to paſſe, we hold out to the end.

I haue told you heretofore, that the land of Canaan was as a common Pawne which GOD gaue to all the children of Iſraell, of his calling of them to the inheritance of the heauẽly kingdome, namely to as many as entered into the land, that is to ſay, to thoſe which were newe ſprong vp in ẏ wilderneſſe. For as for thoſe which came out of Egypt, none of them all but onely two, did enter into ẏ land of Canaan. Num.14.29 30. But thoſe which were then little children, as it were about a foure or fiue yeeres old, all thoſe entered in. Neuertheleſſe there were many of them which ſerued not God faithfully, but played the naughtipackes and backſlyders. Whereby we be done to vnderſtand, that ſeeing God hath once reached vs his hand, it behooueth vs to liue in ſuch ſorte, as we quaile not ne turne not our backes vppon him, but continue ſtill in his obedience, ſo as faith may euermore reigne in vs, to withdrawe vs from the luſtes and cares of this world. And although we haue not the land of Canaan at this day for a viſible ſigne: let vs reſort to our Lord Ieſus Chriſt, who is much more woorth without all compariſon, than the outward inheritance which was giuen to the people of olde time. And ſeeing we be entered into the trace of Ieſus Chriſt, that is to ſay, be put as it were into his body, and he accounteth vs as of his flocke, and is become our ſhepheard: let vs looke that we behaue our ſelues towardes him as ſheepe, hearkening to his voyce, and following him whitherſoeuer he calleth vs. And in ẏ meane while let vs pray this good God, to holde vs ſo vnited to him in the perſon of his onely Sonne, as wee may continually hold out to the end in all holyneſſe and all goodnes, and that at the laſt wee may be gathered vp by him,] not as children of Adam in the generall curſe, but [as children of Abraham] in the promiſe of ſaluation which was made to vs in our Lord Ieſus Chriſt.

Now let vs fall downe before the maieſtie of our good God, praying him to make vs feele our faultes and offences more and more, and that for the more miſlyking of them, wee may exerciſe our ſelues continually in calling them to our remembrance, and in mourning for them, ſo as hee may haue pitie vpon vs, and not onely forgiue vs all our ſinnes, whereby wee haue offended him, but alſo rid vs cleane of them, and redreſſe vs in ſuch wiſe by his holy ſpirite, as our whole ſeeking may be to dedicate ourſelues vnto him, and that his name may be ſo ſanctified among vs, as that in the end wee may come to his glorie as he hath prepared it for all ſuch as doe here yeeld and ſubmit themſelues to his yoke. That it may pleaſe him to graunt this grace not onely to vs, but alſo to all people and Nations of the earth, &c.

On Saturday the xx. of Iune, 1556.

The CXCI. Sermon which is the firſt vpon the three & thirtith Chapter.

HEere followeth the bleſſing wherewith Moſes the man of God bleſſed the children of Iſrael before his death, and ſayde:

2 The Lorde came from Sinai, and roſe vp from Seir vnto them. He appeared brightly on mount Pharan, and came with ten thouſands of Saincts, hauing at his right hand the Lawe giuen in fire for them.

3 Yet loueth he the people, and all the Sainctes are in thy hands, and they bow downe to thy feete to receiue of thy wordes.

WEe knowe that Gods word is ordaind chiefly to this vſe, that we ſhoulde be aſſured of ye good wil & loue which he beareth vs. For wt out that alſo there is no hope of ſaluation, wee be vndone, and to be ſhorte, there is no religion. For how ſhall we feare God, vnleſſe wee knowe that all our welfare lies in him, and that we dare ſeeke him with a right faith? But that is vnpoſſible, vnleſſe he call vs vnto him, and that wee haue aſſurance that if wee come vnto him we ſhall be receiued. That is the cauſe why God in all ages ordeined, that thoſe which are the teachers of the people, ſhould bleſſe them in his name, that is to ſay, aſſure them that God receiued them and was mercifull to them. For ſo dooth ye worde *Bleſſing* import. True it is that wee bleſſe one another by prayer. And when it is ſayd of a priuate perſon, that he bleſſeth his neighbor; it betokeneth that he wiſheth him all good. But there is a ſpeciall kinde of prerogatiue in thoſe whom God hath appointed as in his owne perſon to beare abroad his worde and to preach it. For they in bleſſing are as witneſſes of God and agentes in his behalfe. And in very deede (as we haue ſeene heretofore) as oft as Gods word is preached, it is a ſolemne act whereby he coueanteth with vs. and lyke as he will haue vs to profeſſe our ſelues to be his children, and to giue our ſelues to his ſeruice; ſo dooth hee bind himſelfe to be our father and ſauiour. That is the cauſe why we haue now here ye bleſſinges of Moſes, which he made before his death. And it is lykely that this was thẽ done when he was ready to yeelde vp his ſpirit vnto God. For he had bin commaunded afore to go vp into the mountaine, where he had nothing elſe to doe but to go ſeeke his graue, which notwithſtanding remained vnknowen, as we ſhall ſee hereafter. Deut. 34. 6. At ſuch time as he was to take his leaue of the people, he pronounced theſe bleſſinges here preſent. By what authoritie? As one appointed to yeelde record of Gods good wil. Alſo he ratified that which had bin done before by Iacob, to whome God had giuen the lyke charge & commiſſion. For wee reade of the bleſſinges which Iacob made ouer his children, Gene. 49. how they were not as a houſhold prayer when a father making his laſt will beſeecheth God to bee mercifull to his fatherles children; Iacob went not that way to worke; but being a Patriarke, and knowing whereto God had called him, hee vttered what was to come, accordingly alſo as we ſee how hee ſpeaketh by the ſpirit of Propheſie. And in good ſooth, yee ſee he was a poore man, ſuch a one as was conſtreyned by famine to goe into Egypt; he poſſeſſed not a foot of land in ye whole world, and yet hee aſſigned inheritaunces to his children. Thou ſhalt haue ſuch a portion by the ſea-coaſt; Gen. 49. 1 13, 20. Thou ſhalt haue the paſture grounds; Thou ſhalt be a delicate ſoyle for kinges; ſo as ye bread which ſhall be made there, and ye ſweete fruits of thee ſhal bee their ſtrength; thou ſhalt haue ye royall ſcepter; thou ſhalt be aduanced, & thou ſhalt reigne among thine enemies; As for thee, thou ſhalt be ſcattered, but yet ſhalt thou haue eaſe of body, although thou be faine to remoue here and there. Seeing then that he tooke order after that maner for the land of Canaan, that although he was driuen thence by famine, yet he alotted it out by portions to his children: ſpake he as a mortall man? Let vs knowe then that God gouerned him by his holy ſpirit, and there came not that worde out of his mouth, which was not as a heauenly oracle. Now hereby the people were edifyed, ſo as they knew that God had choſen them with condition that they ſhould enter into the inheritance which he had promiſed them. When the children of Iſraell were in Egypt after the deceaſe of their father, they were by this meanes certifyed yt God had not forgotten his promiſe, but that hee woulde performe it when the time came. They were fed with ye hope; and to hold them thereunto, God had giuen thẽ occaſion enough, if their own vnthãkfulnes had not letted thẽ. This being done, after that they had bin deliuered out of the land of Egypt, and were to inioy the Land which had bin aſſigned them long afore: God made Moſes to ſpeake, and draue him to vtter that which he had determined to doe as touching the childrẽ of Iſraell. And in verie deede, wee ſee that the things which had bin ſpoken afore by Iacob, are partly rehearſed here againe for the larger confirmation of them. And againe, the things which were not reuealed at that time, are ſet downe here; ſo as the people of Iſraell might here beholde their owne ſtate to come, whereby they were taught that God had a ſpeciall care of thẽ. For ſeeing hee declared, firſt by the mouth of Iacob, and ſecondly by the mouth of Moſes, all that hee meant to doe to the people of Iſraell: did hee not ſhewe that hee was neere them, and that hee tooke them to bee as of his flocke, and that hee preferred them before the reſt of the whole worlde? For it was not with them as with thoſe which are ſtraungers to God. Although hee held and accounted thoſe for his creatures; yet did hee not take them for his Children, to gouerne them and to direct all their ſteppes; ſo as nothing ſhoulde befal them but they might know howe it was God that wrought it, who did alſo tell them of it aforehande. Therefore let vs wel remẽber what is conteyned here, as things that proceeded not from a mortall creature, but from God, who witneſſed that he was the father and defendour of his church.

Nowe this concerneth vs. For although wee haue not the like propheſies; yet hath God declared vnto vs, that we be euer vnder his charge, and that he watcheth for our welfare. And wee for our part haue no neede to bee trayned on in knowledge by ſuch meanes, becauſe God hath brought vs alreadie to an other manner of perfection. Therefore let vs holde vs contented with the comming of our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt, in whoſe perſon the thing is performed which was hoped for vnder the lawe. And therewithall let vs bee fullie reſolued that GOD guideth our ſteppes, and that euen in the middeſt of all the diſorders and troubles which are ſeene in the worlde, his Church is ſtill deare and pretious vnto him. And in good ſooth wee ſee that before Dan. cap. 7. & 8. Ieſus Chriſt came into the worlde, Daniell diſcouered all the chaunges which ſhoulde bee made, becauſe it might elſe haue ſeemed, that God had gone from his couenaunt a hundred times within the ſpace of foure hundred yeares, and that all ſhoulde haue goone in ſuch wiſe to wrecke, as if God had forſaken that people, and been minded to haue no more to do with them. It was requiſite therfore that theſe things ſhould bee foretolde, that the faithfull might knowe that although they were ſhaken and toſſed to and fro; yet were they ſtill in the hande of God; and that when they ſawe the kingdomes chaunged rounde about them, and the worlde ſo turned vpſide downe as a man coulde not diſcerne anie thing in it; yet they ſhoulde alwayes be aſſured of that which God had promiſed them, namely of his ſending of his ſonne to redeeme them, and ÿ they ſhould by that meanes bee reſtored, euen after ÿ vtter deſolation of al things among them. Thus ſee wee now the vſe of this Song.

Now whereas it is ſaide *That it was Moſes the man of God that bleſſed the children of Iſraell*: that title was giuen to Moſes as in reſpect that hee was the inſtrument of the holie Ghoſt. Then ſpeake hee not of his owne motion, there is not anie thing ſpoken here after the fleſhe, but as proceeding from a man of God. And hereby wee be the better taught, to imbrace the record that is giuen vs here, as if God proteſted with his owne mouth that hee had a care of his people, and that he would euermore continue his goodneſſe and gratious fauour towardes them. For in deed there was a bleſſing made by the Prieſts in the time of the lawe, according to this ſaying, Bleſſe yee, you that bee of the houſe of the Lorde. And it is the ſame thing which is written in the ſixth Chapter of the booke of Psal. 118. 26. Numbers [where it is ſaide] that they Numb. 6. 23. which doe ſacrifice to GOD, ſhall bleſſe the people in his name. And truely, where the Prieſtes and the tribe of Leuie are ſpoken of, this alſo is added, *To whom the Lorde hath giuen* Leuit. 9. 22. *the charge of Bleſſing the people.* And this thing is not aboliſhed at this day. For our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt had in his perſon the thinges that were figured in olde time vnder the Lawe. Let vs knowe then that noweadayes there is one euerlaſting bleſſing of God, which is much better witneſſed vnto vs, than all the bleſſinges that were ſo often repeated vnder the law; inſomuch that as nowe God telleth vs by his onely ſonne that hee taketh vs into his fauour, and that wee bee as his children, and that the preaching of the Goſpell ſerueth vs to that ende, and wee muſt applie it to that vſe. So then, whenſoeuer wee come to heare the worde of God, let vs call to minde howe our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt at his going vp into heauen, did lift vp his handes ouer his diſciples and bleſſe them as is reported by Saint Luke. And that was done to make vs knowe what his office is, and to doe vs to vnderſtande Luk. 24. 50. that at this day when the Goſpell is preached in his name, it is all one as if hee ſhoulde ſay, Beholde, my father accepteth you, you be in his fauour. Nowe then, ſeeing we haue this, ought it not to make vs to loue the Goſpel, conſidering that therein wee bee bleſſed by the mouth of our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt, as in whoſe name and by whoſe authoritie that doctrine is treated of? Let vs vnderſtande therefore, that if it behoued the fathers vnder the Lawe to bee contented with the bleſſing that was giuen them by Moſes, by the Prieſtes, and by Iacob: if wee nowadayes bee faithleſſe, and admit not the recorde with full certeintie which is giuen vs in the Goſpell; wee bee worſe than vnexcuſable, becauſe wee deface the trueth of Gods ſonne, and (as much as in vs lyeth) accuſe him of lying, as though hee were not a ſure and infallible witneſſe of the will of GOD his father. And when wee compare Moſes who is called a man of God, with our Lord Ieſus Chriſt who hath ÿ whole ſoueraigntie of Gods houſe, as the Apoſtle ſaith: Hebr. 3. 2. wee may bee yet the better aſſured that he hath bleſſed vs at this day, and that hee vttereth vnto vs the loue of God his father; and therfore let our faith be ſo much the better certified, ſeeing it behoued this title of Moſes to content the people of olde time.

Nowe it is added, *That he did it a little before his death.* The worde which he vſeth, is as much to ſay, as hee did it *before his death.* So then, by theſe wordes, *Before his death*, is not meant a yeare or two, no nor yet a moneth, but at his death time, euen when hee was to die. And theſe bleſſinges are therefore of ſo much the more authoritie. For wee knowe that when a man makes his laſt will, it ſhall bee better receyued than the things which he ſpake during his life. Although then ẏ Moſes ſerued God as a Prophet and teacher all his life long, and had diſcharged his duetie faithfully: yet neuertheleſſe his minde was to vtter theſe bleſſinges at the time of his death, to the ende they ſhould be the better receiued, and men conſider thus: Beholde Moſes being readie to departe out of the world, hath told vs of the things that are to come: hee hath not doone it at aladuenture nor vnaduiſedly; but hee hath fully and wholy performed that which was inioyned him. To the intent therefore that the people ſhoulde receyue thoſe bleſſinges the better; this circumſtance is expreſſely added, *That he did it at the houre of his death.* But we at this day haue a farre better and more excellent confirmation, in that we be bleſſed by the mouth of our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt. For he hath not onely doone it at his death, but alſo hath ſealed Gods fatherly loue and adoption towards vs, I ſay ſealed them with his precious bloude, and alſo with his riſing againe from the dead. Seeing then that our Lord Ieſus Chriſt hath bleſſed his diſciples, to the end we ſhould know that his office is to do the ſame to vs, and that his Church ſhall be bleſſed by his power euen to the worlds end, and that he hath done it by ratifying it with his owne death and paſſion, and by his riſing againe to get vs victorie againſt the diuell, to the intent that all the curſedneſſe which we take as it were by inheritance by reaſon of our father Adam, ſhoulde be aboliſhed: ſeeing that our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt hath ſo ratified all thinges: let vs learne to magnifie the fatherlie goodnes of our God ſo much the more: and ſeeing he hath told vs that we ſhal be bleſſed, let vs be the better aſſured thereof by all theſe circumſtances.

And becauſe it behooued the people of olde time to knowe that Moſes ſpake not in his owne perſon but by the authoritie of God: he addeth, *God came from Synai, his comming foorth was from Seir, hee ſhewed himſelfe vpon Mount Pharan.* Here Moſes ſetteth Gods preſence before the eyes of the people, after the ſame maner that it had bin knowen vpon Mount Sinay, at the time of the publiſhing of the law. For he ſpeaketh not of the Wonders which had beene wrought in Egypt, neither ſpeaketh he of ẏ Miracles that had bin wrought by the ſpace of fortie yeares in the wildernes: but his meaning is to bring them backe againe to the Law, to make them ſtay and reſt there. For ſurely when the doctrine thereof ſlippeth from vs, all Gods miracles will doe vs no good. We may well muſe vpon him; but all ſhall be but confuſed imagination, ſo as euerie of vs ſhal turne away to ſuperſtition and Idolatrie. To be ſhort, it will be vnpoſſible to be truely vnited vnto God, and to ſticke vnto him ſtedfaſtlie, otherwiſe, than by the bonde of his worde, ſo as wee be reſtreyned by his teaching of vs, & that we hearken to his talke. And why? For we be ful of lying: and therefore it behoueth vs to receiue the trueth of him. That is the cauſe why Moſes ſaith nowe, *That God came from Sinay, that he ſhewed himſelfe vpon Mount Pharan, and that for his people, he came forth from Mount Seir.* For mount Pharan and mount Seir were neere to mount Sinay. Therefore hee meaneth one and the ſelfe ſame thing: but yet it ſerueth to imprint ẏ woonderfull comming foorth, the better in the remembrance of the people, & to make them to thinke continualy after what maner God appeared vnto them, and ſhewed them his maieſtie viſible. Not that they ſawe him in his being, for that is vnpoſſible: but that they ſawe the ſignes and tokens whereby they knewe howe it was God that cauſed the lawe to bee ſet forth by Moſes. And indeed we cannot ſee God as he is, but he ſheweth himſelfe to vs according to our abilitie and groſſeneſſe. Yet notwithſtanding, the people of Iſraell did eaſily perceiue at that time, that God was there, and that it was his will to haue the power of his glorie knowen. And truelie we ſee howe the Prophets made their benefite of this text of Moſes. For when they ſawe the people variable and ſtarting too and fro, ſo as they were not ſufficiently ſetled in the true religion: they did euer put them in minde of thoſe ſignes and wonders which were wrought at the publiſhing of the lawe. And the Prophet Abacucke doeth in his ſong expreſſely borrowe theſe wordes of Abac.3.3. Moſes. For he ſaith that God came from mount Theman, and appeared vppon mount Pharan. No doubt but hee had reſpect to that which Moſes ſaith here, as though he ſhoulde haue ſpoken thus to the people which were then ſcattered aſunder. Yee wretched people, why holde you not yourſelues vnder the protectiõ of your God ſeeing he hath once called you, and ſhewed him ſelfe to bee your heade, and woulde haue you to bee his bodie? Ye haue ſeene him vppon mount Pharan, that is to ſay, vpon mount Sinay. There his glorie ſhone forth in ſuch wiſe, as yee could not but know that he hath authoriſed the lawe, and made a couenaunt with you to knit you vnto himſelfe. And why then ſhoulde yee now ſtart away, and become as members rent a ſunder?

Nowe ſeeing that the Prophetes vſed this doctrine after that maner; it ought well to ſerue to teach vs likewiſe nowadayes. Therefore whereas it is ſaid that God came from mount Sinay; let vs vnderſtand that ſeeing he hath approued and authoriſed his law by the viſible ſignes and miracles which were ſeene at ẏ time: we at this day ought to receiue the law with like reuerence as if god were before our eyes: & whenſoeuer his word is preached vnto vs, it is all one as if he opened his hart, & ſhewed vs his wil,& that there were mutuall and (as they terme it)interchaungeable communication betwixt vs. The end(ſay I)whereunto Gods word ſhould ſerue vs, is that he might common with vs and we with him,yea and that ſo familiarlie, as if hee came downe to vs becauſe we cannot mount vp to him,ſo as hee is faine to ſhewe that his comming foorth is for our ſakes. True it is that we ſhall not ſee the aire on fire,wee ſhall not ſee the fire burning on the mountaine,we ſhal not heare the thunder roaring nor the trumpets ringing in the aire: but it muſt ſuffice vs that thoſe things were once done to the intent that the lawe ſhoulde haue his authoritie euen to the worldes ende, and that all the miracles which were ſeene at that time, ſhoulde be ingraued in the lawe of God. Againe, it ought to ſuffice vs that God moued both heauen and earth at the publiſhing of the Goſpell: inſomuch that as then his power was yet better vttered; and moreouer his maieſtie hath beene ſeene in the perſon of our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt, whereby hee was prooued to bee the onely ſon of God. Seeing that all theſe things are knowen vnto vs; let not our vnbeleefe keepe vs from receiuing his worde with feare and lowlineſſe at this day,which is ſo well warrãted vnto vs. Thus yee ſee what we haue to gather vppon this text, where it is ſaid that God ſhewed himſelfe from Mount Seir. And truely after the warninges of Moſes did once beare ſway; the children of Iſrael did not then any more ſee the mountaines of Seir, Theman, and Sinay; neither was it lawfull for them to returne into the wildernes; but the remẽbrance of thoſe things ought to ſerue their turne for euer. And ſothly, it was not enough for thoſe which had ſeene thoſe thinges, to bee able to ſpeake of them: but it behooued the fathers to teach their children, that they alſo might vnderſtand that GOD had appeared vnto them, and that by that meanes the law might alwayes bee ratified. Sith it is ſo, let vs vnderſtande that wee alſo at this day ought to occupie our ſelues in the minding of the ſame things.

Nowe it is ſayde expreſſely, *That Gods comming foorth is for the People.* This ſerueth to expreſſe the mutuall communion whereof I haue ſpoken. For it is not enough for God to ſhewe himſelfe or to come foorth: but his comming foorth muſt bee for vs; that is to ſay, to make vs to knowe that hee calleth vs vnto him, and that it is his will to bee knit vnto vs in mutual bonde. And that ought well to touch vs yet further. For the worde which is giuen vnto vs, ſerueth not onely to make vs vnderſtande that there is a GOD in heauen, and that hee hath the ſouereintie ouer all his creatures: but alſo is a pledge that hee will dwell with vs. And foraſmuch as God is inuiſible, ſo as wee comprehende not any thing of him, becauſe it is too high and hidden a thing: when wee haue his worde, wee may beholde him there as in his liuelie image, and ſee him as hee ſheweth himſelfe. And therefore let vs learne; that when our Lorde ſendeth vs his word, he not onely intendeth to aduaunce his maieſtie, but alſo doeth verily renewe his couenaunt to the intent that wee alſo on our ſide might approche vnto him. And thereby wee bee doone to vnderſtande that if wee endeuour to profite in Gods woorde, wee will come vnto it with a right meaning and pure minde, ſo that when God ſheweth himſelfe, we muſt not be afraide as the Papiſtes are, which thinke it to bee too darke a thing. Such doubtes muſt not keepe vs from profiting in the ſchoole of our God, aſſuring our ſelues yͭ he for his part will not fayle vs, but that he wil make vs to perceiue yͭ he ſpeaketh not in vaine, but in ſuch wiſe as we may know yͭ hee is neere vs, and that his countenance ſhall ſhine vpon vs. It is ſaide, *That he appeared with ten thouſand of ſainctes.*

Some haue taken this for the children of Iſraell as that God came thither with them. And they call them Saintes, becauſe God had ſhouled them out to himſelfe, notwithſtanding that the greater number of them was wicked and vnholie. But there is no reaſon in that, that ſo great a multitude as ſeuen hundred thouſande men or there aboutes, ſhould be termed ten thouſande. No doubt therefore but Moſes ſpeaketh here of Angels. And truely when the holy ſcripture intendeth to ſet Gods maieſtie before our eyes; it doth always ad yͭ he is garded with his heauenly hoſtes, and yͭ he hath his angels with him, which are thouſandes of thouſandes. For wee muſt not ſtand altogether vpon the certaine number, becauſe yͤ ſcripture ſpeaketh ſparely of the thinges that are inuiſible. And ſo a number certaine ſhal be put for an infinite number, as if it had bin ſaid yͭ God appeared euen with his heauenly Angels which ſerued to teſtifie his glory yͤ better. True it is yͭ if the maieſtie of God bee ſet ſingle before vs, it ought wel to ſuffice vs: and in good ſooth, can the creatures ad any thing vnto it? No ſurely: but yͭ is ſpoken for our infirmities ſake. For when God ſaith, Here am I; it toucheth vs not yet ſufficiently, and therefore it behoueth him to ſet himſelfe foorth as in his ſouereintie, & to ſhewe by his angels yͭ he hath a dreadful dominion, & that he hath his vertues & powers ſhed foorth eueriwhere. For we know yͭ his Angels are created to execute whatſoeuer he hath ordeined; ſo yͭ they be as his hands, whereby he worketh and performeth whatſoeuer he liſteth. To yͤ end then doth Moſes expreſſely ſay, yͭ God appeared here, *euen with a ten thouſand of Saincts.* And wee ſee alſo how the law was giuen by yͤ hands of Angels, as S. Stephen declareth in yͤ ſeuenth of the Acts. Likewiſe when S. Paul in yͤ Epiſtle to the Galathians, intendeth to ſhew yͭ God appeared to authoriſe his law the better; he ſetteth downe that the Angels were witneſſes therunto. Were there then ten thouſand witneſſes preſent at the publiſhing of the law? What a thing is it then, if mẽ beleeue it not, ne receiue it not without gainſaying? If a bargaine bee paſſed before three witneſſes, and ſigned by a Notarie: it is of authoritie, and there is no pleading againſt it. And how was the lawe giuen? God appeared thereat in his maieſtie, yea and Ieſus Chriſt who was the heade of the Angels, was he that gaue yͤ law,

Numb.1.46

Pſal.103.20

Act.7.38.

Gal.3.19.

Gal.3.19.

as Saint Paul ſheweth in the place which I alledged euen nowe. Looke me vppon Moſes on the other ſide. Hee was glorified after ſuch a ſort, as hee ſeemed not to be anie more of the number of men. God made his face to ſhine as if there Exo.34.30. had beene Sunnebeames thereon, ſo that hee was well ſeene to be a man ſent of God. Againe it ſkilled not for two or three witneſſes: for there were tenne thouſande Angels, there was an infinite number, there were Gods armies to mayntaine the authoritie of the Lawe. And what account is to bee made of men which are but dung, when they will needes deface it, and come to quarell againſt it? Howe ſhall they be conuicted? So then, let vs make all thinges auaylable to the confirmation of our faith, and let vs aſſure our ſelues that in receyuing the doctrine which is conteyned in the law of God, we ſhall agree with all the Angels of heauen, and they will aunſwere Amen to our faith, and bee faithfull witneſſes before God, that we haue not beleeued at aladuenture, but that wee haue bin wel grounded. Thus ye ſee to what purpoſe this text ought to ſerue vs. And ſo we ſee ẏ Moſes had here good cauſe, to make mention of the infinite multitude of Angels, which were witneſſes vnto God at ſuch time as hee ſhewed himſelfe to be the author of the Law.

Now it is added afterwarde, *That the Lawe of fire,* (or the fire of the lawe) *was in his right hand.* Wee ſee here againe the thing which I haue declared already; namely that al ẏ euer Moſes hath ſpoken concerning the maieſtie of God, is done to the ende that the Lawe ſhoulde not bee receyued as a doctrine deuiſed by Moſes; but that wee ſhoulde conſider that God auoweth it, and that hee hath ſhewed that it proceeded from him. And Moſes doeth purpoſely terme it a law *of fire*, becauſe the aire was then all on a flame. The burning of the fire then, was as a marke wherewith God ſealed his lawe, as though hee had rauiſhed the people, and ſhewed them that they were not anie more as vppon the earth beneath; but that they were lifted vp aboue the corruptible thinges of the worlde. Therefore let vs beare well in minde, that the Lawe is termed Fire, becauſe that by that meanes GOD made the preſence of his maieſtie the better knowen. And herewithall let vs alſo marke wel what is ſaide concerning the nature of the lawe and of the whole worde of God: howe it is a conſuming fire. For it muſt needes bee aunſwerable to the nature of him from whom it commeth. When the Apoſtle in the Epiſtle to the Heb.4.12.13 Hebrewes ſheweth vs what the nature of Gods worde is, after hee hath declared that it ranſaketh mens heartes, that it ſifteth their thoughts and affections, and that it tryeth men to the quick: he ſaith ẏ there is nothing hidden therefro. And why? For it is Gods will that it ſhoulde haue as it were his office. Seeing then that our Deut.4.24. Lorde is tearmed a conſuming fire; let vs note that his worde alſo muſt needes be as fire. And that was ſhewed by a viſible token, when it was Exod.19.18 giuen foorth vppon Mount Sinay: and it behoueth vs alſo to be prepared and readie to receiue the ſame. Moreouer wee muſt ſuffer GOD to purge vs and cleanſe vs by the fire of his worde; and if we will not ſuffer our ſelues to be ſo purged; ſurely God will worke after an other faſhion towardes vs, according to this ſaying of his by his Prophete Eſay, Is not my worde as a conſuming fire, and this people as ſtubble? Let vs Eſa.5.24. mark wel then, that ſeeing Gods word is called a conſuming fire; if we bee as ſtubble or chaffe, wee ſhall incontinently bee conſumed thereby. And therefore let vs pray God that wee may be as golde and ſiluer, that we may abide the fining, and be put to the vſe of his owne ſeruice. Howeſoeuer we fare, let vs alwayes marke that the Lawe is not a deade letter, otherwiſe than that men do quench it through their vnthankfulneſſe: and yet for all that, it is not named a lawe of fire without cauſe. For it ſerueth to ſhew that if wee receiue it not with ſuch reuerence & authoritie as is due vnto it; it ſhall not fayle to doe the office of fire towardes vs, to conſume vs. And therefore let vs learne to bowe in ſuch wiſe vnder the worde of God, and to yeelde ſuch ſubiection vnto it, as wee may without anie replying, receiue whatſoeuer is conteyned in it, and not open our mouthes but to ſay Amen, and to giue our conſent to all that euer our Lorde appointeth.

Nowe Moſes addeth immediately; *That GOD loueth the people, and that the Saintes are in his hand.* True it is that heere is ſome chaunge. For, worde for worde it is ſayde, *Yet notwithſtanding God loueth the People,* Or, *The true God loueth the people.* For the word which Moſes vſeth, importeth both. *His Sainctes are in thy hands.* Here hee altereth the perſon. For when as he ſaith, *his Sainctes*; no doubt but hee referreth it vnto God. Therefore hee ſhoulde ſay, *Are in his hande.* But this maner of ſpeaking is rife enough in the ſcripture, ſo as wee ought not to thinke it ſtraunge. The meaning of Moſes then is eaſie enough, namely that albeit God loue all people, yet that his Saintes are in his charge or protection, yea euen thoſe whome hee hath choſen. Vnleſſe a man will refer theſe wordes, *the People*, to the twelue tribes: but that were harde and conſtreyned. Moſes then doeth here compare all men and all the Nations of the earth with the linage of Abraham which God had choſen: as if hee ſhoulde ſay, that Gods grace is ſpreade out euerie where, as wee our ſelues ſee, and as the ſcripture alſo witneſſeth in other places. And not onely men are partakers of this goodneſſe of God, and are fed and mayntayned by his liberalitie: but he doeth alſo ſhew himſelfe bountifull euen to the brute beaſtes. Euen thither doeth his mercie extende according to this ſaying of the Pſalme, Who maketh Pſal.104.14. the fieldes and mountaines to bring foorth graſſe for the feeding of Cattell, but God who hath a care of them? Seeing then that GOD vouchſafeth to haue ſo mercifull regarde of the beaſtes which hee hath created, as to giue them foode; it is much more to bee thought that he will bee a foſter father to men, whom hee hath made and ſhaped after his owne image, which

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approche neerer vnto him, and which haue a thing farre excelling aboue all other creatures. God then doth loue all people. Yea, but yet not in compariſon of his Church. And why? For all the children of Adam are enemies vnto God by reaſon of the corruption that is in thē. True it is that God loueth them as his creatures: but yet he muſt needes hate them, becauſe they be peruerted and giuen to all euill. And that is the cauſe why the ſcripture telleth vs that God repented him that euer he made man, conſidering that he is ſo marred. And in the ſame reſpect alſo is it ſayde, that we be baniſhed out of Gods kingdome, that we be his enemies, that he ſhaketh vs off and diſclaymeth vs, that he abhorreth vs, that wee bee the children of wrath, and that we be ſo corrupted, as there remaineth nothing but vtter confuſion vppon our heades. When the ſcripture ſpeaketh ſo, it is to ſhewe vs that although God for his part be fauorable and merciful to vs, for ſomuch as we be his creatures: yet notwithſtanding we deſerue well to be diſclaymed and hated at his hande, and that he ſhould not vouchſafe to haue a care of vs. Now then, whereas God loueth vs, let vs vnderſtand that he ouercommeth our naughtineſſe with his goodneſſe, which is infinite. Howebeit as I haue touched already, his louing of other men is nothing in compariſon of thoſe whom he hath choſen and whome he acknowledgeth for his children. Now then, doeth he loue all people? Yet are we in his hande: that is to ſay, hee will ſhewe that we be farre neerer vnto him, and that he hath much more familiar acquaintance with vs beyonde all compariſon, than he hath with all the reſt of the worlde. For he hath called vs into his houſe, he dwelleth among vs, he will be knowen to be our father, he will haue vs to call vpon him with full truſt and libertie, ſo as we neede not to dout but that his power is ſpred out to defende vs. Lo how Moſes ment to magnifie Gods goodneſſe in this place, after the maner that he hath made himſelfe to be felt in his Church and to his flocke.

Gen 6.6.

Col.1.21.

Eph.2.3.

Nowe ſith it is ſo, let vs learne to benefite our ſelues by this ſentence; and whenſoeuer wee open our eyes, let it be to beholde the bountifulneſſe of God, who ſheweth himſelfe both aboue and beneath by his goodneſſe. We ſee howe the brute beaſtes are ſuſtained by his hand: and therein we ought to conſider what his goodnes is. Againe, as touching the wicked which deſpiſe him, and doe nothing elſe but prouoke his wrath; when yet for all that, wee ſee the Sunne ſhine vpon them to giue them light, they eate and drinke, and they bee maintayned at Gods coſt, & by his liberalitie: let vs conſider that although men deſerue to be vtterly forſaken; yet notwithſtanding God ſpareth them & beareth with them, and ouercommeth their wickedneſſe with his goodneſſe, in that he rooteth them not out at the firſt, but vouchſafeth to foſter thē ſtill, and to ſhewe a fatherly care towardes them. Let vs conſider theſe thinges, that we may be rauiſhed with wonderment, and glorifie God for his mercy, which is knowen and apparaunt vnto vs euerywhere. And thereupon let vs come to our ſelues, and conſider ẏ ſeeing God hath called vs to the knowledge of his trueth: it is all one as if he had adopted vs to be his children. Ye ſee thē that we be ſanctified by him. True it is, that in reſpect of nature we be no better thā other men: yea and there are yet ſtill ſo many wantes & imperfections in vs, as is pitie to ſee. But yet doth our Lord accept vs for his children, when we receiue his word by faith, & doe ſtedfaſtly beleeue that our Lord Ieſus Chriſt hath not ſuffered his paſſion in vaine, but that as we be reconciled to God his father by his meanes, ſo he wil gouernē vs ſtill. If we be fully perſwaded hereof, let vs not dout but that God will acknowledge vs and auowe vs to be of the company of his Saints: & that ſeeing we be vnder his cuſtody, he wil guide vs and keepe vs vnder his wings and in his protection. And ſo we ſee that Moſes ſpake not for the children of Iſrael only, but meant that Gods Church ſhould receiue common cōfort thereof to the worldes ende, to the intent ẏ being troubled with ſo many ſtormes and tempeſtes, and hauing ſo many perils before our eyes, & being ſo often threatned with deth; we ſhould yet notwithſtanding haue ſure footing, and not ceaſe to faſten our eyes vpon the ſafegarde of God. And ſeeing it is ſo that he ſheweth his loue euen to the vnbeleeuers, let vs not dout but he will make vs to perceiue, that his hande is ſtrong & mightie ynough to maintaine and defende vs, euen though it ſeeme to vs that we ſhould periſh euery minute of an houre.

Nowe let vs fall downe before the maieſtie of our good God with acknowledgement of our faultes, praying him to correct vs more & more, and to forgiue vs the offences and ſinnes wherof we be guiltie before him: & that foraſmuch as it pleaſeth him to edifie vs dayly by his worde, we may be ready to receiue it, and hee make vs to perceiue the maieſtie which is therein, and that we may continually acknowledge that it is hee that ſpeaketh vnto vs, euen to certifie vs of his will, and of the hope of our ſaluation, ſo as wee may be drawen to the feare & obedience of him, and more and more profit therein, euen vntill we ſee him face to face, whereas wee ſee him nowe but in that mirrour or lookingglaſſe which hee ſetteth before vs. That it may pleaſe him to graunt this grace, not onely to vs, but alſo to all people and Nations of the earth, &c.

On Munday the xxix. of Iune, 1556

The CXCII. Sermon which is the ſecond vpon the xxxiij. Chapter.

3 They bowe downe to thy feete, to receiue of thy wordes.

4 Moſes hath commaunded vs the Lawe for an inheritaunce, vnto the congregation of Iacob.

5 And was as a king among the righteous, when they gathered the heades of the people together, together with the tribes of Iſrael.

6 Let Ruben liue and not die, and let his people be fewe in number.

7 As touching Iuda he ſayde, O Lorde God, hearken to the voyce of Iuda, and bring him in to his people: let his handes ſuffiſe him, becauſe thou wilt bee his helpe againſt his enemies.

Heeretofore Moſes had exhorted the people to receiue the Lawe with all obedience: for he hadde ſayde that they did caſt themſelues downe at Gods feete. And it is a kind of ſpeech that is verie riſe in the Hebrewe tongue, becauſe the man that is a learner ſitteth downe at his maiſters feete to receiue learning at his hande. Nowe we haue ſeene howe it behooued the people to bee as it were at Gods feete. To what ende? To heare the woordes of his mouth. And heereby we ſee that GOD hath the whole ſouereinetie in his Church, and that although he ſpeake by the mouthes of mortall men, yet doth not that abate any whitte of his right, that men ſhould therefore vſurpe his authoritie, or thruſt themſelues into his place; but that they ought to deliuer the thinges faithfully which they haue receiued of him. To be ſhort, heere it is ſhewed vs that the Church of God is to be guyded alonely by his worde, and not by the thinges which men ſhall haue dreamed and deuiſed of their owne heades. And heerewithall we be alſo exhorted to obey God, and not to ſtriue againſt him when he ſpeaketh to vs, but to ſtoope and to yeelde ourſelues wholly to that which he ſayeth. At a worde, heere wee bee brought backe from the bondage of men, to the ende that our fayth ſhould not depende vppon this man or ẏ man, but be grounded vpon God. And by the way it is ſhewed vs, that it is our dutie to humble ourſelues vnto God, and to profit vnder his worde and in his ſchoole, ſo as wee may ſuffer our ſelues to be gouerned by his doctrine.

Nowe heereupon it followeth, That Moſes *gaue the Lawe for an inheritaunce to the Congregation of Iſraell*. This ſerueth to expreſſe better what worde it is whereof he had made mention. For euery man can well ynough graunt that GOD deſerueth well to be hearde and obeyed: and the wickeddeſt folke in the worlde will magnifie Gods worde; but in the meane while there are very fewe which by their deedes doe ſhewe themſelues throughly willing to doe that which they ſay. And why? They woulde haue God to come downe from heauen, and to ſende vs his Angelles to tell vs his will. But he will trie our fayth after another faſhion. True it is that he ratified his Lawe in olde time, and ſhewed that it came from heauen, and that it was not deuiſed by men. But nowe hee will haue his Lawe preached vnto vs by meanes of men, and that the ſame ſhalbe of as great force, as if hee himſelfe were preſent in his own being and maieſtie. As for the Goſpell, wee knowe it hath had his confirmation, and that it is not for vs to dout whether it be Gods trueth or no. But now, what are they that bring vs the Goſpell? They be mortall creatures, ſo as this treaſure (as ſayth 2.Cor.4.7. Saint Paule) is in brittle veſſelles; like as if a man ſhould put a two or three thouſande Crownes into a potte that is not woorth aboue a cupple of pence, euen ſo is it in that our Lorde will haue the doctrine of ſaluation which is an ineſtimable benefite, to be declared vnto vs by men like our ſelues, which beare no great ſhowe, nor are of any eſtimation to the worldewarde: and yet notwithſtanding he will haue his worde to be of as great eſtimation among vs, as if he himſelfe were perſonally preſent with vs. And for that cauſe he ſayeth, He that heareth you, heareth Luke.10.16. me, and he that refuſeth you, refuſeth me. For in that place, our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt ment not to exalt men: but to ſhewe that Gods worde ought not to be the leſſe eſteemed, although there bee no man to giue eſtimation thereto. For we muſt not haue an eie to the meſſenger, but to him that ſendeth him. So then, we ſee how Moſes hauing ſpoken of Gods worde, and hauing ſhewed that they which call themſelues faithfull, ought to ſubmit themſelues thereto; addeth, *Moſes gaue the Lawe*, meaning thereby that we neede not to goe to the newfounde Iles to ſeeke Gods worde, nor to paſſe ouer the ſea (as we haue ſeene already,) nor to goe downe into the bottome of Deut.30.12 the earth; but that Gods worde is in our mouth and in our heart, at leaſtwiſe if GOD worke there by his holy ſpirite. For well might we haue our eares beaten therewith, but our heartes ſhould not be touched at all, vnleſſe God gaue force thereto. But when our Lord inlighteneth vs, and maketh vs to feele that it is he that ſpeaketh; then haue we his word in our heart; and againe, we haue it alſo in our mouth, to confeſſe it to be the infallible trueth. And if we ſet our delight therein, wee ſhall no more ſtand in doubt whether it were beſt for vs to receiue it or not, but wee ſhall be fully reſolued thereof. Wherefore let vs learne by this text, that if we will honor God and obey him, and quietly receiue both his lawe and his Goſpell when they bee preached vnto vs by the mouths of men: we muſt not forbeare to doe him the honor to ſubmit our ſelues vnto him, although hee appeare not after a viſible maner, ne ſend vs his Angels from heauen. For it is a true tryall of our faith, when for the honor of him, we forbeare not to accept of men which cary not any great countenance, nor haue any eſtimation at all. That is the thing which we haue to beare away here in the firſt place.

Now immediatly he ſaith that the lawe belongeth vnto vs, becauſe it ſerueth for the whole congregation of Iſraell. For we knowe that God hath gathered vs together with the Iewes, and that in the end when they had ſhut out and baniſhed themſelues from the promiſe of ſaluation, we ſucceeded in their place. Seeing it is ſo, looke what was ſpoken concerning the children of Iſraell, which were come of the race of Abraham as in reſpect of the fleſh: ẏ ſame ought to be applyed vnto vs at this day. And therefore it is no ſuperfluous ſpeech, when it is ſayde *that the Law was giuen.* Let vs learne then, ẏ ſeeing our Lord will haue vs to receiue his word, aſſuring our ſelues that it is ſpoken to vs, and dedicated to vs for the health of our ſoules, it is not as a ſeed that is throwen into the ayre; but that God ſpeaketh in ſuch wiſe, as he ſheweth that it is for our profit to be ſo taught, and that he will ſo approch vnto vs, as we may be knit vnto him. Now then whereas we haue heard, that folke muſt caſt themſelues downe at Gods feete to heare his word: let vs vnderſtand ẏ wee be thoſe folke. Sith we know that Gods word lyeth and conſiſteth in his lawe; let vs aſſure ourſelues that it is the treaſure & benefite which God hath prepared for ẏ food and ſuſtenance of his children ark.7.27. accordingly alſo as he ſpeaketh thereof to the woman of Chanaan, where he ſaith ẏ men muſt not giue the bread of children vnto dogs. True it is that at ẏ time we were as dogs, ẏ is to ſay, al the heathen men of ẏ world were reiected. And our Lord Ieſus Chriſt ſheweth, ẏ as in reſpect of our firſt ſtate, we be no more worthy to be partakers of this benefite; than a dogge is to go to a mans table. None but the children are to take their ſuſtenance and refection there. Howbeit foraſmuch as at this day God hath called vs, & we be his true Church & flocke; this breade is therwithal giuen vs for our ſuſtenãce. And therfore let vs not ſuffer Gods word to ſlip away, whẽ it is preached vnto vs, but let euery of vs applie it to our vſe.

And Moſes declareth expreſly *that it is for an inheritance to the Church of Iſrael,* to do thẽ to vnderſtand ẏ it was not giuen for a time, but to the intent it ſhold be receiued frõ age to age, and ẏ al men ſhold giue thẽſelues to it, ſo as there might be one conſent of faith betweene the fathers and the children, accordingly as it is ſaide thereof in the ſong of Zacharie, & as the Prophet Malachie alſo had ſayde thereof afore. Mal.4.6. Luk.1.17.18 Let vs marke then, that this worde *Inheritance,* or *Heritage* importeth a perpetuitie of Gods word, ſo as it muſt not bee receiued alonely by ſuch as liue at ſome one time, and afterward bee buryed: but the fathers muſt haue a care to make their children agree thereunto after their deceaſe, that all men may obey God and honor him to the ende. If a man haue goods, he will keepe them with great care for his children; and when he dyeth he is well apayd that he leaueth them not vnprouided for, but that they may haue ſome inheritance. But in the meane while we conſider not which is the principal good thing which ought to be left to thoſe which come after vs: which is that they may be partakers of Gods adoption, and accounted among the company of his children. That is the cauſe why Moſes warneth here ẏ people which had bin duely trayned vp in Gods word, that it ſerued not for them alone, but ẏ God bound thẽ to leaue the ſame inheritance in poſſeſſion to their poſteritie, and would haue his Lawe to be knowen continually, & that it ſhould abide frõ age to age in full force and authoritie for euer. And therefore whẽſoeuer we come to a Sermõ; let vs vnderſtand ẏ our Lord calleth vs to him, to the intent that our childrẽ ſhould be drawen Gen.17.7. 1.Cor.7.14. thither with vs. And foraſmuch as he of his infinite goodnes receiueth them afore they bee borne, and declareth that he will be their father and Sauiour, and putteth them aforehand into the aray and company of his, accordingly alſo as they be baptiſed in ẏ vertue of that promiſe: needs muſt we be worſe than vnthankful, if we haue not a care to teach them, whẽ they come to diſcretion: and let vs aſſure our ſelues that this inheritance is oftẽ loſt through the leawdnes of men, or through their careleſnes and coldnes, ſo as their childrẽ are depriued thereof. We ſee what is happened to the world. Wee ſee the horrible diſorder which hath bin euery where, and is yet ſtill in a number of countries, which make great account of themſelues, and deeme themſelues to be of great worthines. If a man ſhould aske the Italians, the Frenchmen, and a great ſort of the Almaines, of what worthines they be; they will ſet ſo great eſtimation vppon themſelues in their pride, as ye would maruel: and yet are they all baniſhed from the inheritance of God, they are all diſherited, they be depriued of the foode of ſaluation which God hath ordayned for his children. Seeing it is ſo, let vs ſee that we be more diligent in keeping this inheritance, & ſith our Lord hath put it as a gage into our handes, let euery of vs inforce himſelfe to teach the younger ſort, that the trueth may bee receiued continually from hand to hand, and that GOD may reigne among vs euerlaſtingly. And to the intent wee may haue the more zeale and good will thereto, let vs call to minde that which I haue ſayd afore, namely that if wee ſhould compare all the goods in the world, and all the riches that fathers can leaue to their children, with this: they be nothing in compariſon of this heauẽly treaſure of Gods auowing of vs to be of his houſhold, and of his declaring that he will dwel among vs, to make vs pattakers of his glorie. Seing then that our Lord aſſigneth vs ſo great a good thing; it is reaſon that he ſhould bee preferred before all the thinges which are to be deſired in this world, and which rauiſh all our wits and willes from vs.

Now he addeth afterward, *That he was a king among the vpright dealers*; that is to ſay, in Iſraell. This ſentence is commonly vnderſtood concerning Moſes, becauſe he was ſpoken of in the laſt verſe. For he had ſayd, Moſes gaue vs the Lawe: and now he addeth, he was a king in Iſrael. But we knowe it was not the cuſtome of Moſes to call himſelfe king. For the time was not yet come wherein God ſhould haue choſen and ordayned a king to haue preheminence. Saul was the firſt: yea and that was through a rebellion of the people. But God choſe Dauid, to the intent that the kingdome ſhould bee ſtabliſhed in his perſon. And vntill that time, the people were at libertie, and God named himſelf their king, and called the people a royall prieſthood. So then, no doubt but that here Moſes contineweth the matter which hee had begunne already; namely that the people ſhould ſit downe at the feete of God to heare his word. He declareth after what maner wee ſhould ſit downe at Gods feete to be his ſcholers, and that hee may be our maiſter, and we be taught at his mouth: *It is* (ſaith he) *by being our king therewithall*. Hee ſheweth that whereas God abaceth himſelfe ſo farre as to be our teacher; his ſo dooing ought not to cauſe vs to deſpiſe him, or to diminiſh his maieſtie: but therewithal he muſt alſo be a king. Let vs beare in minde then, that the doctrine which wee receiue of God, is as the ſpeach of a king, and it behoueth vs to tremble vnder him: ſo as wee may not onely be as little children ẏ record their leſſon vnder a maiſter; but alſo that both great and ſmall doe come to heare what God ſpeaketh, and giue eare vnto it with all humilitie, and that his lawes may preuaile and haue their force amongeſt vs. The thing then in effect which Moſes meant in this place, is that hauing ſhewed that God ſtoopeth ſo lowe vnto our meaneſſe, ẏ he maketh himſelfe as a ſcholemaiſter, and voutſafeth to haue vs ſit at his feet, to the intent we ſhould be familiarly taught at his hand; yet ceaſeth he not therefore to bee a king, and to keepe ſtill his dominion and degree, ſo that what excellencie ſoeuer bee in men, they muſt not preſume to skorne the doctrine that is preached vnto them, but euen the very kinges of the earth ought all of them to ſubmit themſelues to it, and hee as the onely head ought to haue all preheminence and ſoueraigne dominion ouer vs.

1.Sam.10.1.

To be ſhort, we haue two things to conſider in Gods word, the one is his infinite goodneſſe, in that he commeth downe to vs, and becõmeth familiar with vs, and (as yee would ſay) dandleth vs, and ſpeaketh to vs as kindly as a nurſe woulde ſpeake to her babe. Seeing then that God doth ſo faſhion himſelfe to our ſmall capacitie; wee ought of right to loue well his worde. But yet therewithall let vs marke alſo, that hee will not bereaue himſelfe of his right, that hee ſhould not continue King for euer, and wee tremble vnder him, and bee ſubiect to his lawes and commandements. Thus the thing which we haue in effect to beare in mind, is that Gods word ought to bee as ſweete to vs as honie, and as precious as Gold and Siluer, as Dauid ſpeaketh thereof. And he doth expreſly name the people of Iſraell by the terme of *vpright perſons*, as he had done afore; to ſhewe vpon what condition wee be Gods Church; namely that vprightneſſe and Iuſtice ſhould reigne among vs. For we knowe that God wil not be intangled in our diſorders, if we ſhould ruſh out into any maner of euill: for in ſo doing it might ſeeme that wee would driue God farre from vs. So much the more then ought wee to marke well this text, that God was king among the vpright. For it ſerueth to the end that we ſhould firſt vnderſtand, that if wee obey Gods Lawe, his kingdome flouriſheth. And againe, when wee ſerue him, he maketh vs to be righteous, & certeſſe, our true righteouſneſſe dependeth vpon our hearkening vnto God, & ought to be eſteemed thereafter. As for thoſe then which are diſobedient to the lawe and the Goſpell; doe well ſhewe that they cannot abyde that GOD ſhould gouerne them; and that is all one as if they defied him, and would not admit him for their king and Prince. True it is that none of the wicked ſort of this worlde will confeſſe that their intent is to alienate thẽſelues from God after that maner: but yet is it ſo indeede, and it is not for them to pleade to the contrarie, bycauſe the ſoueraigne Iudge hath giuen definitiue ſentence thereof. Alſo let vs marke by the way, that God neuer reigneth among vs, except our conuerſation bee conformable to his worde, ſo as wee forſake all our owne wicked affections to obey him. And therewithall let vs beare in mynde likewiſe that there will bee no righteouſnes when euery man wil needes ſerue God after his owne deuotion as we ſee ẏ world doeth which muſeth vppon theſe pelting fonde toyes: inſomuch that the Papiſtes ſeeme to thẽſelues to be halfe Angels, ſo long as they haue daunced their common trace, that is to ſay, haue played the brute beaſtes. But the very true righteouſnes which God alloweth and accepteth, is to ſuffer our ſelues to bee gouerned by his hand, & to haue none other leader than his ſingle worde.

Pſal.19.11.

He ſayeth immediatly, in *gathering the heads of the people, and the Trybes of Iſrael together*. Heere hee expreſſeth the concorde which ought to bee in Gods Church, euen from the greateſt to the leaſt. Whereas hee ſayeth in *gathering or aſſembling*, hee ſheweth that as ſoone as GOD hath ſpoken, there ought to be a conformitie and true vnion among vs.

Wee

We muſt not be at variaunce, one drawing one way and another another; but euery of vs muſt yeelde & aſſemble together, that none but God may haue any preheminence ouer vs, and that we may be gathered together in one, as it were vnder his winges. That then is the gathering together which Moſes ſpeaketh of heere. And therfore we may conclude thereupon, that when Gods word is not preached, although mẽ agree together, yet their agreement is curſed, & there is nothing but confuſion in it. Will we thẽ be ſo knit together, as God may allowe of the concorde that is among vs? Let him be alwayes our head; let his word be the mean to faſhion vs one like an other; let there be no brotherhoode but becauſe there is one father cõmon to vs al, and ỹ wee be his children together by one common accorde. And herein it is to be ſeene, that all the fond bragging of the Papiſts is but ſmoke & leaſing, when they ſay that they agree among themſelues. For it is alwayes to bee conſidered what the bonde is. Now the Papiſtes agree in all diſobedience, ſo as they muſt neede bee ſtubborne in refuſing Gods worde, and trample his truth vnder their feete; or elſe we ſee that without that there is no acceſſe to be had vnto them. Seeing then that their linking in together is but to withdrawe themſelues from God: wo worth that vnion. But if we will haue a holy and commendable concorde, ſuch as God may allowe of: let vs begin at this point; namly that we hearken to his voyce, and ỹ we followe it, ſhewing therby that we bee his true ſheepe, & that we take him for our ſheepeheard. And in ſo doing let vs take him alſo for our king (as it is ſayde in this text,) that he alſo may take vs for his people and Church; and then we may be bolde to defie all ſuch as behaue themſelues after their owne inuentions and fancies.

Nowe therewithall Moſes ſheweth that there is no man which ought not to ſubmit himſelfe to Gods worde, when he ſayeth *in gathering the heades and all the Trybes together.* Heere then is no exception: neither ought ỹ great ones to alleage either their authority or their power: for they be the folke which ought to ſhewe the way, and which ought by their exãple to induce the meaner people to obedience. Therefore when our Lord ſpeaketh, let the heads be as lowely as the inferiour ſort, & let them lead the daunce and reach their hands to all the reſidue. For in very deede when the great men and rich men of this worlde, and ſuch as are in any eſtimation deſpiſe Gods worde & ſet light by it: it is a dubble ſtumblingblocke, becauſe men haue an eye to them, & they be as it were ſet vp on a hygh ſtage. The diſorder therefore which they make is ſuch, that they muſt yeelde dubble account vnto God, for ỹ they haue bin the cauſe of the backſlyding of many ſimple & weake ſoules. And therfore let vs learn ỹ whenſoeuer God ſpeaketh, thoſe to whõ he hath giuen ỹ greater giftes of grace, & which haue any dignity or excellency, muſt ſhewe that Gods prouoking of thẽ to come vnto him is not in vaine, & they muſt be the firſt that obey him. And on the other ſide the rude & vnskilful muſt not alleadge, We be no Clerks, we be no men of great vnderſtanding; for it is ſayde *that all the Trybes of Iſraell muſt likewiſe aſſemble together.* Let vs conclude then, ỹ as the great ones muſt ſhew the way to the litle ones; ſo all the people generally and without exception, muſt ſubmit them ſelues to God, & al of vs muſt become his ſcholers, ſeeing he vouchſafeth to be our ſcholemaiſter; and al of vs muſt be his people, ſeeing he doth vs the honor to ſet his royall ſeate among vs. That is the effect of the thing which wee haue to remember vpon this place.

But let vs come to the bleſſinges which Moſes giueth to the Tribes of Iſraell. I haue tolde you afore that they be not ſingle prayers, made as by a priuate man: but that foraſmuch as God had appointed him to be his deputie, he declareth that the ſtate of the Church ſhalbe alwayes bleſſed, & that God will haue a care therof. Moſes then ſpeaketh heere, not in his owne perſon, nor of his owne authoritie; but as one gouerned by the holy Ghoſt, and as one whom God cauſed to ſhewe foorth the fatherly care which he would alwayes haue of his Church. To be ſhort, there is nothing heere which ought to be fathered vppon a mortall man: but by the mouth of Moſes God ſheweth that hee hath not choſen the children of Abraham in vaine, but that hee will continue his goodneſſe towardes them to the ende, and ſhew in very deede that they be a people whom he hath adopted to himſelfe and dedicated to his owne ſeruice, and of whom he wilbe the defender. Howbeit, foraſmuch as theſe thinges ſhalbe layd foorth more at large; I doe but touch them ſhortly as nowe.

Let vs come to that which is ſpoken of Ruben. *Let Ruben liue, and not dy.* We know that Ruben was Iacobs eldeſt ſonne, and ought to haue obteyned the right of the firſt begotten, and ought to haue had a double portion, and to haue reigned among his brothers: but he was bereft of it by his owne leaudeneſſe. For he committed inceſt, which was a crime worthy of more than death: he deſerued to haue beene wyped out of the worlde, and to haue had his name reprochfull for euer. Neuertheleſſe God pardoned him. Gen.35.22. Yea, but not without chaſtiſement, as we ſee by the bleſſing which was giuen him: and he ſeemeth rather to haue beene accurſed. For Iacob his father ſayde vnto him, Ruben, thou waſt my firſt borne, the beginning of my force Gen 49.3. and ſtrength; but thou haſt alſo beene the beginning of my ſorrowes. And therefore thou muſt ſlippe away like water, and drie vp. For thou diddeſt looſe the title of thy birthright, when thou wenteſt vp vpon thy fathers bedde, and committedſt inceſt, which is a horrible crime. Foraſmuch therefore as thou haſt beene a greefe and ſorrowe to me whereas I ought to haue receyued ioye and comfort of thee; thou muſt be baniſhed and excluded from thy birthryght, and from the dignitie which thou ſhouldeſt haue had. It ſhold ſeeme ỹ Iacob taketh too great diſpleaſure againſt his eldeſt ſon, when he ouerwhelmeth him ſo with infamie, & thundereth ſo againſt him. Howbeit, ỹ is but a temporall correction.For notwithſtãding this,yet he continueth ſtil a Patriarke.And ſoothly it is a great honor,that a deteſtable villaine hauing broken the whole order of nature, yea and committed aduowtrie with his own fathers wife,did yet for all yͤ, liue ſtill vpon the earth.But God maketh him a Patriark in his Church, & he wil haue his name holy & his poſteritie holy. Lo here a wõderful mercifulnes of God.Yet muſt he be faine to humble himſelfe,& haue his fault knowen,yͭ hee may no more flatter himſelfe. That is the cauſe why Iacob ſpeaketh ſo roughly,and(as ye would ſay)thundereth againſt him being his eldeſt ſonne as I ſayd afore. Now the comfort which Moſes ſetteth downe here, may ſeeme ſtraunge,as why he ſhould ſay, *Let Ruben liue and not dye.* It was to the end that the tribe of Rubẽ, (that is to ſay,the people which came of him, for there were at that time a great number of heades of howſes,as it were about a fiftie thowſand men,)ſhould thinke with thẽſelues,we bee after a ſort cut off frõ gods houſe.For inaſmuch as our father was after a ſort baniſhed & bereft of his byrthright , and wee be ſucceeded in his place;what is our inheritance now but vtter infamie?Thus ye ſee how yͤ Rubenites, (that is to ſay the people yͭ came of Rubens line,) might haue bin aſhamed, if they had not bin vpheld, by putting their truſt in God, to ſerue him with a pure and freehearted affection, or if their heartes had failed them ſo as they had not ſtill imbraced the promiſe of ſaluation which had bin made vnto them, and knowen themſelues to be the children of Abraham, a linage which God had accepted and ſeparated from the reſt of the world. It behoued the Rubenites to haue that.And for that cauſe it is ſayd, *Let Rubẽ liue & not dye*:as if Moſes had ſayd,true it is yͭ Rubẽ deſerued to haue his lyfe thruſt downe to the bottom of hell:but yet ſhall he liue;for his fault is forgiuen;and God hath giuen him lyfe, & that not ſuch a common lyfe as all the ſonnes of Adam haue,but Ruben ſhal liue in the Church of God,he ſhall haue place among the Patriarkes, & the people which ſhall come of him ſhall be a member of Gods Church,and of the number of thoſe people whom he hath choſen and ſanctifyed. Thus then wee ſee now the meaning of Moſes.

And here we be taught,that it ought to ſuffice vs when our Lord taketh vs to mercie,to reſerue vs to be of his people. When we haue offended him,ſo as we deſerue to be caſt off, & to be vtterly diſclaymed at his hand: it ought well to ſuffice vs if wee may but haue a place ſtill in his Church,& be taken & admitted for his childrẽ.Moreouer,if we be chaſtized for our faults, let vs take it in good worth & beare it patiently,& let vs not doe as they doe which grudge & grinde their teeth when God chaſtizeth thẽ, & think they haue great wrong if they be not dãdled, when they haue more neede to be handled roughly.Let vs then beare all yͤ temporal correctiõs which God ſendeth vs, with ſuch mildnes & meeknes,as it may ſuffiſe vs to be cõforted,in yͭ he dooth not raſe vs out of the regiſter of lyfe, but are accounted ſtill among his childrẽ. Doth God then ſmite ſome with ſickneſſe, ſome with pouertie, and ſome after ſome other ſortes,ſo as they pine away in this world,& wote not where to become? Well let all this bee eaſie for vs to beare,ſo long as we haue ſtil wherwith to ſweeten our ſorrowe:that is,when God ſheweth vs yͭ notwithſtanding our imperfections & miſeries, yet he ceaſeth not to be our father ſtill.So long as we haue that; let vs ouergoe all the temptations in the world. Well, I muſt bee heare as a wretched creature, skorned, an outcaſt of the world,ſhamed & deſpiſed; I ſhall ſee no end nor meaſure of miſeries:but what for all this?Yet is it enough for me ſo I bee auowed for the childe of God.Thus ye ſee what we haue to gather vppon this place, when God doth continually put vs in minde of our deſertes, and toucheth vs with thẽ, & maketh vs to feele them by proofe and experience: For whereas he ſayth: *Let Ruben liue and not dye*: it is to ſhewe them what he were worthie of,& that it was needefull in deede that God ſhould haue pitiẽ vppon him;inſomuch yͭ if he had liſted to haue vſed rigor,hee deſerued to haue bin vtterly rooted out.That then is the firſt poynt which wee haue to remember vppon this place.

Moſes addeth, *let his people be fewe in nũber.* In deede a man might here repeate the former ſaying thus, *let him not dy & let not his people be few in number.* But that were conſtrained & forced. The naturall ſenſe then is, that the Rubenites ſhould be *ſmall in number:* not that they ſhoulde not be a great multitude of folke; for (as I tolde you afore) they were fiue and fortie Thowſand men beſides women & children:and that is an incredible multitude to come of oneman alone. But Moſes meaneth ſmall in number, becauſe Ruben & all his oſpring, which ought to haue had preheminence ouer all the children of Abraham, was baſely & ſlenderly eſteemed, and placed in a very lowe degree. Therefore it is all one as if he had ſayd, Although Ruben be not reſtored to his honor,but dooth ſtill beare the marke of his reproch,and is faine to holde himſelfe among the common aray of the children of Iſrael, and to be ſubiect to his brother Iuda;& to yeelde reuerence to him as to his ſuperior: yet notwithſtanding,let him liue. To be ſhorte, Moſes confirmeth that which I haue declared already,that is to wit,that although Rubẽ was put from his byrthright becauſe of his wicked doinges,and ſo became vnworthy of the honor which had bin done vnto him: yet notwithſtanding his linage ought not therefore to bee diſmaid,but rather take comfort in that God held them ſtill in the number of his people. And although they be not Capteines, ne haue yͤ kingdome in their trybe: yet ought they not therefore to fret & repine,but rather to abide in their degree,& to be glad that they haue God ſtill to their father, & to ſet their whole felicitie & ioy there: & in the meane ſeaſon to beare the correction patiently which God ſendeth them as a medicine,and to make their benefite thereof. And moreouer they ought not to bee out of hope,as though God had diſclaymed them:but aſſure themſelues that they were ſtill receyned for the linage of Abraham,which was bleſſed & had the promiſe of euerlaſting ſaluation.

Immediatly after hee ſetteth downe concerning Iuda. *Let it be thus vnto Iuda*, ſaith he. And he ſaith,*Lord heare the voyce of Iuda.* Moſes magnifieth not the tribe of Iuda ſo greatly heere,as Gen.49.8.9 he did in Geneſis in the perſon of Iacob. For there he is likened to a lyon whom no man dareth waken vp. And againe he ſaith he ſhalbe Lorde of all his brethren,ſo as all of them muſt ſtoope vnto him, and bowe their knees to him: and finally that the ſcepter ſhall not depart from his houſe,nor the Lawgiuer frō betweene his knees,vntill God haue ſent the Redeemer whom he had promiſed.Seing that theſe things were ſpoken of the tribe of Iuda; it is maruaile that Moſes ſpeaketh ſo ſhortly of them heere. And againe, hee maketh no mention of the fruitfulneſſe which God promiſed him: As that his teeth ſhould be whyted with milke, that is to ſay, that he ſhoulde haue good and fat graſinggrounde, ſo as hee might drinke milke his belly ful; that his eyes ſhould be red with wine, that is to ſay,that he ſhould haue goodly vyneyardes. Heereby he meant to ſhew,what ſhould become of the tribe of Iuda, and of all his people. And why then doth Moſes ſpeake heere ſo ſparely thereof? It behooueth vs to marke,that by the bleſſings which Moſes vttereth heere, hee meant not to deface the remembrance of the things which he had written afore concerning the ſtate of Iuda, in the teſtament or laſt will of Iacob: but to make as it were a Codicill vnto it, as men terme that which is added to a laſt will that is made afore. And when there is ſuch a Codicill, it ſerueth not to impeach the former laſt will,nor yet to burie it ſo as it ſhould not be knowen. For it is but an appendant, and the Codicill it ſelfe were nothing worth without the will,and that it were added to it. Truly a man may well make a will alone by it ſelfe: but as for the Codicill, it is but as a thing belonging thereto or as a ſhort matter that is added to the will. After that manner doeth Moſes deale heere. For hauing ſet downe there the laſt will of Iacob, as an authenticall matter, and ſuch as ought to haue his full force and effect: nowe for the larger confirmation thereof, hee addeth this comfort which we haue ſeene concerning Ruben,and the comfort which wee ſhall ſee to morrow concerning Leui and ſuch like. Nowe his ſpeaking of the tribe of Iuda,is to confirme the thing which had beene ſpoken afore by the mouth of Iacob. True it is that they be two ſundrie perſons which ſpeake: but yet is all done in the name of God, and by his authoritie.Iacob was not a priuate perſon when he bleſſed his children: but he was Gods deputie. As much is to be ſaide of Moſes.Therefore he repreſented alwayes the perſon of God, who declareth that he hath choſen his people, and will maintaine them to the end, and haue a fatherly care of them. To be ſhort, this ſhortnes ſerueth not to abate the dignitie that was giuen to the tribe of Iuda: but to continue the thing which he had ſaid afore,to the intent we ſhould knowe that God ment not to diſappoint Iuda of the promiſe which he had made vnto him, but that it ſhoulde bee performed in his children. And therefore hee ſaith,*Lorde heare the voice of Iuda.*

Heereby Moſes ſheweth, that the tribe of Iuda ſhoulde not attaine to the kingdome without impediment.True it is that Iacob had ſaid, that the ſcepter ſhoulde not depart from the tribe of Iuda. And where is this king? Yee ſee Gen.49.10. that the tribe of Iuda ſurmounted all the reſt of the tribes at ſuch time as God deliuered his people out of the lande of Egypt. It is true that Nahaſſon had the preheminence, when the offerings were made in the ſanctuarie. It is true Nomb.2.3. that when God diſtributed his hoſt among the fower captaines of his people,Iuda was the formoſt. Howbeit, that was but a very darke ſhadowe,he had neither kingdome nor principalitie. It ſhould ſeeme then that the things which are ſpoken here concerning the ſcepter and the kingdome,are to no purpoſe. For thoſe thinges were not yet ſeene.Againe,let vs conſider what happened to the people after the deceaſe of Moſes. Ioſua ruled them, and the Iudges ſucceeded him. Thē came Saul of the tribe of Beniamin, 1.Sam.9.1. who was made king. And what ſhall become of Iuda? The thinges that Iacob had ſpoken ſeemed to bee but a ieſt. And yet it is God that ſaide that the kingdome ſhould come from thence. Nowe Moſes ſheweth heere, that Iuda muſt bee faine to call vppon God,that is to ſay that the tribe of Iuda muſt ſigh and grone and indure much hardneſſe, ere it attained to the degree of honour, and vnto the thinges which God had promiſed them. Wee ſee then that things ſhall not [alwayes] come to paſſe out of hande, immediatly after that God hath promiſed them. Beholde, Iacob appointeth Iuda to haue the birthright in his houſe, by reaſon whereof hee hath the right of the firſtbegotten ouer all his brethren, and it ſeemeth that all ſhould bee ſubiect to him. And yet for a time there was no whit of it ſeene, but rather Iacob ſeemed to haue doted,and that theſe things ſerued to no purpoſe. Afterward at the end of fower hundred yeares or thereabouts, (for there were not full fower hundred yeares,)came Moſes. But at the ende of three hundred and fiftie yeares or thereaboutes he came and ſaid, Iuda, pray to God,hee will heare thy voyce,and herken vnto thee.As if he ſhould ſay, My friendes, ye haue a promiſe of the kingdome in the tribe of Iuda,and trouble not your ſelues though it be not performed preſently before your eyes, but tarie till God worke, and he in the end will performe that which he hath promiſed.Be of good hope therefore and poſſeſſe the kingdome now by faith, vntill God ſhewe openly by the effect, that it was hee that ſpake by the mouth of your father Iacob. Thus we ſee now in effect, what the meaning of Moſes was.The reſidue we muſt reſerue vntill to morrowe.

Nowe let vs kneele downe before the maieſtie of our good God with acknowledgement of our faultes, praying him to forbeare to haue reſpect of the multitude and greatnes of them, & but onely to correct them by his holy ſpirit, and ſo to increaſe his ſtrength in vs from day to day as we may fight againſt all temptations, and be reformed in ſuch wiſe to his obedience, as nothing may let him to reigne as king ouer vs, nor vs to doe him homage by dedicating our ſelues to him in all iuſtice, holineſſe, and righteouſneſſe, but that they may bee the true marke whereby we may be knowen to be his children, and that we may feele him to reigne among vs, and we more and more finde ſauour in his promiſes; ſo as we may be drawen to the kingdome of heauen, and drawen away from this worlde, and not helde backe to it any more as wee haue beene too much afore. That it may pleaſe him to graunt this grace, not onely to vs, but alſo to al people and Nations of the earth; &c.

On Tewſday the laſt day of Iune, 1556.

The CXCIII. Sermon, which is the third vpon the xxxiij. Chapter.

7 As touching Iuda, O Lord God, &c.

8 Alſo hee ſaide of Leui, Thy Thumim and Vrim belong to him towardes whom thou diddeſt ſhewe thy ſelfe gratious, whom thou diddeſt trie in Maſſa, where ye had debate for the waters of ſtrife.

I Tolde you yeſterday that the thinges which are conteined in Geneſis as touching the bleſſing of Iuda, are comprehended briefly heere. For where as Moſes deſireth that Iuda may be hearde, it is to the end hee ſhould obtaine that which had beene promiſed vnto him, that is to wit, the ſetting vp of the kingdome there, accordingly alſo as he ſheweth in that he ſaith, that he ſhoulde be the leader of his people. For it belonged to none but the tribe of Iuda, to haue the people vnder them and at their guiding. We ſee then in effect, that Moſes meant heere to confirme that which had beene ſpoken by the mouth of the Patriarke Iacob, to the end that God might be knowen to be ſtedfaſt in his worde. The kingdome was promiſed vnto Iuda, & that was a matter of great importance: for not onely the ſtate of the people was grounded thereuppon, but alſo the ſaluation of the whole worlde depended vppon the ſame. To what end was it Gods will to ſtabliſh the ſoueréintie in the tribe of Iuda, beginning it in the perſon of Dauid and continuing it in his houſe, but that the Redeemer of the worlde ſhoulde come from thence? And that kingdome was to continue for euer, as it is ſaid in the Pſalme, that the Sunne and Moone ſhalbe good and faithfull witneſſes thereof in heauen. Pſal.72.5. Seeing it is ſo, it was very requiſite that this promiſe ſhould be certaine, that it might bee helde vnfallible of all the faithfull. Yet notwithſtanding there paſſed a long time wherein the tribe of Iuda was mingled with the reſt of the people, without hauing any authoritie. It was not perceiued what was the meaning of the thinges that had beene ſpoken, and therefore they might haue beene eſteemed as a vaine thing. And therefore Moſes addeth now the confirmatiõ thereof which is ſet downe heere, ſaying that in the end *God woulde heare the voyce of Iuda, and that by that meanes he ſhould haue the leading of his people*, and obtaine the royall mace which had beene aſſigned vnto him.

Heere wee ſee how our Lorde exerciſeth the faith of his children, in that he doth not out of hande performe the things which he had promiſed them. And this thing ought ſpecially to bee applyed to the reigne of our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt. God had declared aforehande, that the Redemption of the worlde ſhould be wrought by one that was to come of the tribe of Iuda. And yet hee deferreth and delayeth it ſo long, that it ſeemed to bee but vaine to looke for it. And why? Of purpoſe to trie the patience of them that hoped for him. Let vs learne then that to bee ſetled vpon our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt, and to be well aſſured of the ſaluation which he hath purchaſed for vs; wee muſt not onely beleeue the things that are tolde vs concerning the Goſpel; but we muſt alſo euen linger in patience, till God performe the things which we ſee not at the firſt ſight. And we muſt not bee ſo haſtie as to ſtart away, when our Lorde anſwereth not our deſires. If God paſſe ouer a day or a yeare, ſo as we perceiue not that he is minded to put the thing in execution which hee hath ſpoken, yet is it not for vs to giue ouer, but we muſt in the meane ſeaſon pray, & not doubt but yͤ he heareth our voyce. We ſhal ſee oftentimes, that yͤ kingdome of our Lord Ieſus Chriſt ſhall ſeeme to be aboliſhed out of yͤ world. And euen at this day, although the Goſpel be preached in ſome places; yet we ſee the power of the enemies to be ſuch as is able to ouerwhelme it vtterly. Wee ſee ſo little order as is pitie. As for vs which ſay we haue receiued the pure doctrine; we be yet farre off from hauing ſuch policie & perfection among vs as were requiſite. To be ſhort,we heare of nothing but diſorder; which might make vs to quaile; were it not that with calling vppon God we did patiently awayt that he will in the end ſet vp the kingdō of his ſonne and maintaine it, though it ſeeme as now to be put out of order, and men ſee it not floriſh and proſper. Were it not for that, ſurely a man would iudge that all Gods promiſes were vaine. It is not without cauſe then, that Moſes ſpeaketh here expreſſely of Iudaes prayers and ſupplications: as if he ſhould ſay, that all they which belong to the kingdome of our Lord Ieſus Chriſt ought to exerciſe themſelues in calling vpon God, that he ſuffer not his kingdome wherein lyeth all our happineſſe and welfare, to go to decay, and to fall to ruyne; but rather that he ſet it vp, and preſerue it, and defend it. And therewithall let vs aſſure our ſelues that we ſhall not loſe our time, nor finde God deafe to our requeſts, ſo we reſort to him for refuge, as we be warned to doe. To be ſhort, this text declareth vnto vs, that the kingdome of our Lord Ieſus Chriſt ſhalbe ſtabliſhed by myracle, and after a ſtrange maner incomprehenſible to the worlde; and that God will worke after ſuch a faſhion in that behalfe, that we ſhall knowe it to be his worke; and therefore that wee muſt not in that caſe bring the iudgement of our eyes; but continue from time to time in prayer and ſupplication, and reſt vpon the promiſe thereof which is giuen vnto vs.

Alſo it is ſayd, *That God will ſuccour Iuda againſt his enemies, and that his hands ſhall ſuffiſe him.* This was no more than needed, forſomuch as the kingdome of Iuda was to be diminiſhed after the deceaſſe of Salomon. And from that time foorth, he was to haue but one trybe and a halfe, ſo as a man would haue thought that all that euer had beene done in the perſon of Dauid, had beene but a puffe. True it is, that when Dauid was crowned king, God in one inſtant ſhewed there ſo great power, as all men wondered at it. In the time of Saul the people were extremely oppreſſed, and ſeemed like to haue beene altogither ſwallowed vp. But yet there Sam,8.12, were ſo excellent victories, as it appeared well that God was the author of that change. Sam.21.15 Dauid not onely draue away all thoſe which had poſſeſſed any part of the lande of Canaan, and had ſubdued the people to their taxes and tributes, whereby he purchaſed libertie to thoſe of whom hee had the charge; but alſo conquered all his neighbours, and made them tributarie vnto him. Therefore in that caſe wee ſee an in.10.7. open miracle of God. When Salomon ſucceeded him, gold and ſiluer were of no more eſtimation than grauell, as the holy hiſtorie reporteth thereof. But what? As ſoone as Roboam ſucceeded, there was a backeſlyding, ſo as almoſt all the people turned backe. There was no more but the trybe of Iuda with a piece of Beniamin, that abode in obedience to the houſe of Dauid. What was to be ſayd hereupon, but that for aught that men did ſee, there was verie fickle hope to be had, when all paſſed ſo ſlightly away? Beſides this, that ſmall kingdome being ſo diminiſhed, (as wherof remained but a piece) was ſo aſſayled on all ſides, that it ſeemed to be as a ſheep alone among a dozen wolues. A man then would haue thought that God had forgotten his promiſe. And therefore it was requiſite that Moſes ſhould ad this for the comfort of the faithful, to the intent they ſhould not be ſhaken from their faith, when they ſaw that kingdome ſo diminiſhed.

That is the cauſe why he ſayd, *The handes of Iuda ſhall ſuffice him, and God will giue him ſuccour againſt his enimies.* And ſo let vs marke well, that this kingdome was ſtabliſhed with great difficultie in the perſon of Dauid; and that in the end it was diminiſhed, and came to ſuch decay, that to all ſeeming it ſhould haue beene vtterly aboliſhed: whereby it was Gods will to ſhewe in a figure, what was to befall to the ſpirituall kingdome of our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt. And in deede wee ſee, that when the time drewe nigh wherein Ieſus was to be ſhewed to the worlde; there was nothing but horrible diſorder among that people. Who then would haue looked for the redemption at the comming of Ieſus Chriſt? For the people were ſcattered abroade and vtterly caſt downe. Yet notwithſtanding, God wrought therein after a manner vnknowen to men. Inſomuch that although the Goſpel was preached; yet was it not ſeene out of hand that the Church triumphed in this world; but cleane contrarywiſe that there was nothing but tormenting, perſecuting and oppreſſing of it, ſo as the name of Chriſtianitie ſeemed to be the irkſommeſt thing that could be ſpoken of, & that all Gods children were but as the doung & filth of the world, as Saint Paul ſpeaketh therof. 1.Cor.4.13. To be ſhort, that kingdome was to be ſet vp with ſighing and ſorrowing; & it behooued the faithfull to pray vnto God, and yet notwithſtanding, great was the griefe of minde wherewith they wayted for the ſetting abroad of the doctrine of the Goſpell, to the intent that Ieſus Chriſt might be worſhipped of the world, and all men ſubmit themſelues to him to do him homage. And yet did not that continue any long time. For the vnthankfulnes of the world deſerued that God ſhould haue withdrawen his hand and power; and we ſee howe the worlde ſtroue to haue driuen Chriſt away. For on the one ſide there were hypocrites which ſcorned al religion, and abuſed it falſly. Alſo there were deſpiſers and worldly folk, which tooke to them an vnbridled libertie (as we ſee ſtill at this day) vnder pretence of the freedome that was preached vnto them. Againe, there were Sects, and Hereſies, and rebellions, ſo as a great ſort ſtepped vp and could not abide to beare the yoke which it was Gods will to lay vpon their necke. Ye ſee then that the reigning of our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt was as it were brought to nothing. And therefore let vs mark well, that this text not only ſerued for the Iewes, but alſo is profitable for vs at this day, as whereby we be done to vnderſtand, that it behoueth vs to make earneſt ſute vnto GOD to ſet vp the kingdome of his only ſonne; and to ſtabliſh it with his power euen in the middes of the trubbles which wee ſee, notwithſtanding that it ſeeme that al things ſhould goe to wracke;& to ſuccour vs againſt our enemies, becauſe we ſee ſo many men inraged againſt vs;& to hyde vs vnder the ſhadowe of his hand, & to ſhewe vs his helpe when wee be in extremitie and euen at the laſt caſt, and can no longer hold out. Againe, although the kingdome of our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt ſeeme nothing to the world, & that the proud & the vnbeleeuers do ſcorne it & deſpiſe it:yet wil God ſhewe that his own hand ſuffiſeth him, that is to ſay, that his power which is hidden & of no reputation to the worldward, ſhalbe of ſuch force,that in the end the wicked ſhalbe driuen to confeſſe that they were too blockiſh & dulwitted,in that they tooke not hold of the grace wherof mention is made here.As for vs, let vs be ſtil more & more confirmed to truſt in this great Sauiour, & to put our ſelues into his protection, and to ſeeke all our ſuccour at his hand. That is the thing which we be taught in this text.

Now let vs come to the trybe of Leuye. *Thy Vrim & thy Thumim* (ſayeth he) *belong vnto thy meeke one*, or vnto the man of thy mercie. The Thumim and Vrim were a parcel of Aarons breſtlap,and of the breſtlap of the high prieſts. Beſides their robe,there was another piece ioyned vnto it,which was of great pryce,beſet with pearles & imbroydered.Moreouer in this piece there was a tablet of precious ſtones hanging Exo.28.14, 15. at little cheynes,which was placed full vpon his breſt: and this piece of the breſtlap was called *Iudgement*, that is to ſay rightfulnes. Alſo there was another part, which a man cannot well diſtinguiſh, and that was named Thumim and Vrim.The former of theſe words ſignifieth perfection;as if a man ſhould terme them perfections in the plurall number. And the other commeth of light or flame; if yee referre it to doctrine. Then if a man liſt to take theſe words in common ſpeech,he may ſay *perfections* and *teachings* [or inſtructions.] But I in reading of the text,haue kept ſtill the verie wordes of Moſes; becauſe it is not to be douted, but that he ſpeaketh of that portion of the breſtlap which was ſo termed as appeareth in the eyght &]twentith of Exodus. And he directeth his ſpeech vnto God.But ſome haue miſexpounded this text,in ſaying,*thy Thumim & Vrim belong to thee & to the Man*,which is cleane contrary. For Moſes ſaith; *O Lord God, thou haſt thy Thumim & Vrim in thy hand.* That is to ſay, the things which thou haſt giuen to thy high prieſt,are things holy & dedicated to thy name; they be thy perfections and teachings.To whom belong they?To thy meek one,or to the man of thy mercie;for ſo is it word for word.But the word *Meeke*, may be taken after the ſame maner that the holy ſcripture calleth Gods children meeke ones;that is to ſay, ſuch as ought to reſemble him who is the fountaine of all mercie & goodnes. For if wee wilbe knowen & auowed to be Gods childrẽ;it is good reaſon that we ſhould reſemble him, by hauing a meeke & myld ſpirit in vs,ſo as we indeuour to do men good. For it is the propertie of God to be liberal to al men, yea eun to thoſe which are Matt.5.45. not worthie therof: inſomuch that he maketh his day Sunne to ſhine both vpon good & bad. After his example we ought to do our indeuer, & to ſtrayne our ſelues to the vttermoſt of our power,to benefite al men,& to do al men good. And ſo it is the common ſtyle of the holy ſcrip- Pſal.16.10. ture to name the faithfull meekes ones; & ſpecially we ſee it is as rife a thing as can be in the Pſalmes. But foraſmuch as he ſayth, *to his meeke one*; it may be taken for *the man of thy mercie*;that is to ſay,for the man whom thou Lord haſt elected and choſen through thy goodnes. For Aaron attayned not to the dignitie of yͤ prieſthood by his owne deſertes; but becauſe God vouchſafed to chooſe him.Now then the name that is attributed to him here,may be taken as if a man ſhould ſay in the paſſiue ſignification, that God vouchſafed to make him a mirrour of his free election; yea and that hauing ſo choſen him & exalted him to ſo high and excellent honour, he would haue him to ſhewe that wee depende wholly vppon his goodnes, ſo that of al yͤ things which we haue, none proceedeth of our owne power or vertue, but of his pitying of vs, for that he is mynded to ſhewe his gracious goodnes towards vs. But howſoeuer the caſe ſtand, Moſes ment to declare here, that the trybe of Leuye ſhould alwayes ſerue God with the dignitie of prieſthood, and that the high prieſt ſhould bee clothed with the ornamentes that were giuen him to goe into the ſanctuarie. And in that caſe hee was not as a mortall man, nor as one of the degree of creatures: but as the mediatour betweene God and men, whereby he ſurmounteth the very Angels of Heauen. For the prieſt of the lawe was in his office more excellent than all the Angels of heauen. And why? Becauſe he was to repreſent the perſon of our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt, who is the head of the Angels as well as of men, and hath ſoueraigne dominion ouer all principalitie, not only on earth,but alſo in heauen. Yee ſee then how the meaning of Moſes is, that the prieſthood ſhould be in the trybe of Leuy.

And let vs marke nowe, that Moſes magnifieth heere the trybe of Leuye, of purpoſe to wype away the diſhonour that was there afore. For wee knowe howe Iacob had ſayde, Gen.49.5. Yee Simeon and Leuye, yee bee inſtruments of wickedneſſe, yee haue deſtroyed a towne, and yee haue ſlayne the men like murderers as yee bee; I will not haue to doe with you, neyther in ſpeech nor in heart, I refuſe you. And thou Leuye ſhalt bee diſperſed among my people; for thou art not woorthie to haue any heritage. Loe after howe terrible a faſhion GOD ſpeaketh againſt Leuye and all his ofſpring. Hee ſeemeth to bee quyte raſed out,as one that was not worthie to haue any place or degree in the Church. But what reuerence nowe had there been in the prieſthood, if the trybe of Leuye had continued in that reproch? For ſeeing that their father was diſgraded by Iacob, who was Gods deputie as I haue declared afore:what ſhould haue becom of al thoſe which were deſcended of his race? Nowe then it was requiſite that this tribe of Leuie ſhould bee reeſtabliſhed, to the intẽt that the order of prieſthood might not be deſpiſed, leaſt it might keepe men backe from hearkening to the doctrine of their mouth. What will become of it if they which haue the charge of teaching the people, be pointed at with mens fingers, ſet light by, ſkorned or blemiſhed with any marke of reproch in themſelues, ſo as men diſdaine them? Surely they ſhall neuer profite men, they ſhall not be able to edifie them, men will vtterly miſlike of them. Nowe we knowe, and it ſhalbe declared more fully heereafter, that the Leuites were ordeined of God to teach all the people. Then if they had beene reputed as men of no valour, it woulde haue caried great preiudice with it, ſo as the lawe it ſelfe ſhould haue had no great reuerence, men would haue made no account of it, and the very common people would haue ſhrunke away from the expounders thereof. Therefore it is not cauſeleſſe that Moſes telleth them, that *The Thumim and Vrim of god*, that is to ſay, his perfections and teachings are in that tribe, and God will haue it knowen, that there remaineth not nowe any ſuch reproch there, as there did before, but rather that hee ſetteth his antſignes there. For in Aarons Mytre was Gods name, euen the name of the *Euerlaſting*: and that was a thing exempted from all the world. Alſo there was *the iudgement*, as I ſaide afore. And for what cauſe was Aaron apparelled after that manner, but to ſhewe that in him there was a myrrour of Gods glory? Sith it was ſo, it behooued the people to forget Leuies fault, and the puniſhment thereof which had beene laide vppon him and his offſpring; and to receiue Gods Lawe at the mouth of the Leuites, and to haue them in eſtimation, and to honour them as Gods meſſengers, or rather as Angels as they be termed in the Prophet Malachie. True it is that Moſes was of the ſame tribe: but yet did God ſo prouide, that the ſkorners could not alledge that he had fauored his owne linage or houſe. And why? Who is hee that pronounced that ſentence againſt Leuie? Euen Moſes himſelfe: for it was he that compyled the booke of Geneſis, wherein hee ſpared not the fault of his own auncetor. For it behoued him to be as Gods notarie, to ſet down ÿ ſentence both vpon Leuie and vppon all that came of his race. Heere then wee ſee that Moſes behaued not himſelfe after the manner of men; but executed faithfully the charge that was committed vnto him. Again, the highprieſthood was not in his owne houſe, though it were in his owne tribe. He was a greater man than his brother Aaron, and hee had children which might haue ſucceeded in his place. And yet for all that, hee made none of them prince of the people, he made none of them a gouernour, neither had they any preheminence aboue the others: nay, they had not ſo much as any portion of inheritance, but were faine to be contented with the firſt fruits, Tythes, and Offerings, after the cuſtome [of the reſt] of the tribe of Leuie. Moſes then gaue not the Highprieſthood to his owne children, neither tooke he it to himſelfe. What were Moſes his children then, and al his ſucceſſours? They were but vnderſeruants of the meaneſt in the Temple, and they were faine to ſerue there, euen without being in any degree of honour. God (ſay I) mẽt to prouide, that Moſes ſhould not bee ſubiect to any ſlaunder. And therefore the thinges which hee ſpeaketh now of the tribe of Leuie, are not ſpoken in reſpect of his owne auncetrie: for (as we ſee) he is not led by fleſhly affection, and that doth the verie thing it ſelfe ſhewe, inſomuch that all the malicious ſort and all the ſkorners of God muſt needes haue their mouthes ſtopped heere, conſidering his wonderful prouidẽce in cutting off occaſion of all ſlaunder as I ſaide afore. Moſes then had none other reſpect, but that God ſhoulde be honoured, that the doctrine of the Lawe ſhould be receiued with al reuerence, and that forſomuch as Leuie was choſen thereunto, and the Prieſthood was to continue in his houſe; thoſe which were ſo ſet in office ſhoulde not be hindered in their proceedings for the building vp of the Church, nor haue any blemiſh in their perſons, which might diminiſh the authoritie of the doctrine which they brought. That is the thing in effect whereat God amed.

od.28.36

al.2.7.

But nowe let vs lay forth the whole by percelmeale. He ſaith firſt of all, *Thy Thumim & thy Vrim.* I haue tolde you already that theſe two words betoken Gods perfections, and his lights or doctrines. Now in effect we be done to vnderſtande heere, that Aarons apparell was no vaine thing; it was not an attyre to giue a glittering ſhewe to mens eyes: but God intended to figure a greater and more excellent thing thereby; which is, that the Prieſt ſhould not be as a common man, but ſhould haue in him things which could not be comprehended. And in very deed, his bearing of Gods eſſẽtial name in his Mytre, ſerued to ſhewe that hee ſurmounted all the worlde and al the creatures therein. There was in his Mytre, *The Euerlaſting*: and that name agreed to none but to God himſelfe. Needs then muſt it bee, that the highprieſt was a figure of our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt, who is God manifeſted in fleſh. God therefore intended to ſhewe, that none of all the Ceremonies of the Lawe, were as toyes for babes to play withall like the traſh of the Papiſtes, who haue a great ſort of pelting gewgawes, and in all their Ceremonies doe nothing but make as it were maygames or ſtageplayes; after which manner the heathen folke alſo haue ſtore of murlymewes and trifles, and yet all is but a hotchpotch. And why? For there is no doctrine, there is nothing but daſeling of mens eyes, it cannot bee ſaide vpon knowledge that God hath commaunded them, or that hee hath appointed them to ſuch ende or ſuch vſe. I graunt that the Papiſtes contriue good ſtore of gay thinges in their Maſſe, as who would ſay, this figureth ſuch a thing, and this ſuch a thing. And yet for all that, all is but leaſing: for they haue forged them of their owne heads. But God had as it were his lampe lighted in all the Cere-

Exod.28.36

1.Tim.3.16.

ronies of the Lawe,to the intent that the people ſhoulde be furthered by the helpe of them: inſomuch that they knewe wherefore Aarons Breſtlap was named *Rightfulneſſe*, and why theſe parts [of *Thumim and Vrim*] were named *Perfections and lights*.It was to doe vs to wit,that God tooke no pleaſure in outward things; for hee is not like men, which are rauiſhed with the outwarde appearance and gay ſhew of things. God hath no ſuch thing in his nature. But by thoſe Ceremonies,he meant to betoken farre greater things, vntill the trueth of them appeared in Ieſus Chriſt. Likewiſe all the things that were done in the Lawe, had a reſpect to the paterne Exo.25.40. Heb.8.5. which Moſes had ſeene in the mountaine, and ſo conſequently all things were ſpirituall, as is ſaide of them in the 25.of Exodus.Let that then ſerue for one point.

Much more reaſon is it that we nowadayes ſhoulde abſtaine from all trifling Ceremonies, becauſe our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt is come, & hath brought vs the trueth of the things which were ſet downe in ſhadowes vnder the lawe. In the time of the Lawe, it behoued the highprieſt to bee appareled [after his peculiar manner,] yea and all the whole lyne of the prieſtes had certaine markes to be knowen by, as who woulde ſay,We be ſanctified to God.But ſpecially when the highprieſt was to go into the ſanctuary, hee was then as it were to bee altogether diſguiſed, there were not the thinges to bee perceiued in him which had beene in men afore:and that order was to bee obſerued in the abſence of our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt. But nowe all thoſe thinges are aboliſhed. Nowe if men inuent thinges of their owne fancie,(as we ſee there is an infinite gulfe of gewgawes in the popedome): what will become of it? The things which God inioyned with his owne mouth tooke their ende at the comming of our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt. And why? For we haue no mo lightes, or teachings in pic- Exod 28.12 Coloſ.1.15. tures; wee haue them not any more in Aarons breſtlap, but wee haue them in our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt, who is the liuely image of God his father, in beholding of whom face to face,we bee there as it were transfigured into the glorie of 2.Cor.3.14. God. As ſainct Paul ſaith, there is no more any veyle in the Goſpel, as there was in the Lawe. Moſes was to haue his face couered with a veile to ſhewe that the Lawe did not yet diſcouer things ſo plainly as the Goſpel doth at this day. If men thẽ take vpon them to inuent figures of their owne braine, what can they be but illuſions from Satan? Wherefore let vs conclude, that when the Prieſtes do apparell themſelues [with their trinkets] in the popedome,they be but maskingtoyes; and wheras in ſo doing they will needes reſemble the Iewes, it is all one as if they trode Ieſus Chriſt vnderfoot,or elſe would burie him, that men might no more looke him in the face,nor he be neere vnto vs, nor wee any more perceiue the worthines that is in him and in his office. That is the thing which wee haue to remember vppon this text where Aarons ornamentes are termed perfections and teachings.

And it is ſaide *that his perfections and teachings* are of God, to ſhewe that in the gouernement of the Church, it is not for vs to inuent what ſeemeth good vnto vs; but that that matter lyeth ſimply in the will of God, and that whatſoeuer he ordeyneth ought to bee held, and that it is not lawfull for men to attempt any thing in that behalfe,yea and that ſuch additions and minglinges are mere corruptions. Therefore when Moſes ſayeth, *Lord God thy Thumim and thy Vrim*, thereby he openly witneſſeth, that when men do ſo farre paſſe their boundes, as to frame a gouernement after their owne fancie, and to ordaine laws and ſtatutes in the church, to ſay this is good,for it liketh me well; It is but a tradition that commeth from ſome one man; and when men do ſo preſume of themſelues, it is a taking away of Gods right; and a committing of diueliſh trecherie.And why?Becauſe the Thumim and Vrim belong to none but God. If the figures of the law,which ſeemed to be ſmall things,were reſerued vnto God, ſo as it was not lawfull for the world to adde any thing, no not ſo much as a pins point vnto them;but that the builders of the ſanctuarie and the makers of the prieſtly garments, were to bee gouerned by the holy Ghoſt: ſeing that God declareth therby that he will haue all things grounded vppon his authoritie: What is to be ſaide to it, if they will nowe binde mens conſciences, and ſet vp a newe ſeruice of God, as if they woulde ſay, Thus ſhall God be honoured, and ſo men become lawgiuers, inſomuch that God ſhall not be heard,nor any account bee made of his ſayings, but that euery man may bee his owne ruler,or elſe ſay after the common manner,Our mother the holy Church hath ſo decreed? In what plight ſhould we be then? And yet we ſee this horrible diſorder throughout all the Popedome. Therefore wee may well conclude that there is nothing but vtter defiling of Gods ſeruice; and that all that euer is ſo intytled there, is but meere ydolatrie; and that Gods name is altogether vnhallowed in that behalfe. That is one thing more which we haue to beare in mind concerning the ſaying of Moſes in that he attributeth the matter concerning the prieſtly apparell vnto God alone.

And as we haue ſeene afore, hee calleth Aaron *Gods meeke one*,or rather *the man of his pitie*:& this latter interpretation is the fitteſt. Yee ſee then how Aaron was exalted to high dignitie. And why? To the intent men ſhould not ſeeke any reaſon thereof in Aarons owne perſon, Moſes ſetteth downe Gods freegoodneſſe aforehande, after which manner we ſee how ſainct Paul alſo ſpeaketh. He confeſſeth that hee was 1.Cor.15.1[illegible] ſomtime a murderer a perſecuter,a blaſphemer; for he had conſẽted to the ſheading of guiltleſſe bloude: hee was a deadly enemy to the Goſpel; hee was full of bitterneſſe, full of rage, and hee inforced the weakelings to blaſpheme the name of God. Nowe if hee were a rauening woolfe, was hee worthy to bee made a ſheepherde in the Church? Verily hee confeſſeth him ſelf vnworthie,yea and that he was the leaſt of all others. But yet in the meane while hee ſhrowdeth himſelfe vnder the grace of God, ſaying, *Paul an Apoſtle*. As howe? According to the wil of god the father, according to the grace of our Lord Ieſus Chriſt, according to the euerlaſting purpoſe of God. Heere hee ſtoppeth the mouthes of all ſuch as woulde enter into contention with him, to abaſe the dignitie of his Apoſtleſhip; proteſting that it is not grounded vppon his owne merits, nor gotten by his owne purchaſe, and therefore he cannot boaſt thereof, but that all commeth of God. As much doth Moſes heere, ſaying that the *Thummim* & *Vrim*, of God belonged vnto him, becauſe God had choſen him, yea euen meerely of his owne gratious goodneſſe. Although Aaron had neuer obtained ſo excellent a ſtate, if God had reſpect to the thinges that were in him: yet neuertheleſſe he was placed in the degree of Prieſthood. And why ſo? Becauſe it was Gods good pleaſure, and further men muſt not diſpute thereof. And heereby wee ſee that when God giueth his gratious giftes to men to ſerue him in any honourable office, his ſo doing is euermore of his owne louing kindneſſe, for hee is not any whit bounde to vs. And ſpecially when the caſe concerneth the preaching of Gods worde, who is hee that ſhalbe found meete for it (ſaith Sainct 2.Cor.2.16 Paul)? The thinges are ſo high that hee crieth out, who is he that can be able thereto? There 2.Cor.3.5.6 is none but God (ſaith he) that giueth abilitie. For without him we ſhould not haue ſo much as one good thought. And ſo wee be doone to vnderſtande, that we on our ſide are vnprofitable, vntill God haue choſen vs, and diſpoſed vs to ſerue him. That being done, we be good, we be readie, we be fit for ẏ purpoſe. Not for any worthineſſe that is in vs, but that euerywhit of it proceedeth of Gods freegoodneſſe & mercy.

By the way, heere is an exception taken againſt Aaron, *that God tried him in Maſſa, and that hee ſtoode in contention at the waters of ſtrife.* True it is that this may be taken as though Aarons faith had not failed, when God rebuked him. And it is certaine, that at that time, in the deede which is reported heere, Aaron ſhewed a commendable ſtoutneſſe: and yet for all that hee ſwarued aſide, for God condemned him. The place was named Maſſa, that is to ſay, *tentation or triall*; and after *Meriba*, which ſignifieth ſtrife, contention, debate. It was the place Exod.17. where the people required water, yea and they required it with grudging and repyning againſt God. There Moſes & Aarō were as it were ouercome: after ẏ ſuſteining of ſo many incounters, they wiſt not what to ſay or what to do. Ah lord, what ſhall we do to this people? Now ſurely there was ſome faultie infirmitie in them, and God who is the competent Iudge thereof, declareth that it was ſo. Yee ſee then that Moſes and Aaron ouerſhot themſelues, ſo as they fell: inſomuch that they were in verie deede baniſhed out of the Lande of Chanaan: they might not enter into it, God excluded them from it: they ſawe it a farre off, but they might not ſet their feete in it. And the reaſon is added expreſly, becauſe (ſaieth hee) yee ſanctified mee Deut.32.51 not before the people; for there ought to haue beene a farre greater conſtancie in them than there was. And although Moſes and Aaron were ſore grieued, and were touched with zeale to the quicke when they ſawe the ſpitefull dealings of the people, and although they laboured to cauſe them to honour God: yet were they not couragious ynough. This would be counted no fault at all in the iudgement of men, as wee haue ſeene heretofore: but God looketh more deepely and cleerely into things, and wee muſt holde our ſelues to the thinges which he telleth vs with his owne mouth. Yee ſee then how Moſes and Aaron are condemned, and yet was there courage in them. For Moſes rebuked the people, ſaying: Come on yee faithleſſe folke, is Num.20.10. not God able to make water to come out of this Rocke? Yes, and that ſhall you ſee in deſpite of you. The people were at that time on a great rore, inſomuch that they would euen haue ſtoned him. Yet notwithſtanding hee behaueth him ſtill as Gods proctor to maintaine his qua- Exod.17. rell, he entereth into the caſe in Gods behalfe, and he hazardeth his life for it. So then there was excellent corage and ſtoutneſſe in Moſes and Aaron. But yet were they put to their triall, ſo as on the one ſide the weakeneſſe of their faith bewrayed it ſelfe, that there was ſome default in it; and they were faine to acknowledge it with humilitie, and patiently to beare ſuch chaſtiſement as God ſent them for it: howbeit, on the otherſide alſo they ſhewed ẏ they were not ſo greatly diſmayed, but that they had ſtill an affection to ſerue God. And ſoothly we ſhal diuers times ſee Gods ſeruauntes ſore ſhaken, and ẏ foraſmuch as they be men they be moued when there commeth any great tempeſt: but yet for all that they do not vtterly quaile. Euen ſo ſtoode the caſe with Moſes and Aaron.

And for that cauſe is it ſaide in this place, *Thou trieddeſt him in Maſſa, thou madeſt him to ſtriue* [or contend] *at the waters of Meriba.* And in that reſpect did I ſay, that this might be taken as though Aaron were taunted for not being obedient ynough vnto God at Meriba, and for that hee ſanctified him not by indeuouring himſelfe as he ought to haue done. Neuertheleſſe, it may alſo be noted, (as truth is), that Aaron was tryed as in reſpect of men, and that being ſo tried [or tempted by men,] he was found faithfull, in that hee ſtoode ſo in contention with them. For wee ſee not that he for his part murmured againſt God, neither ſcaped there any worde of grudging from him. Was hee caried with ſo diueliſh rage as to ſay, Shall we die heere for thirſt? No: he would rather haue died a hundred thouſand times, than once haue opened his mouth to caſt forth one word of murmuring againſt God. What befel him then? By reaſō of the ſpitefulnes of the people, there was a fault committed. For Aaron himſelfe held alwayes on Gods ſide: and therefore although he did amiſſe; yet the ſame proceeded not of himſelfe. And it is the very ſame thing wherewith we haue ſeene Moſes vpbraid the people, ſaying that he himſelfe was puniſhed for their rebellions ſake. Deut.1.37. You be the cauſe (ſaith he) that God hath diſappointed me of going into the land of Chanaan. Hee ſaieth not, I am ſhut out of it for mine offence; but hee caſteth the people in the teeth with it, ſaying; you were the cauſe of it. And ſo it is declared yet once againe in this place, that Moſes and Aaron ought not to be the leſſe eſteemed of the people, nor the prieſthood the leſſe honoured for that there was ſome infirmitie in them which was faultie before God. For therewithall they had alſo a wonderfull ſtoutneſſe of minde, which is ynough to ſtoppe the mouthes of all the worlde, whereby Moſes and Aaron ſhewed themſelues faithfull at the ſame time, ſo as a man might well ſee that what feebleneſſe ſo euer was in them, it could not cauſe them to be corrupted and caried away by the leawdneſſe of the people, or make them to forſake their charge; but they continued in weldoing, and ſtoutly withſtoode all temptations and incounters, ſhewing that their deſire was nothing elſe but that God ſhould haue his due deſerued authoritie among the people, and bee obeyed of all men.

Nowe let vs fall downe before the maieſtie of our good God with acknowledgement of our faultes, praying him to vouchſafe to make vs perceiue them more and more, and that hauing rid vs of all our wicked luſts, he drawe vs fully to himſelfe, and that we may dayly profite and increaſe in his grace, vntil ẏ being departed out of this world, we be come to his heauenly glorie: & ẏ foraſmuch as we be now a prieſtly kingdome, 1.Pet.2.9. it may pleaſe him to cloth vs with ẏ righteouſneſſe & vncorruptnes of our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt; not in figure as the prieſtes of the Lawe were; but by renewing vs in ſuch wiſe by his holy ſpirite, that although wee bee not perfect at the firſt day, yet we may at leaſtwiſe attaine to that perfection which he calleth vs vnto. That it may pleaſe him to graunt this grace, not onely to vs, but alſo to all people and Nations of the earth, &c.

On Wedneſday the firſt of Iuly, 1556.

The CXCIIII. ſermon, which is the fourth vpon the xxxiij. Chapter.

9 Which hath ſaide of his father and of his mother, I haue not ſeene them, nor hath knowen his owne brethren, nor alſo hath knowen his owne children. For they ſhall keepe thy ſayings, and obſerue thy couenants.

10 They ſhal teach thy iudgements vnto Iacob, and thy Law vnto Iſrael. They ſhal ſend vp perfumes to thy noſethrils, and lay whole burnt offerings vpon thine Altar.

11 O Lorde, bleſſe his ſubſtance, and make the worke of his hands pleaſant vnto thee. Breake the backebones of ſuch as hate him, that they may not riſe vp againſt him.

WE be to proceed with the bleſſing of the tribe of Leuy, which I began to declare yeſterday. I tolde you in fewe wordes, that there Moſes intended to ſtabliſh thoſe whom God had choſen to bee his prieſtes, becauſe it was verie needefull to keepe them from contempt of the people, leaſt men might haue made none account of the doctrine which they were to deliuer vnto them: and therefore it behoued them to be in good eſtimation as Gods ſeruaunts and repreſenters of his perſon. And that is the cauſe why Moſes declareth that although Aaron was tried in Maſſa, and ſuffered ſome trouble: yet notwithſtanding God ceaſed not to retaine him ſtill in his ſeruice, yea euen him and all his offſpring. And nowe Moſes ſheweth whereunto God had called the houſe of Leuie, and what was the office of the highprieſt. He ſaith firſt of al, *That they knew neither father nor mother, that they had forſaken their owne Children, and that they tolde their brothers they wiſt not who they were.* And that is to ſhewe, that foraſmuch as God had choſen them, it behooued them to forget all thinges, that they might giue themſelues wholly vnto him. Nowe wee knowe that when the Prieſtes were preſented as all other oblations Nomb.8.10.11. were; men laide either their one hande or both their hands vppon them; to betoken that they were no more at their owne libertie, but that they were ſãctified to ſuch a vſe, as it behooued euery one of them to imploy themſelues wholly to their office, and to be altogether at the appointment of God. True it is that the ſame condition is required of all the faithfull, for we ought to bee dedicated vnto God in ſacrifice. Rom.12.1. But yet muſt the preachers of the worde leade the daunce, and conſider themſelues to bee double bounde, yea and more ſtraitly. The thing then which Moſes meant to betoken in this text, is that ſeeing God had ſo highly honored noured the tribe of Leuie, as to haue them all to be his Prieſts: it behoued them to forget both father and mother, & to be vnaddicted to their fleſhly affections, yea and to giue ouer eue͂ their owne children. Not that God intended to alter the order of nature, but to ſhewe that when the caſe ſtandeth vppon the performance of their charge, they muſt not bee turned from it by any worldly reſpect, neither muſt any thing withholde them from executing throughly & faithfully whatſoeuer God commaundeth them. Now then, he that will ſerue God muſt not forget his father & mother by forbearing to do his natural duetie towards them: but he muſt preferre God before all men, according to this ge- Luke 14.26. nerall ſaying, that we cannot be the diſciples of our Lord Ieſus Chriſt, except wee hate both father and mother. The word *hate* is yet ſomwhat harder than that which is conteined heere in Moſes: but the meaning is not darke at all. For our Lord Ieſus doth vs to vnderſtand, that wee muſt make ſuch account of him, that both father & mother muſt be as nothing in compariſon of him, that the husbande muſt leaue yͤ loue which hee beareth to his wife, and the father muſt ſet aſide the care of his children, that wee may keepe on our way roundly: inſomuch that when the caſe ſtandeth vppon yeelding record to the Goſpell, and of cleauing to our Lord Ieſus Chriſt, all worldly thinges muſt be quite and cleane wyped out of our hearts. And ſo we ſee nowe the meaning of Moſes. And in very deed, the ſame appeared as well in himſelfe as in his brother Aaron. At ſuch time as the Calfe was made and the people had defiled themſelues with ydolatrie, we ſee with what zeale Moſes was carried, and likewiſe all the tribe of Leuie. For hee willed euery man to take his Exod.32,27 ſworde in his hande. Let vs goe (ſaith hee) and ſanctifie you your handes to the Lorde. For in ſo doing yee ſhall ſhewe your ſelues to be rightly zealous of Gods ſeruice, in that yee kill your owne brethren without ſparing, ſo as in this caſe the order of nature be put vnder foote, to ſhewe that God is aboue all, and ought to beare chiefeſt ſway. Seeing then that Moſes maketh ſuch an execution, that hee carieth with him the whole tribe of Leuie: wee ſee it is not ſaide in vaine that the Prieſtes executed vengeance both on father and mother, that they did ſhut their eyes againſt al that euer might coole them or reſtreine them; and that God had ſo rauiſhed them, as they ſought nothing but the maintenance of his honour, and the executing of his vengeance vpon ſuch abhomination as had bin committed againſt him for to deface his honor in Iſrael. Neuertheleſſe we muſt note that no one deede is ſpoken of heere alone: but Moſes meant to ſhewe in fewe wordes, that God had choſen that tribe, with condition that it ſhould be holy vnto him, and that they all ſhould ſhewe the way to all the reſt of the people. But wee know it is vnpoſſible to pleaſe God, ſo long as wee bee too much affectioned towardes men. And therefore we haue heere a rule, that if wee intende to walke aright, and not to halt before God; we muſt not be intangled in our fleſhly affections, no not euen in thoſe which are moſt commendable, or at leaſtwiſe which may haue moſt excuſe. Men cannot condemne him which honoureth his father and mother, for it is a vertue, and wee knowe that God hath commaun- Exod.20.12. Ephe.6.2. ded it with a promiſe. The man that loueth his wife, ſhall not bee the leſſe eſteemed for it: but what ſhalbe ſaide of the man which hath not a care of his children? He were worſe tha͂ a brute beaſt. And Sainct Paul ſaith that ſuch folk ſhal- 1.Tim.5.8. be condemned by the vnbeleeuers, becauſe the vnbeleeuers do ſhewe them their leſſon. Then is it a commendable vertue for a man to loue his father and his mother and his neighbours: but yet muſt all theſe bee forgotten when God commeth in place, and when his honour is put into the balance to be compared with the duety which wee owe to all creatures. For then, (as I ſaide afore) God muſt go formoſt, and al the reſidue muſt follow. Inſomuch that if we ſhoulde be turned quite away from them for the doing of ſuch things as God commandeth to be done for his honour, the order of nature ought to beare no ſway in that behalfe, but rather to bee vtterly ouerthrowen.

True it is that here he ſpeaketh of the Leuits which were in olde time: yet notwithſtanding, they which at this day do preach Gods worde are bound to the like, and ought to vnderſtande that Gods putting of them in that office & degree, is to the intent they ſhoulde ſo giue themſelues vnto him, as that they ſhould not be turned away from him, neither for regard of their owne perſons, nor for any earthly affection, nor for any loue of the world. Then muſt they fight againſt thoſe thinges; and although there bee great hardnes in it; yet muſt they inforce themſelues neuertheleſſe. For we ſhall not ſo fully ouermaſter our ſelues at yͤ firſt, that we ſhalbe able to forget both our wiues and children. But yet is it no excuſe to alledge that we be weake, and yͭ the things which we haue by kind cannot be ſo ſoone forgotten: we muſt fight againſt the͂ neuertheleſſe. For if we be rechleſſe, heere our condemnation is giuen vpon vs. How then ſhall the miniſters of Gods word performe their dutie faithfully? Euen by hauing the one foote co͂tinually lifted vp to depart out of the worlde, ſo as neither houſhold nor any thing elſe do hold them backe from dedicating themſelues wholly vnto God, be it to liue or die. That is the end whereat we muſt begin. Now in very deede that cannot be done throughly: but yet muſt wee indeuour and inforce our ſelues to that ende, and dayly labour and take paines to profite, & to go forward in that behalf. Moreouer foraſmuch as nowadayes al of vs are Leuits & a kingly prieſt- 1.Pet.2.9. hood, as the people of Iſrael were: let vs note yͭ this matter belongeth partly vnto vs all. For we heare how it is ſaide by the Prophet, that in the Eſay.66.21. reigne of our Lord Ieſus Chriſt, thoſe which afore were but Leuits, to be porters of yͤ temple, or to make cleane the veſſels, or to doe the reſidue of the baſe ſeruices; ſhalbe high prieſts: and that the common people which durſt not enter into the Temple afore, ſhalbe of the order and degree of Leuits. And in very deede, at this day Heb.10.19. 20. the ſanctuarie of God is ſet open vnto vs by the bloud of our Lord Ieſus Chriſt, the veile is rent aſunder, and wee goe in vnto the maieſtie of God, as the high prieſtes did of olde time vnder the Lawe. Seeing that God hath ſo greatly inhonoured the faithfull vnder the Goſpell, that hee hath ſet then in equall degree with thoſe which were Leuits in the materiall tabernacle which was but a figure: it behoooueth vs well to conſider what hath beene ſaid concerning the Prieſts of old time; and all of vs from the higheſt to the loweſt, ought to know that we cannot ſerue God without forgetting our father and mother, according to the forealledged ſaying of our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt, who ſpeaketh there not of his diſciples onely. True it is that it behoued them to be the foreleaders, and by their example to induce the faithfull to the reſtreining and diſpatching of their owne affection, and of all that euer they haue of nature; but yet our Lord Ieſus ſheweth that no man can followe him, nor come vnto him to continue ſtedfaſtly in yͤ Goſpel, but with condition of forgetting his father and mother, and of forſaking his wife, and of giuing ouer his own children. After what manner? Not that we do it of our owne head, for euery man ought to diſcharge his dutie as much as he can. But if a man bee called to forſake his wife and houſhold for witneſſing of yͤ Goſpel: he muſt be turned from them as if he had his bowels plucked from him; and yet for all yͭ hee muſt rather chooſe to haue the one halfe of himſelfe taken from him, than in any wiſe to ſhrinke away or to eſtraunge himſelfe from Ieſus Chriſt. That is the thing which we haue to gather vpon that text.

Nowe hee addeth thereunto, *That they ſhall keepe the ſayings of the Lorde, and holde faſt his couenant.* True it is, that foraſmuch as the Law was giuen to all the children of Abraham without exception, the thing that is ſpoken here belonged alike to all the other tribes. And wee haue ſeene already, that the Leuites were not the onely folke which were commaunded to keepe the doctrine conteined therin: but it was ſaide [indifferently to all the reſt,] Yee ſhall Deut.27.1. keepe my Statutes. When God ſaid ſo, hee directed his ſpeech to all the children of Iſrael. Yet notwithſtanding (as I ſaide afore) it behooued the prieſts who had the charge of drawing the people, and of holding them vnder the obedience of God, to ſhewe them the way, and to haue a more ardent zeale to keepe the lawe faithfully. That is the cauſe why Moſes giueth them that title. But wee muſt note that theſe wordes *keepe* and *maintaine*, importe two thinges; that is to wit, that the Leuites ſhoulde teach the people the Lawe (as ſhalbe ſhewed more at large); and alſo holde them in awe, that the religion might be preſerued pure, ſo as the people might not ſtart away to ydolatrie and ſuperſtition, nor leade a wicked and looſe life; but that God might bee honoured and ſerued. That is the firſt keeping which wee haue of the doctrine. And for the ſame cauſe doeth Moſes adde, *They ſhall teach thy Lawe vnto Iſrael, and thy Commaundementes vnto Iacob.* Then was it not ynough for the children of Leuie to walke vndefiledly and according to the doctrine of the Lawe; but alſo it behooued them all to haue the doctrine in their mouth, to giue inſtruction to their brethren, & to bring them alwayes to the knowledge of God, and to make them continue therein to the end.

The ſeconde manner of keeping was in good life, by ſhewing example and by being zelous to holde the people ſtill in order when they ſawe them ſtart aſide, as we knowe that the worlde is ouer fraile, yea and that we be ſo inclined to naughtineſſe and vice, that it is a great matter to vs if we be not vtterly diſſolute. Therefore it ſtoode the children of Leuie in hande to imploy themſelues thereabouts. And here we ſee, firſt that God meant not to make ydols in his Church, when he ordeined Shepherds and other men to haue ſome ouerſight and authoritie there. And if it were ſo in the time of the Lawe; much more ought it to bee ſo at this day. For (as wee ſhall ſee againe anon) the Prieſtes had the Ceremonies and manie like thinges, ſo as they were ſufficiently occupied about them, although they had not medled at all with teaching. But nowadays al thoſe things are ceaſed, and there remaineth no more but yͤ preaching of the Goſpel, and the miniſtring of the ſacraments, which are but feaw in number, and haue not ſo much adoe as was vnder the figures of old time. That is the cauſe why I ſaid, that if the Prieſtes which were before the comming of our Lord Ieſus Chriſt were bound to be Gods meſſengers in preaching his word and in giuing good inſtruction to the people, or elſe they were after a ſort diſgraded from their office: what ſhall become of it nowadayes, when ſuch as are ordained ſhepherds in the Church, haue none other charge but to teach folke publikely and priuately, and therewithall to miniſter the ſacraments? Seeing it is ſo, then is there no excuſe for ſuch as ſay they haue any charge or ſpirituall gouernement in the Church, if therewithall they haue not the doctrin in their mouth. Wherby it is apparãt, that in the Popedome there is nothing but confuſed diſorder, and that all thoſe which nowadayes doe name themſelues Biſhops and Prelates, are but ſcarebugs ſet vp by the diuell to bleare the eyes of the ignorant, and are folkes vnworthy to bee counted of yͤ flock, foraſmuch as they haue peruerted Gods order, and made ſuch a bottomles pit, that a man cannot diſcerne any remnant of that which our Lord Ieſus Chriſt had ordained among the faithfull. Seeing they haue altered and imbaced all thinges after that faſhion, they bee not worthy to bee of the number of Gods people, but rather of his deadly foes, and much leſſe ought they to be reputed for Sheepeherds. But foraſmuch as this deſerueth to be laid forth more at length; let vs begin at thoſe which are ſpoken of heere.

It is ſaide, *That the children of Leuie ſhall keepe the ſayings of the Lorde, and maintaine his doctrine, and preach his Lawe in Iacob.* Heere we ſee that becauſe the worlde is ſo weake, and ſo eaſily turned away from God & from the right way; it is requiſite that Gods word ſhold be preached, and that there ſhould be men appointed thereunto. It might be ſaid that euery man may bee his owne teacher, and that there needeth not any chooſing of ſome ſmall number of men to guide the reſt; for ſeeing we haue the Law and the holy ſcriptures, are not they ynough to gouerne vs? A man might ſo ſay. Yea, but they which giue out ſuch ſpeeches, did neuer examin their owne weakeneſſe, or rather how wicked the inclination of their nature is. For our Lord hath ſet downe an order, which he knoweth to be profitable for vs. And thereby he hath ſhewed vs, that of our ſelues we ſhould be caried away out of hande vnto euill, if wee were not reſtreined by the meane which he hath giuen vnto vs. And therfore it was requiſite that there ſhould alwayes be men appointed in the church to preach Gods word, to admoniſh the people, and to holde them in awe, and to withholde them from diſorder, ſo as the Religion might not be corrupted. We ſee then howe God condemneth our vnfaithfulneſſe in this behalfe, ſhewing vs that if we be not held back as it were by force vnder his yoke; we wil by and by play yͤ loſe coltes, and euery of vs will fling away after ſuch a ſort, that we ſhall become as ſtray beaſts. Seing that God telleth vs it, let vs learn to humble our ſelues, and to conſider what neede wee haue to hearken to his doctrin and to reſt theron. But there are a great many of fantaſtical perſons, which thinke it ynough for them to haue taken ſome taſt of yͤ Goſpel. And thereuppon it commeth that the world is nowadayes ſo full of vngodlynes as is ſeene euerywhere; inſomuch that the moſt part of ſuch as haue heard yͤ Goſpel become dullards, worldlings, and naughtipackes, euen like dogs, skorning all religion, or elſe letting it ſlippe like water (as they ſay) ſo as they paſſe not to continue ſtill brutiſh, yea and vtterly ſenſleſſe. The world at this day is full of ſuch vermin and doung. And what is the cauſe thereof? The foreſaid Rechleſnes, & finally alſo pride, where through a great number do beare themſelues in hand, yͭ they haue knowledge ynough to rule themſelues wel, & that it is needleſſe now to learne any more, and yͭ euery man may gouerne himſelfe as he liſteth. By reaſon wherof doctrin is deſpiſed & god is vnregarded, and therfore he muſt needs withdraw his ſpirit from ſuch folke. So then let vs learne to ſubmit our ſelues with all lowlynes and carefulneſſe to yͤ general rule which god hath ſet in his church, euen for euer; which is, that there ſhoulde bee men which ſhould haue the charge to teach vs, and that we ſhould hearken vnto them, and by that meane continue faſt knit together in the obedience of our faith with indiſſoluble bond, & become one body in verie deede, agreeing al in Gods truth and in the pure Religion. Marke it therefore for a ſpeciall point, that we haue then the true token that we be of Gods flocke, and of his Church, when his word is purely preached among vs, and euery of vs doth quietly receiue the doctrine at the mouth of ſuch as haue the charge to preach it. And therewithall, as I haue ſaide afore, it behoueuth thoſe which are called vnto that ſtate, to looke well to themſelues that they ſurmiſe not to thēſelues a fantaſticall dignitie in this world, to make thēſelues ydols. For wherefore be we ſhepherds, but to giue men the foode of life? In reſpect whereof it behoueth vs to bring folke vnto God, and to holde them ſtill vnder his gouernment. And that is vtterly vnpoſſible to be done, vnleſſe gods word doe ſounde and ring loude and ſhirle in our mouthes, ſo as folk may haue their eares beaten therewith, and be dayly prouoked to come vnto God, and to ſticke vnto him with ſuch firmneſſe and conſtancy, as wee may neuer ſtart away againe. For in all ages men haue miſuſed yͤ things which were ordeined for their welfare, & ſpecially vnto the people of God. We ſee howe the Prieſts themſelues ſtepped awry vnder the law. That is yͤ cauſe why yͤ Prophets crie out againſt them, that they be dumbe dogs, yͭ they be blinde watchmen, yͭ God had ſet thē as on a high ſtage or watchtowre, to the intent they ſhould keepe good watch for the preſeruation of the people & of the true Religion. But they were blinde. Again, he wold haue their mouthes open to teach & that whenſoeuer they ſaw any miſbehauiour, they ſhould crie out againſt it with open throat, as it is ſaid in yͤ Prophet Eſay. But they haue bin as dumbe dogs, they haue done nothing but fill their bellies, and as for the people, they paſt not though they wēt al to deſtruction & decay. We ſee then how yͭ vnder the Lawe, the Prieſtes did wickedly abuſe their vocatiō, inſomuch yͭ whereas they were vtterly corrupted, yet neuertheleſſe they would needes take vpon them to bee men of great valor, & be named Prelates of the Church. Howbeit in yͤ end, when God had well rebuked them, he giueth definitiue ſentence of condemnation vpon them by his Prophet Malachie, who was yͤ laſt of them. No, no (ſaieth he) pretend no more yͤ name of your father Leuie, ſay not any more yͭ God hath choſen you to the dignitie of Prieſthood, for Leuie walked in the feare of God, & kept his law: and the verie condition whereupen God called you, is that the lawe ſhould be in your mouth, ſo as men might ſeeke for learning at your hands, and you be as Gods meſſēgers and Angels. But you haue corrupted and falſified all thinges. And therefore I alſo doe renounce you and diſclaime you. After that maner did God ſpeake to the prieſts of old time.

Eſay 56.10.

Eſay 58.1.

Malach.2.6. 7.8.

Likewiſe let not vs thinke it ſtrange nowadayes, that theſe horned beaſtes of the Popedome doe ſtill vſurpe the title of Prelates and Biſhoppes, and will needes bee worſhipped, vnder colour of vaunting themſelues to haue the gouernement of the Church, which indeede is a ſtarke lye; for it behoueth vs to conſider whether they bee ſet vp by God or no, or whether they haue thruſt in themſelues or no. They haue no ſure grounde. For as it is ſaide in the fifth Chapter to the Hebrewes, No man ought to take authoritie vppon him in the Church, for it is not for any man to intrude himſelfe, but it behooueth vs to be called. Heb.5.4. Certaine it is that our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt declaring the will of God his father, and his owne will alſo, ordeined not dumbe folke thereunto; which ſhoulde but vaunt themſelues with a two-horned Myter and ſuch other gewgawes. Hee meant not to play a pageant, that men ſhoulde diſguiſe themſelues, and in the meane while no man know to what purpoſe thoſe things ſerued. Hee intended not that men ſhoulde play murlimewes, as one that coulde wel skill to mocke at God and all his doctrine by making of Croſſes and bleſſing of Altars. Our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt did not put forth any ſuch defilementes in his Church: but Satan corrupted all things. And therefore they which at this day doe terme themſelues Prelates in the Popedome, cannot alledge that they be ſent of God, nor that they ought to haue any authoritie or credite in the name of Ieſus Chriſt. For hee diſclaimeth them becauſe they haue not any likeneſſe to his inſtitution. Sith it is ſo, we may boldly conclude, that in Popery there is no Church at al, but a helliſh Synagogue: and that whoſoeuer medleth there or thruſteth himſelfe in among them, forſaketh Ieſus Chriſt, and cutteth himſelfe off as a rotten member from his Church. Loe at what point the Papiſtes are. It may bee that they will call vs heretikes and Schiſmatikes as they doe indeede. Yea, but they bee not our Iudges, and wee may boldly laugh at the ſentence which they giue vppon vs, as vaine. For wee haue our warrant in heauen, who alloweth vs, and holdeth them as accurſed. For we know that the true marke of ſheepeherds is to preach Gods worde, that men may inquire at their mouth howe to behaue themſelues according to Gods will, knowing that it is hee which ſendeth them vnto vs. And therefore whenſoeuer wee haue the Goſpell purely preached vnto vs, and that wee agree in vnitie of faith: God doeth vs to vnderſtande that hee dwelleth among vs, and our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt doeth then ſhewe himſelfe to bee the heade of that whole bodie. That is the thing which wee haue to gather vppon this text, where it is ſaide that the children of Leuie ſhall keepe Gods couenant. And why? For elſe it might periſh in the worlde; according whereunto 1.Tim.3.15. Saint Paul ſaieth, that the Church is the Arch, the Piller, and the vpholder of Gods trueth. And howe is that? Becauſe that men (as I haue ſaide afore) are ſo inclined to vanitie and leaſings, that they ſhoulde bee alienated out of hande from the pure Religion, if they were held ſtill by that meane. The Church then is as a Gardian to Gods trueth, to the intent it ſhoulde not bee done away, but that we ſhould alwayes haue that light among vs, and that wee might vnderſtand that where preaching is, there Gods voice ringeth in our eares, ſo as if wee were neuer ſo ſore ſhaken too and fro, yet doeth God giue vs a ſure ſtay wherewith to reſiſt all temptations. Yee ſee then how the keeping of Gods couenant is committed to the Leuits, and generally to all ſuch as haue the office of ſheepherds among Gods people.

Moreouer, for the better maintaining of the pure Religion, it behooueth them to haue a zeale of Gods honour; they muſt all their life long indeuour to maintaine the doctrine, and therewithall they muſt haue their mouthes open to preach the worde that is committed vnto them, to the ende that that treaſure bee not loſt nor buried, but that all men may bee made partakers thereof. *They ſhall preach thy lawe then vnto Iacob, and thy doctrine vnto Iſrael:* ſo as Gods worde muſt needes be publiſhed if we will ſhew our ſelues to bee a people dedicated vnto him. Againe, let vs marke alſo that heere is ſpeciall mention made of Gods worde and of his lawe, to doe vs to wit, that God will not haue mens inuentions to reigne among his people, but will haue men to hold themſelues wholly vnto him, and (as yee woulde ſay) to hang altogether vpon his mouth. Nowe then, the children of Leuie haue not here a libertie giuen them to forge lawes after their owne liking, and to ſet foorth whatſoeuer they liſt as the Pope and al his haue done. And it is to be ſeene yet ſtill at this day howe the ſame tyrannie reigneth in ſuch ſort, that whatſoeuer is termed by the name of Gods ſeruice in Poperie, is but a confuſed heape of all manner of dotages, whereunto euery man hath put to his peece, and yet they cannot alledge one ſyllable of holy ſcripture to ſhew that God alloweth their doings. But men haue ſtepped foorth through their owne diueliſh raſhnes, & haue made Lawes and Statutes to binde mens conſciences vnder paine of deadly ſinne: and moreouer haue coyned articles of faith at their owne pleaſure. From whence then hath all the doctrine of poperie beene taken? Not from the fountaine of ẏ truth; but from the helliſh & ſtinking puddle of Satan, where there is nothing but confuſion. Where haue they founde their praying vnto Sainctes, but in their owne braine, or rather that Satan hauing forged it in his ſhoppe, hath beſotted them therewith? Againe, where finde they any of the thinges which they ſpeak concerning works of ſupererogation, Merits, the Apes toyes of their Maſſe, and all their Ceremonies in generall? It is certaine that al theſe things were ſet forth by men. But contrariwiſe our Lorde hath tolde vs here, that he meaneth not to haue thoſe to put forth any thing of their owne, whom hee hath appointed to beare abroade his worde. For the commiſſion which hee gaue to the Leuites, was to ſet thoſe thinges abroade which they had receiued of him, and to deale them forth plainly and rightly to the people, taking good heede that they did not alter or falſifie any thing. And therefore let vs marke, that wee ſhall then bee allowed for Gods people, when our faith flittereth not, after the lure of mortall men, without knowing why wee beleeue, but that wee reſt wholly vppon God;

and that when wee knowe that wee haue his worde to rule vs by; then will hee vpholde and auowe vs to bee his Church. But yet muſt wee alwayes come backe to this, that it is not ynough for vs to haue the lawe written, and to haue Gods worde in our handes; and to make a priuate reading thereof at home in our houſes: but the ſame worde muſt alſo bee preached and expounded vnto vs. And why ſo? Becauſe Gods will is that it ſhoulde be ſo, and therefore wee muſt not diſpute vppon it. For why? The order which God hath ſet among vs, is not to bee broken. Neither hath hee doone it without cauſe and iuſt reaſon (as I haue ſaide alreadie) conſidering the frailtie that is in vs, and how eaſily wee be led to ſwarue aſide.

Moſes addeth heereunto, *That they ſhall put vp the perfume vnto the noſethrilles of the Lorde, and lay the whole burnt offerings vppon his Altar.* This concerneth the Ceremonies. For vnder the Lawe they had thinges which we haue not nowadayes, namely the figures of the things which were fulfilled in the perſon of our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt. For the Prieſthoode did vs to vnderſtande, that the people coulde not haue any acceſſe vnto GOD, without ſome meane. And when the people came to worſhippe God, and to offer ſacrifices; they helde themſelues in yͤ outmoſt court. There was the firſt part wherein they all held themſelues and it was not lawfull for them to preace any further. There was alſo yͤ ſanctuarie for the prieſts, and lodgings for the tribe of Leuie. Alſo there was the great Sanctuarie whereinto the highprieſt entered all alone with great ſolemnitie. And all this ſerued to ſhewe yet more liuely the death and paſſion of our Lord Ieſus Chriſt. But nowe all thoſe things are come to an end. For there is no more ſhadowing, the veile (as it is ſaid) is broken aſunder, and we haue the heauẽly ſanctuarie wherunto we be called right forth, and Ieſus Chriſt hath ſet it open for vs. And ſo there needeth nowe no more burntoffering, there needeth no more ſacrifiſing for ſinnes: for our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt hath by his one only ſacrifice wiped away the ſins of the world, & made an euerlaſting attonement, the vertue whereof can neuer be diminiſhed. As often then as we will preace vnto God, it is not for vs to bring thither either calfe or ſheep, but we muſt reſort to the bloudſhed of our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt, becauſe that thereby the euerlaſting redemption is purchaſed vnto vs. Nowe we ſee wherein the Prieſtes of the olde lawe differed from vs. Yet notwithſtanding, thoſe which are ordeined at this day to preach Gods worde ought to knowe that God will haue them to ſhewe the way in praying to him. And to that ende ſerued the perfumes that were made in the Temple. Let vs not thinke that God taketh pleaſure in any ſweete ſents, though mention bee made of his noſethrilles after that manner: for wee knowe hee hath no bodie, and therefore wee muſt not imagine him to bee like our ſelues: but the holy ſcripture ſpeaketh after that faſhion, becauſe we comprehend him not in his maieſtie. As for the perfumes then which were vnder the lawe, they ſignifie nothing elſe but the ſauour that is in our prayers and petitions, when wee come to offer our ſelues into the preſence of our God. True it is that all of vs both great and ſmall, may bleſſe the name of our God and yeelde him thankes. True it is that wee may with Rom.8.15. full libertie and open mouth call vppon him as our father, becauſe that in Ieſus Chriſt hee auoweth vs for his children. But howſoeuer the caſe ſtande, yet was that charge committed ſpecially to the miniſters of Gods worde, as is ſaide thereof in the ſixth Chapter of the Actes of the Apoſtles. It is ſaide that wee muſt Act.6.4. giue our ſelues to preaching and praying. And howe? Belongs it not to the whole bodie to doe ſo too? Yes verilie. But (as I haue ſaide) it is requiſite that thoſe to whom GOD hath committed the charge of his Church, and ought to watche ouer it, ſhoulde bee carefull to praye, as who ſhoulde ſay, yea Lorde, This is a charge which I were neuer able to beare, except I were vphelde by thy power: wherefore I pray thee vouchſafe to direct mee and ſtrengthen mee; and therewithall vouchſafe alſo to maintaine thoſe who thou haſt alreadie gathered together vnder thy banner, and to drawe thoſe thither which are away from it. Yea and ſhewing other men the way to pray, wee ought to frame our wordes after ſuch a ſort, as other men may take them as at our mouth. When the Miniſter is in the pulpit, hee is to vtterfoorth the common prayer, and all the reſidue are to ſay Amen, accordingly as Sainct Paul ſpeaking thereof in the fourteenth Chapter of the firſt Epiſtle to the Corinthians, ſaieth that 1.Cor.14.15 when prayer is made in the name of the whole congregation, there ought no moe but one to ſpeake, and all the reſt ought to aunſwere Amen; becauſe that they which ought to teach in Gods name, ought alſo to rule the reſt, and to prouoke them to prayer and ſupplication, by their example. And therefore let vs marke, that whereas heere is mention made of perfumes and ſacrifiſes; let vs (ſay I) mark the thing yͤ was peculiar to the Prieſts, namely how God would haue thẽ to guide the people to hope that there ſhould be a redemption wrought by the bleſſed ſeede of Abraham; and that the people were to be inured thereunto. As for vs, we haue not that office, yͤ is to wit, to be as in yͤ perſon of our Lord Ieſus Chriſt to make ſacrifices. But we haue the Sacramentes; we haue Baptiſme, which ſerueth to ſhewe howe we be made cleane before God: and wee haue the Lordes ſupper, wherein it is ſhewed vs that wee bee nouriſhed with the ſubſtance of our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt. Nowe then let vs vnderſtande, that as the Prieſtes were ordeined to repreſent in the Temple the Mediator which was to come: ſo we at this day doe repreſent him after another manner. Not by doing as yͤ Papiſts do who haue plaid yͤ Apes: For in their Maſſe (ſay they) they make a ſacrifice: but it is an abhomination which ſerueth to aboliſh the death and paſſion of our Lord Ieſus Chriſt. Nowe the vſe of the Sacramentes is cleane repugnant thereunto: For they ſerue vs to ſhewe in the name of our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt, that we haue bin once waſhed & made cleane, and that by meanes thereof men are reconciled by the ſacrifice of his death which was offered vp for them. Alſo when wee miniſter the Lords ſupper, we rehearſe what was ſaid by our Math.26.26 & 1.Cor.11.24. Lorde Ieſus Chriſt: This is my body which is deliuered for you: this my bloude which is ſhed for the ſaluation of the world. Seeing then that we nowadayes do miniſter the Sacraments after that manner; we take not vpon vs the thing that belongeth to our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt or to his office: but rather we ſende the people to the euerlaſting ſacrifice whereby we be reconcyled vnto God, ſo as we neede not any other meane or helpe than that. Moreouer in ſteede of the materiall perfumes which were in the Temple, at this day wee offer vp prayers vnto God, as thinges that caſt a ſweete ſmell vnto him.

Furthermore whereas it is ſaide *that God bleſſed the ſubſtance of Leuie, & accepted the worke of his handes, and that hee breaketh the backebones of all thẽ that ſet thẽſelues againſt him*: therby Moſes doth vs to vnderſtande that wee haue neede to pray our Lord Ieſus Chriſt to maintaine thoſe whom hee hath choſen and ſhouled out to preach his worde. For all Satans ſeeking is to plucke vp all the ſeede, as wee ſee is come to paſſe. For the diuell hath founde out ſuttle ſhifts to make many ſorts of ſhepeherds, Churchmen, and Clergimen. Wee knowe that the number of the Popiſh Clergie is infinite. There are ſuch a ſort of offices, and ſo many liueries of men of the Church as they terme them, that a man cannot tell at what point to bee. If a man ſhould recken vp the orders of Friers, hee ſhoulde bee at his wittes end, there is ſuch a rabble of them as woulde amaſe a man. Yee ſhall ſee their gray Fryers, white Friers, blacke Friers, and Friers of all ſortes. Againe there is ſuch a howge heape of ſtates and offices in the Popedome: as Patriarks, Archbiſhoppes, Biſhops, Archdeacons, Deanes, and other inferiour offices; as woulde make a man to wonder. Beſides this, there are a ſort of Sacramentes, to deceiue men the better, and to giue a pompe and maieſtie to al their gewgawes, which are but ſlights to ſerue Satan withall. For they bee all illuſions framed in his workehouſe. And of all this rout there is not ſo much as any one taile that doth his duetie in teaching Gods worde. Wee ſee then howe Satans wylyneſſe is ſuch, that hee will bring in maskingtoyes ynowe, and iuggling-trickes ynowe to holde ſtill the worlde in errour and ſuperſtition, vnder pretence that they may ſay, wee haue prelates, wee haue men of the Church, wee haue Clergimen. And in the meane while the thinges which our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt ordained are aboliſhed.

For this cauſe Moſes ſaieth, *That God maintaineth Leuies ſubſtance, and that hee breaketh and cruſheth all ſuch as ſet themſelues againſt him*. They that intende to ſerue God faithfully and to preach his worde, ſhall neuer want enemies to make warre againſt them, according as it is tolde vnto Ieremie, Goe thy wayes, I haue appointed thee to fight. Ier.1.10. Inſomuch that the man which ſerueth God in bearing his worde abroade faithfully ſhall neuer haue peace, nor goe vnpinched and vnuexed, nor bee without good ſtore of enemies. But what? Heere Moſes comforteth all ſuch as imploye themſelues that way. Although the worlde bee againſt them, and it ſeeme that they ſhoulde bee ouerwhelmed euery day: yet will GOD maintaine them, and breake the heades of all their enemies; according to this which is ſaide vnto Ieremie, Goe thy way, thou muſt fight: Iere.1.19. but thou ſhalt haue the vpper hande. Thou muſt bee faine to haue a foreheade of braſſe, that thou maiſt ſet thy ſelfe againſt the whole worlde and withſtande them. For in the ende they ſhalbe all broken and ouerthrowen before thee. Seeing wee haue this promiſe, let vs hold our owne & be ſtedfaſt, though wee ſee the whole worlde ſteppe vp againſt vs, knowing that God will beate downe all that ſet themſelues after that faſhion againſt them which indeuour to ſerue him faithfully. Moreouer let vs knowe alſo that this is ſpoken for all the faithfull, to the ende they ſhoulde bee deſirous to haue Gods worde maintained, and men to preach it, and that they ſhould all reach their handes vnto them. Let euerie man in his degree doe the beſt he can, that ſuch as do the duetie of Sheepherds, (ſuch as doe it, I ſay, and not ſuch as bragge and boaſt of it), may be ſtabliſhed and helped, ſo as there may bee an acorde betweene ſuch as report themſelues to bee the Children of God, and ſuch as feede them with the foode that God giueth them. That then is the thing whereat Moſes amed. Let vs note further, how it is not without cauſe that Moſes exhorteth the people to make ſuch intreatance for the bleſſing of Leuie and of his ſubſtance. For why? If wee bee deſirous that God ſhould continually prouide for his church: it behoooueth vs to haue a care to pray for thoſe to whom he hath committed the charge thereof. And if wee through our vnthankfulneſſe cauſe not God to bereaue vs of ſo great a benefite; let vs aſſure our ſelues that wee ſhall neuer want good Sheepeherds. Nowe then if our vnthankfulneſſe cauſe not the contrarie, let vs knowe that our Lord will alwayes prouide vs of fit and able men, and that he will hold them vnder his ſafekeeping, and maintaine them in ſpite of Satan and all the force of the worlde.

Nowe let vs fall downe before the maieſtie of our good God, with acknowledgement of our faultes, praying him to vouchſafe to make vs to feele them more and more, that wee may miſlike them: and therewithall to worke ſo mightily as we may not be turned away from him as wee haue beene, but that wee may proceede ſtill in the renewment which he hath commanded vs, vntill we haue throughly attained thereunto, & that our Lord Ieſus Chriſt do ſo reigne among vs, as we may bee true prieſts vnto him, becauſe that by his meanes wee alſo doe obtaine that grace and dignitie before God his father. And ſo let vs all ſay; Almightie God heauenly father, &c.

On Thurſday the ſecond of Iuly, 1556.

The CXCV. ſermon, which is the fifth vpon the xxxiij. Chapter.

12 Alſo he ſaide of Beniamin, The beloued of the Lorde ſhall dwell ſafelie by him. He ſhalbe a ſhadowe ouer him all the day, and he ſhall dwell betwixt his ſhoulders.

13 Alſo he ſaid of Ioſeph, His Land is bleſſed of the Lorde, through the heauenly ſweeteneſſe of the deaw, and of the waterſprings lying beneath,

14 And through the ſweetneſſe of the fruits of the Sunne, and the ſweetneſſe of the influence of the Moone,

15 And through the toppe of the auncient mountaine, & through the ſweetneſſe of the euerlaſting hilles,

16 And through the ſweetneſſe of the earth, and the plentifulneſſe therof. And the good fauour of him that dwelt in the buſh, ſhall come plentifully vppon the heade of Ioſeph, and vpon the Crowne of the Nazarits head among his brethren.

17 His beawtie is as the firſt borne of a bull, and his hornes are as the hornes of an Vnicorne. With them ſhall hee daſh the people together vnto the ends of the earth. Theſe are the thouſands of Ephraim and the thouſands of Manaſſes.

YEſterday in the bleſſing of Leuie, we ſawe this promiſe, that God will mainetaine ſuch as preach his worde faithfully, inſomuch that although they haue many enemies in this world, and bee aſſailed on all ſides; yet are they ſure that God will ſhewe himſelfe on their ſide, and ſtrengthen them when he ſeeth that Satan ſtreyneth himſelf by all meanes to make cleane riddance of them. And therein he hath an eye to yͤ welfare of all his people. For Gods Church ſhoulde periſh, if it were not preſerued by good and pure doctrine. God then muſt bee faine to reach out his mightie hande ouer all thoſe which preach his word, to the intent they may be mainteined though all the world ſtriue to ouerthrow them.

Nowe he ſpeaketh of Beniamin, and he ſaith, *That he ſhall dwell ſafely by God, and be his welbeloued; and that God will ſhelter him and dwell betwixt his ſhoulders.* I haue told you already that heere Moſes confirmeth and warranteth the promiſes which God had vttered afore by the mouth of Iacob: or elſe that where there was any hardneſſe in them, Moſes mitigateth the ſame, to the intent that the faithfull ſhould not bee troubled out of meaſure. As touching the tribe of Beniamin, Iacob had ſaide that it ſhoulde bee like a woolfe that ſnatcheth vp his pray in the morning, and diuideth the ſpoile at night. For that is the natiue ſenſe. Beniamin then ſhalbe as a rauening woolfe, alwayes giuen to the pray: inſomuch that when hee hath robbed in the morning, he ſhall diuide the ſpoile at night alſo. It is a harde condition that a people ſhoulde liue vppon robbing and rauening: and it might ſeeme by that meanes that they were diſgraded. For we knowe that all men will hate them that vſe ſuch violence and liue vpon the ſpoile of other men by doing them harme and anoyance. To be ſhort, it ſeemeth that the tribe of Beniamin ſhoulde become as robbers. Truely this was ſpoken in reſpect that in the ende they ſhoulde bee placed in the borders or marches of two kingdomes; which thing came to paſſe when the kingdome of Iſrael was departed from the tribe of Iuda. For then the one halfe of the tribe of Beniamin abode on the one ſide, and the other halfe on the other ſide; by reaſon whereof they were as members rent in peeces. And becauſe the firſt brunts lighted vppon them, ſo as they were faine to beare the firſt blowes: it behooued them alſo to be men of warre. That was the thing which Iacob had an eye vnto. Yet coulde it not bee but that the Beniamits muſt bee grieued, ſeeing that God did ſet them there, to maintaine themſelues by violence, and to bee alwayes with ſworde in hande. It was a verie harde caſe, whereat the faithfull might be ſore grieued and diſquieted. Heere therefore Moſes qualifieth the thing which might ſeeme ouer ſharpe in yͤ Propheſie of Iacob; in reſpect wherof he ſaith yͤ

Gen.49.17.

Beniamin ſhalbe Gods derling, and that he ſhall dwell ſafely by him. Soothly it was requiſite that the Beniamits,(at leaſtwiſe the faithfull ſort of thẽ) ſhould be comforted,becauſe there befel horrible enormities, ſo as it might haue ſeemed that God had appointed that houſe to bee as a lookingglaſſe of his wrath. At one time all the people Iudg.20. of Iſrael were faine to ſet themſelues againſt them to roote them out. And in very deede there was a ſolemne othe taken to haue ſlaine them all ſo as one man of them ſhoulde not haue beene left aliue: and they were driuen to deuiſe meanes howe to ſaue fower hundred men which were not in the battell,but were by chaunce in a Towne neere by. Ye ſee then how the tribe of Beniamin ſhould haue beene rooted out of the world.

Now it might ſeeme that by this meanes Satan had made a breach which God foreſawe not before it was come to paſſe, or elſe that hee had failed of his promiſe in maintaining the offſpring of Abraham. This (ſay I) was a great temptation. And therefore not without cauſe doth Moſes preuent it,and giue a good remedy to ſuch as could patiently beare the puniſhmẽts that God ſent vpon them: and he ſaith that yet for all that, that tribe ſhould not ceaſe to be beloued of God, and to dwell by him in ſafetie as vnder his hande. But wee muſt note that this profited not al of them in general. For the tribe Iudg.20.15 of Beniamin was great,and we ſee there went a great armie of them to the fielde: And needes muſt it bee that they were of great force, when all the people of Iſrael were faine to go to battell to puniſh the curſed deede which had bene Iudg.19.25 committed in murthering the Leuites wife,and the abhominable ſinne of Sodome which had reigned in the Citie of Gabaa;which had beene ſuffered by all the Beniamits; inſomuch that to mans ſeeming, God was minded to haue thundred downe vppon them, to ſhewe the like vengeance as he had done afore in Sodome & Ghomorre. It was not therefore for any ſmall number to haue done this. And ſo wee haue to gather, that when God maketh any promiſe to a Nation,a great number of them ſhal not faile to periſh; but yet thoſe which call vppon his name purely ſhalbe preſerued, as it is ſaide in Ioel.2.31. Ioel, Although there ſeeme to be ſome waterfloude to ouerflowe all; yet will God finde incomprehenſible meanes to drawe his ſeruantes out of it, ſo as they ſhall not periſh with the multitude. And therefore when wee haue any promiſe,let vs bethinke our ſelues, and receiue it with pureneſſe of faith: and then let vs not doubt but it ſhalbe performed. But if we thinke that God ſhould be bound vnto vs, becauſe we haue heard ÿ promiſe; and in the meane while bee diſordred and careleſſe of him, ſo as it may rather ſeeme that we would haue nothing at all to doe with him: ſurely hee can well ſhewe himſelfe to be faithfull and performe his ſaying, & yet wee notwithſtanding ſhall periſh, ſo as the ſame ſhall ſtande vs in no ſteade. And indeede, we ſee how God worketh after that manner for the preſeruation of the ſtate of his Church. He ſaith generally ÿ he is our defender: & yet notwithſtãding we ſee ÿ the greateſt number goes to wrecke, and that the number which remaineth is very ſmall. Yea, but yet doth God continually bring to paſſe, that his Church abydeth vnquenched, and that there is ſtill ſome remnant left, according to this ſaying of Eſay, Eſay 1.9. that he will reſerue ſtill ſome little ſeede. And therefore let vs beware that we be of the ſeede which God reſerueth to himſelfe, when hee puniſheth thoſe which turne away from him, notwithſtanding that they did erſt beare the name and title to bee of his houſe,and in deede God did direct the promiſes of ſaluation vnto them, but they receiued them not. Wherefore let vs take heede that wee run not into diſorder with the greater number.

And it is ſaide expreſly, *that God will ſhrowde him, dwelling betweene his ſhoulders.* Heere Moſes ſheweth why God will maintaine the tribe of Beniamin, which notwithſtanding might ſeeme to be vtterly periſhed: namely for ÿ he woulde dwel vpon his ſhoulders. For the temple was builded in the tribe of Beniamin. Although the kingdome was in the tribe of Iuda, and that the kinges houſe alſo was ſet there: yet in the parting of their inheritances, the mountaine of Sion fell to the lot of the Beniamits. God then dwelt vpon his ſhoulders or betweene his ſhoulders; as if a man ſhould beare ſome burthen vpon his necke,ſo doeth God declare that Beniamin did partly beare him as I haue tolde you, becauſe it was his will to dwell vpon him and to haue his Temple there. And he ſpeaketh of his ſhoulders as in reſpect of mount Sion. And ſo foraſmuch as Beniamin did beare God vpon his ſhoulders, that is to ſay, becauſe the Temple wherein it was Gods will to be ſerued, was builded in the tribe of Beniamin, and the people were to aſſemble on Sion to doe homage vnto God, and Beniamin ſerued to that purpoſe: therefore it is ſaide *that God was* (after a ſort) *vppon his ſhoulders.* That then is the reaſon why *Beniamin was well beloued of God.* Not that he had any whit deſerued it: for wherof came it ÿ God choſe mount Sion for his dwellingplace? Euen of his owne free loue, which hee bare to Beniamin. So then let vs not dreame that Beniamin preuented Gods grace with any worthineſſe: but Moſes declareth, that Gods vttering of his loue and fauour towards the tribe of Beniamin,& that there ſhould be a manifeſt recorde and token thereof in the building of the Temple there, and that the tribe of Beniamin ſhoulde euer continue vnder Gods protection; are thinges linked together. Inſomuch that although that tribe ſeemed to bee left vp to the ſpoile, and that their enemies had gotten the ouerhande of them: yet woulde God ſhewe himſelfe pitifull to maintaine them ſtill. True it is that in the ende all that Countrie was harryed, and wee ſee howe the Prophet Ieremie ſaieth thereof, that Rachel mourned Iere.31.15 for her children (for Beniamin came of her)and ſorrowed to ſee ſuch deſolation & waſt made, & could not be cõforted becauſe all were deſtroyed, and no tydings coulde bee brought vnto her of any reſidue that remained, but ſhee ſawe that all her bloude was ſhed, whereuppon ſhee was in anguiſh and as a woman forlorne. Surely Rachel was at that time deade: but the Prophet Ieremie ſpeaketh of her in way of a ſimilitude, and ſetteth her as a mother vppon a ſcaffolde weeping and lamenting to ſee one cut the throats of all her children. Thus ye ſee what befell; but that was an vtter extremitie. Yet for all this, God ceaſed not to performe his promiſe; but at the ende euen in the middes of Babylon, euen in that gulfe, he reſerued a remnãt of Beniamin, which returned home with the tribe of Iuda. They that were much more excellent in dignitie became as baniſhed folk, and God forſooke them as rotten members, ſo as they returned not any more into the inheritance of yͤ land of Chanaan, & the reſtingplace which god had foreappointed to their fathers. Ye ſee then how God continued ſtill his grace towardes the tribe of Beniamin; not that they had not horrible puniſhments, as it fell out afterwardes, but that God by his infinite goodnes ouercame the naughtineſſe of men.

To bee ſhort, let vs note, that when God giueth vs his promiſes after that maner; they ſhal ſeeme to be diſappointed of their effect and performãce through the vnthankfulnes of yͤ world; for yͭ there are a great many which refuſe Gods goodnes & ſhut the gate againſt him, ſo as they be not partakers thereof. That is the cauſe why God ſheweth not himſelf liberal towards vs any more. For if we could skill to inioy his goodnes; ſurely he would alwayes outgo our expectation, & all our wiſhes. But what? We will haue him to content vs, and to pleaſe vs in all caſes: and in the meane while it ſhould ſeeme that wee haue conſpired againſt him, to keepe him back from doing vs good. Therefore let vs not thinke it ſtrange if God perform not his promiſes which he hath made vnto vs with his owne mouth; for we our ſelues be yͤ cauſe thereof. Neuerthelater, although the world be ſo malicious and froward, that (to all ſeeming) men woulde wilfully diſappoint all Gods gratious dealings; yet notwithſtanding let vs not doubt but that there ſhall euer be ſome ſmal number whom God wil maintaine. Onely let vs indeuour to liue vnder Gods wings, that we may be preſerued by him, & ſuffer him to dwell betweene our ſhoulders. Wee heare what warning S.Paul giueth vs thereof, how he ſaith yͭ we muſt beare the Lorde both in our bodies & in our ſoules.

1.Cor.6.9.& 2.Cor.7.34.

True it is that there is not now any material tẽple builded any where, wherein to do ſacrifice: but euery of vs is yͤ temple of God, and that is with condition that wee ſhoulde beare him, according to S.Pauls ſaying, who vſeth the ſame word. And how do we beare him? In knowing that it belongeth to him to be the ſoueraine & to raigne ouer vs, and to haue al preheminence; & that it behooueth vs to bow downe our neckes to receiue his yoke, and to obey him in al reſpects. And if we do ſo, let vs not doubt but that God watcheth for vs cõtinually, ſo as all the aſſaultes and temptations of the world ſhall not preuaile any thing at all againſt vs. Inſomuch that although we be like to periſh a hundred times, yea and to bee ouerwhelmed; yet will he vtter forth his power to preſerue vs, and we ſhalbe ſaued in the mids of death, ſo as we may keepe on our courſe ſtil. When thunder ſeemeth to come downe from aboue, & nothing is to bee ſeene vpon earth but confuſion euery where; then let vs not doubt but God giueth vs incomprehenſible ſafetie. Thus much concerning the tribe of Beniamin.

Now commeth Moſes to the tribe of Ioſeph and ſaith; *That his lande ſhalbe bleſſed of God with the delectable fruites of the Sunne, with the fruites of the Moone, with the pleaſures of the Deaw from aboue, and of the depths from beneath*, that is to ſay, of fountaines and waterſprings which giue moiſture and nouriſhment to the earth: *That his honour ſhould be as the firſtborne of a bull; that he ſhall haue excellent hornes, wherewith to puſh againſt his enemies; that hee ſhall haue the olde mountaines, and the pleaſant hilles, where ſhalbe nothing but ſweetenes.* And afterward in the end it is ſaide, *That all theſe things ſhall come vpon the heade of Ioſeph, & vppon the Crowne of the heade of the Nazarite of his brothers.* Here we may ſee how the intent of Moſes was to confirme the things that Iacob had ſpoken afore: for he vſeth many of the ſame words which are in the nine and fortith Chapter of Geneſis.

Gen.49.

Partly then Moſes doeth but make a rehearſall of the things which had beene written in the perſon of Iacob: and that is not ſuperfluous: but God reneweth and ratifieth his promiſes, to the ende they ſhould be the more aſſured. And ſuch confirmation alſo was needfull, to the intent that the other tribes ſhoulde not grudge againſt the tribes of Ioſeph. Wee knowe that the people of Iſrael were verie full of quareling and rebellion, and that it was a verie harde matter to holde them in awe. Nowe Iacob had giuen dubble portion to his ſonne Ioſeph, becauſe hee had two children, Ephraim and Manaſſes. Hee had ſaide that Ioſeph ſhoulde repreſent two heades in the houſe, becauſe the tribe of Leuie was excluded and had no portion in the Lande, but onely tooke the tenthes and Offerings.

Nomb.18. 20,21.

Their ſucceſſours therefore might haue ſaide, In deede it was the will of our father Iacob to giue this aduantage to his ſonne Ioſeph, howbeit that was vppon ouer earneſt affection, becauſe Ioſeph had ſuccoured him in his neede, and fedde our Fathers in the time of famine. But what? Shoulde they therefore haue two heads here, and we bee ſo much abated? Becauſe the people might ſtill haue pleaded for the partition which had bin aſſigned, and haue ſtriuen when they had bin come into the Land of Chanaan: Moſes confirmeth the thing which had beene declared afore; that is to wit, that Ioſeph ſhould hold ſtill the portion yͭ had bin giuen vnto him, & repreſent two chiefe houſes in yͤ linage of Iacob, & that there ſhould be ten thouſands of Ephraim & thouſãds of Manaſſes. We ſee now to what purpoſe Moſes reherſed yͤ words of Iacob.

And let vs marke alſo that whereas he ſaith, *that*

that he is the Nazarite among his brethren, the word which he vſeth may bee taken for a Crowne, as if he ſhoulde ſay, Hee ſhall be the glorie of his brethren. True it is that this continued not for euer; it was but a temporall dignitie, becauſe that in the end it behooued the tribe of Iuda to attaine to the royall ſcepter, and to haue the ſoueraintie ouer all the whole bodie. And then was Ioſeph alſo brought vnder obedience. But yet for a time hee was the crowne of his brethren. Yet notwithſtanding, he ſetteth downe the worde of *Separation*. So then, he was ſeparated from among his brethren; not in that hee was ſolde into Egypt as ſome haue expounded it, for that is cleane contrarie. But rather hee is termed a Nazarite in way of honour, for that God had choſen him and ſhouled him out by himſelfe, ſo as hee was not of the common ſort, but had as it were a firſt begottenſhip, in reſpect whereof he tooke double portion of inheritance. That is the cauſe why hee was called a Nazarite.

And here we haue to marke firſt of all, that al that euer hath beene rehearſed by Moſes, or ſaid before by Iacob, was a very propheſie that came from God, ſo as it could not haue bin vttered by the mouth of mã, except God had gouerned him by his holy ſpirite. And why? For Moſes neuer came in the land of Chanaan, as we knowe. And as for Iacob, he dyed more than three hundred yeares before the partitiõ of the Land was made. How then coulde he make it? And euen hereby wee ſee, that there was no caſualtie or chaunce in the matter. For Iacob (as wee ſhall ſee againe in due place,) aſſigneth vnto Nepthalim the countrie on the ſeacoaſt, and pointeth out euery man his portion there. And howe is it poſſible that he ſhould hit ſo right vpon it? Surely he did it not of his owne imagination; but God who holdeth the lottes in his Prou.16.13. hand (as ſaieth Salomon,) and who by his wonderfull prouidence which is hidden from vs, diſpoſeth of the things which ſeeme to come by chaunce; vttered by Iacobs mouth what he intended to do. And nowe he ſheweth that when the people are come into the lande, nothing ſhall happen but by his direction. Nowe wee know that the tribe of Ephraim and Manaſſes were planted in ſo fat and fertile a ſoile, that it was the very ſtorehouſe of the Lande. True it is that other of the tribes, as the tribe of Aſer, had great Cornecountries; but theſe countries were ſtored with all kinde of commodities beſides: they were the pleaſanteſt and plentifulleſt Countries of all the lande of Iurie. Nowe then we may eaſily gather, that in this caſe Moſes hath not ſet forth any thing of his owne braine; but that the holy Ghoſt did in very deede gouerne his tongue. And therfore we haue a great warrant of all his doctrine, in that wee ſee that vnder the name and authoritie of God, hee ſetteth ſuch order in things to come which a man wold neuer haue thought of. Sith we heare this, it is all one as if God reached out his hand from heauen, and came to authoriſe yͤ doctrine which Moſes deliuered, and to ſhew that he is yͤ author therof, and that it proceedeth from him, neither ought men to doubt thereof as though it came from ſome creature. And let vs marke that wel. For we knowe that by nature we be inclined to diſtruſt: and were it not that we be helde vp, we ſhould continually be ſhakẽ downe, & we ſhould not neede any thing to turne vs aſide from the right way, & from the certaintie of our faith. For this cauſe therefore let vs marke well howe it is told vs heere, that God in theſe Propheſies hath ſhewed vndoubtedly, howe it was hee that was the guider of Moſes; and that he vſed his ſeruice in ſuch wiſe, as we may well ſay that we receiue his doctrine from God, and that it is grounded vpon his vnchaungeable power, & yͭ it is the vnfallible truth. And why? For it was not inuented by man.

But nowe let vs come to the contents of this bleſſing. It is ſaid *that Ioſephs Land ſhalbe bleſſed of God, as well with the deaw from aboue, as with fountaines and welſprings from beneath*; that is to ſay, that God woulde ſo water the land both from aboue and beneath, that it ſhould be fat & fruitefull. Nowe here we ſee howe it is not for nought yͭ we be commaunded to ſeeke our dayly breade at Gods hande. For howe commeth it to paſſe that yͤ earth bringeth forth fruites for our ſuſtenance? It is becauſe God moyſteneth it. It is not ſaid yͭ the earth hath ſubſtance in it ſelf, neither is it ſaid that yͤ heauen or the fountaines do giue it ſimply of themſelues: but it is God that ſendeth the deaw, it is God that maketh the water ſprings to ſhead out; ſo yͭ he is to haue the praiſe of all the ſubſtance which we haue, whenſoeuer we be fed and nouriſhed therewith. Ye ſee then how God hath ſuch a care of our bodies, and of this corruptible life, that we cannot eate one bit of bread which commeth not from him & of his meere liberality. And indeede it ſtandeth vs in hande to acquaint our ſelues well herewith. For ſith it is told vs yͭ we cãnot haue ſo much as one ſilie mite of theſe goods, no not euen of theſe tranſitory goods, but we muſt receiue it at gods hand: What ſhal befal in the things yͭ are much more excellent? If I want but a bit of breade, I ought of duety to aske it of God, & to acknowledge yͭ it is his peculiar office to feede me. And when yͤ caſe concerneth the attainmẽt of yͤ heauenly life & the euerlaſting ſaluation; ſhal I thẽ go ſeek it elſewhere thã at Gods hand? Or ſhall I thinke to haue it in my ſelfe? What an ouerweening were that? We ſee then how the bread and the bodily foode which is giuen vs, ought to be as a meane to lift vs vp higher, to make vs to thinke our ſelues beholden to God and to his bountifulnes for all yͭ we haue, both of body and ſoule and all. Marke that for one point.

Againe, wheras in this place Ioſeph is called *A Nazarite among his brethren:* we ſee howe God beſtoweth his gracious goodnes where hee liſteth, euen contrary to the opinion of men, yea & cleane contrary to al expectation. Ioſeph was indeede ſeparated from his brothers; yea and yͭ was as by being appointed vnto death, they had conſpired againſt him to kill him. And whereas Gen.37.18. 24.28. he was yet ſaued, it was but to bee caſt into a pit and there to pyne away , which was a crueller death than if they had cut his throte out of hãd. In the end, the greateſt fauour that hee founde, was that he was ſold into a barbarous nation to ſtrange & vnknowen perſons. Againe, when hee came into Egypt, he was thruſt into the bottom Pſa,105.18. of a dungeon, & he was put into the ſtockes, according to this ſaying of the Pſalme, ẏ the iron wounded him & nipped him to the heart. Yee ſee then how Ioſeph is ſeparated not only from his fathers houſe, but alſo from ẏ whole worlde; he is cut off from mankind as a dead perſon; he is like to rot in a dungeon. But God ſeparated him after another maner in his wunderful coũſel. And therefore it is ſayd, that hee was as a ſtarre which was to be worſhipped of ẏ Sunne & of the Moone, and of all the reſt of the ſtars. Gen.37.5.9 Which was as much to ſay, as that all his houſe ſhould ſtoope to him & be ſubiect to him, ſo as his ſheafe ſhould haue preheminence, and all the other ſheaues fall downe: euen becauſe god had decreed it in his own counſaile. And ſo we ſee that when all the worlde thought to haue thruſt Ioſeph downe into the pit: then God exalted him in ſpite of men. Thus yee ſee howe God ſuccoureth his ſeruauntes after a wonderfull faſhion. If wee looke vpon our ſtate as it appeareth to the viewe of men: we may ſeeme as it were reiected, death ſeemeth to threaten vs, and we ſeeme to be beſeeged with it on al ſides, it ſeemeth that we ſhould be ouerwhelmed euery minute of an houre, & that we ſhould be eaten vp quyte & cleane. Lo at what point wee be! But God who hath ſanctified vs, & doeth as it were broode vs vnder the ſhadow of his wings, if we put our truſt in him & flee to him for refuge; will ſhew that his bleſſing of vs is not in vaine; but that he hath ſo ſeparated vs, ẏ though all the earth were moued, & that we were afflicted as wel as thẽ wicked, & wrapped with them in the ſame curſe; yet notwithſtanding hee will maintaine vs by his grace, & euen in the middes of death always find meanes to draw vs out to ſaluation. That is the thing which wee haue to marke in that Ioſeph is called a Nazarite amõg his brethren. So that if we haue any aduantage or priuilege, if we be exempted from any perill, if we be enriched ẇ any goods be it of body or of ſoule; all thoſe things proceed of Gods ſanctifying & chooſing of vs to himſelf, & we ought to yeld ẏ praiſe therof to his only free goodnes.

And to the intent theſe things may be taken to be ẏ more certaine, it is ſaid *that they ſhal light vpon the head of Ioſeph.* Moſes then declareth that theſe things are not a ſound which vaniſheth in the aire: but ẏ God wil giue effect to his word ſo as his bleſſing ſhalbe poured out vpon the linage of Ioſeph. For thereby he aſſureth vs as if he ſhould ſay, No: I ſpeake nowe in the name of God; let no man think that I geſſe at aduenture concerning things to come: for God will performe al things vpon Ioſephs head; ẏ is to ſay, either vpon Ioſephs own perſon or elſe vpon his children. For here the caſe concerneth thoſe ẏ come of his race. God therefore wil ſhewe by ẏ effect, how it is he ẏ hath ſpoken by my mouth, & how it is he ẏ hath declared ẏ things which he had concluded in his own counſaile afore.

Now in the ende, he doeth alſo compare his beautie to a yong Bull & an Vnicorne; to ſhewe that he ſhal not onely haue abundantly wherewith to liue, but alſo that he ſhall haue ſtrength to withſtand his foes & be preſerued. For wee know we haue neede of two things; the one is that we deſire God to bleſſe vs & to giue vs ſuſtenance: & againe that wee may bee defended from our enemies which aſſayle vs. Both theſe things are here compriſed in the linage of Ioſeph. For it is ſayd that God will bleſſe him in his lande, ſo as it ſhalbee verie fruitfull: and alſo that he will giue him ſtrength, whereby hee ſhall haue the vpper hande of his enemies, yea and driue them away to the vttermoſt borders of the world.

For a concluſion Moſes addeth *that there ſhal be ten thouſands of Ephraim, & thouſands of Manaſſes.* His meaning is that theſe two trybes ſhall come to be headhouſes. For by this worde *thouſands*, the Hebrues are wont to betokẽ as it were Bayliwikes & Prouoſtſhips; like as when it is ſaid, And thou Bethleem in the land of Ephrata, art of the leaſt among the *thouſands* of Iuda; Mich.5.2. that is to ſay, if a man conſider thy Prouoſtſhips and Bayliwikes, thou art the leaſt of all: but yet ſhall the redeemer come of thee. I alledge this text to ſhewe what this worde *thouſand* importeth. Now then, when Moſes ſpeaketh here of [thouſandes] he meaneth briefely that Ephraim who was one of Ioſephs children, ſhoulde make a headhouſe or trybe, ſo as he ſhuld haue his ſtate of gouernement & officers by himſelf: and alſo that Manaſſes who was another of Ioſephs ſonnes, ſhoulde likewiſe haue his order and ſtate of gouernement with vnderofficers as wel as Iuda, Beniamin, Iſachar & the reſt of ẏ other trybes had. Let that ſerue for one poynt.

But by the way it is ſayd, *the thouſands of Ephraim, & the thouſands of Manaſſes.* Here he maketh Ephraim tenfold greater than his brother: yet was Manaſſes in verie deede the elder ſonne Gen.48.19. of Ioſeph: but at ſuch time as their grandfather [Iacob] bleſſed them, he declared that Ephraim ſhould be greter than his brother Manaſſes. Thus was the order of nature quyte changed, in that God gaue the birthright of the firſtbegotten to the yonger ſonne; to ſhew ẏ we bring not any thing of our own vnto god, but ẏ we receiue al things of his mere goodnes, & ẏ he diſpoſeth of vs at his pleaſure, without being boũd therunto. And this hath God ſhewed by a figure in ẏ perſons of Manaſſes & Ephraim. For it lay not in Iacobs power to make Ephraim greater than Manaſſes: the matter concerned not ẏ inheriting of ẏ countrey only, but alſo the hauing of a Trybe. And ẏ ſame is called a ſpecial gift of God. Although riches alſo do come of him, yet wil he haue mẽ to acknowledge, ẏ to haue iſſue is a peculiar gift which cannot be gottẽ by cunning nor by any other meane. The ſcripture then in ſpeaking ſo, doth wel ſhew that it lyeth not in the power of any creature, to ſay, This man ſhall growe into a great people, as Iacob ſaid, & yet he could not then diſcerne them aſunder by outward ſight. For he was blinde for Gen 48.10.13. age. And when Ioſeph came & brought him his two children, he did ſet Manaſſes the elder to his right hand, & Ephraim to his left; to the end that Iacob in bleſſing them (as the faſhion and ceremonie then was) ſhould lay his right hand vpon Manaſſes, & his left vppon Ephraim. But Iacob putting his hands acroſſe, did lay his right hand vpon the yonger, & his left hand vpon the elder. Whereat Ioſeph ſayd, Sir ye miſtake them. No, no, ſayd Iacob; let mee alone, I do it not through ignorance: for he that is the inferior by nature, muſt be the greater; God hath ſo ordeined it. Behold here a ſilie blind ſoule, an old man, ſuch a one as ſeemeth to dote for age: he ſpeaketh of things vnknowen, & yet for all that, hee dealeth in that behalfe as if hee were God ſitting in his ſeat. And in very deede (as I haue told you afore) He was Gods deputie and ſpake by his authoritie. So then, to confirme the propheſies which had bin vttered by the mouth of Iacob, Moſes ſayeth, theſe bee the ten thouſands of Ephraim. Although he be the yonger brother, yet ſhall he exceede his elder brother in number of people, & in al other things: and according hereunto, in the end there was ſuch preheminence giuen to that trybe, that the other ten trybes of Iſrael were comprehended vnder it. When the Prophets name Ephraim, it Eſai.7.2.& in other places. is a comprehending of all the ten trybes togither; inſomuch that euen Ruben who was the eldeſt of all, lay hid vnder the wings of Ephraim. And who knew that? Our Lord did ſo vtter it by the mouth of thoſe whom he had appointed in his place. And ſo we ſee againe the thing that I ſaid afore, namely that in this caſe Moſes was not a priuate perſon, ne ſpake at randon, nor of his owne head; but was directed by God, to the intent it might be knowen, that that people was gouerned by ſpeciall meanes as a people choſen and picked out by God from the reſt of the world. True it is that God is the generall creator of all mankind, and that all people are his. Yet notwithſtanding, foraſmuch as he had choſen the linage of Abraham; it was his will to haue his power the better knowen there, & to holde them as his houſhold folke, & neerer alyed vnto him. And therefore it was good reaſon that the things which are declared here, ſhould be knowen of al yͤ Iewes, & that by that meanes they ſhould be prouoked to bleſſe the name of God, acknowledging howe greatly they were bound & tied vnto him, for that he had ſo withdrawen them from al other nations, & vouchſafed to make them feele him to be their father, ſeeing he had adopted them to be his children.

Now let vs come to the things that befell. True it is that God hath wel perfourmed al that he had ſpoken. And thereby wee ſee that the children of Ioſeph were not diſapointed of their expectation, neither was any of al thoſe promiſes void. But yet for al that; they tooke no great benefite by them, but rather it came to paſſe through their own lewdnes, that they were of neceſſitie turned to their harme and vndoing. Wherin we ſee yͭ men are ſo vntoward, yͭ they change all yͭ euer God had ordeyned for their welfare: in ſo much that when he bleſſeth them, they turne his bleſſing into a curſe; when he offereth them life, they turne it into deth; & they not only dim yͤ light, but alſo turne it into darknes. But what befell to the Trybe of Ephraim? It was aduaunced as it were by miracle, and againſt the order of nature, through the onely bleſſing of God. And yet for all this, it cauſed yͤ body [of the commonweale] to be rent & torne aſunder, Gods ſeruice to bee corrupted & peruerted, ydolatry to reigne in the holy land, God to be defrauded and bereft of his inheritance, and all manner of infections to be brought in. Whereupon inſued foorthwith all manner of miſchiefe, ſo as they did eate vp one another like dogs and cattes, and there was ſuch deadly enmitie betweene the two kingdoms of Iuda & Eſay.7.1. Iſrael, that they went to ſeeke help of the Heathen & Infidels to ouerthrow one another: and was not yͭ a diueliſh rage? & yet all this proceeded from the trybe of Ephraim. If a man ſhould ſay yͭ Gods bleſſing was the cauſe thereof, then is there a double malice to be ſeene in yͭ behalf. For they ought the rather to haue bin incouraged to magnifie Gods name, & to walke in his feare, ſeeing he had ſo greatly bounde them to him. But they turned yͤ benefite to the contrary, as I haue ſhewed alreadie, & therfore it was of neceſſitie yͭ all thoſe bleſſings were taken from them, & moreouer yͭ they were vnto them an occaſion of decay; I ſay they were the occaſion, howbeit not the cauſe. Yea, but yet was yͤ blame to be imputed vnto them, becauſe they themſelues were the alterers of Gods order. What is to be done then? Let vs vnderſtand that when God ſhal haue fed vs fat in this world, ſo as wee haue the fruits of the earth, yea & be as it were made drunken with the things that delight vs; yet if we haue not the chiefe poynt, the reſidue ſhalbe ſold vs ful deere. Then let vs not ſo gretly eſteeme the temporall & tranſitory goods, that we ſhould not euermore haue an eye to yͤ chiefe point; which is yͭ God receiues vs for his children, that we abide vnder his gouernement, that wee call vppon him as our father, howbeit truely and vnfaynedly, reſorting rightly vnto him and ſubmitting our ſelues wholy to his wil; knowing that as ſoone as wee bee neuer ſo litle ſeparated from him, it cannot bee but that miſerie and confuſion muſt needes fall vpon vs. So then, let vs eſteeme of the tranſitorie benefits which god beſtoweth vpon vs in this world; but let vs eſteem them in their degree, ſo as we be not tyed to them, ne ſet not our chiefe deſire vppon them. If God giue vs of them, let vs enioy them with all ſobrietie; and let vs not ſet our minds too much vpõ them. Again, if he giue vs them not, let vs beare our pouertie patiently, & keep on our way ſtil. And in yͤ meane while let vs take our cõtentatiõ & reſt in yͤ ſpiritual goods which God granteth vs, in yͭ he vouchſafeth to certifie vs yͭ he is our father, in yͭ he calleth vs vnto him daily, in yͭ he telleth vs yͭ we ſhal finde fauor at his hand for our lord Ieſus Chriſts ſake.

Let the hauing of theſe things ſuffiſe vs, and let vs not repyne at the aduerſities, griefes, & troubles which we haue in this world: neither let vs enuye ſuch as are here in better caſe than wee; but when we ſee the vnbeleeuers liue at eaſe, & haue all their pleaſures, ſo as they want not any thing; let vs haue an eye to the trybe of Ephraim, & conſider the great wealth both of the ſame, & alſo of the trybe of Manaſſes. They were fed at their pleaſure; but what? They glutted themſelues with Gods benefites, and were choked with them for their owne vnthankfulnes. Now then, let this ſerue to reſtraine vs frõ repyning at thoſe with whome God dealeth ſo liberally in this world, and to whom he ſheweth himſelfe ſo bountifull. Let not vs bee grieued thereat. For why? We haue the goods which are of farre greater value: that is to wit, the things that concerne our ſaluation. For ſeeing yͤ God hath begunne to worke after that faſhion in vs by his holy ſpirite; let vs ſeeke for the heauenly riches whereunto he calleth vs from day to day till we haue the ful fruition of them at the comming of our Lord Ieſus Chriſt.

Now let vs fall downe before the maieſtie of our good God with acknowledgement of our faults, praying him to make vs perceiue them more & more, and that therewithall when wee enioy here neuer ſo many benefites, and bee fedde by his hande, wee may not bee ſo rechleſſe and ſleepie, as not to haue our myndes continually lifted vp to heauen, to giue thanks to him for all his benefites, and to ſerue him with the earneſter good will: and that by theſe tranſitorie benefites, we may be put in minde to ſeeke all things in him which belong to yͤ heauenly life, knowing that we ſhalbe vtterly deſtitute & barreine of them, vntil he vouchſafe to impart them vnto vs, at leaſtwiſe according to the meaſure & portion of his meere goodnes, becauſe that wee on our ſide deſerue not any thing at all. That it may pleaſe him to graunt this grace, not onely to vs but alſo to all people & nations of the earth, &c.

On Fryday the iij. of Iuly, 1556.

The CXCVI. Sermon, which is the ſixth vpon the xxxiij. Chapter.

18 Alſo he ſaide of Zabulon, Reioyce thou Zabulon in thy going out: and thou Iſachar in thy Tents.

19 They ſhall call the people into the mountaine, where they ſhall ſacrifice the ſacrifice of righteouſnes. For they ſhall ſucke the abundance of the ſea, and the hidden treaſures of the ſand.

Yeſterday in the bleſſing of Ioſeph, we ſaw how Moſes referred all things to Gods grace, which men are cõmonly wont to attribute vnto fortune. And it is a doctrine well worthie to be marked becauſe of our vnthankfulnes. For vnleſſe wee bee enforced to acknowledge Gods goodnes, it ſhall alwayes lye buryed for vs, and wee ſeeke things here belowe to buſie our wits vpon; in ſo much that when God ſhall haue giuen vs neuer ſo ſufficient occaſion to magnifie his grace; yet do wee make none account of it. Therefore it behooueth vs to be warned to lift vp our wits and mindes aloft, that wee may doe homage vnto God, for all the benefites which we receiue at his hand. Alſo we haue to marke herein the thing that is ſet downe by Moſes. He ſayeth that all the good which Ioſeph and all his whole linage ſhall haue, ſhall come of the free fauour of him *which dwelt in the buſh*. And no dout but that therby he meaneth God. Why then doeth hee mention the buſh here? For at the firſt ſight it ſeemeth a fond thing, & ſeruing to no purpoſe but to leade the ignorant and the weaklings into ſuperſtition. We knowe that the holy ſcripture ſpeaking of God, ſayth that hee dwelleth in heauen. Not that his maieſtie is incloſed there: for his beeing is infinite; it contayneth all creatures, as is ſayde in other textes. But this worde *Heauen* ſerueth to plucke vs from the worlde, when wee thinke vppon God, to the intent that when wee goe about to worſhip him, wee imagine not any earthlineſſe in him, but conſider that hee ſurmounteth all things, and that wee ought to thinke of him farre otherwiſe than wee can conceiue. Nowe ſeeing that the holy Scripture pitcheth Gods tent in heauen, to the ende wee ſhould be lifted vp aboue all the worlde & aboue all creatures when wee thinke vppon him: why doeth Moſes in this place ſet him in the Buſh? It is becauſe God had there ſhewed himſelfe vnto him. And it behooueth vs to note that ther are two dyuerſe faſhions of ſpeaking in the holy ſcripture, when God calleth vs vnto him. Neuertheles, this diuerſitie is not to draw vs into contrary opinions: they meete both in one. As how? Sometimes God ſheweth vs what his glorie is, to the intent wee ſhoulde bee fully reſolued of this poynt, that hee is incomprehenſible, and that wee ought to worſhip him with all humilitie, & that we muſt not looke to forge him after our fancie, or to make

Pſa.115.3. & oft elſwhere.

2.Chro.6.18

make him like to our ſelues , by transforming after our own imagination. Therfore when the holy ſcripture ſetteth foorth Gods maieſtie ſo high as we be abaſhed at it , yea & euen ẏ very Eſai.6.2. Angels of heauen, accordingly as it is ſaid that the Cherubins hyde their faces , becauſe they cannot abyde to looke vppon the maieſtie ſo great and infinite as it is in God : therein it is ſhewed vs that wee muſt needes ſtoope vnder ſuch greatneſſe and highneſſe. But yet therewithall God conſidereth how it is for our benefite to haue ſome familiaritie with him:& thereupon he yeeldeth to our rudeneſſe, and taketh vppon him as it were a newe ſhape , howbeit not which is contrarie (as I ſaid afore;) but to the intent that wee ſhoulde not bee ſtared,nor take occaſion to ſhrink from him. Now then,he allureth vs gently, and therwithal hee ſtopeth to vs & maketh himſelf as it were meane vnto vs. And to that end haue the ſacramentes bin referred at all times: Like as at this day ſtill in Baptiſme we ſee the water;and in the Lordes ſupper we ſee the bread & the wine. And what is the cauſe that our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt, who is Col.1.15. & 2.9. the liuely image of God his father, & in whome dwelleth the whole fulneſſe of the godhead bodily;what is the cauſe (ſay I) that hee ſheweth himſelfe to vs in corruptible things, and in the elements of the world ? It is for our infirmities ſake,becauſe we cannot approch to his ſpiritual power. That is the very cauſe why he figureth his graces vnder the viſible elements:& in them ought we to behold the heauenly power of his holy ſpirite. That is the ſeconde faſhion which God vſeth in reuealing himſelfe vnto vs, the which is anſwerable to our rudeneſſe. But wee ſee howe hee ſhewed himſelfe to the fathers of old time vnder certeine ſhapes. As for example when he talked with Iacob in Bethel, it was be- Gen.28.13. cauſe Iacob needed ſuch confirmation. True it is that he ceaſſed not to looke vp to heauen ſtil when he worſhipped God. But yet for all that, he had the more familiar acceſſe vnto God by his comming downe ſo lowe at that time. And for the ſame cauſe alſo, when Iacob was to re- Gen.35.3. moue from one place to another, he offered ſacrifice to the God of Bethel. Why to the God of Bethel? Was there a God ſhut vp there? No, for we ſee that euen they which would needes Amos.4.4. make a God in Bethel, that is to ſay, which would haue builded vp a temple there, & offered ſacrifices there ; were abhominable vnto God,Inſomuch that God ſayth that it is Bethauen, Oſee.4.15. the place of wickednes ; and no more his houſe:he forſaketh & diſclaimeth it vtterly, euē becauſe they abuſed the reuelation that was giuen to their father Iacob in that place. As for Iacob,he knewe howe to benefite himſelfe by it. For he knewe that God had not changed his nature, ne was incloſed in any certaine place, but that by that meane he meant to draw him vnto him familiarly. Iacob then receiued the gage that was giuen vnto him, to the intent it might be knowen that he worſhipped not ſome God at aduenture, as the Heathen did: but that his faith was ſure and vnfallible. That is the cauſe why he expreſly mentioneth Iacobs worſhipping of the God of Bethel, that is to ſay,not a God which was vnknowen to him, nor a God that was forged of mortall mans braine, a God but in ſurmize & opinion: but the God of whom he was fully aſſured, becauſe he had the trueth whereof he was throughly ſure. And euen ſo is it now in the caſe of Moſes. He ſaith , *the God which ſhewed himſelfe to me in the buſh*, euen that God ſhew his fauour towardes the trybe of Ioſeph. In ſaying ſo,Moſes proteſteth that he ſetteth not downe ſome ydol that had bin forged of late time,ne bringeth in the ſuperſtitions of any heathen folke, Infidels, or ydolaters: after which maner we ſee the Papiſtes & Turkes do, who ſpeake much of God,but in the mean while they haue no aſſurance, all their fond dotages are grounded but vpon ſuppoſals, and all their Apes toyes are founded but vppon their owne good intent as they terme it. For it is ſtarke diueliſhnes when men preſume vpon their owne ſelfelikings, and it is an opening of helgates to them to plunge themſelues in the bottomleſſe pit. Lo what commeth of that which men terme good intent, & of the things which they haue imagined & dreamed in their own brayne . But as for vs,we muſt haue a ſure leaning ſtocke, & ſuch a one as wil not ſwarue , ſo as we may ſay, we haue a God which is not vnknowen nor hidden from vs. Now then in ſpeaking of the God that had appeared to him in the buſh,he meant here to certifie the promiſe yet ſo much ẏ better:as if he ſhould ſay , I ſpeake not at randon, my words are no flying tales : but it is God that hath ordeined mee,& at ſuch time as it pleaſed him that I ſhould deliuer his people out of the land of Egypt,he appeared to me in the buſh, & Exod.3.2. there I knew his maieſtie. So then, the certeintie which I haue of my calling, & of the things which I haue hitherto done by his commandement, ought to make mee continue ſtil,to ſhew that the ſame God wil perfourme his promiſes which are conteined here, & ſpecially his fauor & free goodnes ſhal reſt vpō ẏ trybe of Ioſeph.

Now of this text we haue to gather , ẏ when we ſpeake of God we muſt not wander too and fro, but to the intent we may be throughly aſſured,& that we may hold our ſelues in awe,we muſt conſider after what manner God hath reuealed himſelf vnto vs. But I haue told you alredie ẏ our lord Ieſus Chriſt is his liuely image; Coloſ.1.15. & therefore it behoooueth vs to ſeeke him there. And the very cauſe why the wretched worlde hath bin beguyled by the deceites & illuſions of Satan,is that they haue not held themſelues ſimply to our Lord Ieſus Chriſt. Whence ſpring ſo many diſorders at this day in the popedom,but of this,that(as they themſelues ſay in their prouerb)Ieſus Chriſt is not knowen,nor can be diſcerned from among his Apoſtles ? For they haue bereft him of the glory , power & grace which God his father had committed vnto him. To be ſhort,foraſmuch as our Lorde Ieſus hath bin as it were buried , therfore ſuperſtitiōs haue increaſed more & more, ſo as ther hath bin no end nor meſure of thē,& therfore no maruel though there haue beene ſo horrible a Babylon [that is to ſay confuſion] there. Let vs learne then to know the liuing God as he ſheweth him ſelfe vnto vs,& to impriſon all our wits . And foraſmuch as he hath moſt perfectly reuealed himſelf in our Lord Ieſus Chriſt;let vs not ſeeke any other knowledge than that, neither let vs ſwarue one way or other from the ſame.

But now let vs come to that which Moſes addeth concerning Zabulon and Iſachar. He ſaith of Zabulon,*Be glad in thy going foorth:* and of Iſachar,*Reioyce thou in thy tentes,*or in thy couerts,or in thy houſes. And thereupon he attributeth as common to them both , *That they ſhall call folke into the mountaine* (that is to ſay)*of Sion*, there to make ſacrifice to the liuing God, and therefore that God wil bleſſe them, in ſo much that they ſhal skim off the fat of the ſea,that is to ſay,they ſhalbe enriched by trade of marchandiſe. And that although their countrey was ſandy (as the ſeaſhores cōmonly be)ſo as there was no fruitefulnes of corne & wine;yet ſhould they not faile to be rich for all that: for the ſand (that is to ſay the Sea) ſhould giue them ſufficient abundance. That is the ſumme of the thing that is ſpoken here.Now(as hath beene touched heretofore)we ſee that Moſes ſpake not of his owne head, but that God himſelfe vttereth here the things which he had determined afore:for Moſes could not haue geſſed what was to befall in the portion of Zabulon. I haue told you afore, that the Iſraelites were not their owne caruers. True it is that the trybe of Gad and a parte of Deut.20. Ioſue.14.2. Ephraim had their portion beyond Iordan as ſhalbe declared hereafter : but all the reſt of the portions were made by lot, ſo as it was not for any man to ſay , Such a thing ſhall befall mee. It behooued God him ſelfe to bee the whole doer, as wee ſee he was in this text, ſo as he might be acknowledged aboue all his creatures. Therefore when Moſes declareth that the trybe of Zabulon ſhalbe planted by the ſeas ſide, he doeth vs to vnderſtande that God had reuealed vnto him things vnknowen , and that his ſpeaking was by the holy Ghoſt. When he ſayeth that traffike and merchandiſe ſhalbe in the trybe of Zabulon,and that Iſachar alſo ſhal go by ſea; no dout but ŷ therein God vttereth things which men would neuer haue thought. And ſo wee haue an infallible proofe,not onely of the promiſes that are ſet downe here, but alſo of all the doctrine of Moſes. For to what ende did he ſo bleſſe the trybes of Iſrael,but to holde them vnder obedience of the lawe , and vnder the religion which he had taught them , not of himſelfe,but as he had beene inioyned from aboue? Seeing it is ſo,let vs learne to apply all the teſtimonies to the ſetling of our ſelues in Gods trueth, that wee ſwarue not aſide one way nor other,ne be doutfull in faith, but imbrace the things with all reuerence which are contained in the lawe. For without that, we be miſerable, as all they be which haue their fantaſticall deuotions,of which ſort wee ſee the Papiſtes are, and likewiſe the Turkes , and alſo all the Heathen of the world . For they be verie wilfull in the things which they haue once conceiued: O (ſay they)I hold mee to this,becauſe it is an ancient religion: but in the meane while they bee nothing ſure of it . And why? Becauſe that as long as men reſt vpon their owne opinion , all is but vanitie and ſmoke . Then can wee haue no ſure faith vntill wee be come vnto God,& know that it is he which guideth and gouerneth vs. And therefore it ſtandeth vs in hande to haue the lawe warranted vnto vs, ſo as wee may bee able to ſay that it is no doctrine of man, but that God is author thereof. The like is to bee ſaide of the propheſies and of the Goſpel. Thus yee ſee what wee haue to marke in the firſt part of this text.

Now here are two things ſet one againſt another in Zabulon and Iſachar. *Zabulon,*(ſayth he)*Reioyce thou in thy going out:* and vnto Iſachar he ſayeth,*Reioyce thou in thy reſt* ; Here the one goes abroad and ſeekes from place to place ; & the other taries quietly and peaſably at home like a ſnudge as they ſay . And yet Moſes ſaith that God will make them both to proſper, though their caſes be nothing like. And by *Zabulons going out*,he meaneth not his *end* (as ſome haue expounded it;) but the voyages which the people of that trybe were to make, as folke that ſhould traffike into farre countries . His ſaying then is,*God will proſper thee in thy goings abroade.* When thou goeſt in danger by ſea, and makeſt long voyages ; thou ſhalt be guyded & gouerned by God , and his bleſſing ſhall accompanie thee. But as touching Iſachar, becauſe he was fearefull and cowardly , it is ſaide *that God will yet haue pitie vppon him, and bleſſe him though he loue his eaſe* . And it is not without cauſe that he ſpeaketh ſo to Iſachar . Wee ſee howe it is ſaide of him in the nine and fourtith Chapter of Geneſis by Iacob, Iſachar is as a ſtrong Aſſe or a Mule of burthen which ſleepeth (ſayeth hee) betweene his packes . Gen.49.14. Hee ſawe that eaſe was good, and he bowed downe his ſhoulders, and chooſe rather to bee a ſeruant and to pay taxes and tallages , than to trye his force in reſiſting his foes . Here wee ſee howe the nature of that people was ſtrong and ſturdie , but yet that they wanted heart, and were cowardly,ſo as they played the burdened Mule, which coucheth downe betweene his packes, and there falles aſleepe , that is to ſay, Hee was like a great packehorſe which careth not for libertie: in ſo much that although men loade him with heauie and intollerable burthens , yet he ceaſſeth not to yeeld to them ſtill,as if a Mule ſhould fall aſleepe beeing loden with his packes.He bare then taxes & trybutes and paſſed not greatly for it : he was at a point for all other things,ſo he might eate and drink his fil;as ye ſhal ſee ſome lubberly loutes, which ſo they may always haue meat & drinke, do make no further reckening;neither can they any skil of freedome,they be in that behalfe as Oxen & Aſſes,ſo as they haue no care of any thing.And euen ſo was it with Iſachar.

And Moſes intent is not to ſooth him in his vices when he ſayeth , *that God will bleſſe him in* *that reſt of his*: but it ſerueth to comfort the faithfull which were of that trybe; becauſe that elſe they might haue been diſcouraged, as hath bin touched afore. For God might ſeeme to haue vpbrayded them ſaying, Yee be not worthie to enioy the common freedom which I giue to my children; for yee be of a ſlauiſh nature, yee be great lubbers, which ſuffer your ſelues to bee made vnderlings. It might ſeeme then ÿ God gaue them a marke of reproche, to caſt them off from the aray of his children. Howbeit his intent was that the faithfull ſhoulde knowe, that although they had a hard burthen to beare as in reſpect of the worlde: yet notwithſtanding, God would not ceaſſe to bleſſe them. That was the verie meaning of Moſes.

And here wee haue to note in generall, that although men be able to trauell, and they haue skill alſo, ſo as they want not any thing: yet muſt all their proſperitie come of God and of his meere grace. For it is not without cauſe ÿ Moſes here ſendeth the trybe of Zabulon vnto God. They were men that ſpared not themſelues, they hazarded their liues, they traffiked into ſtrange countreys; and therefore a man woulde ſay it is no wonder though they were riche, for they were men of courage, they were vigilant; they were painfull, they had all worldly meanes to helpe them ſelues withall. Yea, but when all comes to reckening, it is ſhewed vs here that without Gods bleſſing all were to no purpoſe. So then let vs learne, not to preſume any thing vppon our owne trauel & skill, or any thing elſe; but let euery man referre him ſelfe to God, that he may guyde vs in all our doings, according to this ſaying which we haue heard heretofore, Thou ſhalt not ſay, it is mine Deut.8.17. owne hand that hath gotten mee my foode; but know thou that it is God, who fed thy fathers by the ſpace of fourtie yeres in the wilderneſſe; it is hee at whoſe hande thou receiueſt thy foode at this day. Thus much concerning that point.

Furthermore, as touching the trybe of Iſachar, wee haue to note that if it pleaſe God to bereaue vs of any earthly benefites for our imperfections ſakes, we muſt not be greeued out of meaſure therefore; but paciently beare the yoke, contenting our ſelues with this, that God in the meane ſeaſon turneth ÿ things to a good end vnto vs, which of themſelues were as a record that he reiecteth vs; and that he maketh them to ſerue as furtherances of our ſaluation. As for example, it falleth out that ſome folke haue ſome peculiar fault in them; as we ſee how ſome bee groſſewitted, ſo as they ſet not their mindes vpon a great ſort of things which might be good and conuenient for them: Others are fainthearted and rechleſſe, and other ſome, although they ſpare not them ſelues, yet haue they ſome other fault which is a let to them that they cannot throughly ſeeke their owne profit & commoditie. Wel, our Lord alſo bereaueth them of many things which he giueth to others that take paines, & his hand is ſtretched out to bleſſe the labors of ſuch as are painfull & imploy their wittes about it. It may wel be then that our Lord wil puniſh thoſe rechleſſe folke ŵ the want of ſome earthly commodities, for not doing their indeuor as they ought to do. But yet doth it not followe that he taketh them not for his children ſtill, although he make them feele ſome temporal chaſticement, which he cauſeth alſo to ſerue to their ſoulhealth. They ſhal then receiue chaſticement for their infirmities, but yet ſhal they not ceaſſe to be Gods childrẽ ſtill. That is ÿ thing which we haue to gather where it is ſayd of the trybe of Iſachar, that through his cowardlines he ſhall keepe home, and bowe downe his ſhoulders to receiue the great burdens, tributes, & taxes that men lay vpon him, making no reckening at all of them. Well: and doth God ſee ſuch rechleſnes in them? He ſuffereth them to ſmart for it to the worldwarde; but yet howſoeuer they fare, he telleth them ÿ he wil not ceaſſe to be merciful to them. *Reioyce thou* (ſaith he) *in thy Tents.* Wee ſee nowe more clearly the thing that I ſaid afore; namely that Moſes intended not to flatter Iſachar in ÿ thing for which he was to be condemned, that is to wit, for the cowardlines whereof I haue made mention. Neuertheleſſe, becauſe that fault was vnreformable, & in the meane whyle God was to chaſtice that people with bondage, with tributes, and with tallages; therefore Moſes had a care to comfort them, ſpecially the faithfull, which might fall into deſpaire when they ſawe thẽſelues ſo puniſhed at Gods hand. Well (ſaith he) beare ye this burthen paciently, for yee be worthie of the puniſhment which God layeth vpõ you. But howſoeuer the world go with you, be not out of hart, for he wil not faile to be a father to you ſtill. Although yee ſeeme to be ſubiect to many burthens, & he ſeeme to haue withdrawen his hand from you & vouchſafe not to ſuccour you: yet notwithſtanding he wil haue pitie vpon you ſtil. Therfore be glad in your wretchednes & diſtreſſes. Lo how the faithful ought always to aſſuage their ſorowes when God chaſtiſeth them in this world, foraſmuch as his chaſtiſing of them is after ſuch a ſort, that yet neuertheles he eſtrangeth not himſelfe vtterly frõ thẽ, but reſerueth them ſtil as of his houſhold & Church.

Moſes hauing ſpoken ſo of thoſe two trybes, addeth in cõmon, *that they ſhal cal folke vp into the mountaine, to offer vnto God the ſacrifice of righteouſnes.* No dout but Moſes meant this of mount Sion: & that is yet one other propheſie. For no man could foreſee that God would haue his tẽple to be builded in that place: & yet Moſes ſetteth it down expreſly that it ſhalbe ſet vpon a hil. In deed he ſayth, Thy God will chooſe him Deut.12.5. a place where his name ſhalbe called vpon: but yet it was a hundred yeres after, yea, foure hũdred or rather Six hundred yeres after, ere any man knewe where that place was. But Moſes aſſigneth it to a mountaine, and that was by force of the ſpirite. For it muſt needes be that God guyded him thereto, ſeeing he could ſay, Vppon a mountaine ſhal my temple be builded. True it is, that hee nameth not mount Sion:

but yet we ſee there was a comformity between that which was reuealed vnto Dauid, and that which had beene ſpoken ſo long aforehande by Moſes. Heere therefore we haue yet againe an infallible proofe, that Moſes deuiſed not any thing of himſelfe, but that the liuing God vſed him continually as his miniſter, and as the inſtrument of his holy ſpirite. Againe, heere the two tribes of Iſachar and Zabulon are commended for exhorting folke to the ſeruice of God. And it is a praiſe well woorth the noting. For thereby we be done to vnderſtande, that it is not ynough for euery man to occupie himſelfe in the ſeruice of God; but that our zeale muſt extende yet further, to the drawing of other men thereunto, accordingly alſo as is ſayde thereof, ſpecially when the prophet Eſay treateth of the kingdome of our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt, at which time euery man ſhall reach his hande vnto his neighbour, ſaying; Let vs goe vp into the Lordes hill to worſhippe him. Heere Moſes declareth that Iſachar and Zabulon ſhall do the like, and draw their neighbours to the ſeruing of God. But in very deede it were to ſmall purpoſe for vs to incorage our neighbours to yeeld God his deſerued honour, vnleſſe wee ourſelues did beare them companie.

Eſay.2.3.

And for that cauſe it is expreſly ſayde, *That they ſhall call folke, and offer Sacrifice with them.* The thing then in effect which we haue to gather vpon this text is, that we muſt as much as in vs lyeth indeuour to drawe all men on the earth vnto God, that all men may ſerue him and worſhip him with one accorde. And in deede if we haue any kindneſſe in vs, ſith we ſee that men goe to deſtruction till God haue gotten them vnder his obedience: ought we not to be moued with pity, to drawe the ſilly ſoules out of hell, and to bring them into the way of ſaluation? Againe on the other ſide, ſith we knowe that God is our father; ſhould we not be deſyrous to haue him knowen to be the like to all men? And if we can not find in our heartes that all creatures ſhould doe him homage; is it not a token that we haue no great regarde of his honour? Ye ſee then howe that one of the thinges whereunto we ought to apply our mindes and indeuours is, [firſt] to procure the ſilie ignoraunt ſoules to ſerue God: and ſecondly to be alwayes incoraging of ſuch as are in the right trade. As for example, when we ſee blinde wretches runne aſtray; ſurely if we be able and can haue any acceſſe or meanes to doe it, we ought to giue them a taſt of the true religion, that they may ſubmit themſelues to God. Againe, we knowe wherein the ſeruice of God conſiſteth, namely in learning his woorde that we may put our truſt in him, and therewithall call vpon him, yeelding him thankes for all the benefites which he hath beſtowed vpon vs, and dedicating ourſelues vnto him all our life long. Nowe at this day his ſeruice is ſpirituall; it conſiſteth not in the ſhadowes and ceremonies of the Lawe. Therefore let vs prouoke ech other to reſorte to the hearing of Gods worde, let vs treate of it together to the edifying one of another, and let vs alſo giue good exãple of putting our truſt in him, of being patient in our aduerſities, and of walking vnder his feare. Afterwarde let vs call vpon him, as which is the chiefe Sacrifice that hee requireth at our handes; let vs flee to him alone for refuge; let vs yeelde him the prayſe that is dewe to him for al his benefits, and let vs prouoke all others to do the like. That is the thing which is declared vnto vs in the example of Zabulon and Iſachar.

Pſal.5.12.

But as I ſayde afore, we muſt not teache our neighbours, and tarrie behinde ourſelues, but we muſt beare them companie. And for ẏ cauſe is it ſayde *that they ſhall all worſhippe.* Now then, if we will diſcharge our duetie, we muſt not ſay to others, pray you vnto God, put your truſt in him, giue him thankes for the great number of benefites which he hath beſtowed vppon you, dedicate your liues vnto him with all pureneſſe: it is not for vs to ſhift off the matter in ſuch ſort. What then? We muſt ioyne with them, and ſay, let vs ſerue our God, let vs worſhip him, let vs call vpon him, yea and let vs ſhewe the way to ſuch as haue neede to be prouoked by vs. That is the thing then, which in the ſeconde place we haue to practiſe out of this text.

But heere a man might demaunde wherefore Moſes ſpeaketh this of Zabulon & Iſachar rather than of the other tribes. It is likely that it was becauſe of the ſituation of the place. For firſt they were farre ynough from the Temple, and therefore it was the harder for them to offer Sacrifices, becauſe the iourney was paineful; or elſe they might eaſily haue growen out of kinde beeing ſo farre off & intermingled among the heathen, by reaſon whereof they might haue become hardehearted, and haue made no great account of Religion or of the Lawe. That is the cauſe why Moſes doth purpoſely attribute vnto them the ſayde title of zeale of prouoking folke to the ſeruing of God. True it is that the tribe of Gad (of whom mention ſhalbe made heereafter) and alſo a part of Ephraim ſhould haue their portions allotted vnto them beyonde the Iordan. But although they were farre off from the temple, yet might they haue the Religion ſimple; they were not ſo mingled with the Heathen, they had not ſo great corruptions as were in the tribes of Zabulon and Iſachar. For we knowe that theſe were neere vnto Galilie, and that a part thereof was called the Galily of the Gentiles. And when Salomon was in the greateſt proſperitie of his kingdome, we ſee howe he gaue Cities in that Countrey vnto king Hiram, by meanes wherof it was like ynough that thoſe people ſhould bee corrupted. And vnder the worde *Folke*, Moſes comprehended not onely the Tribes of Iſraell; but alſo thoſe which erſt had no acquaintaunce with God but were vtterly ſeparated from the true and pure Religion. Of them is it ſayd that Zabulon and Iſachar ſhould doe their indeuour to bring them into the right way, and to the doctrine of ſaluation.

Nomb.32.

1.King.9.11.

Nowe by this example we be taught, that although the worlde and the fleſh do diuers waies withdrawe vs and hinder vs from giuing ourſelues to the ſeruice of God; yet is that no ſufficient excuſe for vs, but wee muſt fight againſt it. And it is a very profitable warning. For wee ſee that euery ſtrawe (as they ſay) will ſtop vs, when we be towardes the ſeruing of God. If a flye doe but whiske afore our eyes, wee take occaſion to turne aſide, O (ſay we,) I hadde good will, but there happened ſuch a thing, and that diſappointed mee: and ſo by that meanes we thinke ourſelues quit and very well diſcharged. Then let vs conſider, that although this worlde haue many lettes to plucke vs backe and to turne vs out of the right way; although wee haue many temptations; and although there be ſnares layd for vs by Satan, ſo that when we would goe one ſtep forwarde, it ſeemeth that at euery paſe we ſhould meete with a mountaine: yet muſt we inforce ourſelues, and howſoeuer we fare, we muſt not cocker ourſelues in our delightes nor thinke that if we haue ſome harde and troubleſome incounter to ouercome, that that will ſerue to diſcharge vs: But that ſeeing it is ſayde of Zabulon and Iſachar, who being placed in the borders or outleets of Iewry were mingled with the Gentils and heathenfolke, that they ſhould not forbeare to prouoke their neighbours to ſerue God: we alſo ought to followe that which is ſayd heere of them. And ſpecially let vs put this in practiſe when we be among yͤ vnbeleeuers, which would faine infect vs with their corruptions, and bring vs into a miſlyking of Gods ſeruice, to plundge vs in their ydolatrie. When we ſee ſuch thinges, let vs followe the conſtancie and ſtoutneſſe of thoſe whō Moſes cōmendeth & prayſeth heere. For he ſetteth them as lookingglaſſes before our eyes, to the intent that we ſhould followe them. Be we then ſomtimes among the ydolaters? Let vs labour as much as in vs lyeth, to winne them to God and to the Goſpell of our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt. At leaſtwiſe when we ſhall haue done our indeuour, let vs continue ſtill in the pure ſimplicitie which we holde of God and of our Lord Ieſus Chriſt, and let vs not be turned from it by any maner of occaſion. And in any wiſe when we goe about to win any ydolaters, let vs alwayes ſhewe them our good inſample; that ſo farfoorth as is poſſible for vs, we may drawe them to the fayth, euen by ſhewing them that our Religion is warranted by our conuerſation. Thus ye ſee in effect what wee haue to gather vppon this text.

And heere is ſpeciall mention made of *the ſacrifices of Righteouſneſſe*, to ſhewe that euen in the time of the ſhadowes and figures, Gods will was not to be ſerued with countenaunces onely, but that he would haue men to come vnto him with trueth and righteouſneſſe: for hee hath euer hated hypocriſie. Truely the diuerſitie betweene the fathers of olde time and vs is this, that when they worſhipped God it behoued them to ad ſacrifices, and to ſet vp lightes, and to haue many other ceremonies, all which thinges are layde downe at this day. But yet it was Gods will in all ages that men ſhoulde offer themſelues to him with pureneſſe of heart, according to this ſaying in Ieremy, Ier.5.3. Lord, thine eyes regard the thing that is right. And therefore we muſt not thinke that God did euer take pleaſure in any of theſe outwarde thinges which are ſpoken of in the Lawe. For he commaunded them for mennes ſakes. He did it not in reſpect of himſelfe, but to keepe the people in order who were like to litle children, vntill the comming of our Lord Ieſus Chriſt. Nowe ſeeing that vnder the Lawe and ceremonies Gods will was to be ſerued in truth: let vs vnderſtand, that as nowe when his ſeruice is altogether ſpirituall, (as our Lord Ieſus Chriſt ſheweth in the fourth of Saint Iohn where hee Iohn.4.23. ſayth to the woman of Samaria, that God would no more haue the things yͭ were required vnder the Lawe, but would be ſerued altogether in ſpirit and truth:) if we will ſerue him duely, it is not for vs to haue any ſtore of pelting gewgawes before men, as who would ſay, wee woulde pleaſe him with murlymewes, but we muſt offer him the ſacrifices of righteouſneſſe. And this is a doctrine too much corrupted by the world. For we ſee what men doe commonly terme Gods ſeruice at this day. I ouerpaſſe the dooinges of the papiſtes, they be but mens inuentions wherin there is not one ſyllable of Gods worde. But let vs put the caſe that GOD accepted the thinges which they doe; yet are they nothing worth, becauſe there is nothing in them but cōtempt of God and hypocriſie. When the papiſtes haue babbled very much when they haue trotted on pilgrimages, when they haue lighted vp tapers, when they haue bedecked their puppets and ydols, they beare themſelues in hande that God is well payd. And why? For they transforme him with their dotages, and thinke they may ſerue him after their owne faſhion & pleaſure. We ſee then that the wretched worlde is become brutiſh. And we haue ſo much the more neede to marke well this text, where mention is made of the ſacrifices of righteouſneſſe, to ſhew that we doe but vnhallowe the name of God, when we bring not our heartes to him, to offer him a pure and cleane oblation. Yea and we ſee that Dauid alſo did practiſe the ſame doctrine in his time. For whereas he ſayeth, Offer vnto Pſalm.4.6. God the ſacrifice of righteouſneſſe, it is a rebuking of them that had peruerted the Religion. And becauſe his enemies had their full ſcope at that time, and he himſelfe was chaſed and baniſhed in that while, & the wicked vaunted themſelues as the papiſtes do at this day, with, What? We be the Catholike Church; wee haue Gods temple; we haue all the titles which belong to the Church: therefore Dauid ſkorned all ſuch abuſers of Gods name, and tolde them that all their dealinges were but leazinges. And why? Offer vnto God the ſacrifice of righteouſneſſe. He vſeth the ſelfe ſame word which Moſes hath ſet downe heere; to ſhewe that God neuer ment that men ſhould diſcharge themſelues towardes him with Ceremonies and ſuch like thinges, but that he intended to bring them to his ſpirituall ſeruice, that is to ſay, to put their truſt in him, to call vpon him, and to yeelde him the glorie and prayſe of all good thinges. That is the thing which he requireth, and the marke whereat hee would haue vs to leuell.

And ſo we haue one good leſſon more in this text, which ſhall ſerue for an ende and concluſion, becauſe the time will not beare any more. Let vs marke well then, that Moſes hauing ſpoken ſo of the zeale which ſhould be in the tribes of Iſachar & Zabulon; ſayth that God will bleſſe them. True it is that nowe hauing the kingdome of heauen opened vnto vs by our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt, by reaſon whereof it behoueth vs to looke vp higher; wee ſhall not alwayes be riche in this worlde; we ſhall not occupie the trade of marchandice by ſea, we ſhall not flit off the fatte thereof: for it is euen good for vs that our Lorde ſhould keepe vs vnder in lowe ſtate. But yet ſhall we be bleſſed of him, if wee bee his children; according as Saint Paul declareth that the trewe Religion and feare of God hath promiſes both of the preſent life and of the life to come. 1.Tim.4.8. And therefore if we intend to be gouerned by Gods hande, and that he ſhould ſende vs proſperitie conuenient for our welfare: let vs learne to dedicate ourſelues vnto him, let vs all indeuour to ſerue him, and let vs worſhippe him with one accorde. If we doe ſo, ſurely wee ſhall finde that God hath not forgotten vs, and we ſhall alſo ſee what force there is in his grace, when it is vttered vppon vs. And that is the meaning of our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt where hee ſayeth, that we muſt firſt ſeeke the kingdome of God, Mat.6.33. yͭ is to ſay, we muſt firſt indeuor as much as is poſſible, that God may be honoured, & that the world may be gathered vnto him; and wee ourſelues muſt come formoſt. When we once haue this zeale, all other thinges ſhalbe caſt vnto vs. But if we beginne at the preſent life; if we be ouercarefull for our ſuſtenance and food, if we be ſo wedded to this worlde that we make none account of the kingdome of heauen: wee may take peynes and toyle ynough, yea euen till we breake our armes and legges aſunder: but yet it ſhall ſo litle boote vs, that it ſhall rather turne all to our vtter confuſion. Therfore let vs marke vpon this text, that firſt of all God muſt be knowen of all: and then thereupon wee may looke that he will haue a fatherly care of vs, not only in calling vs to the heauenly inheritaunce, but alſo in prouiding vs of thinges neceſſarie, euen while we be as pilgrims and wayfarers in this worlde.

Nowe let vs fall downe before the maieſtie of our good GOD with acknowledgement of our faultes, praying him to vouchſafe to touche vs more and more with them to the quicke, and to drawe vs to ſuch repentaunce, that we miſliking our ſinnes and being ſorie for them, may obtaine the grace to be throughly reclaymed vnto him; and that although we be eſtraunged from him, and doe dwell in the middeſt of ſo manie temptations, ſtumblingblockes & impediments, as long as wee bee compaſſed with our mortall fleſhe: yet notwithſtanding he may not faile to preſerue vs, and to giue vs ſuch ſtrength as wee may maintaine battell againſt all thinges that may turne vs from him, vntill wee bee come to the heauenly reſt, and that all our ioy and contentation may be there, and that in the middeſt of the miſeries of this worlde, we may patiently beare his chaſtiſements & corrections, vntill he haue made it knowen vnto vs that they haue benefited vs towardes our ſaluation. That it may pleaſe him to graunt this grace, not only to vs, but alſo to all people & Nations of the earth, &c.

On Saturday the iiij. of Iuly, 1556.

The CXCVII. Sermon, which is the ſeuenth vpon the xxxiij. Chapter.

20 Alſo he ſayde of Gad, Bleſſed bee he that inlarged Gad: hee dwelleth as a lyon and ſnatcheth away the arme with the head.

21 He looked to himſelfe at the beginning, becauſe a portion of the Lawgiuer was hidden there; yet ſhall he come with the princes of the people, and execute the Lordes iuſtice, and his iudgement with Iſraell.

22 Alſo he ſayde of Dan; Dan is as a Lyons whelpe, hee ſhall leape from Baſan.

23 Alſo he ſayde of Nepthali; O Nepthali which haſt thy fill of [Gods] good pleaſure, and art full of the Lordes bleſſing; take poſſeſſion at the weſt and South.

24 Alſo he ſayd of Aſer; Aſer ſhalbe bleſſed with children, and acceptable to his brethren, and ſhall dippe his foote in Oyle.

25 Thy Incloſures ſhall be yron and braſſe, and thy life ſhalbe according to thy dayes.

HEere wee haue to treate of the bleſſednes of the tribe of Gad, to whom that name was giuen, becauſe that whereas his mother had erſt beene deſpiſed & as it were reiected of her husband Iacob, now after many other children had by him, reioycing that GOD had made her ſo fruitefull, ſhee ſayde of this Gad, *In number*, or *in* Gen. 30.11. *bande* [or *Hoſte*]. And for the ſame cauſe alſo when Iacob bleſſed this his ſonne, he ſayde, An Gen. 49.19. armie ſhall riſe vp againſt Gad, but hee ſhall get the vpper hande. Whereby he ment, that as the mother of him was fruitefull in children, ſo Gad ſhould become a great tribe, and be ſo multiplied, that he ſhould be able to ouercome his enemies. This promiſe doth Moſes confirme and ratifie, ſaying, *That God will inlarge Gad*. We ſee then how that in this promiſe Moſes hath ſhewed, yͤ the bleſſing which was giuen to Gad himſelfe was not in vaine; but that God continued the ſame fauour towardes all the whole tribe, ſo as he had alwayes a ſpeciall care of that people, to performe all that euer hee had ſayde, as well to Abraham as to the other Patriarkes. Now we muſt apply this to our owne vſe; and although the ſame name belong not vnto vs nowadayes; yet haue we a generall leſſon to gather thereupon; namely that we may well apply vnto ourſelues al the promiſes which are giuen in the holy ſcriptures: yea and wee may apply them in ſuch ſorte, as we may euermore conclude, that not ſo much as one mite of them ſhall fayle vs.

Nowe Moſes addeth, *That he ſhalbe as a Lyon tearing his pray, as well the head as the arme*. Wherby he betokeneth that thoſe people ſhall haue enemies, but that they ſhall giue them the repulſe by force. To be ſhort we ſee how it behooued that people to be exerciſed with diuers battelles, but yet that God woulde alwayes ayde them and giue them meanes to ouerthrow their enemies. And therefore let vs learne, that although our Lord ſuffer vs to indure many troubles, yet doth it not followe thereupon that he ſhaketh vs off, or that he will not be mercifull to vs & make vs to feele his goodneſſe. For what elſe are the bleſſinges which Moſes rehearceth heere, and which Iacob vttered in the forealleaged place; but a ſure warrant that God woulde ſhewe himſelfe gratious to the tribes of Iſraell? And yet is this no impediment but that they ſhould haue many troubbles, many warres, and many temptations. And therefore let vs not thinke that becauſe God accounteth vs for his children, and hath pitie vpon vs; therefore wee be exempted from all vexation, ſo as we ſhall liue at our eaſe, and all thinges ſhall fall out to our luſt and liking: for yet notwithſtanding wee ſhalbe afflicted and moleſted. Wherefore let it ſuffiſe vs that we haue God on our ſide, who will at length ſet vs vp, and giue vs ſuch deliuerance and iſſue out of all our miſeries, that wee ſhall throughly perceiue that he holdeth on our ſide. As long as we haue that, let vs paſſe patiently through all the tribulations which it behoooueth vs to ſuffer.

It followeth *that Gad ſawe that he had a portion of the Lawemaker hidden, and yet neuertheleſſe that he ſhould goe with the Princes, to execute Gods Iuſtice and Iudgement*. Moſes rehearſeth that which was alreadie come to paſſe concerning the tribe of Gad, and excuſeth them for deſyring to haue their portion beyonde the Iordan, that is to wit, the countrey of Og king of Baſan, and whatſoeuer elſe had beene conquered before the death of Moſes. It might ſeeme that in this caſe the two tribes of Gad and Ruben were to bee condemned; for their ouerhaſtie eagerneſſe in deſiring to haue partition made afore the people were come into the Lande of promiſe. But yet doth God allowe of it, with condition that they ſhould require that partition. And how was that? That Countrey had elſe lyen deſerte, and had ſerued to no purpoſe. Heereupon the two tribes alleaged that they had great ſtore of cattell, and that the ſayde countrey was a Countrey of very good paſture, ſo as they might leaue their wiues and children there, and not be in charge with the whole hoſte. Againe they alleaged that in the meane while their cattell ſhould proſper, & Nomb. 32.4. the Countrey be inhabited. As touching their owne perſons, they offered to go with the reſt of the people, and to die there rather than not to diſcharge their dutie in yͤ right of brotherhood. Moſes then excuſeth the requeſt made by the tribe of Gad that they might dwell beyond Iordan, and haue their portion and inheritaunce there. Therefore he ſayth, *That they had a hidden Portion of the Lawegiuer*, [or at the Lawegiuers hande]. This text hath cōmonly beene expounded thus; He ſawe that this ſhould be the graue of Moſes the Lawgiuer: but that is ouercolde & not worthy to bee ſpoken of, notwithſtanding that ſome ſticke vnto it. And why? Becauſe wee ſhould bee neuer the ſurer of the ſenſe, which yet notwithſtanding is as fit as any can bee. For to what ende is the excuſe of Moſes compriſed heere? namely that he ſhould haue a portion at Gods hande in that Countrey. As if he ſhoulde ſay, that Gad was led by good diſcretion, when he deſyred his dwelling place beyonde Iordan. If a man ſhould reply, How ſo? Was it not Gods will to reſerue yͤ diſtributing of the inheritances to his people by the hand of Ioſua? And againe, was it meete that the Countrey ſhould haue bin conquered afore? But that was not doone: and therefore there was raſh dealing in this caſe, or at leaſtwiſe there was ouerhaſtie deſire. If any man reply after that maner, Moſes ſayeth that the portion was hidden, and he termeth it *a portion from the Lawegiuer*. Whereby hee ſignifieth that Gad attempted not any thing but yͤ which was lawfull & permitted. For it was well knowen that it was Gods will yͤ the ſayd Land ſhould be conquered after an extraordinary faſhiō, & that it ſhold be poſſeſſed & put to good vſe, & yͤ ſome benefit ſhould be made of it while all the reſt of the people went to conquere the Lande of Canaan. So then, the worde *Lawgiuer* may better be referred vnto God than vnto Moſes. For ſo God be obeyed, all thinges ſhall goe well. Men will perchaunce finde fault with our doings; but let it ſuffice vs to haue God for our warrant, when we ſhall not haue offended him,nor withſtood his ordinance. The meaning then of Moſes is, that Gad knewe he demaunded not aught which was not conformable to the purpoſe of God: and ẏ in ſo doing he was not to be blamed, foraſmuch as he had followed Gods ordinance.

Againe, he termeth it *A hidden portion*, meaning that he did not take his part by violence, but that he tooke it as a thing belonging to him, and which was lawefull for him to doe. For although it fell not to him by lot, but by conſent of the people and of al the other tribes:yet notwithſtanding, God declared that it was his will it ſhould be ſo, and that it was good. And why? For it was a hidden portion; that is to ſay, God had foreappoynted it to that vſe, and he would not that in that behalfe they ſhould followe the common rule, nor that they ſhould tarry till the cōmon partitions were to be made by lot. And thereupon it is ſayde, *that he ſhould goe with the Princes*, that is to ſay with the reſt of the tribes, to execute Gods Iuſtice and Iudgement vnto Iſraell: ſo as his dwelling in that countrey ſhoulde not holde him backe to deceiue his brethren, and to fayle them at their neede: but that notwithſtanding that they ſaw they might haue abidden in a fat and fertile Countrey, yet hee would not inioy his ſtate, but followe ẏ warres ſtill vntill all were at an ende, and that the Lord had giuen reſt to all the other tribes. Nowe we ſee what Moſes meant in effect.

And by this place we be put in minde, that in all our doings we muſt haue an eye to Gods wil. For as ſoone as we ſwarue from that, there remaineth no excuſe for vs,what colour or couert ſoeuer we pretende. Heere then is a good rule to diſcerne betweene good and euill: namely ẏ if men ſubmit themſelues to Gods ordinance,ſo as they attempt not any thing, ne take libertie to do one thing or other, except they knowe it pleaſeth God it ſhould be ſo: then ſhal all things go well. And it is a leſſon well worthy to be marked, to the intent we wander not in our life, ne ſtande in dout and grudge of conſcience, to inquire of the thinges that are to be done. Then let vs alwayes haue Gods will before our eyes, to do whatſoeuer he cōmandeth vs, and to followe whitherſoeuer he calleth vs:and then let vs not paſſe though men ſlaunder and condemne vs; ſo we may be acquit before God, that ought to ſuffiſe vs. For we ſee whereupon the acquitall which Moſes ſetteth downe heere to iuſtifie the tribe of Gad,is grounded; namely *that he ſaw that he had that Portion from the Lawegiuer*; that is to ſay,that he might require the preſent partition, without gaineſtanding the will of God. For it is Gods iuſtifying of vs that maketh vs to ſtande vpright:& contrariwiſe as ſoone as he pronounceth the word to condemne vs, we muſt needes tūble down though al ẏ world ſhould hold vs vp.

And this word *Lawgiuer* is to be marked wel: for it is the ſame wherunto S. Iames had an eie, where he ſayth that there is but one Lawegiuer, ames.4.12. who can condemne and deſtroy, and who can alſo ſaue. He ſheweth vs that it is not for vs to giue ſentence againſt our brethren; for then we take too much vpon vs. Why ſo? Becauſe (ſayth he) there is none but God to whom it belongeth to condmne or to acquit. And why? For he is the only Iudge, and we be his vnderlinges. It is his office to lay Lawes vpon vs, and to put vs to the yoke, vnder the which he will haue both great and ſmall to humble themſelues. After the ſame maner it is ſayde in this text, that Gad knowing how there was a portion layde vp for him with the Lawegiuer, might lawefully require to haue his partition made there, (that is to wit vpō the hill of Baſan,) ẏ hee might not continually driue his cattell from place to place. Now then we ſee, that in the perſon of thoſe whō Moſes ſpeaketh of, we haue a generall rule, to ſhewe that when we followe the thinges which God liked of, and paſſe not beyond our boundes; it is a good warrant for vs to defie the whole worlde when they finde fault with our doinges. And on the contrary part, when we haue not Gods worde to guide vs and rule vs by, nor warrant of his will:al that we can alleage wilbe to no purpoſe. And why? For we be ſet in this worlde to none other ende, but to do homage vnto God with our life. Now if we intende to obey him vnfainedly; wee muſt ſhewe it by the obedience which we yeelde vnto his woorde. That is the thing in effect, which we haue to gather vpon this place.

Now it is ſayde, *that he ſhall followe the Princes of Iſrael, to performe Gods Iuſtice and Iudgement.* Heereby Moſes ſheweth that Gad ſhould not be turned away from God by the cōmodities which he was to inioy. For although hee had alreadie gotten him a certaine dwelling, and was nowe in a place of reſt: yet notwithſtanding he ſhould not forbeare to go ſuffer cold and heat, to ly vpon the hard ground, to followe the wars, to put himſelfe to all maner of daunger, and to indure trauaile and all maner of peines of warfare. Seeing he ceaſed not to ſerue GOD in his calling, ſurely he was to be excuſed. And we haue a good leſſon to gather vpon this place; which is, that we may then well inioy the aduauntages which God giueth vs, when they holde vs not backe from the diſcharge of our dueties,and from imploying ourſelues faithfully in the things which God inioyneth. For although a thing be lawfull of it ſelfe:yet doe we abuſe it when we be hindered by it that we keepe not on our way whither our Lorde appointeth vs. And heerein wee ſee howe there are very few nowadayes, which are not giltie of peruerting the true and right vſe of all the benefits which God beſtoweth vpon thē. We may wel ſay we haue not ſtolne,and ẏ we do iuſtly poſſeſſe the things which God hath giuen vs:but yet for all that,who is he which is not ouercombered with earthly cares, when he hath goods & lāds? Who is he which is not too much wedded to them,& which reſteth not too much vpon them? Who is he which doeth not ſo giue himſelfe vnto them, that he mindeth not ẏ heauenly life? Yee ſhall ſee a great number which become cold, when God hath once giuen them goods: and otherſome become altogether blockiſh.

kiſh. Howe many rich folke ſhall ye find,which are diſpoſed to giue thēſelues wholly vnto God? Nay,we ſee they be held backe as with lines and ropes, ſo as they be not able to ſtep one ſteppe right forth,becauſe their goods do hinder them. And euen therin do we ſee a manifeſt condemnation, ſo as there is no excuſe to be ſought for, wherewith to ſheelde ourſelues afore God. To be ſhort,ſo ſoone as God giueth vs any forehand in this worlde or any cōmoditie, by and by we be as it were tyed heere belowe , and we drawe backe from him, whereas we ſhould rather goe vnto him. We can not ſet forth one ſtep to goe vnto him; it is pitifull to ſee how laſie wee be in doing our duetie. And we ſee that ſcarſely the hundreth man doth determine with himſelfe to followe God: and if he doe, it is ſo laſily as may be. Alwayes the fault ſhalbe layd vpon ẏ goods of the world for plucking vs backe from following the good which God calleth vs vnto. But heere it is ſayde on the contrary part,that God will then like well of our vſing of his benefites, when we be his people,and when we ſeeke to do Iuſtice and Iudgement; that is to ſay, when wee ſhroude not ourſelues vnder pretence of our impediments, or vnder pretence of want of vnderſtanding, as we ſee the common maner is to alleage ſuch fonde excuſes as theſe,I haue bought Luke.14.18. a yooke of Oxen, I haue purchaſed a Manour; and another ſayes, I haue taken a wife, and becauſe I am maryed,I can not go thither as God calleth me. Foraſmuch then as we perceiue that Gods benefits which of their owne nature ought to be ſpurres to pricke vs forewarde, are hinderaunces to plucke vs backe;to the intent we may come to him with the earneſter deſire, let vs inforce ourſelues the more ſtrongly to ouercome all thinges that may hinder vs or plucke vs backe.

Moreouer wheras mention is made of Iuſtice and Iudgement;let vs marke that it is ment concerning the conqueſt of that Countrey. Moſes termeth it Gods Iuſtice & Iudgement,after the cōmon maner of the holy ſcripture: for theſe wordes heere do ſignifie the rule which God giueth vs.And that is yet one other notable point. For ſometimes we may gather good doctrine euen of one worde. It is not for nought, that the holy Ghoſt vſeth theſe ſo excellent wordes, of executing Gods Iuſtice and Iudgement. in ſtead of ſaying, obey God. For thereby hee ſheweth, that as long as men deale after their own fancy, they go croſſely and crookedly, ſo as there is no right dealing in them.I graunt they beare themſelues in hande that their life is well ordered, ſo as no fault can be founde with it, for euery man Prou.21.2. ſtandeth in his owne conceit, as ſayth Salomon. But yet for all that, heere God telleth them frō heauen, that there is none other righteouſneſſe or Iuſtice, than that whereof he himſelfe is the author;and(to be ſhort)that we do but go aſtray, and behaue ourſelues like wandering beaſtes, if we be not grounded vpon his worde. Nowe let vs ſee howe the worlde hath diſcharged it ſelfe heereof. It is as hard a thing as may be to hold ourſelues vnder the obedience of God, that we flatter not ourſelues to inuent ſome one thing or other. For howſoeuer the worlde go,this can neuer be altered,that is to wit that we obey God when we do Iuſtice and Iudgement: and that in following our owne fancies wee take crooked & vntowarde wayes, and(to be ſhort) that we doe but raunge heere and there, without going forewarde.

And truely this circumſtance deſerueth well to be noted. For at the firſt a man would not ſay it were Iuſtice and Iudgement, to goe to put all to the ſworde. For the very purpoſe for which it is ſayde that Gad ſhould followe the tribes of Iſraell, was to goe with naked ſworde , to kill all the males of that Countrey both great & ſmall. And therefore in that caſe it might ſeeme there was ſome crueltie. Yea; but yet for all that,it behooued it to be executed; for it was the iuſt vengeaunce of God. Fourehundred yeeres afore,he might well haue rooted out thoſe people, who were ſo frowarde, and ſo exceſſiue in all wickedneſſe, that although God puniſhed them with extreeme rigor, yet muſt it needes be confeſſed that he had iuſt cauſe to doe it. Yet did he ſpare them and beare with them. But when their wickedneſſe was once ripe, and come to the full grouth; as had beene ſayde thereof vnto Abraham Gen.15.16. fourehundred yeeres afore: then was it for God to execute his laſt ſentence. And ſo let vs marke,that although the thing which God commaundeth vs may ſeeme ſtraunge vnto vs, and we may alleage ſome reaſons againſt it and caſt doutes of it: yet is it not for vs to be wiſer than he, or to make any replying to ſhrinke from obeying him: but wee muſt goe through with it. For it is a true proofe and tryal of our ſubiection, when God commaundeth vs a thing that may ſeeme ſcarſe good, and yet notwithſtanding becauſe he ſpeaketh it, we hold our wittes captiue, ſo as we take not leaue to ſay,I am of a contrary opinion, I thinke it not to be reaſonable. Let vs not bee ſo preſumptuous as to diſpute againſt God, but though a thing ſeeme euill vnto vs, let vs thinke it good if he allowe of it. That is the thing wherein we ſhewe that we be rightly obedient vnto him in all pointes. Therefore when we heare Gods Iuſtice & iudgement ſpoken of, though the caſe concerne the vtter rooting out of all that euer is to be found in a whole Countrey, and the putting of all thinges to the ſword without ſparing: let vs aſſure ourſelues that it is not for men to be iudges of good and euil in that caſe, but that looke whatſoeuer God ſpeaketh,it behoooueth them to holde them to it, and to reſt wholly thereupon. For ſith the tribe of Gad is excuſed heere for not enterpryſing any thing againſt God, and commended for dooing Iuſtice and Iudgement in warre: much more reaſon is it that we ſhould indeuour to obey God when he inioyneth vs things which do much more proue themſelues to be iuſt and rightfull, as when hee will haue vs to be dedicated to him in al holines, to pray vnto him, to put our whole truſt in him, to liue in good loue with our neighbors,indeuoring to doe ſeruice to euery man,and to be ſober and ſtayed in all our conuerſation. For in thoſe caſes his iuſtice is apparant ynough. We cannot reply, that it is too ſtrange a thing: for wee haue this record ingraued in vs aforehand, that God requireth not any thing of vs, which wee owe not vnto him. Nature driueth vs thereunto. Although wee be vnwilling therto, and that we haue a malicious & froward luſt in our harts which draweth vs cleane backe: yet can we not ſay but that the things which are conteined in Gods law be iuſt, good & rightful. Sith it is ſo, let vs ſet our mindes vpon this leſſon, that wee may giue our ſelues vnto him, and breake al the bonds that might hold vs backe, & ſpecially ẏ the gracious benefites which he beſtoweth vpõ vs, may not be ſo peruerted, as to take occaſion therby to deale leaudly, ſo as we ſhould not ſtill do our indeuour to giue our ſelues to the obeying of him.

Now it followeth afterward, *that Dan is as a Lyons whelp, & that he ſhall go out of Baſan.* No dout but ẏ here Moſes intended to ſtrengthen ẏ trybe of Dan, & to giue them courage becauſe they were few in number. They were a trybe of no great reputation, & they ſeemed not worthie to be made account of. Now, they which are ſo deſpyſed of the world, & are of no force, credit, or countenance, are alwayes in dout, & thinke that one time or other they ſhalbee put to the ſpoyle, or rather that men ſhall ſet their feete vpon their throtes. Forſomuch therfore as mẽ beholding their own weaknes, do diſtruſt after that faſhiõ: Moſes meant to exhort the trybe of Dan to put their truſt in God, & not to dout but that he would maintaine them, notwithſtanding that they were fewe, & had not wherof to get any great authoritie to the worldward. And that is the cauſe alſo why Iacob in bleſſing him Gen. 49.16. ſayth, Dan ſhall iudge his people as the other trybes of Iſrael. The word *Dan* ſignifieth *to iudge*: & that name was giuen to the Patriark *Dan*. For it ſeemed vnto Rachel, that God had condemned her; or rather that men had condemned her vniuſtly. Oh (ſayd ſhe) God hath taken my Gen. 30.6. caſe in hand, he hath iudged me; & thereby it appeareth that my quarell hath been maintained of God; for he hath ſhewed in the end, that he condemned me not. Iacob then taketh holde of that ſpeach & ſayth, *Dan, thou ſhalt iudge*. And in the Hebrew, this worde *Iudge* ſignifieth, not 1.Sam. 4.19 only to giue ſentence in matter of controuerſie as it doeth in our language, but alſo to rule or gouerne, & to haue preheminence. And that is the cauſe why it is ſayd, *Such a one iudged*, that is to ſay, gouerned or ruled. And thereupon alſo doth the booke of Iudges take that name; becauſe the Iudges, that is to ſay the gouerners had al the preheminence ouer the people. Thus then we ſee what Moſes meant in ſaying *that Dan ſhould be as a Lyons whelpe*: that is to ſay, that although he ſeemed neuer ſo weake, & wanted wherewith to maintaine himſelfe to ẏ worldward, yet notwithſtanding God would giue him ſtrength, & he ſhould be as a Lyons whelp that leapeth frõ Baſan (it was the place that was aſſigned him for his portiõ) & ſtrẽgthen himſelf in ſuch wiſe, ẏ he ſhuld be maintained & defended.

To be ſhort, wee haue to gather vppon this place, that our Lord if it pleaſe him, will welynough preſerue vs; inſomuch that although we be without defence & vtterly vnfurniſhed of theſe inferiour helps, ſo as we haue neither any great number of people, nor great riches, nor great ſcope of ground: yet we neede not bee afrayd for any of thoſe things; for God is able ynough to preſerue vs, ſo we put our truſt in him. Wil we then be ſafe & ſure? We muſt not haue an eye to our own power: for that is a thing that ſpyteth God & kindleth his wrath: inſomuch ẏ when men thinke themſelues well at caſe, becauſe they haue wherewith to repulſe their enemies, & are rich welthie & ſtrong: that preſumption of theirs muſt needs make God to bereaue them of all; that he may ſhew vnto them that it is in vaine for them to turne away from him, & to put their truſt in corruptible & tranſitorie things. And it is a iuſt vengeance. For we cannot put one drop of truſt in any creature, but Gods right is diminiſhed therby: for we withdraw our faith from him, which ought to be wholly ſhut vp & as it were tyed there. Againe, on ẏ other ſide when we be weake; let vs vnderſtand that it behoooueth vs in any wiſe to flee to Gods protection, that we may be brooded vnder his wings. And God ſeeing vs to be litle ones wil helpe vs. Wherfore let vs therupon conſider; ẏ hee hath power ynough to withſtand al our enemies; inſomuch ẏ wheras to outward ſeeming we haue not the ſtrength of a Gnat; hee will giue vs the ſtrength of a Lyon, or rather he himſelfe wilbe a Lyon for vs, as he vſeth the ſame ſimilitude afore, Deut. 20. & as he ſpeaketh therof by his Prophet Eſay, Eſa 4.31,4. ſaying that he will rore like a Lyon, to repulſe the furie and violence of his enemies; and that he will ſnatch vp the pray, & no man ſhall be ſo bolde as to come neere him to take it frõ him. Now then, when wee bee thus aſſured of the goodneſſe of our God; wee ſhall euer haue wherwith to repulſe all the practiſes of ẏ worlde againſt vs, how many perils ſo euer wee ſee at hand, and as it were hanging ouer our heads. And wee haue good cauſe to put this leſſon in practiſe. For we ſee the malice of the enemies of the Goſpel, wee ſee alſo how all things nowadayes are ſo farre out of order, that by all likelyhood wee ſhoulde bee deuoured euery minute of an houre. And although a greate ſort doe neuer thinke vppon it; yet in very deede the knyfe is continually vppon our throte. And it is not for any man to flatter himſelfe in this behalfe, for then ſhoulde wee bee too dulwitted. It ſtandeth vs in hand to conſider our owne daungers, that wee may bee quickened vp to call vppon GOD, and to flee vnto him for refuge. Then if wee looke well to our ſtate; wee ſhall perceiue that our lyfe hangeth as at a threede, ſo as death threateneth vs on all ſydes, and wee haue no power to withſtande it. The onely remedie whereof is this, that foraſmuch as God hath promiſed to mayntaine the feeble and weake things, and that when in ſight of the worlde, all thinges are like to ſlippe away, yet neuertheleſſe he wil haue his hand reached out, to bleſſe ſuch as are ſo baſe and deſpiſed, & to hold them vnder his tuition, that they may be in ſafetie: we muſt reſt wholly vpon him, and learne to leane vnto him, and beare all things patiently through the power of that promiſe, & with our glorying in God not bee aſhamed to confeſſe our weaknes, to the intent that he may vtter foorth his power, and haue it the better knowen, when the worlde ſhall ſee that there was nothing at al on our ſide, and therfore that we play not the vainglorious folke who woulde always conceale their own weakneſſe although it be knowen. And what a fondneſſe is it to bee deſirous to ſeeme ſomewhat, when we haue nothing in vs? Is it not a fighting againſt nature? And yet in ſo doing we fight againſt God. For it is a darkening of his glory, when we wil needs bleare mennes eyes, and beare them in hande that there is that in vs which is not. Therefore let vs learne to acknowledge our meaneſſe with all humilitie, that we may prouoke one another to reſort vnto our God; and that although wee be but a ſmall handfull of people, and as it were vtterly without ſtrength of our ſelues; yet notwithſtanding, wee ſhalbee defended from aboue, euen when we be caſt vp to all perils here beneath.

Gen.49.21.

After that Moſes hath ſpoken of Dan, he addeth concerning Nephthalim, *that he ſhall haue euen his fill of Fauour*, or of good will, or of free good will: for the Hebrewe word ſignifieth *Free-beſtowed loue*. Then ſhall he haue his fill of Gods free fauour, & be repleniſhed with the bleſſing of the Lorde. Nowe as concerning Nephthalim, it is ſayd in Iacobs bleſſing of him, that hee ſhalbe as a hynde that can skill to ſcape daunger, a fine Hynd that is brought vp deintily, & that ſhall giue goodly wordes, ſuch as will well content men. Hereby Iacob meant to betoken that this trybe ſhould not bee ſo greatly troubled with warre as the other trybes were: but that it ſhould maintaine it ſelfe after another faſhion, namely by being mylde and amiable, & that his ſpeech ſhould be full of gentlenes and courteſie, and that no man ſhould moleſt him. And in ſteed hereof it is ſayd in this place, that Nephthalim ſhall haue his fill of Gods free fauour. The ſtate of this trybe then was better than the ſtate of Dan or of Gad who had enemies, and were continually aſſayled, becauſe God had not giuen them a peaſable ſtate. Now wee knowe that all the riches of the worlde, & all that euer wee can deſire beſydes is nothing woorth; if wee enioy them not in peace. To be ſhort, the chiefe good thing that men can wiſh, is to be voyde of griefe and miſtruſt. This is promiſed to the trybe of Nepthalim, at leaſtwiſe in compariſon of the other trybes. Not that that countrey alſo was not waſted in the ende becauſe of the vnthankfulnes of the people. But God ſheweth here, that whereas hee intended to ſtabliſh the people of Iſrael hee would giue vnto euery of them his portion; & the bleſſings which hee woulde beſtowe vppon them ſhould be diuers; accordingly as we know well, that hee dealeth not alike with all men, no not euen with his owne children, whome hee hath choſen. Albeit that hee loue them all, and be father in common to them all; yet doeth hee handle them diuerſly. After the ſame ſort was it with this people. Here then wee ſee as in a mirrour, that God is not bounde to gouerne his Church after ſuch a ſort, that euery faithfull man ſhoulde haue the ſame thing that the others haue. For God knoweth what is meete for vs. One is handled after one faſhion, [and another after another.] And doth God (ſayth ſome man) take pleaſure in ſuch varietie? For hee knoweth that thoſe things are for our behoofe. Although wee knewe none other reaſon, euen this were ſufficient, that he doeth not any thing but with perfect righteouſnes & wiſedome: and that ought to content vs. But we ſee moreouer, and finde it prooued to vs by experience, that it is not good that all men ſhould be dealt withal alike. And why? For we haue diuerſe diſpoſitions & diuerſe complexions; al mē are not to be fed with one kind of meate; nor all diſeaſes to be cured with one medicine. God therefore vſeth diuerſitie of dealings towardes vs, after as hee perceiueth it expedient for vs: And that is the cauſe why I ſayd that the whole ſumme of Gods bleſſings is a mirror vnto vs to ſhewe vs that hee ſo diſtributeth his gracious giftes vnto his Church as that euerie man hath his meaſure and qualitie, and yet notwithſtanding that howſoeuer wee fare, wee muſt with all humilitie giue thankes vnto GOD, for that it pleaſeth him to bee our father: [aſſuring our ſelues] that although he giue vs not all that our fleſh craueth; yet will he ſuccour vs at our need, and turne our ſorrowes to good, making them to ſerue to our ſaluation.

But it behooueth vs to marke well the word that is ſet downe heere by Moſes, where he ſayeth, *that Nephthalim ſhall haue his fill of Gods fauor, and that he ſhalbe repleniſhed with his bleſsing.* This word *Bleſſe* (as wee knowe) is taken diuers wayes in the holy Scripture. Sometime it is taken for praying. As when wee bleſſe one another, it is as much to ſay, as wee wiſh well one to another. And when it is attributed vnto God, it is alſo taken for benefiting or dooing good. For when God ſayeth the worde, the deede goeth ioyntly therewith. God then needeth not to wiſh vs any good, if hee doo but ſay that hee will doe vs good, wee ſhal haue our fill thereof, and whatſoeuer is expedient for our ſaluation. Nowe then, Gods bleſſing is a teſtimonie and effect of the free fauour, good will, and loue which hee beareth towardes vs. But yet this free loue of God is as the fountayne: and then his bleſſing is as the Conduit pype. Therefore whenſoeuer wee receiue any good or proſperitie; let vs aſſure our ſelues that it commeth of Gods bleſſing of vs, that is to ſaye, of his vttering of his fauour towardes vs; but yet muſt wee euer reſort to that free loue of his, when ſo euer wee bee ſo bleſſed at his hande. For hee would giue vs no ſhow of his fatherly goodnes, if he had not receiued vs alreadie for his children. And that is the cauſe why he dealeth ſo gently and kindly with vs. Moſes then hath kept here a verie good order, in ſaying *that Nephthaly ſhould haue his fill of Gods fauour, and be repleniſhed with his bleſſing.* Hee ſetteth downe *Fauour* in the firſt place, for (as I ſaide) that is the very welſpring: and afterward he addeth *the bleſſing* which proceedeth thereof, that is to ſaye, the record which God yeldeth by effect, that he loueth vs, and that hee hath adopted vs for his children, in reſpect whereof hee vouchſafeth to powre out vpon vs all the ſtores & treaſures of his goodnes.

Now haue wee a good leſſon to gather vpon this text: which is, that if wee bee deſirous of proſperitie, wee muſt ſeeke it at Gods hand; & not do as they do which wiſh ynough, but in the meane whyle cannot lift vp their hearts to call vppon God. Looke vppon the wiſhes of this world, how they flee in the aire; euery man coueteth whatſoeuer moſt liketh his fleſh; & there is no ende of wiſhing, with I woulde, I woulde. And whereas men ſpeake after that faſhion, yet ſhall yee ſcarſe finde one among a hundred, which directeth himſelfe to God, to ſay, Lorde thou knoweſt what is meete for mee, vouchſafe I beſeech thee to ſende it mee. Foraſmuch then as men are ſo gadding, and that their nature leadeth them but to flickering in the aire after their wiſhes; and in the meane while they occupie not themſelues in prayer and ſupplication: therefore it behooueth vs to marke well the texts, where it is ſhewed vs that all proſperitie commeth of God. And moreouer we muſt vnderſtand that when God vttereth his fauour in that wiſe, it is becauſe that hee of his owne free goodnes hath vouchſafed to loue vs: ſo as we muſt not ſeek the cauſe therof in our ſelues, as though we had preuented God, or as though wee had gotten aught by our owne deſertes: but [wee muſt vnderſtande] that God is fauourable vnto vs, becauſe hee hath loued vs, notwithſtanding that wee were vnworthie of it. Thus yee ſee then that from the conduitpype whereat wee drinke, wee muſt goe vp to the fountaine and to the ſprings head, that is to wit, to Gods free goodnes which is higheſt in degree, as the onely cauſe of all the benefites which wee receiue at his hand.

Nowe laſt of all it is ſayde of Nephthaly, *that hee ſhall poſſeſſe the South and the Weſt*, that is to ſay, the Sea; for ſo doeth the ſpeach import. Wherein Moſes propheſieth againe of the ſtate of that trybe. And let vs alwayes beare in mynde howe it is God that ſpeaketh theſe things, to ſhewe that hee hath a care of that people. And that people was as a Mirrour of the Church; yea, and in olde time it was the Church, in whoſe roome wee bee nowe ſucceeded. Wherefore let vs aſſure our ſelues that GOD will alwayes haue a fatherly care of vs. And although hee gouerne all the nations of the worlde in generall by his prouidence: yet is hee neerer vnto vs, and that ſhal wee feele in that wee ſhalbee vnder his direction; and that hee will ſo maintaine vs as wee ſhall knowe that nothing happeneth vnto vs by his will, in ſo much that one hayre ſhall not fall from our head, but by his appoyntment. Luke.12.7.

In the ende hee concludeth with Aſer. True it is that Iacob in his bleſſing of Aſer, ſayeth that hee ſhall haue a country that is fruitfull of corne. Gen 49.20. Here it is ſayd that hee ſhalbe honoured for his children, and that hee ſhalbee acceptable to his brethren. Wee ſee then howe God hath diſtributed to euery of them according to his owne will; and therewithall that it was not lawfull for any of the trybes to murmure againſt him, but that it behooued all of them to bee contented that euery of them ſhoulde receiue the portion that was giuen him. And againe, that all of them ſhoulde thinke thus with them ſelues: Wee haue all one GOD and one father: although hee deale dyuerſly with vs as touching our bodyes; yet will hee haue vs to abyde all faſt knit togither, as whome hee hath called all to one ſelfe ſame inheritance. Lo what wee haue in effect to beare in mynd.

But here is no mention made of the trybe of Simeon. It is alledged that they were ydolaters. And what elſe were all the other trybes alſo? Wee knowe that all the Iſraelites were alienated from God, they were all backſlyders, all the whole countrey was infected with abhomination, and in the ende the very trybe of Iuda was corrupted. It was meete then that all ſhould be buryed. Others ſay that Simeon was companion to Leuy, and therefore that Moſes had already repaired that which had beene ſpoken againſt Leuie and Simeon, which ought to ſuffiſe; Deut.33.8. Gen.34.25. and that God gaue him no peculiar bleſſing, becauſe of the cruell deede which they had committed togither: but that it was ynough for him that hee was comforted in the perſon of Leuye. Howbeit we haue not a better, or a more likely coniecture than this; that although Simeon was then accounted as of the body of that people; yet God gaue him no ſeuerall bleſſing, but left him to languiſh; and yet notwithſtanding, that hee was not deſtitute of all comfort, foraſmuch as hee knew yͤ his fault was forgiuen him, as we haue ſeene afore. Deut.33.8. In likewiſe our Lorde doeth ſometime giue an incling of his fauour though ſomewhat dimly, ſo as we be not named, nor haue yͤ thing ſo cleare as we could wel find in our harts to haue it; but our Lord maketh vs as it were to licke vp his grace, like poore hungry ſoules; wee ſhall haue ſome darke promiſes, and wee ſhall finde them very leane: but yet howſoeuer wee fare, wee muſt vnderſtande that wee muſt not bee out of heart. Therefore when our Lorde ſheweth not his goodnes ſo largely as we would deſire; wee muſt fall to the examining of our faults, whereby it is poſſible that wee haue prouoked him in ſuch ſort, that wee bee vnwoorthie to haue him returne vnto vs out of hande, but hee is fayne to deale with vs as a father that will ſhewe ſome ſigne of diſpleaſure to his childe, inſomuch that although hee ſay, well, I forgiue thee; yet will he not take home his chyld to him to make him a cockeney in his houſe: he will not ſay vnto him, I wil take thee home; but he will ſay, I will not vtterly diſclaim him, I will take him ſtil as one of my houſhold: and yet for all this, the chyld ſhall daunce attendance, he ſhall ſee his fathers countenance very ſtrange towards him, ſo as he ſhall dwell ſtill in dout and in ſuſpence. Euen ſo was it betweene Simeon and God. Our Lord ſhewed not openly vnto him that hee was mynded to receiue him: but yet for all that he did not in the meane while vtterly caſt him off. Although he gaue him not ſuch warrant as was requiſite, to ſhewe that he would admit him to mercy; yet (as we haue ſeene afore) he might perceiue by the bleſſing which belonged to them both and was as it were common to them both, becauſe it was vttered in common by the mouth of the Patriark Iacob: that God did not baniſh him altogither out of his houſe. Howſoeuer the caſe ſtand, wee ſee that to reioyce in God & to receiue his gracious giftes in ſuch ſort as we may haue our mouthes always open to glorifie god, and alſo to bee diſpoſed thereunto all our life long; it behoooueth vs to behold heere as in a mirrour, that ſeeing God is our father, and that we be partakers of the adoption which is made in our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt, by whome hee hath drawen vs out of the deſtruction and gulfe wherein wee were plunged, and hath receiued & choſen vs to be of his flocke: the ſame ought to ſuffiſe vs, and to make vs to call vpon him, & to beare the afflictions patiently which he ſendeth vs, and to learne alſo to giue him thankes for his mainteining of vs in this mortall life; & not to be ſo groſſe in gobbling vp his benefites, as not to conſider that hee continually giueth vs ſome taſte of his goodnes and fatherly loue towards vs. Therefore let vs haue the skill to apply all theſe things to our profite, that wee may be more and more confirmed in beliefe of the immortall inheritance whereunto wee bee inuited.

Gen.49.5.
Deut.33.8.

Now let vs fall downe before the maieſtie of our good God with acknowledgement of our faults, praying him ſo to refourme vs, as wee may not be ſotted in our wicked luſtes & affections; nor Satan ſo bewitch vs with the pleaſures of this world, that wee ſhould bee eſtranged from our God; but that ſeeing he hath once vouchſafed to call vs to the knowledge of his trueth, and that his whole ſeeking is to drawe vs vnto himſelfe; we on our ſide may come vnto him, and euery of vs ſo do his indeuer, as our liues may be dedicated to his honor, and men may knowe that he reigneth among vs in verie deede, and that wee ſhoote at none other mark but to frame our ſelues in all pointes and all reſpects according to his lawes & holy ordinances. That it may pleaſe him to grant this grace, not only to vs, but alſo to all people & nations of the earth, &c.

On Munday the xiij. of Iuly, 1556.

The CXCVIII. Sermon, which is the eighth vpon the xxxiij. Chapter.

26 There is none like the God of Iſrael, who rideth vpon the heauens to help thee, and whoſe glorie is in the clowdes.

27 Thy dwelling place is the Euerlaſting God, & vnder his armes ſhalt thou be for euer. He will put thine enemies to flight before thee, & ſay, deſtroy them.

28 Iſrael ſhall dwell in ſafetie alone. The eye of Iacob ſhall dwel vpon a land of corne and wine: and his heauens ſhall drop dewes.

WE can welynough confeſſe in one worde the greatneſſe and highneſſe of God: but yet yee ſhal ſcarcely find one man of a hundred, which yeldeth vnto God that which belongeth vnto him. For euery man will needes haue his ſhare of it, as though it were a bootie or a pray. For proofe whereof, who is hee that preſumeth not eyther vpon his owne vertue, or vpon his riches, or vpon his courage, or vppon his credit and authoritie? And by theſe meanes God is robbed of his glory. On the other ſide, if wee perceiue any danger, which of vs truſteth and reſteth vpon God? which of vs ſetteth his heart vpon him? Nay, we be vtterly diſmayed. And what elſe betokeneth this, but that after wee haue declared with our mouth that God is almightie, that he gouerneth the world, that nothing can let him to perfourme what he liſteth; we ſhewe by our doings that wee beleeue none of all thoſe things, or elſe that wee be not fully & throughly perſuaded of them? And therſore it is not for nought that the ſcripture doeth ſo magnifie God vnto vs, declaring vnto vs that wee cannot ſufficiently conſider his infinite highneſſe and power which is in him to doe whatſoeuer hee hath ordayned.

And that is the thĩg whereunto Moſes had an eye in this text where he ſayd, *There is none like vnto God, ô right.* This worde is taken for Iſrael or for the Church, as wee haue ſeene heretofore. Deut.33.5. Now at the firſt bluſh a man would thinke that this doctrine were ſuperfluous: ſpecially being directed to ſuch as euen from their childhood were trayned vp in the lawe, and had the doctrine preached vnto them. [A man woulde thinke (I ſay) that it were needleſſe] to tel them that there is none like vnto God. For who denyeth it? But (as I haue ſayd alreadie) it coſteth nothing to ſay ſo; but yet for all that, wee be ſo forepoſſeſſed with the leaſings and darkneſſe of our vnbeleefe, that wee cannot glorifie God in ſuch ſort as to reſt vppon him, to call vppon him, and to holde our ſelues perſuaded and reſolued, that all ſhall go well with vs, ſo God doe pitie vs.

Let vs marke then that in this place Moſes ſpeaketh not to the vnbeleeuers, ſuch as neuer wiſt what the maieſtie of God is: but to ſuch as had heard the lawe, to ſuch as had had their eares beaten with teaching. And wherefore doeth hee it? I haue tolde you alreadie that wee be ſo inclyned to diſtruſt, that euery little temptation will ouerthrowe vs out of hande. Nowe wee ought to reſt vppon the promiſe that is giuen vs; namely that God will guyde vs, & defende vs, ſo as wee ſhall not be ouercome. But wee ſee howe wee be diſmayed euery minute of an houre, and wee haue neede to haue Gods power ſhewed vnto vs to confirme vs, and to knowe that which is ſaide heere, that is to wit, that there is not any like vnto God. And therefore when wee ſee the worlde ſet it ſelfe againſt vs, and Satan ſtill practiſing one thing or other, let vs alwayes reſort to this concluſion, that if Rom.8.19 God be on our ſide, who ſhall then be againſt vs? Not that we ſhall not haue many enemies, or that as in reſpect of our ſelues wee ſhall not haue much adoo to reſiſt them: but that yet notwithſtanding, God will win the vpper hand of them. The way then for vs to put this leſſon in vre, is that when wee ſee all the force of the world bent againſt vs, wee conſider with our ſelues that all is but ſmoke in compariſon of the ineſtimable power of our God, who wil alwayes be in a readineſſe to ſuccour vs.

Nowe hereunto Moſes addeth, *that God rydeth vppon the heauens for our ayde, and that his maieſtie is vppon the clowdes.* This ſerueth to confirm the doctrine which wee haue heard afore. And although it be ſufficiently expreſſed alreadie in one worde, that God hath not his like; and that hee deſerueth to bee ſo exalted aboue all the worlde, that when hee is ſpoken of, all things ought to ſtoope; according as it is ſayde in the Prophets; that as ſoone as his maieſtie appeareth, Eſai.13.10. the Sunne muſt loſe his light, & ẏ Moone muſt bee darkened. Yet I ſay: Howſoeuer the caſe ſtandeth foraſmuch as wee conceiue not his infinite glorie and power: therefore it is ſayd *that God rydeth vppon the heauens, and that his maieſtie is aboue the clowdes.* As if it were tolde vs that all creatures are vnder his feete, that they bee ſubiect vnto him, and that hee can wealde them as hee liſteth. For if God were mingled with the worldly things, there would be a combate betwixt them, there woulde bee many incounters, and there woulde needes be ruſhing againſt him. When one man commeth againſt another, it muſt needes bee knowen which of them is the ſtronger to driue backe his enemie. If God then were in equall and like degree with his creatures, what woulde come of it? But whereas it is ſayde, *that he rydeth vppon the heauens, and that hee ſurmounteth all things:* thereby it is done vs to vnderſtande, that hee hath ſubdued to him ſelfe and to his dominion, whatſoeuer things may make vs afrayde. For although Satan bee called the prince of this worlde, although it bee ſayd that hee fighteth againſt vs from the aire, and that John. 12.31. hee is aboue ouer our heades: Yet notwith- Ephes.6.12. ſtanding hee commeth not at all at God, hee is fayne to ſtoope vnder him. So then in this text wee ſee our vnbeliefe. For when we haue gotten the knowledge of all thinges, if wee knowe not God, what is there in vs but vtter ignorance and beaſtlineſſe? For is it not the chiefe poynt of our wiſedome, to bee ſo grounded in our God, that wee can call vppon him, and flee vnto him for refuge in all our needes? That wee dout not of the aſſuredneſſe of our ſaluation, ſo hee kept vs? If wee haue not that; all our life is but wretchednes.

And by the way we haue to note, that whereas the holy Ghoſt taketh ſo greate paynes to perſwade vs what manner of one God is, and that his power is infinite: it is becauſe wee bee alwayes doutfull and wauering, ſo as there is no ſtayedneſſe in vs. In ſo much that although wee haue heard that God gouerneth all things, and that hee hath ſoueraigne dominion; and although men aſſure vs thereof, and it be tolde vs neuer ſo often times; yet ceaſſe wee not to haue ſtill ſome fancies or others, which darken our vnderſtanding; wee enter into I wote not what ſpeculations, and therewithall wee bee toſſed and turmoyled with a great ſorte of troubles that come vppon vs: And beeing ſo ouerraught by our owne fantaſticall imaginations, wee knowe what it is for vs to truſt in God, and to leane vnto his power. Let vs vnderſtande (I ſaye) that in this text, the holy Ghoſt meant to put vs in mynde of the beaſtlineſſe that is in vs, to the ende to waken vs, that wee may learne to magnifie the glorie of our God, better than we haue done, ſpecially conſidering that all the things which are wont to make vs afrayde, are nothing in reſpect of him. For he is able to ſubdue both Satan & the worlde, and whatſoeuer elſe is againſt our ſaluation: yea, euen all thoſe things muſt yeld themſelues to his ſeruice whenſoeuer he liſteth.

But let vs alſo marke well the ſpeeche that is ſet downe here, *that God rydeth vppon the heauens to our ayde.* If there were but mention made only of Gods maieſtie, and that he were exalted aboue all; wee ſhould already haue ſome matter to make vs to leane vnto him: but yet might we inquire whether he would haue pitie vpon vs, and whether he would diſappoynt the things that are againſt vs, becauſe wee bee not worthie that hee ſhould vtter his power to our benefite. But here Moſes ſaith expreſly, ẏ looke what greatnes & power God hath, he wil apply it to our welfare, that we may be maintained & defended. Therefore when wee heare that God wil be almightie to the intent to ayde vs, & to prouide for al our needes, it is a thing whereon we take a ſure & infallible reſolution. Here then is nothing omitted or forgotten; for on the one ſide Moſes thruſteth downe all that euer may ſeeme high, ſhewing that God hath all things vnder his feete, and that he can wel weald them as he liſteth. And therewithall he ſheweth [on the other ſide] that God will be fauourable vnto vs, that he will helpe vs, and that he will alwayes be readie to ſuccour vs. So then, if wee conceiue God in his high maieſtie, although hee ſeeme to be farre off from vs, and we to bee as wretched wormes creeping on the grounde, and he ſurmounting al that can be ſeene howe great excellencie ſo euer be in them: yet neuertheleſſe, let vs aſſure our ſelues that he vouchſafeth to ſuccour vs, and will haue that mightie power of his linked in vnſeparable bonde with our welfare.

And that is the cauſe why Moſes addeth, *that his dwelling place ſhal be on high, or that the ſoueraigne God ſhalbe his dwelling place*, *and that his armes are alwayes vnder him.* Truely, this worde *dwelling place* is expounded as if it were meant that God is ẏ harbor of his ſeruants, after which manner it is ſayde in the ſong of Moſes in the nynetith Pſalme: Lorde thou haſt bene our refuge from generation to generation. ſal.90.1. And this kinde of ſimilitude is verie often ſet downe, to ſhewe that we ſhould be ſet open to wynde and rayne, heate and cold, if our Lord preſerued vs not, and that we were not harboured vnder his wings. This interpretation then were very conuenient and profitable, namely that the dwelling place of the ſoueraigne & euerlaſting God is a ſure abode, and therefore that it is for our behoofe to get vs vnder him, for there we ſhall be in ſafetie, and wee ſhalbe well lodged as it is ſaid therof in the fourſcore & eleuenth Pſalme. ſal.91.1. And (as I ſaid afore) it is a doctrine which is to be ſeene almoſt in euery leafe of the holy ſcripture, Howbeit foraſmuch as ther is great briefneſſe in the wordes, and there is no more ſayde but *the dwelling of God euerlaſting*: it will come al to one poynt if it be taken, that Gods abyding is euerlaſting, ſo as he fleeteth not as we ſee that we do, who are fayne to trot vp and down here beneath in the worlde, without any certayne ſtay. What is the life of men, yea, euen of thoſe which thinke themſelues to bee lodged in their neſt, neuer to go out of it? Yet muſt they walke here & there. And in very deede there paſſeth not one minute of an houre without ſome change of vs. Though a man ſit ſtil or lye ſtill, yet beareth hee changes continually with him, and hee himſelf changeth in the conceits of his mynd; and he is euer as a ſhadowe. Like as wee ſee a ſhadowe continually fleeting to remoue from the one ſide to the other: euen ſo is it with men. I ſay they be continually fleeting, which ſheweth wel that their life ſlippeth away. But contrariwiſe it is ſayd, that Gods abyding is euerlaſting, according as S. Iames ſayeth that there befalleth no ſhadowing vnto him. It is God (ſayth he) in whome there is no trouble, Iames.1.17. ſo as he is not to bee compared to vs nor to any other creatures. For we be variable, & in continuall mouing; there is a certein ſturring which carryeth vs frō place to place: But in our God there is a ſure ſtayednes, which wee comprehend not here. To be ſhort, the intent of Moſes was to ſhewe, that if wee put our truſt in God, then come there neuer ſo many turnings and returnings, that heauen & earth may ſeeme to runne togither, ſo as to day there is report of warre and to morrowe of famine, enimies approche, and ſudden incounters come, inſomuch that wee bee beſieged with a thouſand deathes, & the world is continuall wauering; ſtormes ariſe on all ſides, & we be as on the ſea, where is no ſtay for vs to reſt vppon: yet neuertheleſſe we may wel be alwayes in quiet. And why? For the dwelling of our God is euerlaſting, & therfore being vnder his hande and protection, let vs not be afrayd of al the things that may happen vnto vs from elſewhere. For wee muſt not meaſure our God by the things which wee ſee with our eyes, & which beſet vs here beneath.

Now remaineth that we apply this doctrine to our benefite: and although wee be driuen to liue as pilgrims in this world, & to be ſubiect to many changes: yet notwithſtanding let vs not ceaſe to put our ſelues ſtill into the cuſtodie of our God. And for as much as wee know that he wil maintaine vs; let vs ouerpaſſe al the ſtormes that riſe againſt vs, and let vs ouercome all tēptations. By what power? Becauſe he that dwelleth in heauen hath taken vs into his keeping; he wil defend vs, for his abode is euerlaſting. So then, he is ſo gracious vnto vs, that wee ſhal not periſh, though it ſeeme ẏ we ſhould be ſwalowed vp euery day, by the dangers that appeare vnto vs. And to the end we ſhould be the ſurer hereof, it is ſaid, *That his armes are below for euer.* Some referre this to the people of Iſrael, ſo as ẏ arms of that people ſhuld neuer faint, ſo long as they were vphelde from aboue: that is to ſay, they ſhall haue an inuincible force ſo long as God is their ayd. Which thing is true. But the wordes of Moſes import it not. His intent and meaning rather is, that Gods armes are here beneath. And why doeth he ſet Gods armes beneath, ſeeing he hath alreadie told vs that God rydeth vpon the heauens? Theſe things ſeeme to be repugnant. For if God haue his ſeat on high, how ſhal he haue his armes ſo lowe? It is becauſe hee filleth all thinges, ſo as not onely his eſſence is infinite, but alſo his power: and it is ſpoken of ſet purpoſe, becauſe he wil haue vs to perceiue it by experience. If it were ſayde that Gods armes are in heauen; it woulde well ſerue to mayntaine the Angels; but as for vs, wee ſhoulde neuertheleſſe quake and be afrayd whenſoeuer we were threatened with any miſchiefe; we ſhould looke heere and there, and continue diſmayed without any remedie. Heere therefore the holy Ghoſt remedieth ſuch temptations, and ſayth that Gods armes are heere beneath. Although then that God ſit aboue in his maieſtie, although that as oft as we thinke vpon him, we muſt needes bee rauiſhed with all reuerence to worſhippe him with humilitie, ſeeing that we be nothing, and he is aboue all: although it behooue vs to worſhip God after that manner by abaſing ourſelues vtterly: yet ought that to be no impediment vnto vs, that we ſhould not knowe his power to be neere vnto vs, that his armes are reached out vnto vs, and that he will make the ſtrength of them to be felt euen heere, and ſhew the open proofe thereof. And why? For he will haue a care to keepe thoſe whom he hath choſen and elected, euen thoſe which truſt in him, which reſt vppon him, and which flee altogether vnto him. It is then a notable point of doctrin, when Moſes maketh ſuch a deſcription of God, that on the one ſide hee ſheweth vs how wee ought to behaue ourſelues lowely in thinking vppon him; and on the other ſide comforteth vs in ſaying that our God diſdaineth not to ſuccour vs: and that for proofe therof hee putteth downe his armes heere belowe, not that he is not alſo in heauen as I haue ſayde afore, but for our faythes ſake, in reſpect wherof mention is made of theſe neathermoſt partes. If we looke vpon our life, truely there is nothing but frailtie in it. Againe, we be beſeeged with ſo many enemies, as is horrible to ſee: and moreouer infinite deathes doe manace vs. But what? Gods armes are rounde about vs, we be fenced with them, and that for mo dayes than one. For as God is vnchaungeable, and hath an euerabyding ſeat: ſo his armes alſo abide heere for euer, and he will neuer be weary of ſuccouring vs. Let vs truſt to that, and then may we alwayes haue full boldneſſe, euen in the middeſt of all the troubles of this worlde, becauſe our ſaluation is in Gods hande, ſo as we neede not to be afraide or to dout.

Deut 33.7. Nowe after this, it is ſayd, *That he will driue away the enemie before vs, ſaying, Deſtroy them.* Wee haue ſeene heeretofore howe Gods Church is neuer without enemies, because Sathan who is John. 12.31. the prince of this world, doth moue the wicked continually to vexe the children of God. If the deuill were quite and cleane doone away, then truely we might haue peace in the worlde. But foraſmuch as he hath the greateſt multitude of men in his hande, who are frowarde by kinde, & we knowe that his whole ſeeking is to deſtroy vs: therefore we muſt prepare ourſelues to haue warre as long as we be in the worlde. The condition is harde, but yet muſt we beare it patiently, ſeeing that our Lorde hath ſo ordained, and therefore ſeeing he will try our faith and obedience by ſtirring vp enemies vnto vs; let vs yeeld our neckes vnto him. But yet moreouer wee haue neede to bee ſuccoured at his hande, yea and to haue him fight for vs: or otherwiſe what would become of vs? In that therefore ought we to haue full truſt. Wherfore let vs be contented, and although wee muſt needs be troubled, and ſuſteine many bruntes, and liue in continuall care foraſmuch as our enemies ceaſe not to prepare newe battels againſt vs: yet notwithſtanding let vs ſtay our ſelues vppon this, that our Lorde will not leaue vs in our neede. The meaning then of Moſes is, that God will ſo ſtretche Pſalm. 10. 5. out his arme, that all our enemies ſhalbe put to flyght; inſomuch that although they come with neuer ſo great violence againſt vs, ſo as it may ſeeme that they ſhould beare downe all thinges afore them, yea and ouerthrow all thinges with their breath: yet notwithſtanding God will ſtep afore them, as in reſpect whereof he is heereafter termed our ſheelde. Deut. 33.29. To be ſhort we ſee after what manner Gods armes are heere belowe. They bee not ydle; but they bee occupied in driuing our enemies away. And we be warned not to vexe ourſelues out of meaſure, when God exerciſeth vs with ſtore of temptations: but to ſtande alwayes vpon this ground (as I ſayde,) that our Lorde will fight for vs, and that by reſting vppon him, wee ſhall gette the vpper hande.

Nowe he addeth, *that he will ſay, deſtroy them.* If God put them to flight or driue them away; why ſayth he that we ſhall deſtroy them? Heere may ſeeme to be ſome contrarietie: For if God doe all, it ſeemeth that hee leaueth nothing for vs. But Moſes hath very well expreſſed, how it commeth to paſſe that we get the victorie of our enemies. In deede it is God that fighteth, but yet will he haue vs to bee inſtrumentes of his power. As for vs, we could not abide any one aſſault, vnleſſe we were ſtrengthened frō aboue, and (to be ſhort) that God himſelfe gouerned vs. For we be vtterly vnprofitable, inſomuch that there is not one droppe of ſtrength in vs, & that ſtrength which we weene we haue, is but leaſing. Yee ſee then how God worketh in ſuch wiſe, that we be maintayned by him; whatſoeuer we haue be it welfare or life, we muſt father it all wholly vpon him, and acknowledge ourſelues to haue it from thence. And if we will needes make ſuch a partition as the papiſtes do, and ſay that we worke together with God ſo as there is a concurrence [or meeting together]; and that we do helpe him: it is a renouncing of his ayde. So then, let vs learne to let God alone with that which is his, namely that all our welfare conſiſteth in him. Yet notwithſtanding, he applyeth vs to his ſeruice, ſo as we ſeeme to be dooers thereof. And that is a thing wherein the papiſts beguile themſelues. They ſpake of Freewill, and of mans abilities, and (to their ſeeming) we worke wonders. They confeſſe in deede that we had neede to be helped by God, and that he had neede to ſuccour vs with his grace: but yet doe they alwayes make vs companions with GOD. And why? Becauſe they ſee well, that to ſerue God, to reſiſt temptations, to walke in vprightneſſe of life, and to eſchue the corruptions of the world, the faithfull are faine to inforce thēſelues, to take paines to brydle themſelues, to become as captiues, and to fight againſt themſelues; which can not be done but with great difficultie. For, to be patient in their aduerſities, they are faine to holde themſelues as locked vp, and ſo to brydle and ouermaiſter their paſſions, as they may be tamed. Nowe then, when the Papiſtes ſee the faithfull take ſuch paines; they imagine that they do it of their owne power. But the matter is not whether mé take great paines, and whether they labour till they pant or no: but to knowe from whence that proceedeth. Now we ſay it is of God: and ſo there remaineth not any ſhare for men, nor aught whereof they may glory. God driueth away his enemies afore him, and yet neuertheleſſe ſayeth, *Deſtroy them*. Lo howe God on the one ſide deſtroyeth our enemies; and therewithall alſo commaundeth vs to vanquiſh them. How can theſe agree? O, yet is it God that doth all. And although he ſeeme to ſet vs a worke; yet are we able to do nothing. No, but yet do we indeuour. Yea, ſo farfoorth as he giueth vs it, and according to the meaſure of his grace, ſo as wee muſt not thinke we haue it of our owne growing. To be ſhort, man hath nothing of his owne in this caſe, neither doth the holy Ghoſt leaue him any thing. But yet are not we ydle: for our Lorde keepeth vs occupied, and maketh his grace auailable in vs, and cauſeth it to bring forth fruite, and wee be the inſtrumentes thereof. So then, we haue nowe the meaning of Moſes; which is, that although heere belowe wee liue not in an earthly Paradiſe; but our enemies do vexe and trouble vs on all ſides, and it ſeemeth that we ſhould bee ſwallowed vp by them: yet ought wee to walke on conſtantly vnder the protection of our God. And why? For his armes are come downe to vs, to ſuccour vs by his power, which ſhall vanquiſh all that euer is againſt our welfare; ſo we on our ſide doe ſuffer him to vtter his power in vs, and we behaue our ſelues as his inſtrumentes. For although he be the dooer of all; yet (as I ſayd afore) he doth vs the grace to doe it, & will haue the worke to be as it were ours: Not to puffe vs vp with preſumption & ouerweening as though we thought our ſelues to haue any thing: but that we ſhould ſo much the more acknowledge his goodneſſe towardes vs, in that hee attributeth and imparteth vnto vs the thing that is his, yea and will haue it to be reputed as our owne.

Hauing ſpoken after that faſhion, he addeth, *that Iſraell ſhall dwell ſafely alone by himſelfe*. Heere Moſes had an eye to the ſtate and condition of that people: becauſe God had culled them out, to ſet them there as in a neſt by thēſelues. True it is that the Countrey of Iewry was not ſeparated out from all other Countryes: but yet had Deut.32.9. God caſt his metelines there, as we haue ſeene in the laſt chapter going afore: and that he had ſet the boūdes and borders thereof, of purpoſe to harbour that people there. Howſoeuer the caſe ſtande, the people of Iſraell were ſeparated from all other Nations. They had in deede ſome trafficke with their neighbours; but yet had God gathered them together, as who would ſay, yee ſhalbe purified, that ye may no more liue in the corruptions of this worlde. And that could not be dóne, but that the reſt of the world muſt haue them and ſhake them off. For when men deſpiſe vs, we alſo on our ſide do diſdaine them againe. The neighbours of the Iewes then, deſyred nothing ſo much as that the memory of the Iewes might haue periſhed. To this ſtate of theirs had Moſes a reſpect in ſaying, *that Iſraell ſhould dwell ſafely, though he dwelt alone by himſelfe*. As if hee ſhould ſay, In deede it is like ynough that yee ſhalbe in perill of many daungers, becauſe our Lord wil not haue you to be mingled with other natiōs, but wil haue ye to be as a litle body cloſe knit together: It may wel ſeeme ẏ ye ſhould be afrayde; but it is ynough ẏ your God hath you in his cuſtody: therfore be contented with him and with his ayde, and ye ſhall dwel ſafely. Furthermore it is not to be douted but that heere Moſes ment to giue a continuing leſſon to the whole Church; which is to thinke her ſelfe ſafe and well aſſured of her ſaluation, although ſhee ſee not her ſelfe fenced in the worlde, ne to haue fortreſſes, walles, weapons, or any other ſuch thinges wherein men are woont to truſt, but rather is vtterly deſtitute of them all. And why? For we be in the hande of God. Then if we will yeelde God the honour which hee deſerueth: when we ſee nothing heere beneath, that may aſſure our ſafetie; let vs learne to go ſtreight vnto him, and to make ſuch account of his power, as to conclude that wee neede not to feare any thing ſo he be on our ſide. For if wee will haue our ſafegarde heere beneath; our Lorde will bee nothing to vs, neither can we ſay that it is he in whom we put our whole truſt. If we ſeeke the inferiour meanes, and ẏ as ſoone as they fayle vs, by & by our hearts quaile, then is there nothing but hypocriſie in vs, and we ſhall euer bewray our owne diſtruſt. Ye ſee then howe the true tryall of our fayth, is to hope in ſuch ſort for ſuccour from our God, that although all the worlde fayle vs, and we ſee nothing about vs that may giue vs corage; yet we aſſure our ſelues of ſafegarde [at his hande]. That is the thing which this text importeth.

When we haue digeſted this leſſon, we ſhall fare much the better by it al the time of our life. For on the one ſide wee ſhalbe drawen away frō the vaine imaginations which deceiue vs. As ſoone as we haue any thing heere beneath that makes for vs, or if we be any thing aforehande: we doe as it were deſpiſe God, that is to ſay, we thinke not that we haue any more neede of him. Will they that haue their Garners and cellers well ſtored, call vppon God to bee fedde at his hande? In deede they will ſay their Paternoſter as other men doe: but yet there is nothing but filth in them, they beare themſelues in hande that they be ſufficiently prouided for, ſo as they come not to God for any neede. In like caſe is it with them which are healthy and ſtrong; they conſider not the brittleneſſe of their life. To be ſhort, ſo long as thinges fall out to our minde and deſire in this worlde, we be ſo daſeled with it that we reſort not vnto God, ne knowe what it is to be guided and gouerned by him. And therefore let vs exerciſe our ſelues in this leſſon, that it behooueth vs to dwell in heauen : that whenſoeuer God liſteth to leaue vs alone, that is to ſay to bereaue vs of al mainteynance, ſo as we be deſtitute of all helpes to truſt vnto: yet for all that we muſt not be out of heart. And the reaſon is, becauſe our ſafetie conſiſteth not in any of the thinges which we diſcerne with our naturall ſenſes; but in Gods defence. True it is that we perceiue not his hande but by fayth, for it is inuiſible. But yet will he make vs to perceiue his ſuccour continually, if we receiue his worde: and when he ſheweth his goodneſſe vnto vs, his power goeth ioyntly therewith. And therefore firſt of all, let vs be withdrawen from all the vaine ſelfeweeninges which are woont to deceiue vs: and ſecondly let vs doe this honour vnto God, that we put our truſt in him, knowing that ſith he hath care of our welfare, we ſhalbe in ſafetie. And this ought to preuaile more now adayes, than euer it did. For it is ſayd expreſly of the reigne of our Lord Ieſus Chriſt, that euery man ſhall dwell ſafely vnder his vine and vnder his figtree. Seeing then that our Lord Ieſus Chriſt calleth vs nowadaies vnto his protection; let vs boldly reſt vpon him. Albeit ẏ all thinges goe againſt vs, and worldly helpes faile vs; yet howſoeuer we fare let vs ſtande faſt, and let this ſaying bee well printed in our remembraunce, that Iſraell ſhall not fayle to be ſafe though hee be alone. And why? Becauſe God is his keeper; his welfare dependeth not vpon ẏ ſtayes of this world; it is ynough for him that God hath taken him into his cuſtodie.

Mich.4.4.

And hee addeth immediatly, *that the Eye or Fountaine of Iacob was vpon a land of Corne & Wine, and that the heauens ſhould droppe downe deawes.* Heereby Moſes betokeneth in effect, that if we be Gods people, he will haue a care to ſuſtayne vs: and that becauſe wee haue neede of ſuſtenaunce, hee will prouide vs thereof according to our neceſſitie, ſo as hee will giue vs meate and drinke ſufficient. True it is that the Hebrewe word which he vſeth, may bee taken both for an *Eye* and for a *Fountaine*. And in deede the Hebrewes call Fountaines Eyes, becauſe the ſpringes of the water (if yee marke them) haue the ſhape of the eye in a mans body. If we take it for an eye in his proper ſignification; it is as much to ſay as that Gods people ſhal haue their ſight continually vppon corne and wine, and that God will giue them ſufficient ſuſtenaunce. For the deawe ſhall come downe from heauen, which ſhall make the grounde to yeelde fruite. If we ſhould take it for a Fountaine; that were ſomewhat harde. I grant it is ſayde in ẏ Pſalme, You that be of the fountaines or welſpringes of Iacob: but that is becauſe the Patriarke Iacob was the welſpring of that people. And it could not agree to the preſent text. And therefore let vs content ourſelues with the naturall ſenſe of Moſes: which is, that God will make vs feele & ſhewe vs by experience, that wee ſhall receiue ſuſtenaunce at his hande as long as wee bee in this worlde. Of a trueth, breade and wine are not the chiefe thinges which we ought to ſeeke at Gods hande: yet is it much when we ſee he hath a care of this corruptible life. And that ought to make vs to ſtye vp higher. For when we ſee that God vouchſafeth to feede our bodies: ought wee not to conclude that it is much more likely that he will feede our ſoules which are much more deerer vnto him? The good then which we receiue heere beneath, ought to ſerue to make vs to ſende vp our truſt aboue the heauens, to ſeeke a better life at his hand, which we can not as nowe comprehende. And therefore of no ſmal importance is this promiſe where it is ſayde, that God will alwayes make his people ſee and feele that he is their foſter father, that he giueth them corne and wine for their ſuſtenaunce, and that he will ſende them deawe from heauen to keepe the grounde frō parching vp, ſo as it may haue moyſture to ſuſteine thoſe which otherwiſe ſhould abyde a hungred. Ye ſee then that the thing which we haue to remember vpon this place, is that if we be of Gods flocke, we ſhall not be deſtitute of any needefull thing. For euen as in reſpect of this tranſitorie life, we ſhalbe fedde and nouriſhed at his hande. And when we obtaine ſuſtenance at Gods hande; it is to incourage vs. Let ſuch as are poore take paines, and pray vnto God to bleſſe their labor, becauſe it belongeth to him to ſuſteine thoſe that are his. Lo howe the poore ought to bee ſtirred vp vnto prayer. And if they haue litle wherewith to ſuſteine them, let them conſider that God intendeth to trye their patience; and yet that in the meane while hee maketh that ſuſtenaunce of theirs as ſlender as it is, to turne into Manna, ſo as they be ſuſteyned therewith. Let not the rich ſort be puffed vp with pride, vppon that they haue their life in their owne hande; but let them vnderſtande that it behooueth thē to haue recourſe vnto God with all their goods. For if they haue not a regarde of him; let them aſſure themſelues that he can well conſume the Corne in their Garners, the griſt at the mill, & the batch in the Ouen: yea he will conſume the bread in their bellies, ſo as in ſteede of receyuing nouriſhment by it, they haue nothing but corruption. Let vs knowe then, that God muſt be faine to performe ẏ which is declared heere, that is to wit, that our eye may be vpon a Land of Corne and wine: and that it behooueth vs to conſider that it is he to whome we be beholden for all thinges. I graunt it may fall out that wee ſhall not haue ſuch abundaunce as wee would wiſh, and as our fleſh luſteth for: but yet (as I haue ſayd already) God ſheweth that he forgetteth not his ſeruauntes; and that although hee giue them but a ſmall and ſlender pittance; yet they haue wherwith to content themſelues, becauſe they receiue ſuſtenance at his hand. Therfore as long as we be to paſſe through this world, let it ſuffiſe vs that God vouchſafeth ſtill to ſuſteyne vs, and that in ſo doing he ſheweth himſelfe a father towards vs to the intent we ſhould go on ſtill, and keepe on our way to the heauenly heritage whereunto he will bring vs, to make vs inioy the thinges fully and perfectly, whereof we haue knowledge as nowe but in part.

Pſal.68.27.

After that maner ought we to put the ſayde leſſon in practiſe. For when the holy Ghoſt ſpeaketh of the temporall bleſſinges which God ſendeth to his children: he meaneth not to hold them there, as if he ſhould ſay, ſeeke no greater thinges: but contrariwiſe, becauſe wee be rechleſſe and ſlowe, and can not ſtep one ſtep without ſtumbling except wee bee vphelde by God; and ſpecially we could not haue the ſteedineſſe and conſtancie to ſay, Let vs put ourſelues into the handes of our God, let vs yeelde vnto him, and in our paſſing through this world, let vs not be held backe, aſſuring ourſelues that Gods prouiding for all our neceſſities, is to none other ende but that we ſhould looke vppe vnto him: That (ſay I) is the ende whereunto we ought to referre all the promiſes wherein our Lord ſayth that he will haue a care of our life. Wherefore let vs make this leſſon auayleable wherein it is ſayde, *That his eye ſhalbe vpon a lande of Corne and Wine.* True it is that we ſhall be threatned with many neceſſities, ſo as we ſhalbe in continuall anguiſh: yet notwithſtanding, if we haue an eye to Gods bleſſing, we ſhall hope ẏ he will guide vs vnto the end, and that he will make vs to perceiue that he hath goods ſufficient wherewith to mayntaine thoſe that are of his houſholde: yea and to ſuſteine them in ſuch wiſe, that by the abundaunce which he will giue them, he will ſhew them alſo that he is able to ſuſteine them euen as it were with nothing. For when God giueth vs abundaunce and fruitefulneſſe, there we ſee that he layeth foorth his treaſures, and that (as hath bin declared heretofore) he will lay abroad Deut.28.12. the treaſures which were (as it were) hidden vnder the earth. But when wee haue a very deere and ſcarſe yeere, which ſeemeth vnable to finde almoſt the one halfe of the poore people: If our Lord make the ſame to ſuffice, and wee paſſe it cleane ouer: in the ende we know that our Lord prouided for vs, and ſhewed a farre more wonderfull prouidence, than if hee hadde giuen vs wherewith to fill our bellies, & that we had wanted nothing. So then, howſoeuer the world goe, let vs learne to call vpon our God. If wee haue ſuſtenaunce, let vs vnderſtande that it is not for vs to truſt thereto, but to do vs to wit, that when God is liberall vnto vs, wee muſt conſider that he laieth forth his riches becauſe he hath a care of our life. And when we haue not ſufficient prouiſion, let vs reſort vnto him, aſſuring ourſelues that he is not diminiſhed: and that although he ſhewe not his bountifulneſſe to the vewe of our eye; yet he hath wherewith to ſuſteyne his ſeruauntes. And therefore let vs call vpon him, & put the thing in practiſe which is ſhewed vs by our Lord Ieſus Chriſt, which is to craue of him *Math.6.12.* our ordinary bread from day to day.

Nowe let vs fall downe before the maieſtie of our good God with acknowledgement of our faultes, praying him to make vs perceiue them better, and that we may be ſo touched with repentance, as it may make vs to ſubmit ourſelues wholly to his trueth, and to fight in ſuch wiſe againſt our owne affections, as our battaile may be ſpirituall againſt Sathan and againſt all his attemptes, vntill we haue obtained the victory that is promiſed vs, at ſuch time as wee ſhall be perfectly knit vnto our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt, to bee partakers of the glory of his reſurrection. That it may pleaſe him to graunt this grace not only to vs, but alſo to all people and Nations of the earth, &c.

On Tewſday the xiiij. of Iuly, 1556.

The CXCIX. Sermon which is the ninth vpon the xxxiij. Chapter, and the firſt vpon the xxxiiij. Chapter.

29 Bleſſed art thou O Iſraell. Who is like thee O people which art ſaued by the Lorde the ſheelde of thine ayde, and who is the ſworde of thy mightineſſe? Thine enemies ſhalbe weakened towardes thee, and thou ſhalt march ouer their toppes.

The foure and thirtith Chapter.

THen Moſes went from the plaine of Moab vnto the mountaine Nebo, vp to the top of Phaſga, which is ouer againſt Iericho. And the Lorde made him to ſee the whole Lande, the Countrey of Galaad vnto Dan.

2 And all the Lande of Nephthaly, and all the Lande of Ephraim and of Manaſſes; and all the Lande of Iuda vnto the vttermoſt Sea.

3 And the South and the leuell of the medowes of Iericho, the citie of Palmtrees, vnto Zoar.

4 And the Lorde ſayde vnto him, This is the Lande whereof I ſware to Abraham, Iſaac, and Iacob, ſaying, I will giue it to thy ſeede; I haue made thee to ſee it with thine eyes, but thou ſhalt not go into it.

5 And Moſes the ſeruaunt of the Lorde dyed there, in the Lande of Moab, according to the word of the Lorde.

6 And he was buried in the valley in the Lande of Moab, oueragainſt Bethphogor, and no man hath knowen his graue vnto this day.

Among the other matters which were layde foorth yeſterday, there remayned how Moſes tolde the people of Iſrael, *That there was not then any Nation vpon earth, like vnto them, becauſe they were ſaued by God:* and that is to bee marked well. For although God do by his power and grace preſerue all creatures; yet will he bee knowen to be the Sauiour of his people. Therefore when wee be ſaued in him it is a priuiledge which can not be ſufficiently expreſſed & magnified. For we differ not from other men in reſpect of any worthineſſe that is in vs; neither haue we it by inheritaunce, but it commeth of Gods freegoodneſſe. And therefore whenſoeuer we be ſpoken to concerning our ſaluation, let vs vnderſtande from whence it proceedeth, and that God giueth vs that beautie. For we be like all the reſt of Adams ofſpring. If we ſhould bee eſteemed according to our nature, we be no better woorth than thoſe whom God forſaketh and vtterly caſteth away. Wherefore then hath he choſen vs, but for his owne meere goodneſſe ſake? The thing which we haue to remember vpon this text, is that God will haue his grace ſo much the better knowen, becauſe ſaluation is not common in generall to all men, but is a peculiar gift. And Moſes ſheweth by the way, what this ſauing is; namely when God is *our ſhielde and our defence.* As if hee ſhould ſay that without him we can not be maintayned: for wee be layde open to many deathes, and haue not wherewith to reſiſt. It is like as when a man is aſſayled on all ſides, and hath neither weapon nor armour, but is ſtarke naked. Euen ſo is it with vs, if God fence vs not. Therefore he is called our ſhield and our help. Wherby we be done to vnderſtand, that we can not ſuccour ourſelues of our owne power, neither haue we the meane to doe; but it muſt come of God. Hee is termed *the ſworde of our glorie.* In deede men glorie ynough in themſelues, they flatter themſelues, and they perſwade themſelues the thing that is not. But heere we be plucked backe from all the vaine hopes which deceiue vs and beguile vs, to the ende we ſhould learne to ſet all our glorie in God, and to conclude that we haue none other power than his, whereby to be maynteyned.

Now heereupon Moſes addeth, that the Iewes *ſhould march ouer their enemies heades, or ouer all their gallantneſſe* (for there is no more but the word *Top*, or hygheſt part), *and that their enemies ſhall flatter them with leazing* [*or lying*]: for this worde *Lye* in holy ſcripture, is taken for to ſet a good face or countenaunce vpon a matter, and to play the hypocrite by force, as when it is ſaid in the eighteenth Pſalme (where the great victories are ſpoken of, which God would giue vnto Dauid) *Thine enemies ſhall lye vnto thee.* Pſal.18.5. Nowe then, the ſumme is this, that God will be the ſauiour of his people. Inſomuch that although they haue many enemies, yet ſhall they not bee able to match them, but ſhall be driuen in the ende to confeſſe themſelues to bee the weaker. And that although their ſo dooing be but counterfaite; yet notwithſtanding, Gods power ſhall ſhewe it ſelfe therein. And now proceeding with this leſſon, let vs learne firſt to knowe that wee be vtterly naked, and that wee want all thinges: & when we knowe that, let vs humble ourſelues ſo as there may not be one droppe of hautineſſe or fooliſh ſelfeweening in vs. And therewithall let vs vnderſtande, that God will not ſuffer vs to quaile in any caſe. For if we haue neither ſword nor ſhielde, he will ſerue our turne for both of them. If we be in daunger of vndooing, hee is our preſeruer. If we be plundged heere in neuer ſo many miſeries with the reſt of all mankinde; we ſhalbe recouered again by his grace, becauſe he hath choſen vs for his people. That is the point whereon we muſt reſt.

Nowe haue we heere a rehearſal of the death of Moſes, whereof mention was made in the end of the two and thirtith Chapter, and heere it is repeated againe; Deut.32.50. namely that God *made Moſes to goe vp into the mountaine Nebo*, which otherwiſe is a part of the Mountaine Abarim. And he addeth afterwarde *Gay*. In deede this worde *Gay* ſignifieth a valley. But we ſee it was a part of the mountaine in diuers reſpectes, and that appeareth in many places. Moſes then went vp as he was commaunded of God, and there beheld all the Lande which had bin promiſed for an inheritaunce to the linage of Abraham, euen vnto the Sea which was right ouer againſt it, that is to wit the midland Sea. He viewed the Countrey, to the intent he ſhould be certified before his death, that the promiſe which God hadde made fourehundred yeeres afore, Gen.12.7. was not in vaine, but euen at the point to bee performed: neuertheleſſe it was not Lawfull for him to goe

into the Lande, but only to ſee it. And (as hath beene treated heeretofore) God puniſhed him
Deut. 32.51. becauſe he had not glorified God at the place of
Exod.17.7. Meriba, that is to ſay the place of Strife, which was ſo named becauſe the people were on an vprore there.

And heere we haue to cal to minde the thing which hath beene layde foorth already more at length; that is to wit, the obedientneſſe of Moſes. For he knewe well that his going vp thither as God called him, was to the intent he ſhould die. Death then was not ſo greeuous vnto him, but that he prepared himſelfe vnto it when hee ſawe it was Gods will it ſhould be ſo. And by this example wee be taught to liue in ſuch ſort, as wee may alwayes haue one foote lifted vppe to goe, whenſoeuer GOD liſteth to take vs hence to himſelfe. And in deede, what win the ſtubborne ſort by their deſyrouſneſſe to eſchewe death, but to bee ouercome by force when they haue fretted and chafed neuer ſo much? It is a point of ſlender diſcretion when men conſider not that as God hath ſette them heere, ſo he ought alſo to haue authoritie to take them away againe when he liſteth. Wee ſhewe ourſelues to be deſtitute of wit and reaſon like brute beaſtes, if we haue not ſuch conſideration wᵗ vs. Wherfore let vs learne to finiſh our courſe in ſuch wiſe, walking as Pilgrimes vppon earth: as we may euermore be ready and weldiſpoſed to depart from it, whenſoeuer God ſheweth vs that our houre is come. But truely that can not be done, except we conceiue a hope of a better
Cor.5.4. life. For (as ſayth S. Paul) naturally we be loth
D to be vnhouſed; there is no man but hee would faine continue ſtill. Therefore it ſtandeth vs in hande to knowe that our true dwelling place is not heere in this worlde, and that we be but onely to paſſe through it. So then, without fayth
Hebr.13.14. we can neuer obey God, ſpecially when we bee to depart out of the worlde; but we will alwayes grynde our teeth at it, ſo as if it were poſſible, we would fight againſt God. But when we once conceiue that our inheritaunce is aboue, and that God hath a better life in ſtore for vs: then doe we determine and prepare to ſubmit ourſelues vnto him, whenſoeuer hee giueth vs any token that we muſt depart hence. After that manner ſhall we followe the example of Moſes.

I graunt he had a promiſe that God accepted him for one of his; but yet the ſame belongeth to vs alſo, and we haue this aduauntage more,
Iohn.11.25. that our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt who is our life, hath ſhewed himſelfe vnto vs, to the intent we ſhould boldly followe his ſteppes. And he entered into death, to bring vs to the glorie of his reſurrection. Therefore let vs not ſticke to followe the Lorde Ieſus, becauſe that if we die with him, we
Rom.6,8. be ſure (as ſayth S. Paule) to be partakers of his life, and to be companions with him, becauſe it belongeth vnto vs. For he was not rayſed againe for his owne profite, but for the aſſuring of our ſaluation. Therefore let vs not dout therof; but let vs cleaue vnto him. And in ſo doing let vs aſ-
Rom.4.26. ſure ourſelues, that his reſurrection ſhall be maniſeſted in vs alſo. Thus ye ſee howe we haue to put this text in practiſe, where it is ſayde that Moſes went [vppe to the mountaine] knowing well that when he came there, God would take him out of the worlde. And yet for all that hee ſhunned not the place, ne made any reſiſtance, but prepared himſelfe to death with true obedience, yea and with ſuch frowardneſſe, that forward he needed not to be ledde, nor to be haled forth by the handes of ſergeauntes. God ſayde the worde, and Moſes went thither with a good will.

Againe, let vs marke alſo what hath bin declared as touching the puniſhment that was laid vpon Moſes: namely that God had ſhut him out & baniſhed him from the lande which was promiſed to all Abrahams poſteritie: and that was a verie greeuous thing to him. But yet did he beare it patiently, acknowledging ẏ fault which he had committed; though it came not of himſelfe. For he had alwayes ſerued God faythfully: yea and in the very ſelfeſame deede, there was no more but this, that it ſpyted him to ſee the leaudneſſe of the people. Howbeit foraſmuch as he was caſt downe, and ſtoode not ſo ſtoutly to it as was requiſite; God layd that fault to his charge, and puniſhed it with ſuch rigour as we ſee, in not admitting him into the lande of promiſe. To be ſhort, let vs vnderſtande (as I haue ſayde afore) that whereas we thinke wee haue not done amiſſe, our offences ſhalbe groſſe and exceeding great before God. Wherefore let vs learne, not to be our owne Iudges, but to referre ourſelues vnto God, and to ſuffer him to acquit vs or condemne vs by his worde. When we ſhall haue doone any thing, albeit that our conſcience reprooue vs not, let vs aſſure ourſelues that God ſeeth more clearely than we do, as ſayth S. Iohn in his canonicall Epiſtle. And 1.Iohn.3.20 if we thinke the fault ſmall, our Lorde will account it great. If we ſhould iudge after the imagination of men concerning this deede of Moſes, what is to be ſayde but that he ſhewed great ſtoutneſſe? For he reſiſted the people, and vſed very rough and ſharpe wordes. Thinke yee (ſayth he) that God is not able to make water to Num.20.10. iſſue out of this Rocke? See howe Moſes ſtryueth with them through fayth, with obedience to God, and he glorifieth him. To be ſhort, in all his words there is nothing to be ſeene, which is not worthy prayſe: and yet notwithſtanding he did amiſſe; and ſeeing that God pronounceth it ſo, it is not for vs to gaineſay it. Therefore let vs learne to walke in humilitie, for feare leaſt it happen vnto vs according to this ſaying of Salomon, that whē we haue weyed our waies Prouer.21.2. and thoughtes, and that to our owne ſeeming there is nothing amiſſe, God will not agree to our balaunce, for hee hath another meaſure, whereby he will iudge more vprightly. And we haue his worde to iudge vs. Let euery man then examine himſelfe, and when we finde that our Lorde reprooueth any thing, let vs aſſure ourſelues it is not without cauſe. Againe when we once knowe our faultes, let vs aſſure ourſelues that there are a hundred thouſande times moe than we can perceiue, and we muſt cry out with

Pſal.19.13. Dauid, Lorde, who can tell the number of his faultes? Clenſe thou mee from my ſecret ſinnes.

Moreouer, wee haue to comfort ourſelues in all the temporall puniſhmentes which God ſendeth vs, becauſe they ſerue to bring vs lowe, whereby God ceaſeth not to further our ſaluation continually, and to holde vs euermore in the hope which we haue that he acounteth vs of his houſhoulde and Church. So long then as we be ſure that we belong to our God, and that he acknowledgeth and auoweth vs to be his; it ought well to content vs, as wee ſee heere that Moſes was contented with the onely ſight of the Land. Truely he neither poſſeſſed nor inioyed it; but it ſuffiſed him that he was a partener in the promiſe, to the ende he might attaine to the heritage of heauen. Foraſmuch as Moſes had that, it was a comfort and ioy vnto him. And it behoued him thence foorth to forbeare the making Deut.3.25. of that requeſt any more afterwarde. So then, although the puniſhmentes bee harde vnto vs when God chaſtiſeth our ſinnes, & that we may deſire him to deliuer vs from them: yet if we ſee that his will is not ſo, but that it is good for vs to be corrected, let vs ſtrengthen ourſelues to it, and pray him to giue vs power to holde out vnquailed. And therewithall let vs vnderſtande that our ſtrength conſiſteth in faith, in ẏ we haue an eye to the hope wherunto we be called. True it is that we poſſeſſe not in deede the thing that is promiſed vs; but yet God giueth vs ſuch a taſt thereof, as ought to ſuffiſe vs: we haue the certeinetie thereof printed in vs by his holy ſpirite. Therefore let that bee a meane to holde vs in, that we may patiently beare all the corrections which God liſteth to lay vpon vs. That is ẏ thing which we haue to gather here vpon the example of Moſes.

Now in the end it is ſayd, *That God buried him.* In deede the word [*God*] is not expreſſed, ẏ text ſayth only *Moſes dyed, and he buried him in Nebo:* but yet it ſetteth down alſo, *according to the mouth of God, and buryed him in Gay.* Hee went vp into Nebo, & on the other ſide of the hill, there was a place named the valley of Gay; and there was his ſepulchre. We ſee then ẏ it is ſpoken of God where it is ſet downe that Moſes dyed *according to his mouth.* For Gods mouth ſignifieth nothing elſe but his worde. In deede God declareth not the dying time of euery of vs, he reſerueth that to himſelfe. We haue our boundes which wee Iob.14.5. can not paſſe; but we ſhall die euery chone of vs, and we be to die according to Gods decree. The only difference betweene vs and Moſes is this, that God telleth vs that we be mortall as ſoone as we come into the worlde. Heerewithal we ſee alſo how ſhort & flyghtfull our life is, inſomuch Iob.14.2. that we haue but a ſhadow which ſlippeth away. We ſee it; but we haue not a day certaine aſſigned vs: God prolongeth the life of one, & ſhorteneth the life of another. And in that caſe it behoueth vs to ſubmit ourſelues to his determination. All of vs then die according to Gods decree: but Moſes dyed according to his mouth, that is to ſay, according as hee had declared it afore.

Nowe as touching his buryall, it behoueth vs to ſee wherefore Moſes was not buried after the common faſhion of men, and why he would haue his ſepulcher to remain vnknowen. Soothly we muſt not expounde the worde ſo groſſely which is ſet downe heere, as to ſay ẏ God made a pit to burie Moſes in: but hee ſo ordeined that he was buried by his power. God needeth not to ſet his hande to a thing when hee will haue it done: it is ynough that his power bee knowen. For all creatures muſt needes obey him, the earth will open when it pleaſeth him, as the which was made of nothing. God then may cōmaunde, and the thing is by and by done & performed, accordingly as it is ſaide in the Pſalme, Pſal.33.9. that his commaundement is of as great force as all the executinges of the worlde. Ye ſee then that ẏ burying of Moſes by God, was that God willed the earth to open to giue him buryall, & to hyde his body in ſuch ſort as neuer man might knowe what became thereof. And it was not without cauſe, ẏ God would haue the graue of Moſes ſo hidden. Nay rather, wee haue to note what S. Iude ſayth thereof in his epiſtle, ẏ is to wit, that Michael tharkeangell fought with Iude.9. the deuill for the graue of Moſes. And that battell was not ſtirred vp by Satan for nought. For needes muſt it be that hee pretended ſome aduauntage, if the graue of Moſes had bin knowen: and that had bin a meane to beguyle men with ſuperſtition. So then Gods purpoſe and intent is nowe manifeſt vnto vs; which is that he would not haue men to abuſe the body of Moſes in ydolatrie. And ſeeing that God prouided for it; it is a ſigne that he knewe mens inclinations to be ſuch, as they would hardly forbeare to make ydolles, if they had any occaſion at all. Beholde, Moſes excelled all Prophetes, as it is ſaid of him in the ende of this booke, & as (by Gods will) we ſhall ſee to morrow. Inſomuch that after his death there came not a prophet in Iſrael like vnto him. All of them were as expounders of the Lawe; but yet had he as it were the principall anthoritie. Againe, we knowe howe God wrought by him, how he deliuered the children of Iſraell from the bondage of Egypt, howe hee ruled them by the ſpace of fortie yeeres in the wilderneſſe: yea and that he was taken vp into the mountaine to ſet foorth the Lawe, and had Exod.19.3. taryed there fortie dayes and fourtie nightes together without eating or drinking, liuing like an Angell of heauen, as one that was no more Exod.24.18 ſubiect to mortall ſtate. For we knowe that men can not continue if they want ſuſtenance. Yee ſee then howe Moſes was caught vp to the glorie of heauen. Moreouer, when he came to the people, he had beames ſtreaming from his face ſo as men could no more abide to looke vppon him than vpon the Sunne. The brightneſſe of God ſhewed it ſelfe in ſuch wiſe in him, that the people were aſtoniſhed at it, and hee was fayne Exod.34.29 33 to put a veyle before his face, to ſhewe that he was no more a common man, nor ought to bee taken as he was afore. Seeing then that Moſes had done ſo notable thinges, and God had ſo hyghly inhonored him: no dout but the people would haue beene led to ſome ſuperſtition, and haue made an ydol of his bodie. That is yͤ cauſe why his body was hidden, and God would not haue it to be perceiued.

Nowe wee haue in this text a very profitable warning. Firſt of all how great frailtie there is in vs, if wee bee not reſtrained and brydled by God; and that aboue all things our nature is ſo giuen to ſuperſtition, that God is faine to reclaime vs from that vyce as it were by force. Therefore let vs ſuſpect our ſelues in that behalfe, and conſider that it ſtandeth vs in hande to remoue all obiectes and all other things that may intyce vs to ydolatry, becauſe wee be ſo much giuen vnto it alreadie. Marke that for one poynt. But if men had wel conſidered this, there had neuer beene ſo great and horrible confuſion, as is to be ſeene in the Popedome. What is the cauſe the Papiſtes are ſo whot after their ydols and puppets? Whereupon haue they taken ſo great libertie to fill all their Churches with them without ende or meaſure, buylding ſo many altars and chappels, and making ſo many images and pictures? It is for want of the knowledge of that which is tolde vs heere, that is to wit, that as ſoone as men haue neuer ſo litle occaſion to commit ydolatrie, by and by they bee rauiſhed with it, and as it were ſtarke mad. They knewe not this. They bore themſelues in hande that they might buylde altars, make images, and fill all places with the filthines of their ydolatrie, and yet not offend God. They perſuaded themſelues ſo. Howbeit they ſhewed by experience, that God doth not without cauſe condemne all mankinde to bee giuen to ſuperſtition. Seeing then that wee perceiue this miſchiefe to bee come to paſſe; let vs the rather take warning to liue ſoberly; and (as I ſayd afore) let vs diſtruſt our owne nature, ſeeing it is ſo ſinfull and corrupted. Alſo let vs note, that God meant to ſhewe by his owne authoritie, howe greatly all ydolatries and ſuperſtitions diſpleaſe him. Hee hath hidden the graue of Moſes; and ſhall men nowe pleade againſt it? No: for it is a fighting againſt God, when wee will nowe diſpute whether it be good to haue meanes of ydolatrie. For our Lord pulleth them away from vs, becauſe he ſeeth well that wee ſhall by and by bee ſnarled in Satans ſnares, vnleſſe hee take from vs all obiectes. Seeing then that God declareth the matter ſo plainly; it behoooueth vs to agree fully thereunto.

And ſpecially wee haue to note, that heere God condemneth all the ſuperſtitions which are committed in the perſons of Prophets or Apoſtles, as well as vnto Idols which the Heathen haue made. And that is yet one other thing wherein the Papiſtes do ouer groſſely ouerſhoote themſelues. For when ydols are ſpoken of, they beare themſelues in hand, that if a man worſhip not the gods which were renowmed among the Heathen; it makes no matter, & that it is no ydolatrie at all. For if the virgin Marie ſhould bee called an ydol among them; what a thing were it? If the Saints as well Apoſtles as Martyrs, & euen thoſe whom they themſelues haue imagined, ſhould be called ydols: it were a curſed ſpeech among the Papiſts. And why? For they take none to be ydols, but thoſe which were ſo vſed among the Heathen. Yea, but in the meane time they perceiue not that ydolatrie may as wel be committed in the perſon of an Angel, yea & euen in the perſon of God, as in the perſons of theſe petidiuels which were ſo forged among the Infidels. I ſay that ydolatrie may be committed euen in the perſon of God. Let a man followe all the abominations that are committed in the world, & how be they coloured? There is a thing in the Popedome, which they terme Gods ſeruice; and what is that? The Maſſe. But we knowe it is moſt lothſome & diueliſh ydolatrie that can be, ſpecially, becauſe yͤ name of God is intermedled with it. So then we may wel ſay, that we ſerue God, & that we worſhip him; & yet in the meane while there ſhalbe ſhameful & exceſſiue ydolatrie; as when men turne away from Gods worde, & followe their owne inuentions & fancies. But as for the Papiſts, it is certeine that of the virgin Mary they make an ydol. For wheras they attribute vnto her the office of an Aduocate, to make interceſſion betweene God & men, & terme her their life, light, & hope: what remaineth more to our Lord Ieſus Chriſt? Is he not by that meane bereft of his Prieſthood which was giuen vnto him of God his father? As much is to bee ſaid of all the reſt of their Patrones as they beare themſelues in hand. So then we ought to marke well this text, where God would haue the body of Moſes to be hidden. And why? Becauſe that if the people had giuen themſelues that way, it had bin no leſſe abhomination, than their receiuing of ſtrange gods, & their intangling of themſelues in the ſuperſtitions of the Heathen. I grant there had been a more apparant ſhrowdingſheete: For they would haue ſayd, he was yͤ ſeruant & Prophet of God, who publiſhed the law: and therefore in the honor of God whom he ſerued, hee muſt nowe bee worſhipped and haue his bodie aduaunced among vs. And if the rod which he bare had ſuch vertue in it; howe much more ſhall his bodie haue? Therfore whẽ we would bee heard of God, wee may reſort to his tumb, and there pray vnto God. For needes muſt he be preſent with yͤ bodie of Moſes, ſeeing that ſo great & notable miracles were wrought by his rod only. Such things might they haue alledged. But yet for all that, where are ſo many enticements of Satan, there ought we to be the more afrayde. When Satan hath illuſions, and the things which he faceth vs withall doe carry ſome likelihood: then muſt wee (ſay I) fight the more manfully: or otherwiſe wee ſhalbee carryed away by and by into manie dotages, from whence it will bee vnpoſſible for vs to retyre.

Exod.7.20. & 8.17.
Nom.20.11.

Moreouer, as touching the text which I alledged out of S.Iude, let vs mark that in all ages it hath bin Satans policie, to face men with the things yͭ might corrupt them, or drawe them to ydolatry: like as the Fowler or Birdcatcher hath his ſnares and nettes alwayes ſet; ſo hath Satan his ſleights to beguyle vs. And he knoweth that he hath wunne the goale of vs; when he can once turne vs away from the pureneſſe of Gods ſeruice, and trayne vs to ſome ſuperſtition: for then runne wee headlong into wickednes, and hee carryeth vs whither he liſteth. That is the cauſe why he taketh ſo much paines in this behalfe, and wee ſee it as in reſpect of the bodie of Moſes; yea, we ſee it by experience the which is vſed too much. And herewithall let vs marke well howe S. Iude ſayeth, that Michael the Archangel withſtoode him. Yee ſee here howe there is a ſtryfe betweene the Angels of God and the diuels, the Angels fighting to maintaine vs continually in the purenes which God requireth, that is to ſay, that we ſhould worſhip him alone, and not put our truſt in any creatures. That is the deſire of the Angels. On the other ſide, the diuel being enemie to our ſaluation would faine that the maieſtie of God were quite defaced. And when he cannot do that, he laboureth to darken it, practiſing continually to caſt fooles bables before our eyes, that wee might haue toyes to occupy our heads withal here below, & neither go nor once looke vnto God. And here we be put in mynd, firſt what a care God hath of our ſaluation, in that it is his will that the Angels ſhall fight to draw vs out of all the temptations of Satan. Which thing ought to prouoke vs to bee of the better courage, ſith we ſee we haue ſuch helpes. Now then, if we be weake as of our ſelues, and cannot put from vs the temptations of Satan when we be aſſayled with them; let vs truſt that God wil not faile vs, but that he wil imploy euen his Angels, who be champions valiant ynough to reſiſt all Satans attempts, & whatſoeuer elſe he can practiſe againſt vs. Here yee ſee vppon what truſt wee ought to ſtande to our tackling, when Satan aſſaileth vs & laboureth to win vs. True it is ẏ we ſhould euermore be ouerthrowē & ouerwhelmed out of hand, if God ſuccoured vs not. But ſeeing wee haue the Angels of heauen to reliue vs, and God armeth them with his owne inuincible power: to the intent we ſhould neuer faile; it ought to make vs take courage, as I ſaid afore.

Now moreouer we ſee alſo, what pleaſure the ydolaters do to the Angels, Prophets, Apoſtles, Martyrs, & (at a word) to al the ſeruants of god, when they will needes aduaunce them aboue their degrees. The Papiſts thinke they doe well aduaunce the virgin Marie, when they call her their aduocate, when they terme her the life & welfare of the worlde, when they bid her commaund her ſonne, and when they caſt foorth ſuch other horrible blaſphemies. But if they had troden her vnder their feete when ſhee was in this world, or if they had dragged her by ẏͤ haire of her head; they ſhould not haue done her ſo great outrage. And why? For wee knowe howe exceedingly God hateth al ydolatries. A church that is infected with images, is worſe than a brothelhouſe to Godward. And ſhal men go & abuſe the name of the holy virgin? And whereas the Apoſtles and holy Martyrs haue ſhed their bloud to keepe holy the name of God, whereas (ſay I) they deſpiſed all the abhominations and ydolatries of the world, and ſhed their bloud for the maintenance of Gods trueth and Goſpel; ſhal men now in ſteede thereof goe vnder their ſhadow, to deface Gods honour, to vnhallowe his ſeruice, and to rend him in pieces and gobbets? Let vs marke wel then, that the Papiſtes haue not any worſer or ſorer enemies than the Saintes whome they thinke to honour, becauſe they do them ſo much wrong as to ſet them for contrarie parties againſt God. And how ſee we that? Euen by S. Iudes reporting that the Angels of heauen with their captaine, did ſtriue for the bodie of Moſes. Iude.9. And let vs not thinke that the virgin Marie, the Apoſtles and Martyrs are at variance with the Angels: nay, they bee all of one mynde: And that ſhalbe knowen when the bookes ſhalbe layde open. Dan.7.10. Yee ſee then how that all the ſeruants of God doe fight to keepe the Church from beeing corrupted, & from turning away or ſlipping aſide into any ydolatrie or ſuperſtition. Seeing it is ſo, let vs alſo on our ſide ioyne with them in fighting, & ſticke to our tackeling, that Gods ſeruice may continue vnappayred, and that there may bee no mingling at all to alienate vs from God; and let vs occupie our ſelues wholly therein, ſeeing it is the peculiar office of Satan to ſet himſelfe continually againſt our ſaluation, ſo as he ceaſſeth not euen now to hinder the ſame, but holdeth out ſtil. And his ſtriuing was not then only for the only bodie of Moſes: but he hath ſtriued euer ſince to ſet vp all the bodies of the holy Prophets. When Ieremie ſerued for ydolatrie in Egypt, where was his bodie? To whome ſhall that bee imputed but to Satan, which inuented a newe meane of ydolatrie to the holie Prophet? Againe, whence came all the illuſions and falſe miracles that haue bin wrought in the Popedome, but from the ſame ſhop? Wee ſee then how Satan hath alwayes ſtrayned himſelf to caſt ſome obiect before our eyes, to draw vs away from Gods ſeruice, and to buſie our heads about other things, that being wrapped in ſuperſtition, we might be vtterly marde. Sith it is ſo, let vs keepe the better watch and ſtande at our defence. For ſeeing our enemies come neere vs, and are alwayes watching to ſpye vs at ſome aduantage: ſurely it will waken vs though wee bee neuer ſo loth. But it is ſaid that Satan neuer reſteth, and that he is euer practiſing what he can poſſibly, to catch vs vnawares in ydolatrie. Wee ſee it; the thing bewrayeth it ſelfe. Sith it is ſo, ſhould wee fall aſleepe? Nay rather let vs looke narrowly about vs (as I ſayde afore,) and let vs take good heede that wee bee not intrapped. I ſayde that wee ſee howe Satan practiſeth all meanes to corrupt vs. For hee hath fought, not onely for the bodies of men, but alſo for al other things belonging to them, euen ſuch as a man would not think; inſomuch ẏͤ the very haire of their heads, their kerchiefes, their ſhirts, their pantoples, and diuerſe other things haue bin worſhipped.

To bee ſhort, they haue worſhipped thinges ſo fonde, as that euen litle babes might haue mocked them for it. Yet notwithſtanding, euē the wiſeſt folke haue beene doted with them, & the ſpirit of giddineſſe hath reigned ouer them. And it hath beene Gods will to make men ſo brutiſh. For when they would not hold themſelues ſimply vnto him, but were carryed away with their fickle luſtes; it was meete that they ſhould come to that poynt. For as much then as it is ſo; let vs vnderſtand that our Lorde giueth vs ſo many warnings the mo, to the intent to hold vs in ſuch awe, as we may be well ware that wee be not by any meanes ſeduced. Thus yee ſee what wee haue to note as in reſpect of the things which S. Iude teacheth vs concerning the body of Moſes.

Now there is yet this ſaying further ſet down in the text, *No man hath knowen his graue vnto this day.* Wee knowe not which of the Prophets wrote this laſt Chapter. The Iewes ſay it was Ioſua: but their coniecture hath no ground. It is much more likely that the ſame Prophet which gathered the booke of Ioſua, did therewithall write the death of Moſes alſo. Neuertheleſſe it is not without cauſe ſayd, *that no man vnto this day.* For it doeth vs to vnderſtand that it was not for one day onely that God woulde haue the bodie of Moſes ſo hidden: for then it might haue beene ſayd, true it is that the body of Moſes was vnknowen to men, but that was but at the beginning. For the firſt boylings are ſomewhat too headie, and God ſawe that the people might haue beene moued with too great affection, and by that meane they might haue corrupted themſelues. It is not then to be wondered at, if Moſes ſepulchre had beene vnknowen, for two or three dayes, or for a moneth, or for a yeare: for theſe people were too farre in loue with him: but when he was once buryed, then it came to knowledge. But our Lord ſheweth that hee knewe well that men are ſubiect to ydolatrie, and that, not for a day onely; but euen vnto the ende; and that the ſame ſinne is ſo rooted in vs, that as ſoone as wee haue neuer ſo little an obiect, by and by wee ſtart out of our boundes. Let vs marke well then that it behoueth vs to ſtande vppon our garde; for ydolatrie is not for a time, but for euer. And wee take this curſed inclination from our mothers wombe, ſo as wee bee eaſily allured away from the ſeruice of God. That is the thing which wee haue to remember vppon this part of the text. And therefore let vs indeuour al the time of our life, to walke according to Gods ordinance, and let vs alſo beware that wee bee not caried away after the illuſions of Satan. And when we our ſelues ſhall haue continued in the ſeruice of God; let vs teach our children to doe the like, that it may for euer be reteyned in the worlde, ſo as God may be ſerued of al men with one common accord. For if wee be recheles in that behalfe, it wil abaſh vs to ſee howe the diuel will incontinently get the forehand of vs; & in the turning of a hand there wil followe a horrible change which will corrupt and marre all. Sith wee ſee this, let vs be ſteddie and conſtant, and let vs bee ſo zealous to bring to paſſe that God may bee purely worſhipped, as it may continue, not for one day onely, but euen vnto the ende, ſo as we may from age to age proteſt, that Gods name is called vppon ouer vs, and that he hath the whole preheminence; and that the creatures howe excellent ſo euer they bee, doe abyde in their degree and place, and that they haue not occupyed the roome of God nor his ſoueraigne dominion.

Now let vs fall downe before the maieſtie of our good God which acknowledgement of our faultes, praying him to make vs perceiue them more and more, that wee may be ſo caſt downe in our ſelues, as our whole ſeeking may bee to receiue mercie at his hand, and hauing receiued it, to bee ſo guyded by his holy ſpirite, as we may giue our ſelues wholly vnto him to dedicate our ſelues fully to his obedience, and to ſerue him with all pureneſſe both in body and ſoule, and that hee impute not our imperfections vnto vs which are yet ſtill in vs, but that he rid them from vs day by day, and reclaime vs of them more and more, vntil he haue brought vs to the perfection whereunto he inuiteth vs. That it may pleaſe him to graunt this grace, not onely to vs, but alſo to all people and nations of the earth, &c.

On Wedneſday the xv. of Iuly, 1556.

The CC. Sermon, which is the ſecond vpon the xxxiiij. Chapter of Deuteronomie, and the laſt vpon that booke.

7 Moſes was a hundred and twentie yeres olde when he dyed, his ſight was not dimmed, nor his liuelineſſe abated.

8 And the children of Iſrael mourned for Moſes thirtie dayes in the playne of Moab. And after that, the dayes of mourning and ſorrowing for Moſes were ended.

9 Then Ioſua the ſonne of Nun was filled with the ſpirite of wiſedome,for Moſes had laid his hand vpon him. And the children of Iſrael obeyed him, and did as the Lord had commaunded Moſes.

10 And there aroſe not vp a Prophet in Iſrael thenceforth like vnto Moſes, which knew the Lord face to face,

11 In all ſignes and woonders, for which the Lorde ſent him to do them in the Land of Egypt before Pharao,and all his ſeruants,and all his Land.

12 Nor in all the ſtrong hand,and al the great viſion,which Moſes did before the eyes of all Iſrael.

IT was needefull that after the death of Moſes, the Iewes ſhould know the good that God had done them by the meanes of ſuch a man. For we know that Gods gratious dealings are by and by forgotten, and it is the point wherein men doe chiefly ſhewe their leawdneſſe. For although it be prooued to them that God hath helped them, yea euen with ſignes and myracles: yet woulde they paſſe it ouer ſlightly. In this reſpect it is ſaide expreſly heere, *that Moſes had his liuelineſſe, and all his ſtrength vnto the age of a hundred and twentie yeares*. Nowe wee knowe what is written in his ſong, in the fowerſcore and tenth Pſalme, That after a man commeth Pſa 90.10. to threeſcore yeares, there remaineth nothing but ſorrowe paine and griefe, and he doeth but linger and pine away. Loe what our life is. Although we haue beene ſtrong, yet doe wee decay in the twinkling of an eye, when wee once paſſe threeſcore yeares, and it is a great matter for a man to attaine thereto, I meane in ſuch ſtrength. But nowe whereas it is reported that Moſes attained to double thoſe yeares: thereby it appeareth that God ſtrengthened him aboue the common rate of men. And that was not for his owne ſake onely; but to the intent he might be able to ſuſteine the charge that was committed vnto him. Had not the people bin vnthankfull, they ſhoulde ere that time haue beene conueyed into the lande of promiſe, and then had Moſes gone in with them. But his life was prolonged a great time, becauſe of the leawdnes of the people. Heere we ſee a wonderfull goodnes in God. For ſeeing that the people (that is to wit, as many of them as were then of diſcretion to knowe good from euill,) were condemned to die in the wilderneſſe: it had beene a great diſ- Num.14.23. comfort to them if Moſes ſhould haue dyed out of hand. But God reſerueth him: and although he chaſtiſe the people, yet notwithſtanding hee moderateth his rigour. Heere then we ſee in effect, that when God tolde the people that they ſhould die in the wilderneſſe, hee meant not to puniſh them with ſuch extremitie, but that hee prouided them firſt of ẏ principall point, which was, ẏ they might haue a good loadeſman: For that is an ineſtimable treaſure. And againe we ſee, howe God wrought in Moſes by a power that was not common to men; that is to wit, that at the age of Sixſcore yeeres, there was in him ſtill all that euer was requiſite in ſo difficult and weightie a charge as wee knowe was committed vnto him. True it is that he had Iudges Exod.18.25 with him; but yet for all that, no one man, no nor a dooſen men had beene able to haue gone through with that charge, though they had bin choſen of the excellenteſt men in the worlde. Needs muſt it be thẽ that God aided him. Now whereas in ſo old age men are wont to be drooping and halfe dead, or at leaſtwiſe in ſuch caſe as they can ſcarſly crawle, and are halfe doted, and yet Moſes continueth ſtill in his perfect ſtate: therein it appeareth that God had compaſſion of his people. And this is expreſly declared that the children of Iſrael ſhoulde knowe that God neuer forſooke them;& that although they had grieuouſly offended him, and were worthy to be cut off from his houſe, and to bee ſtripped out of his gratious giftes; yet he ment not to vſe ſuch rigour: for hee reſerued Moſes, and gaue him wherwith to go through with his charge continually. To be ſhort, in this text it is ſhewed vs, that if God giue vs ſuch men to bee our guides as behaue themſelues faithfully, and haue abilitie matched with their will, and that they bee maintained to doe their office to the full: it behoueth vs to perceiue therin, that God hath pitie vppon vs, and we muſt acknowledge ſuch a benefite, vnleſſe we wil be condemned of vnthankfulneſſe.

Nowe it is ſaide, *that the children of Iſrael mourned thirtie days for the death of Moſes*. It was a common thing to make ſuch ſorrowe for the deade. But foraſmuch as Moſes was a father to all the whole people, it was verie requiſite that not ſome one houſe or kinred, but that all thoſe which had beene gouerned by him, ſhoulde weepe for him. Euerie man is to be mourned for in his owne houſe by his kinsfolfe and neere friendes: but there was another ſpeciall reaſon in Moſes, becauſe God had giuen him to all the people, and he had guided them with a fatherly care as we knowe. The people therefore doe witneſſe openly howe much they were bounde and beholden vnto Moſes, and al of them ſhewe themſelues as his children. But here it might be demaunded, whether it be lawfull to make ſuch lamentation for a man that is departed: for it ſhoulde ſeeme to bee an incountering of Gods will. Wee knowe that the life and death of men is in Gods hande; nowe if hee call vs away, it behoooueth vs to goe, without any gaineſaying, as I ſaide yeſterday. They that outliue vs muſt not ſorrowe for our death; for it were a kinde of ſtriuing againſt God. But wee muſt euer haue an eye to the end of our ſorrowing, when wee mourne for the deceaſe of men: and againe, we muſt come to the meaſure thereof. Thoſe two things then muſt we obſerue to the intent that our ſorrowing may bee lawfull. The firſt thing is that our mourning for a partie departed be vpon iuſt cauſe. For we haue good occaſion to weepe, becauſe death is a common lookingglaſſe and record vnto vs of Gods curſe, not vppon one or two folkes, but vpon all mankinde. When we ſee any man deade, God ſheweth vs to the vew of our eye, that we be all of vs curſed of him, and that wee be all of vs incloſed in that curſe, becauſe of Adams ſin. For whence comes death, but of the eſtraunging of vs from the fountaine and welſpring of life? God then giueth vs good occaſion to weepe when any man dyeth: but that muſt bee done becauſe of our ſinnes, ſo as we feele what we haue deſerued, and bee aſhamed of our ſelues, and bee touched with the feare of Gods vengeance, and bee ſo wounded therewith, as it may prouoke vs to make ſorrowe. But this ende is ill regarded, welneere of all men. For when wee weepe, we wote not why wee weepe: and ſcarſly ſhall yee finde one among a hundred, which is mooued and ſtirred vp to acknowledge the puniſhment of ſinne & the curſe of God which is ſpred ouer all the ſonnes of Adam. That then is the thing which we haue to remember in the firſt place.

There is another ſeconde ende. That is to wit, when God taketh away a man that was able to doe ſeruice in his Church either publikely or priuately, wee ought to bee ſorie for it foraſmuch as our Lorde chaſtiſeth vs. If there bee a good Sheepeherd, a good Prince, a good Magiſtrate, a man of counſell, or any other that is fitte to ſerue the whole bodie; and God taketh him away: we ought to bee ſorie for him; and not without cauſe: for it is a ſigne that hee is minded to diminiſh his grace in vs. And ought wee not to bee grieued in feeling Gods wrath? On the other ſide we ſee how it is ſaid, Eſa.57.1. that our Lorde taketh away the righteous, when he hath any vengeance in a readineſſe: hee calleth away his ſeruaunts to reſt, that they may be free from the miſchiefe which is at hande. Therefore when God taketh away the excellent men from among vs, it is alwayes a threatning vnto vs. For it is all one as if he told vs, that wee bee not worthie to haue him to dwell in our companie, according to this ſaying in Heb.11.38. the Epiſtle to the Hebrewes, that the worlde was not worthie to haue the men that ſerued God with ſuch vertuous conuerſation. True it is that men miſlike of them and thruſt them out of their company, as though they were not worthie to goe vppon the earth. But yet on the contrarie part, God telleth vs that we forgoe the company of the good men, and of thoſe whom hee hath reſerued to himſelfe. Therefore when we bewaile the death of honeſt men, which haue liued in the feare of God, which were indewed with excellent vertues and gifts of grace, which haue done ſeruice to the building vp of the Church, and which coulde haue continued in doing the ſame ſtill: that is a welordered mourning. But yet muſt we alſo come to the meaſure. For it may bee that a man ſhall mourne for iuſt cauſe; and yet if he giue his ſorrowe too much ſcope, then is it a fault and a vice. As howe? If wee ſorrowe for our ſinnes without comfort, wee ſhalbe ſwallowed vp of heauineſſe: and thereuppon oftentimes ſpring grudgings and repynings againſt God. But ſaint Paul telleth vs that when we mourne ſo for the death of our friends and kinsfolke, or of ſuch as ſerued in the Church, we muſt not reſemble the vnbeleeuers, who (ſaith he) haue no hope, and 1.Theſſ.4.13 therefore can haue no comfort. In that place, S. Paul ſaith not that it is ſinne to weepe, hee doth not vtterly condemne the thing: but hee ſheweth that our ſorrowing muſt be moderated, becauſe God giueth vs comfort by calling vs to yͤ hope of the heauenly life, wherein we ſhalbe renewed. So then let vs vnderſtande that GOD humbleth vs by death, and that we muſt goe into corruption like ſtinking carions, yea and euẽ our ſoules muſt ſeeme to vaniſh away, and that all ſhalbe forlorne. Nowe although wee muſt needes bee ſorrowfull when wee conſider theſe things and ſpecially our ſinnes; yet (I ſay) wee muſt euer come backe to this point, that God of his infinite goodneſſe pitieth vs ſtill, and wil not haue vs to periſh in death, but rather that it bee vnto vs a paſſage into the euerlaſting life. And this hope is ynough to comfort vs in the middes of all our heauineſſe: at leaſtwiſe it ought to be a bridle to reſtraine our ſorrowing that it paſſe not the bounds, and ſo we fal to fretting againſt God as we ſee the vnbeleeuers do, who ſtorme and howle and yell, and cannot by any meanes be held in order. And why? Becauſe they haue no comfort, which is the mother of patience. But foraſmuch as God calleth vs to the hope which hee giueth vs; therefore after wee haue wept and mourned, we haue wherefore to giue him thanks, to bleſſe his holy name, and to cõtent our ſelues that he vſeth not extreme rigor againſt vs. Now then, although we weepe when we ſee that our Lorde hath taken thoſe from vs which might haue ſtoode vs in great ſteede: yet muſt we not fall into deſpaire, as though God had no way to ſuccour vs. For he can raiſe vp euen the ſtones, if he thinke it good. Therfore we muſt reſort vnto him when wee perceiue any ſigne of his wrath; and when we haue acknowledged our ſins, and asked forgiuenes of them at his hand; we muſt alſo waite his leiſure vntil he ſhew vs fauour, that in finding mercy wee may alſo find remedy of all our griefs. Thus yͤ meaſure which hee ſpeaketh of, is that hauing ſorrowed to a good end, becauſe our Lord hath taken ſuch folk out of yͤ world, as we ought to long for & deſire; wee muſt alſo haue ſome ſtay of our ſelues, & not be caried away to fretting & chafing in our ſorrowe: but rather aſſwage our ſorrowes, becauſe wee know yͭ when God hath chaſtiſed vs; he will moderate his mightie hand, and not ſtretch it out to the full againſt vs, but chaſtiſe

2.Sam.7.14. ſtiſe vs with the rodde of man, as is ſaid thereof. Sith wee ſee this, let vs learne to comfort our ſelues and be patient.

But herewithall we haue yet one point more to obſerue: which is that our forefathers had mo ceremonies than wee haue, becauſe they had not ſo euident a recorde of the euerlaſting life. And the ſelfeſame reaſon was of burial vnder the lawe, for they buried men with greater pompe than they do nowadays. And what was the reaſon? forſooth becauſe the reſurrection was not yet ſo well witneſſed as it is now. I grant that the fathers knew well what was requiſite to their ſaluation: howbeit, ỹ was vnder ſhadowes and figures. But behold, nowadayes God himſelfe calleth vs from heauen; our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt ſheweth vs that as he himſelfe is riſen to glorie, ſo we alſo ſhalbe made like to his image, and therefore that wee haue no more neede of ſuch helps as ỹ fathers of old time had. So then, it were a mockery at this day, to counterfeit the thinges that were obſerued in the olde Teſtament. And that is a thing wherein the fondneſſe of the Papiſtes appeareth vnto vs. For they woulde needes counterfeit al things without cauſe or reaſon. And yee ſee that in their burials they haue ſo many gewgawes and pelting toyes, that a man woulde bee aſhamed of them. And what is the cauſe thereof, but that they knowe not the difference that is come in ſince the comming of our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt; namely that the ancient ceremonies are come to an end? Yee ſee then that the Papiſts are become Iewes, howbeit but baſtarde Iewes. For not without ſome reaſon did the Iewes vſe that cuſtome, becauſe it behooued their ceremonies to ſupplie the want of doctrine. But nowe that our Lord Ieſus Chriſt is come, and we haue the reſurrection manifeſted in his perſon; if we ſet our mindes ſtil vppon ſhadowes and figures, what is it but a defacing of the reſurrection of our Lord Ieſus Chriſt, & an vtter quenching of ỹ light of the Goſpel? That is ỹ cauſe why I ſaid that the Papiſtes are not worthie to bee called Iewes, but baſtarde Iewes. But whereas it is ſaide *that the people made lamentation by the ſpace of thirtie dayes*: let vs on our ſide learne that it behooued the auncient fathers to bee kept vnder, becauſe God had not giuen them ſo large a teſtimonie of the euerlaſting life, and that for their rudeneſſe ſake, they were gouerned like Gal.4.3. little children, as Sainct Paul ſpeaketh of them to the Galathians. Let vs nowadayes learne on our ſide to make the reſurrection of our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt auailable, that when any man dyeth, there bee plaineneſſe vſed in his buriall, and theſe pompes eſchewed wherewith GOD is mocked, and the people intangled in manie errours and ſuperſtitions. And not without Matt.27.59. cauſe is it ſaide that our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt was buried after the manner of the Iewes, to ſhew that that cuſtome ought nowadayes to bee chaunged among vs, and a newe to bee put in the ſteede. Alſo let vs moderate our mourning, and let not our ſorrowe bee exceſſiue; but ſith wee haue wherewith to comforte our ſelues; which thing the folke that liued vnder the Lawe had not at all, or at leaſtwiſe not ſo largely as wee haue: let vs practiſe the doctrine which we bee taught in the Goſpell, and alſo by S. Paul to the Theſſalonians. 1.Theſſ.4. Thus much concerning that point where mention is made of the lamentation that was made for the death of Moſes.

Now it followeth, *That Ioſua the ſonne of Nun was filled with the ſpirite of wiſedome, becauſe Moſes had laide his handes vppon him.* Heere againe the people are put in minde, that God had not forſaken them though they were worthy of it. And it is a very profitable leſſon for vs, to know that God gouerneth his Church, and neuer forgetteth it. For without that, what faith coulde be in vs? Wee ſhoulde bee as folke forlorne. For as long as God gouerneth vs, if wee reſt vppon him, wee boldly proceede and keepe on our courſe. But if God withdrawe his hand, and we perceiue not that hee guideth our ſteppes, or that hee hath a care of vs, and that we be vnder protection: wo will be vnto vs, and men are too dulheaded if they be not then vtterly diſmayed. Behold then, our happineſſe is to haue God to be our watchman, and to be gouerned vnder his hand and protection. Indeede hee appeareth not alwayes viſiblie to ſhewe his preſence; but he giueth vs men to be the miniſters of his grace. True it is that at that time there were viſible ſignes, to ſhewe that he dwelt among his people. Neuertheleſſe as he had bin ſerued by Moſes, ſo was it his will that Ioſua ſhould ſucceede in his place.

And in that reſpect is it ſaide *that hee was filled with the ſpirit of wiſdome*: to doe vs to vnderſtand that God hath alwayes ſhewed himſelfe mercifull to his Church, and that as a father hath a care of his children, & prouideth thē all things meete for them: ſo God hath alwayes prouided aforehande for the neceſſities of his people. This doctrine (as I ſaid) doeth concerne vs alſo. For wee haue a promiſe that God will neuer faile vs if wee be of his flocke and come to him to ſhrowd our ſelues vnder his wings, that wee may be guided by him: and we knowe hee hath giuen that office to our Lord Ieſus Chriſt. And for the ſame cauſe alſo hee ſaieth to his diſciples, Matt.28.20. that hee will bee with them to the worldes ende: and that ſaying extendeth to the whole bodie of the Church. Seeing then that our Lord Ieſus Chriſt hath ſaid that he will neuer bee ſeparated from vs, let vs knowe that in him wee haue God, who will vtter forth all his power to maintaine vs: But yet it is verie much, that beſides the promiſes, we haue moreouer teſtimonies thereof, ſo as hee pointeth vs with his finger to the thing performed, as it is ſpoken of heere, where wee reade that Ioſua was filled with the ſpirite of wiſedome. For to what end was that done? It happened not by chaunce, neither had God regarde of Ioſua alone: but it was becauſe he would ſhewe himſelfe to bee the ſafetie of the Iewes. We nowadayes are in the ſame taking. For if they had abidden in Gods houſe, we ſhould haue bin ioyned ẘ thē. And becauſe they bee baniſhed thence and cut off as rotten members,we take their place , as ſaith S. Rom.11.24. Paul.Now then,let vs aſſure our ſelues that God will neuer ſuffer vs to want any thing requiſite for our ſaluation , but continually ſhew his loue and fauour towardes vs , and prouide vs of the thinges that are for our behoofe , if wee flee to him for refuge; yea euen though wee bee not worthie thereof. For as for this people, we knowe what manner of folke they were , and howe many faultes and offences they committed; ſo as it had beene no wonder though God had vtterly deſtroyed them . But nowe ſeeing hee prouided them of men that were fit and meete to defend them; therby we perceiue that God ſtroue with his mercie againſt the malice of that people . So then , whenſoeuer wee bee tempted to diſtruſt becauſe wee bee rebuked for our ſinnes ; let vs reſort to Gods mercie, and pray him, not to looke vppon our ſinnes,but to proceed continually in his goodneſſe and fauour towardes vs , whatſoeuer vnworthineſſe there be in our perſons.Thus much concerning that point.

Heere is nowe a queſtion that might be demaunded, howe it is ſaide , *that when Moſes had laide his hands vppon Ioſua , hee was filled with wiſedome*, whether a mans handes haue that power or no ? [No.] but when the ſigne of a thing is ſpoken of, wee muſt go to the thing it ſelfe . Wee knowe that in all ſolemne bleſſings, there was this ſigne of the Laying on of handes . Nowe this was not an inuention fondly contriued after the manner of men, which haue many Apes toyes : but it was a recorde allowed of God , as if an oblation had beene made of the partie that was ſo bleſſed. When the holy Patriarks bleſſed their childrē, it was as though they had giuen them aſſurance that the inheritance of ſaluation belonged vnto them , & that the promiſe ſhould ſtand & abide in full force to their poſteritie . Likewiſe at this day when a man ſelleth lande or houſe,one putteth a fether into his hand, and he deliuereth it ouer to the purchaſer; and in ſome countries the cuſtome is , that he which ſelleth any inheritance and maketh the ſurrender deliuereth a ſticke or wand to the purchaſer in token that he may thence forth poſſeſſe and inioy the ſame. And euen after the ſame manner was it with this ſigne of laying on of handes . For (as I ſaide) it was not a fonde and fooliſh deuice; but it was Gods will that it ſhould be a kinde of warranting , to the intent that the faith of the fathers might be the better helped. That is the cauſe then why it is ſaide in this place,that God gaue the ſpirit of wiſedome vnto Ioſua,becauſe Moſes had laid his hands vpon his head. Nowe in ſo doing he inueſted him in the charge that was committed vnto him.

Let vs nowe ſee firſt of all , whether Moſes choſe Ioſua vppon his owne heade or no . No : but he knew him to be firſt choſen of God. And afterward when he laide his handes vpon him, did he attempt any thing vpon his own fancie? No:but contrariwiſe God only was the orderer or diſpoſer thereof . He knew that Ioſua was to be ſet in his place. And this is ſpoken not of that man onely; but alſo when the Apoſtles did Act.19.6. lay their hands vpon the faithfull,by and by the gifts of the holy Ghoſt were made viſible to the eye. After that manner did the faithful receiue the gift of tongues , yͤ interpretation of tongues, the healing of diſeaſes , and the raiſing of the dead. And how receiued they it? They did but lay their hands vpon them . Yea, but had that Ceremonie ſuch vertue? No:but becauſe it was Gods will to haue his grace ſo declared , & that yͤ laying on of hands was as a gage of it; it was not a vayne and vnprofitable thing.And in that reſpect is it that ſaint Paul ſaith vnto Timothy, That he ſhould make the grace auailable which 1.Tim.3.14. was giuen him by laying on of his hands.Seeing it is ſo(ſaieth hee)looke that thou indeuour thy ſelfe to ſerue God , and labour to builde vp the Church, and that the grace of God which is giuen thee by the laying on of my handes be not hindered . Saint Paul challengeth not to himſelfe yͤ thing that is peculiar to the holy Ghoſt, neither meaneth he that he had the holy Ghoſt in his ſleeue to giue him to whom hee liſted by the reaching out of his arme : but hee ſheweth vs that the ſigne which God had appointed vnto it,was not vaine or vneffectuall.

Moreouer,the ſame is to be conſidered more in all the Sacramentes whereof the Scripture ſpeaketh, than in all other ſignes that are to be had in the world . I haue alreadie alleadged a ſimilitude of yͤ deliuering of a fether or of a wand to him yͭ purchaſeth an inheritance:but there is yet much more in the Sacraments ; we muſt go yet one ſtep higher.For there our Lord worketh that by his power,which men cannot doe.True it is that when ſuch a ceremonie is once done & performed, the lawe will maintaine a man in poſſeſſion of the thing that he hath purchaſed: howbeit, that is not all . For (as I ſaide afore) God performeth by the ſecret power of his ſpirite, whatſoeuer hee ſheweth and witneſſeth to the eye. So then wee muſt euer come to this point, that the ſacraments are effectuall,& that they be no trifling ſignes which vaniſh away in the aire,but that the trueth is alwayes matched with them , becauſe that God who is faithfull, ſheweth that he hath not ordained any thing in vain.And yͭ is the cauſe why yͤ in baptiſme we receiue truly the forgiuenes of our ſins,we be waſhed and clenſed wͭ the bloud of our Lord Ieſus Chriſt,we be renewed by yͤ operation of his holy ſpirit. And how ſo?Hath a little water ſuch power when it is caſt vpon yͤ head of a child? No:But becauſe it is yͤ will of our Lord Ieſus Chriſt, yͭ the water ſhould be a viſible ſigne of his bloud & of yͤ holy Ghoſt:therfore baptiſme hath yͤ vertue & whatſoeuer is there ſet forth to the eye,is forth with accompliſhed in verie deede. If wee come to the Lordes ſupper,it is certaine that a little cantle of bread and a drop of wine cannot quicken our ſoules, for they be corruptible thinges: but therby we haue a record yͭ we be fed with yͤ body & blud of our Lord Ieſus Chriſt:& by yͤ record we know yͭ our Lord Ieſus Chriſt ſheweth yͭ will not deceiue vs in his promiſes, nor holde vs downe with our nebbes in the water as they ſay; but that he performeth all that euer is tolde vs there: inſomuch that when we come to that holy table, we muſt aſſure ourſelues that our ſoules are nouriſhed with the ſpirituall foode which we ſee not, and that our faith muſt mount vp vnto heauen, there to be ioyned with our Lord Ieſus Chriſt.

Heere then wee haue to note, that when the ſcripture ſpeaketh vnto vs of the ſignes which we haue in vſe according to Gods ordinaunce; the very trueth of them is preſent with them. And why? For (as I haue ſayde) our Lorde alloweth of our fayth in that behalfe, ſhewing vnto vs that the thinges which proceede from him are not deceiueable. And as we ought to be fully reſolued heereof in the Sacramentes, ſo let vs marke on the contrary part, that when men inuent things of their owne heades without the ordinance of God, they be but toyes and maygames and no better. As for example, in the Popedome they haue many ſignes, which they would haue men to accept as hygh myſteries. What a ſort of fonde thinges are in the Maſſe? And yet (if a man will beleeue them), there is nothing which is not well worthy to bee commended. They would haue it ỹ there they be as it were rauiſhed vp among the Angelles, when they play their pretie pageantes. And yet all is but vtter vanitie, and a blearing or daſeling of mens eyes. And why? For if a man demaunde from whence thoſe thinges come; he ſhall finde that men forged them, and that there is no warrant for them from God; yea and euen we ourſelues doe ſee that they haue defiled baptiſme. True it is that they could not vtterly diſpatch it out of the way, but that (euen in ſpyte of their teeth, and in ſpyte of Satan who ſtirreth them thereunto, and reigneth ouer them yet ſtill at this day), our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt hath brought to paſſe that his baptiſme continueth ſtill in his Church. But yet we ſee howe it is infected with many ſpottes among the Papiſtes, ſo as the baptiſme it ſelfe is nothing in cõpariſon of the reſt. For they eſteeme not a childe to bee baptiſed with the water [as it is of it ſelfe]; but the water muſt bee charmed aforehande, and it muſt haue coniurations made ouer it: and then muſt other inuentions be mingled with it, as Spittle, Sault, and Tapers, & a number of other gawdes which would make a man amaſed. And what importeth all this? Euery whit of it is but doung taken from Satan and held ſtill: and yet the Papiſtes ſet all their holineſſe therein. Againe, they haue inuented Sacramentes of their owne brayne, as their Sacrament of confirmation as they terme it, and their Sacrament of Anealing, and al their other pelting toyes. And to be ſhort, what elſe are all the Ceremonies which we ſee among them, but vtter illuſions of Satan? Therfore let vs learne to diſcerne the thinges which God ordeyneth and alloweth by his worde, from the thinges that men haue putfoorth at aduenture, and after their owne fancies. And let vs vnderſtande that as Gods trueth is alwayes certaine and infallible; ſo ỹ things that are brought vp by men, can not proceede but of vntrueth and falſhoode. For they be gouerned by Satan who is the father thereof. That is the thing in effect, which we haue to beare in minde.

And let vs marke further, that when men are choſen to gouerne Gods Church, (ſo it be by orderly proceeding according to his word) they ſhalbe guyded and gouerned by him, and hee will furniſh them with his gratious gifts as farre as ſhalbe needefull for them; and whereas wee perceiue not nowadayes the thinges by experience which are contayned heere; it is by reaſon of our vnbeleefe and leaudneſſe. For had wee ſuch order of election as ought to be in chooſing miniſters to preach Gods worde, and that wee went about it with ſuch reuerence as is requiſite, with calling vpon the name of God, & with obſeruing the order in ſuch ſort as hee hath ſet it downe by his worde; and againe if the like were done in the chooſing of magiſtrates and officers of Iuſtice: It is certaine that GOD alſo would ſhed foorth the gratious giftes of his holy ſpirite, and we ſhould ſee that his bleſſing ſhould not be vayne in thoſe elections. But what? Becauſe we be oftentimes puffed vp with preſumption, and euery man deales after his owne fancie, and a great ſort of vs neuer paſſe for the obſeruing of the thinges which God ſheweth vs by his word: therfore he alſo withdraweth his grace from vs: wheras if we had ỹ zeale to gouerne his Church according to his worde, and teaching, and did put our indeuour thereunto; and that in chooſing men to guide the people, we proceeded to it with ſuch ſobrietie as I haue ſpoken of: It is certaine that God would doe his part. For his hande is not ſhortened; but looke what is tolde vs heere, we ſhould ſurely finde it among vs by effect.

Nowe it is ſayde in the ende, *That the children of Iſraell obeyed Ioſua, and that they did according to that which God had commaunded by Moſes.* Heere in the firſt place we ſee, that among the giftes of the holy Ghoſt Authoritie is one, accordingly alſo as the holy ſcripture maketh mention therof in other places. Put the caſe that a man were as fit and meete to gouerne as were poſſible; yet notwithſtanding hee ſhalbe of no authoritie or reputation, except God ſet him in authoritie, & giue him as it were a marke to the end that men may ſtande in awe of him, and ſticke to him, and receiue the doctrine which he bringeth. Then is it a ſpeciall gift of God; and on the other ſide we ſee that men are deſpiſed and vnregarded vnleſſe our Lorde doe ſo auowe them, and make folke to imbrace them, and inable them to performe their charge, and to acquit themſelues thereof. That is the cauſe why it is added expreſly heere, *that the children of Iſraell obeyed Ioſua.* It is not onely ſayde that he receiued the giftes that were neceſſarie for his office; but alſo did therewithall girde him with the ſworde, according as it is ſayde in Iob, that when he will haue a man to be honored, it is like as if he gaue him a ſworde. And contrariwiſe when hee will haue a man to be deſpiſed, it is all one as if hee tooke

Iob.12.18.

tooke the ſwordgirdle from him. God then did ſet Ioſua after that maner in honour, and it behoued the people to obey him. Now we knowe the pride that is in all men, and we knowe that the people of Iſraell were giuen to rebelling aboue all other people. Therefore God was driuen to holde thē in awe, that Ioſua might reigne ouer them, not in way of tyranny, but to diſcharge himſelfe of his duetie. That is the thing in effect which we haue to remember.

Now heereby Magiſtrates are put in mind to pray vnto God that when he hath giuen them corage and power to do his commandement, he will alſo not ſuffer them to be impeached by the miſdealinges of their people, but that if there be any rebelles, he will vouchſafe to repreſſe them. For it is certaine that euen the very flyes will riſe vp againſt a man, vnleſſe our Lorde do giue him authoritie. Therefore let Magiſtrates liue warely and in feare, and let them aſſure themſelues they ſhal neuer ſtande ſure in their eſtate, vnleſſe God ſet his marke vpon them, and that they be had in reuerence by his meanes. Alſo let the miniſters of Gods worde pray him, that the doctrine may be receiued as from his mouth, & that he ſuffer them not to be deſpyſed and skorned, as we ſee howe the world is ſo vnthankeful that it coueteth nothing ſo much, and that the deuill alſo deſyreth nothing more than that the miniſters ſhould be had in contempt, to the end ẏ the word which they bring might be deſpiſed. What haue we then to doe, but to pray God to worke in ſuch ſort, as we may do men good, and as our labour may edifie them, becauſe he hath giuen vs authoritie to ſpeake in his name? Thus ye ſee how we ought to put that part of this text in practiſe.

Nowe heerewithall it is ſhewed vs, what maner of obedience it was which the Iewes yelded vnto Ioſua. And therupon we may gather howe farre foorth we ought to obey men: namely ſo farre foorth as God haue the dominion & chiefe ſouereintie, and men be but his miniſters. True it is that if God permit Tyrantes to reigne ouer vs, it behoooueth vs to yeelde our neckes to the bearing of that yoke. Yea, but yet muſt we not in the meane while ſwarue aſide from his word. If the Princes, the Magiſtrates or the Paſtors of the Church will turne vs away from the thinges which our Lorde telleth vs: we muſt rather die a hundred times. Why ſo? For ẏ obedience which we owe vnto men, ought alwayes to bee led by this rule, that God holde ſtill his place, and euery man ſubmit himſelfe to him, both great and ſmall. Let vs marke well then, that if wee will haue our Lorde to allowe this lowlineſſe of ours, which we ſhewe in being obedient vnto men; we muſt not bereaue him nor rob him of his right, but that he may gouerne vs by the hande and meanes of men. And herein we ſee how a great number doe ouerſhoot themſelues nowadayes. For they beare themſelues in hand that they be excuſed, if their fathers and mothers, or their elders, or at leaſtwiſe their Princes doe like and allowe of their doinges. But yet ſhall they not fayle to be condemned at Gods hande; for if the blinde leade the blind, both of them ſhall fall into the ditch, and the firſt ſhall not ſaue the laſt. Matt. 15.14 Wherefore let vs learne to obey our ſuperiours in ſuch ſort, as God may neuertheleſſe holde vs vnder him and vnder his guiding, and our life be ruled by his word. And ſpecially let vs haue this regarde to the ſpirituall gouernment of the Church. For if we play ẏ Papiſtes, who alleage that they followe their Prelates, and do as they haue commanded them: we ſhalbe Apoſtataes. For wee ſee that God hath reſerued this obedience to himſelfe, that hee will gouerne vs after his owne will, and not haue his word in any wiſe corrupted. He will ſo reigne ouer vs, as hee will haue none other to meddle, nor to put any thing of their owne inuenting, to that which he hath ordeyned, The way then for vs to practiſe that which is ſet downe here, is ſo to obey thoſe which haue ſuperioritie ouer vs; that firſt wee haue an eye to Gods commandement and ordinance; and then ſerue men as his miniſters whō he ſendeth, and by whoſe meanes he will haue vs to be guyded. That is the thing in effect, which we haue to gather heere.

Now finally he ſayeth, *That there was not any Prophet in Iſraell founde like vnto Moſes, which knew God face to face*, that is to ſay, to whom God reuealed himſelfe ſo familiarly. Heere wee ſee in the firſt place, that God keepeth not alwayes one rate in vttering forth his grace as we would haue him: but that he doth and dealeth in that behalfe according to his owne will. God then is not bound to any certaine lawe, as who woulde ſay, that becauſe he hath ſent an excellent man to day, he muſt do the like to morrowe too. No. Sometime we ſhalbe depriued of a man, whoſe match we ſhall not finde againe. And why? Becauſe God reſerueth that to himſelfe, to giue the greater glorie to his grace. That is the thing which we haue to note in the firſt place: and it ſerueth to teach vs that wee ſhould not be abaſhed. Notwithſtanding, if our Lorde do ſometimes diminiſh his gratious giftes towardes vs; let it not caſt vs in deſpayre. For why? It ought to content vs that our Lorde is liberall. And againe we haue ſeene already that he ceaſed not to haue a care of his people, though Moſes did farre ſurmount Ioſua, and had not his equall or match. Not that Gods intent was to magnifie Moſes as in reſpect of his perſon; but to the end that the Law ſhould be receiued with ẏ greateſt reuerence, and the people knowe that Moſes was ſent of God. And God alſo meant to giue ſome confirmation to the doctrine of the Lawe, to the intent to print the ſame the better in the heartes of the Iewes, and ſpecially the excellent deliueraunce that had bin wrought [by Moſes]. For we ſee howe all the other prophetes alſo do beate about that marke, when they rebuke the people for their vnthankefulneſſe. When they Ier. 2. 6. & elſwhere. blame them for their vngodlineſſe, they ſet before them their deliueraunce out of Egypt: for it was a deede worthy of eternall memory. To the intent therefore that the people might bee the better prouoked thereunto; it is ſayde that Moſes was the excellenteſt of all men. And therewithal the people were to be helde in obedience to the Lawe, vntill the comming of our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt. And that ſhalbe the concluſion in one worde.

Although God rayſed vp great prophetes after the deceaſe of Moſes, yea and ſuch as ſpeake more loftily than he; (as in Eſay we ſee a doctrin which at the firſt ſight ſeemeth more ſtately thã the doctrine that is contained in Moſes :) yet notwithſtanding it is certaine that Eſay was but an expounder of the Lawe, and that the thinges which he wrate were but dependentes thereof, ſo as he and all the reſt drewe light at the things which had beene taught afore by Moſes. And therefore (as I haue declared already) it behoued the people to haue a continuall regarde of the Lawe that was giuen vnto them, that they might neuer forget it. And although our Lorde had ſo well prouided for it; yet we ſee how negligent they were. 2.Kings.22.8. It is a horrible thing that the Lawe ſhould be loſt, as we knowe it was found againe in the time of Ioſias. And yet it was a treaſure which God had committed to the cuſtodie of the Prieſtes, there was a tribe choſen to that purpoſe, as who ſhould ſay, keepe yee well the Lawe that it periſh not. Deut.11.18 19. The people (as we haue ſeene heeretofore) were warned to haue the lawes written vpon the poſtes of their houſes, to write them vppon tables about their beddes, to carrie thẽ about vpon their hands, and to weare them as bracelettes about their armes. Whereas other people haue Iewels to decke them withal, you (ſayth God) ſhall euermore haue my Lawe before our eyes, that ye may neuer for goe the remembrance thereof. Yet for all this, the people forgate it, whereby we ſee howe needefull it was that the authoritie of Moſes ſhould bee ſo magnified, to the intent that the Lawe might abide vnimpeached. And that is ſhewed vs by Malach.4.4. the prophet Malachie where he ſayth, Remember the Lawe of Moſes ẏ was giuen you in Oreb. After that maner ſpeakes Malachie to the people, telling them that they ſhould be deſtitute of prophetes. For he was the laſt from that time foorth to the comming of our Lord Ieſus Chriſt. There was not after him any prophet, there was a horrible deſolation. Notwithſtanding, to the ende that the people ſhould not fall away, and forſake the couenaunt of God: Malachie ſendeth them backe to the Lawe of Moſes; as if he ſhould ſay, All the teaching that yee haue had, tended to none other end but that yee ſhould abide vnder the Lawe of God. And was it of neceſſitie that Moſes ſhould abide in his ſtate for yͤ doing thereof? No: the Law was giuen by Moſes Iohn.1.17. but we haue grace and trueth by Ieſus Chriſt.

Now whereas it is ſayde, That *no prophet was like to Moſes, who ſawe God face to face*: let vs vnderſtande that it is to the end to bring vs to this cõcluſion of S. Iohn, That our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt, Ioha.1.18. who is the only ſonne of God, is come from the boſom of his father to diſcloſe his ſecretes vnto vs, and to accompliſh all the thinges which had beene foretolde by the prophetes: and that many kinges and prophetes haue beene deſyrous to ſee and heare the thinges which wee heare Luke.10.24 and ſee, and haue not obteyned it. So then, let vs vnderſtande that Ieſus Chriſt was not ſimply 1.Tim.3.16. a prophet, but the liuing God himſelfe, manifeſted in fleſh & nature of man, to the intent that we ſhould learne to reſt wholly vppon him, and beare in minde this ſaying of the Apoſtle in the beginning of the Epiſtle to the Hebrewes, that Hebr.1.1.2. God in time paſt ſpake many and diuers wayes to our fathers, and that now we haue one concluſion of all, in that he hath vttered his wil vnto vs by our Lord Ieſus Chriſt.

Now let vs fall downe before the maieſtie of our good God with acknowledgement of our faultes, praying him to make vs ſo to perceiue them more and more, as wee may be ſory for them, and reſort vnto him to be rid of them by him; and that in the mean ſeaſon he beare with vs of his infinite goodneſſe, vntill ſuch time as hee haue fully renued vs. And ſo let vs all ſay, Almighty God, heauenly father, &c.

FINIS.

Heere ende the Sermons which were made vpon the fifth booke of Moſes
called Deuteronomie by M. Iohn Caluin miniſter of Gods
word in the Church of Geneua, and were gathered
by Dyonis Raguenier, borne in Bar, ſtanding vpon the riuer Seine.

Tranſlated out of French into Engliſh by Arthur Golding.

A TABLE OF ALL AND SINGVLAR
THE DOCTRINES OF MASTER IOHN CALVIN delivered in his tvvo hundred ſermons vpon Deuteronomie,

Gathered and laid together orderlie by the letter in the forme of a Concordance, by

ABRAHAM FLEMING.

A

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Why a Child ought to honour his father, whatſoeuer father he be. 214.b 60.& 215.a 10

What kind of dutie that is which the Child oweth to his parents. 213.a 50.

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A lawe made that Children ſhould not dye for their fathers ſins. 861.a 20.30

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Diſobedient Children curſſed, and ſtoned to death: Read that place aduiſedly. 929.a 40.50.60

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Inuentions.

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Of Malice,and that ſuch as foſter it in their heartes are murtherers. 689. a 50.60.& b 10.& 516.b 20

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A comfort for ſuch as ſeeke peace,men neuertheles not ceaſing to be Malilicious. 79.b 20.30. Looke wicked.

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Seuen hundred thouſande perſons fed with Manna. 1021.b 10.20

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Of our Mediator Chriſt Ieſus, and of the mediators of the Papiſtes. 485.a 50.60.& b 10

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The allegation, that becauſe God is Mercifull, men muſt alſo be mercifull, anſwered. 875.b 10.20.& 305. a 20.30.40.50.60

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We muſt imagine Merites or deſertes, no not in the Angels of heauen. 418. b 50.60

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XX.	13	362.a
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XVI.	36	456.a
XXII.	8	220.a
		516.a
		686.a
	14	654.a
XXV.	1	428.
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	9	241.a
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II.	19	848.b
VI.	18	1215.b
	24	58.a
	30	194.b
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VII.	14	59.a
XX.	6	712.
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	15	712.b
	20	712.b
XXII.	8	172.b
XXVIII.	3	172.b
XXXIIII.	14	1079.
Iob.		
I.	6	669.b
	21	233.a
II.	10	348.a
IIII.	18	245.b
IX.	10	1143.b
XII.	18	215.
XIII.	14	1010.a
XIIII.	2	1237.a
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XXVI.	14	356.b
XXIX.	15	906.a
XXXV.	6,7	358.a

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		436.a
		570.a
XII.	16	198.a
		446.a
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II.	4	510.a
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VII.	10	221.a
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VIII.	3	1145.a
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		571.a
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XX.	2	335.b
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XXX.	6	951.b
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	5	155.a
	9	965.b
	10	964.a
XXXIII.	1	668.b
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XXXVII.	1	989.a
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	17	43.b
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XCI.	1	1230.a
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	13	334.b
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XCV.	6	377.b
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	10	383.a
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XCVII.	1	146.a
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	4	162.a
	5	146.a
		162.a
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CII.	8,9	192.b
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CIII.	8	304.b
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	20	1187.b
CIIII.	14	782.a
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	23	207.a
	27	383.b
		877.a
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	30	1021.a
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CXVI.	6	624.
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	10	276.b
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CXVII.	2.	22.b
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CXVIII.	17	118.a
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CXIX.	1	925.a
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	3	953.
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CXXX.	3	906.b
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		275.b
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CXXXII.	10	418.a
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	14	336.
		415.a
		492.a
CXXXIIII.	1	660.a
CXXXVII.	4	660.a
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CXXXIX.	20,	731.b
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XI.	20	631.b
XII.	10	770.a
XVI.	13	1212.a
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XIX.	17	857.a
XXI.	1	75.a
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XXV.	2	397.a
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	5	1150.b
	6	117.a
	8	986.b
	9	45.b
		152.b
		439.b
		1210.
	12	300.b
		944.b
	13	894.b
	15	226.a
		516.a
		741.b
		797.
	23	230.a
	24	969.a
		1005.
		1153.b
II.	3	457.
		647.
		665.a
		671.b
		889.a
		1219.a

C.	V.	P.
	4	671.b
III.	9	924.b
	15	782.b
V.	1	1153.b
	2	1205.b
	4	676.a
	24	1188.b
	25	151.a
	26	619.b
		668.b
VI.	2	183.b
		254.b
		1108.a
		1121.b
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	5	194.a
	9	77.a
	10	1205.b
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VII.	1	1214.b
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VIII.	18	336.b
		663.a
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IX.	4	720.b
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X.	12	1153.a
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		436.b
XI.	1	1004.b
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		1018.b
	6	712.a
XII.	2	996.b
	5,6.	300.a
XIII.	8	1158.b
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XV.		817.b
XVI.	3	817.a
XIX.	1	146.a
		185.a
	14	81.a
		524.a
	19	509.a
XXII.	12	1034.a
	13	1034.a
	14	1307.a
XXIII.	24	509.
XXV.	4	734.b
	9	146.a
		147.a
		269.b
		485.b
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XXVI.	9	117.a
	27	534.a
XXVIII.	1,2	150.a
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C.	V.	P.
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	15	150.b
		320.a
		980.
		1037.b
XXIX.	10	524.a
	11	4.a
		1061.b
	12	1061.b
	13	250.a
	14	526.
	15	169.b
		985.
XXX.	1	712.b
	2	55.a
	15	338.b
	21	391.b
		684.b
	24	663.b
XXXI.	3	651.b
		713.b
XXXIII.	1	230.b
	6	655.b
	19	979.a
	22	525.
		945.a
XXXV.	3	36.a
XXXVII.	33	93.b
XXXVIII.	15	59.b
		294.a
XXXIX.	2	362.a
		654.b
	6	654.b
XL.	6,7	129.a
		616.
	8	1174.a
	15	135.b
	18	134.b
		372.a
	25	134.b
	27	169.b
	33	1143.a
XLI.	8	1073.a
	23	534.a
		669.
XLII.	1,2	363.a
	3	290.a
	7	1018.b
	8	197.a
		270.b
		490.b
	13	1056.
	18	123.b
	19	270.
	20	123.b
		124.a
XLIII.	3	808.a
	7	917.
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	31	1.a
XLIIII.	9	1043.a
	15	136.a
XLV.	7	964.a

C.	V.	P.
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		130.b
		529.a
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XLVIII.	11	197.a
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	22	907.a
XLIX.	7	537.a
	8	154.
		484.a
		910.b
	15	41.a
		116.a
	23	537.a
		655.b
LI.	1	315.b
		453
		1116.b
	2	168.b
		315.b
		453
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	17	1153.a
	21	988
	22	1010.b
		1153.a
LII.	4	810.a
	5	984.a
	11	427.a
		888.a
LIII.	2	765.a
	4	1018.
	5	763.a
LIIII.	13	678.a
		1083.a
LV.	3	515.a
	4	637.b
	6	154.a
	10.	1176.a
	11	270.a
LVI.	11	521.b
LVII.	3	797.
	21	1158.b
LVIII.	1	1242.a
	7	68.a
		210.a
		516.a
		580.a
		610.b
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	13	210.a
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LIX.	1	1151.b

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	7	961.
	16	1123.b
	19	320.a
	21	674.b
		677.a
LXI.	1	718.a
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		1175.
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LXIII.	10	1052.a
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LXIIII.	1	184.a
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	4	1063.b
LXV.	1	298.a
	10,	270.a
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	15	286.a
	23	58.a
		98.b
		122.b
		155.a
LXVI.	1	618.a
		894.a
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		159.b
		250.b
	5	183.b
		199.b
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		658.b

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C.	V.	P.
I.	5,7	253.a
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	19	1208.b
II.	2	253.a
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		1112.a
	6	1246.b
	10	488.b
		1041.b
		1131.a
	11	148.b
		488.b
	13	1110.a
	21	119.a
		619.b
IIII.	1	1050.a
	4	222.a
	5	93.b
	3	194.b
		225.b
		284.b
		434.b
		580.a
		936.a
		1220.a
	8	444.b

C.	V.	P.
	26	580.a
VII.	4	43.b
		147.b
		498.
	11	688.a
	12	498.b
	21	381.a
IX.	1	401.a
		991.a
	23	451.
	24	979.
X.	2	669.a
	8	136.b
XI.	13	250.a
	20	241.a
XII.	1	1109.a
	3	319.a
	16	195.b
XIII.	23	58.a
XIIII.	22	102.b
XVI.	16	1136.a
	17	170.a
XVII.	10	194.b
		241.a
		285.b
	21	202.a
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	24	202.a
	25	457.a
	27	573.a
	28.	202.a
XVIII.	2	1161 a
XIX.	3	456.b
		1001.a
		1039.a
XXII.	19	970.
XXIII.	14	1153.
XXVI.	8	538.b
	11	538.b
XXVIII.	9	534.a
		538.a
		681.a
	14	999.b
XXXI.	9	133.b
	15	1210.b
	18	93.a
	28	314.a
	31	132.b
	32	404.a
		421.b
	33	132.a
		404.a
		421.a
		912.a
		959.b
		1029.a
		1054.b
		1175.b
	34	483.b
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C.	V.	P.
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XLII.	15	991.
	16	991.
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C.	V.	P.
IIII.	16	353.a
		585.a
V.	16	353.a
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XI.	19	252.
		255.a
		260.a
		404.
		421.b
		519.
		611.a
		612.a
		959.
		1069.
		1175.b
XIIII.	16	938.a
XVI.	3	442.a
		797.
	8	1119.a
	20	1110.
	46	1153.b
	49	1154.a
	61	634.b
XVIII.	2	189.b
	4	861.b
		1040.a
	19	189.b
	20	104.a
		1143.a
	21	306.a
	23	152.a
		155.b
XX.	11	153.a
		181.b
	12	207.b
		587.b
	13	153.a
		573.a
	18	489.a
		1041.b
	21	201.a
	39	117.b
		272.b
		490.b
		1132.a
XXII.	8	201.a
XXV.	12	69.
XXXIII	31	323.
XXXIIII.	4	113.a
XXXVI.	26	404.
		421.b
		1054.
		1175.b
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9 1164.a
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II. 5 118.a

Nahum.

I. 2,3 188.b

Michee.

I. 4 184.a
II. 11 534.b
III. 1 580.a

C. V. P.

2,3 580.a
IIII. 3 712.a
4 1011.b
V. 2 1213.b
VI. 3 34.a
195.b

Habacuc.

I. 13 1109.a
II. 1 374.a
3 338.b
1158.b
4 338.b
988.b
18 136.b
20 146.a
III. 3 1186.b

Sophonias.

I. 5,6 195.b
8 774.b

Aggee.

I. 8, 362.a
9 362.a
II. 7 3.a
45.b
131.b
388.b
672.b
13 820.a

Zacharie.

I. 3 979.a
16, 362.a
17 362.a
20 67.b
II. 2 799.a
4 612.a
8 173.a
1121.a
V. 3 230.a
345.b
4 230.a
XII. 10 198.a
1140.a
1155.a

Malachie.

I. 2 62.a
63.a
316.
809.a
6 113.b
185.b
275.a
358.b
11 819.b
13 630.a
14 630.a
II. 7 508.a
564.b
926.
1014.a
1079.a
10 129.a

C. V. P.

15 652.b
749.b
749.b
16 837.a
841.a
III. 8 571.
17 858.a
IIII. 2 312.b
527.b
4 125.b
258.b
665.b
6 1191.b

Matthew.

I. 23 308.b
336.a
III. 9 393.a
16 504.b
17 302.b
765.b
IIII. 1 919.b
2 269.b
389.b
3 664.b
4 352.a
353.a
353.b
7 291.b
527.b
V. 39 873.b
17 163.b
181.a
18 163.b
181.a
200.a
202.a
247.a
252.a
344.a
19 693.a
21 220.b
22 220.b
239.a
934.b
28 225.b
241.b
710.b
33 94.a
34 195.b
35 140.b
37 195.a
38 710.a
44 327.
330.a
695.
710.b
724.b
874.
1157.b
45 141.a
303.a
327.a
809.
1198.b
46 710.a

C. V. P.

VI. 2 856.b
3 857.a
900.a
4 569.b
577.a
582.b
610.b
5 700.b
9 99.a
1182.b
11 985.
12 1234.b
14 201.b
20 1148.b
21 606.a
924.a
23 1046.b
31 355.b
33 209.a
345.b
1182.
1221.a
VII. 2 975.b
7 101.a
103.b
298.a
529.a
9 103.b
116.a
11 305.b
752.b
12 231.a
251.b
824.b
827.a
862.
886.a
13 578.a
VIII. 11 1139.a
17 1018.b
IX. 13 610.a
852.a
X. 14 56.a
727.a
27 126.b
666.b
770.
29 1091.a
38 409.b
40 56.a
XI. 11 666.a
676.a
13 666.a
28 157.b
1170.a
29 474.a
1170.
30 443.a
492.a
566.b
XII. 7 578.a
610.a
XIII. 17 180.b
19 474.a
24 28.a
29 835.a

C.	V.	P.
	31	28.a
XV.	4	218.a
	5	218.a
	6	218.a
		262.b
	14	521.b
		664.a
	18	814.b
XVI.	4	1125.b
	18	1122.b
	19	806.
	24	332.
		407.b
		461.b
		950.b
XVII.	3	389.b
	5	22.a
		181.a
		302.b
		666.a
		677.a
XVIII.	6	50.a
	15	700.a
	16	700.a
	18	718.a
	20	336.b
		512.b
		606.b
		705.a
		900.b
		1027.a
		1081.b
XIX.	5	229.a
		743.b
		840.a
	6	115.a
		127.b
		749.a
	8	750.a
		836.a
		838.a
		841.b
	9	792.b
		836.b
		839.b
	10	843.b
	11	829.b
		840.b
	19	140.b
	29	321.a
		925.a
XX.	15.	199.a
XXI.	9	764.b
	22	97.a
	43	148.b
XXII.	37	112.a
		243.
		272.b
		371.a
XXIII.	5	276.
		784.a
	9	129.a
		213.b
	23	212.a
		517.a
		693.b
		814.b
		885.b
	25,	517.a
	26	517.a
	37	41.a
		281.a
		338.a
		969.a
		1122.a
XXIIII.	24	534.
		535.b
XXV.	33	129.a
	40	569.
XXVI.	11	585.b
	26	93.a
		299.a
		1056.a
	28	299.a
	60,	239.
	61	239.b
XXVII.	24	740.a
	25	692.a
	45	257.
	46	1063.a
	51	257.
		919.b
XXVIII.	18	481.a
		481.b
		441.a
	19	181.a
		258.a
		263.b
		505.a
		666.a
	20	500.b
		607.a
		815.
		1004.a

Marke.

C.	V.	P.
II.	7	93.a
VII.	27	1191.a
IX.	42	50.a
XI.	24	97.a
XII.	30	272.b
XVI.	15	181.a
		181.a

Luke.

C.	V.	P.
I.	6	925.
	16	93.a
	17	1191.
	74	1.a
		171.a
	75	171.a
		1012.b
	78	854.
II.	9,	257.a
	10,	257.a
	11	257.a
IIII.	41	257.a
V.	21	93.a
VI.	25	612.a
		1171.b
	35	582.
		827.b
	39	521.
VIII.	6	1019.
IX.	23	201.b
	35	21.a
		256.
X.	5	77.a
	16	256.a
		256.a
		258.a
		431.b
		469.
		1190.b
	24	180.b
		676.
		1059.b
	27	272.b
XI.	9,	298.
	10	298.a
	19	519.
	28	1057.b
XII.	3	126.b
	7	685.a
	35	605.a
	47	289.
		471.b
	48	289.b
		1133.b
XIIII.	26	1223.a
XV	17	612.a
XVI.	5	49.a
	15	294.b
		376.a
		1027.b
	16	666.a
	22	971.a
XVII.	2	50.a
	7	267.b
		518.a
		594.a
		942.a
	9	594.a
	10	900.b
XVIII.	1	414.
	2	399.a
		414.b
XIX.	22	1096.a
XX.	38.	738.a
XXI.	19	733.
		888.b
XXII.	17	505.b
	19	505.b
XXIII.	30	1009.a
	31	988.b
		1144.a
XXIIII.	50	429.a
		739.a
		1185.b
	51	429.a

Iohn.

C.	V.	P.
I.	1	481.a
	12	798.a
	13	798.a
		880.b
	16	301.b
	17	1061.a
	18	269.b
	29	187.a
	51	466.a
III.	14	29.a
	16	167.a
	33	487.a
		929.a
IIII.	14	1125.b
	20	918.b
	21	268.b
		269.a
	22	509.a
	23	797.a
		894.b
		1220.b
	24	135.b
		139.b
		145.a
		217.b
		220.b
		221.a
		223.b
		251.b
		927.a
		928.a
	25	665.b
V.	22	196.b
	23	296.a
	24	257.a
	25	257.a
VI.	32	1020.b
	44	1054.a
	46	1083.a
	51	93.a
		505.b
		512.b
	53	299.a
		512.b
	54	299.a
		336.b
	55	299.a
		336.b
	56	299.a
VIII.	11	790.b
	33,	1136.b
	34	1136.b
	36	605.b
	56,	629.a
	57	629.a
X.	27	323.b
		461.b
	28,	534.a
	29	534.a
XI.	25	512.b
		1138.a
XII.	11	55.b
	14	55.b
	16	55.b
	30	55.b
	31	55.b.
		536.a
		1229.b
	46	1018.b
	48	1100.
XIIII.	2	1063.b

C.	V.	P.
	6	312.b
	13	485.
	15	192.a
	19,	604.
	20	604.a
	30	88.a
XV.	3	312.a
	15	180.a
		1031.b
XVI.	8	1100.a
	11	953.
		1121.a
	12	121.a
		666.
	13	666.
	20	1007.
XVII.	5	481.a
	12	606.a
	19	502.b
	21	336.b
XVIII.	9	532.a
XIX.	36	602.b
XX.	21	806.a
	22	405.a

Actes.

C.	V.	P.
I.	4	739.a
	9	607.a
	24	170.a
II.	1	610.b
	3	504.b
	4	600.b
	23	765.b
	24	1063.a
	31	765.a
III.	18	665.b
	21	765.a
	25	1137.a
IIII.	28	765.b
VI.	4	1207.b
	8	414.b
VII.	38	1187.b
	44	502.b
		796.a
	48	894.a
	51	385.a
		442.b
X.	34	19.a
XI.	18	306.a
XII.	23	334.a
		870.a
		985.b
XIII.	45	1017.b
XIIII.	16	958.a
	17	958.a
		1018.a
XV.	20	516.b
		559.b
	21	559.b
XVII.	24	135.a
	25	358.a
	28	135.a
		153.b
		199.a
		272.a
		336.b
	29	135.a

C.	V.	P.
XIX.	6	1244.b
XX.	28	181.a
		298.b
XXII.	3	242.a
XXIII.	12	829.a
XXVI.	18	186.b

Romanes.

C.	V.	P.
I.	2,	282.a
	3	482.a
	4	35.b
		41.b
	5	81.b
		928.b
	8,9	118.b
	16	78.a
		81.b
	19	81.a
	20	199.a
		357.b
		371.a
		403.a
		412.a
		699.a
		1015.b
	21	101.b
		135.a
		485.b
		545.a
	22	122.a
	23	171.a
	24	81.a
	25	140.b
	26	81.a
	28	81.a
		486.a
		524.a
	32	134.a
II.	2	376.b
	4	280.b
		291.a
		730.a
		793.a
		802.a
		969.a
		1135.a
		1136.a
	5	58.a
		328.a
		1037.b
	6	321.a
	12	146.b
		266.a
		370.b
		910.a
		963.a
		1018.b
	15	302.b
	16	266.a
III.	4	171.b
		193.b
	9	90.a
		112.a
	10	301.
	14	961.a
	19	112.a

C.	V.	P.
		940.a
		1119.b
	20	295.b
		300.a
		300.b
	21	300.a
	22	246.b
		270.a
		298.b
		298.b
	23	246.b
		270.a
	24	270.a
		298.b
		301.b
	26	370.a
	27	301.a
IIII.	9	376.b
	11	440.a
	14	939.b
		943.b
	15	77.b
		112.a
		300.a
		482.a
		1053.b
		1061.b
	16	300.a
	17	420.b
		316.a
		1138.b
	18	337.b
		373.b
	19	166.a
	20,	373.b
	21	373.b
	22	301.a
	25	35.b
	26	1236.a
	29	376.b
V.	1	1011.a
	2	1053.b
	5	1008.b
	8	142.a
	10	142.a
		187.a
		319.a
		326.b
	12	142.a
	14	186.b
	15	370.a
	17	432.a
	18	319.a
	19	418.b
		676.a
VI.	1	323.b
	[illegible]	112.a
		325.b
	3	421.a
	4	93.a
		137.a
		200 b
		399.a
		302.b
		316.b
		441.a

C.	V.	P.
	5	166.b
		200.b
		302.b
		605.b
	6	36.a
		200.b
		206.a
		302.b
		605.b
	8	1236.a
	12	247.b
		503.b
	13	503.b
	14	112.a
	17	847.b
		1053.b
	18	114.b
		140.a
VII.		283.a
	5	374.b
	4	193.b
	7	242.b
		687.a
		1061.b
	9	242.a
	10	131.a
		610.b
	12	179.b
	14	131.a
		179.b
		207.a
		268.a
		301.b
		464.a
		483.a
		483.b
		605.b
	15	203.a
		207.a
		263.b
		911.b
	17	270.a
	18	267.a
		270.a
	19	203.a
		479.b
	22	464.b
	23	405.a
		434.a
		464.b
		479.b
		503.b
		605.b
	24	246.
		906.a
VIII.	2	114.b
	6	132.a
		140.a
		376.a
	7	37.b
		88.a
		114.a
		132,a
		191.a
		200.b
		201.b

C.	V.	P.
		207.a
		144.a
		257.
		322.a
		376.a
		411.a
		417. a
		430.a
		483 a
		721.b
		727.a
	8	228.b
	9	405.a
	11	35.b
	14	62.b
	15	62.b
		192.a
		358.a
		556.b
		611.a
		674.a
		836.b
		1114.b
	16	62.b
		167.a
	23	35.a
	26	325.a
	28	334.a
		1089 a
	29	334. a
		335.a
		341.b
		375.a
		950.b
	30	451.b
		464.b
	31	88.b
	32	186.b
	38	1123.a
IX.	3	402.
	4	124.a
	7	316.a
		797.b
		1110.b
	11	168.
		169.a
		377.b
	12	68 a
		316.a
	13	62.a
	15	167.b
		318.b
		1149.b
	19	372.a
XI.	4	112 a
		164.a
		269.a
		405.a
		1062. a
	5	112.a
		181.
		301.a
	6	1061.a
		1062. a
		1100.b
	7	29.b
	8	463.b
		1061.b
	9	941.b
	10	310.b
		1096.a
	13	105.a
	14	397.a
		417.b
	17	346.a
	17	87.a
		397.
	19	151.b
		1137.a
		1137.a
	16	170.b
	17	124.a
		148.a
		170.b
		797.b
	21	1041.a
		1139.a
		1141. a
	24	798.a
	29	1047. b
	33	1143. a
	34	1143.a
XII.	1	346.a
		426.a
		445.a
		454.b
		556.b
		593.
		596.b
		630.a
		794.b
		820.a
		820.b
		900.a
		1073.b
		1202.b
	2	963.a
		1058. a
	3	131.a
		522.b
	4	51.b
	5	94.b
		95.a
	6	611.b
		680.a
		926.a
	16	214.b
	17	785.a
	18	79.b
		87.a
		725.a
		953.b
	19	306.a
		695.b
		800.b
	20	80.a
	21	724.b
		733.b
XIII.	1	19.a
		213.a
		215.a
		218.a
	2	214.a
		216.a
		218.b
		579.a
		642.b
	4	305.b
		308.a
		620.a
		712.a
	5	218.b
	8,	214.b
	9,	231.b
	10	231.b
	14	511.a
		616.b
XIIII.	7	186.b
		1073.b
	8	171.b
		186.b
		553.b
	9	186.b
		489.b
		553.
		593.a
	10	49.b
		1178.b
	13	510.a
	23	446.a
		502.b
XV.	16	426.a
		428.a
XVI.	20	88.b
		340.b
		477.a

1.Corinthians.

C.	V.	P.
I.	9,	177.b
	10,	177.b
	12	177.b
	25	1107.b
	26	537.b
	27,	51.a
	29	51.a
	28	454.a
		1138.a
	28	420.b
	30	420.b
II.	5	388.b
	8	481.a
	14	664. a
		1015.b
III.	1	110.a
	2	249.a
	7	369.a
	9	82.a
	16	289. b
		308.b
		336.a
	18	76.b
	19	120.b
IIII.	2	258.b
		261.b
		49.b
	4	285.b
	5	194.b.
		284.b
		289.b
		286.a
	7	314.
		378.a
	9	722.a
	13	30.a
		977.b
	16	47.b
V.	2	842.b
	5	50.b
		325.a
		793.a
		850.b
	6	198.a
		546.a
		548.b
	7	597.b
		602.b
	8	603.b
	10	308.a
		556.b
		745.b
	11	771.
	13	636.b
VI.	2	288.b
		1152.b
	9	788.a
		933.b
		1211.a
	11	234.a
		240.b
	12	559.b
	15	226.a
		289.b
		405.
		793.a
		934.a
	18	226.a
		229.b
	19	225.b
		289.b
		405.b
		427.a
		493.a
		557.b
		619.a
		744.b
		934.a
	20	226.b
		229.b
VII.	2	749.b
	4	840.a
	5	227.b
	7	227.b
	9	227.b
		229.a
	11	876.b
	14	1191. b
	17	829.b
	20	186.b
	23	847.b
	24	186.b
	29	844.b
	30	430.a
		511.a

C.	V.	P.
		658.b
	31	950.b
	34	225.b
		229.b
VIII.	4	130.b
		160.a
	5	130.b
	6	730.b
		454.a
IX.	7	583.
	9	739.b
	10	770.a
		877.b
	11	514.b
	13	429.b
		564.b
		658.a
	14,	514.b
	15	514.b
	17	7.b
	22	363.b
X.	2	41.b
	6	93.b
		116.b
		787.b
	8	226.
	9	1123.b
	11	45.b
		73.a
		83.b
		168.b
		431.b
		459.b
	12	625.
	13	59.a
		87.b
	17	505.b
	20	343. a
	23	559.b
	31,	198.b
	32	198.b
		553.b
XI.	5	773.a
	19	529.a
	24	299.b
		894.a
	31	143.a
		382.a
		448.a
		487.b
		634.b
		689.a
		701.b
		966.a
	32	50.b
		143.a
XII.	3	683.b
	4	166.a
	7	611.b
	13	93.a
		137.a
		210.a
		592.a
	19	657.b
	21	94.b
	27	95.a

C.	V.	P.
		336.b
	28	926.a
XIII.	5	240.a
	12	182.
		249.a
		461.b
		618.b
		952.b
		1173.b
XIIII.	12	95.a
	16	1207.b
	24	239.a
	25	239.a
		936.a
		967.a
	29	678.a
	38	1046.b
XV.	3	200.b
	10	175.b
		193.b
	12	126.b
	15	241.a
	16	1200.b
	20	35.a
	33	227.a
		343.b
	56	112.a

2.Corinthians.

I.	12	1171.a
	24	1098.b
II.	4	414.b
	9	1063.b
	15	77.b
		484.a
	16	77.b
		79.a
		484.a
		1047.a
		1071.b
		1105.a
III.	3	112.b
		132.a
		252.a
		255.a
		405.a
		412.a
		436.b
		483.b
		518.b
		611.a
		653.b
	5	912.a
		943.a
		1024.a
		1053.b
		1175.a
		1201.a
	6	405.a
		429.b
		483.b
		610.
		653.b
		1130.a
	7	3.a

C.	V.	P.
		131.a
		403.b
		610.b
		1053.b
		1100.a
		1130.a
	8	131.a
		1130.a
	11	181.a
		252.a
		436.b
	13	131.b
		403.b
	14	123.b
		403.b
		986.b
		1200.a
	15	164.a
		182.b
	16	123.b
	18	56.b
		111.a
		121.b
		124.a
		131.b
		163.b
		182.b
		270.a
		338.b
		474.a
		485.b
		504.b
		537.b
		628.b
IIII.	4	485.b
		504.
		628.b
		667.b
		1016.a
	5	422.a
	7	156.a
		717.b
		1190.b
	8	1008.b
	10	359.a
	13	487.a
V.	1	616.a
	4	617.b
	6	312.b
		340.b
		430.
		604.b
		615.
		1005.b
	8	604.b
	10	1178.
	17	1054.
	18	158.a
		973.
		1028.b
	19	158.a
		187.a
		676.a
		718.a
	20	77.b
		158.a

C.	V.	P.
		429.a
		727.a
	21	510.a
VI.	2	910.b
		978.b
	5	466.b
	14	307.b
	16	289.b
		315.a
		556.b
		619.a
		797.a
	17	427.a
		812.b
VII.	1	556.b
	8	612.a
	10	1179.b
VIII.	14	866.b
		867.b
	21	904.a
IX.	7	192.a
		275.a
		581.a
		606.a
		830.
		867.b
	10	577.a
X.	4	56.b
		239.a
		918.a
	5	239.a
		657.a
	6	239.a
XI.	2	270.b
		392.a
	14	124.b
		535.a
	24	876.a
XII.	7	104.b
		1163.a
XIII.	1	637.b
		701.b

Galathians.

I.	8	684.a
	13	242.
II.	19	201.a
	20	201.a
		208.a
III.		939.b
	7	797.b
		797.b
	10	245.a
		464.b
		487.b
		905.b
		938.a
	11	464.b
	13	167.b
		196.b
		763.a
		940.a
	16	880.a
	19	5.b
		252.a

C.	V.	P.
		300.a
		675.b
		1187.b
	22	300.a
	23	1055.b
	24	812.b
	27	93.a
		210.a
		336.b
		421.a
	28	210.a
		592.a
		727.b
		744.a
		822.a
	29	4.a
IIII.	1	465.b
		550.a
		556.a
		609.a
		612.b
	2	344.b
		780.b
		1055.b
	4	168.b
		466.a
		600.a
		940.b
	5	600.a
	6	167.a
		336.b
		556.b
	11	559.b
	12	673.b
	30	809.a
V.	1	114.b
	4	611.a
		612.b
	9	536.a
		546.a
		548.b
	12	536.a
	13	344.b
	17	203.a
VI.	1	237.b
		239.b
	2	770.b
	10	580.a
	14	203.a

Ephesians.

C.	V.	P.
I.	2	283.a
	4	10.b
		171.a
		296.a
		301.b
		318.a
		378.a
		431.b
		1117.a
	5	182.b
		283.a
		296.a
		300.a
		316.a
		676.a
	6	296.a
		300.a
		302.b
		321.b
		439.a
	7	319.a
	9	167.a
		298.b
	10	168.b
		186.b
	13	164.b
		167.a
		186.b
		313.a
		116.b
	14	167.a
		182.b
		420.a
		1118.a
	17	563.b
	18	563.b
	22	22.a
	23	349.a
II.	1	1024.a
	2	88.b
		332.b
		503.b
	3	90.a
		169.a
		186.b
		189.b
		257.b
		365.a
		420.
		421.a
		428.b
		440.b
		556.
		603.a
		727.a
		1189.a
	5	142.a
		169.a
	6	169.a
		319.a
		1063.
		1094.a
	8	166.a
		283.b
		370.a
	9	295.b
		301.b
		370.a
	10	296.a
		301.b
		377.b
		421.b
		1113.b
	12	124.a
		148.b
		170.b
		186.b
		186.b
		289.b
		312.a
		503.b
		556.b
		727.a
		797.b
	13	124.a
		556.b
		658.b
	14	283.a
		438.b
		576.b
		611.b
		744.a
		995.b
		1011.a
	15	163.b
		181.a
		200.a
		252.a
	16	772.a
	17	77.b
		158.a
	18	798.a
	19	131.a
		797.b
		869.a
	22	14.b
III.	12	130.b
		914.a
	15	214.a
		489.b
		540.a
		592.a
		998.a
		1130.b
IIII.	2	214.b
	5	126.b
	7	95.a
		302.a
		359.a
		405.b
	8	675.a
	10	14.b
		815.a
	11	126.b
		675.a
		926.a
	12	95.a
		126.b
	13	604.
		606.
		797.a
	14	527.b
		544.
		664.b
		1132.b
	15	181.b
		604.a
	16	604.a
	17	120.b
	18	120.b
		123.b
		186.b
		664.a
	19	907.a
	23	299.a
		557.b
	24	130.b
		299.
		557.b
	26	689.a
	27	689.a
A.	5	116.b
		234.a
	6	116.b
		226.b
		706.b
		788.a
		1002.b
	11	239.a
		407.a
		842.b
	17	563.b
	21	214.b
	22	229.a
	23	677.a
	25	229.a
		750.b
	26	93.a
		137.a
		299.a
		313.a
		505.a
		1081.a
	27	299.a
	28	750.b
	29	750.b
	30	166.b
		223.b
		339.b
		349.a
		604.a
		629.a
		815.a
VI.	1	213.b
		213.b
		215.a
	2	217.a
		759.a
		1203.b
	4	215.a
		216.b
		757.b
	5	213.b
		216.b
		218.b
	6	216.b
		218.b
	9	215.b
		587.b
		591.a
		594.b
	11	90.b
	12	38.a
		55.b
		74.a
		87.a
		332.b
		477.a
		503.b
		528.a
		721.b
		889.b

C. V. P.

13 45.b
477.a
15 77.b
726.
16 528.a
17 90.b
528.a
544.b
664.b

Philippians.

I. 5 170.a
6 8.a
35.a
170.a
296.b
18 805.a
21 1089.a
II. 7 185.b
196.b
210.a
390.b
481.b
1063.a
9 389.a
481.b
641.a
10 197.a
216.b
389.a
1063.b
12 75.a
70.a
282.a
1024.b
1054.b
13 11.a
26.b
112.b
170.a
260.a
377.a
405.a
566.b
1054.b
15 1099.a
17 739.a
III. 5,6 242.a
12 181.b
464.b
906.b
15 130.b
IIII. 7 611.b
11 1126.b
12 359.b

Coloſſians.

I. 6 268.b
13 212.a
13, 300.a
14 300.a
15 182.b
269.a
269.b

C. V. P.

1062.b
1071.b
1137.b
1200.a
1216.a
16, 389.a
17 389.a
648.a
19 1137.b
20 428.b
432.a
21 88.a
132.a
1051.b
1189.a
22 599.b
28 125.b
177.b
29 1137.b
II. 3 182.b
911.a
1062.b
9 41.b
131.b
138.b
163.b
239.b
289.b
481.a
485.b
607.a
661.a
815.a
1137.b
1216.a
10 14.b
1056.a
11 205.a
605.a
648.a
12 93.a
201.a
205.a
300.b
316 b
441.a
13 170.a
14 170.a
181.a
200.a
202.b
205.a
206.
252.a
505.
556.
559.
560.
764.b
764.b
15 170.a
340.
16 555.
17 200.a
202.a
202.a

C. V. P.

206.a
252.a
269.a
336.a
388.b
403.b
405.a
425.
426.b
429.a
454.b
502.
545.a
505.a
509.b
593.
597.a
611.a
20 201.a
206.a
23 389.b
1025.a
III. 1 93.a
594.b
2 35.b
3 36.a
51.a
605.b
5 332.b
6 1040.b
9, 132.b
10 132.b
11 167.b
12 867.b
14 868.a
18, 229.a
19 229.a
20 213.b
21 216.b
22, 213.b
23 218.b
IIII. 1 19.b
215.b

1.Theſſalonians.

II. 12 182.b
IIII. 13 553.b
V. 3 151.a
320.a
979.a
1034.b
5,6 563.b

2.Theſſalonians.

II. 9 535.b
10 535.a
535.b
11 82.b
153.b
669.b
983.a
1046.b
12 531.a
669.b

C. V. P.

III. 3 341.a
15 731.b
14 850.b

1.Timothie.

I. 4 522.b
5 217.b
221.a
II. 1 396.a
2 215.a
215.b
224.a
872.a
4 660.b
772.a
8 611.b
9 774.a
15 1206.a
III. 14 1244.b
15 229.a
253.a
1141.a
1159.b
16 138.b
185.a
186.a
240.a
389.b
471.
545.a
606.
607.b
629.a
640.b
815.a
1199.b
1178.
IIII. 2 255.
4 124.a
5 549.a
564.b
567.
719.a
8 90.b
264.b
325.b
465.b
950.b
1221.a
V. 8 732.a
1203.b
24 547.b
633.a
699.b
VI. 9 132.a
10 132.a
652.a
1036.a
16 130.a
160.b
17 363.b

2.Timothie.

I. 7 358.a
918.a

C. V. P.
9, 187.a
10 187.a
12 318.a
1180.a
II. 2 1080.a
13 192.b
397.b
506.b
19 197.b
1038.b
1091.a
25 306.a
26 186.b
III. 7 672.a
1061.a
16 1044.a
1083.a
1173.
17 650.a
IIII. 3 1172.a

Titus.

I. 15 227.a
325.b
344.a
512.b
711.a
16 937.b
II. 11 11.a
12 224.a
III. 9 522.b
10 536.a
11 642.a

Hebrewes.

I. 1,2 131.b
249.b
371.a
2 163.b
182.b
481.a
505.a
642.
719.a
3 132.b
269.a
269.b
354.
481.a
504.b
4 1206.a
5 647.b
8 641.a
642.
13 641.a
14 476.b
1123.a
II. 2 1114.b
9 765.b
13 663.b
14 212.a
340.b
17 642.a
III. 2 1185.b

C. V. P.
5 666.a
666.
6 675.b
7 45.a
13 525.a
IIII. 3 202.a
7 61.b
525.a
910.b
8 209.b
9 1005.b
10 202.a
11 209.b
12 221.b
704.b
935.a
936.a
1070.b
1181.a
1188.a
13 128.a
221.b
704.b
1188.a
V. 1 424.a
2 424.a
4 1076.b
5 849.a
6 426.b
429.a
VI. 4,5 150.a
13 1168.a
16 194.a
19 357.
VII. 18, 252.a
19 252.a
19 299.b
24 270.b
326.b
603.b
25 674.a
VIII. 1 326.b
5 299.b
426.a
502 b
509.b
796.a
1175.a
1200.a
6 133.a
378.b
8 181.a
9 181.a
10 912.a
13 181.a
IX. 7 299.a
8 252.
264.a
502.a
10, 163.b
11 163.b
187.a
418.a
607.a
11 629.a
640.b

C. V. P.
12 418.a
13 264.a
14 171.a
264.a
418.a
603.a
15 186.a
19 418.b
649.a
20 418.b
649.a
22 264.a
23 465.b
24 426.b
431.a
25 629.a
26 311.a
509.a
27 676.a
28 465.b
X. 3 299.a
302.a
4 660.a
18 299.a
19 426.b
658.b
1204.a
20 26.a
603.b
658.b
742.b
1204.a
28 675.b
29 675.b
30 306.a
1160.b
31 189.a
939.b
1166 a
37, 338.b
38 338.b
XI. 1 1149.a
2 133.a
4 501.a
7 57.a
729.a
1148.b
9 27.a
377.b
453,a
12 166.a
299.a
13 10.a
27.a
99.b
431.b
465.b
490.a
615.b
950.
14 431.b
16 99.b
186.a
407.b
430.a
431.a

C. V. P.
490.a
604 b
604.b
615.a
1005.b
XII. 1 35.a
701.b
1131.a
9 355.a
11 637.b
999.
12 36.b
15 402.b
546.a
636.a
731.a
1032.b
18 132.b
152.a
255.
1139.b
22 132.b
25 742.a
26 3.a
131.b
388.b
29 375.a
XIII. 3 826.
4 228.a
788.a
788.a
844.a
7 47.b
12 30.a
723.a
14 1236.a
15 630.a
820.b
16 517.a
569.b
581.b
585.b
609 b
619.b
852.b

Iames.

I. 5 625.b
1111.b
6 97.a
396.a
6,7 98.b
417.b
14 244.
943.b
15 245.a
17 39.a
189.a
300.b
369.a
1088.a
1230.b
19 768.b
21 675.a
1082.a

C.	V.	P.
	10	301.a
		693.b
		763.b
	11	115.a
		630.b
		937.a
		999.a
	13	638.a
III.	17	561.b
IIII.	5,6	240.b
	4	526.a
	12	526.a
		945.a
		1223.a
	16	418.a
	17	395.
	20	237.b

1.Peter.

C.	V.	P.
I.	2	83.a
		302.b
		603.a
	3,	1064.
	4,5	532.a
	4	186.a
	7	61.b
	10	440.a
		554.b
	11	666.a
	12	180.b
		249.a
		349.a
	15	1064.b
		1174.b
	17	19.a
	18	142.a
	19	186.b
	23	1073.a
		1130.b
	24	129.a
	24,	181.a
	25	181.a
II.	1,	140.b
	3,4	326.b
	9	142.a
		160.a
		426.b
		619.a
		658.b
		920.b
		960.a
		984.b
		1094.a
		1202.b
	11	140.b
	13,	213.b
	14	214.a
		308.a
		305.
		620.a
	17	223.b
	18	213.b
	20,	349.a
	21	349.a
	21	359.
	24	763.a
III.	5,	277.b
	6	277.b
	5,	229.a
	7	229.a
	9	140.b
	11	79.b
	19	241.b
IIII.	3	563.b
	5	221.a
	8	237.a
	12	155.b
		349.b
	13	349.a
	17	988.b
V.	3	113.a
	4	118.b
	6	394.a
		1151.a
	8	88.a
		124.b
		169.b
		339.a
		477.b
		503.b
		721.b
	9	90.b
		140.b
		145.b

2.Peter.

C.	V.	P.
I.	10	300.a
III.	8	1129.a
		1130.a

1.Iohn.

C.	V.	P.
I.	7	163.b
		246.a
		299.a
		596.a
		603.b
		630.a
II.	1	419.a
		485.a
		676.a
	23	269.a
		545.a
III.	2	486.a
	15	173.a
		219.a
		221.a
		306.b
		516.b
		560.a
		685.a
		934.a
		936.a
	17	867.b
	20	191.b
		385.b
		935.b
		1156.a
	22	291.b
		395.a
IIII.	1	977.b
	20	852.b
V.	4	527.a
	14	395.
	19	200.b
	20	1042.b

Iude.

C.	V.	P.
I.	9	1237.b
	10	1146.a
	25	129.a

Apocalips.

C.	V.	P.
I.	5	35.a
XIIII.	13	321.a

FINIS.